

PARTS I & II

WESTMINSTER IN MORESBY

PAPUA NEW GUINEA'S HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

1964 -1972

L.W.JOHNSON

The Author Les Johnson, who went to Papua New Guinea as Director of Education in 1962, was elected to the post of Assistant Administrator in 1966. In 1970 he left Papua New Guinea to take up the position of Director of the College of Advanced Education in Tasmania, but got as far as Melbourne when he was persuaded by Australian Prime Minister John Gorton to return to Papua New Guinea as Administrator. At self Government he became the High Commissioner of Papua New Guinea in 1973 and retired the following year.



THE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

SECOND HOUSE—FIRST SESSION.

Speaker—MR. JOHN GUISE.

Chairman of Committees—MR. W. W. WATKINS.

Open Electorates.

John Guise	....	Alotau.	Poio Iuri	....	Lagaip.
Nauwi Sauinambi	....	Ambunti- Yangoru.	Pupuna Aruno	....	Lufa.
Peter Garth Johnson	....	Angoram.	Angmai Bilas	....	Mabuso.
James Meangarum	....	Bogia.	Paliau Maloat	....	Manus.
Karigi Bonggere	....	Chimbu.	Pita Lus	....	Maprik.
Yauwi Wauwi Moses	....	Chuave.	Thomas Leahy	....	Markham.
Sinake Giregire	....	Daulo.	Momei Pangial	....	Mendi.
Kokomo Ulia	....	Dreikikir.	James McKinnon	....	Middle Ramu.
Norman Evennett	....	Esa'ala.	Percy Chatterton	....	Moresby.
Meck Singiliiong	....	Finschhafen.	Mek Nugintz	....	Mul-Dei.
Matthias Toliman	....	Gazelle.	Mangobing Kakun	....	Munya.
Louis Sebu Mona	....	Goilala.	Julius Chan	....	Namatanaï.
Sabumei Kofikai	....	Goroka.	Patik Nimambot	....	Nawae.
Ninkama Bomai	....	Gumine.	Tegi Ebei'al	....	Nipa.
Pena Ou	....	Hagen.	Donatus Moia	....	North Bougainville.
Bono Azanifa	....	Henganofi.	Warren Dutton	....	North Fly.
Toua Kapena	....	Hiri.	Muriso Warebu	....	Okapa.
Michael Marveta Kaniniba	....	Huon Gulf.	Epineri Titimur	....	Rabaul.
Turi Wari	....	Ialibu.	John Poe	....	Rai Coast.
Paulus Arek	....	Ijivitari.	Nathaniel Ian Uroë	....	Rigo-Abau.
Kaura Duba	....	Jimi.	Katigane Endekan	....	Sinasina.
Rauke Gam	....	Kabwum.	Wilson Suja	....	Sohe.
Yano Belo	....	Kagua.	Paul Lapun	....	South Bougainville.
Noel Michael Casey	....	Kainantu.	Niwia Ebia Olewale	....	South Fly.
Anani Maino	....	Kaindi.	John Middleton	....	Sumkar.
Koitaga Mano	....	Kandep-Tambul.	John Maneke	....	Talasea.
Koriam Michael Urekit	....	Kandrian-Pomio.	Matiabe Yuwi	....	Tari.
Daniel Bokap	....	Kavieng.	Wesani Iwoksim	....	Upper Sepik.
Tore Lokoloko	....	Kerema.	Tei Abal	....	Wabag.
Siwi Kurondo	....	Kerowagi.	Kaibelt Diria	....	Wahgi.
Tom Koraea	....	Kikori.	Yakob Talis	....	Wapei-Nuku.
Oscar Tammur	....	Kokopo.	Leme Iangalyo	....	Wapenamanda.
Trainya Kambipi	....	Kompiani-Baiyer.	Brere Awol	....	West Sepik Coastal.
Andrew Andagari Wabiria	....	Koroba.	Beibi Yembanda	....	Wewak.
Lepani Watson	....	Kula.			

Regional Electorates.

Joseph Adrian Lue	....	Bougainville.	Walter Andrew Lussick	....	Manus and New Ireland.
Oala Oala-Rarua	....	Central.	Cecil Abel	....	Milne Bay.
Eric Pyne	....	Chimbu.	Anthony Constantine	....	Morobe.
Dennis Buchanan	....	Eastern Highlands.	Voutas	....	Northern.
Oriel Irving Ashton	....	East and West New Britain.	William John Fielding	....	Southern Highlands
Michael Tom Somare	....	East Sepik.	Ronald Thomas Dalton	....	Western and Gulf.
Jason James Garrett	....	Madang.	Neville	....	Western Highlands.
			Virgil Baden Counsel	....	West Sepik
			John Watts	....
			Joe Paul Langro	....

Official Members.

- ✓ Frank Cotter Henderson, O.B.E., Assistant Administrator (Economic Affairs).
- ✓ Leslie Wilson Johnson, Assistant Administrator (Services).
- ✓ Walter William Watkins, Secretary for Law.
- Anthony Philip John Newman, Treasurer.
- ✓ Thomas William Ellis, M.B.E., D.F.C., Director of District Administration.
- ✓ Donald Stuart Grove, Director Lands, Surveys and Mines.
Charles Geoffrey Littler, District Inspector, Department of District Administration.
Stanley Michael Foley, District Commissioner, Chimbu.
Ronald Thomas Galloway, District Commissioner, Port Moresby.
Herbert Percy Seale, District Commissioner, Lae.

Ministerial Members.

Angmai Balas—Trade and Industry.
Ashton, O. L.—Public Works.
Matthias Toliman—Education.
Sinake Giregire—Posts and Telegraphs.
Tei Abal—Agriculture, Stock and Fisheries.
Tore Lokoloko—Public Health.
Toua Kapena—Labour.

Assistant Ministerial Members.

Andagari Wabiria—Lands, Surveys and Mines.
Joseph Luc—Technical Education and Training.
Kaibelt Diria—Local Government.
Lepani Watson—Co-operatives.
Meck Singiliong—Rural Development.
Oala Oala-Rarua—Treasury.
Paul Langro—Information and Extension Services.
Siwi Kurondo—Forests.

Abbreviations and Notes.

the Administration:	Reference to 'the Administration' means the Administration of the Territory of Papua and New Guinea.
AEC	Administrator's Executive Council.
AMM	Assistant Ministerial Member.
CPD	Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates.
HAD	House of Assembly Debates.
LCD	Legislative Council Debates.
MHA	Member of the House of Assembly
MM	Ministerial Member
Papua New Guinea	Until 1971 the correct name was the Territory of Papua and New Guinea. The 'and' was officially discarded in 1971.
Papua New Guinean	This rather longwinded term is forced on the writer by the absence of other accepted names for the nationals of the country. Other simpler terms have by usage, become pejorative.
the Territory	Reference to 'the Territory' means the Territory of Papua and New Guinea or, since 1971, of Papua New Guinea.



First PNG members of the Legislative Council at its inauguration in 1951.- L to R. Aisoli Salin, Merari Dickson, Simogen Pita.

Preface

Papua New Guinea's House of Assembly between 1964 and 1972 introduced a largely non-literate population to democracy Western style with universal suffrage, single member constituencies and a quasi-Ministerial system with its office holders drawn from within the Parliament. The political foundation for the nation which emerged eleven years later was the first House but it was in the second House that political sophistication grew apace so that the third House, elected in 1972, ~~which~~, without much fuss and no drama, projected Papua New Guinea into self-government in December 1973 and to independence in September 1975. For those who participated it seemed a breathlessly short space of time.

The account that follows does not purport to be a history of Papua New Guinea over the period 1964-72 except as events were projected into the House deliberations or House activities had an impact on the wider world. The creation and the functioning of the House of Assembly, and particularly of the first one, has had many critics; what follows is an attempt to take you inside to mingle with the members, and to judge for yourself.

All of the members of whom I write were well known to me and many were, and are, good friends. I hope that they do not take it amiss that I quote from their parliamentary speeches. The reader will note that I quote the members of the second House much more freely than those of the first. This is because there is much more to quote and there I have been content to let the members speak for themselves. It must be remembered that the record of House of Assembly debates was produced only in English from simultaneous interpretation of words that were frequently spoken in Pidgin and occasionally in Motu. The interpretation stilted somewhat, and perhaps purges a little, some quite remarkable oratory in Pidgin. ~~I point~~

~~out that the Proclamation on the first page of Chapter I could not be classed as Pidgin.~~

I can hardly claim to be totally objective for I was an official member of both Houses until my appointment as Administrator of Papua New Guinea in July 1970 whereupon I became Chairman of the embryonic cabinet, the Administrator's Executive Council. I was a member of a number of House Standing Committees, of both Select Committees on Constitutional Development and, from 1966, of the Administrator's Executive Council. (originally the Administrator's Council).

The Australian Minister for External Territories from early 1964 until the end of 1971 was C.E. Barnes, a Queensland member of the then Country Party. He was the subject of much criticism because of his conservative attitudes, and I too have been among the critics, but this has nothing to do with my respect, indeed affection, for the man himself. He was a true gentleman, courteous, patient and loyal to those who served him. He did not seek political preferment but when it came to him he carried out his duty as he saw it. He firmly believed that Papua New Guinea should proceed slowly and cautiously along the road to self-government and only abandoned reluctantly the possibility that the tie between Australia and Papua New Guinea might be a permanent union of some sort. He was particularly concerned that Papua New Guineans should be free to make their own pace for political development and not be subjected to 'hurry-up' harassment from outsiders. He felt very much at home among the Highlanders who confirmed him in his views. He was unswerving in adhering to the policy that economic progress should precede political development, until party rivalries in Australia reversed that policy.

development

The sources I have used as reference material are varied, mostly my own memories reinforced by the record of House of Assembly debates and newspaper clippings. I had also a variety of letters, reports and other documents among my personal papers, some of which I came by involuntarily. They were shipped to me unexpectedly in Greece when the last remnants of colonialism were being cleared out of dusty cupboards after independence. They have since been deposited in the Australian archives.

I take this opportunity also to pay tribute to my wife Dulcie who played no small part in gaining the friendship and trust of the members of the House.

L.W.Johnson.

Official members and Under-Secretaries
at the last meeting of the House
November 1964

Official Members.

Frank Cotter Henderson, O.B.E., Assistant Administrator (Economic Affairs).
Leslie Wilson Johnson, Assistant Administrator (Services).
Walter William Watkins, Secretary for Law.
Anthony Philip John Newman, Treasurer.
William Frederick Carter, Director of Posts and Telegraphs.
Roy Frederick Rhodes Scragg, Director of Public Health.
Thomas William Ellis, M.B.E., District Commissioner.
Donald Stuart Grove, Director of Lands, Surveys and Mines.
Wilfred Lawrence Conroy, Director of Agriculture, Stock and Fisheries.

Under-Secretaries.

Matthias Turanava To Liman, Under-Secretary for Education and Local Government.
Lepani Watson, Under-Secretary for Department of Trade and Industry.
Sinake Giregire, Under-Secretary for Department of Agriculture, Stock and Fisheries.
Paul Lapun, Under-Secretary for Department of Forests.
Edric Eupu, Under-Secretary for Department of Lands, Surveys and Mines.
Pira Simogen, B.E.M., Under-Secretary for Police Department.
Dirona Abe, Under-Secretary for Department of Public Health.
Robert Tabua, Under-Secretary for Department of Public Works.
Zure Makili Zurecnuoc, Under-Secretary for Department of Treasury.
Nicholas Brokam, Under-Secretary for Department of Information and Extension Services.
Tei Abal, Under-Secretary for Department of Labour.

INTRODUCTION.

Papua New Guinea comprises the eastern half of the island of New Guinea together with associated island chains, the Admiralty group, New Ireland and New Hanover, New Britain, Bougainville and Buka from the Solomon Islands group and several significant island chains to the east of the mainland.

The island of New Guinea was arbitrarily disposed of by the European powers in the 19th Century when the Western half became Dutch, Germany annexed the Northern part of east New Guinea and Britain, not without some nudging from Queensland, took possession of the south, Papua. ~~However,~~ In 1902 Britain passed over Papua to Australian management, but New Guinea remained a German colony until 1914 when Australian military forces took control, and the Territory of New Guinea became an Australian mandate on behalf of the League of Nations.

However, though both Territories, Papua and New Guinea, were controlled by Australia, their administrations remained separated until World War II when, in 1942, Australian Military Forces through the Australia New Guinea Administrative Unit united the two, though indeed much of New Guinea remained in Japanese hands during the war years. The administrative union created by ANGAU was formalised by an Act of Parliament in 1949 and the combination became the Territory of Papua and New Guinea, though New Guinea officially remained a UN Trust Territory until Papua New Guinea independence in 1975.

Thus the two Territories had considerably different colonial experiences which, in part, generated differing attitudes and rivalries which were often ventilated on the floor of the parliament and elsewhere. This meant that a careful division of rewards and responsibilities between the respective areas was necessary. For instance, since independence, the

three Prime Ministers, Somare, Chan and Wingti from New Guinea, made it necessary for the Governor-General to be Papuan, Guise, Lokoloko and Dibela.

Other physiographic divisions similarly demand recognition. Four areas are generally delineated - the New Guinea islands, the New Guinea mainland, the Highlands, and Papua. The spoils of office have to be shared four ways.

During the colonial period the Australian Government's jurisdiction was exercised through a Minister for Territories, (later External Territories), advised by a Department of Territories in Canberra. The Minister delegated his powers to an Administrator with a supporting structure of Departments in Port Moresby.

L.W.J.



The Administrator's Council in 1967.

Clockwise from bottom left

Nicholas Brokab, Zure Zurecnuoc, Robert Tabua, John Stuntz,
Ian Downs, Frank Henderson, David Hay, Council secretary

John Brown, John Guise, Les Johnson, Keith McCarthy, Matt Toliman

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PART I

THE FIRST HOUSE

CHAPTER 1.

THE HOUSE AND ITS MEMBERS.

Papua New Guinea's first parliament elected by universal suffrage was inaugurated in June 1964 by the Australian Governor General Viscount de Lisle. Twenty years later, in September 1984, I was invited by an independent Papua New Guinea to witness the opening of the new national parliament building, agitation for which had begun in 1968. This time the opening ceremony was performed by the direct heir to the throne, the Prince of Wales.

The new building was a far cry from the makeshift quarters of 1964. It was airconditioned throughout, there was a large and comfortable chamber for debate, a commodious gallery for spectators, spacious offices for members, committee rooms, a library, catering services, a banquet room, recreation area for members, a sauna and much more. The building was of spectacular design with an upswept and intricately carved entrance in the manner of the spirit houses of the Sepik people. It was a building of which any country might well be proud. Groups of dancers from all parts of the country celebrated the event on the lawns adjacent to their parliament.

~~seated there~~

Of the members, 89 from open electorates and 20 representing the provinces, ~~seated there,~~ only two of ~~them~~ were originals from 1964, Pita Lus and Barry Holloway. However, a number of us from 1964 were ~~seated,~~ ^{there} nostalgic and envious, in the Visitors' gallery, the first Speaker, Niall, Guise, Chatterton and Abal among them.

The first House comprised 64 members, forty four

v

~~Sixty-years-later,--on-23-February-1974-the-sovereign,-no-longer
'un-king'-but-'Misis-Kwin',--visited-Rabaul-in-person.---There-she-was
greeted-by-a-New-Guinean-Minister-of-a-self-governing-Papua-New-Guinea,-
soon-to-be-an-independent-nation.---That-Minister²-was-a-member-of-the
third-Papua-New-Guinea-House-of-Assembly.~~

~~But-the-first-House-of-Assembly-began-in-June-1964,--ten-years
before-that-auspicious-visit.---It~~ comprised sixty-four members, forty-four
of them, of any race, elected from a common roll in single member
constituencies, ten non-indigenous members, also elected from a common roll
but representing reserved single member constituencies, and ten nominated
official members. Voting had been preferential and the life of the
House was to be four years.

Six of those elected for open electorates were expatriates, all
Australians, as were those from reserved electorates, except Chatterton,
who was originally from the United Kingdom. All of the official members
were Australians. Thus twenty-six of the members were expatriates and
thirty-eight Papua New Guineans. Of the indigenous members nineteen had
never been to school and only four had any education beyond primary grades.
Only one of the Highlands members had ever been to school. Fourteen of
them were professed Catholics and twelve were Lutherans. Among the
Australian elected members seven had once been officers of the Department
of Native Affairs.

The building in which they were to conduct their business was an
unprepossessing structure which had originally been a hospital. It sat
on the roadside, half-way up Toua Guba Hill, surrounded by what we called
high covenant housing which, in 1964, meant housing designed for
expatriate occupation. It was within easy walking distance of the centre
of the town of Port Moresby where, at that time, most hotel and hostel
accommodation was situated.

The only notable feature of the building was the central chamber which was large, comfortable and well appointed, in sharp contrast to the rest of the place. Members' desks, each designed for two, were arranged in a U-shaped formation with the Speaker and his officers occupying the open mouth of the U. There were two single seated desks on the extreme right and extreme left of the Speaker, presumably for the ultimate occupation of the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition, demonstrating that at least the designers of the chamber ^{were} Westminister ^{in mind.} men. In the first House the senior official member, originally John Gunther, occupied the desk on the right of the Speaker, while the other one was for the leading elected member. It was never possible to decide who should be the leading elected member but Ian Downs took possession of the desk. During the brief period when John Guise was leader of the elected members he did not aspire to occupy this place of honour.

With Gunther in the van, official members and Under-Secretaries sat on the right of the Speaker, the bulk of elected members on the benches facing the Speaker, and the remainder, including some of the principal critics of the Administration, ^(?) on the left. The seating arrangements gave the impression of a Government and an Opposition facing each other with an uncommitted majority on the cross-benches. We official members each shared a desk with an Under-Secretary with the exception of Bill Carter who chose to identify himself more closely with the rank and file by sitting on the cross benches.

Each member had a set of earphones and a switch to enable him to receive the language of his choice, English, Pidgin or Motu. Glass fronted booths for the interpreters were high up on the right of the Speaker. I recall that a male staff member was interrupted while in congress with a staff member of the opposite sex on the floor of one of these booths. He defended his actions with spirit claiming that the

girl had fainted and that he was attempting to revive her. Nonetheless he was reprimanded for resorting to such unconventional first-aid.

The chamber also accommodated a press gallery, small enclosures for VIP's and for officials, while there was a substantial area for spectators, usually well patronised. In front of, and below, the Speaker were the Clerk of the House and his Deputy, the Sergeant-at-Arms and the shorthand writers. The last-named, who kept a verbatim record of proceedings, were mostly personable young women who had a magnetic attraction for all eyes as they swayed in and out of the Chamber every twenty minutes.

There were no amenities for members. We had nowhere to go but to a small open-sided and very hot lounge and consequently most stayed inside the Chamber throughout the day's proceedings except for the tea-breaks. Refreshments were served mid-morning and mid-afternoon, and, as the service was free, some members used these occasions to eat prodigiously, thus economising on the purchase of meals. The tea-breaks provided opportunities for informal discussion of House business and, apart from the refreshment, all members enjoyed these social occasions, while a deal of business was also carried forward.

There were usually two sessions of the House each week day, morning and afternoon, morning and evening, or afternoon and evening. During the long intervals before evening sessions many members retired to a nearby hotel, a practice which sometimes induced greater eloquence that evening, but less tolerance. While the House was in session most members attended throughout - there was nowhere else to go, and, as a high proportion of members read with difficulty, if at all, they found it preferable to sit in the Chamber and listen to their colleagues. In the second and subsequent Houses absenteeism became a problem and Whips had an unenviable task mustering numbers for divisions.

With the exception of those members living in, or adjacent to, Port

Moresby all members travelled by air and were effectively confined to that town for the duration of the meeting. During the meeting, or when they were engaged in other parliamentary duties, members were paid a per diem allowance pitched to cover the cost of modest hotel accommodation and meals. Most of the expatriate members stayed at one or the other of the town's hotels or hostels, but Papua New Guinean members did not find hotel living suitable to their tastes or pockets. Mostly they stayed with clan members already established in Port Moresby so that members of related tribal groups could get together and reinforce traditional ties. One member sometimes stayed in the limited accommodation of my domestic servant, who occasionally borrowed my glassware and crockery to put on a party for his distinguished guest. As these occasions often became quite lively we always had some apprehension for the safety of our possessions.

Towards the end of the first House, particularly after the foundation of ^{political parties} ~~the Pangu Pati~~, meetings outside the House began to assume a more purposeful political mien and to cut across tribal divisions, but in general this was confined to the younger and better educated members. Some of the senior members who had houses of their own in Port Moresby provided meeting places which became, in effect, political salons, notably John Guise in Hohola and to a lesser extent Lepani Watson. Oala Oala-Rarua and Albert Maori-Kiki, not yet members, but union and party organisers, played an active role and their houses became centres of political activity.

In this first House no meeting extended into the third week and some were despatched within the five sitting days of one week. The longest meeting was the budget meeting of August/September 1967 which occupied two full weeks, or ten sitting days. As most members were men from small and often remote villages they found the strain of a temporary urban existence considerable and, after a week, the tedium of parliamentary attendance and concern as to events on the home front began to overcome their sense of duty. If the meeting was prolonged deep into the second week they would

begin to go home and attendance in the House became lighter as the week wore on. This tendency became more pronounced in the subsequent Houses as meetings lengthened, both with increased business and increased numbers of meetings.

To get back to the topic in hand, the building itself also provided for staff work areas for the preparation of Notice Papers, of the Hansard record, the ^{preparation} printing of Bills, and so on. There was a deal of additional clerical work - pay and allowances for members, travel arrangements, etc. The Speaker also had a minute two roomed suite in which he occasionally dispensed hospitality from a meagre entertainment allowance. The basement of the building accommodated the National Museum so that tourists had a unique opportunity to reflect on the artifacts of the past and then move up to observe men who had used them coping with a vastly different environment.

Over the years there were a number of proposals for a new building for the parliament but cost and sharp differences of opinion as to where it should be sited always inhibited action. ~~It was not until 1984 that a splendid new Parliament House was opened,~~ - in Port Moresby.

As I have indicated earlier the seating arrangements pointed to the leading protagonists on either side of the House, John Gunther, the senior official member, and Ian Downs for the elected members. Both had been in Papua New Guinea for many years. Downs had been a patrol officer in the Highlands before World War II and had resumed a career in the Department of Native Affairs afterwards, ultimately becoming an active and innovative district Commissioner. He had resigned from the Government to develop a coffee plantation in the Highlands near Goroka. He was elected to the Legislative Council and became a penetrating critic of the Administration. He had once resigned from the Council in protest at the introduction of income tax. In 1964 he won the Highlands reserved seat. Gunther came to Papua New Guinea after the war as Director of Public Health. His drive

and energy built up a most successful medical service and led to his elevation to the position of Assistant Administrator where he became a dominant influence on Papua New Guinean affairs. He served in the Legislative Council throughout its post-war life.

Both Downs and Gunther were experienced, intelligent, and inclined to be intolerant of conflicting views. Neither suffered fools gladly, and we had a few in the House. Both had combative personalities, and although each respected the other's ability, they had some spirited clashes in the House. Downs spoke freely and with force both in English and Pidgin. Gunther, on the other hand, was no great orator but when he did intervene in debate it was with authority which commanded respect. He invariably spoke in English.

The most prominent Papua New Guinean member was undoubtedly John Guise. By virtue of experience, ability, personality, personality and political nous he was the outstanding indigenous member. Unlike his Papua New Guinean colleagues he had a European ancestor in his background but managed to shake off any handicap this may have been for him by espousing vigorously all causes promoting the advancement of his countrymen. Though by no means a scholar he had been pretty well educated, by Papua New Guinean standards, by the Anglican Mission. He spoke, wrote and read English well and was fluent in Pidgin and Motu. Early in his career he had been a Sergeant-Major of police at a time when no indigenous policeman could aspire to commissioned office. He was a member of the Legislative Council and of the Administrator's Council. With his subordinates he was authoritarian but also very emotional so that tears came readily. He cultivated his electorate assiduously and was obviously destined for a long and prominent political career. In this first House he was briefly the leader of the elected members' group before it broke up, he was a member of the Administrator's Council throughout. In the second House he was Speaker, in the third a Minister, and then ^{briefly} Governor-General on

Independence. He returned to active politics ^{before finally retiring} ~~and is currently a~~
~~to look after his business interests~~
~~prominent member of the Opposition.~~ He always sought but never quite reached the political summit of Prime Minister, for members were never prepared to give him their full confidence. They doubted his integrity because Guise was never prepared to put his existing status at risk to grasp at the prize. Had he unequivocally put himself in the van of those demanding early self-government he would have been far in front of all possible rivals, but he equivocated and was passed by others who had less to lose by a radical stance.

It took a little time for most Papua New Guinean members to ^{adjust} ~~acclimate themselves~~ to novel circumstances, to ^{accept} ~~adjust to~~ majority rather than consensus decision making and to seek status in new ways. Some had the benefit of considerable acculturation prior to membership of the house and adjusted easily to the new environment, others never made it at all, but by the end of 1965 most members had created for themselves a parliamentary niche, even if it was only persistent and pertinacious representations on behalf of their electorates, and parliamentary partnership with others pressing similar causes.

Of those who emerged on the national stage, possibly the two most respected were the self-taught Tei Abal from Wabag in the Western Highlands and Matthias Toliman (To Liman) a devout Catholic Mission teacher from New Britain. Abal, (now Sir Tei Abal), a Minister in the second House, at times leader of the Opposition in the third and re-elected for the fourth House, ^{but now retired,} had taught himself to read and write in Pidgin but spoke no English and had had no experience, prior to the election in 1964, outside of his own district, where he was the senior medical orderly at the Wabag hospital. He quickly displayed leadership qualities and exercised a profound influence throughout the Highlands. As a politician he was a natural, and his skill in getting advantages for his electorate was envied by his fellows. He reflected the conservatism of the Highlands and was a dependable supporter

of Administration policies, which in part explains his success in his representations on behalf of his electorate. He believed that early independence would leave the reins of power in the hands of coastal sophisticates to the detriment of the undeveloped Highlands. Delay was a self interested tactic he pursued persistently. Despite the constraints of his origins and upbringing he could see Papua New Guinea as a whole and spoke fervently about the need for a national unity on a number of occasions.

Toliman was educated by the Marist Brothers and became a teacher in his home near Rabaul, still with the Marists. He came of a leading Tolai family and it was expected of him that he would play a prominent role in community affairs. He had no difficulty in winning the parliamentary seat in his own electorate and retained it comfortably at subsequent elections. His status and education made him an automatic choice as an Under-Secretary in the first House of Assembly and he continued to hold important political posts until his death in 1973, at which time he was Leader of the Opposition. Toliman was first and always a member of the Tolai people, but he was also a Papua New Guinean nationalist who, however, had confidence in the Australian government and its goodwill towards his country. He was a reliable supporter of government policies in the House and widely respected by his colleagues. ~~His initial Under-Secretary post to the Department of the Administrator gave him no opportunity to exercise his particular talents but later he became a highly successful Under-Secretary for Education and revelled in his role.~~ Like many Tolais he was big, and dwarfed most of his parliamentary colleagues. He was good humoured, cheerful, and could hold his own in debate. His principal interventions in the House of Assembly, other than those falling within his education portfolio, were in respect of land problems in his home area, the Gazelle Peninsula^f, where his leadership and status were under threat from the more radical Tolai who were prepared to take the law into their own hands

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to resolve their problems. Toliman's death removed a respected, moderating influence on Tolai affairs.

Koriam?
Koriam?

Pita Lus is one of three members who have served in all of the first four Houses of Parliament. (The others, Tei Abal and Koriam Urekit) He was a figure of substance in that he was outspokenly aggressive about almost everything, and every now and then became involved in minor fracas with those with whom he disagreed most violently. One could not say that he had a deep understanding of the issues on which he spoke so frequently but he was almost a professional rebel and must hold the record for votes in opposition to Administration proposals. Lus was an early recruit to the Pangu Pati when it was formed. Since 1972 he had filled a succession of minor Ministerial posts as a reward for long and faithful service to his party, he was knighted in June 1979. At the time of writing he was Minister for Parliamentary Services.

Koriam Urekit represented an undeveloped area of West New Britain. He was hardly a prominent member of the House, but his constituents revered him greatly for his mystical powers. To reinforce his status at home he displayed a large iron key to his followers, explaining that it was the key to the House of Assembly, which could not begin work until he got there and unlocked the door. But for one meeting he forgot to take the key, causing much consternation in the village. The people in the District office in Rabaul were astonished one morning to see an old woman, Koriam's wife, enter in great agitation waving an old key. She had made a considerable journey by boat to ensure that the House of Assembly could begin its work without too much delay. Koriam may not have been the custodian of the House of Assembly but he certainly had a mortgage on his seat until his death in 1979.

Barry Holloway is the only other member of the first House to serve in the present parliament. His service, however, was interrupted by his failure to be elected to the second House. He was Minister for Education at the time of writing.

Among other notable members one must include Paul Lapun from Bougainville, also a Roman Catholic ex-mission teacher. He

was another early adherent to the Pangu Pati and indeed was its parliamentary leader until the advent of Michael¹¹ Somare in 1968. He was Under-Secretary in the first House and a Minister in the third; but was eclipsed by younger men in the 1977 election. In the first House Lapun soon revealed considerable dedication to the welfare of Bougainville but little interest in the rest of the country, and this marked his attitude throughout his political career. He is, of course, principally notable for his successful ~~fight for mining royalty payments to the owners of the land on which the vast Bougainville Copper Mine was located.~~ As an Under-Secretary he was distinguished for his consistent record of opposition to Government proposals in the House and for the little seen of him by his Department. He rarely did much campaigning for re-election but had no difficulty in retaining his seat in 1968 and 1972 due, to some extent, to a widespread belief that he possessed supernatural powers. *

1. * Another notable member was Simogen Pita (or Pita Simogen) representing Wewak-Aitape in the Sepik District. He was one of three Papua New Guineans appointed to the first Legislative Council of the combined Territories in 1951. Simogen, in his early sixties in 1964, had had a notable war service record with the Australian forces behind enemy lines. He was awarded the British Empire Medal for his services. (His story is recounted in 'If I Die' by Malcolm Wright; Lansdowne Press 1965). Gabriel Ehava Karava was another Papua New Guinean ex-soldier. He was decorated with the Military Medal for courageous action in a hot encounter with the enemy. 3.

in Pidgin, Motu or English. His interpreter would go into the interpretation box and render Handabe's words on the floor of the House into Pidgin which other interpreters would pick up and turn into English and Motu.

There was Percy Chatterton, a retired English missionary, who had spent most of his life in Papua and who operated in Parliament rather as an ombudsman for those individuals with grievances against the Administration. Chatterton, ~~new in his eighties~~ ^{since deceased}, was knighted in June 1981.

Among the expatriate elected members Don Barrett was undoubtedly the hardest to ignore. He was a somewhat less than successful plantation

owner near Rabaul, but was highly successful in injecting himself into public affairs. He was twice elected to the Legislative Council and won the reserved seat of West Gazelle (Rabaul and environs), in 1964. Barrett was an indefatigable member, involving himself in every controversy and striving for place and power at every opportunity - the very prototype of an ambitious politician. But as well as these thrusting characteristics he was well-informed and a strong debater with a good nose for sensitive issues. His parliamentary ubiquity militated against him mustering much support from his fellow members. He lost his bid for re-election in 1968, being overcome ~~by what appeared to be a much weaker candidate, Ashton.~~ ^{one who}

One other elected Member deserves mention, not so much for his prominence in parliamentary affairs, but rather for the apprehension caused among some members by his death. He was Ugi Biritu, the member for Henganofi in the Eastern Highlands. It was an electorate of sparse development and Biritu confined himself to parochial matters. He died in March 1967, the second death among members, and there was a deal of concern that sorcery ~~was~~ ^{was} being directed at members in general. A good many members continued to maintain a firm belief in sorcery. Pita Simogen first raised the question

on the first occasion Mr Bloomfield died.... His was the first death in the House of Assembly, now Mr Ugi Biritu has died. Why? What is the reason for this?.... Was sorcery used against him? ~~4.3 2.~~

Downs did his best to reassure that, statistically, a few deaths from a variety of causes other than sorcery could be expected during the life of the House, but disquiet remained for some time thereafter.

Of the official members Gunther stood out, but with the exception of McCarthy, the rest of us were rather a faceless lot, standard sized bureaucrats diligently following the leader of the House. J.K. (Keith) McCarthy was the veteran of the official members, having spent all of his adult life in Papua New Guinea. He came as a Patrol Officer in 1927 and eventually became the head of his department (originally Native Affairs but later

renamed District Administration). As most of his earlier career had been spent in New Guinea he was particularly favoured by the New Guinea members, for he spoke with eloquence and wit in Pidgin and was familiar with the 'big men' of the past. He was a multi-talented man, a great raconteur, one who painted well in oils, and was an occasional contributor of cartoons to the local newspaper. He was the author of a successful book relating his exploits, Patrol Into Yesterday. To the best of my knowledge McCarthy was the only expatriate to carry the scar from an arrow wound, which occasionally led to some jibes about the 'Battle of Agincourt'. However, he came by it as a young patrol officer when he was ambushed by a group of Kukukuku's, aggressive little men who possibly owed their name to their mode of speech - in a manner similar to the origin of the word barbarian. McCarthy was particularly valuable in the House for his oratorical command of Pidgin. He was jealous of the status of his Department and a fierce defender of his officers in the field.

On the whole we ^{official members} were cautious and loyal public servants, despite the misgivings of our colleagues in Canberra. We felt irritation at the close surveillance of our parliamentary activities but by and large we did not disagree too much with the thrust of established policy except as it may have restricted the activities of our individual departments. Our differences were rather in the manner of execution rather than substance. In any case we kept any disagreements we may have had strictly within the club. We did not yet feel insecure. Most projected dates for self-government and independence ^{that} were well into the future; a consensus might have arrived at about 1980, though some with saleable professional qualifications were already looking at employment opportunities in Australia. Two official members left for Australian jobs during the course of the first House (Geoff Cannon and Noel Mason), and I brought my projected retirement date as ~~Director of Education forward from 1976 to 1971.~~

Pay and Allowances for Members of the first House of Assembly:

Elected Members: Basic Allowance \$A1900 p.a. plus cost of travel on parliamentary business. A per diem living allowance of \$A10.50 when living away from home on parliamentary business. Telephone and postal allowance \$A50. An unspecified amount for travel in the member's electorate.

elected

Under-Secretaries and Members of the Administrator's Council:

Basic Allowance \$A2600. \$A600 non-residential allowance to compensate for the need to make semi-permanent living arrangements in Port Moresby. Other allowances as above.

Official Members originally received \$300 p.a. but this was later withdrawn.

Travel and living allowances were paid at the standard public service rate. *Official Members were all Heads of Administration Departments and carried out their normal duties as well as their parliamentary responsibilities.*



The Second Constitutional Committee meets the Prime Minister.
L to R Walter Lussick, Les Johnson, Donatus Mola, Ebia Olewale,
Matthias Toliman, John Gorton, Paulus Arek, Matiabe Yuwi,
Tom Leahy, Michael Somare, Oala Oala Rarua, Sinake Giregire,
John Middleton, Tei Abal, Geoff Littler. 3.2.1970.

Chapter II

FOUNDATIONS

The first House of Assembly had its origins in British colonial practice, - first the establishment of a Council dominated by ^{expatriate} officials but with an increasing proportion of non-officials ^{also expatriate,} initially nominated and later also elected. This then developed into the election of a representative parliament preparatory to self-government and ultimate independence. It was a pattern familiar to Australians and reproduced pretty faithfully in Papua New Guinea.

Papua had its first Council, under Australian control, in 1905 with 6 officials and 3 nominated non-officials. New Guinea, perhaps as befitted a Mandated Territory, had to wait until 1933 when a council of 15 had a bare majority of 8 officials. But the first antecedent of a representative parliament for a united Papua New Guinea was the Council established by the Papua and New Guinea Act, introduced into the Australian parliament in February 1949. The Act provided for the administrative union of the Australian colony of Papua and the Trust Territory of New Guinea, henceforth to be known as the Territory of Papua and New Guinea. It also created a Legislative Council presided over by the Administrator and having 28 other members, 16 of whom were to be nominated officials. The remaining 12 were to represent various special groups or interests in Papua and New Guinea as follows:

- 3 elected non-official members;
- 3 non-official members representing Christian Missions;
- 3 non-official native members;
- 3 other non-official members.

All members other than elected members were to be appointed by the Governor-General on the nomination of the Administrator, while elected members were to be drawn from, and elected by, non-native adults of British nationality who had resided in the Territory for at least the preceding twelve months.

The Act also provided for an Executive Council which seemed unlikely to exercise much independent influence on the course of events as it consisted of the Administrator and nine Public Servants appointed by the Governor-General and was required to consider only such matters as placed before it by the Administrator, who was not obliged to act upon the advice tendered by his Council.

In so far as powers of the new Legislative Council were concerned it was competent to make Ordinances for the peace, order and good government of the Territory though these were subject to the assent of the Administrator and in specified cases were reserved for the Governor-General's assent. As a further insurance against unwarranted Council or Administrator initiatives the Governor-General could exercise the power of disallowance over all Ordinances. Given the composition of the Council the need to exercise the latter power seemed unlikely to arise with any frequency.

The first election for members to the new Legislative Council took place in 1951 and the Council formally began on the 26th November in the same year. Its elected members, representing respectively Papua, New Guinea Mainland and New Guinea Islands can hardly be said to have been elected by a wide franchise. Papua had 664 voters enrolled and New Guinea Mainland and New Guinea Islands respectively 537 and 496. Not much more than half of those enrolled exercised their democratic rights.

Among the categories of nominated members the balance between Papua, the New Guinea Mainland and the New Guinea Islands was maintained. For instance, of the indigenous members, one, Dickson, came from Milne Bay in Papua, Salin came from New Ireland, and the New Guinea Mainland's representative was Simogen from the Sepik. Several of the members of the first Council exercised a continuing influence on Papua New Guinea affairs over a long period of time and seven of them took their seats when the House of Assembly first met almost thirteen years later. Don Barrett, the compulsive politician, who was elected to represent the New Guinea Islands was back in 1964, Simogen Peta was there too, as were five

of the original official members, Gunther, Reeve, Watkins, McCarthy and Niall, though the last named had renounced his official status and became an elected member in 1964.

This progenitor of Papua New Guinea democracy did not seem to have in it seeds of growth or reform, for its constitutional make up remained unchanged until 1960. Not too much disturbed the political somnolence in the fifties except in matters directly affecting the expatriate community. The imposition of income tax in 1959 caused all three elected members to resign their seats.

During this period external pressures, though gentle ones, came from the triennial visiting missions despatched by the United Nations to report on Australia's administration of its Trust Territory of New Guinea. The membership of these missions was such that they were unlikely to be harsh critics, but they did reflect a changing world and new attitudes towards colonialism, currents of thought which largely passed Australia by. The 1953 Mission spoke with a muted voice:-

"with regard to political development in general the Mission believes that, if the present low level of political education is any indication, significant political development would take a very long time.... The Mission believes that the training in representative government is a task which should be prosecuted with all possible speed."¹

But in 1956 the Mission was a little more persistent and recommended immediate consideration to the nominating of additional New Guinea members to the Legislative Council. The Minister for Territories, Paul Hasluck, responded that, as yet, there were insufficient natives able to take an adequate part in the deliberations of the Council.

By 1959 world opinion had travelled far along the road to acceptance and implementation of the principle of self-determination, and the United Nations Visiting Mission of that year was rather more politely persistent than previously, stating in more categorical terms that 'the Mission believes that the Administration is unduly conservative in its views regarding the

qualifications that indigenous persons should have in order to serve on the Legislative Council'.²

But Australia continued to ignore complacently the world outside. P.M.C. Hasluck had taken the Territories portfolio in 1951 and devoted his very considerable energies and ability to putting into practice his firmly held views on colonial development Australian style. His suzerainty *from* lasted ~~from~~^{from} 1951 until the end of 1963 and was accompanied by similar terms of office for his two principal lieutenants in the implementation of policy, C.E. Lambert, as Secretary, Department of Territories, and D.M. Cleland as Administrator, Papua and New Guinea.³

However the changing world could not but affect Australian attitudes and despite Hasluck's apparent imperviousness to external pressure and his dedication to his own firm philosophy of sound broad based development he was not unconscious of the need for change nor unwilling to initiate it, though he was not about to be instructed in his duties by outsiders. In 1956 while discounting the possibility of a Territory-wide franchise for native people and alluding to the possible transition of local government councils to regional groupings and to federations of regional councils, he said that although a long period of tutelage would have to precede the inauguration of representative government, 'we need to keep the principle steadily in mind and work purposefully for its application'.⁴

But in 1960 the dam broke. The climate of world opinion had heated to such purpose that the gradualism espoused by Hasluck was clearly superseded. In 1957 Ghana had become independent, followed in rapid succession by almost all of the British and French African colonies. In 1960, in a speech in Accra, Harold MacMillan coined an historic phrase 'the wind of change is blowing right through Africa',⁵ though he had to repeat it in Capetown before it attracted international notice. These events even jolted the grooved minds of Australian politicians who had been quite unaccustomed to regarding themselves as colonialists. After all we held New Guinea in trust for the United Nations and Papuans were Australian

citizens, (albeit rather second class ones). In December 1960 the United Nations General Assembly passed Resolution 1514 which 'called for the independence of all colonial peoples' and in the following year set up a special committee⁶ to study the application of the resolution. Meanwhile the Australian Prime Minister R.G. Menzies had sniffed MacMillan's winds, and, in an oft-quoted statement, indicated a change of heart in respect of colonies, including Papua New Guinea:

"If in doubt you should go sooner, not later.
I belong to that school of thought myself now".⁷

On top of this came Indonesia's demand for West New Guinea and events soon indicated that early Australian bets on the Netherlands would have to be hedged. In 1962 the Netherlands agreed to hand over West New Guinea to a United Nations Temporary Authority, and Australians in Papua New Guinea noted, with some foreboding, that Indonesian maps now showed the island of New Guinea divided into Irian Barat (West Irian) and Irian Timor (East Irian). Dutch efforts, prior to this, to accelerate political development in West New Guinea, and the possibility of an Indonesian take-over, spurred us to efforts to make our side of the border greener. Mostly the border area was either lowland swamp or precipitous mountains, sparsely inhabited by small groups of people largely untouched by the changes which had taken place in the more accessible parts of the country. McCarthy⁸ and I were despatched to begin a crash programme to set up patrol posts and schools on inhospitable sites along the border. A posting to these locations was regarded by the unfortunate officers as the equivalent of a sentence to Siberia.

But already in 1960 Hasluck had decided that a review of the representative principle in Papua New Guinea should proceed at once. He visited the Territory in July of 1960 to discuss proposals for the reform of the Legislative Council with representatives of all sections of the community. In a statement in Port Moresby at that time he said -

"The main decision has been one of timetable. My own opinion was that we had progressed far enough to attempt

reforms two or three years ago. However I gave priority to other items of major legislation... "

"Prospective reform of the Legislative Council has become mixed up with talk about self-government. These reforms are but one step in that direction... " ⁹

At any rate whatever the impact of external or internal pressures Hasluck was satisfied that it was time for change. The fourth Legislative Council, meeting first on October 17th 1960, knew that its life was to be short as proposals for its reform had already been framed, discussed and accepted. On September 22nd Hasluck had introduced legislation to amend the Papua and New Guinea Act into the Australian House of Representatives. In doing so he indicated that it was intended that the Legislative Council should become progressively the representative organ and the law making body of the Territory.

The reforms proposed were extensive but did not materially alter the balance of power. The principal features were that the Administration surrendered its official majority and that some Papua New Guineans were now to be elected by an indirect process. In brief the provisions were:

- (1) An increase in the size of the Council to 37, (including the Administrator as Chairman), of whom 14 were to be nominated officials, 12 elected and 10 nominated non-officials;
- (2) Electorates were to be increased to 6, each of which would elect one European under the same British subject franchise as previously and one indigene by the electoral college system, the collegians being drawn from Local Government Councils and other identifiable groups.
- (3) The nomination of 10 non-officials was subject to a Ministerial direction that at least five of these should be indigenous and that not less than five of the ten should be from the Trust Territory of New Guinea.

Indigenous representation was thus raised to eleven.

The new arrangements also changed the composition of the Executive

Council, to be renamed the Administrator's Council, and to consist of the Administrator, three official members of the Legislative Council and three non-officials at least two of whom were to be elected. At least one of the elected members was to be indigenous.

In regard to the Administrator's Council Hasluck set out his intentions in his speech introducing the amending Bill:

The establishment of [the Administrator's Council] will directly associate the Legislative Council with the tasks of Administration, for only Legislative Councillors can be members of the Administrative Council and through membership of the elected members of the Council it will introduce the first measure of representative government to the Territory".¹⁰

In debating the Bills introduced into Papua New Guinea's fourth Council to provide complementary legislation to bring about the changes, members exchanged self-congratulatory speeches, eulogising their progressive approach towards parliamentary government. The expatriate non-officials saw the prospect of a large expansion of their influence on government as they confidently expected that the indigenous members would be pliable enough to ensure them a majority. On the other hand, it was more accurately anticipated in Administration circles that an unofficial majority would not seriously affect control of Council business as it was expected that sufficient nominated members would support the Administration to maintain a majority on most issues. Not surprisingly this latter expectation was borne out, while also Papua New Guinea members generally had a greater community of interest with the Administration than with elected Europeans.

The reconstituted Council met for the first time on April 10th 1961 and heard from the ^{Acting} Governor-General, ~~now~~ Sir Dallas Brooks, that further change was contemplated:

"Nevertheless my advisers have it in their own mind that, after experience of our full term of the newly constituted Council, and after a second general election - that is to say perhaps five years from now - this Council and the Australian parliament might be asked to consider what the

next step forward should be. My advisers also have it in mind, that as soon as the people of the Territory themselves feel ready for the change they should move to a system of elections, on a common roll".¹¹

The impetus for change came sooner than anticipated and from an unexpected source. Lloyd Hurrell, an Australian coffee grower elected to represent the New Guinea Mainland, had been one discordant voice in the debate on the legislation to bring about the constitutional changes. He promised that his efforts would be directed toward 'curbing the headlong rush to superficial political and social development'. On future independence he thought that 'if it is granted during this century it will be too early'. However when re-elected to the 1961 Council he suffered conversion on the road to Port Moresby. He later explained how he came to see the light:

"I realised the inadequacy of the present Council. I wanted the development and reconstitution to get away from Canberra's lead and produce something that would force the Administration to earn the support of the Council in legislation".¹²

At any rate six months after his vow to obstruct political development he was saying in the new Council:

"shortly we must certainly consider methods of introducing the common roll".

In June he was talking in a matter of fact fashion about self-government and in September he gave notice that he intended to propose the establishment of a committee to study the constitution of the Legislative Council. In so doing he specifically mentioned universal franchise and a common roll. In March 1962 on Hurrell's motion a Committee was set up from whose recommendations was to spring the first House of Assembly in 1964.

The deliberations and recommendations of the Legislative Council Committee became entangled with those of the United Nations Visiting Mission of 1962 led by Sir Hugh Foot, but it is quite clear that both the Minister for External Territories and the elected members of the

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Council were moving with unexpected rapidity towards a representative parliament elected from a common roll. To understand the relativity of the recommendations of the Mission and of the committee one must know a little more about how Missions operate, though indeed the leadership of the 1962 Visiting Mission was atypical.

United Nations Visiting Missions customarily consisted of four representatives drawn from the nations of the Trusteeship Council, balanced so that, though a critical report might be produced, a hostile one was out of the question. The 1962 Mission contained representatives from the United Kingdom, Bolivia, India and the United States of America. Members were usually totally unfamiliar with New Guinea and were subjected to a whirlwind tour of the country with a tedious succession of public meetings mostly conducted in 'Pidgin', a language they did not understand, with often rudimentary interpretation.

In these circumstances the supporting staff from the United Nations Secretariat carried the burden of preparing a report to bear the names of the Trusteeship Council representatives that would be acceptable to the full Council. In general this required something mildly critical and mildly constructive with which the administering power could live. The supporting Secretariat thus had their antennae extended to test the current thoughts and opinions of the administering authority with a view to perhaps anticipating the trend of events. Administration representatives accompanying the Mission were not above some collusion, and it was not surprising that Mission recommendations often either narrowly preceded or succeeded Administration reforms. An able Principal Secretary to a Mission was thus able to produce for his members material that was sufficiently progressive but was unlikely to outrage the Administering Authority. One such Principal Secretary was James Lewis, who tended the 1962 Mission and who had been Assistant Secretary to the previous one in 1959. He also served the 1968 Mission.

The leader of the 1962 Mission, Sir Hugh Foot (later Lord Caradon),

was something of an exception to those who had previously led these forays into New Guinea. Whether from conviction or from other personal motives, he was quite determined to press the Administering Authority to greater progress. The Foot Mission was the only one, either before or since, which made positive, firm and constructive proposals on matters of magnitude and then attempted to impose a timetable for their accomplishment. It is evident that these recommendations had a significant effect on Papua New Guinea development, not so much in changing the nature of events but in precipitating them at an earlier date.

In brief the Foot Mission indicated orally both in Papua New Guinea and in Canberra at the conclusion of its Mission in mid-May 1962 that it would recommend:

1. A full economic survey by the World Bank;
2. A new programme of University and higher education;
3. Immediate preparations for the election of a representative parliament.

After outlining the reasons for these recommendations in the Report presented in June 1962 the Mission concluded:

"That is why we propose that the target for implementation of the three plans which we have advocated should be set no later than 31st December, 1963".¹³

In conversation with me at this time Foot confided that he thought it necessary to give the Administering Authority 'a bit of a push', but Hasluck in June told me that he would not be deflected by United Nations pressure from what he considered a proper timetable for desirable reforms.

The Mission took its recommendations to more specific detail, suggesting a "House of Representatives" consisting of about 100 members, each electorate comprising about 20,000 people. There should be no nominated members but there was room for say five officials and an official Speaker to replace the Administrator. A Ministerial system was to emerge from the newly constituted parliament but not immediately.

The Visiting Mission got few bouquets from the non-official members

of the Legislative Council. Fairfax Ross commented acidly:

"On reflection some may regret that Sir Hugh Foot, the fleeting prophet and critic who swept through our administration policies like a hurricane, did not depart from the international scene before rather than after his brief visit to this country".¹⁴

It will be noted that the Hurrell Committee was set up in March of 1962, before the Mission had arrived in New Guinea, but it was not to meet until after the Mission's Report was public. Gunther in a minute to the Administrator traversed attitudes he claimed to have elucidated from native informants in and around Rabaul. Not unexpectedly these were apparently all unfavourable towards the Mission's recommendations, or as he put it "almost unanimously not acceptable". Gunther's minute also records proposals he himself made at these meetings with native groups which he claimed "received ready acceptance". The proposals were:

- (1) That the Council be increased in number to 50 or 60 members;
- (2) That 30 or 40 of the members should be natives elected from single member constituencies and from a common roll;
- (3) That there should be 12 elected European members from the same common roll;
- (4) That there should be 8 official members;
- (5) That it should be established in 1964.

Rather ingenuously Gunther concluded that he was certain that the Select Committee would have reached the same conclusions, as indeed it did somewhat later.

Meanwhile the Australian Cabinet had also discussed the Foot recommendations and decided to go along with their general tenor as they differed from what was now established Australian policy only in degree and in timing. All that remained was for the Select Committee to provide some of the finer print to fill out the reforms.

The Committee consisted of Hurrell, supported by Gunther and

Carter from official ranks, and Downs from among the elected Europeans. The elected Papua New Guinean Members were, Guise and Sigob, and ToBaining was added later. Gunther was elected Chairman. Gunther, Downs and Guise were also members of the reconstituted Administrator's Council. All three exercised a strong influence over political developments of the sixties. Guise was by far the most articulate indigenous member and was generally looked to for the provision of a national Papua New Guinean viewpoint: for once Downs and Gunther had little occasion to disagree.

The terms of reference of the Committee were to ascertain:

- (a) the need for a change in the present constitution of the Council;
- (b) if there is a need for change, then what changes should be made;
- (c) whether there should be special provision for representation of racial or other groups; and
- (d) when should such changes, if any, take place.

The Committee set out in September 1962 with great despatch to fulfil its task and in a breathlessly short space of time conducted over a hundred interviews and took evidence from some four hundred individuals. Right on time on the 15th October 1962 the Committee presented its first interim report to the Council.¹⁵ It recommended:

- (1) There should be a change in the composition of the Council in 1964;
- (2) There should be a President and ten official Members together with 44 Members elected from a Common Roll;
- (3) In addition there should be ten non-indigenous persons elected from the Common Roll as Members from reserved electorates, but this provision should be reviewed before any election in 1967;
- (4) Voting should be voluntary, preferential and on an individual basis from a Common Roll comprising all adult inhabitants of the controlled areas within the Territory without regard to any educational or property qualifications but including a residential requirement of twelve months.

The Report also recommended the appointment of parliamentary Under-

Secretaries to major Departments to provide a training ground for future responsible government.

It is always difficult to say to what extent the findings of Select Committees are influenced by the views expressed at public meetings and by evidence presented either orally or in writing. In my experience, all Committees, or their individual members, are strongly disposed to take note of views which reinforce their own and to encourage the expression of conforming opinion. The Gunther/Hurrell Committee was no exception. It confirmed Gunther's previously expressed views, which were pretty similar to those Hurrell himself had enunciated in the Legislative Council.

The contentious issues arising from the report were the nature and extent of non-indigenous membership; the actual numbers of electorates open to all, and preferential voting. The Council debated the Report, with criticism from expatriate members focussing on what they regarded as inadequate elected expatriate representation, but ultimately the Council approved the Report and recommended that it be forwarded for consideration by the Commonwealth Government.

The Minister for Territories was quick to endorse the Report. In the House of Representatives on October 23rd 1962 - seven days after the Legislative Council had adopted the Report - he took up one of the less prominently featured recommendations and said:

"We want to make the Legislative Council not only a gathering of representatives but an effective part of the structure of government. Therefore in the new Legislative Council some of the elected Members will be asked to accept office as Under-Secretaries to be attached to each of the main Departments and to understudy the Official Members. The Government will also consider strengthening the Administrator's Council in which some of the elected Members are already associated with the Executive".

The Legislative Council Committee continued to meet to refine and develop its recommendations. The duration of each elected parliament was discussed and Guise was persuaded to agree to four year terms of

office instead of the three he had earlier favoured. Guise's view was also sought as to whether a non-indigenous person would be eligible to nominate for a non-reserved, or open, seat, - Guise thought that he should be able to if he wished, and the Committee so resolved.

The Committee then presented its Second Interim Report to the Council on 27th February 1963. It set out electorate boundaries, recommended that the Legislative Council be renamed the House of Assembly, and decided that the Administrator should not preside over the House of Assembly and that a Speaker should be elected from among the Members, thus reducing total membership to 64. The Report also recommended that voting should be secret but that assisted voting was permissible and that elections for each Assembly should be held every four years. The Council accepted the recommendations without significant debate.

Examination by the Australian Government produced some minor changes but the Bill amending the Papua New Guinea Act went to the Australian House of Representatives on May 7th 1963 substantially unchanged from the recommendations of the Committee. Hasluck opened debate and some excerpts from his speech may indicate the policies being pursued:

"It is our firm intention to defend the freedom of choice and respect the wishes of those dependent on us.... It is true that there is a power for the disallowance of the Ordinances made by the Territory legislature but that is a negative provision and does not help in the practical problem of getting the financial estimates passed or Government bills enacted.... We meet this problem... by facing up to the political reality that in future the appointed minority of Official Members in the legislature will have to obtain the support of a significant proportion of the elected Members".¹⁶

It was the numbers game that had aroused some anxiety in the then Prime Minister's breast, (R.G. Menzies), who had asked Gunther if he was confident that he could manage the newly constituted House. Gunther assured him that he could.

Hasluck further said:

"We are moving with steady purpose and without hesitation or delay to bring self-government to the people of Papua New Guinea".

But this he qualified later in his speech:

"There is a tendency in some quarters to proceed from the assumption that there is a demand for more speed to the conclusion that we should therefore fix 1970 or some other date for self-government. That seems to us to be an unrealistic approach to a complex task and the Government rejects it. The end of a journey is not only a matter of going faster but of arriving safely".

Hasluck also expressed the widely held view that all of the 44 Members elected from open electorates would be indigenous.

Given the bipartisan political approach to Papua New Guinea affairs, the Opposition could only zero in on the details of the Bill but even so a wide ranging and constructive debate ensued with the Labor Party concentrating their proposals on the democratisation of the Papua New Guinea Government. A large number of amendments were proposed and some of the minor ones were accepted but the principal proposals were:

- (a) Increase open seats to 88;
- (b) Eliminate Official Members;
- (c) The Administrator's Council of 10 should all be elected Members;

all of which were defeated.

In winding up Hasluck spoke rather defensively of the Administrator's Council:

"The Deputy Leader of the Opposition (Whitlam) seemed to me to be suggesting that the Administrator's Council had limited functions.... I certainly hope that in the development of this enlarged Administrator's Council it will become the practice much more frequently than it has been in the past working of the Council for matters of policy to be brought before that body for discussion and advice."

It was a hope that had rather modest realisation, at least until 1967.

Cleland tended to regard Council meetings as a routine chore to be

disposed of as quickly as possible.

After the passage of the amended Papua New Guinea Act, complementary legislation was required from the Legislative Council now in its final months of office. The Bill to establish Parliamentary Under-Secretaries attracted more than average attention, not only because it could be a timid step towards responsible government but also because of suspicion of the Administration's motives and that it was a device to ensure a government majority.

Although there had been, in the past, occasions when the Administration could not be assured of a majority in the Council, the numbers were so balanced that only the unlikely combination of all elected Members and more than half of the nominated Members could produce a non-government majority. As a general tendency, nominated Papua New Guinean Members supported the Government and only on one major issue did all of them, both elected and nominated, defect. As might be expected, this was a land matter. The Land Tenure Conversion Bill introduced in September 1962 provided for the conversion of customary held land to individual title. It was clear that the Bill would not pass without substantial amendments to afford a greater degree of protection for the rights of customary owners. After many adjournments these amendments were made and the Bill finally passed a year later. Incidentally, the amendments made conversion an intricate, difficult and protracted process so that in a large measure the purposes of the Bill were defeated.

The proposed membership of the House of Assembly presented a different sort of numbers problem. As Official Membership was but 10 in 64 the support of at least 22 other Members was required for a majority, (the Speaker only voted when the numbers on the floor of the House were tied). The 44 open electorates were thus the key to control of the House as past practice indicated that expatriate members tended to operate like an opposition. It was widely assumed that all open electorates would be won by indigenous candidates, though this expectation was not borne out

by subsequent events.

Given this arithmetic, critics of the Administration immediately assumed that the proposal to appoint parliamentary Under-Secretaries was a device to ensure bloc support of a group of elected Members which in combination with Official Members and a few fellow travellers would provide consistent majorities; Downs, for instance, speaking to the Under-Secretaries Bill said:

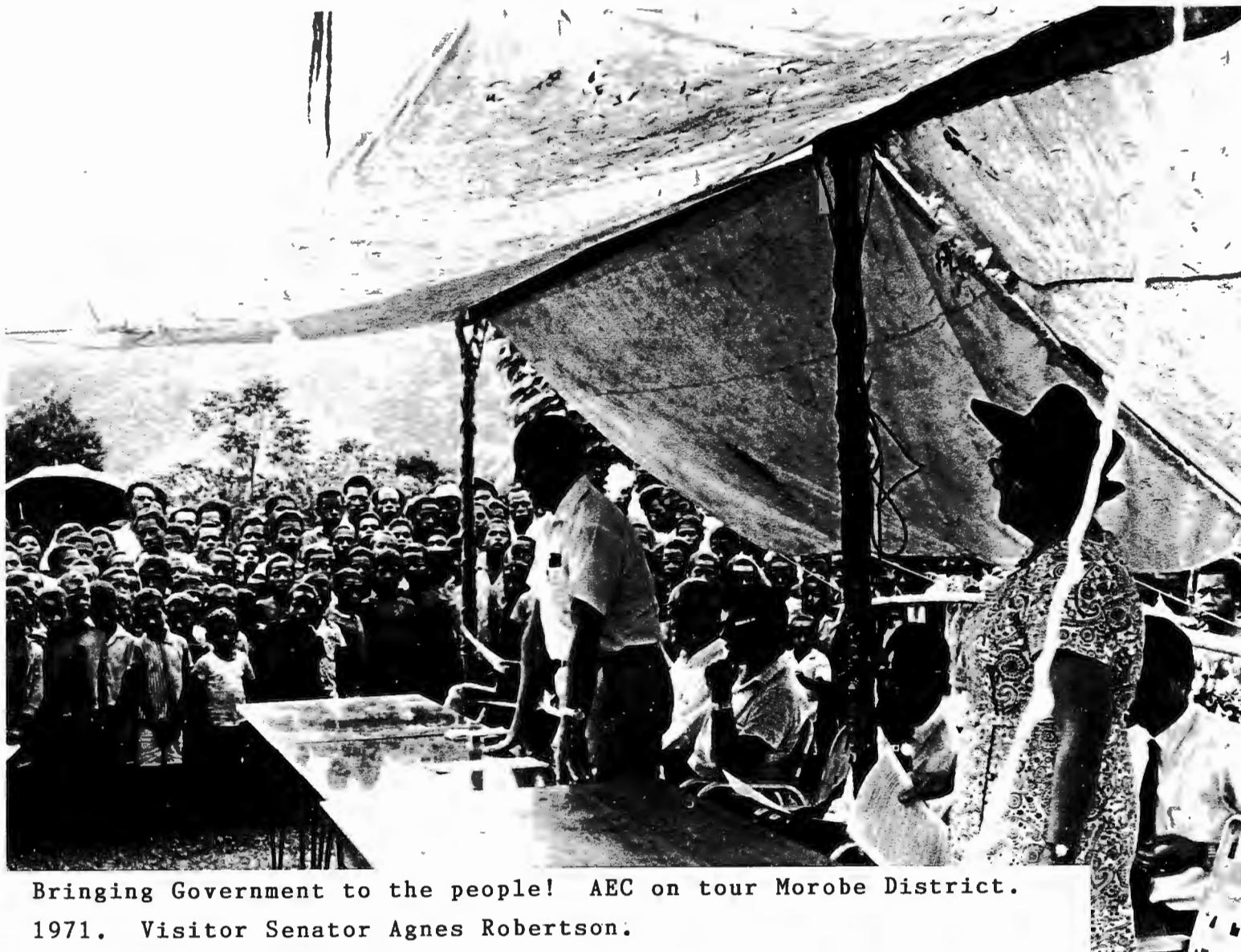
"I would not like to have it thought that this proposal is another way of getting an official majority.... I believe the number of Under-Secretaries should be limited."¹⁷

Under pressure of criticism the Bill was amended to limit the number of Under-Secretaries to 15 though this did not satisfy all the critics.

Equally pertinent was Fairfax Ross's comment on the Bill:

"I must say it is one of the most delightfully vague pieces of legislation that this Council has ever been asked to approve."¹⁸

The final session of the last Legislative Council concluded on 14th November 1963 with mutual expressions of esteem from Members. Papua New Guinea began gearing up for its first national election on a common roll and the beginning of its first parliament.



Bringing Government to the people! AEC on tour Morobe District.
1971. Visitor Senator Agnes Robertson.



Tei Abal and experimental rice plants in Markham Valley.



CHAPTER II

THE FIRST MEETING

The story of the preparation for the elections, detailed studies of particular electorates and an analysis of the results is dealt with very comprehensively in the ANU publication, The Papua-New Guinea Elections 1964.¹

Suffice to say that there was a very keen interest in the whole operation and, despite some initial timidity, a very high turnout of voters, although this may be due rather more to zeal on the part of those field officers responsible for the conduct of the elections, keen to ensure that their particular zone of influence was not lacking in its appreciation of democracy. (Enrolment was compulsory but voting optional). There was some criticism of the use of a preferential system of voting, though the exercising of preferences was optional. In my view most voters quite understood the placing of candidates in order of preference though they were far less clear on what had happened when the allocation of preferences produced a winner for someone who had not led on the primary count. Of the 41 seats where preferences were distributed five candidates came from behind to win. There was also doubt as to whether the assisted vote, or whisper vote, would lead to abuses by polling clerks, but there was no evidence of this in 1964, - or in the 1968 elections either. (Subsequently there was less need for it because candidates photographs appeared on ballot papers.

To the surprise of most, six Australians won open seats. Three of these were Native Affairs officers who had served in the electorates for which they nominated, two of them, Holloway and Pople, resigning from the Public Service shortly before the elections. The others were well known in the areas where they worked, had the advantage of having much greater mobility than their opponents, and a better understanding of the use of preferences in the electoral system. One of these, Bloomfield, died in office and was replaced by a patrol officer from that area who resigned from the Public Service to contest the seat. (Voutas).

Of those elected for open electorates only three, Guise, Simogen and Brokam had had previous Legislative Council experience, although many were

members of Local Government Councils. Four members for reserved electorates, Stuntz, Downs, Niall and Barratt had served in the Legislative Council, the first three having at one time been administration officers. Niall had been an official member throughout the post-war Council period and had retired from his position as District Commissioner for the Morobe District to be elected unopposed to the North Markham reserved seat, which boundaries ^{comprehended} ~~coincided~~ with the District he had managed. Seven of the ten official members had been members of the Legislative Council, four of them since 1951. (Gunther, Reeve, Watkins and McCarthy).

All official members except the two Assistant Administrators were heads of Departments and only one, McCarthy, could claim complete proficiency in Pidgin, the only common language of most of the members. The Administration was criticised for its failure to appoint experienced field officers as Official Members to facilitate better mutual understanding between English speaking officials and Pidgin speakers, as had been the practice in the Legislative Council. It might be noted that when, in 1968, experienced field officers were appointed, the Administration was criticised for so doing. The reasons in 1964 were obvious enough. The principal role, previously taken by field officers, was that of contact with the indigenous members, and this was now to be the task of Under Secretaries. Language was not expected to be a problem in the House of Assembly itself as the simultaneous translation service was expected to cope adequately. Although fourteen Papua New Guinean members claimed to speak and understand English, there were in fact only eleven with any degree of competence. With the possible exception of Rarupu, Tabua and Tiaba, all Papua New Guinean members could get along in Pidgin. Tiaba was the only member who neither spoke nor understood any of the three languages.

Welding this disparate body of men into an effective parliament was a task to daunt the boldest. Possibly twenty of the members were almost totally illiterate, and many of them had little or no knowledge of the world outside.

The previous experience of very many members had been confined within the

boundaries of village and district. To attempt to remedy some of the deficiencies in understanding, and to provide an opportunity for members to get to know one another before the first formal meeting of the House, a seminar was arranged for May. It took place at a boys' residential high school at Sogeri - about 30 kilometres from Port Moresby.

The seminar has been described, in somewhat euphoric detail, by David Betteson in The Papua New Guinean Elections 1964, ~~previously cited, and needs little further elaboration here~~. The seminar had a number of objectives. It aimed to introduce members to parliamentary forms and procedures, to familiarise them with the processes of law making and to make prior arrangements of an administrative nature so that the opening days of the first meeting would proceed without hitches. Minor needs were for the purchase of clothing suitable to the new status of members. Some wore shoes for the first time and many had never previously owned a pair of long trousers. However, the most important incidental result was the familiarisation of members with each other and the early recognition of some with obvious leadership qualities. The one who comes most readily to my mind is Tei Abal, the member for Wabag, who despite his restricted background, soon revealed a national outlook and an ability to adapt to new circumstances.

A large part of seminar time was taken up with what might be termed 'instruction' - trying to teach members how to operate the complex system, and procedures for presenting, debating and passing laws. The system in use had been adopted by the first post-war council in 1951 and followed unquestioningly the standard Westminster procedures. In fact members were pleased and proud to be participating in these time-honoured customs and manipulating apparently complex procedures. Familiarisation with these rites was a bit like initiation ceremonies for an exclusive society. The inauguration of the House of Assembly in 1964 could have provided a new departure point based on the knowledge and experience of the largely unlettered indigenous majority, rather than attempting to introduce them to the arcane procedures of Westminster. That the opportunity

was not taken, certainly restricted Papua New Guinean participation in the early years of the House and ten years later some veteran members had not yet managed to master the mysterious parliamentary arts. The efforts to induct them at Sogeri were a good deal less than successful.

Other matters of moment were also discussed - what dress was appropriate for legislators, who should be Speaker of the House, which members seemed likely to have the qualities needed for positions of Under-Secretary, which for membership of the Administrators' Council. For some it was also an introduction to protein rich diets and many highland members, accustomed to massive intakes of sweet potato, found the lack of bulk unsatisfying. Copious intakes of unfamiliar food had disastrous effects on some members intestinal tracts. The seminar proceeded happily enough and the members went home armed with status and some fragmentary knowledge of what they were to be about and awaited the formal opening.

Things had proceeded with such speed that insufficient time and thought had been given to designing efficient systems to make the new parliament work. I have mentioned above, the adoption of unfamiliar and complex procedures which confused members and inhibited their participation in the affairs of the nation. An obvious starting point would have been the procedures used in Local Government Councils. Twenty-one of the 38 native members had Local Government Council experience and no less than 12 of these were or had been Presidents or Vice-Presidents of Councils. The House could have been developed from this base. A law is no less soundly based because the procedures used to arrive at it are simple: likewise House Standing Orders. These were taken largely from those for the Australian House of Representatives devised for a totally different membership and for completely different circumstances from those pertaining in the House of Assembly. There is no doubt that simpler rules of procedures and for decorous behaviour could have been worked out which would have caused less puzzlement and a greater degree of participation in the work of the House. Some expatriate members delighted in using these parliamentary forms and in referring to obscure precedents discussed learnedly

in May's 'Parliamentary Practices'. The principal offender, - if it is an offence, - was Walter Watkins, Secretary for Law, who used his parliamentary erudition, acquired as a member of the Legislative Council since 1951, on numerous occasions. Once when a private member's Bill was about to be defeated he moved that it be read six months hence - a practice allegedly derived from Westminster but having no meaning, except total confusion - to Papua New Guineans. John Gunther, too, was a convinced adherent to the practices of the Mother of Parliaments and it is perhaps primarily his responsibility that simplified forms and practices were not introduced or even attempted. In his defence he said that

It has been said by some of our critics that we were in error and showed an unnecessary conservatism in introducing Standing Orders based on the Australian House of Representatives Standing Orders which themselves are based on the House of Commons. These Standing Orders were devised in the House of Commons two hundred years ago when the literacy rate of the people of England was probably not much greater than the current literacy rate in this Territory.

One would have to comment that the literacy rate in the Commons would have been a good deal higher than ^{that} in the House of Assembly. This responsibility is one borne also by successive senior official Members, including myself, who never found the time nor the impetus to review and reform the system. Papua New Guinea went into independence carrying with it this Westminster legacy.

Language was another problem of greater proportions than had been anticipated, as the assumption that a simultaneous translation service would surmount most of the difficulties was soon disproved. Originally it had been planned to recruit and train indigenous interpreters, but even when these were available both their general knowledge background and their language competence was inadequate for the difficult task of translating complex ideas and intricate speech nuances. There was a totally inadequate exchange of ideas in House speeches between English and Pidgin speakers. Some relief was obtained when well educated and experienced Australian officers were drafted for the task. Pidgin is less well adapted to the expression of abstract thought than English, or rather some circumlocution is usually necessary, and sometimes there were

some rather free interpretations of speeches made in Pidgin. Inevitably the use of some of these men, in this capacity, aroused the criticism that they were using their positions to put words in the mouths of speakers which advanced their own ideologies. I think that the worst that can be said was that some critical speeches by Papua New Guinean members got a rather more dramatic rendering in translation than was warranted, and likewise, occasionally a translation into Pidgin gained emphasis from the interpreter's own prejudices.

As these experienced officers were withdrawn from the translation service the quality deteriorated sharply but perhaps this had the useful effect of compelling more and more members to speak in the lingua franca of the House, Pidgin. This occasionally resulted in some unusual linguistic combinations as when Paulus Arek allegedly speaking in Pidgin said, 'emi olsem putim cart before the horse.'² Lepani Watson was another speaker noted for his use of a language indulgently called Lapanese by his colleagues.

As far as written material was concerned the objective was to provide summaries in all three languages of House usage, but this task proved quite beyond the resources of the translation service. Even with important reports there was usually a long delay before Pidgin translations were available and quite often a Motu rendering was not produced at all. It proved impossible to produce Bills in a language other than English, though Joe Lynch the Legislative Draftsman made a bold attempt. He first tried to condense the essence of the Bill into everyday English and then equate the English to accepted Pidgin orthography, but the magnitude of the work required was far beyond the slender resources available in Papua New Guinea. The prospect, too, of legal argument before the High Court of Australia on the interpretation of words and phrases in laws produced in both English and Pidgin was daunting to say the least.

Members' / One of the features of parliamentary life anywhere is the inexorable flood of printed material flowing across Member's desks. Even in a Parliament composed of highly literate members the volume takes some coping with. It is difficult to imagine the feeling of Members from a non-literate society when

faced with such a mass of totally incomprehensible material, some of which is the subject for the debates they listen to, in an attempt to understand what is going on.

I sometimes wonder why we official members were content to leave things as they were and I suppose the principal but unacknowledged reason was that it reinforced our own minority position and helped us to keep control of a House in which the Australian Government, the responsible authority, had only ten representatives out of sixty-four.

The House of Assembly was in fact the possessor of very substantial powers. It had powers of initiation which, it is true, were strictly circumscribed in that any legislation could be disallowed by exercise of powers provided for in Papua New Guinea Act, but even so the use of veto powers would need to be used sparingly, - as indeed it was. On the other side of the coin the House had unlimited obstructive powers. If the House refused to approve the Annual Appropriations, for example, there was nothing to be done about it but try again or amend it to meet the conditions the House might choose to impose. The Papua and New Guinea Act, as amended in 1963, had created an institution with potentially formidable powers. That they were powers which were never used, even to a modest degree, is a circumstance I will discuss later.

The first House of Assembly met on Monday, 8 June, 1964 and as first business elected H.C. Niall as Speaker. Niall, an Australian, had served in New Guinea all of his adult life and as noted earlier, had retired from the Administration service as District Commissioner Morobe District to context the election. The seminar conducted in the previous month had arrived at the conclusion that only two men in the House of Assembly possessed the requisite qualifications, experience and status to satisfy the exacting requirements for Speaker. Obviously the Speaker would need to be experienced in parliamentary procedures, he would need to be a man whom members would respect and obey, and one who would not have too many political axes of his own to grind.

Guise was the only indigenous member who might have been suitable but

he had a political career in mind which could not be pursued from the Speaker's chair, though he proved a most competent Speaker for the second House of Assembly. McCarthy and Niall it was decided after lengthy discussions, in small groups and large, fulfilled the requirements. They had commenced service in New Guinea at the same time (in fact, arrived on the same boat), and their careers had been closely parallel until McCarthy had been appointed Head of the Department of Native Affairs, the position he held when he was nominated as an official member of the House. Elected members showed a strong preference for McCarthy as Speaker, but, as an official Member, he was subject to direction by the Administrator who very properly thought that as the Government's decision had been to reject an officially appointed Speaker, it was hardly appropriate to permit an official to be elected to the post. McCarthy was disconsolate. He had thought to cap his career with this final distinction. He was not too discouraging to those members who were prepared to persist in representations to the Administrator on his behalf. The Administrator was firm and so it was that Niall was elected to the position of Speaker. Barrett and Guise, his nominators, then observed Westminster tradition by 'dragging' a rather compliant Speaker to the Chair. As a consolation prize, and by agreement, McCarthy became Chairman of Committees and Deputy Speaker.

At the earliest opportunity during the ensuing week the Speaker requested the views of the House as to whether it desired him to wear a wig as indication of office and so plainly indicated that he wished to do so that an indulgent House, not averse to a bit of display, signified that it did so wish. The first House of Assembly began the long road to democratic responsibility with 63 members stuffed uncomfortably into suits and ties and shoes, many of them for the first time, presided over by a begowned and bewigged Speaker with a clerk of the House also gowned and wigged.

Not inappropriately in the circumstances the Australian Government had presented to the House a Mace as the traditional symbol of the power of Parliament and a few days later a Port Moresby citizen was moved to present a manuscript

copy of the Standing Orders of the House of Lords believed to be from the library of George III. In moving a vote of thanks Gunther said

So early in its history this House has been presented with two valuable gifts. Firstly it was presented with the symbol of British Parliamentary tradition - the Mace - and now ... we have been given this very practical example of how one of the Estates of the Realm conducted its parliamentary procedures. 3

The two gifts symbolised a commitment to parliamentary practices unsuited to the experience of the majority of members and militating against effective participation for many in the business of government.

With the Speaker installed, the Governor-General, Lord d'Lisle, opened the House with a speech indicating the shape of things to come by dwelling upon the economic developments to be embarked upon. The Minister for External Territories, C.E. Barnes, spoke prophetically when he said

I do not promise that every action I take in the exercise of my responsibilities in relation to Papua New Guinea will please everyone in the Territory but I will say that my actions will be guided by a sincere desire to do everything I can that will best further the progress and prosperity of the Territory. 4

After the formalities were over the Administrator, Sir Donald Cleland, announced membership of the Administrator's Council, formally appointed by the Minister, and the names of those selected to be Under-Secretaries - appointed by the Administrator. In the Administrator's Council were official members, Gunther, Reeve, and McCarthy, and elected members Guise, Brokam, Toliman, Tabua, Zurecnuoc, Downs and Stuntz. The above five Papua New Guineans plus Lapun, Simogen, Abe, Eupu and Giregiva were the Under-Secretaries.

The first House of Assembly was launched and the member most eager to demonstrate his command of the situation was Barrett who, at the first available opportunity (on the third day), took advantage of Standing Orders to initiate a debate on urban unemployment. He was also the first member to put questions on the Notice Paper, having the first six answered on the fourth day, though out-numbered by Guise who followed him with no less than 18. Probably to Barrett's chagrin, the first question in the House was asked by Holloway on the second day who beat the system by asking a question without notice of his

previous boss, J.K. McCarthy.

v Also in the first House ^{Givegire} ~~Gire-Gire~~ made the first of many speeches about economic development, Lapun likewise about the needs of Bougainville and Tei Abal made his first contribution indicating his national outlook even at this early stage. 'Now that the members of this House have come together, the first thing that we should try to do is to unite.'

Much of the business of the House passed over the heads of most members but there was lively participation in a debate initiated by Brokam critical of the Johnson Cargo Cult in New Ireland. Cults were endemic in Papua New Guinea. Essentially they are quasi religious movements where a messianic leader preaches beliefs and actions which will deliver copious quantities of goods, or cargo. The Johnson cult was an expression of dissatisfaction with the Administration over the inadequate resources devoted to the development of the district of New Ireland and was concentrated principally in the island of New Hanover. A substantial sum of money had been collected from unsophisticated villagers to buy the U.S. President, Johnson, in short an attempt at secession from Australian Administration to accession to the U.S.A., whose citizens were remembered from their prodigality during the war years. In the elections about half of the New Hanover population of seven thousand said emphatically that they wanted to vote for President Johnson of America. In the time allotted for the debate there were 22 speakers, 16 of them Papua New Guinean members. Two of those decrying the evils of cargo cults were Paliu Maloat, a noted cult leader on Manus in earlier days, and Koriām Urekit who even at that time was an influential cult leader in New Britain.

The first meeting lasted for six sitting days and in that time each elected member but one ⁵ made his maiden speech, mostly about the development needs of his electorate. Everybody left with some sense of satisfaction. The first meeting had concluded without anything untoward taking place. Nothing too contenious had been raised but expatriate elected members had

got in some sharp blows against the Administration. Papua New Guinean members had brought to notice the deficiencies in their electorates and the official members had managed to keep out of serious trouble. We felt that democracy had been fairly launched.

CHAPTER III

Mafes
 1. Ed. Redison, Hughes, van der Veer; ANU Canberra 1965

2. Arek was speaking in the second House of Assembly.

3. HAD, Vol.I, No.1, p.65.

4. Ibid., p.7.

5. Makaim Mo, member for Lumi, a remote area in the West Sepik district.

He broke his duck during the second meeting of the House seeking the establishment of a Local Government Council in his area.

CHAPTER IV

THE HOUSE AT WORK

The House day began with prayers and then petitions. Petitions were rare, the only one of substance that I can recall was presented by Toliman on behalf of some of his electors, praying for 'A full examination of the laws relating to land to ensure that the land law accords with justice and morality.' It was a subject of recurring concern both to the Tolais whom Toliman represented and to the Administration.

After this came questions without notice. Questions on notice were also taken orally with the answers being read out so that non-literate members would have a spoken as well as a written answer. Supplementary questions were permissible, subject to the Speaker's consent, but this licence was infrequently used. Question time was important to members and was always a lengthy business, usually exceeding an hour.

Normal parliamentary business followed - official statements and ensuing debates, the presentation of Bills, the reports of House committees, and so on. There was provision for members to initiate debates on matters of public importance if the initiator was supported by five or more members. Each day concluded with an adjournment debate when members were free to discourse on any matter they wished. A random sample of one evening's adjournment debate turns up the following topics - self-government, the development of the Western Highlands, Papua New Guinea unity, schools in New Britain, Housing in Kavieng, Laloki Mental Hospital, and Political Parties.

In its early stages the organisation and working of the House inevitably fell upon the official members, who, apart from the previous parliamentary experience of many of them, lived in Port Moresby and held the levers that made the country's institutions work. Government as such still lay in the hands of the Administration, though now parliamentary assent to legislation had to come from an institution in which the Administration had no assured majority, and a parliament which, if it deemed fit, could put the numbers together to institute its own legislative

programme, though subject to the limitations imposed by Australia's over-riding powers.

The House also contained some expatriate elected members who were experienced, able and active, and who generally arrogated to themselves the role of Her Majesty's loyal opposition. In general these men acted as goads to the Administration rather than as a government in waiting, and their leading members were Downs, Barrett, and Stuntz. As I have indicated earlier the most persistent of them in the search for influence was Barrett, but the most able and influential was Downs. If these men could ^{have} put together a reasonably strong group of Papua New Guineans who could ^{have} ~~form~~ ^{ed} something resembling a party, and who would ^{have} vote to a consistent pattern, they could have completely changed the nature of the country's politics.

So at the second meeting of the House, the elected members, motivated by expatriates among them, decided to do just that. Accordingly they met and formed an elected members' group, designed to embrace all of those elected to the House. John Guise was elected leader and Matthias Toliman his deputy. Guise resigned the Under-Secretary position to which he had been appointed but retained his place on the Administrator's Council. Toliman, who was also Under-Secretary and a member of the Council, retained both ~~of~~ his official posts. On the next day Gunther, in all sincerity, welcomed the appointments and told the House how he and his colleagues on the Legislative Council Committee on Political Development had worried about the possibility and the dangers of the development of regional groups in the House. He said,

What had worried many people was that these groups on geographical lines would prevent any unity of outlook, and unity is needed irrespective of whether it means a later demand for self-government or not. There can be no future for this country without unity. It is therefore a very welcome decision to find that the diverse peoples of the House were able to see the need to unify under one man. The decision to choose a leader is a

part of the tumbling speed that is about us today - speed in all things, not just political.¹

Alas the great expectations were not realized. The elected members group planned to meet each day to consider the business to be transacted in the House that day, and to arrive at decisions on common parliamentary action. But attendance soon fell off, rivalry among European members to be the power behind the throne shattered ideals, and rarely was the official bloc faced with united opposition or united legislative initiatives led by Guise or anybody else. The elected members group, almost from its inception, was a meaningless facade. Eventually it broke up altogether and Guise resigned his post as leader.

The expatriates who master-minded the formation of the group failed first because they did not make a concerted and serious attempt to weld together a voting bloc because they were ambivalent about it. Any significant accretion of power to the House of Assembly would depend upon the votes of the Papua New Guinean members and perhaps ultimately lead to their control of the House unguided by their original mentors, and led by men unsympathetic to the presence of expatriates in places of power and influence. Measured step by step advance towards self-government was more likely to ensure the retention of the privileged position of whites in the country's economy. Any quick accretion of power to the elected members of the House would certainly have precipitated self-government and independence and into the bargain would have led to the growth in influence of the better educated and thus more radical elements in the indigenous population. Whether consciously or otherwise, expatriate elected members stopped short of a concerted attempt to create a real parliamentary opposition to the Administration.

The second reason for the failure to put together what might have been a real alternative to the Administration control was the nature of the indigenous membership of the House. Most of these members, initially, simply

did not see or care for national issues. Papua New Guinea as an embryo nation had little meaning for them. Their horizons were confined to family, village, clan and tribe. Their lives had been built on fear of neighbours and unwavering loyalty to kin. They saw their parliamentary role as exclusively representing the interests of their electorates, and thus their approach was to make requests for funds to the source, - the official members. Their requests were mutually exclusive, - what one member won for his constituents meant less in the kitty for his fellow members. In these circumstances members were loath to offend seriously the decision makers in the Administration; they were to be courted rather than opposed.

Papua New Guineans too, recognized a greater affinity of interest with the Administration rather than with expatriate private interests. The former, though often difficult and intractable, were regarded as relatively benign arbitrators, but white private industry obviously served its own interests, often at the expense of the black population. Papua New Guinean members were adept at recognizing sincerity and matched their support accordingly.

Quite apart from the direct self-interest of members in economic development of their own electorates there were larger issues which kept them apart. In the broadest terms there was rivalry between Papuans and New Guineans deriving from their administrative division prior to World War II and the different developments which sprang from that division, but more important were tribal enmities so that even cooperation between members of adjoining electorates was not always possible. But the deepest division in the House was between the Highlanders and the coastal members, both in attitudes and in aspirations. The coastal areas had long been influenced by the outside world. There had been expatriate colonisation of a sort for many years. They had experienced and resented domination by white settlers and envied the material possessions which these

settlers managed to accumulate by exploiting land previously occupied by indigenes. Their fathers and grandfathers had suffered from colonial attitudes and colonial policies, but their sons and grandsons had had sufficient educational opportunities to make them resent their subservient role even more. In the first House of Assembly, radical opinion, when it existed, came from the coast, and radical youth outside of the House was from young people from the old established coastal settlements.

The Highlanders had had quite a different sort of contact with whites. White penetration of the Highlands did not begin until the 1930s and had not proceeded far before the interruption of World War II. The whites they encountered after World War II came of a different and more enlightened age and were restricted by more enlightened government policies. White settlement was relatively sparse but also it assisted to develop the strongly acquisitive instincts of most highland groups in that many white settlers actively assisted and encouraged their New Guinean neighbours to plant and process cash crops and generally to improve their living standards. The Highlanders recognised that they were far behind the coastal areas in both social and economic development. They were anxious in that their lack of education would handicap them as a group in contesting the allocation of resources and that the gap between mountain and beach might widen further. The Highlanders saw their best chance of redressing the imbalance by delaying the constitutional progress which would inevitably mean that the better educated and experienced coastal people would have the greater opportunities. What has often been criticised as Uncle Tomism among the Highlands leading politicians in this formative period was nothing less than hard nosed self interest, and this was associated with a rather more cooperative attitude towards the whites in their midst, whom they also saw as a developmental springboard for their own aspirations.

The views of Tei Abal and most other Highland members were often cited by the conservative Minister, C.E. Barnes, in his pronouncements on

future self-government and independence for Papua New Guinea. To the Highlanders the social and economic development of their districts should precede political advances so that they, or their children, could assume their rightful place as leaders in the future Papua New Guinea. When I visited villages as Director of Education, it was commonplace for village elders to come up to me and say in Pidgin: 'I am an old and ignorant man, (het bilong mi em i ston),² but my son will go to school and be educated and become a big man.'

Thus the House was fragmented into groups with conflicting interests and the Administration could usually rely upon the support of one or other of these factions to get its programmes through the House. It was usually the Highland bloc upon whom we called most often for support, and when we could not count on their votes we were in trouble.

However, this is not to say that the Administration legislative programme passed through the House unscathed. We were anxious for our policies to be seen to have wide support among members. Both before and after Bills reached the floor of the House compromises on sensitive issues were canvassed. Of all of these the most contentious were Bills dealing with land. To subsistence agriculturalists, growing mostly annual crops which would endure storage for only a short time, land was the only source of wealth. Delays and amendments always accompanied any legislation dealing with land.

Sometimes Australian doctrine was too rigid for compromise, notably on the ownership of minerals, and being unable to deal we were defeated, but it would be quite wrong to assume that we could railroad pretty well anything through the House. We may have been misguided but we sincerely believed that our programmes were in the best interests of the country.

Given the role of managing a House of Assembly of 64 members, of whom only ten could be commanded, official members were subject to many anxieties in the course of a meeting. Most of these related to the

unpredictable reactions of many members, and not only of persuading them to a particular course of action, but also in getting them to the barrier to vote. The first day of a meeting was usually easy and we often used it unscrupulously to push through legislation, perhaps not of great importance but which might encounter difficulties later in the meeting. There were no permanent secretaries, or any other organisation, to pre-plan for elected members, they had little or no contact with each other between meetings and customarily straggled into Port Moresby on the first day of the meeting quite unprepared to face the legislative load. They had little or no idea of what had been carried forward from the previous meeting and had not read (or had read to them), the preparatory material that had been forwarded to them in their electorates. Once in Port Moresby, members resumed contact with their fellows, and were open to persuasion and sometimes exploitation by their more activist colleagues. Members, of course, were also subject to external pressures, and some of them accumulated satellites who used them as conduits for their own ideas. The various missionary organisations had very strong influences on some members, many of whom had been educated in mission schools. John Pasquarelli, an Australian trading on the Sepik River, was subject to a positive barrage of criticism, and sometimes invective, for his persistent attacks on mission trading ventures and their other profit making concerns which were free of tax. Pasquarelli was abundantly capable of giving as good as he got, but his mission vendetta earned him defeat at the next election.

From the third day of the meeting onwards one could expect initiatives from individuals and from groups of members with the ever-present problem that the errant sympathy of the House might be caught by some quite impracticable proposal. The Administration in fact set itself to live with proposals supported by the House and to use the over-riding powers of veto - or disallowance - only when it could not be avoided. During the currency of the first House it was used just once - to disallow

a Bill to extend local control over the Public Service Commissioner. On one other occasion, legislation was returned to the House for a technical amendment.

I have previously mentioned that evening meetings were sometimes difficult. The three hour break between afternoon and evening sessions tended to enliven evening debates in a variety of unpredictable ways. Interjections were more frequent, emotions ran high and sense of responsibility was diminished. Sometimes it was difficult to get members to crucial divisions, and on more than one occasion, couriers had to be despatched to nearby hostelries to persuade members to fulfil their parliamentary duties.

The very existence of an open political debating forum did a great deal to arouse political consciousness outside the House, and during the four years of tenure of Papua New Guinea's first parliament, there were a number of attempts to put political parties together. The general division of interest was between those who were conservative in their attitudes towards self-government and those who were progressive. Ultimately these resulted in the formation of a conservative group based on Highland members, supported by white planter and commercial interests, and the progressive Pangu Pati (Papua and New Guinea Union) comprised of the younger and better educated Papua New Guineans and like-minded expatriates.

By the end of 1967 political lines were being drawn and adversary politics based on party affiliations was about to be born.

got in some sharp blows against the Administration. Papua New Guinean members had brought to notice the deficiencies in their electorates and the official members had managed to keep out of serious trouble. We felt that democracy had been fairly launched.

CHAPTER III

Mafes

1. *Ed. Bettison, Hughes, van der Veer? ANU Canberra 1965*

2. Arek was speaking in the second House of Assembly.

3. HAD, Vol.I, No.1, p.65.

4. Ibid., p.7.

5. Makaim Mo, member for Lumi, a remote area in the West Sepik district.

He broke his duck during the second meeting of the House seeking the establishment of a Local Government Council in his area.

CHAPTER V

UNDER-SECRETARIES

It seems strange now that when the 1963 Constitutional reforms were being considered, the augmentation of the Administrator's Council and the appointment of Under-Secretaries were considered as separate issues. Prior to the reforms there were two bodies with some pretensions to being Cabinets. One of these, the Central Policy and Planning Committee, had no legal standing, being set up by Administrative action to advise the Administrator. It was composed wholly of senior officials and considered and advised upon the whole range of government activities. Hasluck re-acted sharply to the pretensions of this body and effectively extinguished its ambitions.

Please inform the Administrator that the Central Policy and Planning Committee is quite inappropriate as an embryo Cabinet. It is nothing of the sort and the Administrator and the members have a totally wrong conception of its function if they have views entertaining the idea for a moment.

On the other hand, the functions of the Administrator's Council were enshrined in the PNG Act:

Section 20: 'The functions of the Administrator's Council are to advise the Administrator

- (a) On any matter referred to the Council by the Administrator.
- (b) In accordance with an Ordinance on any other matter.'

Certain Ordinances required the approval of the Administrator-in-Council but only in terms of approval by the Administrator after having received the advice of the Council, advice which he was not required to heed. As far as part (a) is concerned, it was not the practice of the Administrator to refer many matters to the Council for its advice, and the Administrator's Council became a formal body exercising a limited constitutional role.

However, there was a clear intention on Australia's part that there should be some progress towards responsible government but no very precise ideas on how it should be done, though the evolutionary path via

the Administrator's Council seemed to be the most suitable. The reforms were modest to say the least. The new Council was expanded to eleven - the Administrator, three Official Members of the House of Assembly and seven elected Members. Its functions remained precisely as before and all members were appointed on the nomination of the Administrator. The fact that elected members were now in a majority on the Council was meaningless unless their advice was sought and heeded on a much wider range of issues than in the past. Also, despite the fact that all Councillors were Members of the House of Assembly, there was no other relationship between the Administrator's Council and the House.

In the debate in the House of Representatives on the amendments to the Papua and New Guinea Act the Labor Party had proposed that all members should be elected Members and should be nominated to the Council by the House itself, but this was rejected.

The proposal that parliamentary Under-Secretaries be appointed from among elected Members came as a separate and unrelated issue from that of Administrator's Council reform. The Hurrell Committee proposal was:

Your Committee recommends that Under-Secretaries to the major Departments be appointed in the belief that the training and understanding of administration received by such appointees would be of great assistance in achieving responsible political development.

2

The proposal was approved by the Australian Government, supported by the Labor Party, and welcomed in Papua New Guinea, once suspicions as to the motives were dissipated, and the Administrator began collecting ideas as to how to make it work. Here again thought was given as to how Under-Secretaries would relate to the House of Assembly and again any direct relationship other than that of Membership was avoided. The idea of nomination by the House was discarded on several grounds. First that Members in the early stages of the House would not know each other well enough to choose wisely, though indeed the Administration was not much better off. Second, that House nomination might ignore the claims for

adequate regional representation, though events have since proved that Papua New Guineans are at least as sensitive on this issue as Australians. There was also the seldom expressed fear that the pace of constitutional change would be radically upset if an ambitious white man managed to get himself elected. The possibility of Barrett as an Under-Secretary did not bear contemplation. At any rate, the final decision was that Under-Secretaries would be appointed by the Administrator and that they would all be Papuans or New Guineans.

The functions they should perform were elucidated.

They were:

- (i) to receive training in the executive management of a department (or an Assistant Administrator's office);
- (ii) in association with the responsible Official Member to represent the department or the interests of the Assistant Administrator;
- (iii) to advise on policy formulation;
- (iv) to proffer the department's policies to the public;
- (v) to keep other elected Members informed of policy;
- (vi) to tour the Territory and hear complaints from the public and receive petitions;

Who should be among the chosen was also a matter for planning and the pattern for an ideal Under-Secretary was evolved:

- (i) He should be literate, if possible in English;
- (ii) he should be one of no more than four Papuans or no less than six New Guineans;
- (iii) he should have won his seat well;
- (iv) he should have leadership qualities, be known to have the support of others and be likely to influence others;
- (v) he should be known as a man with a point of view.
- (vi) he should represent an electorate that fitted in with an appropriate geographic distribution of portfolios.

Perhaps the problem of finding such paragons among members influenced the decision to limit, in the first instance, the number of Under-Secretaries to ten, despite legislative licence to appoint fifteen.

The Administrator outlined his thoughts to the Secretary

The next thing to be determined, having decided that the Administrator should appoint the Under-Secretaries on nominations made to him by the official members, was what Departments these Under-Secretaries should represent. In the Administration there are 15 Departments. In addition, there is the Department of the Public Service Commissioner. There are only ten official members in the House of Assembly so that, of the 16 Departments only 8 are directly represented. Though the Assistant Administrators could be expected to bring direct representation for those other Departments, their task could be particularly onerous, if not impossible. Thus, to keep the number of Under-Secretaries to ten, if 8 are appointed to be trained in the non-represented Departments, and one each by the Assistant Administrators, there will be equitable representation of overall policy in the House.

It is believed that by appointing Under-Secretaries to represent Departments not directly represented by official Members would mean better training, greater experience in responsibility, and they would be of more assistance to over-burdened Official Members.

3

All of these cogitations took place before the first meeting of the House of Assembly and, for the first time, when actual names were being considered, there was a discussion about membership of the Council by Under-Secretaries. The importance of this link was still ignored and, indeed, it had been the intention of the Administrator to nominate five Papua New Guinean Members for the Council who would not be appointed as Under-Secretaries, (the remaining two elected Members of the Council were to be expatriate). He explained his thought processes which caused him to abandon this intention:

My original thinking was that I should nominate five persons for the Administrator's Council who would not be appointed as Under-Secretaries. The problem then came up about such leaders as Messrs Guise and Brokam. You will recall that Mr Guise was a member of the old Legislative Council. Mr Brokam was a member of the old Legislative Council and, in fact, he and Guise were the only two returned by the election. Both have ambitions, both are capable and both fulfil the qualifications for Under-Secretaries. It seemed undesirable that they should not be appointed as

Under-Secretaries. My next thought was that perhaps these two could be both Members of the Administrator's Council and Under-Secretaries, and that I should select three others who would not be Under-Secretaries. However, after a great deal of consideration I agreed to appoint the following persons as Under-Secretaries.

4

Gunther persuaded the Administrator to take the further step of nominating Under-Secretaries for all five positions on the Administrator's Council. Appointments of Under-Secretaries were made as follows:

Dirona Abe	Health
Edric Eupu	Lands
John Guise	Information
Matthias Toliman	Administration
Nicholas Brokam	Assistant Administrator (Economic Affairs)
Paul Lapun	Forests
Pita Simogen	Police
Robert Tabua	Works
Sinake Giregire	Assistant Administrator (Services)
Zure Zurecnuoc	Treasury

The odd man out was Zurecnuoc who was Under-Secretary to a department represented in the House by an official Member, Tony Newman. The Public Service Commissioner's Office was not represented by an Under-Secretary because of its direct relationship with the Minister. Of these, Guise, Brokam, Tabua, Toliman and Zurecnuoc were appointed to the Administrator's Council where they joined Downs and Stuntz from reserved seats and Official Members Gunther, Reeve and McCarthy.

The first significant, if inadvertent, step towards responsible government had been taken, though regrettably after the 1968 election only Guise and Toliman remained of Council members, and Giregire and Lapun of the other Under-Secretaries.

To set out the duties and appoint the men was not too difficult, but to carry out the intention was another thing altogether and a pretty haphazard operation it was. To take a totally inexperienced, barely literate

man having his first experience of parliament and of national affairs and expect him to comprehend the issues and to reach logical conclusions was a great deal too much to expect, but on the whole one could not say that the Under-Secretary system failed entirely. Indeed, it succeeded to a surprising measure where sympathetic Departmental Heads took the time and trouble to ensure that their Under-Secretaries were adequately and carefully briefed, that they were given real responsibilities and made real decisions. It required patience, planning and understanding. It also required unusual qualities in the Under-Secretary and a deal of determination and a degree of empathy to continue to live in two worlds.

Of the ten, only three could be classed as fluent in English - Guise, Toliman and Tabua - and of these only Guise read English with speed and comprehension. Zurecnuoc's English was fair and Abe's passable. Most spoke Pidgin fluently though Tabua and Abe were hesitant. Giregire was the only one with no English at all. There is little wonder that, faced with lengthy reports in official English, these men often felt despairing. It is not that their difficulties went unappreciated but that adequate resolution of their problems was hard to come by without the services of a skilled and experienced secretariat which could provide full-time services to the Under-Secretaries. Such individuals who were appointed to fill the personal assistant role were not adequate for the task. A number of devices were tried to relieve the difficulties - some reports were tape-recorded so that reading was not necessary - oral discussion replaced reading of minutes, reports and so on. Collective discussions were held, or seminars, on various aspects of government work while, of course, five of the Under-Secretaries participated in Administrator's Council meetings.

Given that they were selected because of their superior education and/or leadership qualities, Under-Secretaries did not distinguish themselves in the House of Assembly in the first year or so of office. The notable exception could have been Guise but in the second meeting he resigned his

Under-Secretaryship to become leader of the elected Members. He was replaced by a fellow member from Milne Bay, Lepani Watson. Of the others Simogen probably intervened in debate more frequently than his colleagues, but more weighty contributions came from Zurecnuoc. Abe, despite what should have been an inside track on Administration operations, was the most persistent questioner in the House of his official colleagues.

It was Simogen who first publicly expressed his confusion as to his responsibilities, this in a speech in the House of Assembly in February 1965:

I have been elected to this House and I have been made an Under-Secretary but I would like to know what kind of work an Under-Secretary is supposed to do. The Government has made me an Under-Secretary but I do not know what I am supposed to do and my Department has not shown me.

He was not alone in his confusion as to his role, and in response to specific criticism from the Department of External Territories, that Under-Secretaries should undertake a wider range of parliamentary duties, Gunther defended the position. Substantial sections of his memo of June 1965 on the matter are worth repeating:

All in all this was an experiment and like all experiments it will have its ups and downs. Those of us who foresaw some of the problems ahead foresaw that some Departmental Heads would not have the ability or even the patience and interest that others would have in the training of these people. We foresaw that these people would be accused of being tools of the Government and that there would be times when these accusations would have real meaning for them. We even foresaw that the electorate may be suspicious of them. For these latter two reasons we provided that they should spend quite a deal of time in their electorates and that they were at liberty to vote as they wished and to act in the House of Assembly as they wished. All we asked was that they gave us forewarning of opposition to the Administration. We also foresaw that there would be some people who would wish the Under-Secretary scheme to fail and who would go out of their way to point out its failures. On the whole, I do not believe that the Under-Secretary scheme has failed. I believe that it is moving exactly as we anticipated though at a much slower pace.

Whilst all but two of the Under-Secretaries are relatively fluent in English, we over-estimated their capacity to read. One of the more fluent Under-Secretaries described reading as 'painful'.

The Secretary, Department of Territories, had suggested one fairly obvious task for Under-Secretaries - that of answering questions in the House. Gunther had this to say:

On all our written proposals for Under-Secretaries it was anticipated that they would be given the task of answering questions that were directed to the departments they represent as soon as it was felt they could do so without being ashamed of their shortcomings; for instance, while they would be provided with a written answer to the question asked, it would be essential that they themselves understood the answer and could answer any supplementary question. 6

Not only were Under-Secretaries dissatisfied with their jobs but the departments to which they were attached in some cases saw little or nothing of the Under-Secretary. Electorates also claimed that their Under-Secretary representative was not paying enough attention to his parochial duties, though this sort of complaint was not confined to Under-Secretary MHAs. Two years of experience of the Under-Secretary system had not produced anything much in the way of change of the system, though some Under-Secretaries had developed considerably and were able to take a national viewpoint. Of these, Zurecnuoc was the most notable and perhaps his association with the Department of Treasury as its Under-Secretary helped him to a better appreciation of the problems of government. It was Zurecnuoc who could say in the House in January 1965:

The Administration has made the mistake of giving the people of PNG too much for too little... 7

and later in debate on the Bill to impose personal tax on low income earners:

I think it is wrong that people should receive services without paying tax but if you think I am wrong then that is up to you. The Administration needs a great deal of money for its hospitals and for its other health services. We cannot develop or carry out functions of government unless there is an adequate plan of revenue and we must find it from somewhere. We cannot develop if we do not make a contribution in tax. 8

It was Zurecnuoc's intervention that mustered sufficient votes for the Bill to pass. Zurecnuoc customarily spoke in Pidgin and an English translation does not do justice to the force of his arguments and the conviction of his rhetoric.

During 1965, controversy on the role and functions of Under-Secretaries was further stimulated by the newly established House of Assembly Select Committee on Constitutional Development, and by proposals from various sources for the development of the Under-Secretary system further towards Ministerial Government. Holloway, in the House of Assembly in May 1965, raised the matter:

Mr Speaker, I believe the next step in bringing about the sharing of executive responsibilities should be the development of Ministerial Government.... It has been stated that the appointment of Under-Secretaries is a step towards Ministerial Government; that is by associating them with Official Members. But I for one am not at all clear about the functions of the Under-Secretaries and I suspect that they are not either.

9

Holloway was moved to raise the matter after reading a paper prepared by the Legislative Draftsman, C.J. Lynch, whose fertile mind stimulated thought on Constitutional development on a number of occasions. Holloway pursued the matter at Question Time in August but got little satisfaction from Gunther's reply which concluded with the assertion:

I assure the Honourable Member that the deliberations have reached a stage which we believe is a proper stage at this time.

10

It is not surprising in the light of this answer that Holloway, assisted by Lynch, then produced a Private Member's Bill called the Parliamentary Executive (Interim Provisions) Bill 1965. The Bill envisaged the development of the Administrator's Council into a Cabinet of Ministers - both official and unofficial, exercising limited Ministerial powers. Outside of Cabinet would be Assistant Ministers who were Official Members of the House and Under-Secretaries who were, in effect, trainee Ministers.

The Bill aroused consternation in the breast of the Secretary, Department of Territories, but we had already arranged that Holloway would agree to refer it to the Constitutional Committee after he had had his moment of glory in the House of Assembly. In seeking leave to present his Bill, Holloway said:

X
 My purpose in introducing the Bill is primarily to give to Members, to the Administration, to the Australian Government and to the people of the Territory, a concrete proposal as a focus for their thoughts on the matter. 11

The Bill was then adjourned and duly joined the papers presented to the Constitutional Committee. Holloway and Lynch deserve credit for the initiative and, although the Bill was not antecedent to the proposals eventually put forward for a Ministerial system, it played its part in directing thought to the need for a measure of Ministerial responsibility for elected Members.

During 1965/66 Official Membership underwent substantial changes which negated the principle of Departmental representation upon which the Under-Secretary system was based. Reeve retired, Gunther, Cannon and Mason resigned from PNG service. They were replaced in the House by Scragg, Ellis, Grove and Burns. This meant that Treasury, as well as Lands, Works and Health now had both ^{an} ~~as~~ Official Member and an Under-Secretary in the House of Assembly.

In the middle of 1966 I replaced Gunther as Assistant Administrator (Services) and was enjoined almost immediately to do something to improve the Under-Secretary system. I outlined the difficulties and shortcomings to the Administrator...

'It is generally acknowledged that (in most cases) the Under-Secretary system has not worked very well. There are a variety of reasons for this which I set out below:-

- (1) In general Under-Secretaries have little or not experience with the sort of activities required in controlling an Administration Department and assisting to formulate policies. To acquaint them fully with the situation it would require the Head of a Department to spend a great deal of time with the Under-Secretary or else to allocate a senior officer to advise and assist. No Head of Department is in a position to spare the necessary amount of time and there is the greatest difficulty in

providing suitable senior officers for this task. I think it fair to say that the education of the Under-Secretary in this field has been neglected by most of the Departments to which Under-Secretaries were allocated. There are one or two notable exceptions to this.

(2) To comprehend adequately the operations of a large department an Under-Secretary needs to have a reasonable level of literacy in English. It is not possible to exchange all information orally and it is necessary to be able to read and digest written reports. Regrettably most Under-Secretaries have not sufficient competence in English to do this adequately. This has led to feelings of frustration and Under-Secretaries have avoided some of these problems by absenting themselves from their Departments.

(3) One of the principles made clear to Under-Secretaries on their appointment was that they would not be bound to support Government policies but would be free to take individual positions, provided that they advised the government of their opposition before the event. This has created a rather difficult situation where Under-Secretaries may in fact oppose some of the proposals which the Head of a Department wants to put forward and which are in line with government policy. This sort of situation is inherent in any 'half-way house'. Ministerial responsibility, of course, avoids such difficulties.

(4) Attendance of Under-Secretaries to departmental business has been very poor indeed for a variety of reasons. The first of these is mentioned above - that of a general feeling of inadequacy and a failure of Departments to provide sufficient assistance to help Under-Secretaries understand what is going on. However, the major cause of absenteeism had been the growing pre-occupation of Members with their own electorates and the desire to ensure re-election in 1968. No Under-Secretary is in a position to feel entirely secure in his electorate and it is quite understandable that the Under-Secretary should feel that his first and most pressing duty is to

his electors.

There are no easy solutions to the problem of improving the Under-Secretary system and of its evolution into some form of Ministerial responsibility and it seems that re-election worries will mean continued absence of Under-Secretaries in their electorates.¹²

Of all the Under-Secretaries the three who had least guidance and least purpose were those attached to the Assistant Administrators and to the Department of Administrator, ToLimán, Giregire and Watson. For all practical purposes all three depended upon the Department of the Administrator for support and guidance as the Assistant Administrators had no personal staff. This Department was ill equipped to give either training or a functional role to its Under-Secretaries as its duties were largely of a co-ordinating nature. I thought it desirable to get these men posted to Departments with functional responsibilities throughout Papua New Guinea. ToLimán had been a teacher, Giregire was a coffee grower and Watson a Co-operatives Officer, and as the Departments of Education, Agriculture and Trade were no longer directly represented in the House of Assembly the postings were obvious ones.

Two other matters required urgent attention. One was to try to isolate and define the duties that Under-Secretaries were supposed to carry out. The other was to balance the Under-Secretaries' time spent in Port Moresby on ~~his~~^{their} Ministerial duties against the demands of ~~his~~^{their} electorates.

Definition of duties proved elusive. The Papua New Guinea Administration was a form of bureaucratic government not derived from political groups within the system and, as such, it was difficult to delineate a meaningful political role for Under-Secretaries. Clearly it was desirable for Under-Secretaries to be identified with Government but this implied responsibility for proposals and decisions which they were reluctant to accept. Equally an Australian Minister was not prepared at this stage to relinquish any of his powers or responsibilities. It was

on this basis that Under-Secretaries, on appointment, had been given an understanding that there would be no obligation to support Administration proposals, and on occasions more than half of the Under-Secretaries had been numbered in opposition ranks. Some individual Under-Secretaries, notably Watson, had a significant record of ^cabsentⁱon or opposition to Administration proposals while Lapun led a successful crusade to amend the Mining Ordinance against a determined stand by the Administration. Under-Secretaries supporting Lapun in this measure were Watson, Giregire and ToLiman while Simogen and Brokam did not vote.

In these circumstances, where Under-Secretaries were neither given, nor prepared to accept, the responsibilities associated with policy decisions, only cosmetic action could be taken to improve the public image of the system.

In September 1966 Zurecnuoc made a spirited plea for people to understand the difficult role of Under-Secretaries -

A personal servant does not work for three or four masters.
 ... Now we are professional politicians but we are only a young country and we must find ways and means to explain these matters to the people and bring these matters to their attention. If these things are not explained most of the professional politicians here will not win their seats again.

13

Subsequent to this I met with Under-Secretaries on a number of occasions to try to work out a satisfactory method of operation and to expand the Under-Secretaries' role. By this time many Under-Secretaries were spending little or no time in Port Moresby other than for House of Assembly meetings. The Department of Forests saw almost nothing of Lapun, a characteristic which endured throughout a long Ministerial career; Brokam too was infrequently with the Department of Information. Arising out of this meeting was an agreement that Under-Secretaries would try to spend one week in each month fully engaged on Ministerial duties while those who were Members of the Administrator's Council would also spend each week prior to

a Council meeting on their official duties. Departments were directed to appoint a suitable senior officer to be attached to the Under-Secretary to assist him in carrying out his functions and to follow up proposals made by the Under-Secretary.

A Circular Memorandum redefined the Under-Secretarial functions as follows:-

- 1) To assist during the preparation of Bills within the Department.
- 2) To represent Department's views in the House of Assembly where applicable but retaining the right to express personal views during debates. The Under-Secretary is free to speak against Government Bills if he so desires. His appointment does not interfere with this right.
- 3) To answer questions in the House of Assembly.
- 4) To represent the Department at official functions.
- 5) To visit Districts to assist in the resolution of Departmental problems.
- 6) To be a special source of advice and knowledge on some particular area of Departmental activities.
- 7) To meet official visitors.
- 8) To participate in Departmental conferences.
- 9) To participate in Departmental policy formation.
- 10) To participate in preparing Budget estimates and recruitment requirements with the Department.

The Circular further explained and exhorted:-

So that the Under-Secretary, His Department and the country as a whole can obtain maximum benefit from the appointment, it is vital that the Under-Secretary be given the fullest cooperation from the Department to which he is attached and that he spend as much time as possible in the Department learning and participating in its work.

This latter requirement has been the cause of some difficulty for, as well as an obligation to his job, he is also obligated to his electorate, and the more duties he assumes as an Under-Secretary, the greater amount of time required to be spent in Port Moresby. This means a consequent reduction in the time spent in his electorate visiting the electors and

attending to their needs.¹⁴

At this time, even the simple matter of answering questions on notice in the House of Assembly had been monopolised by Official Members. All that was required was the reading of a prepared answer and though some Under-Secretaries had difficulty in reading English, Pidgin could have been used. Abe was the first Under-Secretary to answer a question on notice and this not until early 1966, and later Zurecnuoc and occasionally Tabua, also read answers. The practice became more general in 1967.

There is a certain prestige associated with the answering of parliamentary questions and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the Official Members enjoyed doing it and rationalised their reasons for not passing over this duty to Under-Secretaries. It was claimed that Under-Secretaries would be unable to deal with questions supplementary to written ones, but supplementaries were so infrequent as to make the possibility of embarrassment negligible.

It is more charitable to point out that the Official Members on whom the system depended had many pre-occupations. During a meeting of the House of Assembly they were required to be in constant attendance while continuing the direction of their Departments. They were involved in the presentation of Bills, in the preparation of speeches and supervision of those answers to questions on notice. It is not surprising that they found insufficient time to devote to help Under-Secretaries as much as was needed.

What then was achieved by four years of Under-Secretary experience? Five of the Under-Secretaries were members of the Administrator's Council, (Guise remained a member in spite of his resignation from his Under-Secretary position), and this gave them invaluable corporate experience and a broader view of national affairs. However, in Council they made very limited contributions, only Guise having firm opinions of his own and a readiness to express them. One must admit that a Council including Downs, Stuntz,

Gunther and McCarthy may well have provided limited opportunity for self-expression by others. Some Under-Secretaries undoubtedly grew in stature during their tenure of office and it was generally conceded that the two who seemed to have the best appreciation of their portfolios were Zurecnuoc in Treasury and Abe in Health. After his translation to Education, Toliman developed quickly, while Giregire with some grass roots appreciation of economic principles became a prominent though somewhat unpredictable speaker on economic matters.

The original purpose was to provide training and experience so that there could be progress towards responsible Government in the next House of Assembly. Despite its imperfect operation the system achieved this and indeed may have been a good deal more successful if the original Under-Secretaries had been more fortunate in the 1968 elections. Of the ten only four survived, Lapun, Giregire, Toliman and Watson, plus, of course, ^{the last three} Guise, ~~and~~ of whom retained their quasi-Ministerial posts in the second House of Assembly and all of whom became prominent in House Affairs. (Guise became the Speaker of the second House). It might be thought that the others lost their seats because of their Under-Secretary pre-occupations but this would hardly be true. Zurecnuoc had the misfortune to have the boundaries of his electorate changed to the advantage of his principal adversary. Brokam lost to a stronger candidate, as did Eupu. Simogen did not stand and Tabua had moved house to Port Moresby and could hardly expect continued support from his distant electorate, Fly River. Abe was plain unlucky to be defeated the second time round to the expatriate runner-up in the 1964 elections. Proportionately about the same percentage of other MHA's also lost their seats.

Critically one may say that the Under-Secretary system had insufficient preliminary planning - indeed hardly any - insufficient human resources were devoted to supporting it and the constitutional arrangements within which it had to operate were not suited to its purpose.

living standards in their own Sepik District to greener pastures at a large oil Palm Development Scheme in New Britain where Simogen himself has a prosperous holding and has adjusted admirably in the role of patriarch. He was knighted in June 1981.

Eupu and Abe, though defeated in 1968, continued to be active in local politics.

Brokam and Tabua, losers in 1968, do not reappear in either national or local politics.

CHAPTER V . Notes

1. Letter, Secretary to Administrator, 5 June 1963. P.P.
2. LCD, Vol.VI, No.6, p.614.
3. Administrator to Secretary, 15 May 1964. P.P.
4. Ibid.
5. Gunther to the Administrator, 6 May 1965. P.P.
6. Ibid.
7. HAD, Vol.I, No.3, p.410.
8. HAD, Vol.I, No.5, p.721.
9. Ibid., p.760.
10. HAD, Vol.I, No.6, p.779.
11. Ibid., p.851.
12. Johnson to Administrator, 25 August 1966. P.P.
13. HAD, Vol.I, No.10, p.1651.
14. Personal Papers.



Minister for Territories Andrew Peacock attending
an Investiture in 1971



Michael Somare congratulates John Guise on his MBE award.
Guise later became Speaker of the House and was knighted.
He also became Governor General of Papua New Guinea.

CHAPTER VI

PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY

By mid-term, (June 1966), the House had met on nine occasions, the shortest meeting lasting four sitting days and the longest nine. It had shaken down into a familiar routine and transacted its business with reasonable efficiency. As previously described, the day began with questions and concluded with an adjournment debate. For the rank and file these two sessions were the most important for in these they could have an active part and one directly related to the needs of their electorates.

In the early stages the principal actors in the parliamentary drama were the expatriates, - official members who filled the role of Ministers, and a handful of elected whites who might be called a highly critical opposition, though given the nature of colonial politics, not an opposition which could conceivably become a government. Essentially the official members were the government, a government which could be outvoted but not replaced. Supporting roles were filled by the Under-Secretaries, but whose support for Administration measures was somewhat less than unanimous. There were a number of individual Papua New Guineans who, by force of personality, or by firmly held convictions, became at times prominent actors on the parliamentary stage. Only quite late in the four year term of the first House was there much accretion of individuals into groups with some common embryonic political philosophy, which groups developed into political parties.

Official members conducted the business appropriate to their own Departments in the House and on broader or controversial issues collaborated in presenting or defending policies, Bills and other House matters. Some of our number were more articulate than others and were called upon to hold the breach more frequently, and some had special talents for use on special occasions. For instance, when it was necessary to rally the Highlands members to the Administration cause, Keith McCarthy was put up as a respected father figure who spoke persuasively and eloquently in Pidgin.

The most concerted criticism of Administration policies came from a group of expatriate members, usually led by Downs, but with leadership contested by Barrett. Downs was a penetrating critic with a well-developed capacity for nettling the official benches. He was usually well supported by John Stuntz, a planter from the Milne Bay District. The other expatriate members were generally a supporting chorus with the exception of Chatterton who did not sing in anyone's choir. Their role, perhaps unperceived, was to keep the Administration up to scratch without endangering its control of the House, in which case they could be submerged by an indigenous majority which as yet possessed no policies and no defined principles.

These observations may lead to the conclusion that the Papua New Guinean members were not much more than a backdrop upon which was projected shadow play between two groups of expatriates. In a sense this was true of the early years of the House. But it was also a dynamic situation with indigenous members adjusting to novel circumstances, becoming accustomed to thinking nationally and confronting issues which they had never previously thought about. It is not surprising that it took time for them to adjust to a situation where they were in a position to influence, and even initiate, policies, when in the past they had been passive beneficiaries of the impact of decisions reached in remote Administration offices.

I have referred earlier to the unsuccessful attempt to create a voting bloc of elected members and this failure meant that the pack was full of wild cards when it came to assessing the chances of passing particular pieces of legislation of a controversial nature. Lobbying took place both before and after the introduction of Bills and we, the Government, were also disposed to accept amendments during the passage of legislation provided they did not distort too much the thrust of the measure. We were also prepared to amend legislation ourselves in response to criticism

during debate. We prided ourselves on our flexibility, sometimes to the great concern of our colleagues in Canberra who doubted both our resolution and our wisdom in these matters.

In the early meetings of the House, divisions were infrequent as Papua New Guinea members were unaccustomed to reaching decisions by counting heads. In the first four meetings, spread over the period June 1964 to February 1965, there were only three occasions on which the House divided to resolve an issue, but thereafter things began to warm up. In the August meeting in 1965 which lasted nine sitting days there were five divisions. In all, in the life of the first House of Assembly, there were fifteen meetings and a total of fifty divisions. Many of these divisions were of a procedural nature, for the adjournment of debate, for the suspension of Standing Orders, and so on, but there was an increasing readiness by members to divide the House to see just where everyone stood on particular issues. There was little ideological pattern in voting behaviour until the later stages of the House when increasingly a small group of members - the nucleus of the Pangu Pati, began to vote with some consistency against Government proposals. Some individuals could be counted on, almost certainly, to support the Government, others were invariably in the Opposition ranks. We were by no means assured of regular support from the Under-Secretaries who had, in effect, a license to vote with their consciences. Lapun was regularly among the opposition ranks. His record shows him 28 times opposed to the Government and 20 times in support. Lepani Watson, too, was not warm in his support, in that he voted with the Government on 24 occasions and against it 18 times. Our most whole-hearted support came from Robert Tabua who had an almost unblemished record of 45 votes in support of the Government and only 4 against. Absences or deliberate abstentions also occurred among the Under-Secretaries, but Tabua and Lapun had almost perfect scores. Tabua missed only one division and Lapun, two. On the other hand Zurecnuoc missed 20, though when he was present he supported the Government 27 times in the

30 Divisions in which he took part.

These rather mixed results from our Under-Secretaries were not due to lack of effort on our part to ensure their understanding of and support for our measures. We used to meet, - Official Members and Under-Secretaries, - each day before the House sat, and go through the business of the day, while, in addition, legislative proposals were discussed in the Administrator's Council, and, where relevant, in the Department with which individual Under-Secretaries were associated. However, electoral interests usually came first, though overall the record of the Under-Secretaries indicates pretty general support for key legislation. Under-Secretaries, in total, cast 289 votes in support of the Government position and 123 against.

The very first division in the House resulted in a tied vote and the Speaker was obliged to use his casting vote to negate the proposal, which was an elected member's amendment to an Administration Bill. We proposed to amend the Restaurant Licensing Ordinance to make it an offence to smoke, to chew tobacco or betel nut, or to spit in a place where food was being prepared, - unpleasant propensities not entirely unknown to some of our restaurant workers. A warm debate broke out when Chatterton moved to amend the Bill to prohibit the chewing of gum as well, presumably in the interests of non-discrimination between chewing betel nut and chewing gum. Paliau Maloat produced the unanswerable argument in opposing Chatterton's amendment, averring that, 'chewing gum should be allowed because when people chew it, it stops their breath smelling.'¹

At the other end of the scale of significance were the Mining Royalty Bills fought so tenaciously and ultimately successfully by Paul Lapun. On the second time round with his amending Bill the House supported Lapun against the Administration by 31 to 21. Only four Under-Secretaries stayed with the Administration on this issue - three Papuans - Abe, Eupu and Tabua, and Zurecnuoc from New Guinea.

But it was only on rare occasions that Papua New Guinean members in the first House took initiatives to introduce legislation of their own, though official assistance was available to prepare Bills for them. Of course it is a feature of all Westminster parliamentary systems that the Governments put forward the legislation which may be amended or rejected by the members of the House. Private members Bills haven't much chance of getting to the starting post.

But the situation in the Papua New Guinean parliament differed in that non-government members enjoyed a majority (if we assume that the official members and the Under-Secretaries comprised the government), and could get positive assistance to get a Bill before the House. The problem was to rally enough support from the large body of uncommitted members to have it accepted.

Despite the obstacles there were some interesting initiatives pursued by individual Papua New Guinean members. Three of these occur to me as exemplifying some of the preoccupations of members. These were the Playing Cards Bill introduced by Sinake Giregire, the member for Goroka in the Eastern Highlands, the Crocodile Protection Bill from Robert Tabua the member for Fly River, and the Bird of Paradise Bill from Gabriel Ehava Karava, member for Lakekamu. In each of these there was a lively interest and widespread participation in debate. The two fauna Bills were both defeated initially but brought members face to face with the problem of promoting some means of achieving a cash income in remote and undeveloped areas as against that of the conservation, both of resources and of national symbols. Members' feelings moved steadily towards the conservationist viewpoint, particularly with regard to Birds of Paradise. Gabriel Karava, in May 1965, proposed that:-

Birds of Paradise may be captured for trading purposes.

However only persons holding a special Bird of Paradise

Licence may do so and only then during declared open seasons.²

The Bill was defeated after 18 Papua New Guinean members had expressed their views. Singin Pasom, a forthright man who always spoke as if he were addressing a large gathering of tribesmen in the open air, expressed the majority view:

Birds of Paradise are beautiful to look at. If we shoot out these birds people all over the world will be very upset. These birds are part of New Guinea and I know that if we pass the Bill they will become extinct in a very short time. 3

Tabua, concerned at the sharp reduction in crocodile population in the Western District, was moved to legislate for conservation as early as January 1965, but was stoutly opposed by the Sepik members who continued to derive cash income from crocodile skins and had not yet suffered from the extensive slaughter that had occurred in Tabua's electorate. Ultimately Tabua was successful in having a modest protection ordinance placed on the Statute Book after suffering defeat at the first try.

The Playing Cards Bill, in some ways, marked an assertion by ^{indigenans} ~~members~~ members that Papua New Guinea was their country and that, when they were so minded, they would legislate for it as they saw fit. Sinake Gire ^{Giregire} ~~Gire~~ introduced a Bill in May 1965 to prohibit the playing of cards and their possession. The object was to prevent gambling with cards which caused considerable disputes and frequent violence, sometimes culminating in death. Large sums of money, by Papua New Guinea standards, changed hands and there was a deal of fleecing of innocents abroad. The principal game was a simple number card game called 'Lucky'. There was already a gambling ordinance on the books which prohibited all forms of gambling, which included all games of chance, though little attempt was made to enforce it, and ^{Giregire's} ~~Gire Gire's~~ Bill was rather a naive attempt to stamp out gambling with cards. This was particularly rife in the Highlands, and among the Highlands migrants to Port Moresby, but the Bill received enthusiastic support from all quarters, except from the expatriate members who saw one of their own pastimes at risk. There were 28 speakers and the Bill passed without a

division. It included provision which permitted friendly games of cards under licence but the ownership of cards was prohibited and travellers entering Papua New Guinea were often startled to have packs of cards in their baggage treated like noxious drugs and held by Customs until they left the country.

A number of attempts to repeal the Ordinance were unsuccessful until, finally, during the third House of Assembly it was expunged from the Statute Book. It did result in some temporary abatement in gambling with cards, but commensurately an upsurge in gambling in other forms. In Highland villages a variant of golf was popular, the players using a stick to putt a round object towards a hole in the manner of a putting green. Wagers were placed and paid to the man who got closest to the hole.

No very determined attempt was made to enforce an unenforceable law but Highlanders strongly resisted efforts to repeal 'their law'. It may be noted that the first attempt to repeal the Playing Cards Ordinance occurred shortly after its passage, and official members were permitted the unusual luxury of a free vote. Repeal was resoundingly defeated by fifty votes to five, only two official members, McCarthy and I, indulging ourselves by voting against the majority, on the basis that, as gambling was illegal in any case, the provision of special legislation against card games was hardly likely to change things. It seems to me to be of significance that, as early as the third meeting of the House, some Papua New Guineans, entirely on their own initiative, presented Bills to resolve problems they saw for themselves in their own electorates.

Indigenous members used other ways to bring their wishes and their problems before the House, and the most common means was the use of Question Time. House staff were used to assist members in framing questions and in giving them point, or bite, when required. The most common ending to a question requesting action on, say, construction of a bridge, was 'if not, why not?' Initially virtually all questions were placed on the

Notice Paper but answered both verbally in the House and in writing. The difficulty most members had in reading necessitated oral answers, but the piece of paper with the written answer could be taken home as evidence of the member's activity and as a basis for further pressure when the literate members of the community had had time to digest it.

In the four meetings in 1966 there were 189 questions without notice and 702 on notice, with a notable increase in questions without notice in the course of the year. There were 33 questions without notice in the first meeting of 1966 and 68 in the fourth, the increase being due, in part, to our own greater readiness to try to answer them as fully as possible. Question Time in the House of Assembly was not a contest but a period when information was elicited, explanations were given and promises made which we did our best to keep. The great majority of questions related to parochial matters - roads, bridges, schools, aid-posts, agricultural offices, and the like. An analysis over the March 1966 meeting shows that of the 117 questions asked by Papua New Guinean members, 91 of them related entirely to the members' electorates, most of them concerning roads, buildings, schools and teachers.

The next most popular means of expression of opinion was through the use of the adjournment debate, - that period at the end of each day's sitting when members were free to speak on any subject. Time was of course a constraint as only a few could be heard on each occasion and I have known a dozen or more members on their feet time after time endeavouring to catch the Speaker's eye.

Discipline in such matters as getting listed to speak either during a debate on a Bill or in the adjournment was foreign to members' habits. They spoke when the mood seized them and not on a pre-determined plan, - some as frequently as possible, some only rarely, - but there were none who remained totally silent. In a non-literate community all were accustomed to public speaking of a sort and I have never known a Papua New Guinean to

suffer from nerves on such occasions.

The effective operation of a Westminster system of government depends largely upon the interaction of defined groups of members representing particular interests or political philosophies, each group speaking or voting in ways consistent with their beliefs and thus to a large degree predictably. In this situation speeches of members are opportunities to define policies, to inflate, or deflate, egos, to achieve status and to attract notice. The oratory does not influence voting patterns and may be regarded as the icing on the legislative cake.

The Papua New Guinea House of Assembly operated in quite a different way. There were no parties and no ideologies. There were some regional affinities, particularly of Highlands members, which became the basis for a party later on, but in the early life of the House most indigenous members were uncommitted on most subjects. They could be persuaded, - or convinced, - to support or oppose measures before the House by appeal to parochial self-interest, by emotional outpourings, by personal regard for the progenitor, or by sheer oratory. A non-literate society obviously prizes oratorical performance, and a good many decisions in the House were influenced by the individual capacity of speakers. It should, however, be said that Papua New Guinean members made shrewd assessments of character and had instinctive confidence in some members and an equally instinctive reluctance to support others, irrespective of the case presented or the manner of presentation.

Melanesians also dislike seeing any individual humiliated and, in personal attacks on members or their policies, oratorical overkill was counter-productive and would result in a sympathy vote for the victim.

The overall product of the influence of oratory upon the melange of factors shaping members' decision was that the result of a division on a closely argued proposition could never be predicted as members would veer from one side to the other as the oratory waxed and waned. Only when members

stood to be counted in support or in opposition to the measure before the House could we know the outcome.

The participation of indigenous members in debate on Bills depended entirely on whether the issues were relevant to their needs as they understood them. Traditionally almost everyone spoke during the debate on the annual Appropriation Bill, this being an occasion to restate the needs of their electorates. Any matter relating to land always drew a long list of speakers. In a subsistence agricultural community, depending mostly on annual crops, land was life itself. I have noted above the interest in the Playing Cards Bill and in those dealing with the environment. Broad constitutional issues, particularly as to whether self-government should be sooner or later attracted many speakers but they were content to leave alone matters relating to the machinery of government.

Apart from Question Time, debate on Bills, adjournment debates and debates following statements from Administration spokesmen, members could take initiatives through a debate on a matter of public importance or by introducing a resolution. Barrett made most frequent use of public importance debates but 'Resolutions' which, if passed could be both strictures on the Administration on demands for action became popular among the indigenous members. This was particularly so in the second and third Houses when they became so ^{overrun} ~~narrowed~~ as to clog the Notice Paper entirely so that restrictive measures had to be introduced.

There were, however, some notable occasions when Papua New Guinean members proposed 'Resolutions' of considerable national importance. The first of these was as early as the second meeting in September 1964 when Toliman introduced a motion on self-government. It was a reaction to external pressures for Australia to establish target dates for political advance towards self-government, particularly from United Nations sources, and closely followed a visit to Papua New Guinea by representatives of the United Nations Committee of Twenty Four from India and Iran. Toliman

was certainly assisted in framing his motion but there was no doubt that it expressed the views held by the vast majority of Papua New Guineans who had any idea of the implications. In part the motion read:-

That we, the elected representatives of the people of Papua and New Guinea desire to convey... the expressed wish of the people that they, the people, and they alone, be allowed to decide when the time is ripe for self-government.⁴

The feelings of the House were demonstrated by the 22 indigenous speakers who all firmly supported Toliman.

At a later meeting Tei Abal was motivated to introduce a motion to be known as the Development Capital Guarantee Declaration. Abal also was undoubtedly helped to construct his motion which was converted from Pidgin to parliamentary English to read, in part:-

that the House.... invites and welcomes investment for development purposes and guarantees... that expatriate capital shall not be subject to expropriation.⁵

This motion also attracted widespread support with, as might be expected, expatriate elected members weighing in heavily. But this time there were a number of Papua New Guinean members sitting uneasily on the running rail. John Guise was one who expressed cautionary support:

I believe that there are inherent dangers in granting a blanket authority to the entry of outside capital to any country.⁶

No official member participated in either debate. The remarks of the elected members were to be seen as genuine expressions of Papua New Guinea attitudes. We were really quite complacent about it all.

There is no doubt about the Toliman resolution. Papua New Guineans of all shades of political opinion resented outside pressures, none more so than the radicals in 1973 and 1974 who thought that Australian haste to be quit of its colonial responsibilities was pre-empting their right to begin independence with a genuine home grown Constitution. There is, however, some truth in the criticism that the Abal motion was the product of brain

washing by expatriate interests, though again it was in part due to the Highlanders seeing increased investment in their districts as expediting their own development and helping them in their own 'catch up' design. The Declaration is, of course, not too different from the policies presently pursued by the independent government of Papua New Guinea.

The House also operated a Committee system. There were in all seven Standing Committees covering the following areas: Public Works, Public Accounts, House Committee, Regulations and Orders, Library, Standing Orders and Privilege. Indigenous representation on these Committees was small. Excluding the Public Accounts Committee, which was not set up until 1965, there were only seven Papua New Guineans out of a total committee strength of 33. In all cases the committees were run by the white members. The only ones attracting particular attention and some interest were the Public Works Committee and initially the Public Accounts Committee. There was an undignified scramble by expatriate members for a place on the Public Works Committee because of what they deemed to be its pork-barrel potentialities, but as it was chaired by an official member, originally Reeve and later by me, its activity was kept to as low a level as possible, neither of us welcoming what we considered to be uninformed intervention in our well laid plans.

A Bill to establish a Public Accounts Committee was produced by the Administration in 1965 and Barrett became its chairman. This committee, or at least its chairman, engaged in frenetic activity resulting in the production of numerous voluminous reports which, however, evoked little interest in the House and not much consequent action from the Administration.

The House Committee was responsible for the orderly conduct of the House, its amenities and other privileges. The most contentious issues were the hours of sitting and dress for members. The lively evening sittings, promoted to a degree by the break between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m., were a problem at times but, as the House was also used by the general populace of Port Moresby

as a good evening's entertainment, it was not possible to curtail these educational opportunities. Another problem facing the House Committee was that of suitable dress for members in the chamber of the House. As the chamber was airconditioned it did not reflect the tropical conditions outside, and members, conscious of their dignity, decided that jackets and ties were appropriate. There were a number of attempts to relax the dress rules but they were all defeated. Papua New Guinea members, in general, felt that formal dress enhanced their status and increased decorum, but one of the arguments used against the elimination of jackets was that some members had occasion to have their shirts washed rather infrequently and that the public display of these garments might not contribute to the prestige of the House. It was not until the third House of Assembly in 1972 that more reasonable dress rules were established and the House blossomed with more colourful attire. Trousers were never a dress requirement and some members in the first House customarily wore ramis, or lap laps, instead. Zurecnuoc, Lus and Watson usually wore ramis and later this became the accepted form of national dress.

The House Standing Committees remained in being throughout the life of the House and had continuing functions. Of another kind were Select Committees set up for a specific purpose and terminating on the presentation of a report. The first House of Assembly set up five such committees but the only one of considerable significance was the Select Committee on Constitutional Development which is described in detail in a later chapter. Of interest was a Select Committee on Powers and Privileges, particularly because of its reference to the role played by the interpreters who provided simultaneous interpretation in the three official languages of the House. I have referred earlier to the suspicion that some interpreters were using the speeches of members as a vehicle to promote their own particular points of view. Ron Neville in particular became a self-appointed watchdog in this matter and was well qualified to do so as he spoke all three languages fluently. He usually spoke in the House in English

or Pidgin but occasionally demonstrated his linguistic prowess by breaking into Motu. Despite Neville's suspicions most of the members did not take the allegations of partiality too seriously.

The Select Committee on Discriminatory Practices also raised some contention and aired some disagreeable practices which had been frequent cause for complaint by Papua New Guineans. One of the most common of these was the offloading of Papua New Guineans from aircraft to accommodate whites. Although airline policy frowned on the practice, individual expatriate employees in different parts of the country not infrequently favoured their own race at the expense of Papua New Guineans. Vigorous reaction from members of the House reduced the irritation and the Select Committee recommended a review of the Discriminatory Practices Ordinance.

I have already mentioned the difficulty of assessing which way the House would vote when divisions occurred, or indeed to vote at all unless the mood seized them. A system of using Whips was tried but it was never effective, even during the second and third Houses when political parties had achieved some shape and substance. Nevertheless attendance of members was good though rarely were all members present and voting. Excluding the Speaker and the Official Members, there were 53 voting elected members but during the sittings in 1966, on the twenty occasions when divisions were called the voting numbers never exceeded 50 and on three occasions fell below 30. The average number of voters in divisions over this period was 42, and average absence from divisions of 11. Some of these were, of course, deliberate, the absentee not wishing to be publicly committed to one side or the other. For obvious reasons Under-Secretaries were more prone to deliberate abstentions than others. The House had no system of pairs as the absence of party membership and the impossibility of predicting voting attitudes made it impracticable.

The role of official members was always a matter of some content-on. On the one hand we were there to explain government policies and to exercise

powers of persuasion to gain acceptance of those policies, but on the other hand we were presumably appointed for our knowledge and experience and surely capable of exercising judgement on how to go about our business, and of providing impartial advice both to our own government and to our own parliamentary colleagues when required. There is an inherent conflict for the official member between his duty to the government which appointed him, his duty to the parliament of which he is a member and his own conscience.

The conflict between the two roles had surfaced prominently in 1959 in the Legislative Council with the Administration Bill to introduce income tax in Papua New Guinea. Five official members sought to vote with their consciences which were nudging them to oppose the Bill. Bill Carter, the Director of Posts and Telegraphs, always a bit of a maverick, wrote on behalf of the five to the Governor-General seeking 'to be permitted to vote with freedom and not receive formal directions in this regard' on the grounds that 'official members lose all identity as responsible advisory officers of the service, supposedly appointed because of their specialist knowledge and Territory experience, and become rubber stamps for the directions of an executive machine.'⁷ The Governor-General, Viscount Slim, replied promptly through his official secretary that the purpose of appointing official members was, among other things, for:-

insuring the Government a majority in the Council without which its responsibility for governing could not be carried out and making available... men... who are best capable of explaining Government measures and policy to unofficial members. If these aims are to be fulfilled it is obvious that Official Members must support Government policy and legislation inside the Council and in public.

His Excellency therefore advises you that, in his opinion, you, as Official Members, should in private advise your superiors fully and freely on your views on any proposed policy or legislation. You are not responsible for decisions on policy; that is for the Commonwealth Government acting usually through His Honour the

Administrator. If your advice is not accepted when proffered to your official superiors you must, as all civil and military officers on a staff should, loyally accept and carry out the directions received.

8

That seemed to be the last word on Official Members.

In fact we did not seriously dispute the Governor-General's outline of our role subject to reasonable opportunity to 'advise (our) superiors fully and freely', and to exercise some independent judgement in carrying out our duties. In the first and second Houses of Assembly we were too often faced with policies originating in Canberra and about which we had not had opportunities to advise our views. Further we were conceded little room for manoeuvre in gaining acceptance of these policies. The mining royalties affair discussed later is an example of government rigidity. The issue of how much freedom of action could be exercised by official members was a particular point of contention in the Select Committees established by the House to advise the House, but especially in the case of the Select Committee on Constitutional Development. We pointed out that such Committees were established by the House and members were elected to them by the House, and that the Committee was entitled to expect each of its members to contribute his best knowledge and advice. We thought that the Administration and the Australian government should be seeking the collective views of the House rather than trying to influence the recommendations of its Select Committees by directing the official members of how to carry out their committee functions. I was subject to criticism by the Secretary of the Department of Territories when, as a member of the Second Constitutional Committee, I expressed doubt as to the suitability for Papua New Guinea of a bicameral parliamentary system, a system the Department claimed to be favoured by the Minister. George Warwick Smith referred to me as a potential 'thorn in our side'. In March 1965 the Administrator wrote to the Secretary in these terms:-

I must urge upon you the need to give myself and my senior

Do not indent

advisers room to manoeuvre. We must be able to come to compromises at times and as long as such compromises do not go against broad policy lines then I feel that I and my senior advisers must be in a position to offer them without any fear at all that we will not be supported by you or by the Minister.⁹

The Department may have had the last word when, on my appointment as Assistant Administrator in 1966, the Minister signed a letter of admonition to me including a sentence, 'the present circumstances require a thorough understanding amongst senior officers of the Administration of the overall situation and policy aims so that they will not only appreciate the reasons for particular measures but will explain and support them.'¹⁰ I felt amused rather than affronted by this gratuitous advice and I had a fair idea as to who had drafted the letter.

But some official members were not above striking an unauthorised blow for their Departments when they thought that the annual appropriation had not made sufficient provision for their needs or when other opportunities arose, McCarthy, in particular, felt that his Department was threatened by the policies of the government and that the primacy long enjoyed by the Department of Native Affairs, (now renamed the Department of District Administration), was being claimed by others. In debating the Appropriation Bill of 1967 McCarthy was a trifle petulant:-

In Port Moresby one sees some very magnificent training establishments such as the Administrative College, the Medical College, the University in the process of building, and my Department still runs its own training establishment at Vunadidir just outside Rabaul. The cost of building it, Sir, was something like \$10,000. I am afraid we are not able to build such magnificent buildings as other training establishments but I can assure members that the turn out of the men from the Vunadidir Training Centre is equal if not better than our more finely decorated establishments.¹¹

The ten official members did indeed exercise a strong influence in the House, irrespective of their powers of patronage. With the exception of Downs, our number included the best informed of the membership of the House and a number were convincing speakers, although only McCarthy was so in the lingua franca of the House, Pidgin. We were the only coherent group and given the expectation of better than average support from the Under-Secretaries we had a firm numbers base which ensured that, on most occasions we could attract sufficient of the uncommitted group to our ranks to give us a majority. The occasions when this was not possible were few. It is sobering to consider, however, that the policy pursued by Barnes and Warwick Smith, of insisting that we adhere closely to their rigid interpretation of policy, required us to devote so much of our energies to getting approved legislation through the House unchanged that we had little time for the more important task of educating and involving members in the democratic process.

CHAPTER VI Notes

1. HAD, Vol.I, No.2, p.177.
2. HAD, Vol.I, No.5, p.716.
3. HAD, Vol.I, No.6, p.935.
4. HAD, Vol.I, No.2, p.158.
5. HAD, Vol.I, No.10, p.1627.
6. Ibid., p.1630.
7. Letter, Carter to Governor-General, 11 June 1959. P.P.
8. Official Secretary (M.L. Tyrrell) to Carter, 18 January 1954. P.P.
9. Cleland to Warwick Smith, 15 March 1965. LH 71. P.P.
10. Barnes to Johnson, June 1966 (undated). P.P.
11. HAD, Vol.I, No.14, p.2687.

CHAPTER VII

REBELLION

The first major row in the House of Assembly was caused by the announcement of new - and sharply reduced - salary scales for Papua New Guinean Public Servants, but its origins go much further back in the history of Papua New Guinea's development. As originally established the Public Service was a body of expatriates supported by Papua New Guineans in a number of menial roles. The lack of educational opportunities meant that few indigenes could aspire to enter the ranks of the classified Public Servants, even though the educational entry requirements could hardly be termed exacting. The Service consisted of three classified divisions. The First Division was for Departmental Heads, the Second was made up of professional, sub-professional and administrative officers, and the third comprised artisans and technicians. Second Division entry required an Australian High School Leaving Certificate, or equivalent, and the Third Division a Certificate appropriate to the trade concerned. As the Service grew a Fourth Division was added, called the Auxiliary Division, specifically for Papua New Guineans who did not have appropriate qualifications to enter the higher ranks of the Public Service, but some of whom might eventually be expected to graduate thereto. The Auxiliary Division was a training division. Supporting staff who could not make it to the Auxiliary Division were called Administration Servants. The salaries of the officers in the three top Divisions were based on Australian rates with a substantial supplement to take care of additional costs and of the hardship attendant on Papua New Guinea service for expatriate officers.

By the early 1960s there were signs of change. Planning commenced to establish an Administrative College specifically to prepare Papua New Guineans for higher positions in the Public Service. Educational opportunities began to expand even though they remained severely limited until the large scale development of secondary education in 1963 and

1964 began. In 1962 there were only three Papua New Guinean students engaged in university studies in Australia and small numbers enrolled in Australian High Schools. In Papua New Guinea it was difficult for an indigene to get beyond three years of secondary education, as courses leading to an Australian Leaving Certificate were provided only at the high schools in Port Moresby and Rabaul designed specifically for Australian children, though with some indigenous scholarship students, admitted. Schools at Sogeri, ^{near Moresby} and Keravat, near Rabaul, provided high school courses for Papua New Guinean boys, initially preparing them for Australian Public Examinations, as did a Roman Catholic Seminary also near Rabaul.

However, change was taking place and by the end of 1962 there were 30 Papua New Guineans in the Second Division of the Public Service and some 700 in the Auxiliary Division. Expatriate Public Servants for the first time began to express concern as to their future security as the political developments and increasing opportunities for Papuans and New Guineans meant the ultimate replacement of at least some of the white officers and eventually the majority of them.

Planning to reform the structure of the Papua New Guinean Public Service began towards the end of 1961 with the following principles in mind: the creation of a Public Service designed for the future when it would be staffed largely by indigenes; the development of a Papua New Guinean salary scale appropriate to the economy of the country; a service which would not be blatantly discriminatory in its pay scales and conditions of service.

The Minister, Hasluck, having been apprised forcefully of the concerned interest of the Public Service Association felt obliged to reassure them all in a letter of August 1962 in which he promised two things: that expatriate pay rates and conditions of service would be guaranteed and that if careers were terminated because of localisation of positions, compensation or alternative employment would be provided. These were

promises that were not translated into concrete terms for another ten years.

In September in Port Moresby, Hasluck amplified his plans for the Public Service:

We are now proposing, in the light of progress made, that this structure be changed to provide for the present and prospective increases in the number of indigenous Public Servants and for the day when the service will be predominantly an indigenous one.

He also made it plain that the indigenous Public Servant could not continue to expect expatriate rates of pay as he penetrated ~~into~~ the upper ranks of his service:

The question to be faced... is whether an indigenous public service can be maintained at the Australian rate of salary and whether its members should receive the expatriate allowances and conditions given to Australians. This is not a question of equal pay for equal work but a question of the capacity of the country to pay. and a question too of social equality in the indigenous community.¹

A new Public Service was to be created for Papua New Guineans at appropriate rates, and expatriates were to be separated off into an auxiliary division. This would remove direct competition for jobs, and emphasise the temporary role of the expatriate in the Public Service. Local and expatriate officers were to have a common salary scale with special allowances preserving the expatriate margin. The proposals were sensible and in initial discussions supported by the Public Service Association representatives, but it was not until ten years later that these proposals were finally implemented.

The new Public Service Bill to accomplish Hasluck's objectives was slow in preparation and did not reach the Legislative Council until September 1963 where it ran into immediate trouble. On reflection, expatriate Public Servants were not satisfied that their future was sufficiently protected by the rather nebulous undertakings by the Minister.

His exhortation:

As in other matters the strongest safeguard is an expectation that Governments will act responsibly'

fell on doubting ears, and the Association reversed its stand on separation of the ^{indigenous} native and expatriate components of the Public Service. The change of attitude was justified on the grounds of promotion ~~ON~~ and merit, maintenance of standards of efficiency and so on, but in fact it was to protect the position of expatriate Public Servants by the maintenance of a single line service with competitive promotional opportunities. The Public Service Association reneged on the salary arrangement, contending that their re-employment opportunities in Australia would be affected if they were required to quote their Papua New Guinea base salary at the common figure proposed for all members of the service.

The separation provision in the Bill met with such prolonged and vehement opposition that it was obvious that this would be an occasion when all nominated and elected members would oppose the measure. Recognising the inevitable the Administration decided to amend its Bill to restore the single line service provision even before the Bill was debated in the Council. When debate did take place all speakers referred to their opposition to a divided service and also spoke of the need for a compensation scheme for displaced expatriate Public Servants.

The Bill made no reference to the actual salaries to be paid to indigenous officers who would now be included in the Public Service proper in much greater numbers, but it did empower the Minister for Territories to fix salary scales. The auxiliary Division was to disappear and a large number of its members would be incorporated into the Third Division, while some would make it into the Second Division where the educational entry requirement was to be reduced (for indigenous officers), to Intermediate Certificate level (equivalent to three years of secondary education).

Briefly, the Bill, when amended, provided for:

- 1) A single line Public Service with different salary scales for indigenous and expatriate officers.
- 2) A structure of three Divisions with amended requirements for entry into the Second and Third Divisions to permit easier access to these grades by indigenous officers.
- 3) Provision in certain circumstances for preference in promotion to be given to indigenous officers (Section 49 of the Ordinance). The Minister may by notice in the Gazette declare that an office or class of office is an office such that in selecting an officer for promotion or transfer to it or in appointing an officer to that office or an office of that class -
 - (a) preference shall be given to any efficient officer who is not an overseas officer over an officer who is an overseas officer.²

It was a provision so restricted in the circumstances in which it could be used that it never was used.

During my period as Director of Education, I was unable to persuade the Minister to declare any such office and other Departmental Heads had similar experiences. The rock upon which all such suggestions broke was that this would raise the matter of compensation to expatriates for loss of promotional opportunity and this was deemed to be more contentious and more important than preferential promotion of indigenous public servants.

Guise was the only speaker during the debate in the council who raised doubts about the Bill:

I find it difficult to support this Bill because there are many anomalies in it. For example, the salary levels of local officers have not been disclosed and there is nothing about compensation for European officers. I think that we have to be very careful about this Bill because it has confused me and it has confused many others.... I am afraid that I cannot make great decisions in a hurry... my mind is confused and we are being made to get this through in such a desperate hurry. These are great decisions to be made and we need more time.³

Desperate hurry was, perhaps, an appropriate term. The Bill was passed on the last day of the last meeting of the old Legislative Council; the last day on which the Administration could be confident of a majority.

There is no doubt in my mind that the provisions of the Ordinance forced upon the Administration by the expatriate wantok system gravely delayed the development of an efficient indigenous Public Service. But the Minister was not blameless in that he failed to bite on the bullet of compensation for loss of career prospects for expatriate officers.

The new House of Assembly inherited this explosive legacy. The first eruption occurred as soon as the new salary scales for local officers were published in the late stages of the second meeting of the House of Assembly. The House rose on 10 September 1964 before indigenous Public Servants had had time to react, but the immediate result was an angry protest march on the Administration offices at Konedobu by Teachers' College students who saw their expectations of generous salaries on graduation sharply reduced. The new scales were greeted with dismay by local officers everywhere. Many saw an unexpectedly low ceiling imposed on their salaries while those already above the new ceiling, even though the principle of non-reduction applied, could not expect further increases for many years, and in some cases, never. Their consternation was reflected in the reactions of House of Assembly members at the next meeting in January 1965. John Pasquarelli led the charge on the first day of the third meeting by asking a question of Harold Reeve:

Who were the persons responsible for giving the 'all clear' to the approved salary scales indicated under the 'new' Public Service Ordinance?

Reeve, never one to be too forthright, raised the temperature by giving a correct but uninformative answer:

I refer the Honourable Member to Section 50 of the Public Service Ordinance 1963.⁴

Predictably it was Barrett who followed next by bringing forward a matter of public importance for discussion on 20 January 1965.⁵

The structure of salaries and allowances payable to local officers of the Public Service under the new determination and its effect on the morale of the service, recruitment of staff and its extension into private enterprise.

In all, 24 elected members spoke, 16 indigenous members and 8 expatriates. Papua New Guinean Members all emphasized the concern felt by Public Servants in their electorates, but both indigenous and expatriate speakers accepted the principle of a salary scale related to the country's economy without, however, going along with the Public Service Commissioner's assessment of what were appropriate figures. The main thrust of the criticism was the ham handed way in which the new scales had been suddenly revealed to all without any serious attempt at preparing public opinion. This was certainly a well based criticism and it bore out the problems attendant on the Public Service Commissioner being directly responsible to the Minister, and thus insulated from local pressures.

Most speakers followed predictable paths but Downs introduced a new challenging element:

The majority of members here want to be re-elected and they find it intolerable that they should be placed in an embarrassing position by a politician in Australia who is not thinking of their political future at all.⁶

He then gave notice of his intention to bring forward an amendment to the Public Service Ordinance at the next meeting of the House, an amendment which would propose some local controls on the Public Service Commissioner, and thus indirectly restrict the unilateral actions of the Minister.

Downs was putting his finger on a source of continuous irritation to successive Administrators. The Public Service Commissioner and later the Public Service Board, was not subject to any form of control by the Administrator or by the Administrator-in-Council, but was responsible solely to the Minister. Under delegations from the Minister, the Public Service Commissioner could

initiate actions contrary to what the Administrator or his Council conceived to be in the public interest or obstruct policies in regard to the public service that they wished to pursue. Theoretically the Minister, through the permanent Head of the Department of Territories, coordinated the separate activities of the Commissioner and Administrator, but the inability of the Administrator to direct the Commissioner remained an area of friction until self-government resolved the problem by removing altogether the jurisdiction of an Australian Minister.

Guise, in speaking to the debate, underlined the situation:

At the present moment the Administrator has no powers under the Public Service Ordinance. All these powers are vested in the Public Service Commissioner and the Minister...

I believe that this power should be taken away from them and given to the Administrator.⁷

The reading of Hansard does not give the flavour of the debate on the new salary scales. It was vehement, impassioned and there were heated exchanges, all of which were reported by press and radio. The Minister and his Department were disturbed and were moved to make a statement immediately following the debate denying the existence of a crisis between the Australian government and the House of Assembly. The statement was placatory in its tone -

for its part the Government had no fixed position regarding the operation of the constitutional and administrative arrangements for the Territory and would look responsibly at any proposals for change that were made by the House of Assembly.

Meanwhile the new arrangements had certainly made an impact upon the composition of the Papua New Guinea Public Service. By the end of January 1965 there were 106 local officers in the Second Division and 1148 in the Third Division.

The parliamentary row had been fostered by the Public Service Association, an organisation completely dominated by expatriate officers, but they were rather less certain of the benefits which might flow from

House of Assembly control of their pay and conditions of service should such a proposal proceed from Downs' remarks in the House. Between the January meeting of the House and the next one in late February, the Association circulated a letter signed by an indigenous Vice-President, calculated to alarm members of the Public Service at the prospect of House of Assembly control. Concurrently some individuals had circulated some pseudo bank notes bearing pictures of Guise, in a crude attempt to suggest that House control would result in the use of currency of dubious value to pay public servants. These practices were attacked by Downs and Mirau in speeches in the House while Gunther officially deplored the bank note device.

Shortly afterwards, on 26 February, Downs introduced his Bill to amend the Public Service Ordinance and a second heated debate erupted. Downs sought to take advantage of the feelings of the moment by moving to suspend Standing Orders so that the Bill might be taken to finality on the same day. In normal circumstances debate on a Bill would be adjourned after the introductory speech by its sponsor and private discussion, lobbying and persuasion would precede final decisions. The Bill was distributed only minutes before its formal introduction, and the suspension of Standing Orders immediately placed the Administration in a losing position.

The Bill, by which a locally appointed Public Service Board was placed over the single Commissioner, set out to bring some major areas of public service jurisdiction under the control of the Administrator-in-Council, notably classification of positions and recruitment, although Downs was careful to point out that the Minister retained the right to direct the Public Service Board on matters of policy.

The Department of External Territories was aghast at the temerity of the elected members in mounting what was clearly a challenge to the authority of the Minister and the official members were enjoined to pull out all stops to have the Bill rejected. It was quite obvious to us that the

elected members had unanimously decided to force the Bill through and that all our oratorical efforts would be in vain. Nonetheless we stonewalled loyally. We first challenged Downs as the mover of the Bill by questioning him in detail on the implementation of it, and exposed the obviously hasty preparation that had gone into it. Next we marshalled all our resources in speaking on the second reading. All of us participated, some at considerable length, and finally we challenged various clauses when the Bill reached the committee stages. In the course of this day-long debate we were in receipt of instructions and exhortations by telephone from the Department of External Territories who had not yet understood that the power and influence wielded from Canberra would not move the elected members. Altogether there were 17 speakers from among the elected members, all of them in favour of the Downs Bill. The Bill was passed on the voices, as we were inhibited from calling for a division as it would have revealed the defection of all of the Under-Secretaries and the total lack of support for the Administration's position.

The actual content of the Bill is less significant than the demonstration of the latent power which could be exercised and the possibility that one revolt might lead to other incursions into the area of Ministerial prerogative. Everyone knew that the Minister would have the Bill disallowed, but equally we knew that an important principle had been established. Elected members were to be courted a little more and dragooned somewhat less. Warwick Smith wrote to the Administrator expressing the Minister's concern, and with the implication that Official Members had not adequately explained the important issue at stake. Cleland responded at length and concluded:

To sum up I believe that it must be emphasized that native members of the House of Assembly... are men with keen minds of their own, who are quite capable of understanding political issues. They are professional politicians with an interest in retaining their seats.⁸

The inevitable result of the passage of the Downs amendment was its rejection by the Australian government. Minister Barnes, in a statement on 25 August 1965, said:

Constitutionally PNG is at a stage of transition. The House of Assembly has been established and we look to it to take an increasing part in Territory affairs. Australia is the administering authority. As such it is responsible for the executive control of the Territory.

This uncompromising position was modified little by the announcement of the establishment of a committee consisting of two elected members of the House of Assembly, a Canberra officer and an Administration officer to review operations of the Public Service 'with the object of providing opportunity for Territory opinion to be taken into account when significant decisions were being taken on the Territory's Public Service.' In the ensuing debate the House of Assembly viewed these protestations sceptically and Watson summed up the attitude cryptically: 'This is the first time the elected members have heard that some people think we just come here to play.'

Nonetheless, the affair emphasized the latent powers of the House and that given a sufficiently emotive issue, Papua New Guinean members, including Under-Secretaries, would desert the Administration. There were, however, only two other substantial occasions in the course of the first House of Assembly when there were sufficient desertions to cause serious embarrassment to the Australian government. One of these was an amendment to the Appropriation Bill of 1966 and the other an amendment to the Mining Ordinance a little later in the same year. There were other issues on which the Administration was in the minority, but in no other circumstance was the Administration cause defended with the committed dedication devoted to the three amendments referred to above.

In each case the Australian government saw vital principles at stake and firmly directed official members to oppose strongly the initiatives of elected members, and evinced surprise and disappointment that our

management of the House was not adequate to achieve the objective of defeating the amendments, - not untinged with the suspicion of an unholy alliance between Administration officials and elected members to curtail the powers of the Minister and his Canberra bureaucrats.

I can state categorically that although there were a number of occasions on which Administration advice differed substantially from the course of action pursued by the Minister, as advised by his Department, there was no occasion when there was a deal in Port Moresby to produce a result contrary to the Ministerial direction.

As the elected member amendments to the 1966 Appropriation Bill and to the Mining Ordinance marked a growth in House independence and were bench marks of political evolution, it is worth spending a little space on each.

In brief, the powers of the House as to money Bills were that it had power to reject as a whole or to reduce any particular item. It could not augment any item. This it could not transfer funds from one item to another.

The presentation of an Appropriation Bill was always an anxious occasion, given that the Administration had no means of ensuring its passage and that inevitably it would fail to satisfy the parochial aspirations of most members. Into the bargain individual members, or groups of members, had little voice in its evolution. The Annual Budget was initially outlined within the Administration in Port Moresby, discussed with officers of the Department, refined, still within bureaucratic circles while the size of the annual Australian grant was being decided. Individual Under-Secretaries participated in formulating their departmental estimates but no elected member, no Under-Secretary and no elected member of the Administrator's Council had a voice in the fundamental decisions as to what broad expenditure policies to follow, what priorities were to pertain and what revenue measures were to be pursued.

The Council was provided with an outline of proposals (but not revenue proposals), quite late in the piece and given some opportunities to discuss them, but none to influence them. In essence the Budget was made in Canberra with the cooperation of Port Moresby bureaucrats.

The 1966 Budget was the third one to be presented to the House of Assembly and the usual dissatisfaction with its individual allocations of funds coalesced with restiveness about the inability of members to influence its general direction. Downs led the charge:

We were led to believe that the Administrator's Council would be given some opportunity of taking part in the preparation of the Budget. Despite anything we may have been told, this has never happened. It is true that the Budget in its completed form, approved by Canberra and printed, is shown to members of the Administrator's Council a few days, (last Monday) before it is presented in the House. It is not presented to the Administrator's Council for them to make a contribution towards the Budget. It is presented to the Administrator's Council for them to agree and even if they disagreed there is nothing that they could do about it.⁹

Early in the debate the elected members' punch was telegraphed through the unlikely medium of Tetley, an Australian crocodile shooter from the Gulf District, who, on 5 September, moved 'while not declining to give the Bill a second reading, the House is of the opinion that no future Appropriations Bill should be introduced without adequate control by elected members as outlined in paras 48 and 49 of the second interim report of the Select Committee on Constitutional Development.'¹⁰ The motion was pre-arranged by elected members and the temper of the House was exemplified by the affirmative vote of 42 to 16.

The next assertion of independence came towards the end of the lengthy, and at times, tedious, debate on the Budget Bill when it had reached the Committee stages. Guise moved for the reduction of the item for Recruitment expenses by \$50,000. The debate on the amendment centred around the need for recruitment which in fact was not questioned by anybody. The amendment

was the vehicle to claim a voice in budget decision making and again the elected members prevailed, though this time only narrowly, by 28-25, all of the Under-Secretaries sticking to the Administration on this occasion, by dint of a deal of individual persuasion.

The Department of Territories expressed grave concern at the House of Assembly bolting from the stable and in the course of debate, maintained a flow of advice and admonition to the senior official member by telephone, as to how to win the day, - or night as it was - and what dire catastrophe would follow the revolt. In fact nothing dire did follow, - having made their point the House accepted docilely a move by official members to restore the \$50,000 plus an additional \$10,000 to the original item at the February meeting in 1967.¹¹ I did, however, make a placatory statement prior to the debate on the restoration:

The Administration desires to increase the degree of consultation in framing the budget for the next financial year... For the immediate future the principal area of consultation will be with the Administrator's Council.... The Administration proposes to take its budget planning to this body and to consult closely at every meeting of the Council.¹²

After almost three years the House had, at last, managed to get its foot in the door.

The next occasion on which the Administration was convincingly defeated was later in 1966 when Lapun, the member for Bougainville, sought a share of mining royalties for the landowners in his constituency.

The development of the vast Bougainville Copper Mine has been dealt with extensively in a number of publications, suffice to say that by 1966 it seemed likely that mining on a large scale would proceed and, to meet the needs, our Mining Legislation needed extensive review. The Bills to do this were presented on 8 June 1966, (two Bills were required because of the separate constitutional status of Papua and New Guinea), and adhered closely to the principle that the ownership of all minerals rests with the government of the country and not in the owners of the land where mining was taking

place. There was a need for haste in having the Bills as a whole accepted to meet the development time-table of the Mining Company, Con Zinc Rio Tinto of Australia (CRA), while it was common knowledge that the ownership principle was likely to be strongly challenged if the Papua New Guinean people had time to think it through. The advent of a large scale mining enterprise presented revenue and development opportunities previously unthought of and members were anxious to get it under way.

Lapun challenged the principle of ownership and gave notice of his intention to amend the Bill to provide for a portion of the royalty from mineral production to be paid to the owners' of the land on which mining was taking place. He was prompted to put forward the figure of 20% of the royalty payment for the landowners, but most members, not at this time having much prospect of mining activities in their electorates, thought this to be greedy. Ultimately, when the Bill reached the committee stage, Lapun and his advisers accepted that 20% had no chance of success. Lapun moved to amend the Bill to provide for 5% of the Royalty to go to landowners. Both the principal Bill and the clauses were debated warmly and extensively with the verdict going to the Administration 30 to 22.

That was not the end of the matter because at the next meeting of the House in November, Lapun tried again. The government had ample notice of his intention and there had been a sharp difference of opinion between Canberra and Port Moresby as to how to deal with it, given our expectation that Lapun would have considerably more support the second time round. According to the Standing Orders of the House of Assembly (Sec.No.157) there needed to be a delay of at least 12 months before 'questions or amendments' dealt with by the House could be introduced again. Lapun's amending proposal was well inside this period and thus contrary to Standing Orders. We in Port Moresby argued that there had certainly been insufficient time to gauge the feeling of the country as a whole before the June debate and that it was only reasonable to permit a free and informed expression of opinion on

the subject. We further argued that 5% of the royalty to the landowners in a country like Papua New Guinea was not unreasonable and that we might well face much larger demands in the future if we resisted discussion now. Further we knew that Lapun would be treated gently and with sympathy by the House which would almost certainly support the suspension of Standing Orders to permit the Bill to be argued, - opposition on technical grounds would be counter-productive. I think it fair to say that, individually, official members thought that the Administration should agree to Lapun's modest 5% proposal. Canberra gave way on the technicality but remained firm on adherence to the principle. This was a principle on which the Minister himself had the firmest of convictions. Once more we traversed familiar ground in debate. Altogether the Mining Ordinances and the amendments proposed had been debated by some thirty members of the House, many of them speaking on more than one occasion. This time the verdict was reversed, Lapun being supported by 31 to 21.

It had been evident to us from the first debate that any opportunity for mature consideration of the royalty question would result in the refusal of most Papua New Guineans to accept the doctrinaire Australian position that although a man or his clan may own the surface soil and all that grows there on, as well as the trees that put roots into that soil, he has no ownership rights to the rocks around which those roots may twine or even the surface itself should it be classified as metalliferous. When all Papua New Guineans had time to think through this imposition of Australian doctrine, it seemed certain that it would be rejected by the majority and supported only by those whose loyalty to the government was stronger than their convictions, and indeed this is how it turned out. The 21 votes for the Australian viewpoint came from official members, ~~five~~ ^{four} faithful Under-Secretaries and the members from the least developed districts, the Southern Highlands, and the Goilala. and ~~was from~~ the Western Highlands.

Our next battle was to convince the Australian government that they

should not disallow the amendment and there was a deal of argument about it before the inevitable was accepted and the Lapun amendment became law.

These latter two occasions were later in the life of the House but it was the Downs Bill to amend the Public Service Ordinance in February 1965 that marked a stage in the maturation of the PNG parliament.

CHAPTER VII : Notes

1. Address to Annual Congress of the Public Service Association, Port Moresby, September 1962. P.P.
2. Details of the Bill as outlined by Reeve in LCD, Vol.VI, No.10, p.1004.
3. Ibid., p.1082.
4. HAD, Vol.I, No.3, p.395.
5. Ibid., p.391.
6. Ibid., p.401.
7. Ibid., p.411.
8. Cleland to Warwick Smith 15 March 1965. P.P.
9. HAD, Vol.I, No.10, p.1641.
10. Ibid., p.1709.
11. HAD, Vol.I, No.12, p.2054.
12. Ibid., p.2061.

CHAPTER VIII

LAW MAKING

In our colonial situation law making was a complex and time consuming business. When an idea germinated, it had to grow to a formal proposal before flowering as a policy decision, all of which required lengthy and sometimes exasperating exchanges between the Administration and the Department of External Territories until our views co-incided. Then there was the job of preparing the legislation and getting it debated and accepted by the House of Assembly, not always a compliant group of men, before the final blessing by the assent of the Administrator, or, in some cases, by the Governor-General. A good example was the process by which we finally had authority to set up a University and an Institute of Higher Technical Education.

It would have to be said that within Papua New Guinea in the early sixties there was little appreciation of the advantages of, or the need for, higher education other than among professional educators and a small minority who thought that for progress towards independence tertiary education institutions were essential. Impetus in this matter came mostly from within Australia and was strong enough to direct Hasluck's mind towards the subject. In any case, whether from inner motivation or external suggestion, the Minister set up a committee to consider the case for higher education. The committee, disproving the commonly held view that they are a device for deferring decisions rather than expediting them, ~~was about to propose that~~ ^{proposed that} by 1966 a University College should be established, associated with an Australian University, ~~when the death of two of its members aborted a formal recommendation.~~ ^{the Committee's / in 1962} ~~progress but~~ Nevertheless a proposal, ~~for all practical purposes,~~ ^{had, in principle, been endorsed by the} ~~was on the Minister's table.~~ ^{Minister.} ~~had also taken~~

The United Nations Visiting Mission ~~then took~~ ^{had also taken} up the issue in early 1962 by advocating heroic measures to get at least a hundred students into tertiary institutions no later than 31 December 1963.¹ Hasluck responded by setting up a Commission of Enquiry chaired by Sir George Currie, previously

Vice Chancellor in New Zealand, with John Gunther, our Assistant Administrator and Oskar Spate, a professor from the Australian National University. At the time we did not think it strange that no Papua New Guinean was a member of the Commission, though Oala Oala-Rarua was its Assistant Executive Officer. The Commission was launched in March 1963. It worked with some despatch and presented its report to the Minister for External Territories, (by then C. E. Barnes), just one year later, recommending two separate but linked institutions, a university in its own right rather than a college, and an institute of higher technical education, both to be in operation by 1965 and to be located in Port Moresby.

But we were as yet nowhere near the starting line. Both the Minister and his Secretary were dubious about the wisdom of the recommended course. The expense of establishing separate institutions worried them, the small number of students, at that time, capable of undertaking higher education was a problem, while there was the usual colonial lobby which thought that better tradesmen were all that were needed and that Papua New Guineans, with an education influenced by pointy headed academics, were likely to be a deal more of a nuisance than their qualifications were worth. At that time we had a mere handful of Papua New Guinean students in Australian universities and had managed to produce just three graduates, Henry To Robert in Economics, John Natera in Agriculture and Joseph Aoae in Law.

The Commission's report shuffled around Canberra desks for almost a year until pressures on the Department and the Minister finally elicited authority for us to proceed with the preparation of the requisite legislation for the House of Assembly. Bills for the House were drafted in Port Moresby by our Legislative Draftsman, Joe Lynch, and his staff. Then draft legislation had to be approved by the Minister before it could be put to the House. There were sometimes a good many exchanges by teleprinter before there was final agreement and even then last minute

amendments often had to be inserted. It was then expected of us that we would get the Bill through the House unscathed. In this respect but on another issue the Administrator wrote plaintively to the Secretary:-

Frankly I feel that the Minister has not understood the human material with which we are dealing here in the Territory. We are not dealing... with men who can always be persuaded willingly that the Government is right. The native members do not make up their minds because they respect or do not respect white men. We are dealing with men who are interested in their own political futures.²

In the case of the Higher Education Bills we had Bills which we regarded as satisfactory though the Clauses were mostly borrowed from Australian legislation for universities. Even so we still found errors and omissions which required amendment in the Committee stages of the Bill.

The job of piloting the Bills through the House fell to me as Director of Education and I was by no means sure that we would have the numbers. The presentation of the Bills would require arguments which members would find convincing given the general lack of background of both expatriate and indigenous members on such matters. There was a possibility that a majority might be persuaded to oppose the Bills by some with prejudices against the idea of a university in Papua New Guinea. There were, of course, a variety of well founded arguments against the proposal. The cost would divert funds from other projects and, as Australian universities could, and would, cater for our immediate requirements, should we not continue to use them? There seemed to be such a small number of students at an educational level sufficient to benefit from a university education that it made sense to continue to send them to Australia. There was also likely to be a hostile reaction from members from New Guinea constituencies at the proposal to establish two more prestigious institutions in Port Moresby and, even if the Bills got through the second reading stage, amendments in the Committee stage to transfer them to other locations would be sure of strong support.

Anyway, as was usual, the Bills were despatched to Members in their electorates with the customary explanatory notes and I pondered on material for a persuasive speech. The Bills were introduced to the House on 18 May 1965³ and I judged it necessary to pre-empt the contra arguments in my introductory speech - the need for a university now, the availability of students and the logic of siting the institutions in Port Moresby.

If we agree... and I feel sure that we do,- that a university in the Territory is an important requirement then the House must ask some questions. The first question is - 'Is it now time to establish a university?' If the answer is 'yes',... the House must then ask: 'does this Bill provide for the establishment the way we want it?' My answer to the first question is 'yes, it is now time to establish a university.' It is quite clear that the sooner we have a substantial number of graduates in education, in administration, in engineering, in medicine, in law, and so on, the better. We can use hundreds of them right now. So I think that three more questions arise from the answer 'yes it is now time to have a university.' The first of these is 'Are there enough students?', the second, 'Can they manage university courses?, Are they good enough?' and the third, 'Why not send them to Australia in any case?'

I proceeded to convince myself and most members of the House that the answer to these questions was 'yes!' but I was far from successful in convincing them that the university should be in Port Moresby, despite my unauthorized undertaking that the Secondary Teachers' College at Goroka and the Agricultural College at Vudal, near Rabaul, would in future become colleges of the university. Holloway, the member for Kainantu in the Eastern Highlands, led the charge against a Moresby site:

I strongly oppose Port Moresby as the site of the Papua New Guinea University. I feel that most of the arguments put forward to date in favour of Port Moresby lack vision and appreciation of the future development of Papua and New Guinea.⁵

On the other hand I had support from James Meanggarum despite the fact that his electorate was Ramu, whose people might have been expected to support

a Lae site.

I think that Port Moresby is the place where the university should be sited... We are now like so many dogs scrapping over a bone, trying to pull it in different directions.⁶

There were 27 speakers on the Second Reading debate, eighteen of these Papua New Guineans, and ultimately the Second Reading stage passed without a division. However it was obvious that we had a fight on our hands in the Committee stages of the Bill when we came to the Clause nominating Port Moresby as the site for the university. I was particularly concerned that a proposal for a site in the Highlands would draw support from a large proportion of Highland members, and, if such an amendment was passed by the House, we would be faced by the prospect of accepting an unsuitable site, yet to be determined, with lengthy delays in acquiring sufficient land and very considerable increases in building costs. Of course there would be the alternative of using the reserve powers to disallow the amendment but it was a course we were always extremely reluctant to advocate, though our colleagues in Canberra were more hawkish in this regard.

We lubricated the passage of the Bill through the Committee by accepting some minor amendments from the floor of the House, notably to increase local representation on the University Council, including one extra member from the House of Assembly. Barrett held me to my promise in the general debate by moving to include in the Bill a requirement that the university should establish, or embrace, colleges at Goroka, Bulolo and Vudal. Again we did not demur. The crunch came with Clause 15 - the one nominating Port Moresby as the site. Bloomfield, whose electorate lay in the Morobe District of which the town of Lae was the centre, immediately moved that the clause be amended to nominate Lae as the site for the university. But with opinion widely divided on parochial grounds, he did not get much support.⁷ Holloway moved for a site at Goroka but I managed to have his amendment ruled out of order because a change of site had been

rejected previously. The decision of the Speaker in my favour was on rather shaky grounds but, possibly, having seen his home town, Lae, rejected he was not going to see the university going to another provincial town.

The Bill was reported with amendments but Bloomfield and Hollaway made a last ditch attempt by seeking a re-committal and this time moved that the site should be determined by the Interim Council of the University. This would not have bothered us too much as we could be sure of the numbers on the Council, but members were sick of the debate and quickly threw this initiative out. We had our Ordinance and were soon to have a university in Port Moresby.

Meanwhile the Bill to establish the Institute of Higher Technical Education had passed through the House unchallenged.⁸ It was presented on the evening of the day on which we had begun the debate on the University Bill and members had apparently had enough of educational arguments. Apart from my own speech in support of the Bill no other member rose. To my astonishment the Bill went through all stages in half an hour.

As our plan was that the two tertiary institutions should be linked and have some common services, the Bill also nominated Port Moresby as the site for the Institute, but this had passed in the House without a comment. But the sequel was a different matter. In the following year the indefatigable Barrett, who had been appointed to the Interim Council of the Institute, with the object of keeping him off the University Council, set out to change the site of the Institute to Lae. He had recognized that there would not be enough support for his home town of Rabaul, for not only was it not sufficiently central but was also subject to both earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

There were some good reasons for re-considering the siting of the Institute, for at this stage not too much money had been spent, - students were still living and working in borrowed accommodation, - though in the long term the plan that the university and the Institute would share

accommodation, library, messing facilities, etc., was designed to save duplication and a deal of money. The strongest reason was undoubtedly the reaction of the people of New Guinea as articulated by their members in the House - they resented the concentration of facilities in Port Moresby and only lack of organisation had prevented them from moving to site the university elsewhere. Also there were likely to be jurisdictional problems between two separate and equal institutions sharing facilities; at this early stage, even before there were any facilities to share, there were some warning signs of likely friction. I thought, too, that there was a case for decentralising higher education, while if one looked to the future there seemed to be some point in not concentrating the whole body of tertiary students in Port Moresby in the event of a combustible situation.

Barrett first tried to move the Council of the Institute to initiate the change and when that failed he put a Bill into the House to amend the Ordinance to locate the Institute in Lae.⁹ In most parliaments the government would have ensured that an unacceptable private members' Bill would languish at the bottom of the list of business for ever, but this summary solution was not open to us. Our members, no matter how docile they might be, would not countenance an elected member's initiative being discarded unheard. We would certainly have been soundly defeated if we had tried it on. Whether we liked it or not, Barrett was going to have his moment of glory.

On this occasion, probably for the reasons traversed above, we got uncertain signals from our Canberra colleagues and I went into the debate not certain that a negative position would be a wise one but loyally prepared to argue the issue. In fact I thought it a lost cause as it seemed sure to be based on a Port Moresby versus the rest contest. I had arranged with Barrett that the issue would be argued in the Committee stages of the Bill rather than in the Second Reading debate. Our Standing Orders permitted members to speak twice on each clause under consideration when

the House was in Committee and thus one can reserve one's heaviest broadsides until the second time up, and this I had planned to do. Unfortunately this was not to be - the temper of the House was such that it was quite obvious that our cause was well and truly lost, but even so I was sunk without having a chance to use my biggest guns as one of my own official colleagues, Scragg, took it upon himself to guillotine the debate. Although the issue appeared to be a foregone conclusion, I was less than pleased to be cut short by a colleague who should have kept his mouth shut. We lost the division 37 to 20.

The end result was, I believe, a good one, even though it delayed somewhat the effective commencement of tertiary education in the technical fields, and added considerably to its establishment costs. A fine Institute was developed near Lae and now flourishes as the University of Technology.

This eleventh meeting of the first House of Assembly in November 1966 was a bad one for us. Earlier in the meeting we had lost to another elected member, Paul Lapun, on the issue of mining royalties to landowners. In both cases we had to argue strongly to dissuade the Minister and his advisers from using the reserve powers of disallowance which were very seriously considered even in the face of the convincing majorities supporting Barrett and Lapun.

CHAPTER VIII : *Notes*

1. United Nations Trusteeship Council 1962, Supplement No.3.
2. Cleland to Warwick Smith, March 15, 1965. P.P.
3. Debate in HAD, Vol.I, No.5, pp625 and beyond.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., p.727.
6. Ibid.
7. The Hansard record of the Committee stages of the Bill is incomplete.
8. HAD, op.cit., pp.634-636.
9. HAD, Vol.I, No.11, pp.1977-1980.

CHAPTER IX

CONSTITUTION MAKING

During the currency of the first House of Assembly a number of external events exercised a substantial influence on the deliberations of the House and on the programmes that were presented to it for approval. In particular these events influenced attitudes towards constitutional change. The most important of these was an economic survey of Papua New Guinea by a mission from the IBRD (The World Bank), which had been pressed on Hasluck first in 1960 and then by the 1962 United Nations Visiting Mission led by Sir Hugh Foot.

The Bank Mission was comprised of a large team of experts, four economists, two advisers on agriculture and livestock and others to report on education, public health, transport and communications, and industry. The Mission set out an economic programme which the Australian Government accepted as a basis for future planning and which was to influence strongly Australian policies for Papua New Guinea for the next six years. The key sentence in a Bank report of over four hundred pages was:

To obtain the maximum benefit from the development effort, expenditures and manpower should be concentrated in areas and activities where the prospective return is highest.¹

At the same time there was a change of guard in the persons of both the Minister for Territories and the permanent Secretary of the Department. Hasluck moved over to the Defence Ministry at the end of 1963 and was replaced by an elderly Country Party M.P., C.E. Barnes, a man with no previous ministerial experience.

G. Warwick Smith, previously a Deputy Secretary in the Department of Trade replaced C.E. Lambert as Head of the Department of Territories. Hasluck, had he remained, would have appointed Gunther.

The coincidence of a Country Party Minister, a permanent Head with a Trade background and a comprehensive IBRD economic report shaped the events of the future. Economic development became the principal concern of the Minister and his Department, and both political and social development were subordinated to the achievement of economic targets.

Political development was not entirely neglected, it would be hard to do so when the first House of Assembly began its life shortly after the appointment of the new Minister, but at its inauguration ceremonies the Governor-General, and later the Minister, had little to say about politics and much about economic development. There began a conscious effort to restrain the rate of political change, to slow down the activists, in the hope that the point of economic take off could be reached before policy direction devolved into the hands of Papua New Guineans. The Australian Government looked ~~on~~ with ^{on} approbation ~~to~~ the House of Assembly's reaction to the United Nations' Fourth Committee's pressure for more rapid progress towards self-government in Papua New Guinea when the resolution introduced by Matt Toliman to tell the United Nations to mind its own business was supported by all members.

However there was some stirring among the politicians with political ambitions, and in January 1965 John Guise brought to the House's notice a meeting of elected members at which it was decided that some progress should be made on the development of a Papua New Guinea Constitution. Cautious as always, Guise emphasised that: "the last thing we want at this time is for the people to think...that we want our independence now".² The idea was warmly supported, nineteen indigenous members recording their approval.

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Guise followed this up in the next meeting of the House by moving for the establishment of a Select Committee on Constitutional Development, which thereafter took the central stage on all matters relating to political development. The original committee with Guise as Chairman comprised ten members. Other than Guise the Papua New Guineans were, Nicholas Brokam, Sinake ^{Guise}Gire, and Pita Simogen. Elected expatriates were Bill Bloomfield, Ian Downs and John Stuntz, while the officials were Gunther, Watkins and ^{me} ~~S.~~ It was soon realised that it was heavily over^gblanced by expatriates and Paul Lapu, Tei Abal, Wegra Kenu and Dirona Abe were added. An executive secretary was conscripted from the Department of Law, (F.M. Chaney, now Senator Chaney).

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For some time the Committee was at a loss as to how to go about its task, or indeed just what the task was. Could it embark upon constitution making when national politics had hardly begun? How could a constitution be drafted until principles were defined and how were these principles to be discerned? We made a tentative beginning by examining the constitutions of some newly ~~e~~ emergent nations. Our executive secretary produced summaries of the constitutions, but we were soon out of our depth and before too long we reached the conclusion that we were ill-prepared to recommend fundamental changes, nor was the country prepared for them. We settled for a more modest role of considering the next steps to be taken in establishing a parliamentary democracy.

However Guise had some firmly fixed ideas which he was keen to implement. He was anxious that the Committee should arrive at a suitable name for a united country rather than the clumsy and divisive Papua and New Guinea, and that the united country should have a flag and a national anthem of its own. It might be noted that it took a

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further six years to arrive at an agreed flag and that no consensus has yet been reached on a name except to drop out the 'and' between Papua and New Guinea.

Nevertheless the idea that, at this stage of its development, the country should seek a separate identity from Australia alarmed some bureaucrats in Canberra and the official members of the Committee were enjoined to dissuade this premature effort to short-circuit the orderly process of decolonisation. A Department of Territories memo explored the implications:

There is a danger, however, if the adoption of common symbols is used by some people to force the pace of political development beyond what the majority of people wish to see it... Official members should not align themselves with members of the Committee pressing for adoption of symbols to force the pace of political development.³

I recall Gunther, in reluctant obedience to this injunction, using his best persuasive efforts to push Guise's unseemly initiatives into the background. Guise went ahead unilaterally and circulated a letter seeking suggestions, but it was eventually agreed that we should defer the pursuit of such a radical initiative. To digress, the Constitutional Committee established by the Second House of Assembly was not so inhibited, though in Canberra there was still an obsession about hauling down the Australian flag and flying a new Papua New Guinean flag only on independence day, - then considered to be a remote date. This second Committee arrived at a recommendation for a national flag only in its dying moments and even then its proposal survived in the House of Assembly only on the casting vote of the Speaker. But an attempt to have 'Niugini' accepted as a name was vetoed by the Papuans in favour of Papua New Guinea where the matter still rests. The

appropriate flag raising and lowering ceremony was duly carried out on Independence Day in 1975, but in fact the Papua New Guinea flag had been flying from Administration Offices and buildings for four years. From the flagstaff outside my office⁴ we flew both the Australian and the Papua New Guinea flags on separate staffs at the same level, - probably faulty protocol but good politics.

To return to the first Constitutional Committee: It provided a first Interim Report to the House in November 1965, shortly after Guise, accompanied by Gunther and Toliman, had returned from the United Nations Trusteeship Council meeting in New York. The report had little to say but intimated the Committee's intentions to visit Australia to seek the Australian Government's views on constitutional development and then, bolstered by what might be gleaned in Canberra to "ask the people of Papua New Guinea what they want, and if they want the present way of governing changed in any way".⁵

At the same time the Committee lost Gunther who could no longer put up with the heavy handedness of the Department of Territories, in particular its nervous grip on the official members words and actions in the Committee. Gunther might well have been the head of the Department of Territories himself had not Hasluck moved over before the appointment could be made, and Barnes played safe by appointing Warwick Smith from within the Canberra bureaucracy. Gunther, who had been a member of the Legislative Council since its post-war inception, *then* Chairman of the Committee which had set out the design for the present House and handled the transition, thought with some justice that his judgement of both the desirable and the possible was at least as good as that of officers in Canberra, *and* he rejected in his forthright way the detailed oversight to which we were all subjected. He stalked out of a meeting between the official members of the Committee and Warwick

Smith in Port Moresby, and shortly afterwards resigned from the Administration altogether to become Vice-Chancellor of the about-to-be established University of Papua New Guinea.

The Select Committee's visit to Canberra was preceded by the Australian Cabinet's consideration of a submission from its Minister for Territories which pointed out that the United Nations Trusteeship Council, following the United Nations Visiting Mission of 1965, had recommended consideration of a Ministerial Cabinet in which New Guineans should hold positions of responsibility, and that "the next step in constitutional development is to bridge the gap between a fully representative parliament and a fully responsible government".⁶ Cabinet agreed to Barnes' recommendation that it be prepared to accede to requests for modest increases in participation in the executive government by elected members, provided that the prerogatives of the Minister for Territories were not infringed. Shortly afterwards Barnes confided to Parliament that: "The Government has no desire to press constitutional changes upon the people of the Territory which they do not want...or for which they think they are not ready..." but "the Government would regard transitional steps towards eventual responsible Ministerial government as appropriate at this stage".⁷

The Canberra discussions between the Committee and a number of Australian Ministers served to make it apparent to Committee members that the Australian government was anxious that the pace of political development should not be too precipitate but that a modest movement forward would be acceptable.

Other than this general impression the meeting was not too productive. Some of the more adventurous members of the Committee had included among the matters to be raised more ambitious reforms. Question 5 on the Papua New Guinea Agenda was:

Has the Commonwealth Government any views as to whether there should be a form of ministerial government with a parliamentary executive as in Australia or whether some pattern akin to the American system with a non-parliamentary executive should be established?

The Department of Territories "Notes of Discussion" record "this was not discussed in any detail". The Minister's view had been expressed at his initial meeting with the Committee: - "If we attempt a long term constitutional goal based on what we think, at this time, will be suitable at some unknown time ahead we may find we have followed the wrong road from the one we think best when that time in the future actually arrives".⁸ In my own notes for the Administrator's information I commented "Unless there is some idea of destination it is difficult to consider the road which should be taken to reach it".

Barnes was able to report the result of the conference to the House of Representatives with some satisfaction:

The Committee emphasised that its wish to discuss future possibilities should not be taken as indicating that the Committee considered that the pace of development should be hastened or accelerated.⁹

He also left the faint hopes of the Seventh Staters alive; "a decision as to the nature of possible further forms of association that would be acceptable to Australia should not be made now". We had thought that the then Treasurer, W. MacMahon, had already extinguished that spark. Mc Mahon

Our Chairman, John Guise, captured the publicity in an interview with the A.B.C. by blandly ignoring the Official Statement as to the product of the meeting and complaining that Federal Ministers had been vague about the possibility of Papua and New Guinea becoming a seventh

State of Australia, but at the same time they had not indicated any clear road the Territory could take in its future constitution.¹⁰

However, despite the Chairman, the Committee felt reassured as to its role and divided itself into small groups and set out to various parts of Papua New Guinea to determine the will of the people.

The public meetings which the sub-committees held followed the same pattern. The chairman of the visiting group would explain the purpose of the meeting, rehearse the questions, already outlined in a widely circulated pamphlet, and then invite the views of the people. Sometimes there were vigorous exchanges but generally the meetings were pretty tedious affairs, principally noted for leading questions from individual members of the visiting group and authoritarian statements from one or two members of the audience. After the first tour by the sub-committee of which I was a member I reported to the Administrator as follows:

1. Attendance

Attendance of Papuans and New Guineans was good and interest appeared to be high. European attendance was sparse and there was little general European interest.

2. Participation

Not very many people participated in discussion. Groups would attend with a nominated spokesman who was the mouthpiece for the group. Usually these groups came along with their views already formed. Most meetings had a sprinkling of younger educated men who spoke freely and represented their own individual ideas.

3. Trend of Discussion

Councils and other recognised groups tended to be conservative. Most expressed a wish for some further constitutional progress but with strict limits. There was no criticism at all of

existing arrangements but a general feeling that a further constitutional step was desirable for the 1968 House. The young men referred to in 2 above had more radical ideas but there was nothing extreme. There was not a good knowledge of the existing arrangements nor of the powers of the present House. Very few appeared to be acquainted with the widely distributed circular outlining the constitution and responsibilities of Under-Secretaries and of the Administrator's Council. There is an immediate need for the political education material now being prepared by the Department of District Administration.

4: Consensus of Views

The most commonly expressed views related to rather superficial arrangements for Under-Secretaries.

- (a) The name Under-Secretary was not popular. The word Minister was commonly suggested though this did not imply Ministerial status in the Australian sense.
- (b) It was widely advocated that Under-Secretaries or Ministers should be selected by the House of Assembly.
- (c) It was generally accepted that each Government Department should have a Minister.
- (d) There was widespread criticism of the failure of Under-Secretaries to combine successfully their representative duties with their Ministerial responsibilities. Some of this criticism came from individuals who were engaged in political manoeuvres with an eye on the next election.
- (e) No-one knew much about the function of the Administrator's Council and there was no serious criticism of its operation

or membership. Among those better informed there was an indication that they thought that its powers should be extended but definite proposals were lacking.¹¹

Conservatism was general but none more so than the majority of the Highlanders which was best expressed by the people of Wabag in the Western Highlands¹² led by the redoubtable Tei Abal:

Nogud yupela hariap tumas long sanisim sampela samting na daunim strong bilong ol Eupian i laik kirapim wok long i laik helpim planti people long Territory. ...Nau long 1968, yupela i ken sanisim liklik samting long House of Assembly. Yupela ino ken hariap, mipela laikim step by step. Sapos yupela i laik sanisim sampela samting long country bilong yumi orait yupela i ken sanisim long 1972.¹³

Broadly translated it means: "It is no good to hasten change and destroy the good work of Europeans which has helped the people of the Territory. In 1968 small changes could be made in the House of Assembly but these should be step by step. If changes are desired they can be made in 1972".

The logical conclusion to arrive at was that only modest change was desired or needed. Most people in fact were neither sufficiently informed nor politically motivated to provide any worth-while guidance to the Committee. The meetings were public relations exercises and served as a measure of political education. It became clear quite soon that the Committee would need to generate its own views and then educate the public to understand the consequences of those views. If there was any consensus of the views of the people, obtained from the visits of the Committee to all parts of Papua New Guinea, it was that dramatic advances were not wanted but that greater representation was most strongly desired. Papua New Guinean voters wanted their voices heard

in the House as to their specific local needs and they wanted those needs expressed by men they knew, by men whom they would see frequently and on whom they could exert some pressure. Large electorates, sometimes comprising mutually hostile tribes, meant that the member would often be afraid to visit some of his constituents. The consensus was that a larger parliament was required, but that there should be no haste towards self government.

Having tasted public opinion the Committee then reviewed its role and came to the conclusion, some consciously, others in a more intuitive fashion, that what was required was some proposals which would move Papua New Guinea moderately on the road to self-government which would mean some devolution of authority to the House of Assembly and/or its Ministers, possibly some commensurate reduction in the numbers and role of official members, an expansion of the responsibilities of the Administrator's Council and a little tinkering with membership of the House of Assembly, particularly with the reserved or regional seats.

This is not to say that there was not a degree of nudging from Papua New Guinea sources, both internal and external to the House, to push the Committee into rather more progressive recommendations than it seemed likely to produce of its own volition. Actually the first such attempt was made by Barry Holloway before the Committee had got into its stride. He sought discussion in the House on a proposal calling for the establishment of a quasi-Ministerial system of government. It was promptly squelched ~~in the House~~ on the basis that this is what the Constitutional Committee had been set up for and ~~Mr~~ Holloway should properly refer his ideas to that quarter.

Outside of the House there was some political awakening among the younger Papua New Guinean public servants who were brought together for special acceleration courses at the Administrative College to prepare them for senior executive posts in the Public Service. A group of these,

initially ten, made a submission to the Committee in April 1966¹⁴ which was by no means revolutionary; perhaps mildly progressive would be the most suitable term to apply to it. The submission proposed a "true Cabinet which will include leaders of elected members who will begin to act as Ministers responsible for the running of Departments" but the group was quite prepared to accept co-responsibility between these Ministers and their Departmental Directors. They also foresaw the continuation of Official Members of the House of Assembly, perhaps five or six of them. They referred to the Administrator's Council as the Cabinet or the Executive Council and suggested that it should have a membership of ten or twelve, and include four Ministers, two Assistant Ministers as well as Officials and others. The group also wanted a one-line Public Service with a common salary scale for all officers but with special allowances for expatriates, - a proposal almost identical with that put forward by the Administration in 1962 and rejected by the Legislative Council.

The submission claimed that "The Federal Government, in our opinion, has not only failed to introduce the executive side of parliamentary government, above all it has failed to give out a clear cut plan to show what steps it means to take to bring about and make true its promise of one day giving self-government to our country".¹⁵

As might be expected the people of Wabag responded vigorously to these adventurous proposals.

No gut yumi hariap na yumi bakarap. Yupela ino ken harim gris tok bilong tenpela man istap long Town or ol save long English.

Dispela country em ino bilong lo pela man istap long Town...

Em dispela country bilong mipela planti man na meri.¹⁶

Loosely translated it said. "Haste may bring disaster. Don't listen to the smooth words of townsmen who understand English. This

country doesn't belong to these ten men. It belongs to all of us."

In March 1967 the group, by then increased to thirteen, presented a refined version of their proposals to the Committee, supplemented by oral evidence. More heat than light was thrown upon the submission through the choleric interventions of Walter Watkins, the Secretary for Law, and at that time the Deputy-Chairman of the Committee. He concluded what might be termed a hostile cross examination with some personal comments:

These statements, I think, show absolute disregard of the true facts and in no way exhibit any thankfulness for what has been done and I feel that a document such as this, which has been made public, unless something is said about it, can damage this Territory or the people of this Territory in the eyes of the outside world... I take a very poor view of the manner in which this detailed explanation has been submitted.¹⁷

We found the fuss, which the local press took up with some enthusiasm, a bit embarrassing but certainly Watkins' views aroused a responsive chord in the breasts of many of the older expatriates, and some younger ones too who felt their status under threat. It might be noted that seven of the thirteen were, or became members of parliament, and four of them were Ministers in the first Somare ministry in 1972 - Somare, Olewale, Taureka and Kiki. Another, Oala-Rarua, was Papua New Guinea's first High Commissioner to Australia.

These stirrings which arose among the indigenous public servants were encouraged and developed in the House of Assembly upon the election of Tony Voutas, vice the deceased Bloomfield, and led to the creation of the Pangu Pati (Papua and New Guinea Union). The press statement of the new party began:

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The thirteen men known as the home rule group, together with some nine elected members of the House of Assembly have joined to form a new political party called the Pangu Pati.¹⁸

The first plank of the new party's platform was:

Home rule leading to ultimate independence.

That means we aim for independence in the future, but we must have time to learn and our leaders must begin to train for this through taking part in executive government.¹⁹

It was hardly a revolutionary document and the new member of the House, Voutas, was equally modest in his maiden speech:

I feel that the Government is giving the elected members a very limited amount of power. The power given them is not commensurate with their wisdom and integrity. They do not have a great deal of power - just a name and nothing else.²⁰

Paralleling these activities was growing pressure from progressive forces in Australia, some influenced by firmly held political beliefs and others by a strong desire to participate actively in nation making. Perhaps the best expression of these was during a seminar held in Goroka in 1965 under the auspices of the Council for New Guinea Affairs. A number of well known Australian personalities planned Papua New Guinea's future untroubled by any responsibility for making it work, but seized with the idea that we should be proceeding somewhat faster than our present snail's pace along the decolonisation road. E.G. Whitlam, then Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Australian parliament, shocked local expatriate opinion by saying that it was unrealistic to think that Australia would still have political control of Papua New Guinea after another five years.²¹

The Committee was unresponsive to these pressures and in August 1966 presented its Second Interim Report²² dealing principally with the make-up of the membership of the House. The relatively early conclusion of this part of the Committee's work was to ensure sufficient time for the Australian Parliament to make the necessary amendments to the Papua New Guinea Act so that new electoral boundaries could be drawn in time for the 1968 elections. In brief the Report recommended an increase in open electorates from 44 to 69, that the special electorates be renamed regional electorates and be open to all qualified candidates, subject to the existing educational qualification, and that their number be increased to fifteen. The Committee adhered to the preferential vote for elections and to the four year tenure of life for each elected assembly. Official membership was to remain at ten, making up a total House membership of 94 as against 64 in the First House of Assembly. The Committee commented rather cautiously that elected members should have some voice in the disposal of locally raised revenue and adverted to the suggestion made by Dr Coombs at Goroka, that of a dual budget arrangement. With little debate the House approved the Report without a dissenting voice.

Although viewing with a jaundiced eye the possibility that the House of Assembly might demand a voice in the disposal of revenue, the Australian Government saw no threat in the recommendations and proceeded to amend the Act accordingly.

But the next steps to be taken by the Committee were more fundamental; their recommendations would perforce deal with the pace of constitutional change while there had already been considerable discussion outside the House as to whether the Westminster model would best suit Papua New Guinea's particular circumstances or if alternative models should be considered. The next phase of the Constitutional

Committee's deliberations might bear upon this problem. Would it be shaping the long term political/executive structure by its recommendations or would its proposals be sufficiently elastic to permit future governments to choose from a variety of constitutional models? There is obviously a strong disposition among bureaucrats to choose the model with which they are familiar and have successfully manipulated and the Constitutional Committee was very strongly influenced by the Australian bureaucrats, both past and present, in its midst. The Papua New Guinea members had no experience upon which to draw. In these circumstances it seemed most likely that proposals might be not much more than variations on a Westminster theme. Already we had a parliament consisting of members elected in single member constituencies and a quasi-Ministerial structure drawn from within that parliament. On the other hand we had a potential rival executive structure (the Administrator's Council), a nominated body headed by the Administrator which would perhaps be considered as the forerunner of a Presidential system on the American pattern if an elected President ultimately took the place of the Administrator. There were still a number of ways in which the cat could jump.

However our problem in the Committee was to make some forward constitutional progress given the limitations in background, experience and education of those Papuans and New Guineans who would be manipulating the institutions of government in the future. In 1966 it looked to be some time before the removal of an expatriate Administrator could be contemplated or the jurisdiction of the Australian Government withdrawn. It seemed to us that the only road to progress was in the extension of the powers of parliament through some of its members, the extension of the responsibilities of the Under-Secretaries was an obvious development, as was the expansion of the role of the Administrator's Council. It was becoming clearer to us that the Administrator's Council

would be the forerunner of a Cabinet linked to the House of Assembly.

These deliberations coincided with the retirement of Sir Donald Cleland, the long serving Administrator, and the appointment of David Hay in his place. It marked the beginning of a more progressive era.

However, the Minister for External Territories, rather upset the apple cart in April 1967 by publicly stating his doubt that Papua New Guinea would ever be completely independent of Australia, though qualifying this pronouncement by confirming that the Government's basic policy for Papua New Guinea had been, and still was, self-determination. "It is the prerogative of the people to terminate the present status and take independent status if they wish to do so."²³ During press interviews Department of External Territories' officers were always a little on edge with their Minister, and his views, spontaneously expressed, sometimes seemed several degrees more conservative than when they appeared in prepared statements.

Meanwhile the Australian Government had taken the initiative on the possibility that the Constitutional Committee would recommend an undue degree of control of the finances by elected Papua New Guinea representatives. In a statement made in the House of Assembly in February 1967 I indicated that the Administration proposed to involve the Administrator's Council in budget discussions. Nonetheless the key word was still "consultation". We undertook that after the discussion of the general budget outline the Administrator's Council would embark upon a detailed discussion of the estimates which indeed we did during the month of April.²⁴

The House reacted with some scepticism to the Administration's avowals.

The final report of the Constitutional Committee was presented to Parliament in June 1967 and did not make any recommendations likely to alarm the conservative Minister for External Territories or his Department. The Administrator's Council was to remain virtually unchanged with the Administrator's powers unchallenged, though the report did say that the Council should be "the principal instrument of policy of the executive Government of the Territory" and that this somewhat tenuous definition of increased responsibility should be accompanied by the new name for the Council, the Administrator's Executive Council. Enlarged responsibility for Under-Secretaries, that of sharing responsibility with the Permanent Heads of their Departments, was recommended. There was to be a two tier system of Ministers and Assistant Ministers. The appointment of Ministers and Assistant Ministers was to be a shared responsibility, and for the first time there would be a direct link between the House and the Administration through a House elected Ministerial Nominations Committee which would consult with the Administration^{or} on a Ministerial list to be submitted to the House for approval before going to the Minister for External Territories for appointment.

Financial matters and in particular the annual Budget planning were left largely as before, given the Administration's undertaking of increased consultation and the rather nebulous enhancement of the Administrator's Executive Council role, but a Standing Committee of the House would be created through which individual members would channel their views on fiscal matters.

The Committee defended itself from the criticism that it was steering Papua New Guinea in the direction of a Westminster type parliamentary institution by saying that "it does not see its recommendations as committing the country, or attempting to commit the

country, to any particular course".²⁵ Nevertheless it was a good long step towards confirming us in the Westminster pattern.

The Australian Government saw no serious threat to its policy of ordered and leisurely evolution with the minor exception of objecting to the names Minister and Assistant Minister on the grounds that it implied a status and responsibilities a good way beyond those they were to have. We in Papua New Guinea argued that this was a triviality but the Department of External Territories persisted and rather indulgently the House consented to an amendment. The clumsy terms of Ministerial Member and Assistant Ministerial Member were substituted. However in Papua New Guinea the term 'Minister' was commonly used. In fact the Report of the committee was adopted without debate at all except the intervention of the Official Member, Frank Henderson, proposing the change of name for Ministers.

There was one more postscript to the adoption of the report and that was the amendment to the Electoral Bill concerning the residential qualification required for nomination for a seat in Parliament. The report called for five years residence and the Administration, in amending the existing Electoral Ordinance, also included a Clause allowing for an absence of two years during this period. This was to cater for sometimes lengthy absences by expatriates for business, or education, sickness and study periods. Its actual effect however was to protect the position of Tony Voutas who had been absent from Papua New Guinea for a long period on study leave. In his relatively brief period in the House ~~✱~~ Voutas had aroused antagonism in some quarters, and strong support in others, by advancing consistently progressive views, some would call them radical, and there was a good deal of support, particularly from some of his elected expatriate colleagues, for a measure which might exclude him. After a series of proposed amendments the House ultimately approved one which would

permit Voutas to nominate again. Official members did not participate in the argument though I made a brief intervention in the debate which I like to think had some influence on the decision. I believe it was a very fortunate decision by the House. It ensured that the new political party, PANGU, would have moderate and intelligent guidance in its future development and after its assumption of political power in 1972.

The Minister Barnes had the last word speaking between the dissolution of the first House of Assembly and the election of the second.

I urge that Australians....should admit the possibility that Papuans and New Guineans in general are conscious of the shortness of time of their development and are not anxious to rush into self-government or independence... I myself see little need for, or advantage to be gained in, forcing the pace of constitutional change.²⁶

Chapter IX

1. 'The Economic Development of The Territory of Papua and New Guinea' IBRD, Johns Hopkins Press 1965 p35
2. HAD Vol.I, No.3, p.453
3. Dept of Territories memo 69/3605 (undated) PP
4. I was then Administrator of PNG.
5. HAD Vol.I, No.7, p.1126
6. Draft Cabinet submission 27 Jan.1966. PP
7. Statement to the House of Representatives 31 March 1966
8. D.E.T. 'Notes on Explanatory Talks' p.9, PP
9. Statement to the House of Representatives. April 21 1966
10. ABC broadcast Port Moresby April 25 1966 (7 pm news) PP
11. PP
12. Wabag is now in the Enga Province
13. Submission of Wabag Local Government Council 20 Jan. 1967.
The translation is from the local vernacular into Pidgin by Tei Abal
14. Letter to Chairman of the Select Committee 15 April 1966 PP
15. Submission of Committee of Thirteen to Select Committee
16 March 1967
16. Submission of Wabag Local Government Council. op.cit
17. Transcript of proceedings of Select Committee 16 March 1967
18. Press statement 13 June 1967
19. Ibid
20. HAD Vol.I, No.10, p.1588
21. South Pacific Post 14 April 1965
22. HAD Vol.I, No.10, p.1582
23. Address to International House, University of Melbourne
12 April 1967 PP
24. HAD Vol.I, No.12, p.2061
25. HAD Vol.I, No.13, p.2340-44
26. Address to Summer School, Canberra 28 Jan. 1968 PP

CHAPTER X

THE END OF THE BEGINNING

The final meeting of the first House was in November 1967 and it found members anxious to put in a final word for their electorates in the hope that last minute answers to their pleas would assist their re-election. Over the seven sitting days of the meeting, 283 questions were asked, 95 of them without notice. Some questions had been repeated many times since 1964. In the first meeting in June 1964, Singin Pasom, from the mountains behind Lae, had pleaded:

The Administration is not doing its best to help the people out in the bush. There is no way of access for the people to take their produce to Lae. I would like a road to be built in my area.¹

In November 1967 he was still asking, 'Will the government help the people with the roads in my electorate?'² Inevitably many members and their electors had been disappointed in the lack of response to their importunities.

Characteristically the most active Papua New Guinean members were John Guise, Tei Abal and Pita Lus. Guise's contributions were the most weighty but those of Abal and Lus were more numerous. Lus asked ten questions and intervened in debate no less than eleven times. Abal was even more active. He asked nine questions and had something to say in debate on thirteen occasions. A good deal of it related to parochial preoccupations but all three spoke on the important issues before the House, one of which was Guise's own motion urging the unification of the education services provided by Church and State. As this seemed likely to bring about substantial financial benefits to Church schools it had wide-spread support from members who had an eye to the Church's influence on the minds of voters. Guise's proposal to bring the two systems together was later implemented

The other principal business was my own presentation of five interrelated Bills to establish a common salary scale for indigenous and expatriate officers in the public service, a proposal which had been around

since 1962 but had latterly been resurrected when the Minister accepted the recommendations of the committee set up following the disallowance of the Downs Bill which had been designed to make the Public Service Commissioner and the Minister more responsive to local opinions! Shades of the third and fourth meetings of the Houses. Downs was unkind enough to rub some salt into the wounds we official members had sustained on those occasions:

The main provisions of this Bill were the subject of a Bill which members of this House introduced in the face of tremendous opposition from the official members... all the main provisions were opposed. This was the Bill which had the distinction of being rejected and disallowed by a Minister and now it is fortunate and satisfying that after four years we are going to get the things for which we asked four years ago.³

Other matters of moment included Guise's minority report on the visit of a parliamentary mission to Malaysia to look at land resettlement schemes. The members of the Mission comprised Henderson, Abal, ~~Gise~~^{Firegine} and Guise. The majority report had been presented to an earlier meeting by the leader of the party, Frank Henderson, then the Assistant Administrator for Economic Affairs. It has to be said that Henderson's consultation with Guise in the preparation of the report was minimal, principally because he knew that Guise had been favourably impressed by the Malaysian activities, whereas Henderson regarded them as unsuitable for Papua New Guinea. ~~Gise~~^{Firegine} and Abal had been successfully brainwashed to agree with Henderson's views. In the irritable debate following the presentation of the minority report, ^{not too much} ~~more heat than~~ light was thrown on the subject.

Tony Voutas made an erudite speech about the origin of the term Kukukuku for the aggressive little people living in the mountainous hinterland of his electorate. He made an eloquent plea for the official abandonment of a name which he said had a 'derogatory connotation'. He canvassed the possibility that the name was derived from the Motu word for cassowary, 'kokokoko' or that it was a European corruption of a word used by the people

themselves, 'kokei', meaning 'man'.⁵ I prefer the more colourful explanation that it was an outsider's derogatory reference to the way they spoke.

Voutas also threw a spanner into the works by moving to amend the Public Service Salary Bill which I was pushing through the House with some urgency in fear that the House might collapse without a quorum before the Bill had passed. He moved an amendment to provide for equal pay for women, - (in 1964, and in male dominant Papua New Guinea!) But at this particular time it had an obvious appeal to members about to face their electorates, and overcame their inherent prejudices. Paul Lapun took the opportunity to exhibit some old world courtesy:

We must show kindness to our women. We must show them courtesy.

If they go up a ladder we must hold their hand and help them.⁶

Lapun may have been indulging in tok bokis⁷ by likening the ladder to the upward progress of women. At any rate, despite their frailties, Lapun was in favour of equal pay. We, in the Administration, felt that we had been jumped by Voutas and fought a losing battle in opposition to his amendment. We lost 28 to 22.

Barrett was his usual busy self. He presented and spoke on no less than six of the reports of his Public Accounts Committee, but evoked little interest or response from a House where members had more personal pre-occupations. In addition he spoke on every other matter before the House, on fifteen times in all, and into the bargain introduced a motion urging a review of the organisation of the Administration. He was certainly⁸ the most active member in the House.

The House finally expired on 21 November 1967 after fifteen meetings and a total of 102 sitting days. It was a busy last day. Question time followed the well trodden path established in previous Houses. The parish pump questions were usually referred to as Mi laikims, which translates as 'I want...'. They invariably began, 'Mi laikim ...'. Paliau Maloat wanted a second high school for Manus, Koitago Mano wanted bridges repaired

in the Southern Highlands and Suguman Matibri sought a nurse for Kar-Kar hospital. Only seven of the 29 questions extended beyond the bounds of immediate electorate needs.

After question time Barrett presented the final two of his series of the Public Accounts Committee, - the fourteenth and fifteenth reports. The Administration then took advantage of an indulgent occasion to rattle through some routine legislation, - no less than eight Bills passed through all stages during the day.

Further debate centred around renewed attempts by Voutas to make quite sure of pay equality for women in the public service by producing, this time, a Bill to remedy a defect in his successful amendment on the same issue on the previous day. There was again a confusing debate but this time the male chauvinists of the Administration won the day when Voutas agreed to adjourn his Bill, thus effectively expunging it from the legislative slate, at least for the time being.

Of much more immediate and direct interest to members was the continuation of the debate on a motion introduced by Wegra Kenu calling on the Administration to assist financially those members who would lose their seats in the forthcoming elections.

This House requests that the Administration give favourable consideration to requests from former members of the House who are defeated at the elections, for loans to either begin new business ventures or rehabilitate existing business interests which they have been forced to neglect in favour of the interests of their electorates.

There was no risk that the motion would be defeated. The mover may have been rewarded later on as he was one who lost his seat. From time to time we had looked at the possibility of a contributory pension scheme for members but we never did come up with anything practicable.

The House closed with a lengthy adjournment debate, members seizing the opportunity to make some political capital for their electorates. Tei Abal put in a final plug for Wabag, having a few days earlier repeated his call

for unity made in his first speech in the House in 1964.

We must tell our electorates that this House of Assembly is for everyone - we must have unity in this country and our country will progress. ~~4~~ 9.

Paul Lapun catalogued his achievements and excoriated the Administration's failures, despite his role as an Under-Secretary with a voice in that Administration's activities. Although Lapun was one of the better educated and successful members he confessed:

After four years I still do not really know what is happening all the time. I still do not follow the procedures of the House. ~~20~~

Nevertheless this same member had fought and won a most sophisticated campaign over the payment of mining royalties to landowners.

In this final session almost everyone had words of praise for the veteran, Pita Simogen. His name was really Simogen Pita but it had been reversed to meet Australian tastes in nomenclature. Simogen had first *political* X tasted political life as a member of the first post-war Legislative Council in 1951 and was now retiring.

Some members ruminated on what had been achieved since June 1964 but with no very profound conclusions. By 11.00 p.m. 21 November 1967, the first House of Assembly was over and members dispersed to face an uncertain future.

They faced the elections with apprehension only too conscious of how their efforts had fallen short of the expectations of their electors and well aware that although there were an increased number of electorates, there would be more and stronger candidates to contest them. In brief their fears were largely realised. Of the 44 members for open electorates in the first House, 20 were returned, ~~one, Voutas, this time in a regional electorate,~~ and this for a larger House with 69 open electorates and fifteen regional electorates, these last now open to all with the requisite educational qualification (three years of secondary education or its equivalent). ~~Only~~

~~two of the previous incumbents of special electorates and regional seats, Neville and Ashton, while Chatterton successfully transferred to the open seat of Moresby.~~ Among the taller poppies to fall were Zurecnuoc, who had been a more than useful Under-Secretary for the Treasury, and Abe who had been a success as Under-Secretary for Health. Other Under-Secretaries to go were Brokam, Tabua and Eupu while Simogen did not contest a seat. Of the prominent white members Barrett and Stuntz disappeared, as did the Speaker, Niall, ~~who was defeated by Voutas.~~ Pasquarelli, the scourge of the Church Missions, suffered inevitable defeat. Downs did not re-nominate. He had made a distinguished contribution to the political development of Papua New Guinea. McCarthy had retired from his long service to the country. ||

The passing of the first House had seen the disappearance of the three most senior official members, Gunther, Reeve and McCarthy, ¹⁰ the resignation of their principal critic, though often a constructive one, Downs, and the defeat of the Speaker who had presided over it all.

Chapter X. Notes.

1. HAD Vol 1 No1 p117
2. HAD Vol 1 No15 p2910
3. Ibid p2861
4. Ibid p 2939
5. Ibid p2841
6. Ibid p2905
7. To speak with hidden meaning,
8. HAD Vol 1 No 15 p2963
9. Ibid p3045
10. Ibid p3048
11. After his retirement McCarthy nominated for the seat of Moresby but was comfortably defeated by Chatterton.

CHAPTER XI

UDUMU A-HAGAIA

The title of this ~~concluding~~ chapter is in Motu and for it I am indebted to Dr Ian Maddocks, the foundation Professor of Clinical Science at the University of Papua New Guinea. I quote from his inaugural lecture given at the University in June 1971:

The title of this address means in Motu, "open your mouth". I was first shown how to administer medicine to a resisting child by a young Papuan nurse. Mother holds the child's arms, you grasp his nose between left finger and thumb, you say firmly to him "Udumu a-hagaia" and as he opens his mouth to breathe, or voice a protest, you slide the spoon quickly over his tongue and hold it there while he gulps the mixture down in order to clear the way for another breath. There is a certain satisfaction for the operator in the neat execution of this procedure.

The procedure described is not too different from the administering of a therapeutic dose of democracy to Papua New Guinea in 1964. The subject had little voice in the nature of the medicine, and was unaware of his need for it. His complaint was diagnosed by outsiders and the remedy administered by them. Nevertheless he gulped it down and waited in hope for something miraculous to happen. That it did not was not unduly disturbing to the Papua New Guinean patient, he had been disappointed many times before at the failure of panaceas administered by others. His hopes may have been high but his expectations were low.

In 1964 Papua New Guinea was little more than a collection of villages, what did the villager expect of the House of Assembly? He did not read newspapers, the majority did not hear the radio. His sources

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of information were government officials who may have been infrequent visitors, rumours passed on by returning workers, or by those adventurers who travelled outside of the local boundaries from time to time. Local Government Councils disseminated information, often unreliable and the villager's only hard source was the electoral education patrols which set out to instruct him in his duties as an elector, which distributed informational material and later recorded his vote. He saw and heard the candidates before the election, though often not all of them, and afterwards he occasionally saw and heard his member, though some never did enjoy this privilege.

The villager was conscious of the power of the "Gavman", or Administration. It could punish individuals and sometimes whole villages but it could also reward by building roads, aid posts, schools and other things sought after. To the villager the nearest patrol officer or "Kiap" personified the Administration and only through him, or his seniors when they visited, could benefices be sought. What he wanted was his own conduit to that source of power located in a remote place called Port Moresby, and he was led to believe that this would be supplied by the man he elected to the House of Assembly in that distant town.

As he had no understanding of Papua New Guinea as a nation he could not comprehend any role for the House of Assembly and for its individual members, other than that of meeting the expressed needs of the people in the electorates. There was no concept of members formulating policies which would affect areas which they did not directly represent, or have an impact on all of the people of Papua New Guinea. The villager expected that his member should not only bring his needs to the attention of the Administration but also report back regularly to his electors. He demanded to see and hear from him frequently, though his expectations in this regard were often disappointed.

Electorates were large, travel was difficult and members tended to confine themselves to those tribal areas which had supported them strongly in the elections. There were always complaints of the failure of members to fulfil their obligation to report back and disappointment and criticism that their efforts to win advantages for the electorate always fell below expectation.

The villagers' attitudes and their expectations were reciprocated by the members. As they were villagers themselves it was not to be expected that they would differ from their fellows. They accepted their role and did their best to carry it through. Of course they did become conscious that the village was but a small part of the whole, that others in different parts of the country shared the same problems and had the same hopes and fears. In the first meeting they recognised that cargo cults were a problem affecting people in many parts of Papua New Guinea. In the second meeting they encountered the annual budget and learned that the Administration did not have limitless amounts of money to devote to satisfying the pleas of members. They also noted that a disproportionate amount of that money seemed to be spent in Port Moresby. Momei Pangial who represented Mendi in the undeveloped Southern Highlands confided lugubriously to the House: "Some areas have fared well and others have not fared so well in the allocation of budget money".¹ (His area being one of the latter.) At the same meeting they found common ground in the debate on the timing of self-government. In the fourth meeting members found to their surprise that, collectively, they could push the Administration into paths it did not want to travel when they passed the Bill about the Public Service against the strenuous opposition of the Official Members. This unusual experience alarmed some and caused them to draw back from such dangerous adventurism.

Papua New Guinean members were participants, but they did not see themselves as prime-movers in the business of government. Almost all of their energies were devoted to the interests of their electorates. If we exclude the small number of members with some political sophistication and follow the parliamentary progress of Waiye Siune, the member for Chimbu in the Central Highlands, there can be some appreciation of the attitudes and the pre-occupations of a member. Prior to his election Waiye had been a medical orderly in his local hospital and a vice-president of his Local Government Council. In the first five meetings of the House, that is up to and including May 1965, Waiye asked 24 questions, all prepared and on notice. They ranged across the spectrum of local needs, transport, power supply, schools and teachers, nurses, buildings, roads and bridges. He spoke in the adjournment debate three times about the same things and participated briefly in the debates on the timing of self-government, on the Public Service Bill, initiated by Downs, and on the Bill to establish a University. His most notable contribution was on the Public Service Bill:

I was surprised when a letter was sent to my electorate asking whether we wanted all the power to be given to the House of Assembly or whether we wanted it left with Canberra.... I said that I did not think that we should take all the powers from Canberra because Canberra is as a mother to Us. The patrol officer said that it was something for the people to decide for themselves and a vote was taken. Only 19 voted in favour of leaving all the power with Canberra and 34 wanted the power to be transferred to Port Moresby. That is all I have to say about this.²

Waiye had done a nice job of sitting on the fence.

His contributions in the final two meetings of the House, in September and November of 1967, did not reveal much expansion of his horizons. He asked twenty questions, on notice, all of electorate import, though one on the price of beer might be categorised as of national moment. He made eight speeches three of which were on local needs and three which bore on the need to retain the unity of Papua New Guinea:

The people of Papua New Guinea are one people....

We are not a very big country and if we break Papua and New Guinea into two parts then we shall be very small countries.... I want us to stay together.³

and a variation on the same theme, "there should be one aim - the development of the nation".⁴

But he summed up his role as he saw it in the final meeting of the House:

As I work as a middle man the people ask me to talk for them and it is for me to express their thoughts and desires correctly in this House.⁵

Waiye was fairly typical of the members from the less developed areas. He had grown to appreciate the need for unity and had developed a sense of national identity, but his fundamental purpose was to be a channel between the Administration and his electors. Really when he spoke in the House he was addressing the Official Members rather than his parliamentary colleagues. He, in himself, did not aspire to a national role.

Of course there were some indigenous members who did seek to speak for a wider public and who sought to be initiators of policies rather than critics of them. The outstanding figure in this regard was John Guise who, though zealously forwarding the interests of his

electorate, also saw himself as speaking for Papua New Guineans as a whole. He had sufficiently influential outside contacts to support him in this role. He cast his net very wide on the matters he spoke about in the House and it is not possible to list all of the matters that he pursued. He had a talent for pressing on exposed Administration nerves in Question Time, as for instance when he asked:

On how many occasions has Section 49 of the Public Service Ordinance been used to secure preference for a Papua New Guinea Officer over an overseas officer for promotion.⁶

As has been previously related the embarrassed answer was "none".

His close association with the Anglican Mission made him a strong and persistent advocate for greater Administration support for all Missions in their education and health activities. His previous police experience made him a strong supporter of the Papua New Guinean Police who in truth, fared very poorly in comparison with Defence Force personnel. He was particularly watchful for discriminatory practices and ever ready to expose them in the House, and he was especially critical of the Department of District Administration and its officers, (previously the Department of Native Affairs), a Department which had been pretty much a closed shop to Papua New Guineans other than in menial roles.

Given the circumstances, his leading role in the House was quite remarkable, but he placed most of his bets on his Chairmanship of the Select Committee on Constitutional Development and, as its rather modest reforms did not throw up a leadership role for him, he chose to sit on the fence as Speaker in the Second House, a fatal miscalculation.

However, Guise in the First House was atypical; it may be fairly said that Waiye Siune's view of how he saw his responsibilities was one shared by most members.

Is this what the Australian Government wanted or expected in planning a House of Assembly in which there would be a conclusive majority of Papua New Guinean elected members? In 1962, in an address to the Public Service Association in Port Moresby, Hasluck explained the Government's policy:

The Australian Government has previously committed itself to advancement towards self-government through a process of successive extensions of the representative character, powers and responsibilities of the Legislative Council.

In carrying forward this policy the Government set up a House which was of a widely representative character, and endowed it with considerable powers of both initiation and of obstruction. But there it seemed to stop, - it became a House which was not expected to assume any real responsibilities in the development of policies. One may speculate that it might have been different had the two principal architects of the First House of Assembly, Hasluck and Gunther, still been in harness together in 1964, but I think it unlikely. The expectation was that the official members would control the House and, although elected members expressed the views of the people, those views should not seriously affect the plans of the Government, or rather that those views should be sufficiently modified through the influence of the official members so that plans were not impeded.

It must be said that, given the nature of the membership of the House and the absence of any coherent groups within it which would pursue consistent policies, it could hardly be expected that the Government would either wish, or be obliged, to relinquish its control. On the face of it, it seems that the Australian Government and the Papua New Guinea people had identical views on the role of elected members. What could have been expected, however, was that the Government would listen with a more sympathetic ear to the wishes of the representatives of the people.

In summary the Australian Government's objectives in setting up the House of Assembly were twofold:

1. To create a representative Assembly which could be a launching pad for the gradual transfer of responsibilities to begin at a later date. It was clearly not expected that the first House would exercise any real powers other than under the guidance of the official members. It was to be a training ground - a preparation for the future.
2. To allay international and Australian criticism of the lack of political progress in Papua New Guinea.

There was certainly some risk that the elected members might take control of the House and obstruct the passage of Government legislation and press forward with unacceptable measures of their own. This would leave the Government with unpalatable options, a series of vetos on House proposals, or amendments of the Papua New Guinea Act to curb the powers of the House. But it was correctly anticipated that the members elected under the guidance of Australian officers supported by Australians in private industry, would be conservative and that there would be no thrust for more than the most modest political progress. It was further calculated that, despite the powers the House possessed, members would be too inexperienced and too disunited to attempt to exploit those powers. Certainly in 1964 Guise was the only Papua New Guinean member with any understanding of the political process and sufficient political ambition to make use of his position. The total lack of any indigenous political organizations ensured that members would have no source of advice other than from Australians, mostly cast in a colonial mould, whose principal objective would be to secure their own interests.

If there was any prospect of a somewhat more liberal interpretation of the role of the House it disappeared with the advent of Barnes and Warwick Smith as Minister and Secretary respectively, and their commitment to the policies advocated by the World Bank. The implementation of those policies, and in particular its advocacy of concentration of effort in areas where the economic return would be greatest, meant that the House would have to be firmly controlled so that these policies might be pursued without disruption. I have previously referred to the anxieties of the Department of External Territories when the House threatened to seize initiatives which might threaten the control of the Minister and his Department. ~~Warwick~~ Smith was particularly concerned that the Select Committee on Constitutional Development should not get out of hand. This fear was carried over into the Second House sometimes almost amounting to hysteria. In 1968 ~~Warwick~~ Smith proposed the following remarkable restrictions on the participation of official members in Select Committees:

1. Official members would not accept appointments to Select Committees without prior approval from the Minister.
2. The prior approval of the Minister would be obtained to the attitude to be adopted by any official member of Select Committees and, as far as possible, the limits of the Commonwealth's policy position should be laid down.
3. The official member... of any committee of the House would submit a confidential report on each meeting of the committee to the Minister through the Administrator.⁷

We rebuffed this proposal but it was symptomatic of Canberra's efforts to manage Papua New Guinean affairs regardless of the views of its representative Assembly. We official members were expected to gain acceptance of Government policies irrespective of the attitudes of the House. When occasionally we were unable to do so there was consternation,

and some suspicion, in Canberra. Hasluck had held a tight rein on both his Department and on the Administration, so tight that he ^{subsumed} superseded many of the functions of the Secretary and the Administrator. Barnes had neither the wish nor the capacity to do the same, but his Secretary did so wish and adopted the interventionist role with vigour.

The reader may feel that I have carped overmuch about the Canberra dominance of Papua New Guinea affairs. There is nothing new about officials at the extremities being at odds with those at the centre. We in Port Moresby certainly had our shortcomings. Both Canberra and Port Moresby would freely admit to difficult relationships between ^{1964 and 1970} ~~1970~~. Charles Rowley, Professor of Political Science at the University of Papua New Guinea, had this to say:

this situation requires political bargaining and negotiation from a centre of government in this country. But at present there is a straight line of control from the Commonwealth Government to the sub-District Office, which seems to rule out the flexibility required for negotiation and seems at times to by-pass the centre of Administration here in Port Moresby.⁸

Perhaps this is an extreme view but, nevertheless, we in Port Moresby felt that the words "bargaining", "negotiation" and "flexibility" had been erased from the political lexicon in use in Canberra. It was not until the translation of David Hay from the position of Administrator to that of Secretary during 1970 that, in my view, a proper Department/Administration relationship was established which led to fruitful co-operation in the run-up to self-government, though it must be said that in 1970 we were in a different ~~kind~~ game after the Prime-Minister, John Gorton, had abruptly extended wide powers to Papua New Guinean Ministers and clearly signalled that Australia was in some haste to discharge its colonial responsibilities.

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The attempt to retain political power solely in the hands of the Australian Government was in some ways counter productive. It put a brake on political growth temporarily, but it should have been obvious that the expansion of educational facilities, the increasing number of openings in the public service and greater prosperity would produce increased pressures from Papua New Guineans for policies which would lead to equality of opportunity. Papua New Guineans viewed with some scepticism protestations that it was their country as they saw the policy of economic development as being extremely beneficial to Australian companies and individuals while not too much was trickling down to them. Australians remained firmly on the top of the heap, the villager at the bottom. The middle layers, thin but growing, were occupied by young Papua New Guineans, mostly Public Servants, who were becoming acutely conscious of the difference in status, income and power between themselves and Australians. It was these who would soon claim, not ~~only~~ a share of the power, but all of it.

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that political consciousness was developing more rapidly outside of the House than within it. The medicine administered in 1964 was more a tranquilliser than a stimulant.

What then was achieved in the first House?[?] First in the actual transaction of the business of government it had been successful, if one judges success by the volume of legislation and the ratio of Administration wins to losses. The Administration had been frustrated by the legislators only on rare occasions and with some judicious use of persuasion, and occasional unauthorised compromise, had had its way without too much trouble. In fact there had been a high degree of accord between the executive and the parliament.

The second category relates to the less tangible achievements. Was the experience of this first House a suitable base on which to build a participatory democracy? Had there been growth in members' understanding of their individual vote and the role of the parliament as a whole? Did the country at large accept and respect this new institution in its midst and how was it able to contribute to its development?

The answers to these questions must be qualified but I judge, with a somewhat partial eye, that, although the record is ^{uneven} ~~a bit spotty~~, on the whole reasonable success was achieved considering the limited base upon which the parliamentary structure was erected and the very modest objectives of the Australian Government.

It must be remembered that a large proportion of the members, perhaps a majority, began in 1964 with little concept of life outside the confines of the village, with suspicion of all those beyond their immediate geographic confines, with no capacity to read or write, with no concept of planning for long term development and no idea of how large projects were funded. Most were still essentially subsistence farmers. They were accustomed to reach decision by consensus, only after lengthy discussion and, although many were members of Local Government Councils, their experience of this locally based democracy did little to prepare them for a national forum. When they had encountered the local representatives of the Administration, - almost always white, - they were always in a subordinate situation, a master-servant or teacher-pupil. Could they be their own men when faced with a more august and more powerful government representation and could they be expected to understand and manipulate the parliamentary machine?

It is true that even after four years of experience many members continued to find the complex procedures of the House confusing but this did not check their vigorous participation when their interests

were at stake or when their emotions were aroused strongly. However most thought of themselves almost solely as advocates for their electorates - or in some cases only sections of their electorates. But the important change that did occur was the growth of a sense of national identity. Village horizons had extended to district and nation and there was a developing concept of relationships with other nations. Some members, and most Under-Secretaries, had travelled to other countries, had spoken at international fora, and had felt proud of being Papua New Guineans. Probably even greater significance should be attached to the remarkable growth of self-esteem among members.

Members had gained an understanding of what a government was and although, to many, the decision making process was a bit mysterious they certainly learned that pressing particular buttons got predictable responses. They learned too that sufficient parliamentary pressure might change the mind of the executive, there were enough examples of success to assure them that they too possessed powers. In the next House it might well be dangerous for a Government to attempt to frustrate the exercise of those powers.

financial

"Cargo" thinking disappeared when members were confronted almost daily with the financial and manpower limits within which a government had to work. They did not yet consider themselves and their parliament as an integral part of Government but rather as an auxiliary enterprise standing apart from the real business of running the country, which I suppose was a realistic assessment. At any rate among the Papua New Guinean members there was no thought of the House itself taking over the Government. Members looked to the Official Members as the presence of the Government, as indeed they were. The House had a good long way to go to fulfil a recognised "Westminster" role, if that was to be the objective of political development.

There is also another side to the coin, that is not ~~in such~~ as how the populace at large considered them and their task. Certainly the House and its members grew greatly in status, perhaps partly because it was news and both radio and newspapers publicized its doings widely. In Port Moresby itself there was a keen interest in its meetings and the public gallery was usually well filled, and on occasions, in the evening sessions, there was only standing room for spectators. Papua New Guinea did not regard its parliament as irrelevant and visitors to the country were somewhat bemused to be carted off to see the House of Assembly in action as an essential part of their programme.

On the whole it is fair to say that we members and the general public agreed that we had got somewhere and that we were going a good deal further.

The recognised prestige of a member of the House of Assembly and his relative affluence caused all Papua New Guinean members, and some white ones, considerable concern as the term of the House drew to a close and they faced the prospect of keen competition in the election to come. In 1964, in the villages, there was a good deal of doubt about this new institution, "the House of Assembly". Not all "big men" were prepared to risk their status and their reputations by competing for votes to get there. By 1968 doubt and suspicion had vanished, the House had established itself as a channel to the Government though not yet a part of Government itself. Its members had prestige, they spoke to the Government and even challenged it sometimes. It was unlikely that "stooges" would be thrust forward to compete in 1968. This time the election was for real. Almost all of the indigenous members were desperately keen to continue in office but they knew that they would face stiff opposition.

But there is no doubt that we could have done it better. First the whole thing needed a great deal more planning than was devoted to it, not so much the administrative structure which was well enough done, but insufficient thought had been given on how best to help members understand the process of government, and to give them some knowledge of the central problems facing Papua New Guinea, and the various proposals for their resolution. In short we had not thought enough about how to educate and how to involve members. To do this would have required the employment of skilled and experienced staff to assist and advise members. Those directly in the employment of the House had neither the time nor the experience to assist members much, though they did what they could. It was up to the Administration to provide the sort of support services which in a developed democracy are provided by party organisations or other extra-parliamentary non-government associations.

There was always extreme pressure on the House to get through a heavy legislative programme which limited the time available for more general debate on matters of national importance. Time might have been set aside at each meeting for a set debate on a previously nominated topic but without any legislative strings attached to it. Standing Orders made provision for debates on matters of public importance but these were generally used by expatriate members to attack the Administration, whereas what was required was a debate in which opinions could be freely expressed without confrontation or acrimony. To find time for such additions more frequent meetings would have been required, as members' endurance of Port Moresby did not permit extension of the length of meetings. The usual three or four meetings in each year could have been supplemented by an extra one or two to make more time available.

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Having, myself, wrestled unavailingly with the difficulty of giving a more meaningful role to Under-Secretaries I am hardly in a position to suggest reforms fifteen years later, but it occurs to me now that one thing which would have helped would have been to allocate a sum of money to each Under-Secretary to dispense, within his portfolio jurisdiction, at his sole discretion, but accountable to the House for his decisions. This would have enhanced the status of Under-Secretaries and provided effective training in the exercising of ministerial responsibilities.

All of this may be fine but at the time we did nothing very constructive to bring about a better understanding of, and a greater involvement in, the affairs of State by the Papua New Guinean members. The plain fact is that we thought we were doing pretty well as things were. We were certainly pre-occupied with what we saw as our principal objective, to ensure House support for Government policies, to have the numbers with us, even if sometimes our supporters voted with us out of habit rather than conviction. But we did our best to fulfil our other parliamentary duties. We answered innumerable parochial questions with sympathy and when it was within our powers we responded positively to requests for help. Regrettably such requests vastly outnumbered the resources available to meet them. We explained our legislative proposals as clearly as we could and defended our policies with vigour when required. We took note of the expressions of opinion of members but failed to appreciate that they were often ill-informed, at least in part, because of our own shortcomings in failing to provide adequate opportunities for members to learn. In defence it could be said that most members were not too much interested in topics which did not touch the immediate concerns of their electorates, and such explanatory sessions that we did arrange were poorly attended. I believe that the essential requirement was

the appointment of specialised staff to assist members in fulfilling their parliamentary duties, though, at the time, we would have had an obvious reluctance to agree to an independent advisory role to such support staff.

I have said little about the development of political ideology or of politics for its own sake or the grouping of members around ideas rather than individuals but such changes were an inevitable consequence not only of the existence of the House and its growth as a recognised political forum but ^{of} the development process itself. The Administrative College provided opportunities for the better educated Papua New Guineans to discuss novel topics; politics, self-government and independence. Expatriate staff at the University, often acutely self-conscious in their colonial environment, were outspoken critics of the colonial establishment and all its works, though at the same time enjoying the privileges of being charter members of that establishment.

In earlier years there had been a number of ill-judged attempts to found political parties but it was not until 1967 that there was a real base for such establishment, the dissatisfaction of the younger, educated Papua New Guineans with their subordinate role in their own country. The Pangu Pati was formed in that year based on the thirteen men who had presented mildly radical proposals to the Constitutional Committee, and soon, in the House of Assembly ten members acknowledged allegiance, with Paul Lapun as the parliamentary leader and Tony Voutas the party strategist.

It may fairly be said that party politics was on its way because the existence of a party with a firm parliamentary core and well informed and skilful publicists in the community at large automatically drew together the conservative interests in Papua New Guinea and in particular the opponents of early self-government. ~~Parties under~~

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Chapter XII.

Elections - 1968.

If the first House of Assembly was but a modest step in the transfer of Australia's colonial responsibilities to the Papua New Guinea people what should be done to provide for a more politically literate populace to elect the second House? Although political education was an on-going operation, carried out somewhat spasmodically mostly by field officers, teachers and the Administration radio network, it was deemed that special efforts were required in the lead up to the 1968 elections.

As early as 1965 a special committee had been set up to initiate appropriate action and out of this came the preparation of booklets and pamphlets especially directed to developing an understanding of the processes of government, and of the issues relevant to the election of the second House of Assembly; the best of these was probably 'Sowai finds his country', designed for use in schools, a series of stories of government action which affected the lives of the people. The central booklet was called 'Government in Papua and New Guinea' which had sections on Law Courts, parliament, (the big Council of all Papua and New Guinea), finance and so on.

It was intended that the material would be produced in English, Pidgin and Motu but, as so often happened in Papua New Guinea, execution fell short of design and the central book on government was produced only in English. There was a deal of criticism of it in that the language used was ^{considerably} more than somewhat above the level of literacy of the community. Shortly after the election Somare asked a question in the House on this material, "Is he aware that some of the booklets produced by political education officers are equivalent to Political Science I at the University?"

In defence it should be said that at least some of them were intended as source material on which political educators could draw given that many of them had somewhat imperfect ideas of what government was all about themselves. The reader may judge from a brief extract from a leaflet on political parties.

" A political party is a group of like-minded people who aim at gaining power in the government of a self-governing country.

A political partynominates its members to stand for election to the parliament and works hard to get people to vote for them. The party tries to get so many of its members elected that it will have a majority in the parliament or House of Assembly. These members will be willing to vote for the things the party wants."

It should be noted that even here the Administration was hedging its bets by referring to party actions in a 'self-governing country', a situation which certainly was not expected to eventuate during the currency of the second House of Assembly.

As far as the mechanics of voting was concerned it was correctly assumed that the experience of 1964 would carry over. Again voting was not compulsory and the exercise of preferences was optional. This latter provision, again subjected to criticism, did not appear to confuse voters, though many did not exercise a preference beyond the first one or two candidates. Two examples are indicative. In the Mul-Dei open electorate in the Western Highlands there were six candidates and 10987 people voted. The distribution of preferences went down to the last two candidates before a decision was reached and only twenty failed to exercise a second preference, but thereafter the

persistence of voters diminished. There were only 47 informal votes. These figures are sometimes explained by the alleged existence in the Western Highlands District of a heavily paternal administration. In the highly sophisticated electorate of Rabaul open there were also six candidates, all well known figures in the district. Here 8915 people voted and again all preferences were required to reach a final result. Only 32 failed to exercise a second preference and 5715 exercised all six preferences. Such voter perseverance in Rabaul was certainly not due to paternalism. There were 501 informal votes. In both of the above examples the leader on the first count was ultimately successful.

Whatever the shortcomings of the first House it had, in part, awakened what might be termed 'national' feelings among its members and, to a considerably lesser degree, amongst the population at large. But the most significant movement had occurred among the better educated young public servants who had been brought together in the various training institutions, and particularly in the Administrative College where courses were being conducted to produce the indigenous executives of the future. There, in Port Moresby and elsewhere, their collective recognition of their inferior status in their own country, and their exposure to the anti-colonial views of University and College staff, and other more enlightened members of the community produced first the action referred to in Chapter LX, and then formed the basis for political action through the founding, in 1967, of the Pangu Pati. It numbered, among its more influential adherents in the first House of Assembly, Lapun, Voutas, Lus, Holloway and a somewhat diffident Guise, the last named not inclined to publicise his allegiance.

To the Australian Government and the Papua New Guinea Administration the advent of a political group advocating Home-rule now and early self-government was, to say the least, unwelcome. The 1968 elections and the more numerous membership of the resulting House promised, - or threatened, to be less docile than its pre-decessor and if the new party won a significant number of seats it might challenge for the control of the House. We awaited the elections with some concern because not only were we official members but ten out of ninety four, but that sufficient of the eighty four elected members might be persuaded by arguments of the Pangu members to disrupt our rather modestly progressive programmes.

The advent of the Pangu Pati also stirred currents of political ambition in a number of breasts and, leading up to the election, several political parties were launched. Including Pangu, six political parties were formed in 1967, the new ones being the United Christian Democratic Party (soon to shed the word 'Christian') which was based in the Sepik District, the All People's Party with its political objectives directly opposed to those of Pangu, the Territory Country Party, the New Guinea Agricultural Reform Party and the National Progress Party of Papua and New Guinea. Of these, excluding Pangu, the All People's Party and the United Democratic Party each managed to get two members elected, and the Agricultural Reform Party one. These members stood somewhat diffidently under their parties' labels, ~~and shed their membership with some celerity on the first day or two of the first meeting of the second House.~~ McKinnon, one of the successful, and co-founder of the All People's Party spoke during the first meeting,

We have decided to delete the word "Party" and replace it with the word "Group". We maintain that the majority of the people have not the slightest idea

of politics or party systems, and consequently have little trust in parties. They want to be developed by the Australian Administration and not by party politics.(1)

For all practical purposes the House began with only one political party, Pangu.

The official attitude towards parties had been enunciated by the Minister for External Territories, Barnes, in 1967 just ten days after the announcement of the formation of the Pangu Pati. 'At this stage of its development the Territory would be better off without parties'!(2) It followed that the Administration's position was, to say the least, discouraging to the appearance of these exotic emanations from our previously placid pond.

Despite the existence of political parties most candidates campaigned as individuals, many of those named as party adherents disavowing allegiance. Pangu was a notable exception. It endorsed thirty candidates and claimed the support of some fifty others. Altogether 433 candidates contested the 69 open electorates and 51 nominated for the 15 regional seats. About 63 per cent of eligible voters went to the polling booths in 1968 as against 72 per cent in 1964. The results were known in March and in fact did not much change the nature of representation from the previous House. Of the 69 open seats 60 were won by Papua New Guineans but in the 15 regional seats only four indigenes were successful.

As to the performance of the political parties Pangu claimed a disappointing eleven seats and, as previously recorded, other parties had a total of five, though almost

all of the five quickly separated themselves from the fragmentary political organisations they ostensibly represented. Chapter 10 records the fate of some of the members of the first House, sufficient to repeat that 23 of them were back with us in 1968; only Neville and Ashton survived from the special electorates, though Chatterton had successfully transferred to the open electorate of Port Moresby and Voutas had moved from an open to a regional electorate defeating the Speaker of the first House, Niall, in the process. All of the other expatriate members were new to national politics.

Prominent among the newcomers were members of the group who had presented what was termed a radical submission to the first Constitutional Committee. (See Chapter 1X.) Chief among them was Michael Somare now the designated leader of the Pangu Parti. Others elected from the group were Cecil Abel, Oala Oala - R arua and Ebia Olewale.

Somare, then 32 years of age, had won the regional seat of his home district, East Sepik where he had had the advantage of being a journalist/newscaster on the staff of the local radio station. He ~~was~~ easily defeating^{ed} the previous incumbent, Frank Martin, an Australian. Somare had previously been a teacher where he had come to notice for what might be called politely 'progressive views', opinions which also aroused criticism from the Head of the Department of Information where he was next employed. (3) He was further politicised at the Administrative College. He joined a lively intelligence with an attractive open personality.

Oala Oala-Rarua had held responsible posts in the Administration and had been the first President of the

Port Moresby Workers' Association. He was one of the early leaders in pressing for the devolution of power to Papua New Guineans, so much so, in fact, that a speech to that purpose in Australia had been disavowed by the Pangu Pati executive as being too radical. Oala-Rarua had then separated from the party and entered the House without party affiliation.

Cecil Abel was the elderly (65) expatriate son of a very well known missionary family, born at the Mission headquarters on the island of Kwato in the Milne Bay District. He had a Cambridge degree and at the time of the election was a research fellow at the University of Papua New Guinea. The reputation of his family and the contacts developed through those who had been associated with the Kwato Mission ensured support throughout the regional electorate of Milne Bay. Abel won narrowly, by 210 votes out of 32068, from a rival Pangu man Elliot Elijah who was a signatory to the presentation to the first Constitutional Committee referred to ^{earlier} above. Both Abel and Elijah easily outpolled the previous Australian member John Stuntz.

Holloway, one of the founding members of Pangu, however, lost his seat (4) but his loss may have been partly compensated for by the election of Ebia Olewale, a high school teacher who had been a student leader in the disturbances following the Public Service pay dispute of 1964. (See Chapter V11). If we add to the newly elected group the sitting members Lapun, Voutas, and Lus it can be seen that, despite its small members Pangu was certainly going to make its presence felt in the second House.

In the Highlands the electorate proved remarkably faithful to its sitting members, only three of the indigenous members were not returned, Handabe Tiaba, Waiye Siuve

and Tambu Melo. The return of sitting members ensured the maintenance of a solid bloc of voters who had supported the Administration programme in the first House and who could be relied upon to check any measures introduced to hasten the devolution of political power.

Two of the leading Highland members returned were Tei Abal and Sinake Giregire. Abal had become a formidable politician ever ready to speak his mind, and Giregire, perhaps the wealthiest of all Papuan New Guinean members, would also again be promoting his somewhat esoteric views on economic development. Siwi Kurondo, from the Chimbu, despite having had no formal education, was a politician not to be trifled with, and the Australian, Ron Neville, was back to give strong and forthright support to his Highlands colleagues. We welcomed the return of the veteran Yauwe Wauwe who had the unwelcome distinction, in his ^{youth} ~~childhood~~, of having seen his father shot by a white man.

Despite the lack of formal education the Highlanders were men of substance, Kaibelt Diria's assets are set out as follows; 'owns a substantial coffee plantation and some cattle, poultry and a fish raising pond. ' It goes without saying that he also owned some pigs. He was president of the Local Government Council in his area. Sinake Giregire was also President of his Local Government Council and a director of the Highlands Commodity exchange. He owned 17000 coffee trees and a market garden. He operated a carrier business and a trade store. In what spare time remained he prospected for gold.(5)

Of the other returnees Matthias Toliman had had a comfortable win in the Gazelle and Lepani Watson had

easily won Kula in the Milne Bay District. Paul Lapun and John Guise had romped home but all of the other Under-secretaries had disappeared.

Many of the new members who boasted no party label seemed likely to exercise influence in the new House. Teua Kapena, a leader in Hanuabada, a large Port Moresby village, and a long time Administration employee, was one of these. At the time of election he was President of the Port Moresby Local Government Council and Chairman of the Local Government Association of Papua New Guinea. Tore Lokoloko, later to be Governor General of an independent Papua New Guinea, a well educated Papuan from the Gulf District and Chairman of the Co-operative Federation of Papua and New Guinea, attracted the attention of parliamentary talent scouts. So did Paulus Arek, a teacher from the Northern District, and President of that district's Workers' Association. An interesting addition to House membership was Julius Chan whose father was Chinese and mother a New Guinean. He had been educated in Australia and was an Australian citizen. After brief service in the Administration, he entered private industry to operate a shipping service. At age 28 he won the open seat of Namatanai in the New Ireland District.

From the remote reaches of the Southern Highlands two new members attracted attention, Andigari Wabiria and Matiabe Yuwi, both prominent in the affairs of their people, and with leadership qualities. ~~A survey of new membership would not be complete without~~ Oscar Tammur, ^{new} the member for Kokopo in the Gazelle Peninsular. ~~Tammur~~ had been a teacher, had then served as a craftsman-mechanic in the Pacific Islands Regiment and on returning to his home had harnessed the discontent of the Tolai

people about land alienation by leading a squatter invasion on an unused section of a plantation owned by an Australian company. Here they planted some coconuts before eviction, but the reputation gained from this episode associated with his uncompromising position on the justice of Tolai land claims, and an oratorical gift, provided him with an easy election win.

Altogether it was a youthful parliament. Fifty one of the elected members were under forty. Chatterton, at seventy, was the undisputed father of the House and Voutas, at 25, the youngest though pressed for that distinction by Tammur and Ebia Olewale, both 26. As mentioned earlier Chatterton had transferred from a regional seat to the open electorate of Port Moresby. Here his long residence, his church affiliations and his fluency in Motu(6) earned him the support of the Motu speaking majority in the electorate. As well as this he had given good service to his constituents in the first House. It was a pleasure to see him, still a Port Moresby resident, as an honoured guest at the official opening of Papua New Guinea's new Parliament House in August 1984, then in his 86th year. He died shortly afterwards in November 1984.

For those interested in statistics it should be recorded that, of the members elected in 1968 who disclosed their religious affiliation, 29 were Catholics, 11 were Church of England, 6 Lutherans and 21 could be classified under 'other Protestant'. 26 members, mostly Highlanders, had never been to school, though all spoke fluent Pidgin as well as one or more local languages.

In the first House of Assembly white elected members generally acted individually, apart from the abortive attempt to form and influence an elected member's group as recorded in Chapter IV. There was little coherent planning in their parliamentary activities. We officials looked at the new white members to see what might be expected of them. They numbered 21, (7) five more than in the smaller first House. Two of these, Voutas and Abel, belonged to Pangu and Chatterton was unlikely to join any expatriate grouping. With the exception of Ashton and Neville the remainder were newcomers, mostly youngish with an average age of forty, and with three exceptions farmers (or planters) and traders. The exceptions were Buchanan who ran a charter airline, Pyne who managed the large Chimbu coffee co-operative and Garrett who was a surveyor. There was sufficient commonality of interest to suggest that they might co-operate closely in promotion of their interests and attempt to influence, and perhaps manage, the Highlands membership. In the first House the presence of Downs, a man of experience and capacity, had checked the possibility of intemperate action by his expatriate colleagues. There seemed to be no-one in the second House to match his abilities.

Official membership underwent a considerable change though six of us served in the first House. Henderson, Watkins, Newman, Ellis, Grove and myself, that is the two Assistant Administrators, the Secretary for Law, the Treasurer and the Heads of Departments of Lands and District Administration. As Ministerial Members chosen from among the elected members were to assume greater responsibilities in the control of their

Department's activities it was thought inappropriate that the Public Service heads of those departments should also be House members.(8) However, as there were still to be ten officials in the House of a larger and more diverse membership making contact with elected members more difficult, we reverted to the Legislative Council practice by including District Commissioners Seale, Foley and Galloway, and the District Inspector for the Department of District Administration, Littler, among the official members. Their task was to be, primarily, one of liaison. Their combined service in Papua New Guinea totalled 105 years.

The Administration greeted the results of the election complacently. The general composition of the new House did not differ materially from that of the first one. There appeared to be a large preponderance of members who would tend to support Administration policies. The small core of activists within the Pangu Pati did not seem likely to threaten our control of the House. The first meeting of the second House of Assembly was planned for early June 1968. We awaited it with confidence.

Notes: Chapter X11.

1. HAD Vol II No 1 p99. N.B. Some of the Hansards printed at the time are incorrectly labelled Vol I instead of Vol II. This applies only to No's 1 and 2.
2. 'The Canberra Times' 23-6-67.
3. See 'Sana' by Michael Somare Niugini Press 1975.
4. Holloway was returned to parliament in 1972 and again in 1977 and 1982.
5. Personal details of members may be found in '1968-1972 Members of the Second House of Assembly' TPNG Port Moresby 1968.
6. He was then engaged in translating the New Testament into Motu.
7. This included Chan and Evenett who are sometimes recorded separately as 'mixed race' because of an indigenous mother. Both were fully fledged Australian citizens.
8. Both Treasury and Lands were to have Assistant Ministerial Members.

PART II

THE SECOND HOUSE

THE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

SECOND HOUSE—FIRST SESSION.

Speaker—Mr. JOHN GUISE.

Chairman of Committees—Mr. W. W. WATKINS.

Open Electorates.

John Guise	Alotau.	Poio Iuri	Lagaip.
Nauwi Sauinambi	Ambunti- Yangoru.	Pupuna Aruno	Lufa.
Peter Garth Johnson	Angoram.	Angmai Bilas	Mabusu.
James Meangarum	Bogia.	Paliau Maloat	Manus.
Karigl Bonggere	Chimbu.	Pita Lus	Maprik.
Yauwi Wauwi Moses	Chuave.	Thomas Leahy	Markham.
Sinake Giregire	Daulo.	Momei Pangial	Mendi.
Kokomo Ulia	Dreikikir.	James McKinnon	Middle Ramu.
Norman Evennett	Esa'ala.	Percy Chatterton	Moresby.
Meck Singiliong	Finschhafen.	Mek Nugintz	Mul-Dei.
Matthias Tollman	Gazelle.	Mangobing Kakun	Munya.
Louis Sebu Mona	Goilala.	Julius Chan	Namstanai.
Sabumei Kofikai	Goroka.	Patik Nimambot	Nawae.
Ninkama Bomai	Gumine.	Tegi Ebei'al	Nipa.
Pena Ou	Hagen.	Donatus Mola	North Bougainville.
Bono Azanifa	Henganofi.	Warren Dutton	North Fly.
Toua Kapena	Hiri.	Muriso Warebu	Okapa.
Michael Marveta Kaniniba	Huon Gulf.	Epineri Titimur	Rabaul.
Turi Wari	Ialibu.	John Poe	Rai Coast.
Paulus Arek	Ijivitari.	Nathaniel Ian Uroo	Rigo-Abau.
Kaura Duba	Jimi.	Katigane Endekan	Sinasina.
Rauke Gam	Kabwum.	Wilson Suja	Sohe.
Yano Belo	Kagua.	Paul Lapun	South Bougainville.
Noel Michael Casey	Kainantu.	Niwia Ebia Olewale	South Fly.
Anani Maino	Kaindi.	John Middleton	Sumkar.
Koitaga Mano	Kandep-Tambul.	John Maneke	Talasea.
Koriam Michael Urekit	Kandrian-Pomio.	Matiabe Yuwi	Tari.
Daniel Bokap ..	Kavieng.	Wesani Iwoksim	Upper Sepik.
Tore Lokoloko	Kerema.	Tei Abal	Wabag.
Siwi Kurondo	Kerowagi.	Kaibelt Diria	Wahgi.
Tom Koraea	Kikori.	Yakob Talis	Wapei-Nuku.
Oscar Tammur	Kokopo.	Leme langalyo	Wapenamanda.
Traimya Kambipi	Kompiani-Baiyer.	Brere Awol	West Sepik Coastal.
Andrew Andagari Wabiria	Koroba.	Beibi Yembanda	Wewak.
Lepani Watson	Kula.		

Regional Electorates.

Joseph Adrian Lue	Bougainville.	Walter Andrew Lussick	Manus and New Ireland.
Oala Oala-Rarus	Central.	Cecil Abel	Milne Bay.
Eric Pyne	Chimbu.	Anthony Constantine	Morobe.
Dennis Buchanan	Eastern Highlands.	Voutas	
Oriel Irving Ashton	East and West New Britain.	William John Fielding	Northern Southern Highlands
Michael Tom Somare	East Sepik.	Ronald Thomas Dalton Neville	Western and Gulf.
Jason James Garrett	Madang.	Virgil Baden Counsel	Western Highlands.
		John Watts	West Sepik.
		Joe Paul Langro	

Changes in Membership.

Norman Evenett : deceased; replaced by Timothy Ward.
Kaura Duba : deceased; replaced by Thomas Kavali.
Frank Henderson : deceased; replaced by James Ritchie
Eric Pyne : resigned; replaced by John Milles
Walter Watkins : retired; replaced by Lindsay Curtis.
Leslie Johnson : retired; not replaced.
Herbert Seale : retired; not replaced
James Ritchie : resigned; replaced by Harry Ritchie.
Lindsay Curtis : resigned; replaced by William Kearney

Assistant Ministerial Members.

Paul Langro : resigned from Ministry of Information
and Extension Services.

replaced by

Wesani Iwoksim : Social Development.

Additional Assistant Ministerial Member

Donatus Mola : Information and Extension Services.

Official Members.

- ✓ Frank Cotter Henderson, O.B.E., Assistant Administrator (Economic Affairs).
- ✓ Lealie Wilson Johnson, Assistant Administrator (Services).
- ✓ Walter William Watkins, Secretary for Law.
- ✓ Anthony Philip John Newman, Treasurer.
- ✓ Thomas William Ellis, M.B.E., D.F.C., Director of District Administration.
- ✓ Donald Stuart Grove, Director Lands, Surveys and Mines.
Charles Geoffrey Littler, District Inspector, Department of District Administration.
Stanley Michael Foley, District Commissioner, Chimbu.
Ronald Thomas Galloway, District Commissioner, Port Moresby.
Herbert Percy Seale, District Commissioner, Lae.

Ministerial Members.

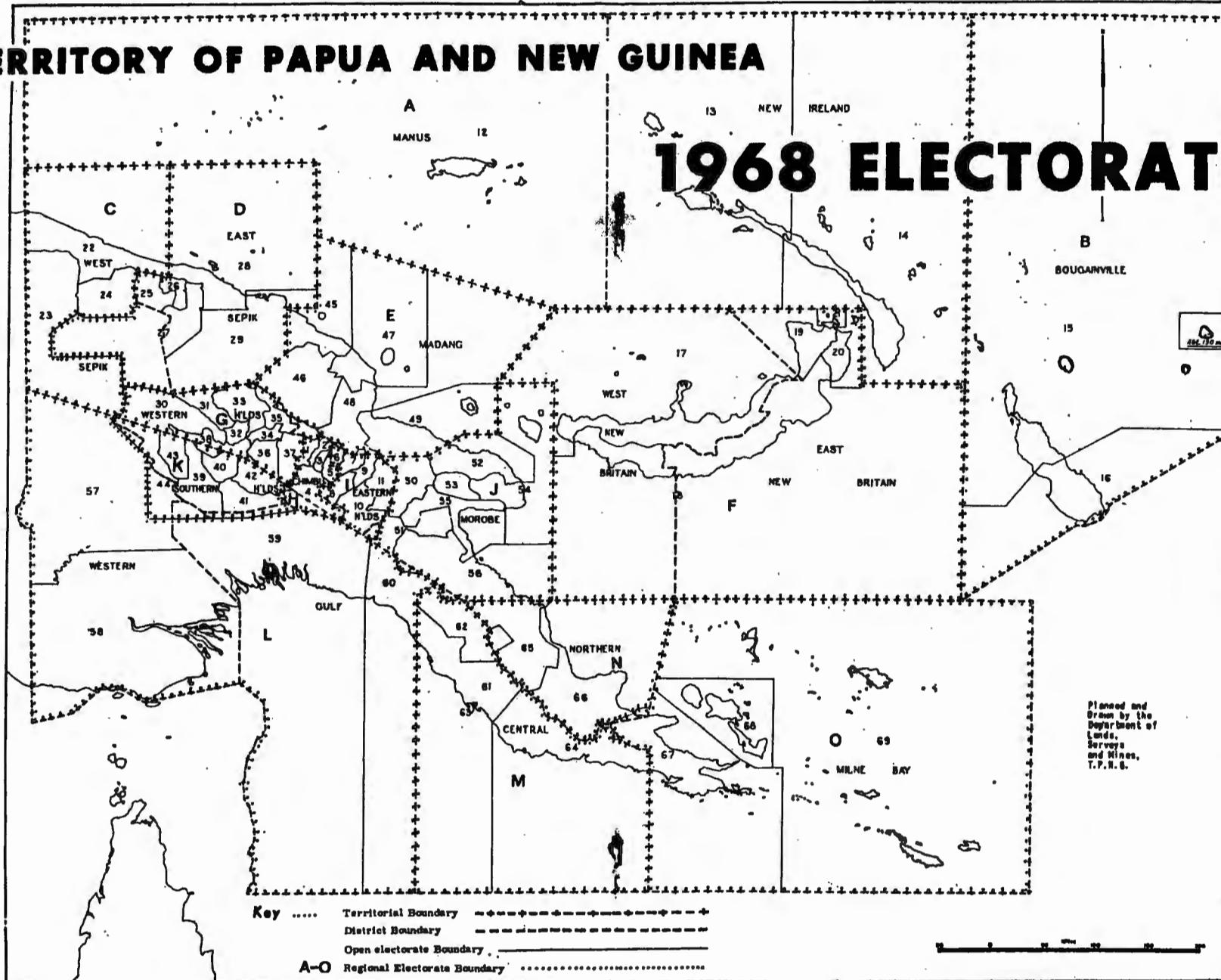
- Angmai Balas—Trade and Industry.
- Ashton, O. L.—Public Works.
- Matthias Tollman—Education.
- Sinake Giregire—Posts and Telegraphs.
- Tei Abal—Agriculture, Stock and Fisheries.
- Tore Lokoloko—Public Health.
- Toua Kapena—Labour.

Assistant Ministerial Members.

- Andagari Wabiria—Lands, Surveys and Mines.
 - Joseph Lue—Technical Education and Training.
 - Kaibelt Diria—Local Government.
 - Lepani Watson—Co-operatives.
 - Meck Singiliong—Rural Development.
 - Oala Oala-Rarua—Treasury.
 - Paul Langro—Information and Extension Services.
 - Siwi Kurondo—Forests.
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TERRITORY OF PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA

1968 ELECTORATES



KEY TO 1968 OPEN ELECTORATES

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Chapter XIIIA New Beginning.

As in the case of the first House we had a preliminary meeting to get to know each other and to indoctrinate newcomers. It was much less elaborate than in 1964 but a deal more bibulous, members possibly not approaching their forthcoming responsibilities with the same reverence as before. We met for a few days at the Port Moresby Administrative College and, among other things, to look at likely Ministerial possibilities and to sort out a likely Speaker. Pangu diligently sought to increase its numbers by recruitment among the uncommitted, the new expatriate members sized up the role they might play and the influence they might be likely to exert. Ashton lobbied vigorously for Ministerial appointment.

Although the position of Speaker was hardly crucial it was a prestigious post with Ministerial level salary and allowances and many perquisites. It was an ideal post for a political neuter. It was a considerable surprise when it became known that John Guise was interested in the position. He was the most widely known and experienced indigenous politician. He had been in the forefront of movement to promote Papua New Guinean political consciousness and economic well being. He had been associated with the beginnings of the Pangu Pati but had not fully committed himself to its causes and, indeed, had associated uneasily, as an elder statesman, with a group of men a generation younger than he. Somare was the designated leader of the Pangu Pati which had had but limited success at the polls. Guise decided that the time was not propitious to put himself forward as a leading radical. He hoped that a broader based group might emerge which would seek his leadership, and that the best place to wait for it was in

the Speaker's Chair. It turned out to be a ~~fatal~~ miscalculation. He had lost the chance to lead his country into independence..(I)

The House met on the 4th of June 1968, a Tuesday, and members were duly sworn in.

Its first duty was to elect a Speaker and Guise had no opponents. Two Highlanders Siwi Kurondo and Tei Abal performed the nominating duties, and Guise was conducted to the Chair. His first responsibility was to present members to the Administrator and then to greet the Governor-General of Australia who would formally launch the second House of Assembly on its way.

But first there was something of a contretemps with regard to the Speaker's dress and members had an unofficial, and unrecorded discussion when Guise intimated that, on especially formal occasions, he proposed to wear a wig and gown, while to emphasise the indigenous nature of the parliamentary institution he would also wear a cloak of tapa cloth from the Northern District of Papua. Tei Abal immediately complained that a Papuan Speaker wearing a foreign wig and a Papuan cloak did injustice to the Highland and other New Guinean members of the House. After some backing and filling Guise agreed to add some plumes from the Bird of Paradise as well. Thus bedizened with wig, tapa cloth cloak and plumes, the Speaker of the House greeted a morning suited, top hatted Governor-General, Lord Casey, the Minister for Territories C.E. Barnes, a uniformed Administrator David Hay, and other distinguished guests. It was something of a field day for photographers.

In welcoming the Governor-General, Guise produced some well worn phrases,

You will launch...Papua New Guinea into a new era of further national progress, of nation building. The first requirement of these, as I see it, is for the creation of unity of all tribes and races and people to become conscious of being one people of one country with one single political identity and one name.(2)

The Governor-General then set out the Australian Government's policies for Papua New Guinea. The key sentence was :

My Government's view ... is that the destiny of Papua and New Guinea is to become a self-governing country developed for independence if and when it is clearly demonstrated by a majority of the indigenous population that this is what they wish.(3)

Other themes of the speech were the need for unity, and the indigenisation of the public service. In this latter respect it should be noted that the Australian Government had done nothing to expedite the process by coming up with a suitable scheme for retrenchment payments to displaced expatriate officers and did not do so until 1972. But the bulk of the speech related to economic development, thus confirming that the policy pursued by the Minister for External Territories since his assumption of office in 1964 would continue as before:

The Territory is moving towards self determination - to self-government and later to a decision about its final status. Each forward step that is taken must be on sure ground. Wrong or ill-judged steps cannot be reversed. Nevertheless advance is essential

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and a proper balance must be sought between economic and social and political advance as well as between moving too quickly and not moving quickly enough.⁴ The members might well have pondered over what all that equivocation meant. To us officials it meant that our course was ~~to~~ 'steady as she goes.'

With the pomp and ceremony concluded the House got down to business. The first important Standing Committee to be established was a new one, the Ministerial Nominations Committee, arising from the recommendations of the first Constitutional Committee. The process was for the Committee to reach agreement with the Administrator on a list of appointees to Ministerial office which would then require the approval of the House before formal appointment by the Minister for External Territories. Commonly membership of Standing Committees was reached by informal discussion between leading members of groups or parties with due respect being paid to regional distribution and political affiliations. The Committee approved by the House consisted of Arek from the Northern District in Papua, Neville from the Southern Highlands, Lapun from Bougainville and representing Pangu, Kafikai from the Eastern Highlands and Poe, unusually a Papuan elected for the Rai Coast in New Guinea. There was bound to be a deal of horse-trading before the Committee came up with a Ministerial list but we expected to have Ministers allotted to particular responsibilities by the end of the week.

Arek

Meanwhile we officials had to field the barrage of questions which would otherwise have gone to the respective Ministerial Members. I had the misfortune to have the administrative responsibility for departments which

were the most popular targets for questions - Public Works, Health and Education, and in the course of the seven days of the meeting I answered orally 237 questions. The day of an official member during a House meeting was a pretty busy one. The mornings were particularly hectic. I had to be in my administration office before 8am to deal with normal extra-parliamentary business, then check my parliamentary responsibilities for that day which might include the presentation of a Bill, a speech in support of one or in opposition to an unwelcome one, as well as consider other possible interventions in debate. Answers to Questions on Notice from five departments for which I was responsible had to be scanned and perhaps amended, and then I had to get to the House to check the Notice paper for the day and for the regular pre-session meeting with other officials and Ministerial Members. At 10am the House commenced. On the last day of the first meeting I answered 47 questions, 19 of them about education and 21 concerning works. I looked forward keenly to the appointment of Ministers to these portfolios.

Pangu had been disappointed in its attempts to recruit from among the newly elected members and, when the meeting commenced only nine were open and avowed members, Somare, Voutas, Lapun, Abel, Kaniniba, Kakun, Meangarum, Lus and Maloat, but they could expect support from others, certainly from Olewale, who had resiled from earlier open support when he thought that it might damage his election chances. Chatterton, though a sturdy independent, could be counted on for support for many Pangu initiatives, and others would certainly be fellow travellers.

The second day of the meeting was the first real business day. As in the first House most members sought

to make their presence felt in Question Time, almost invariably about the local needs of their electorates. In seven meeting days 361 questions were answered. For the first few days the Administration had planned to present some Bills which would not arouse controversy and enable new members to become accustomed to the procedures and then let members have their heads to discuss whatever they wished in the Address-in-reply to the Governor-General's opening speech, and in the customary Adjournment debate at the end of the day.

Joe Lue from Bougainville was the first to speak on the Address-in-reply. Lue was one of the better educated members, had travelled widely and had spent some years in Australia. He took up predictable themes, - the lack of Administration expenditure on Bougainville development and the peoples' concern about the development of a large copper mine by the CRA company.

Everywhere Mr. Paul Lapun and I go in the electorate all the people talk about CRA.

The people are very worried about this....

They were surprised to discover that the law says that whatever is on the surface of the land belongs to the people and anything under the ground belongs to the Government.⁵

We were to hear a good deal more about it in the succeeding months and years.

Olewale came out of the closet and avowed his allegiance to the Pangu Pati. Anani Maino made a brief simple statement which summed up the changes in the lives of the people in the remote areas, - 'It is not so long ago that my people were warriors and now I am representing them in the House. Also I now have a small coffee plantation. I am very happy about this.'⁶

Tei Abal spoke for the conservative Highlanders, -
'We should not hasten the development of the Territory.
We must work slowly and progress will come gradually.
We do not want people in the villages complaining to us
about hurrying the development of the Territory.'⁷

Then Somare rose to announce his leadership of the Pangu Pati and to deliver what was, in fact, a policy speech. He first explained why the party had decided that its members would not accept Ministerial appointments, something of a disappointment for the Administration but not a surprise. One or two Pangu Ministers would have added substantially to the quality of the Ministry - 'Acceptance of ministerial positions would reduce our ability to carry out our objectives. Acting independently we would be in a better position to initiate legislation given our full voting strength and the retention of our most capable men,'⁸ and something on the role of the party - 'Its role is not to obstruct and undermine the work of government but to offer constructive criticism and alternative courses of action where necessary.' He concluded with criticism of the appointment of District Commissioners as official members, claiming that its primary purpose was to manage the Highlands group of members; - 'the Government made a selection of official members from a power department. Is this to control the Highlands bloc in this House?'⁹

It was a comment that I was obliged to contest in the Adjournment debate which followed, but there were certainly grounds for suspicion as to our motives as two of the official members were Tom Ellis the previous long serving District Commissioner of the Western Highlands and his successor Mick Foley. Foley himself made a spirited riposte in Pidgin to Somare's criticism, making

much of Somare's reference to 'simple' Highlanders. A lengthy portion of it is worth incorporating as an example of oratorical performance. Regrettably the original Pidgin version is lost.

When speaking yesterday the leader of the Pangu Pati said we were protecting "simple Highlanders". By "Simple" did he mean unintelligent? I can assure the leader that in my long time with the Highlanders that they are not unintelligent. Before the Government came the tribal people had a fine cultural organization, lived under clan authority, had grand ceremonies of gift exchange, pig killing and feasting which involved the organization of thousands of people. They had an intensive agricultural system. Mr. Speaker they are hardly simple men. In a few short years since they have come under Government influence they have developed their districts in a manner unparalleled in this country. They have an extensive road system and well developed cash crops. The Local Government Council system throughout the Highlands embraces Councils with a total of \$1,250,000 in annual revenue. The Goroka Local Government Council controls the township. - hardly simple people.

The simple Chimbu own the largest single coffee factory in Papua New Guinea employing 300 people, owning 24 trucks with a total business turnover last year of \$1 million. Simple people?¹⁰
and more of the same; the Highlanders loved it.

Predictably, on this first working day most speakers lamented the lack of development in their districts, there

emerged some evidence of anti-party feeling and many speakers, mindful of their debt to the Christian Missions, compared unfavourably the pay of teachers in Mission schools to that of Administration teachers, a familiar theme from the first House. Each of these was to be further developed in succeeding days.

During the course of the meeting the Administration presented 23 Bills, all non-controversial and all of which passed, only two arousing a little debate. One of these was to authorise the Administration to negotiate a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD or World Bank) to upgrade our telecommunications and the other to lay down conciliation procedures in the event of an industrial dispute. Those members who were or had been Workers' Association officials got in a word or two on the latter, but there was no opposition to either Bill.

Apart from this routine, official statements and the like, the Pangu Pati produced two initiatives. Voutas introduced a motion to set up a Select Committee on Parliamentary Procedures which, after official support, was adjourned. Somare followed with a proposal to set up a Commission of Enquiry into the electoral system which again had official approbation but members were not about to let the Pangu Pati run the show and when a procedural vote went against him 57 to 28, he withdrew the motion. At subsequent meetings both were accepted by the House.

It was clear from the voting pattern and from members' speeches that a large majority of the House was determined to put the Pangu Pati firmly in its place by rejecting

that party's initiatives irrespective of their merit. It seemed too, that white elected members, excluding Chatterton, Voutas and Abel were endeavouring to orchestrate their black colleagues to crush political initiatives that might accelerate any movement towards self-government. Jim McKinnon, an expatriate sawmiller and an unreconstructed colonial, spoke for the whites - or at least some of them, on his 47th birthday 'the people who are adamantly trying to foster independence in the Territory are the non-producing type of people and some radical academics who should be regarded to be, if nothing else, full of cloudy water and wind.'¹¹ 'cloudy water' is polite Hansard language for a simpler word used in both Pidgin and English. Poio Iuri, the member for Laiagam in the Western Highlands supported him

There are 48,000 people in my area and they think that Papua and New Guinea is not ready for self-government yet. They are also in disagreement with the Pangu Pati. At one stage I was thinking of joining the Pangu Pati but my people warned me against it. On the matter of self-government the coastal people must co-operate with the Highlanders and in turn the Highlanders must co-operate with the coastal people. When we are both at the same stage of development, - I do not know how long this will take, we can consider the question of self-government.¹²

It was an accurate summary of the Highland's view. Let us catch up, then we will think about it.

Another Highlander, Matiabe Yuwi, expressed the general feeling of the House on the disadvantageous position of teachers in Mission schools whose salary

was provided in part by a subsidy from the Administration and supplemented from Mission resources. It left them far short of their colleagues teaching in Administration schools.

In my area there are four Missions, Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist and Seventh Day Adventist with four schools. I have seen the teachers work hard in educating the school children but I have also seen the amount of pay they receive. Mission teachers and Government teachers both have the same capabilities. Why cannot the Government and the members of this House do something about this matter?¹³

Tony Voutas did his best to set the record straight about self-government and developed his party's views on home rule

'Currently many villagers believe that parties mean instant independence, that self-government means the exodus of Europeans, together with their capital and their cargo, and that Australian financial aid will cease forthwith. Villagers have been told that parties will ruin the country and that they should beware of party men and that parties are bad.

and on home rule -

The present number of officials in the House and in the Council would be retained. Initiatives in the formation of policy and in the drafting of the Territory's budget would be the sole prerogative of the House of Assembly. Partial and total veto power would continue to be exercised by the Australian Government. The fact that Australia provides a major portion of the Territory revenue gives her considerable

bargaining power in determining the final shape of the budget.¹⁴

Meanwhile the House was also completing its Committee organisation and, in particular, the Ministerial Nominations Committee had finalised its Ministerial list with which the Administrator had concurred. There was, of course, a good deal of informal consultation between Committee members and officials, principally Frank Henderson and myself on the suitability of individuals, and on adequate regional representation. For the Administration we felt, reluctantly, that we had to concede that one expatriate could be nominated, and in this respect Ashton's lobbying earned him a place. We were satisfied that he was the least likely expatriate member to cause problems or to exercise undue influence on his Papua New Guinean colleagues.

the Ministerial Members, who would also be members of the Administrator's Executive Council were;

Tei Abal
Roi Ashton¹⁵
Angmai Bilas
Sinake Giregire
Toua Kapena
Tore Lokoloko
Matthias Toliman

and the Assistant Ministerial Members-

Kaibelt Diria
Siwi Kurondo
Paul Langro
Joseph Lue
Oala Oala-Rarua
Meck Singiliong
Andgari Wabiria
Lapani Watson

Lapani

Four of the Ministers had been in the first House and of them Abal, Giregire and Toliman had been Under-Secretaries. Three of the Assistant Ministerial Members were in the first House, but only Watson had Under-Secretary experience. As to distribution in the Administrator's Executive Council, there were two Highlanders, two Papuans, two from the New Guinea islands and one from the New Guinea mainland, (Bilas). It was not too well balanced regionally until the Administrator exercised his right to appoint an additional member to his Council and chose Tom Leahy, an Australian, farming in the Markham Valley in the Morobe District in New Guinea. Of the AMMs, three were Highlanders, though one, Wabiria was from the Southern Highlands, a Papuan district. There were two from other Papuan districts, one from the New Guinea islands and the remaining two from the New Guinea mainland.

Fitting them all into portfolios was a task of some magnitude. It was the prerogative of the Minister for Territories to make these allocations which he did on the recommendation of the Administration. We did our best to match interests, experience and abilities of the various Ministers to particular Departments, bearing in mind also that some Departmental Heads would be more supportive of Ministers than others. We came up with the following appointments-

Ministerial Members-

Tei Abal - Agriculture, Stock and Fisheries.

Roi Ashton - Public Works

Angmai Bilas - Trade and Industry

Sinake Giregire - Posts and Telegraphs

Toua Kapena - Labour

Tore Lokoloko - Health

Matt Toliman - Education

Assistant Ministerial Members

Kaibelt Diria - Local Government
Siwi Kurondo - Forests
Paul Langro - Information and Extension Services
Joe Lue - Technical Education and Training
Oala Oala-Rarua - Treasury
Meck Singiliong - Rural Development
Andigari Wabiria - Lands
Lepani Watson - Co-operatives.

To accommodate such an influx of Ministers we had hived off some Departmental Divisions which seemed to lend themselves to a degree of autonomy. Rural Development and Land Development were responsibilities within the Department of District Administration, CO-operatives were with Trade, and Technical Education part of the Department of Education. There were later some re-allocations whereby Lue went to Transport and a newcomer Wesani Iwoksim replaced Langro as Minister for Social Development.

Membership of the House Standing and Statutory Committees had been reached by amicable arrangements among members but as in the first House, membership of the Public Works Statutory Committee was a sought-after post. This time indigenous membership was a little greater, Somare, Koraea and Poe being included in a nine member committee of which, by convention, I was Chairman. There was also an innovation in that a Budget Committee had been created to give the House at least an illusion that it had a voice in the planning of the annual Budget. Its role was 'to consider budget proposals from members and refer them with recommendations as appropriate, to the Administrator's Executive Council, or the Ministerial Member or Assistant Ministerial Member representing the Department concerned'¹⁶. Only one

Papua New Guinean, Arek, made it onto the five member Committee, though the expatriate membership of Counsel, Garrett, McKinnon and Pyne did not seem likely to project the Committee to actively or perceptively into the fiscal affairs of the country.

The last day of the first meeting of the second House of Assembly saw the repetition of topics familiar to the first House. Question Time was filled with the local problems of members, the need for schools and teachers, pay for Mission teachers, roads and bridges, medical services, airstrips and the like. At the other end of the day the last speaker was Oscar Tammur telling us 'Some people have been heard to say that if we are thinking of self-government we will ruin the country. I do not believe this.'¹⁷

Among the speeches delivered during the meeting one in particular attracted attention. It was from Julius Chan who, in a sense, stood mid-way between the indigenous and the expatriate membership. (His mediating talents later projected him into the Prime Ministership) He said

It is the responsibility of the House to generate towards unity. It is disheartening therefore, at a time when new members are finding their feet in the new House, that a party group, or groups, should take advantage in the vigorous pursuit of their objectives. I consider their approach and their announcement were untimely and divisive in character. In the light of our many differences and difficulties this does not promote co-operation.

The Pangu leader's criticism of the Administration in the selection of official members from

one department is a just one, and offers speculation and suspicion. In spite of Mr. Foley's sentimental or campaigning speech there are legitimate doubts created which can affect togetherness.¹⁸

Chan appeared to have a foot in each camp but he may well have been right in that early and vigorous explication of the Pangu Party's views may well have consolidated anti-party feeling and driven the heterogenous conservatives and the uncommitted into a grouping that ultimately became another political party.

As far as the Administration was concerned the first meeting confirmed our earlier expectation that the House would firmly control radical initiatives from the Pangu Pati or its sympathisers and that expatriate elected members would be reasonably docile. We saw no obstacles in the pursuit of the policies set out by the Governor-General :-

1. Concerted efforts towards national unity.
2. Modestly progressive political development with the ultimate objective of self-government and possibly independence 'if and when it is clearly demonstrated by the majority of the indigenous population that this is what they want.'
3. Vigorous economic development needed by capital investment from overseas.
4. Greater participation of Papua New Guineans in all phases of development - 'economic, social, administrative and political affairs.'

No member of the House was likely to be critical of those objectives, - it was the pace with which we proceeded towards them and the methods used to get there which would be questioned in further meetings.

Notes; chapter XIII

1. Guise, of course, was the first Governor-General of an independent Papua New Guinea but it was largely an honorific post.
2. HAD Vol II No.I p4
3. ibid
4. ibid
5. ibid p 16
6. ibid
7. ibid p17
8. ibid
9. ibid p18
10. ibid p41
11. ibid p142
12. ibid p36
13. ibid p39
14. ibid p62
15. Given names Oriel Irving or 'oi' corrupted to Roi.
16. HAD op cit p183
17. ibid p190
18. ibid p176

NB. Note that some of the Hansards printed at the time are incorrectly labelled Vol I instead of Vol II. This applies only to No's 1 and 2.

Chapter XIV.

Perspective.

Although there had been no appreciable increase in the powers of the second House, and while it did not appear likely that the Administration's control would be seriously challenged, the House membership differed in some material respects from that of its predecessor. There were twenty three members who had already had some years of parliamentary experience, there were more members so that the country as a whole was more truly represented, and there was a higher proportion of better educated members. There was a political party, small but well organised and articulate, intent on pressing for change, for increased responsibility for its parliament, for greater opportunities for Papua New Guineans and for progress towards self-determination or 'home rule'. In general members had a wider range of interest. They were much more prepared to take initiatives and to question colonial doctrine, though not yet ready to confront it. Their questions covered broader areas, they moved motions and presented Bills in pursuit of particular needs and interests and sought to be participants in the parliamentary action rather than observers.

The Administration, through its official members, was soon put on notice that it was not going to have it all its own way. Voutas' motion to set up a Select Committee on Parliamentary Procedures, presented to the first meeting but passed in the second, aimed to provide for a better informed membership and a more efficient parliament-

Every member regardless of his education and background should be equally capable or equally

able to perform (his task). We do not want this House to become an instrument which only the better educated members can use to the best advantage.¹

Somare, frustrated at his first attempt, tried again with his motion on the Electoral system which had a variety of sound objectives but the principal one, for Pangu, was to have the voting age lowered to eighteen which, undoubtedly, would swell the Pangu vote at the next election. It added 225,000 young voters to the electoral roll. This time there had been some explanation outside of the House Chamber which had reassured members that the motion, despite its origin, did not have horns and a tail. It was passed without debate. ^h ~~Actually~~ ^{Though} official members had supported both motions but it is doubtful that we would have initiated such reforms of our own volition, and certainly not so early in the life of the second parliament.

However, the first motion had come from a non-aligned member, Lepani Watson, soon to be an Assistant Ministerial Member. It was framed as a request for the Administration to send a parliamentary mission to South Pacific countries to investigate the use of long term volunteers with a view to their use in Papua New Guinea. It sounded like a rather expensive political jaunt. In fact we already had volunteers from Australian Volunteers Abroad (AVA) and from the British Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) while all of the Missions introduced volunteers into their own establishments. We were wary about an influx of youthful Peace Corps volunteers, an organisation which I, myself, had looked at in the USA and in some recipient countries. It did not seem likely that the Peace Corps would contribute to the great leap forward its supporters in the House of Assembly might hope for. We officials opposed the motion vigorously and managed to have the House reject it 45 Noes to 28 Ayes. Among the Ayes was one Ministerial Member, Giregire, and two

AMM'S Langro and Oala-Rarua, plus of course, Watson. The vote was a source of some satisfaction to the Administration because we had expected such a motion to attract a greater degree of support. Almost all of the Highland members stayed with us. Thus the first motion produced by an elected member and opposed by the Administration was defeated but thereafter motions became increasingly frequent items on the Notice Paper.

There were two distinct phases in the life of the second House, the first concluding in early 1970 following the well publicised visit by Gough Whitlam, then leader of the Labour Party opposition in the Australian Federal Parliament. The effects of the Whitlam visit, over late December early January 1969-70 have been examined by a number of authors,² suffice to say that he was extremely critical of the policies of the Australian government of the day towards Papua New Guinea, and caustic in the opinions he expressed of Ministerial and Assistant Ministerial Members, labelling them 'stooges.' He challenged and infuriated Toua Kapena and Oala-Rarua on their own patch, calling them 'Uncle Toms'. He warmly supported Pangu Pati policies and strongly advocated early self-government.

Prime The Prime Minister, John Gorton, responded with some expedition, by greatly enhancing the powers of PNG Ministers and shortly thereafter visited Papua New Guinea himself to announce on July 6th 1970 that;

The time has come when less should be referred to Canberra for decision and more should be retained for decision by the Administrator's Executive Council and Ministerial Members... and we also propose that the Parliament of Australia will not exercise its veto power in relation to Ordinances if these Ordinances affect the actual responsibilities handed

over to Ministerial Members.³

This amounted to a very large devolution of power to the AEC and its members and, in the short term, to the Administrator as Chairman of that Council. Self-government had suddenly become, for the majority of members, not a distant threat but an early prospect. The attitudes of members and the nature of debate in the House changed.

This political watershed was also marked by administrative changes. The Secretary of the Department of External Territories, George Warwick Smith, the favourite whipping boy of all Territorians, was supplanted by the Papua New Guinea Administrator, David Hay, and Hay's place was taken by a 'local boy', myself.

But these sudden and dramatic changes, precipitated by political rivalries in Australia rather than by consideration of Papua New Guinea's needs, could not be perceived in the first two years of the second House. Some issues certainly were common subjects for debate throughout the life of the House, particularly political development and the disturbances in the Gazelle Peninsula of New Britain, and separatism in Bougainville, but in 1968 and 69 the rancor and the urgency were not there because the prize of political power did not appear to be within early reach. Members were content to consign political development to a widely representative Select Committee on Constitutional Development, though there was much greater concern about the disturbances on the Gazelle Peninsula where separatist tendencies had emerged and for the opposition of Bougainvillians to the intrusion of a large copper mine into their land and their life style.

A large majority of members had little sympathy for Tolai problems in the Gazelle, nor for the Bougainvillians turning their backs on mineral development. Only Pangu members

expressed some cautious sympathy for the dissidents.

Papua New Guinea members were essentially local politicians whose principal concerns were domestic issues of which roads and schools were paramount. In the van were the members from the Southern Highlands, the latest and least developed District not yet attached to any other part of the country by a trafficable road. No session of the House passed without Tegi Ebei'al , Yano Belo, Momei Pangial, Turi Wari, Andigari Wabiria, Matiabe Yuwi and the regional member, Ron Neville, assailing the House about the shortcomings of their district. In the first meeting in June Turi Wari from Ialibu had pointed out the difficulties faced by an energetic, vigorous people;

Things just do not happen - they cost money. If money is available then we can have a good house and all the good things of life. Money controls these things. We, as yet, do not understand these things and we do not have businesses. When you other people want to race ahead you make us frightened. How about sending some of the development to the Southern Highlands, give them some land and show us how to cashcrop. We will watch and learn. It is no good telling us to progress if we have no-one to show us how. Do we follow our fore-fathers or what? Our grandfathers were not cash croppers - they were subsistence farmers who loved fighting.⁴

The cash economy had not yet penetrated far into the Southern Highlands but Turi Wari was keen that it should. It was the beginning of a virtual siege of the Administration by the Southern Highlands members demanding development expenditure in their district; a siege they maintained throughout the duration of the House, supplemented by forays into Administration Departments to reinforce their demands.

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Andigari Wabiria spoke of other deficiencies when he lamented the lack of education and what this would mean to his people;

The number of our children is increasing but we are the last part of the whole of Papua and New Guinea to receive education. We fear that when self-government or independence comes we will be working as labourers for other people in the country.⁵

Wabiria and Wari were stating the case for all of the isolated areas of Papua New Guinea for more of the fruits of progress, roads, schools and the means of earning a cash income. All members saw that development, economic, social or political depended in a very large measure on two things - education and roads. These two matters recur continuously in Question Time, in Adjournment Debates, in Budget speeches and in party policies. Education meant that young Papua New Guineans would be capable of managing their own country, of competing on equal terms with other nationalities and other nations; They would take the place of expatriates in government and in business. Members, whether they admitted it or not, felt at a continual disadvantage in the House in their inability to comprehend the mass of printed documentation which ~~flooded~~ flooded across their desks, and by their inability to participate fully in debates about finance and other matters of significance to their welfare. Roads meant greater opportunity to move produce to markets and move it cheaply, it meant cheaper goods in village stores, and it meant new industries now that road transport would be available as against light aircraft. It meant the breakdown of tribal enmities, and it meant that a sense of national unity could become more than a distant prospect.

flooded

tribal

Of course both education and roads also meant a weakening of kinship ties, the intrusion of foreign culture and

foreign values, it meant death on the roads, and it meant moral crises in village communities. It meant expectations that in many cases would never be realized. The arrival of a road and a school meant that things would never be the same again, but it was the crucial element in the process of creating a nation where tribal loyalties and enmities, kinship ties and obligations, pay-back murders and subsistence cultivation of taro, sweet potatoes and yams, the making of sago and the husbanding of pigs were ^{still} what life was all about for the majority of the population.

Members were unanimous in that the price of progress was worth paying but there was also common concern that indigenous culture should not be totally destroyed. Somare, who had accepted the job of Chairman of the governing body of the PNG Museum, was at the forefront. In his official capacity he presented the Cultural Property Bill to exercise control over the artifacts trade. Many valuable items had been picked up by collectors and taken out of the country, and the Bill provided for the gazettal of items as prohibited ^{by} imports, the appointment of inspectors and provision for licensing inspectors. All members were in favour of it. Tei Abal agreed 'that rare items should be strictly preserved so that their associated legends are not forgotten'⁶ while Wabiria concurred 'such a Bill will help our young people to live with our cultural heritage because the present changes seem to have diverted their interest from it.'⁷ Probably one of the most interesting, but brief, debates resulted from a motion initiated by Matiabe Yuwi-

That this House is concerned that many young Papua New Guineans are growing up without learning and appreciating the good things from our traditional way of life, and requests the Department of Education and those responsible for educational institutions of all kinds in the Territory to do whatever is possible to change the situation.⁸

Fourteen speakers received the motion warmly with Siwi Kurondo making the most arresting contribution: ~~It is~~ ~~worthy of a substantial excerpt;~~

In the Highlands the Highlanders traditional dress is still being worn - we are proud today to see our traditional dress still in use. We would like it to be preserved ... We in the Highlands will not abandon our dances, dress and traditions. These traditions will co-exist in the event of self-government. By then we will still be beating our kundus (drums) and we will still be practising polygamy. This is our custom. Our other friends in here can stick to having only one wife. We will stick to our own custom in this case. We have some of our leaders marrying as many as ten women... no-one must stop this traditional practice of ours. Another of the unique traditional dances is a dance called 'karim lek'⁹ (carry leg). This too must be preserved. In New Guinea the nursing of pigs is a tradition. We want no restrictions imposed to stop some of our ideas for looking after pigs... In our area the women sleep with their pigs and I want this to be one of our customs that is continued'.¹⁰

His praise of polygamy would not have pleased his colleague the regional member for Chimbu, Father John Nilles, a Roman Catholic priest who had been elected to replace Pyne. Kurondo, like many other members was also concerned about mini-skirts, despite his support for traditional dress, which was a good deal scantier. Tei Abal thought that girl's skirts should be knee length though in his electorate the majority of women still wore traditional dress.

accepted

Pita Lus was prepared to challenge accepted wisdom on culture; 'we are trying to introduce a legislation which will mean the retention of our ancestral beliefs and customs. I am concerned about this because some areas of the Territory may abandon the growing of cash crops and return to their old ways'.¹¹ Lus' concern was, in part, due to the development of a cargo cult in an area adjacent to his electorate where people had abandoned their gardens.¹²

traditionally

Throughout the term of the House any reference to culture or tradition was assured of support from members across the political spectrum, but particularly from the more isolated areas where the comparatively recent intrusion of the modern world could be seen to be changing values and eroding custom. In 1971 Yano Belo sought help. 'Will an officer or anthropologist be sent to Kagua to obtain the traditional stories of all the land in the area.' Whether from parliamentary stimulus or otherwise there was a remarkable growth of interest in indigenous culture among the young in educational institutions. It led to the establishment of a cultural centre and during the third parliament the relocation and development of the museum, the expansion of the centre for Creative Arts and the development of an Institute of Papua New Guinea cultures. The official opening of Papua New Guinea's new Parliament House in 1984 was an occasion for a massive display of dance and costume. Innumerable groups had gathered from all over the country in celebration of traditional culture.

During the first two years of the House three members died, Kaura Duba from the inaccessible Jimi Valley in the Western Highlands, Norman Evenett, the member for Esa-Ala, the islands electorate in the Milne Bay District and Frank Henderson, the senior official member, Evenett and Henderson after long illnesses.

Kaura Duba was a simple man and one of his speeches underlines the difficulties faced and surmounted in New Guinea's remote Highlands -

We did not have any road, or anything else but through our own efforts we have achieved a great deal. We carried three vehicles from Mt.Hagen to the Jimi. Just recently we carried a tractor to Jimi for the Local Government Council. We do not just sit around. We are now building a road.¹³

By 'carrying' he meant by human muscle power. It is of more than passing interest that he was succeeded in the Jimi electorate by a young prison warder, Thomas Kavali, who later became a Minister in the Somare government and was knighted for his service to PNG.

Evenett, who was only forty when he died, had not made much impact in the House. Henderson, a BSc. (agric) was born in 1911 and first came to Papua New Guinea as an Agricultural officer in 1935. After war service in the RAAF he returned to PNG, became Director of the Department of Agriculture, Stock and Fisheries, and in 1966 Assistant Administrator for Economic Affairs. Frank believed in calling a spade a spade and in a tribute to him, my closest colleague, I had this to say in the House:

x

Frank was straightforward, perhaps blunt. He was a tough opponent, he stuck to his guns and he knew his facts. But just beneath that determined surface was a keen and ready sense of humour and a large store of humanity.¹⁴

On the matter of death Epineri Titimur philosophised 'Life is a play and death is the end.'¹⁵

The second phase in the life of the House, dating from early 1970 saw a period of more vigorous political activity. Whether they liked it or not Papua New Guineans had to accept that self-government was going to be thrust upon them, and they would have to adjust their thoughts and their attitudes to cope with it. Whitlam, in a return visit in early 1971, correctly defined the change:

In the past year the political climate of Papua New Guinea has been transformed...now the most significant leaders of PNG and significant sections of the population accept that they must shortly come to terms with their own future as a self-governing nation.¹⁶

The independent group of members first felt the winds of change. It became apparent to the leaders of the conservatives that, if they wished to influence the rate of change, and, as Whitlam said - 'come to terms with their own future' they would need a tighter political organisation with some more clearly articulated aims than the generalisation that economic development should take precedence over the assumption of political responsibility. After some fumbling ~~which first produced a Highlands based party called Compass~~, the United Party emerged in 1971 while the middle ground was occupied by a small group ~~led by Julius Chan~~, the Peoples' Progress Party. The second House began with one credible party, and concluded with three, Pangu, United and Peoples' Progress with a Pangu offshoot in the Highlands ~~led by Thomas Kevall~~, the New Guinea National Party.

An extra parliamentary party was also born in 1971, Papua Besena,¹⁷ the political vehicle for the separatist Papuans. It exploited the general feeling of Papuans that, as Papua was the original colony of Australia, and Papuans were nominally Australian citizens, special conditions should apply to them, perhaps associated with separation from New Guinea. The clamour of the Papuan members for

preferential treatment resounded through the House in its later stages.

In summary the pre-eminent concern of most of the members through the life of the second House was for development, with the fundamental need for adequate provision for education and transport facilities. But broader national issues increasingly intruded, with the twin themes of unity and separatism occupying much of the time of the House. There was so much talk about unity that the observer would soon deduce that there was not much of it in Papua New Guinea. The devolution of political power initiated in early 1971 greatly accelerated the growth of national consciousness and sharpened debate as the crucially important elections for the third House of Assembly approached.

Notes : Chapter XIV.

1. HAD Vol II Nol p88
2. See 'Colonial Sunset' Johnson, University of Queensland Press 1983.
3. 'Steps towards Self-Government in Papua and New Guinea. AGPS Canberra 20176/70
4. HAD op cit p175
5. HAD Vol II No 9 p 2391
6. ibid No 11 p 3370
8. ibid No 11 p 2738
9. 'Karim lek' is a courtship ceremony - we might call it licensed 'necking'. A girl of marriageable age sits beside a youth with both her legs across one of his thighs. They then rub cheeks and noses sometimes for hours. A number of such courtship couples may be in the same room.
10. HAD Vol II No 9 p 2745
11. ibid p2815
12. See 'Colonial Sunset' op cit pp89-91
13. HAD Vol II Nol p175
14. ibid No 6 p 1449
15. ibid No 4 p949
16. Press release 17 Jan 1971.
17. ~~Metu for 'Papuan Family'.~~

Chapter XV.

The House at Work.

Organisation and Procedures.

Early in the life of the second House a group of white members, specifically Lussik, Leahy, Buchanan, Watts, Neville, Fielding and Middleton with the co-operation of two Highlanders, Abal and Giregire, had put together the Independent Group. It was based for numbers on Highland members but attracting others with conservative views. At full strength it could muster fifty votes. Pangu could usually count on ten votes which left some twenty four members not firmly aligned, though in most cases a majority of the uncommitted went along with the Independent Group. According to Lussick 'the basis of the Independent Group is that we band together to support one another and to ensure that the people in the electorates of all our members truly have their voices heard in the House of Assembly.' The parliamentary alignment was, then, the Pangu Pati, the Independent Group, the official members and the non-aligned independents.

The Independent Group was really a one issue party, - 'go slow on political development' or more specifically 'delay self-government' which in most things meant opposition to Pangu initiatives. As nearly all the Ministerial Members were members of the Independent Group, it was, in most cases, committed to support Administration policies, rather more so as one of the leading white members, Leahy, was the Administrator's nominee to the Administrator's Executive Council.

The Independent Group had the numbers and could have taken over the reins of Government had they had the will of the organisation to do so. It was never considered. There were no rebellions such as the Downs led initiative in the first House. In the first House we officials were

x always nervous about House acceptance of the Annual Budget because there was no firm group of supporting members upon whom we could rely. In the second House we could always count on majority support, for it was now Ministerial Members who presented their Departments' estimates and defended their deficiencies.

Voutas gave the Independent Group some good advice in November 1969 when he said 'I think that the conservative case in Papua New Guinea can no longer rest on anti-party fear. I do honestly believe that the only course of action open to the conservatives is for them also to form a political party'²; But it was the changed climate after the Gorton unilateral extension of powers to Ministerial Members and to the AEC that forced reconsideration of the role for political parties. It became apparent that the House elected in 1972 would be likely to see the inauguration of self-government. The House's own Constitutional Committee was about to reach the reluctant conclusion that self-government would come in the life of the third House.

x The early efforts in 1970, with Watts, a Highlands coffee planter, a prime mover, revolved around the creation of the Highlands party called Compass, short for Combined Political Associations. This became the base for wider recruitment and by the end of the year it had been renamed the United Party, and became an official part of the House structure. It claimed to have 47 parliamentary members and had elected Abal as its leader with Giregire h's deputy. In the same year there had been a further coagulation of members who saw the inevitability of party membership if political prerequisites were to be within reach, but who were disinclined to adopt the more extreme positions of the United Party or of Pangu. A centre party could occupy a

pivotal position in any future political alignment and members who had been meeting informally as a discussion group formed a third party, the People's Progress Party, with Julius Chan as its leader. Their expectations were fulfilled after the 1972 elections when the PPP bargained an elected membership of ten into four key Ministries and the Speakership of the Somare led National Coalition Government.

One more party followed, the New Guinea National Party created by Thomas Kavali; essentially it was a Pangu foothold in the Highlands and apart from Kavali its only other member in the House was Siwi Kurondo. Kurondo, originally a Pangu member, had divorced himself from the party when he accepted appointment as the Assistant Ministerial Member for Forests.

So during 1971 the majority of members admitted some party allegiance. Numbers were always somewhat speculative but the parties lined up pretty much as follows.

United Party	47
Peoples' Progress Party	12
Pangu Party	11
New Guinea National Party	2
Independent	12
Total	<u>84</u>

The institutions of the second House replicated those of its predecessors. The same Standing Committees were set up, Standing Orders remained unaltered and the time-table unchanged. The complaints about procedures were unchanged too. Many members found that the rules of the House, the limitation on debating times and what might be said, and when it might be said were frustrating in the extreme. The simultaneous interpretation service was inadequate and the non-English speaking majority found it difficult to follow proceedings and to take a

meaningful part in debate on Bills which had been produced only in English. Neville, a critic of interpreters in the first House, was on the attack again, - 'I would suggest that a lot of the import of very important speechesis being lost to members who do not understand English'³ and from Tei Abal 'We speak Pidgin here in this House ...I do not like to be told that interpretation is difficult when Pidgin speakers are not clear'⁴ and Pena Ou - 'a lot of us do not understand English and therefore often cannot follow what is going on'⁵. The Administration, in recognition of this difficulty, had increased the linguistic flexibility of official members by adding to its ranks fluent Pidgin speakers Foley, Seale and Littler and a Motu speaker Galloway, but most of the other official members, except Ellis, customarily spoke in English, relying upon the interpretation services.

X The rudimentary orgⁿisation of the Independent Group where Pidgin was a vehicle of communication was some help in that prior consideration could be given to matters coming up in the House and positions to adopt agreed upon, but there was clearly a need to help members understand and to influence the legislation before them. Even towards the end of the House Yauwe Wauwe from the Chimbu, who, at the time, was a member in his eighth parliamentary year, could say - 'The amount of money for Chuave I do not know because I cannot read. Self-government is here already but we cannot be strong unless we have more general education for our people to understand the functions of all the things going on'⁶.

Voutas' Select Committee on Parliamentary Procedures was Pangu's early initiative 'so that the elected members will be able to have a greater understanding of the work

of the House and take a greater part in it.⁷ It got to work promptly and in September 1969 came up with a voluminous report with eighty recommendations. Reluctant to give the Pangu Pati all of the credit for the initiative it had taken in this matter, the Independent Group insisted on some cosmetic amendments before the House accepted the proposals. They fell into four categories:

1. Translation and interpretation
2. Procedures
3. Presentation
4. Legal and ancillary services

A solution to the problem of the interpretation service proved elusive. More extensive use of taping to produce a better record of speeches made in Pidgin was recommended, but the difficulty in accurately producing an instantaneous record of a member's words for the earphones of listeners defied solution; the interpreters available were just not good enough nor did they have sufficient education or background for intensive training to make an appreciable difference. The twenty three recommendations on interpretation were sound enough but did not do much to better the situation. The position improved principally because English speaking members increasingly resorted to Pidgin to make their points.

The recommendation which had most impact on the House was on procedures. It advocated the creation of subject committees which would give members an opportunity to study Bills before they reached the floor of the House. Every member would be required to serve on one of five committees. They were:

1. Primary and Secondary Industries (later re-named Land and Industries)
2. Finance and Public Service.
3. Social Services.
4. Works and Services.
5. Law and Public Administration.

Another matter of some moment dealt with by the Committee was days and hours of sitting. As most meetings, except for the Annual Budget meeting, did not extend beyond ten sitting days, principally because of members' reluctance to spend any more time away from home, there were only limited opportunities for discussion between members other than the formal parliamentary sessions and the brief intervals between them. The Select Committee proposed that Wednesday of each sitting week should be free so that members would be available for the various House committees, political party meetings or extra-parliamentary pursuits. To ensure that this measure would not prolong each meeting, changes in the sitting hours were also accepted relating to Question Time and to the daily Adjournment debate. Members would be restricted to four questions on notice in each sitting week, and were required to indicate on each whether or not an oral or a written answer was required. This was planned to result in a significant shortening of the period allotted to Questions though the measure was not as effective as had been hoped, for the majority of members continued to require both an oral and a written answer. Also, Questions without notice, which were unrestricted, became more numerous.

The committee also dealt with the vexed question of Adjournment debates, that period at the end of each sitting day when members were free to discourse on any subject they wished, and which were the principal opportunity for most members to speak of electorate problems and other concerns which had not come up for discussion during normal House business. Of the Adjournment debate Wesani Iwoksini said - 'We have to pour out the worries of our hearts to the House'⁸ There were constant complaints that there were too few opportunities to speak, though it must be said that was due, in part, to the indulgence accorded by the House to members

exceeded the time limit. I can recall no instance where the House refused to grant an extension of time to a verbose member. Sometimes the pressure of House business pushed the Adjournment debate off the day's programme altogether; at others only one or two members could be called. At best a member might expect to get called during the adjournment once in every year. McKinnon was a sufferer and addressed the Speaker, -'during the last three debates I have risen approximately forty two times yet on no occasion have I been given the opportunity to speak.'⁹ McKinnon's failure to catch the Speaker's eye was not due to his unobtrusiveness.

The Committee recommended that the House should sit to fixed hours, and conclude at 10.30 pm on each evening session and that the nature of the Adjournment debate should be changed so that it would take place only on one day in each week, and that should be immediately after Question Time and allotted a specific period of 'prime' time. The measure was slow to be introduced and only in the latter stages of the House was greater opportunity to speak available to members when a Grievance Debate was introduced which took place each Friday morning after Question Time.

The House was usually quite sparsely populated during these free expression periods which produced dogmatic views over a wide range of subjects. For instance there was a generous allotment of time for debate on 7th June 1971. There were seventeen speakers and the topics dealt with were - insurance, agricultural development, venereal disease, land disputes, roads, schools, pornography, tribal fighting, bank loans, business development, Local Government Councils, coffee co-operatives, police dealings with the public, (this a complaint by a member who had punched a policeman), and

cargo cults. It was John Maneke of Talasea in West New Britain who raised the matter of cargo cults, impugning his colleague from the other side of the island, - 'the king of this cargo cult is Koriam.' Koriam defended himself at some length and with vigour - 'the Manus and the Mengen people live by the ten commandments. Do you all know the ten commandments? We are not followers of the cargo cult.' Nevertheless members continued to be mystified as to the reasons for the loyalty of Koriam's electors. He served in the parliaments of 1964, 1968, 1972 and 1977 and died during the currency of the fourth parliament. Only Pita Lus of Maprik could claim similar popularity. Lus has served in all five parliaments.

but
x Other than the subject committees set up on the recommendation of the Procedures Select Committee there remained six Standing Committees and two Statutory Committees, (Public Works and Public Accounts), and another one, the Privileges Committee, was set up in 1969. Regrettably members' attendance at the Subject Committees was sparse and little effective work was done, but at least those who did attend with some regularity became more effective parliamentarians. Of all committees, that for Public Works
x was best attended and every major works item had to be approved by the House on the recommendation of the Works Committee. Full attendance was obligatory for the functioning of the Ministerial Nominations Committee, but after
x its first major task in nominating the Ministry it had occasion to meet only when a vacancy occurred, or the addition of a Ministerial office holder had been approved.

One recommendation from the House Committee concerning appropriate dress in the House initiated a lively debate. The Committee proposed some relaxation of the dress standards in the Chamber from those which had applied since 1964.

These had required long trousers, or a rami, shirt with tie, a jacket and shoes or sandals. Pre-occupation with standards of dress may seem unusual in Papua New Guinea, but members were sensitive on the issue and intent on maintaining the status and dignity of the House with appropriate dress. Various efforts to make dress more suitable to the climate had failed. Lus had a particularly sharp eye for members improperly attired. In March 1970 he asked the Speaker:- ' I see that some members are wearing coloured shirts on the floor of the Chamber. Can something be done to ensure that our parliament is respected by wearing white shirts?' The Speaker's Delphic response was :- ' I ask that some of the honourable members who are wearing coloured shirts to use their own common sense.'¹⁰ Anyway individual members did raise with the Speaker the possibility of removing jackets when the heat in the Chamber became oppressive and this was referred to the House Committee. The Committee reported that jackets should be optional but ties should be worn, otherwise a rami, shirt and sandals would be appropriate.¹¹ The House would have none of it. Tammur upheld the dignity of the House:- 'When this House of Assembly commenced we decided that the House deserved respect. We must follow the rules. The members of this Chamber should be well dressed.'¹² He was supported by Counsel:- 'I do not think it becomes the dignity of the House to bow ~~to~~ to modern slipshod dress trends.'¹³ Langro, now with the Pangu Pati, spoke in favour of reform as did Maneke who confessed that he had worn a coloured shirt 'though not very brightly coloured,' but they were overborne by the traditionalists. However, thereafter, on a request from the floor of the Chamber, the Speaker would approve the removal of jackets when the air-conditioning failed

to cope with Port Moresby's summer weather.

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✓ Another occasion of a highly controversial nature was a reference to the Privileges Committee initiated by Traimya Kambipi who, in June 1969, drew attention to statements made in Australia by the secretary of the Pangu Pati, Albert Maori Kiki,¹⁴ in a television interview on the 'Four Corners' programme and printed in the newspapers 'The Australian', 'The Times Courier', and the 'South Pacific Post'. Kambipi said: 'I consider that there has been a grave breach of privilege amounting to contempt of the House.'¹⁵ He asked that the matter be considered by the newly established Privileges Committee. Kiki, in a wide ranging condemnation of the status quo in Papua New Guinea, allegedly said that 'Ministerial Members are merely stooges of the Administration and the Administration has bought them with high salaries, cars and status' and further that 'Planters have paid the independent members of the House of Assembly \$60,000 to accept a platform drawn up by the planters.'¹⁶ The Privileges Committee, x chaired by an earnest young Australian, Warren Dutton, quickly produced a report extolling the rights and privileges of the House, and condemning Kiki's statements and the reproduction of them in local newspapers. It x recommended that public apologies from Kiki and from the South Pacific Post would discharge their breach of privilege. Not surprisingly the two offenders refused to apologize so the House resorted to banning Kiki and representatives of the newspaper from the duration of that meeting--rather like chastisement with a feather. Pangu Pati members valiantly defended their secretary but lost the Division 58 - 10, only Chatterton supporting their stand. Official members, somewhat furtively, supported the majority.

Of the Select Committees appointed by the House, one that cropped up has relevance to more recent events. Early in the life of the second House Uroe moved for the appointment of a Select Committee to report on:

1. this House and House staff
2. members of the public visiting the House of Assembly building.
3. library facilities and other facilities and services in the Assembly building for members of the House and others.

Uroe noted that :-'the congestion on this floor is plain to see, the lack of space in the secretarial building is also self-evident; the over-crowding in the members' offices is a source of concern for all members ...we have reached a stage when action is immediately necessary to create a permanent House of Assembly'.¹⁷

The House agreed with him and somewhat later added to the responsibilities of the Select Committee the duty of reporting on possible sites for a permanent parliament house in a central part of the Territory, preferably somewhere in the Lae area.¹⁸ Apart from some warnings about the cost, the Administration did not demur, although it seemed extremely unlikely that funds would be available for such a project.

After much wrangling about sites the Committee finally reported in March 1971 recommending a site at Arona in the Eastern Highlands, a comfortable distance from Lae, but an undeveloped area which would require, in the early years at least, the separation of the public service administration from the country's parliament, as well as vast sums of money to create all the facilities required, roads and airstrips, electricity, water, housing

and so on. Members were unmoved by official objections. Pena Ou, in supporting the case for Arona, cited the example of a near neighbour: ' I have some knowledge of the history of Australia. The Government of Australia was originally in Melbourne. The other States disputed this until a central place of Government was established in Canberra'.¹⁹ Having seen Michael Somare in 1984 in charge at last of a splendid new parliament building in Port Moresby it is interesting to note his comment in the debate in 1971: 'it's a waste of money. The House of Assembly could meet in a native material building. What would be wrong with that? It would be better to spend \$4 million on roads.'²⁰

Papua New Guinea's new parliament house is about as far removed from a native material building as it would be possible to get, though its architectural style and its adornments, within and without, do reflect Papua New Guinea culture. Toua Kapena, a Port Moresby resident, was expected to oppose strongly the re-siting of the parliament, but this was not so - 'If it is decided to remove the House to Arona we will not mind at all. Removing this capital to a new site would help to ease the problem of your people moving into this town. The problem will be yours again - they have made more than enough trouble (here) already.'²¹ The report was adopted only narrowly, 34 votes to 29, a division notable for the abstentions. Nothing further came of it.

As a postscript to the recommendations of the Procedures Select Committee, was action by the Standing Orders Committee in 1971 to allot specific days and times to Administration and to private members and political party initiatives. The Administration was confined to Monday and Tuesday and the afternoon of Friday, while non-Administration activities occupied Thursday and the morning of Friday. Question Time continued as usual

on all four days.

The House was surprised when, one day, Voutas launched a question at the Ministerial Member for Labour, Toua Kapena -

In view of the fact that he has accepted a position on the board of a brewery company in Port Moresby - does his acceptance accord with the code of conduct for Ministerial Members and Assistant Ministerial Members announced by the Minister for External Territories?

Does he acknowledge that his acceptance may compromise his attitude in labour relations.²²

Kapena's response was abrupt - 'It's nothing to do with you. It is my own private business. Shut up!'²³

Voutas followed the matter up urging the necessity of resignation from the Ministry or the brewery.

Up to that time Papua New Guinea had got on pretty well with one brewery, but a competitor had set up in 1970, and had sought an indigenous board member. Kapena, a leading citizen in the large Port Moresby village of Hanuabada, seemed obvious. Despite his choleric response to Voutas he came to see me, talked it over and decided to resign from the board. The following day he announced his intention to the House though in a somewhat aggressive manner - 'I am confident that in Papua there are very few politicians of my standard and I am determined to lead my people in politics for many years to come.'²⁴ It was a resolve not shared by the electors. He lost his seat in the 1972 elections.

However the incident did activate apprehensions

in Tom Leahy's mind. He had been a member of the Constitutional Committee which visited Africa and was deeply disturbed at the possibility that Papua New Guinea politicians might seek to emulate some of the corrupt practices he claimed to have observed in some of the countries visited. He announced his personal crusade immediately after Kapena's statement - 'Concerning Ministers and directorships of various companies and the interest of honourable members as to just what is the code of conduct applying to Ministers, I would like to inform members that this is, at the moment, being closely examined.'²⁵ Ultimately his interest resulted in two private members' Bills, broadly known as the Integrity Bills - one for parliamentarians and one for the public service, the latter Bill being rejected by the House. Leahy would have been gratified to note that the Constitution of the independent Papua New Guinea nation includes a very specific section on the matter under the title 'Leadership Code' which embraces all parliamentarians, senior public servants and political party executives. One section reads, in part, -

A person has a duty to conduct himself both in his public, or official, and his private life as not to place himself in a position in which he has, or could have, a conflict of interests or might be compromised when discharging his public or official duties.²⁶

It does not appear to have been observed too strictly by some, despite the additional pressures applied by an Ombudsman.

In general the second House, like its predecessor, was a fairly decorous place though longer experience of politics, sharper divisions of opinion as to the political future of the country, and the realisation that the assumption of real power was imminent, made for

more acrimony on the floor of the Chamber. The Speaker, however, presided with a firm hand and attracted the respect of members. He could readily quell incipient verbal brawls. No blows were struck on the floor of the House though the hot-tempered Peter Lus came close to involvement in fist-cuffs a time or two. There was one occasion when he and Toliman clashed and Lus, quelled by the Speaker, suggested that the argument be continued outside, an invitation not availed of by Toliman.

As the House proceeded points of order and interjection became more frequent. The Points of Order taken were not often made on highly technical grounds, they were made to disrupt the Speaker's flow of eloquence, or sometimes it was just an individual member exercising his right to use Standing Orders to draw attention to himself. Commonly points of order taken were to call upon members to address the Speaker or to speak to the point. It was a frequent offence for members to introduce irrelevant electoral concerns into debate.

Repartee or interjection was not often distinguished by its wit and insults did not cut very deeply, though allusions made in Pidgin often appeared in the English language record of debates in more polite terms than in the original. Perhaps the most insulting term used was Somare's intemperate interjection that Tei Abal was a 'bloody rock ape' for which he later apologised. The occasion was on 21st September 1971 during a debate on the budget. A not very elevating exchange between Lus, Somare and Abal took place in June 1971 when Abal was speaking -

Lus to Abal; Sit down. - I move that the question be put (Motion lost on voices)

Abal: Perhaps they are being excited by my statements. If they cannot realize the truth of them let them be. I know my words have had their effect. I am tired of them.

Somare: Shut up (in Pidgin 'sarap or pasin maus')

Notes: Chapter XV

1. HAD Vol II No7 p1903
2. ibid p1906
3. ibid No2 p380
4. ibid p381
5. ibid p380
6. HAD 2Sept 1971
7. HAD Vol II No1 p88
8. ibid No5 p1353
9. ibid p1423
10. ibid No 9 p2570
11. ibid No12 p3514
12. ibid p3630
13. ibid p3637
14. Now Sir Maori Kiki
15. HAD Vol II No5 p1134
16. ibid p1134
17. ibid No2 p343-4
18. ibid No5 p1121
19. ibid No13 p3845
20. ibid p3842
21. ibid p3848
22. ibid No11 p3130
23. ibid
24. ibid p3163
25. ibid
26. The Constitution of the Independent State of Papua
New Guinea. Division 2.

29. HAD Vol II No5 pp1200-1
30. ibid No9 p2430
31. ibid p2388
32. ibid No12 p3630
33. ibid No 13 p3842
34. ibid No14 p4259
35. ibid
36. ibid No 13 p3818
37. ibid No14 p4158
38. ibid No14 p4261
39. unsourced and probably apocryphal.
40. Tei Abal 3rd Sept 1971.
41. HAD VolIII No 13 p3847
42. ibid No9 p2477



Toua Kapena recieves his MBE.



Matthias Toliman receives his MBE.



Matthias Toliman being congratulated by Tom Ellis after receiving his MBE.



Investiture. L.W. Johnson conferring MBE on Pita Simogen, 1972.

Chapter XVI.

Unity and Separatism.

The first speech in the second House of Assembly referred to unity; the Speaker, John Guise, in welcoming the Governor-General referred to it and the Governor-General in reply echoed him:- 'If the Territory is to make progressnational unity is essential' and 'if people see that the House of Assembly is moved by a sense of national unity they themselves will become more united.'¹

Those first speeches were barely on record when the lack of it became evident for during the following weekend a wild riot erupted at the annual rugby league football match between Papua and New Guinea. Papua usually won these gladiatorial contests easily, largely because Port Moresby clubs imported experienced players from Australia and found them jobs, thus entitling them to represent Papua. New Guineans, mainly Highlanders, retaliated by showing their superior aggression among the spectators and then outside the ground during which there were a number of injuries and damage to property. Members expressed their dismay led by that apostle of unity, Tei Abal, who had spoken of unity in the first and last meetings of the first House of Assembly. This time he urged that 'Papuan members from the coast and we members from the Highlands must work together. We must show unity to our people!'² and at the next meeting: 'We people must forget about unimportant feuding, - friction between one District and another, Papua versus New Guinean, white versus black, Highlands against the coast - this could destroy us.'³

At the same time, in Rabaul, a group of expatriates and Tolais were busy formulating a plan to establish a Melanesian Independence Front (MIF) which advocated union and independence for the island districts of Papua New Guinea, Manus

(the Admiralty group,) New Ireland, New Britain and Bougainville. This was promoted initially by a white journalist in Rabaul, Simpson, with covert support from white businessmen from the same town, but also it attracted support from both establishment Tolais and from the young radicals. The basis of their argument was that the islands were the most productive part of Papua New Guinea and the resources that could be used to generate their own economies were being diverted to the lesser developed areas on the main island. The 'Australian' newspaper supported their argument - 'the islands are not getting enough spending in return for the high proportion of the country's finance they provide.'⁴ PNG's underdeveloped areas were saying precisely the opposite - that too many resources were being devoted to the developed areas at the expense of the less fortunate.

The MIF, however, did not gain a significant foothold, partly because Bougainville, which would have been a major partner in the enterprise, was much more inclined to go it alone, while the younger Tolais were attracted to a newly created anti-colonial organisation whose influence was confined to a small portion of the island of New Britain, the Gazelle peninsula. But separatism was to be with us for the duration of the Second House and beyond.

The Bougainville problem surfaced shortly thereafter when news was broadcast of an indigenous independence movement on the island citing its most prominent parliamentarian, Paul Lapun, as a supporter. In answering a question in the House on the matter Frank Henderson rather ingeniously said: 'I would besurprised if it represented the feelings of the people of Bougainville'⁵. He was entitled to be surprised because earlier in the meeting Lapun had seemed to confirm his allegiance to a united

Papua New Guinea by introducing a 'National Name' Bill proposing 'Niugini' as the name for the combined Territories of Papua and New Guinea. Lapun, perhaps, was carrying out a duty for his party rather than from any inner conviction. He certainly did not exercise his very considerable power of persuasion in presenting the Bill. He spoke briefly, explaining only the derivation of the name 'Niugini' which had come out of a newspaper competition when, among the myriad of suggested names was the unlikely 'Paradisias'. Lapun explained that 'Niugini', this Pidgin sounding word also had links with Papua as 'niu' meant 'coconut' and 'gini' meant 'a stand' in the Motu language.⁶

Despite the Governor-General's words we officials were directed that, as such an initiative was premature, the Bill should be opposed. Watkins did so with relish on the ground that it was not constitutional. He produced various pieces of the Papua and New Guinea Act to support his argument most of which no-one understood. To the non-aligned members gathered loosely together as the 'Independent Group' the Bill was seen as a threat to their firm intention to slow down any movement or initiative that might move forward the date of self-government or independence. Foley, for the Administration, pointed out that the correct action for the House was to have requested the Administrator to approach the Australian government to have the Papua and New Guinea Act amended to incorporate the new name. In the long run only ten members supported the Bill.

But unity and national symbols hung in there and at the same meeting Peter Johnson, an expatriate trader on the Sepik River came up with a motion to form a Select Committee to report on a name, a flag, a national anthem

and other national symbols for Papua New Guinea. As this seemed likely to be a leisurely business official members were permitted to support it. Henderson enunciated the official view:-

The Government believes that the selection of a name for the Territory is a most important matter... that concerns the people of all the Territory. The Government believes that the views of the villagers and all sections of the community should be sought before any firm proposal is made for a common name for Papua and New Guinea.⁷

However, successive adjournments of the debate stalled final consideration of the motion until June 16th 1969, by which time it had been overtaken by a motion from Paulus Arek to set up a Select Committee on Constitutional Development which would include consideration of national symbols.

Meanwhile national unity as a House topic had had plenty of exposure when Brere Awol, the grizzled member for the West Sepik Coastal electorate, produced a somewhat wordy motion:-

That this House declares that national unity is essential to the progress of Papua and New Guinea as a modern state with enough resources and population to sustain a developing economy, resolves to support national unity and in particular calls upon its members to support it in their electorates and calls upon the Administration and holders of Ministerial office through the use of field staff, Administration radio and lessons in schools to tell the people what they will gain by keeping together as a single country.⁸

Such a 'motherhood' motion was not likely to encounter much opposition though Michael Somare spent a fair amount of time justifying the separatist movements in the Gazelle and in Bougainville:- ' I therefore feel. that our prime purpose is to solve the problems of our people. We should not merely direct criticism at them because this causes more resentment'⁹. Oscar Tammur and Paul Lapun, supporters of the two dissident movements, provided the case for the defence without actually challenging the motion, and the word 'secede' appeared publicly in the House in Lapun's speech:-

How are we going to promote unity in this country when certain areas are getting all the benefits while others are being neglected. It seems that the neglect of the people of the New Guinea islands has been the cause of their desire to secede. If such people wish to secede and corruption follows that is their problem, it should be their funeral and no-one else's. I believe that the best solution would be to ask Canberra for a referendum.¹⁰

In winding up, the mover of the motion had an irrelevant shot at idle youth and at Somare in particular 'many of you are lazy....another thing,you should remember that we have not many educated people although mind you we have one over there, - Michael Somare, - whom we call our swollen headed youngster in my part of the Sepik'¹¹. Altogether thirty two members participated in the debate and the motion was passed without a dissentient voice. For the time being ' national unity ' was consigned to the Adjournment debate at the end of each sitting day - thus Yauwe Wauwe, one of the elders of the House¹² 'The

dissentient¹²

2

Administration should find a name for the Territory and not something to do with New Guineans or Papuans because these two groups will never agree with each other's suggestions'.¹³ It was a prophetic statement which was borne out much later when the second Constitutional Committee also recommended 'Niugini' as the national name, which the House again rejected.

However national unity remained on the House agenda. Tom Leahy approached it from a different direction when, on behalf of the Administrator's Executive Council, he presented a motion 'that this House is of the opinion that the annual September Public Holiday at present known as Commemoration Day should henceforth be known as 'National Day'.¹⁴ and so it was. The first actual attempt to make a ceremony of it had been in September 1970 when a group of Teachers' College students came to Government House and planted a coconut palm in the garden, - its growth to symbolise the growth of a nation. The following year was much more of a celebration. There was a public function in the Port Moresby stadium with dancing groups and culminating in the raising of the new Papua New Guinea flag. There were similar ceremonies in all centres of Papua New Guinea and the House recessed to permit members to attend. I had earlier asked Chatterton to chair a national committee which would provide ideas for the celebrations. He reported to the House 'the celebrations included marches, flag raising, tree plantings, traditional dances, string band competitions and sports. At two ceremonies effective use was made of four young people, a Papuan, a New Guinean, a Chinese and a European to emphasise the theme of national unity.'¹⁵

So much for unity, for the problem which troubled the House throughout its life was the development of the

dissident movement in the Gazelle Peninsula which soon gained wide support among the Tolai people and gave rise to the founding of the Mataungan Association.¹⁶ The events associated with the confrontation between the Mataungan Association (MA) and the Gazelle Local Government Council, with the Administration inevitably drawn on to uphold the legally constituted Council and to preserve law and order, has been amply documented elsewhere.¹⁷ The confrontation required the presence of a thousand police in the Gazelle, and two Commissions of Enquiry; it resulted in the jailing of leaders of the movement, including Tammur, for failure to pay Council tax and other offences, to wide scale intrusion by squatters on Government and privately owned land and, indirectly, to the murder of the District Commissioner, Jack Emanuel.

Oscar Tammur founded the Mataungan Association, though its roots lie in the Tolai past. Tolai grievances and associated myths, springing from their experience of successive German, Australian, Japanese and then again Australian administrations, were basic to the dissident movement, but Tammur gave discontent an organisational outlet when he proposed the formation of the MA early in 1969. The trigger was the dissolution of the all-Tolai Local Government Council and the substitution of a multi-racial Council of 42 (38 Tolais and 4 expatriates). From that time the House heard a great deal about events in the Gazelle from Tammur. He was an articulate advocate for the MA and an aggressive critic of Administration actions in the Gazelle. It was a lonely crusade but he held his own doggedly.

He formally opened his campaign in the House in March 1969, a few weeks after the proclamation of the multi-racial Council, with a question:-

Is it a fact that the Gazelle Local Government Council is to become a multi-racial Council in

the near future? If so how was the proclamation made when no committee was set up to seek the views of the people?¹⁸ and later in the Adjournment he pursued the topic:- 'I have toured my area and nearly been bashed up twice. The people have said to me "Who told you and the Government to form a multi-racial Council here? Find out who did this."¹⁹ Thereafter in every meeting we heard much more from Tammur. In June 1968 he made a protracted speech justifying the actions of the MA

The election has failed and the people in the Gazelle Multi-racial Council who have been elected have no right to sit in the Council House because it is quite obvious that the people did not want the mixed Council to be created. If 77% did not vote it is quite obvious that we are not happy with these new Councillors and I claim that the election has failed completely.²⁰

As confrontation developed in the Gazelle Tammur's oratory waxed : 'I am ashamed and disgusted with myself because of the treatment that has been dished out to me and the wishes of the people...I think that this House of Assembly should never have been created... I ask that the Administration carefully considers the desires of my people because if it does not heed them then fighting is going to break out causing loss of life.'²¹ Confrontation was at its height in early 1970 and Tammur stepped up his attacks on the Administration. He asked a pointed question about traffic regulations:-

1. Is it a fact that thousands of dollars have been taken in fines from motorists in Rabaul since the increase in police activity and their increasing checks on vehicles carrying passengers?
2. Is this happening to the same extent in Port Moresby?
3. Is this being done as a plan to frustrate the MA activities? 22

Curtis for the Administration deferred an answer but the truthful response to part 3 of the question would certainly have been 'yes'. The good road system and the wide distribution of ownership of motor vehicles, particularly trucks, made it difficult for the police to monitor and forestall the disruptive activities of MA action squads. But fines and delicensing of vehicles did not do too much to restrict MA mobility. At the end of 1969 there were more than six hundred motor vehicles registered to Tolais.

Tammur continued to keep the flame of Tolai nationalism alive when he moved late in 1970:-

That this House requests the Government of Australia to grant self-government to the Territory before the end of 1972, but so that those parts of the Territory which do not wish to have self-government may continue under the present system.²³

The House gave it short shrift for after the briefest of Debates it was defeated 51 to 14.

The murder of Jack Emanuel, the District Commissioner, on August 19 1971 by a group of villagers further aggravated the Mataungan issue in the House when the murder was debated as a Matter of Public Importance with Tammur under attack. Olewale gave him some modest support:- 'How will the Tolai people feel about the fact that we are using the national assembly to rubbish them?'²⁴ But the Tolai people as a whole never got too much sympathy in the House. They were the most affluent of Papua New Guineans, had the best education facilities and occupied many senior posts in the Administration. Members thought that they had little to complain about.

2 AEC
The Mataungan issue remained with us for the rest of the House. Attempts by officials, by members of the AEC and by non-Ministerial members to mediate failed and by the end of the second House an obvious stalemate had been reached. We hoped that a new House with enlarged powers and responsibilities might do better.

The House also had a continuing pre-occupation with the problems presented by the Bougainvillian reluctance to embrace the activities of the CRA company in developing a huge open cut copper mine on their island and with the separatist tendencies this induced. Paul Lapun was their spokesman, a man of equal eloquence to Tammur. He was open to attack in the House in offering his support to secession agitation on Bougainville while a member of a party which in its name proclaimed Papua and New Guinea Unity (PANGU), and fended off criticism by claiming the Administration neglect of the island, "neglect of the people of the New Guinea islands has been the cause of their desire to secede",²⁵ and further claiming that he was no more than the voice of his electors. Lapun himself was undoubtedly an antagonist of colonial rule whether it be German, British, Japanese or Australian, all of which nations had had jurisdiction over his island. On a number of occasions he had referred bitterly to 'black birding' in the earlier history of European contact. He made it clear that he would be glad to see the Australians go. 'The Government which is in existence is not the real government of this country, it is merely an Australian administration. When we speak in the House of Assembly we should bear in mind what some people are saying, 'that political independence is the key to development and also the key to self-respect....How are we to be united? Are we going to be dictated to and forced into uniting?"²⁶ He got only modified support from his two

parliamentary colleagues from Bougainville. Donatas Mola and Joseph Lu~~2~~; both were in the Administration camp, Lu~~2~~ an AMM and Mola to become one.

However, despite underlying secessionist rumbling, Bougainvillians were reluctantly adjusting to the development of the vast copper mine on their lands. Some who would profit greatly from it were more than pleased, but when it became apparent that there would be a great deal more encroachment on their land for the construction of a town and other land hungry facilities to service the mine and its workers, there was ~~better~~ resistance from the landowners. Lapun delivered a scathing attack on the Administration on behalf of his people at the June meeting of the House in 1969. It followed the presentation of an Administration paper giving a very ~~upbeat~~^{optimistic} summary of present progress and forward plans for the mine with estimates of the very large benefits it would bring to Papua New Guinea, which included the right of the Administration to take up a 20 per cent holding in the Company with representation on the Board.²⁷ But the statement also included reference to the resumption of land for the support facilities required by the Company.

Lapun responded by reading a long resolution passed by the villagers to be affected:-

We, the Nasioi and Rorovana people in general have been wronged by the Australian Administration's desire to force its will upon we people in the matter of resuming native held lands and the Arawa Plantation for the proposed site of a town to serve CRA:...We believe that at no time has the Government given ~~vs~~ cause to have confidence in it or caused us to trust it.

Lapun supplemented the resolution by outlining the duplicity of the Administration in dealing with the people and also dealt with the economics of the mine:-

You are looking at the situation from one side and not considering the Country's economic development. If a plantation like Arawa²⁸ has crops grown by Europeans, Chinese or local people it still belongs to the country anyway. You are anxious about the copper because it will bring you motor-cars, planes and other mechanical developments, but once everything is dug out the land is finished. Coconuts, cocoa and cattle will not bring the same large amounts as minerals but we will always get regular income. We live on this land and so should our children and our children's children.²⁹

However, the land was compulsorily resumed though a show of police force and some minor scuffles were necessary. When the House met next, shortly after the land resumption Lapun was pursuing his campaign in Australia and thus unable to lacerate the officials in the House though Ebia Olewale and Michael Somare used Question Time to embarrass the Administration. But by the time the House met in November 1969 further negotiations had taken place with villagers with a very much sweetened financial package which did a great deal to assuage their resentment.

Nonetheless the quarrel about the mine, even after grudging acceptance that it would go ahead anyway, resulted in a significant strengthening of Bougainville separatism. The action of the Administration in using a massive police presence to enforce land resumption fuelled the wish of many Bougainvillians to have no more to do with the central Administration while there was also a

strong current of opinion among them that it was 'their mine' and that the profits from it should be theirs. Ample resources to go it alone were now at hand. On an Administration motion to endorse the development plans for the mine Lapun was once again the spokesman - at length-

Now that the copper mine has been discovered the Administration has put up a large sum of money to extract the deposit and this, indirectly, is a threat to our freedom of expressing our opinions on our political future as you want to take away our rights from us...

Despite the amount of money you are spending on the project we still insist on our right and freedom to hold a referendum for secession....

I am not opposing this motion on the copper project in Bougainville. This is a good development but we do not take the people's rights away. Do not attack them when they freely express their political views on secession.³⁰

Lu~~u~~ and Mola were obliged to lend a hand though they did this with some circumspection. Lu~~u~~ defended his electors against their parliamentary critics:- 'You only pay lip service to unity. I am a citizen of this country and I say that Papua and New Guinea is unable to join and find unity - definitely unable. These groups on the Gazelle Peninsula and in Bougainville want something now. Give it to them! Give them self-government tomorrow. All others shall receive self-government as they are ready.'³¹

Secession was being strongly promoted in parts of Bougainville and plans were afoot to conduct a referendum which, in the existing emotional climate, would certainly have found a massive majority in favour of secession. Lapun recognised that a referendum conducted by Bougainvillians would have little credence so he produced a Referendum motion

which provided for the House to appoint a committee to oversight the referendum, the committee to consist of three members of the House, the three Bougainville members to observe, three public servants to be selected by the House from a list supplied by the Administration and three Bougainville residents. It suffered the same fate as Tammur's motion for self-government for those areas which desired it. Only fourteen members supported it and members forgot about Bougainville as the House neared its dissolution.

The third separatist problem came from quite a different direction, from Papua. Papuans felt a strong affinity to Australia, they were nominal Australian citizens; Papua was an Australian colony, not a Trust Territory like New Guinea. It had remained largely in Australian hands during World War II, the Japanese incursions into Papuan territory having been repelled in the bitter campaigns of 1942. In a Papua New Guinea union Papuans would be in a minority; they could see little benefit for them in an independent united Papua New Guinea.

As with members from all Districts, Papuans considered that they were not given a fair share of the Administration resources and certainly the two districts to the west of Port Moresby, Gulf and Western, had fair claims to be considered neglected, while the Southern Highlands had the worst of both worlds; as a Papuan district in the most isolated part of the Highlands it was doubly disadvantaged. The most prominent spokesman for the Papuans was Virgil Baden Counsel, more appropriately known as Bert, an Australian, married to a Papuan, with business interests in the Gulf District. He went in for blunt speaking! 'A fat lot of use it is for a Papuan member to stay in the House. All he is ever asked to do is to approve develop-

ment expenditure for New Guinea,³² and a little later:-
'there is no way in the world that we in Papua will ever be happy at the prospect of being told what to do by a bunch of Highlanders',³³ and then; 'For years members of this House have called on the Administration to make a clear unequivocal statement on what rights and privileges the Papuan people have by virtue of their long and special relationship with Australia. All this has been of no avail.'³⁴ Counsel got some modified assistance from his Papuan colleagues from the Southern Highlands, but Matiabe Yuwi qualified his support:- 'I agree with him when he said that some parts of Papua are fed up with the Administration for not giving them much assistance' but 'other parts of Papua, such as the Southern Highlands do not intend to join with Australia. These are ideas which break Papua New Guinea into little countries',³⁵ Yano Belo, also from the Southern Highlands spoke up too 'The Administration falls short in the assistance it gives to us compared to that rendered to other areas ... like other Papuan areas we get nothing. There are areas ... which the Administration has been in contact with for about a hundred years but in terms of development these areas are way behind. There are no modern facilities, no roads and not enough schools. We have virtually nothing.'³⁶

Papuan feeling had been stirred up to such an extent that a clear statement of the Australian Government's position was necessary. I was authorised to issue a statement which Tony Newman read to the House. It was quite unequivocal and read in part:-

It is the policy of the Australian Government to advance Papua New Guinea to internal self-government and independence as a united country..
...there is no ground for any people of Papua New Guinea to expect, as self-government and independence approach that their present legal status will lead to any difference in their treatment by the Australian Government or in their rights....In practice the difference of legal status between the inhabitants of Papua on the one hand and New Guinea on the other has been of little consequence since the approval by the United Nations of the administrative union in 1947.³⁷

Counsel retaliated with a motion requesting the Australian Government not to alter the existing status and rights of Papua and Papuans without the express approval of the Papuan people or their elected representatives which Momei Pangial, the member for Mendi, gilded further by moving 'that this House requests the Australian Government to invite the United Nations to make an early visit to Papua to determine the wishes of the Papuan people and to learn of their concern at first hand.'³⁸ The thought of United Nations intervention caused some alarm bells to ring and officials worked hard to modify the motion. Toua Kapena, also a Papuan, obliged by an amendment that, instead of 'inviting the United Nations,' the House should request the Australian Government to appoint a Commonwealth Parliamentary Committee comprising representatives of all political parties to perform the functions previously assigned to the UN. It won House approval by a narrow margin 30 to 25, the majority comprising all Papuan members, the Pangu Pati and the People's Progress Party. The Administration could live with the motion though there

was no expectation that the Australian Government would comply, but there had been so much fuss that the Minister for External Territories felt obliged to invite Papuan Ministerial Members to come to Canberra to discuss their problems. The five of them, Kapena, Oala-Rarua, Wabiria, Watson, Lokoloko with the Speaker Guise, went in hope and returned in disappointment. The Minister stuck to the official statement and the only consolation they obtained was the promise of an independent consultant to make a study of the less developed areas of both Papua and New Guinea prior to the preparation of a development programme for those areas.

The Papuans were far from satisfied and their discontent became channelled into a political movement called Papua Besena (Papuan Family) led, surprisingly, by a woman, Josephine Abaijah. The party gained seats in the 1972 election and Miss Abaijah became the first woman to be elected to the House of Assembly, though women had previously been members of the Legislative Council, notably another Papuan, Alice Wedega, to whom is attributed the most telling riposte to an interjector when she was speaking - 'My grandfather ate better men than you.'³⁹

Thoughts and speeches about unity were not entirely overborne by these separatist activities. In fact the United Party, which formally surfaced in 1971, claimed that 'the main aim (of the UP) is that all of the people of this country should be united. We hope to bring all of the people together to live happily and then run the country without any trouble.'⁴⁰ But Abal also put his finger on one of the problems associated with the achievement of unity when he said:- 'Unity depends on some equalisation of standards of education, economic and social development.'

Certainly the underdeveloped areas were fully represented in the nation's parliament so that there might be said to be political equality, but with fewer educated people, and fewer opportunities of becoming educated, inferior infrastructure, poorer health services, they had a long way to go to catch up. It is not surprising that they exercised a strong preference to catch up before the Australian administration disappeared. Both Giregire and Kavali were of a mind:- 'What will promote unity : - 'only roads' (Giregire) and Kavali - 'We have already spoken about unity - what will promote unity? - only roads.'⁴¹

It is fitting that Tei Abal should conclude this chapter: Our people ...do not want to see this good country fall into small fragments - If we think of ourselves on a regional basis I do not think that we will get anywhere at the time of independence and national unity will never come..⁴²

Notes: Chapter XVI.

1. HAD Vol II No 1 p5
2. ibid p122
3. ibid No2 p222
4. 'The Australian' 23.10.68
5. HAD Vol II No2p432
6. The Bill was presented during the second meeting but debated in the third. HAD Vol II No 3 pp565-577
7. HADVol II No 4 p971
8. ibid No 3 p616
9. ibid p643
10. ibid p627
11. ibid p653
- 12.. *Yauwe* ~~Yauwe~~ Wauwe was born in 1916, the other veterans were Chatterton 1898, Abel 1903, Yembanda 1910, Guise 1914 and Urekit 1916.
13. HAD VolIII No 7 p2032
14. ibid No 6 p1644
15. ibid No 18,p 4968
16. 'Mataungan' Kuanua for 'watch out' or 'be alert'
17. See 'The Australian Trusteeship. Papua New Guinea 1945-75. Downs; AGPS 1980 p425 et seq
18. HAD Vol II No4 p987
19. ibid p1070
20. ibid No5 p1314
21. ibid No 6 p1498
22. ibid No 9 p2499
23. ibid No 12 p 3591
24. ibid
25. ibid No 3 p627
26. ibid
27. CRA hived off 'Bougainville Copper' as a subsidiary company.
28. Arawa was an expatriate owned plantation which had been included in the land resumption to limit the encroachment on village owned land.

Chapter XVII.

Questions, Motions and Bills.

As in the first House, Questions were the principal means whersby Members criticised the Administration, pressed claims for amenities, - and necessities, for their electorates and pursued personal hobby horses. Questions were the only unlimited means of expression in the House; all other occasions had limits, - debates could be cut off by motion of the House, by time limits or by the intrusion of Administration business with many members unheard. Motions could be listed but might never reach the top of the Notice Paper, but any member could list as amny questions as he wished and get answers for them all.

Until limits were imposed late in the life of the House most questions continued to be on notice though answered orally, though Questions without Notice became more frequent as the House proceeded and Members gained confidence. In the nine meetins^g up to and including March 1970 there were 3388 questions on notice, and 778 without notice. In the eleven sitting days of the March 1970 meeting there were 504 questions on notice and 169 without notice.

Dorothy Dix played no part in Papua New Guinea Question Time. Ministerial and Official Members had ample opportunities to delineate or defend Administration policies, and members would have regarded planted questions with rehearsed answers as an abuse of the one period of parliamentary time when they controlled the action.

Questions fell into predictable categories. First and most numerous were requests, or demands, for facilities to serve the individual electorates. For instance Pita Lus asked - 'When will a HighSchool be established in Maprik?'¹ (his home town) and from Brere Awol 'Can money be allocated from rural development funds for the construction of the road from Lumi to Nuku?'² It was a matter also raised constantly by Yakob Talis who lived at the projected terminus of the road, Nuku.

Two:
Nuku

A second category of questions were those raising critical issues and attempting to generate action from the Administration. Yakob Talis, who owed much to the Catholic Mission in his electorate, was one of many to raise the matter of salaries of teachers in Mission schools - 'When are qualified Mission teachers going to receive the same salaries as Administration teachers?'³ This was a particularly sensitive issue for members, many of whom had been educated in Mission schools, and depended on Mission support for election.

A third type of questions were those which were essentially an attack on Administration actions. Oscar Tammur was a fertile progenitor of these - 'When will compensation be given for 5400 coconuts, vegetable gardens and shade trees which were destroyed by the police during the last dispute over portion of Raniola Plantation?'⁴ The question related to the occupation of a portion of an expatriate owned plantation by squatters led by Tammur who were evicted by the police and their plantings uprooted. It should be said that the plantings had been there only a day or two.

Other questions drew attention to disagreeable acts and practices among which discrimination against indigenes figured prominently, Voutas asked, 'Is it a practice to allocate telephones and instal new lines on a discriminatory basis in urban areas so that high covenant areas receive priority over longer established low covenant areas?'⁵ (The white population occupied most of the high covenant houses.) Giregire, the Ministerial Member for Posts and Telegraphs answered a flat 'No'.

The existence of Pangu meant that some questions were intended to project party policies into the House arena. An example is the issue of the importation of rice. There had been a number of attempts to develop rice growing in Papua New Guinea without much success despite apparently favourable conditions. Production had been uneconomic in relation to the cost of Australian imports. A particular difficulty was that Papua New Guinea producers did not themselves regard rice as a staple food so that virtually all of the crop was for sale to the towns and for use in institutions. But one area where rice was growing successfully was in the Sepik District and its regional member, Somare, speaking in the Adjournment, raised the problems of disposal.

Again I am embarrassed. There had been a high yield of rice from plantings in the Maprik area. Whilst in a Council meeting the people at Wosera told me of the high yield of rice. But there were no customers to purchase all this rice. Even the Department of Agriculture did not want to buy this rice. Understandably today people are being encouraged to grow more and more crops. The people in my area are growing this cash crop and the amount of

rice now grown in Maprik is of tremendous abundance. The Government has not taken any steps to purchase this rice but instead is continuously importing Australian rice. Why do you preach economic development and talk about a 'self-governing economy' while this ^{is} undone by your own orders and the purchase of rural products from other countries?⁶

Voutas followed up with a lengthy question which read in part:- 1. How much rice was imported into the Territory in 1969?

2. What was the value of this rice?

3. What country or countries exported this rice to the Territory?

The short answers were 1. 37662 tons 2. \$6,416,677

3. Australia.

Olewale wrapped it up with a supplementary question

'What steps has the Administration taken to ensure that the Territory produces its own rice?'⁸ I provided rather

a halting answer which, however, included one difficulty we had encountered 'One of the problems about Territory produced rice is, I gather, that it has a lower vitamin content than Public Health Regulations require for rations. It has therefore to be enriched, which is a rather expensive process'.⁹ The inmates of our institutions continued to eat Australian rice but we did purchase the Maprik crop, ~~and~~ but import replacement became an important part of Pangu policy - and remains so.

At the mid-point of the House a random choice of Question Time on one day (13th March 1970) reveals that there were 14 questions without notice and 106 on notice. 62 of them drew attention to deficiencies in electorates. The turbulent affairs of the Gazelle Peninsula took up a good deal of the time, Tammur and Titimur between them asking 23 questions and two supplementaries. Of the questions without

notice only three were related to individual electorates, while the remainder ranged through the problems of plantation labourers, playing cards legislation, District Education Committees, and the Select Committee on Constitutional Development.

As the House proceeded the range of interest of members expanded as did the complexity of questions, though Question Time was still used abundantly to press upon the Administration the urgent needs of members' electorates. A cross-section of questions on June 10th 1970 reveals the following topics; implementation of education reforms, entry permits for visitors, staff shortages, recruitment of police from Rhodesia, (the member was against it), education standards in Papua New Guinea schools, (not good enough), working conditions for plantation labourers, (poor), anti-malaria spraying of houses, (unpopular), Housing Commission designs, (terrible) promotion of indigenous public servants, (too slow) and plenty of the usual staples such as two from Muriso Warebu from Okapa 'Has the Department (Health) any plans to provide an ambulance for Okapa hospital?' and 'When will permanent houses be built for local officers in the Okapa district?' The answers 'No' for the first and 'this year' for the second was a better than average score.

The House individual champion as far as questions were concerned was undoubtedly Chatterton;- in the ten meetings up to and including June 1970 he asked no fewer than 228 questions. He had a good nose, - or a good intelligence organisation, - for turning up administrative deficiencies and pressing on some of our exposed nerves. He was a solid supporter of the under-dog. His interests ranged from the parochial to the plight of West Irian refugees; for instance in the August-September meeting of 1968 his questions related

to the following topics - access roads in Port Moresby, broadcasting in Papua New Guinea, indigenous participation in the ownership of businesses, motorised canoes, West Irian refugees, police in Rabaul, newspaper reporting of House business, low covenant housing rentals and traffic notices.

But on a collective basis the most persistent group of questioners were the six members of the open electorates in the Southern Highlands. It was hardly surprising for it was the least and last developed district and thus most in need. They began their interrogative onslaught on the first business day of the first meeting when, of the 24 questions on notice answered, 21 came from the Southern Highlands members. They were a clear expression of the needs of their remote mountainous area. There were demands for schools, roads, airstrips, staff and housing for them, mostly directed specifically to each member's electorate. Wabiria, however, asked two pertinent general questions, the first to the Treasurer: 'Will he provide me with comparative figures of expenditure by the Administration for all the districts in the Territory?' and the second:- 'Will sufficient funds be allocated for the pacification and control of the Territory by Administration patrols?' the latter question pointing up the fact that some of the Southern Highlands electors could still be pretty turbulent people. Massed assaults from the Southern Highlands members became a regular feature of Question Time, usually with Matiabe Yuwi or Tegi Ebei'al leading the way. Wabiria had become an Assistant Ministerial Member which took him out of the front line though not preventing him from the stoutest advocacy of his electorate's needs. Midway through the House the Southern Highlanders were still out in front. On June 4, 1970 they were credited with 21 of the 55 questions on notice, ten of them from Tegi Ebei'al.

The use of supplementaries to questions also became more common as the House proceeded. Supplementaries not infrequently caught Ministerial Members poorly equipped to respond. The best example I can recall was from Louis Mona, the member for Goilala in the undeveloped area in the mountainous hinterland of the Central District. It was accessible only by light aircraft or on foot. A landing or take-off on the Tapini Airstrip was an alarming experience. We sometimes used a visit to Tapini as indoctrination for visitors representing various United Nations Committees. To return to the point Mona challenged the Ministerial Member for Education, Toliman, as to why his electorate the Goilala sub-district was the only one in the Central District to have no representation on the District Education Board. Toliman fumbled and Mona followed through immediately with no less than four supplementaries, eventually driving Toliman into a corner when he capitulated and agreed that he would correct the oversight.

Eventually when pointed questions had not resulted in any action from the Administration and members' electors were beginning to suggest that their representative was nothing more than a 'man bilong mauswara' (windbag) members would resort to a motion, which, if passed could not be shrugged off. It required consideration by the Administrator and, where appropriate, by the AEC with a written response to the Speaker from the Administrator. Motions often gave official members problems. Some were ill-conceived, seeking impossible objectives yet phrased to get support from a sympathetic House. Some were such that Administration acquiescence would unduly distort development strategy and some ran counter to policy objectives which lay within the jurisdiction of the Australian Government. In such cases

amendments

✓ we would endeavour to move amendments which would bring them within range of fulfilment. Some of these expressions of opinion from the House had to be met with a polite rejection.

One of the not so difficult ones and a good example of progression from Question to Motion was provided, again by Louis Mona who sought to increase ^{the} to meagre educational opportunities in his electorate. In the course of the first two years of the House he asked on sixteen separate occasions for an increase in educational facilities in his area. In particular his efforts were directed to obtaining a vocational school. Vocational schools were established so that children concluding primary school but unable to get secondary school places could go to a school where skills which would be of use in the village environment were taught. For instance on the Sepik river the vocational school centred its activities around outboard motors which were widely used - and abused - on canoes, the principal form of transport in that aqueous environment.

Mona first asked the Ministerial Member for Education politely - 'Does your Department have in mind the establishment of a vocational school in the Goilala? I have seen that many young people in the Goilala area who have finished school have not got jobs - - What does his Department think about it?'¹⁰ He was told that the Department had no immediate plans for a vocational centre in the area. He tried again with a stronger attack - "Has the Department decided to establish a vocational school in the Goilala sub-district? If so, when? If not, why not?.'¹¹ Again he got a negative answer so two days later he produced a motion - 'That this House is of the opinion that a

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vocational school should be established in the Goilala sub-district during the next financial year.' ¹² Having heard the importunings of the member before, officials had little doubt that the bulk of members would support him and we decided that opposition would be futile, though I took care to point out that such motions created wider problems.

What bothers me is that motions of this nature could come up from eighty four different members of this House, all of whom, I am sure, have very great need in each of thier electorates.. .If we are going to make a practice of moving motions relating to our own electorates the business of the House is going to be crowded with similar motions and the House will be required to make decisions for or against such motions without all the facts at its disposal. ¹³

The motion passed on the voices with no opposition and eventually Mona got his vocational school.

However, a good many motions resulted from members bringing social and other problems to the notice of the House with proposals for resolving them. One of the endemic ones was the movement of young men to the towns, and particularly to Port Moresby, where, without jobs, without accommodation, and without the social restrictions of their village homes they became a potent source for riot and other criminal behavior. Meck Singiliong, the Assistant Ministerial Member for Rural Development, brought the problem to the notice of the House by moving:

That this House is of the opinion that serious consequences detrimental to village life result from large movements of people to towns and that unemployment follows and therefore requests the Administration to re-introduce restrictions on movements

to towns except where a person is guaranteed employment or visits a town for bonafide reasons.¹⁴ There was a good debate with issues for and against canvassed, but with majority opinion supporting the motion. Ninkama Bomai from what might be termed the backblocks of the Chimbu, Gumine, disagreed:-

We may succeed in passing laws for restricting the movement of these wandering people but the laws cannot be very effective. These wanderers have many ways of moving from place to place - nothing can really stop them...This House is responsible for any consequences resulting from the decisions it imposes upon the people...I would ask the House not to hasten the passing of it.¹⁵

The House ignored the warning and that of another Chimbu, Yauwe Wauwe, and the motion was passed on the voices.

The AEC then deliberated on the matter and the Administrator responded diplomatically. The letter read in part:

A great deal of work has been put into consideration of the resolution and the Administration appreciated the underlying purpose of moving from towns those who are not needed there. The difficulty is to find workable and administratively practicable measures which will not infringe basic human rights and which will not impede the movement of labour essential for urban, industrial and commercial development. The Administration is seeking to develop a comprehensive programme to counter drift to towns and also for the strengthening of village life.¹⁶

We had as little success as other developing countries in finding 'workable and administratively practicable measures.'

But perhaps the motion which had the greatest long term effect was Uroe's proposal during the second meeting for the establishment of a Select Committee for a new and permanent House of Assembly. It was sixteen years before it bore fruit.

At least until after the mid-point of the House motions were, in general, of national interest and were relatively few in number. At the seventh meeting in November 1969 only six motions were presented; Koraea about conditions of employment for Aid-Post Orderlies, Oala-Rarua promoting a national pension scheme, Lus who thought that boarding school fees were too high, Chatterton who deplored unfair trading practices, Lussick in pursuit of a particular personal interest in wanting a Commission of Enquiry concerning air transport regulations, and Abal about the development of cash crops to save imports. By June 1970 the list was a little longer, ten motions were presented, most of them still of a general nature except for Tammur's attempt to have the prosecutions of tax defaulters in the Gazelle Peninsula deferred. Of note were Chatterton's motion for the establishment of a Papua New Guinea National Broadcasting Commission, not his last word on the subject, and Lussick's proposal for an air link between PNG and Guam. Although an indulgent House accepted a good many of the motions, their proposers in general did not expect too much to ensue if official members had not indicated Administration support

but they had ventilated the subjects of their concern, the motions would at least be considered by the authorities and some action might follow.

However, in the final year of the House, motions became such a popular means of expression that they choked the Notice Paper and a great majority of them had little chance of being debated. The practice grew of grandstanding in the House to woo electoral popularity. In the August-September meeting of 1971, the Notice Paper for August 30th carried twenty two notices of motion; a month later on October 25th the list had grown to thirty. They included such populist items as the building of a road between Port Moresby and Wau, a formidable engineering feat, and the equally difficult one of connecting Kikori on the south coast to the Southern Highlands. One motion urged higher payments to copra growers and another wanted the Tari airstrip upgraded. Very few of them were debated.

Of all the motions debated in the second House one made its mark on history when Ebia Olewale in August 1969 moved:
That this House considers that the present state of the boundary between Papua and New Guinea and the State of Queensland, which, in part, runs within 1.5 miles of the coast of the Western District and includes a number of islands, (eg Saibai, Dauan, Boigu, Warrior islands etc) and reefs within a few miles of that coast and separated from Queensland proper by the whole width of the Torres Straits is in all respects most unsatisfactory and will become more unsatisfactory as time goes by. ¹⁷

The motion continued on and easily holds the record for the longest one in the history of the House, - a total

length of 364 words. After a brief debate, with official members opposing, the motion was defeated but Olewale did not give up; he pursued the matter with tenacity and tried again in September 1971 with 'the House registers its dissatisfaction with a section of the present boundary between Papua and Australia.' It precipitated a long process of negotiation which has finally resulted in a border agreement which ^{was eventually} ~~is about to be signed~~ ~~and~~ ~~will~~ be signed in December 1984.

The ultimate step in members' search for action was to prepare a Bill which, if passed, imposed mandatory requirements on the Administration unless we were prepared to use the disallowance powers resting with the Administrator or finally with the Governor-General, a power we were always reluctant to use.

Naturally the vast bulk of Bills to come before the House were from the Administration presented by Ministerial or Official Members according to the responsibilities of the individual. I can recall none which suffered outright defeat, for the Administration was almost assured of majority support from the Independent Group, or, as it later became, the United Party, the ranks of which included most Ministerial Members. Sometimes, however, amendments from the Pangu Pati or from individual members were successful. However, on one occasion the Administration suffered a conclusive defeat. It was an attempt at major reform of the antiquated land laws, including the conversion of community held land to individual title. We had commissioned the best of advice and, in particular, had looked closely at Kenyan land laws which had been much admired by our politicians. When the Bills, (four of

them,) were drafted they were given the widest publicity and we had held explanatory sessions with House members and other interested parties. Yet, when the Bills were finally introduced there was opposition from all sides. Toua Kapena, normally a reliable supporter, epitomised the low level of debate and unreasoning opposition: 'When the British Government first landed in this country, it hoisted its flag in my village. At that time it made a proclamation to protect our land. All the old people did not know the importance of the land at that time. I will not support this Bill'.¹⁸ Members believed that, irrespective of the merits of change, association with change in the land laws may well be politically suicidal. We withdrew the Bills rather than face a humiliating defeat.

The presentation of Bills was something that the average indigenous member was disinclined to tackle, but the white members were not so restrained, nor was the Pangu Pati which had no inhibitions about presenting Bills in pursuit of party objectives. As recorded elsewhere Pangu's first Bill in the second House was introduced by Lapun, the National Name Bill, but the proposal for 'Niugini' was firmly rejected by the House. At the same meeting Lus had more success with a Bill for PNG to adopt the international code for traffic signs. He argued the case very competently and had no opposition. I have referred elsewhere to the very considerable victory of the Pangu Pati over official opposition to a Bill whereby the House restored the name 'Administrative College' to the institution which had been, briefly, the 'Public Service Training Centre.' Voutas also had a win with his Bill to ease the bureaucratic difficulties Papuans and New Guineans suffered when they sought to leave from and return to their own country.

Lapun's Sorcery Bill was a successful personal initiative and could not be attributed to the Party. Although members of the Pangu Pati often complained that their worthy initiatives were smothered by the might of mindless opposition they certainly did a good deal better than parliamentary opposition in other countries.

Of the white members Chatterton was the most active, - the most questions, motions of social consequence and in the production of Bills. His first attempt was to set up a Commission of Enquiry into the salaries of local officers of the Public Service whose dissatisfaction arose from the events recorded in Chapter VII. The Administration had to close ranks to oppose a proposal which found plenty of sympathisers among the members. We contended that such an approach would destroy the arbitration system which the local officers could resort to if they so wished. Chatterton lost with 25 supporters against 53 opposed. He had better luck with his Discriminatory Practices Bill which was directed against retail traders who, enquiry had revealed, had a two tier pricing system which provided for higher prices in areas of largely indigenous population as against those outlets serving the expatriate areas. He had another uncontested victory with his Human Rights Bill which he regarded as the summit of his political career.

Lussick was also prominent in the production of Bills as well as in general debate on other matters. One of his preoccupations was for the establishment of a separate Department of Local Government and ^{another} ~~for~~ all matters relating to air transport. He had served as a pilot in the RAF and RAAF. He had wide support for his Local Government Bill as for many members their Local Government Council was the centre of their political universe and their springboard

into national politics. The Administration, however, managed to stave off the separation of Local government from its parent department, District Administration. The fact that five of the official members were from that department may have had something to do with it.

Legislative initiatives, in~~s~~o far as the presentation of Bills was concerned, from individual Papua New Guinean members were not numerous, but those that come most readily to mind relate to capital punishment and to playing cards, and sometimes the latter activity produced action for which the former was advocated.

Notes.Chapter XVII.

1. HAD Vol II No7 p1947
2. ibid No5 p1194
3. ibid p1198
4. ibid No7 p2116
5. ibid No9 p2370
6. ibid No6 p1519
7. ibid No9 p2456
8. ibid p2457
9. ibid
10. ibid No7 p1879
11. ibid No9 p2291
12. ibid p2378
13. ibid p2380
14. ibid No6 p1461
15. ibid p1470
16. ibid No7 p2103
17. ibid No6 p1485
18. ibid No 14 p4320



At the launching of the first novel by a Papua New Guinean,
"The Crocodile" by Vincent Eri. L to R Les Johnson, Vincent Eri,
Sir Donald Cleland (Administrator 1953-66)
Eri was later PNG High Commissioner to Australia, then Knighted
and became Governor General of PNG.



The Administrator with Marshall Lagoon Council



His Honour the Administrator Les Johnson with Boy Scouts .

Chapter XVIII

Big Occasions - and some small ones.

Arguably the two most important actions of the second House were the acceptance of the Constitutional Committee's recommendation that Papua New Guinea should plan for self-government during the currency of the third House of Assembly, and the reform of the Education system. The first of these has been examined in the succeeding chapter, the latter came to pass in 1969-70. In contrast the Public Order Bill introduced in September 1970 was the most actively controversial.

Education Bills are not the stuff of parliamentary drama but the Education Bill and the Teaching Service Bill presented by the Ministerial Member for Education, Matt Toliman created an administrative revolution in a notoriously conservative environment. The two Bills set out to unscramble the operations of some fifty separate Christian Mission establishments each conducting schools, and unite them with the Administration structure and make for a national system of education and a national teaching service. Perforce the Bills would intrude on the independence of the Missions in the field of education.

Up to this time Mission schools which catered for almost two thirds of primary enrolments had been sustained by meagre Administration grants -in-aid for teachers' salaries together with the provision of class room materials. The system left Mission teachers' salaries far below those of their Administration colleagues - a source of constant complaint from members of the House. There was thus a great deal of inequality in the standards prevailing in schools. Some very small Church organisations were quite

unable to sustain satisfactory standards and even the large organisations such as the Catholic Church found the cost of paying adequate salaries to their teachers, and maintaining their extensive school system, beyond their means.

The changes were some time in coming. In February 1969 a committee was set up to make recommendations, and in November 1969 Toliman tabled the committee's report for discussion. Essentially it recommended the establishment of a national system overseen by a Territory Education Board comprising representatives of the Administration, the Missions, teachers, Local Government Councils, laymen and other interested parties, while comparable boards were to be set up in each district. The Director of Education retained responsibility for education standards and curricula. Church interests could opt out of the system but would not then receive Administration assistance. A common teaching service would be established paying standard rates to all qualified teachers within the system. As far as the Missions were concerned there was a good deal of stick with the carrot. However, the Missions did accept the proposals though some elements within the Catholic Church were concerned that the religious nature of their education offering might be seriously diluted. Ultimately the Bishops, after being subject to some persuasion by their education officer, Father Paul McVinney, agreed to accept the scheme and participate in it.

In the House members welcomed the proposals enthusiastically, most of them not looking beyond the fact that Mission teachers' salaries would at last equate with the teachers working in Administration schools. So it was with some surprise that the House found that there was no

unanimity among them when Donatus Mola, the member for North Bougainville, moved a contrary motion which appeared to have emanated from Catholic sources in Bougainville. The basis of his argument was that the proposed system was a threat to a religious education. Mola claimed that the proposal provided for a system which was contrary to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and that:- 'it appears to be a Communist type policy' and that 'we know that the Missions are teaching only ^{for} spiritual needs while the Administration teachers only for material needs. Have a look and see which is the most successful.'¹ I responded immediately, but skirted the issue of which particular group was behind the motion:

I personally am opposed strongly to the motion, and I think that almost every member of the House is opposed to it. I think that Mr.Mola is opposed to it also. He is speaking for some of the people of Bougainville but if this expresses the views of the majority of the people of Bougainville they are certainly out of step with the rest of the Territory. Joining the national system will not affect in any way the Church's right to teach religious principles and to teach religion in schools.²

Lapun was waiting in the wings to add support to the motion. He was his usual prolix self developing familiar themes.

Our belief in spirits went through a gradual and constant process of change so that our initial belief in spirits has now become a belief in the one true God... Now the parents of a child want to see that this belief will be taught to their children and passed on...We want to retain our good old ways of life; our

culture, our race must be preserved.³
and much more of the same. Then Toliman came in strongly⁴
and the House, well knowing where the impetus for the
motion originated, brushed it aside.

There was one more stage to go, the passage of the
Bills to implement the proposal, Toliman introduced the
two Bills at the meeting in June 1970, emphasising that
the right of parents to obtain the education they wished
for their children was protected and that a desirable
diversity in education was secured as was the need to
preserve the character and identity of all schools. He
had wide support. Somare, after providing some histor-
ical background, said 'This scheme to associate the work
of the Christian Missions with the Department of Education,
the new conditions for teachers and new educational schemes
is very important to this country. I believe that all
Honourable Members will assist in making this scheme work.'⁵
Tammur and the Administration were, for once, at one:

I wish to say that I am not a 'yes' man when
it comes to considering laws being introduced
by the Government. I do not agree with measures
hastily. However, when the Bill was introduced
I immediately thought of our people of Papua New
Guinea and all of the men who are working to es-
tablish this country, and I praised the Govern-
ment.⁶

Bougainville, however, was not yet defeated. At the
Committee stage of the Bill Lapun produced an amendment
to conserve the right to maintain a fee paying structure
in Mission schools. Toliman attacked the source of the
motion rather than the intent:

I think that the Honourable Member is speaking
for the Catholic Mission on Bougainville. How-
ever we have the national representative for

Catholic Mission education stationed in Port Moresby ... one of the men who looked into all the aspects and problems when preparing this Bill. When this information does come from Bougainville why does it not come through the correct channel? ⁷

In essence Toliman was saying that the Church had helped to frame the proposals and had accepted them, / the motion was a back door way whereby a section of the Church was trying to gain some advantage. It should also be borne in mind that Toliman, like Lapun, was a devout Catholic. Lapun's amendment was defeated and after running the gauntlet of many other minor amendments the Bill became law. It was Toliman's finest hour. Despite the greatly added burden on the Administration budget the new provisions were implemented speedily and by the end of the year Papua New Guinea had a rational, equitable education system.

The most actively controversial Bill introduced was undoubtedly the Public Order Bill which was presented to the House during the September meeting in 1970. Up to that time Papua New Guinea had no specific legislation with which to deal with the combustible situation faced in the Gazelle Peninsula, or with other groups who might seek to emulate the Mataungan Association in the future. The Administration was also faced with regular recurrences of tribal fighting in the central and western Highlands, which we had found increasingly difficult to contain, but the Public Order Bill was primarily a response to our concern about the events in Rabaul and its environs.

The Bill set out measures to control public meetings and processions, there were additional powers to control

traffic and to stop and search vehicles. There was to be summary conviction for breaches of the peace and magisterial powers to bind offenders over to be of good conduct. There was protection against trespassers and the requirement for permits for public meetings in declared areas. The provisions of the Bill were to apply only in declared areas and contained the usual safe-guard provisions to curb the arbitrary exercise of power. On the whole it was not too different from provisions which most countries had on their statute books for emergency situations, but its introduction at this particular time, and obviously directed at a group which had many sympathisers in the community, particularly among the articulate young staff members of the University of Papua New Guinea, was inauspicious. The Vice-Chancellor of the University, Ken Inglis, and a representative of the staff association, Charles Rowley, sought a meeting with me to convey the views of the staff which, however, did little to deflect us from our course, though the Secretary for Law, Lindsay Curtis, met with the staff and agreed to some amendments.

arbitrary

x

Draft copies of the Bill had been widely circulated so that public positions had been taken and speeches and protests prepared. The Administration knew that it would face sharp criticism, but as the Administrator's Executive Council had approved the Bill and the majority of members had little sympathy with the MA there was no doubt that there would be a handsome majority to support the Bill.

In the House Voutas speculated that 'I suspect that the anxious hours the Prime Minister experienced prior to his arrival in Rabaul and the large crowds that confronted him at the airport plus (Australian) Cabinet

Administration's x

involvement in decisions regarding the Vunapaladig confrontation soon after, were basically instrumental in the instruction to draft the Public Order Bill. The Bill is, in my opinion, the Administrator's legal answer to situations which have arisen on the Gazelle Peninsula'.⁸ Nobody was about to deny it. Gorton had certainly had a nervous time facing the hostile mass of Mataungans and this, in part, led to the Australian Cabinet authorising the Administrator⁹ to call out the defence forces in aid to the civil power should the situation get out of hand. Fortunately there was no occasion to do so.

For the Administration Lindsay Curtis opened the debate with the longest speech in the records of either of the first two Houses. As usual he presented a fluent tightly argued case with a resounding peroration:

Freedom is not only for those who want to demonstrate and march and protest about existing law. Freedom is also something for the ordinary people of this country who want to live their own lives and go about their own business in the villages and the towns without interference. Freedom is also for those who want to support platforms and policies without fear of being intimidated.¹⁰

Chatterton led the attack on the Bill and Voutas almost rivalled Curtis with a marathon effort, while Tammur, as might be expected, was his usual verbose self, adding a further 3000 words to the record of Debates. But their arguments made little impression on the House. The second reading passed 54 to 21. Opposition continued right through the Committee stages, Chatterton moving no less than fifteen amendments, but all were lost as the Administration majority stayed firm. Even at the

conventional third reading Somare sought to intervene but much to his chagrin was prevented by the closure of the debate, again by a comfortable margin 53 to 18.

One of the rare defeats in the House suffered by the Administration was in its opposition to the Administrative College Bill presented by Paul Langro on behalf of the Pangu Pati. In general the House was indulgently disposed towards the extra-parliamentary activities of the Administration. It was more inclined to be critical of its methods rather than its policies and viewed the shortcomings of its senior servants more in sorrow than in anger. But one issue proved extremely irritating and aroused a direct response. That was the renaming of the Administrative College to call it the Public Service *Training* Centre. The Administrative College had achieved status and prestige since its establishment in the early sixties and was regarded by Papuan New Guineans as the leading edge in the localisation of the Public Service. However, a newly appointed Chairman of the Public Service Board, plucked from the Canberra bureaucracy, persuaded his Board that a change of name would impose a sense of purpose and improve the discipline of the institution. Perhaps he had in mind that the political discussion which abounded there disturbed the students' concentration on the more important things of life.

Training

In March 1970 Voutas asked:

Why was the name of the Administrative College changed to the Public Service Training Centre?

The response (mine) as provided by the Public Service Board was:

The name was changed to reflect more exactly the actual role of the establishment which is development and training at all levels.¹¹

Student reaction was universally unfavourable and the

role

Pangu Pati set out to make an issue of it by introducing a Bill in the House to require reversion to the original name. The Minister for Territories considered the matter entirely outside the province of the House of Assembly and official members were directed to oppose the Bill although we all felt that the unilateral action by the Public Service Board was ill-judged and inappropriate.

The principal concerns of those opposed to the name change were exemplified first by Olewale who spoke of the downgrading of the institution and next by Somare, a previous student, who had fears of political censorship: 'We were free to discuss whatever we wanted in our classes. Nothing obstructed us from expressing our view.'¹² and then Chatterton joined the chorus: 'What has happened there? The morale of the students has been shot to pieces, the prestige of the institution...has been lowered and staff are apparently just streaming out of the door.'¹³

Kurondo x

The voting on the Bill was close but the 'Ayes' had it 37 to 33, one feature of the voting being the abstention rate. Two Ministerial Members, Kurondo and Oala-Rarua were among the Bill's supporters and Ministerial abstainers were Giregire who had spoken in favour of the Bill, Ashton, Lue, Wabiria and Watson. Seven of fifteen Ministerial appointees had failed to support the Administration.

The Minister for External Territories was disinclined to accept the views of the House and had in mind to disallow the Bill, but as this, coming so soon after the powers of Ministerial Members and the AEC had been extended by the Prime Minister, would have attracted widespread criticism, he refrained. The Public Service Training Centre became again the Administrative College and the

ranks of Pangu were sustained after a long period in the legislative wilderness.

x The increasing probability that West Irian would legally become a province of Indonesia aroused apprehension in the minds of some Papua New Guineans and Chatterton, in the first House, had raised the issue of treatment of border crossers, a matter he pursued throughout the life of the second House. As the Act of Free Choice approached, and the defacto occupation of West Irian by Indonesia proceeded, concern arose that Indonesia may have further expansionist ambitions and this was re-inforced by an increase in the number of border crossers, a substantial proportion of whom sought permanent residence in Papua New Guinea, citing political persecution, or the fear of it, as the reason. In an answer to a question in the House in November 1969 it was revealed that, at that time, there were 1294 West Irianese in Papua New Guinea, of whom 276 had temporary residence permits, 508 were awaiting decisions on applications for residence and 510 were tribal border residents, most of them over for the sago making period of the year.

The concern of members was increased by an incident when an Indonesian patrol crossed the border and fired a couple of shots in the general direction of our resident patrol officer at Wutung, the nearest outpost to the border on the north coast. The Administration had been obliged to set up reception camps near Wutung to cater for the influx of what might be called refugees. The House was angry, upset and apprehensive. Langro, the member for West Sepik(regional) spoke of the problems created by an arbitrary international dividing line: 'These people are

closely related to us and we consider ourselves as members of one group ... These are our brothers and we cannot understand why we are not allowed to be their hosts'.¹⁴

Members' concern and sympathy for those they regarded as brothers, obliged the Administration to make a statement in the House, a duty performed by Watkins at great length;

'for some years West Irianise have entered Papua New Guinea at Wutung. Ties of kinship and tradition extend along the coast on either side of the border and at various times small and large groups of people have called at Wutung by boat or on foot; Many have called to visit relatives. They are the traditional inhabitants of the border area.'

But many of the new border crossers were of a different kind, and even an anodyne statement had to take them into account

Recent large crossings have meant the provision of facilities at Yako (in the north) and Morehead (south of the mountainous divide in Papua) for West Irianese seeking permissive residence... the seventy nine West Irianese who crossed the border are being accommodated at the Yako quarantine station near Vanimo. They are being cared for by the Administration and in accordance with normal prodedures ... any claims they may have to remain in the Territory are being investigated.¹⁵

Chatterton promptly turned the motion to 'take note of the paper' into an attack on Indonesia, and Australia's pusillanimous policy, by amending the formal motion.

The amendment, in part, read:-

We cannot rule out the possibility that when the stage Sabang to Merauke has become an accomplished fact the next stage may be Sabang to Samarai.

(Merauke is on the southern coast of West Irian near the PNG border, Samarai is a small island on the eastern tip of Papua) and the motion went on

expresses its deep concern in regard to the manner in which the forthcoming Act of Free Choice is to be conducted and the possibility that dissatisfaction resulting from it will confront Papua New Guinea with a continuing and increasing border problem.¹⁶

Chatterton was warmly supported by members and the amended motion passed, only Voutas raising the larger issues of Australia's and Papua New Guinea's long term relationship with Indonesia and the fragility of the Indonesian regime at that time.

The border crossing continued and Chatterton remained a persistent questioner in the interests of those West Irianese who sought asylum in Papua New Guinea.

The Indonesian Government was anxious that its small neighbour's fears should be dispelled and so the House was gratified to have its status recognised when the Speaker announced an invitation from Indonesia for a representative group of five MHA's to accompany the Speaker on an official visit to that country. The House, through a process of negotiation selected Lapun, Nugintz, Yembanda, Dutton and Kavali to accompany Guise. But elements within the majority Independent Group, then in the process of becoming the United Party, had always been strongly antagonistic towards one of the chosen, Kavali, who was regarded as a

renegade because of his association with Pangu and his recent announcement of the creation of his own party, the New Guinea National Party. It was decided that the embryonic United Party would show its strength by excluding Kavali from the visit group. Tei Abal produced an axe rather than a stilleto to do the job which was accomplished by a vote of 41 to 29. He was replaced by Nimambot from the hinterland of the Morobe District. It was a shabby incident and quite uncharacteristic of members' actions. It was always considered that the perquisites which might come their way should always be shared out fairly and by common agreement.

In June 1971 the Speaker reported to the House on the visit, ¹⁷ and spoke with some satisfaction on the warmth of the hospitality and the exhaustive programme planned for them by the Indonesian Government, but members' concern at events in the border region continued.

The Papua New Guinea economy was heavily dependent on tropical tree crops, particularly copra, cocoa, coffee and to a lesser degree tea and palm oil. A considerable and increasing proportion of these crops was produced by Papua New Guinea small holders so that it was with much anxiety that members considered the effect on their sales to the United Kingdom which was about to enter the European Economic Community. Under the Lomé Convention colonies or ex-colonies of member countries had preferential entry into the markets of all EEC member countries. PNG's standing in the UK market in particular would be seriously affected if it could not gain entry on the same terms as rival producers in Africa and elsewhere.

Angmai Bilas, the Ministerial Member for Trade and Industry, introduced the problem to members in September 1970.

Many of our African competitors, because of their special relations with the Common Market, will not have to face this duty. This will clearly make our products much harder to sell.¹⁸ Britain takes about 30 per cent of our exports. It is a most important market for our copra and tea and particularly for coconut oil and pyrethrum. It is also important for our coffee and cocoa and we had planned on it being a major market for our palm oil.¹⁹

He then intimated the intention to lead a Papua New Guinea delegation to put the case to the EEC member countries. The House warmly approved its entry into international affairs in its own right and the despatch of its own Ministers and public servants to argue its case. Bilas led an expedition accompanied by Ashton, who apart from being Ministerial Member for Works was also a planter of cocoa and coconuts. Fairfax-Ross, a long term Australian resident and Chairman of the Copra Marketing Board, went along as did two PNG public servants, Natera a Papuan economist, and Thomson, the Director of the Department of Trade. Gutman from the Department of External Territories, an experienced economist, also accompanied the party.

The Mission proposed the ingenious but somewhat dubious argument that because New Guinea had been a German colony and Papua had originally been a British colony and then a colony of Australia which had been a colony of Britain (are you still with me) Papua New Guinea had a clear entitlement to preferential access to EEC markets. The Mission was sympathetically greeted in London and had a good hearing in Bonn, but their

reception in Paris was decidedly cool. Ultimately the venture had a happy ending and PNG tropical products gained the same advantage in Europe as their colonial and ex-colonial rivals. Bilas was pleased to take the credit for it.

A chapter on parliamentary occasions would not be complete without reference to the annual presentation of the revenue and expenditure estimates for the forthcoming financial year, commonly known as the Budget. The Budget meeting was always in August - September shortly after the size of the Australian grant had been revealed. It was the set piece debate of the year. However, in the second House it became a somewhat tedious repetitive exercise. Officials approached the occasion with less anxiety than in the first House because the political configuration ensured majority support, while those who might be termed the opposition members confined themselves to verbal attacks which were not usually translated into calling for divisions on the whole or the parts.

That is not to say that they were all happy with the budget allocations, in fact most were critical of at least some of the items, and, in particular, what they deemed to be neglect of their own electorates. The 1969 Budget provides some examples of this which Triyaya Kambipi's comments were typical though rather more colourful than most.

The Administration had forgotten one of the new electorates. I think that is a sin. The Government has been neglecting some of the new electorates, for example my electorate. I am ashamed and shocked when looking through the Works Programme I cannot find any places in my electorate being named there for new

Triyaya.

x

projects to be established . A man has a wife and two children. The first one is older, about sixteen years of age and the other one is about one year old. Which one has the greater need for care and protection? ²⁰

Somare, speaking for the Pangu Pati, had plenty to say about the deficiencies of his electorate but provided also some comments on policy direction:

I feel not enough was allocated for secondary education, tertiary education and technical education. The Budget cannot fulfil all we want this year but the Party had hoped that more could be allocated to education which the party feels is very important and basic to the economic, social and political development of this country.²¹

Every member sought to speak on the budget though time restrictions did not make this possible. In 1969 forty three members , excluding officials, did catch the Speaker's eye. It was conventional practice to begin by expressing appreciation for the Australian grant as a prelude to criticising the way it had been dispersed, thus Somare, in a mild mood: 'I know that the Pangu Pati has often been critical of the Australian Government but at the same time we very much appreciate the money from the Commonwealth Government even though the money may not always be spent efficiently by the Administration.²²

Perhaps it is appropriate to record that the 1969 Budget called for an expenditure of \$175.9 millions of which \$96 millions was a direct Commonwealth grant

to the Budget. The Commonwealth also allocated another \$22.6 millions for other Commonwealth instrumentalities in Papua New Guinea. The biggest share of the PNG Budget was devoted to education, 16.5 per cent of the total, and roads and bridges, 9.06 per cent. Certainly this proportion accorded with the wishes of members, their complaints were that in total it was insufficient and that not enough of it was directed to their respective electorates. Another familiar criticism was that the expenditure pattern was unduly influenced by bureaucrats in Canberra. Ron Neville had a few words to say about it:- 'It is a compromise Budget - a compromise of what we think should be done for the Territory and what Canberra in its complacency will allow us to do.'²³

During the second reading stage of the debate members could be expansive and this was the place when exhortation to remedy electoral deficiencies could be developed, but when the Bill reached the Committee stages, where it was examined item by item, it was the Works Programme which attracted the keen scrutiny of members for items that might enhance their reputation and assist their re-election. In the Works Programme was the stuff of local politics, - roads, bridges, schools, houses, water and electricity supplies and so on. Also of great interest was the schedule of proposed staff recruitment, would it be enough to provide additional health workers, teachers, agricultural officers; all were deficient throughout the country. A common complaint was the disproportionate amount of money devoted to Port Moresby. Of the 1971 appropriation Chatterton complained 'The amount allocated for new work in the Central District is \$6,881,811. The amount actually being spent in the Central District is \$193,061. All the rest is being

spent on the National Capital.' Perhaps a suitable conclusion is Matiabe Yuwi's comment, also on the 1971 Budget 'We cannot do anything because sweeping changes are going ahead and self-government is only a step away, independence is not very far away.' 24

Notes Chapter XVIII

1. HAD VolIII No9p2508
2. ibid p2509
3. ibid
4. ibid p2681
5. ibid No10 p2808-9
6. ibid p2810
7. ibid p2921
8. ibid No11 p3286
9. At that point I had just succeeded David Hay as Administrator.
10. HAD Vol II p3137
11. ibid No9 p2370
12. ibid p2780
13. ibid No10 p2938
14. ibid No5 p1436
15. ibid No5 pp1131-33
16. ibid p1342
17. ibid No14 p4479
18. ibid No11 p3365
19. ibid No 13 p3999
20. ibid No6 p1745
21. ibid pp1718-19
22. ibid
23. ibid p1712
24. ibid No 18 September 21.



Port Mresby becomes a City 1972. The Administrator congratulates Lord Mayor Oala Oala Rarua,



Swearing in Ministers to third H of A. B.Jephcott, J Kaputin,
Y.Belo, P.Lus.



The foundation of the PNG National Broadcasting Corporation.
Sam Piniau being congratulated by the Administrator Les Johnson
on his appointment to head up the NBC. In the background Malcolm
Naylor of the ABC, and Kubulon Los.

Chapter XIX

The Second Constitutional Committee.

On the 12th March 1969 Paulus Arek moved:

That in accordance with the procedures adopted by the first House of Assembly a Select Committee be appointed to consider ways and means of preparing and presenting, and to draft for the consideration of this House, a set of constitutional proposals to serve as a guide for future constitutional development in the Territory.

and in supporting his motion Arek endeavoured to indicate, politely, that there were constitutional models other than Westminster that might be considered:

The Australian Government ...has given us the Westminster system of government which is one of the most significant systems of government in the world. In America they have a different system known as the Presidential system, and in other parts of the world there are systems such as federations of different States and variations of these.¹

Arek, an ambitious politician, had been eager to get his motion in since the first meeting almost a year earlier, after he had failed to gain a ministerial post. Convention had it that the proposer of the motion for a Select Committee would also be its Chairman, a position providing status and travel perquisites and allowances of some significance. The Administration had recognised that the establishment of a second Constitutional Committee was inevitable, but as the Australian Government's policy was to hold in check possible radical political initiatives we official members were directed to restrain Arek until we were assured that the temper of the House would ensure the rejection of anything too progressive. Discussion on Arek's motion was deferred until the next meeting.

Meanwhile we considered what our reaction should be and with Ministerial approval adopted a 'hands off' attitude when the motion was debated. I enlightened the House:

The Administration considers that a decision to establish a Constitutional Committee or to defer such an establishment until later is essentially a matter for the elected members of the House to take and we do not consider that it is a decision in which we official members should intervene. In consequence, Mr. Speaker, should there be a division on this particular matter the official members will not take part.²

There was widespread participation in the ensuing debate on Arek's motion and, in all, twenty two members spoke, only four in opposition; Leahy, Kambipi, Abal and Yuwi, two on the fence, Lokoloko and Nugintz, and the rest firmly in favour. Leahy suggested deferral and the three Highlanders repeated rather well worn views. One of them, Triamya Kambipi, the member for Kompián-Baiyer in the Western Highlands, was unusual in that he spoke good English, having been educated by the Baptist Mission in the area where he also worked for the active, Mission initiated, Enga Co-operative Society. He had a better understanding of the issues than many of his fellows, but always sounded rather sententious. On this occasion he presented familiar arguments:

Triamya
Kompián

it is far too early and I will tell you why. I think so. In my electorate I never find anybody who understands the system of government we have here. Nobody knows what the House of Assembly means; no-one knows what a democratic system is. Not one person in my area understands anything about democracy, the House of Assembly or the Commonwealth Government.³

Kambipi's arguments were contested by another unusual member,

Epineri Titimur, from Rabaul. At times his comments were sharp and penetrating and at others it was as if he lived in quite another world; 'My thoughts and wishes, and I believe that these are the wishes of the younger generation of Papuans and New Guineans, are that our government should be similar to that of other Western nations. We must co-operate also with the young generation of Australians.'⁴

Arek wound up the debate in fine style; 'Mr. Speaker, no two countries in the world have exactly the same system - it is a matter of trial and error, but in this country we hope by timely effort to avoid the majority of errors made elsewhere.'⁵

without X

The motion passed with ^{out} dissension.

A few days later consultation had produced a Committee of fourteen and although we officials had stood apart from the argument as to whether or not there should be a Committee we ensured that we were represented on it. The membership was Arek, Mola, Olewale, Oala-Rarua, Leahy-Lussick, Yuwi, Toliman, Somare, Middleton, Giregire and Abal. Littler and I from the official members were included. Arek was to ^{be} Chairman and I was his deputy. Although the Committee included a number of progressive members, ^{of} Oala-Rua, Somare, Olewale and Arek, all of the elected white members were conservatives. As two members from the Pangu Pati were included (Somare and Olewale) this meant that neither Voutas or Abel could ~~not~~ be considered and the only other white man on the liberal side of the fence was Chatterton who considered himself too old to undertake what was sure to be a good deal of physically taxing travel. Four Ministerial Members were there plus Leahy, the non Ministerial member of the AEC.

Para 1

There remained some apprehension in Canberra that the Committee might get out of control and so, when the appointment of an executive officer was canvassed we had thrust upon us an officer from the Australian Attorney General's Department who had no knowledge of Papua New Guinea and who proposed to continue to reside in Canberra paying visits to Papua New Guinea as required. It was a totally unsatisfactory situation and the officer was soon replaced by one from the Department of External Territories, Alan Kerr, who had a law degree and had previously worked in Papua New Guinea. He was a great success, efficient, sympathetic, well liked by Committee members and a trusted confidant.

The Committee presented its first interim report to the House in November of the same year, outlining progress to that date. Three sub-committees had been formed to consider respectively a suitable name for the country, to select a design for a national flag and to select a suitable national song. It also set out a provisional programme which was to include a comprehensive review of other systems of government and the problems associated with modification of the existing system. It was quite an ambitious proposition.

The entire Committee then set out for Canberra to try to get some indication of the intentions of the Australian Government and thereafter submitted a second interim report. In the meantime the Whitlam visit to PNG in January 1970 and its repercussions had moved the Australian Government to pre-empt possible Committee recommendations by the announcement that the powers of Ministerial Members would be considerably expanded. The Minister, Barnes, set

out the changes:-'a Ministerial Member will be fully responsible to the AEC for the day to day running of his Department instead of, as at present, acting jointly with the Departmental Head, and sharing the responsibility with him.'⁶

The Committee was more than somewhat miffed by such a unilateral announcement made without consultation with, or reference to, the House of Assembly's Select Committee on Constitutional Development but redeemed its self-esteem by a firm statement to the House in June 1970:

'The Committee firmly maintains that all major constitutional changes which require amendment to the Papua and New Guinea Act should, in future, be made only on the recommendation of a Select Committee as endorsed by the House of Assembly. The Select Committee sincerely requests all Australian political parties to respect this principle.'⁷

In Australia both the Liberal government and the Labor opposition, in the person of Whitlam, had so far ignored the Select Committee; The Prime Minister, John Gorton, continued to do so when, in July, he further expanded the powers of Ministers and the AEC without reference to the Committee.

In its second interim Report the Committee notified its intention to seek the views of the people of Papua New Guinea on the matters relevant to the Committee's brief by visiting every district and conducting open meetings. It also advised an envious House that it proposed to expand its horizons by dividing into two groups to visit countries which had already passed through the colonial experience, or were in the process of divesting themselves

of its burdens. One group was to visit the Pacific countries, the UN Trust Territories, Guam, Western Samoa, Fiji, American Samoa, Tonga and the British Solomon Islands Protectorate, the other group would go to Sri Lanka, India, Uganda, Tanzania and Ghana. I should say that by this time I had left the Committee but did meet up with the African group in Tanzania where they encountered stories of violent crime in Dar-es-Salaam similar to those being publicised in Port Moresby in more recent times. Irrespective of whether or not these visits influenced members' views on constitutional development they were invaluable in expanding their horizons but in particular the experience of seeing black citizens in full and confident control of their own affairs had a profound effect on their outlook.

By June 1970 the Committee had completed its District visits. Arek set out the arduous programme they had completed between 13th April and 27th May. (prior to the overseas tours) They had held 143 meetings, visited each major town, a majority of sub-districts and many patrol posts and Local Government Council centres⁸ Even so, pressure from members obliged the Committee to undertake a further round of visits later because of complaints by many constituents that they had not had an opportunity to meet the Committee.

These meetings did not differ too much from those undertaken by the first Constitutional Committee as described in Chapter IX, except in one respect and that was the active participation of students. There were now many more senior high school students and many more in vocational training courses of all kinds; these young people wanted a Papua New Guinea in which they could hold a prominent place; they saw the disappearance of colonialism as ensuring them

of an appropriate status in their own community. Also there were many more foreign academics in the rapidly expanding tertiary education institutions, these mostly young and eager to have an influence on events. The Committee was thus exposed to far more pressures than its predecessor.

But the principal factor in precipitating more adventurous recommendations than might have been expected from the membership of the Committee was the unilateral actions of the Australian Government in the extension of the powers of Ministerial Members and of the Administrator's Executive Council, announced by the Prime-Minister in his visit to Papua New Guinea in July 1970 when he also announced the creation of the position of Spokesman for the AEC. Under the new situation the Administrator was now required to act in accordance with any advice in respect of matters in which a Ministerial Member or an Assistant Ministerial Member had full authority and also to act in accord with the advice given him by the AEC. The Spokesman of the AEC was to answer Questions in the House on the AEC activities and decisions, to make statements in the House, to liaise with parties and with groups of members and to chair meetings of Ministerial and Assistant Ministerial Members. It was potentially a key post. The Prime Minister had further thrust Papua New Guinea along the Westminster track in confirming the relationship of Ministerial Members and the AEC with membership of the House and with a designated leader who might be translated into a future Prime Minister. There was little left for the Constitutional Committee to do unless it was prepared to break the constitutional mold created by the Prime Minister's decisions.

It was not surprising then, that the Committee's third interim report did not break much new ground. As a preliminary recommendation it proposed the substitution of the term 'Minister' for MMs and AMMs, a term which had been widely used in practice since the first meeting of the House in 1968, and a term to which their expanded responsibilities entitled them. The Committee considered that there might be up to seventeen Ministers and that between seven and ten might be AEC members. Voutas commented:- 'it seems that the Select Committee is having difficulty in keeping up with the changes introduced by the Prime Minister'.⁹

The House of Assembly had taken the Prime Minister's initiatives quietly enough except that it aroused criticism from Highland members who had thought that the Constitutional Committee would make the running and in this case they were in a strong position to influence its findings as well as House reactions to any recommendations it might make. Now they had lost their leverage. Clearly there had been a marked advance towards self-government and almost all that remained was to fix a date for it. The AEC had implemented the Prime Minister's decision that it should have a spokesman and, in the absence of its Chairman, (myself) and the official members it opted for Tom Leahy with Tore Lokoloko as his deputy. The choice of a white for the job was controversial and Pangu members in the House adopted the procedure of calling Leahy the proto-Prime Minister. There was never any real chance of Leahy becoming Prime Minister and indigenous pretenders to the Prime Ministerial throne were not too happy in it having a temporary white occupant while they manoeuvred for the future prize.

unhappy

The only remaining decision of consequence left to the Constitutional Committee was self-government - when? Even Tei Abal had been obliged to modify his public stance, in November 1970 he was saying :- 'We say self-government might come in three or four years -we always forget the views of the people - - all the people in the Highlands request cautious progress towards self-government',¹⁰ and Arek confirmed that 'on the evidence submitted to the Committee it is apparent that the majority of the people in Papua New Guinea are opposed to early internal self-government.

The final report was presented to the House in March 1971. Points made were that although the majority of the people had expressed opposition to early self-government the Committee had noticed that there was a widespread lack of appreciation and understanding of the meaning and implications of self-government. However, during the second tour of the districts most people were then prepared to discuss an appropriate time for self-government, though the majority considered that it should be no sooner than the 1976 House of Assembly.

The Committee had pondered, and argued, but it was already faced with Gorton's 'fait accompli', there was pressure from the younger and better educated citizens and there was the obvious wish of the Australian Government to shed its colonial responsibilities. It took the plunge and came up with the recommendation that as 'the rate of political development and awareness is accelerating' then 'that the development of the Territory(should) be geared to preparing the country for internal self-government during the life of the next House of Assembly'.¹¹ In short it should be no later than 1976, or it could be as early as 1972. There had been a remarkable foreshortening of political perspective since the first Constitutional Committee met in 1965. An associated recommendation was that the AEC should elect a Deputy Chairman

(deputy to the Administrator). He certainly would be a Prime Minister in waiting. Also a firm figure of seventeen Ministers was recommended, ten of whom would be AEC members, plus three officials with the addition of the Administrator as Chairman.

The remaining recommendations were marginal to the central one. There should be an increase in regional electorates as well as thirteen additional open electorates which made a House of a hundred elected members. Official representation should remain but reduced to four and there should be provision for three additional non-official members if the House approved. This last option was never taken up. Despite Minister Barne's avowed preference for a bicameral system the Committee proposed a unicameral parliament.

Matters of interest to all members were the proposed flag, crest and a name to replace the clumsy 'Papua and New Guinea'. The recommended flag came from among innumerable designs submitted by interested citizens. It was a striking design incorporating a bird of paradise and the Southern Cross submitted by a school girl, Susan Kanike. The crest, likewise, used the bird of paradise as its central motif. The name proposed 'Niugini' had been around for a long time and rejected by the House in 1968.

The House was not about to put a rubber stamp on the recommendations. A protracted debate followed with the conservatives expressing concern about early self-government. Tei Abal pronounced the attitude of the newly formed Compass Party of which he was leader:-

'The Compass Party feels that between 1976 and 1980 may be the appropriate period to achieve self-government'.¹² but there were no attempts to amend the proposed dates as the conservative majority on the Committee had endorsed it. Amendments did come on the peripheral proposals. Paliau Maloat proposed the deletion of regional electorates. It was thought by some that white nominees had an advantage over indigenous rivals in the regional electorates for of the fifteen regionals eleven were held by whites. The amendment was defeated 47 to 17 and it should be noted that at the next election only four of eighteen regional seats were won by whites. Tei Abal proposed deferring consideration of the flag and drew sufficient support to get a tied vote, 31 each. Guise was pleased to be able to follow convention and vote to negate the ~~amendment~~ ^{proposal}. Finally Toua Kapena, buttressed by his Papuan colleagues, objected to the name as it completely ignored any reference to Papua. He moved to delay consideration of the name and won his point 30 to 25 with the Pangu supporting him despite their advocacy of 'Niugini' in 1968. A few days later Chatterton moved that the name be 'Papua New Guinea' and with a collective sigh of relief the House accepted the deletion of the central 'and' and approved the motion without further debate.

Papua New Guinea then had its political parameters fixed. It had a unicameral parliament with Ministers and an embryonic Cabinet drawn from among its members. It had a somewhat fluid date when this parliament and these Ministers would become fully responsible for the country's internal affairs and it had the symbols of nationhood, - crest, flag and name. It was not alone in its unavailing search for a suitable national song or anthem. All that was required was for the next election to produce a party

with a parliamentary majority to put a new Westminster type democracy to work. Minister Barnes agreed :

Given that a cohesive group of Ministers emerge with a majority backing in the House I envisage that the Commonwealth would , in practice, regard this group as constituting the Government with the authority of the Administrator gradually becoming confined to matters remaining within the Commonwealth responsibility.¹³

The final report also caused some embarrassment to some of the Committee's members when it listed the number of meetings attended by the various members. The four most assiduous in fulfilling their duties were Yuwi 129, Arek 128 Olewale 123 and Lussick 118. At the bottom end of the scale were Oala-arua 6, Abal 32, Leahy 59 and Giregire 60. It should be remembered that the four last named were Ministers and/or members with other duties to attend to.

Notes : Chapter XIX.

1. HAD Vol ii No 4 p1031
2. ibid No5 p1144
3. ibid p1146
4. ibid
5. ibid p1301
6. ibid No9 p2661
7. ibid No10 p2935
8. ibid
9. ibid No11 p3151
10. ibid No 12 p3613
11. ibid No13 Report pp3804et seq
12. ibid p3884
13. ibid No 14 p4170.

Chapter XX

Social Pre-occupations.

(Sorcery, Murder, Gambling and Marriage)

Although much of the routine administration in the Papua New Guinea House of Assembly was similar to that of parliaments throughout the world there were items which were specific to the concerns of Papua New Guineans. Four such matters brought to the attention of the House exemplify this:

1. The Sorcery Bill
2. The motion to ensure the most severe punishment for pay-back killing.
3. The various attempts to repeal the Playing Cards Ordinance passed in the first House.
4. The motion to fix bride prices.

Sorcery : Paul Lapun had introduced a Sorcery Bill in the last meeting of the first House of Assembly where it died before debate when the House was dissolved. It was not until June 1970 that he tried again. The Bill was debated in November of that same year and quite certainly it was the best example of persuasive oratory in the life of the House. His premise was that sorcery was a fact of life and as such it must be legally recognised so that its practitioners could be punished by the courts if its practice occasioned harm: 'We ourselves, the people of this country, know that sorcery does occur. This is because we know and believe in these things; they are our customary practices.'¹

He identified three types of sorcery. The first was the secret administration of poison, which in fact may not have been truly sorcery as suitable ingredients for

manufacturing poison were readily available from known toxic plants found everywhere in the jungle. However, the Courts often rejected charges that poison, deliberately administered, could be the cause of death or illness even where known sorcerers were alleged to be involved. The second type was 'sangguma' or sorcery proper where spirits may have been called upon or there were occult practices to cause harm. Lapun did not refer directly to the 'sangguma' which was assault from ambush when the victim was purportedly mutilated and poisoned, and then sent off in a stupor, though sometimes seeming perfectly normal but destined to an early death. The third type of sorcery was the use of love potions and charms. Lapun described it : 'I wish to speak of a spell called 'marila' (love magic) used against young girls- If you were a girl and I called you to me using "marila" it would really affect you and make you follow me all the time. Eve used this type of power on Adam and both committed a sin in the eyes of God.'²

Lapun skillfully marshalled his arguments to persuade his audience of the reality of sorcery and of malign spirits. He called upon God and the angels (good and bad ones) and upon souls to prove that it was not possible to see and know such beings, but that they did indeed exist - why not other spirits?

Sorcery itself has a power of its own which makes it work, love charms and sorcery do work out in practice and this proves that it is true..
..The unseen things are much more powerful. They are so strong that no anthropologist, priest or bishop or the wisest man on earth can say how powerful they are. The unseen things are so huge and powerful that no-one knows their whereabouts.³

The English translation does but poor justice to Lapun's Pidgin eloquence. He marshalled his arguments for 45 minutes and used some five thousand words without a note to aid him.

He had a receptive audience ^{as} ~~for~~ by no means all of his listeners were incredulous; for, although most of them were confirmed Christians, they also believed in sorcery. In many cases they had acquired their Christian beliefs from simplistic explanations of the faith which positively encouraged a belief in spirits. They found Lapun's arguments convincing.

There was no doubt that the great majority of members would support the Bill though they were reluctant to put their beliefs publicly on the line. Only Siwi Kurondo from the Chimbu spoke of his peoples' summary way of dealing with sorcerers: 'Long before the white men the Chimbu people had traditional laws which discouraged sorcerers. If they saw a sorcerer coming they would hide in nearby bushes, ambush the sorcerer and kill him.'⁴

Official members managed to get a couple of structural amendments included, perhaps on behalf of the sceptics, one of which changed the phrase: 'who has powers or purported powers of sorcery' to 'who claims to have powers of sorcery'⁵. Thereafter the Bill passed without a dissentient voice.

Murder: An endemic problem in the affairs of Papua New Guinea citizens was the prevalence of pay back killings. If a killing had been carried out it was a matter of honour, an inescapable obligation, to even the score. It could become an endless pattern of violence and revenge. Pay back, or in Pidgin 'baim blut', was pretty well an accepted law in Highlands society. ~~Tribal~~ warfare,

Tribal

traffic accidents fatalities and personal vengeance all contributed and Members of the House from those electorates sought parliamentary sanctions to put a stop to it. Bono Azanifa, a substantial citizen from Henganofi in the Eastern Highlands, took the initiative with a question in March 1970:

When there has been a public announcement about a murder I have seen relatives of the victim in Port Moresby decide to take revenge. Has his Department (Law) considered any action to stop this? ⁶

Mek Nugintz, the member for Mul-Dei in the Western Highlands took the matter up and introduced a motion to inhibit the practice by proposing that offenders should be deprived of some or all of their land. In Papua New Guinea this was recognised as an extreme penalty perhaps more severe than death itself. Nugintz had occasion to feel strongly about it. He had won his seat over stiff opposition, assisted in some measure by his ownership of a motor vehicle which gave him greater mobility than some of his opponents, but the election had almost been aborted when a killing in the area and threats of payback had caused grave concern. Only prompt action to ensure adequate compensation to the family of the victim had calmed things down. The House, however, did not agree with Nugintz after Lindsay Curtis, the Secretary for Law, pointed out that the House had already passed two Bills which made it an offence to urge or to encourage killings.

Members, nevertheless, continued to be concerned at the high incidence of homicide throughout the country and at the relatively light sentences imposed on murderers. There were constant calls for ^{the} mandatory exercise of the provision for capital punishment already the law of the land. Nobody had been hanged for many years. The Southern Highlanders were particularly vocal about it. Andgari Wabiria

spoke of his constituents:

My people and our Councils believe that it is only a right that a man who is convicted of killing another should suffer capital punishment, - murder, as you know, is very prevalent in my area, ...When murderers are released from prison there will only be a remote chance of their rehabilitation because the families of the victim will definitely be seeking a pay back killing.⁷

Somewhat later another Southern Highlander, Momei Pangial from Mendi introduced a motion requesting the Administration to introduce legislation making death, or at least life imprisonment, a mandatory punishment for people convicted of wilful murder.⁸ Wabiria joined in the debate 'My constituents....support this suggestion of hanging murderers in public'⁹ Tei Abal, from the neighbouring Highlands district which also had more than enough murders, supported him: "If a person kills another person we must punish him in our customary manner. In olden times we did not have institutions such as prisons for holding wrongdoers."¹⁰ The motion drew wide support and was passed without a division.

It is interesting to note that sometime after this a group of Highlanders was asked what sort of punishment would be appropriate for a man who killed his wife with an axe after she had taken a lover and then insulted his manhood with a vituperative comment when he taxed her with her infidelity. The group considered that in such circumstances the sentence should be 'liklik kalabus tasol' (a short gaol sentence only)¹¹

Motions supported by the House of Assembly were not always acceptable to the Administration and Pangial's motion was politely fended off. But members were far

from satisfied with this and next time a white member, Scotty Uroe (given names Nathaniel Ian), introduced a Bill to make hanging mandatory for wilful murder. Uroe had been born and educated in China, then was a member of the Australian forces, and a prisoner of war, during World War II. He arrived in Papua New Guinea in 1950 and became a planter. He won the seat of Rigo-Abau, close to Port Moresby after a close contest with the previous incumbent Dirona Abe. The House had heard the arguments for and against capital punishment time and time again, but this time the level of debate was lifted significantly by a lengthy, cogently reasoned speech from Lindsay Curtis arguing against the motion. Uroe's motion was defeated.

Seizing time by the forelock Warren Dutton, who managed a Co-operative Society in the neglected Western District, introduced a Bill to remove the option of capital ~~of capital~~ punishment from the Statute Book altogether. On the last day of the second House members were even handed enough to reject this Bill also. The status quo on punishment for wilful murder was maintained but regrettably pay-back killing continued, though averted in an increasing number of cases by the payment of swingeing compensation claims.

Gambling : Chapter VI refers to the passage of the Playing Cards legislation, the Bill introduced by Sinake Giregire and warmly supported by Highlands members. It proved an inconvenience and an embarrassment to Europeans in Papua New Guinea but there was strong resistance to any attempt to either amend or delete it altogether from the laws of the country.

However, Uroe tried it in June 1969 with two Bills, one to repeal the Playing Cards Ordinance and a companion Bill

to strengthen the laws relating to gambling generally. He was swamped by the opposition, only Paulus Arek openly supporting him. There were certainly many earlier instances of loss, hardship and assault arising from gambling with cards which the law may have served to diminish though other forms of gambling had taken up any slack that may have resulted from observance of the law. Siwi Kurondo provided an example of the perils of gambling with cards:

A man would go and play cards and lose his money and then he would put up his wife as stakes. The winner would take his wife and then her husband would kill the winner. The Bill banning cards was passed in 1964 or 5 and it was the wish of the native people rather than the EuropeansI cannot be concerned if Europeans are angry over this ... the law that exists about cards must stay.¹²

John Maneke supported him 'The original law was introduced by one of our people, so how can we throw it out?'¹³

Once again, a year later, a further attempt was made to repeal the Playing Cards Ordinance, this time unusually by a Highlander, Thomas Kavali who as reported earlier had distanced himself from his fellow Highlanders and established his own political party with policies close to those of the Pangu Pati. Kavali had the courage of his convictions, and needed to, because he was given a rough time by his opponents from his own district. Kavali contended, quite truthfully, that

cards are only one way of gambling, shortly after the ban on playing cards people who wanted to gamble invented a new game. It is a game played with a match-box. It is just like 'Lucky' without cards. I do not think that we should keep laws just because they were brought in by native people. The playing cards ban must be lifted, it has not done any good. I think it has done

harm because it has made people invent new ways to gamble.¹⁴

Pupuna Arono from the Eastern Highlands held a contrary view though whether he was relating an incident which occurred before or after the ban on cards is uncertain: 'Two men from my father's village played 'Lucky' and one won \$100. The loser was angry and ambushed the winner and beheaded him' ¹⁵ Kavali had no more success than Uroe.

Members continued to be concerned about breaches of the Playing Cards Ordinance because of the continuing availability of cards despite the ban. There was a brisk trade in cards from sailors on visiting ships who were able to obtain premium prices from wharf labourers who acted as middle-men in a profitable trade. A number of questions were asked to bring pressure to bear on the Administration to check this and ultimately Sabumai Kofikai from Goroka produced a Bill to make it an offence to be unlawfully in possession of playing cards. However it still languished at the bottom of the Notice Paper on the last day of the last meeting of the House. Kofikai tried to jump the queue to get his Bill debated but was unsuccessful and it lapsed when the House was dissolved.

The original Playing Cards Ordinance of May 1965 had taken a sustained battering but remained firmly in place at the conclusion of the second House.

Marriage: Another matter of general concern in Papua New Guinea was the rising cost of brides. Throughout the country bridegrooms and their immediate families and other kin were having increasing difficulty in putting together the cash and kind required by the parents of marriageable young women.

There was, of course, no uniformity in bride-price as it varied according to the resources of the different communities but the growth of the cash economy had helped to inflate the cost of brides, particularly in urban areas where many potential brides were also wage earners. Brides from high status families attracted proportionately high bride prices or conversely a groom from a high status family was expected to provide a bride price indicative of his family's standing in the community. In the villages adjacent to Port Moresby bride price had risen in a spectacular fashion.

Commonly it was the Highlanders who brought their social problems before the House. Their parliamentary colleagues from areas of longer contact with the outside world had learned to roll with the punches of acculturation while the Highlanders retained faith in the powers of parliament to legislate effectively for their domestic problems. They believed that their playing cards legislation had been effective in, at least, restricting gambling with cards, so why not regulate bride-price.

¹⁶
of Bone Azanifa, the member for Henganofi in the Eastern Highlands, and a man of substance in his electorate, ¹⁶ brought the marriage problems in his area to the attention of the House by producing a motion:

That the House is of the opinion that:

- (a) the level of bride prices throughout the Territory is not justified.
- (b) a maximum bride price should be fixed by law.
- (c) the money so saved should be directed to economic development. ¹⁷

In developing his argument he revealed that the Henganofi Council was proposing to reduce bride prices to something like \$100 plus a pig to be killed and given to the bride's parents, and should nostalgia for older times when bride

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prices were paid with spears, pig's teeth, necklaces, pigs and other customary items of exchange, Andigari Wabiria had a practical approach:

In some areas people only have to pay \$100 or \$200 for a bride and in some areas prices might be down to \$50 or less. In other parts they go up to \$3000 and \$4000 and even \$6000. I paid a considerable amount to marry another man's daughter and therefore, in return, I should get the same benefit from my daughter when she is married.¹⁸

Oala Larua who had narrowly won the Central District Regional seat from a strong field, and arguably the most acculturated member, was supportive of the system though bride-prices in the environs of Port Moresby might exceed \$6000 (and this in 1970). He pointed out that getting together the bride-price was a social obligation on the parents, relatives and friends of the groom and that the money and goods become disseminated throughout the community.:

If the parents are able to pay \$3000 or \$4000 or \$6000 they have to. It all depends on how much money they collect from their friends. We should not lose this tradition for it strengthens and holds the community and family life tightly in the villages.¹⁹

However the House accepted Azanifa's motion but after consultation with the Assistant Ministerial Members for Social Development and for Local Government the Administrator's response to the resolution was a reasoned negative:

Although the resolution has merit it has failed to take full account of the facts as they exist. Presently twenty nine Councils covering 700,000 people have a bride price limit which averages \$140 and ranges between \$50 and \$400. Thus 30 per cent of the population pay less than \$400.²⁰

The bride-price tradition became increasingly contentious as more and more young men and women were taking partners from outside their home areas. Oala-Rarua's theory about circulation of benefits within the village community broke down and Council rules were ignored by outsiders.

Notes: Chapter XX.

1. HAD Vol II No 10 p2959
2. ibid
3. ibid No 12 p3676
4. ibid No13 p4143
5. ibid p4138
6. ibid No9 p2481
7. ibid No5 p1284
8. ibid No9 p2342
9. ibid No10 p2970
10. ibid p2970
11. A common phrase used in such circumstances might be 'go suck your mother's vagina' - translated from the vernacular into more restrained terminology.
12. HAD Vol II No5 p1137
13. ibid p1140
14. ibid No11 p3109
15. ibid p3116
16. Azanifa was a trade store owner, coffee planter, cattle owner, member of the Coffee Marketing Board, member of the District Advisory Council and Vice-President of the Henganofi Local Government Council.
17. HAD Vol II No 11 p3109
18. ibid
19. ibid
20. ibid No13 p3965

Four more Investitures.





Chapter XXI.

Ministerial Members and the Administrator's
Executive Council.

As elsewhere in these pages I use the term Ministerial Member to embrace also Assistant Ministerial Members, clumsy titles imposed on us by the insistence of the Minister for External Territories and his Canberra advisers. Locally we simplified procedures and called them all Ministers except in the House where formality prevailed.

When the second House commenced and for the first two years of its operation the powers of PNG Ministers were strictly circumscribed. The report of the first Constitutional Committee had set them out as follows:

Each Minister should be responsible with the Departmental Head for departmental policy and for the overall activities of the department ...In the event of disagreement between the Minister and the Departmental Head the matter should be referred to the Administrator for decision.¹

and for the AEC 'the Administrator's Executive Council should be the principal instrument of policy of the executive government of the Territory' As far as I can recall no Minister or Departmental Head approached the Administrator, either my predecessor or myself, to resolve any dispute, but Departmental Heads sometimes sought intercession to restrain some erratic intervention of Ministers into Departmental administration. Commonly Ministers sought to get involved in appointments and promotions which we considered off limits for them.

Ministers had cause to wonder just what political powers they could dispose within their departmental jurisdiction while in the AEC the Administrator's authority had not been diminished in any way. A Minister could, of course, bring any differences he might have to the floor of the House but none did so though a number used the debates to deplore deficiencies in their

electorates which, I suppose, was implied criticism of the Government of which they were a part.

Thus in 1968 and 1969 the constitutional position remained unchanged but the profile of Ministers in the House was substantially enhanced as in most cases Departmental Heads had disappeared from House membership., only Treasury, Law, Lands and District Administration remaining. Ministers now had to defend their Departments, present Bills, answer questions. Some performed with assurance, some hesitantly, but they became men of stature in the eyes of fellow members and the general public. Tore Lokoloko, Minister for Health and one of the successful ones, outlined in practical terms how he carried out his Ministerial functions at a seminar at the University of Papua New Guinea.

For example in the last meeting I made a statement on our malarial eradication programme and this is the subject of a debate which will resume in June. I presented two Bills - Medical Services (Medical aids) Bill and Public Hospitals (Revised Charges) Bill. The recent increases in intermediate ward charges are the result of negotiations approved by the Administrator's Executive Council under this last Bill, but only after I took this matter to the AEC on three different occasions was it finally agreed upon. ²

Lokoloko also replied to frequent criticism that Ministers were nothing more than Administration stooges. There has been criticism that Ministerial members blindly follow an Administration line in the House. This is not so. Certainly the Ministerial and official members usually vote together on legislation and policy matters, but it must be remembered that

Ministerial Members have already had an opportunity to discuss legislation and policy in the AEC and in many cases have made considerable changes before these matters go to the House.

Lokoloko did not mention an additional Ministerial duty, for most of them pursued an active travel programme to see at first hand the problems their Departments faced and to listen to the complaints and the suggestions of the general public. Members welcomed such visits and frequently complained of the insufficiency of Ministerial visits, for instance Jim McKinnon asked the Minister for Agriculture:

1. Will he visit the middle Ramu electorate to see its agricultural problems at first hand?
2. If so, can he give me a definite date so that proper arrangements can be made? ³

Tei Abal promised to go. Ninkama Bomai from Gumin~~e~~ pointedly asked the Local Government Minister : ' Does he only visit urban areas, or rural areas as well?' Perhaps the fact that the Gumin~~e~~ airstrip was about the most hair raising in all Papua New Guinea was a disincentive but it transpired that Diria had been in almost continuous orbit up to that time (March 1969). He had visited New Britain, Madang, the Sepik, Bougainville, the Gulf, Morobe and other Districts. He complained about his lot some what later on:-

Under our old system we would do things at random - if we wanted to go hunting or gardening we would do so without having to follow a set plan. With the work I am doing(now) I hardly rest. I am always on the move. ⁴

The announcements of Prime Minister Gorton in 1970 changed the Ministerial powers significantly.

Ministers no longer shared authority with the Departmental Head, they possessed full control subject to AEC approval of major initiatives while the Australian Government had relinquished its power of veto over matters which were within the final authority of Papua New Guinean Ministers. The Administrator was requested to act in accordance with any advice in respect of a matter on which a Minister had final authority.

But these pronouncements did not change the men who held Ministerial posts and few individual initiatives emerged from them despite their greatly augmented powers. They still did not have sufficient confidence in their knowledge and judgment, and perhaps Departmental Heads were much too inclined to do their thinking for them. Also there were no party policies which might have suggested initiatives and no party structure to support them. In short the resources were not there to enable them to function as responsible Ministers independent of the colonial administration. Policy initiatives remained firmly in the hands of the Australian Minister and his support staff in Canberra and Port Moresby; we would have been surprised and taken aback if it had not been so. In January 1971 I commented on the changes to the Minister for External Territories:

One of the important expectations was that Papuans and New Guineans would feel more involved in government and cease regarding the Administration as an oligarchy controlled and manipulated from Australia... ..However total acceptance of the proposition that it is a Papua New Guinean government and not a colonial administration depends on Ministerial office holders demonstrating a far greater degree of control of their portfolios and on them taking initiatives in determining policies. Regrettably, to date, individual Ministers have not had sufficient confidence in their judgements to take policy initiatives.⁵

The performance of Ministers in the House both before and after the constitutional advances varied from indifferent to adequate. Toliman in Education was probably the best informed of them in the operations of his Department, and Lokoloko also had a good grasp of his portfolio. Oala-Rarua took an active part in his Treasury assignment. They were perhaps more fortunate than some of their fellow Ministers in that the Heads of those Departments, respectively McKinnan, Syme and Ritchie, were more understanding of the problems their Ministers faced and involved them a great deal more in the operations of the Departments.

Questions on Notice did not present Ministers with problems as answers were prepared for them within their Departments but their responses to supplementary questions and Questions without notice often found them wanting. However they soon learned to deal with questions beyond their knowledge by asking that they be put on the Notice Paper so that an adequate answer could be prepared. But as such a tactic, oft repeated did not enhance the Minister's reputation, Tei Abal adopted the practice of suggesting that a matter of such importance would be best discussed in his office. Soon all Ministers were following his example. Toliman was skilful at the soft answer. In response to a question without notice about a young woman student whose University course had allegedly been terminated because of pregnancy he soothed Tammur's often savage breast: 'The matter is an important one. Therefore I would ask the Honourable Member to please place the question on the Notice Paper so that information can be obtained on the matter.'⁶

Ministers had no difficulty in the formal presentation of Bills though not given to long speeches in support of them, partly because as many of them read with difficulty

and in some cases not at all, their speeches were unscripted. The best example of the presentation of important Bills, arguing strongly for them and rebutting contrary views, both during the second reading in the committee stages, was Toliman in bringing forward the education Bills referred to in Chapter XVIII.

The most ebullient Minister was undoubtedly Giregire who had ideas about almost everything and expressed them freely, though somewhat constrained by the technical portfolio of Posts and Telegraphs. Tei Abal was probably the most frequent performer on the floor of the House speaking on a variety of subjects outside of his Ministerial responsibilities. Ashton, the Australian, had little to say and when asked a question about his Ministry, Public Works, often claimed ignorance and left it at that.

On the whole members were respectful of their Ministerial colleagues but critical in that they were unable, or unwilling, to meet the many demands for assistance. Yano Belo spoke for all the rank and file parliamentarians:-

The Minister has authority which he should use without fear. With this power he can direct his Department to help us immediately by taking action on the requests forwarded to him. However, when we forward their (the people's) requests to you we do not achieve anything for them. All you do is ignore their needs. ⁷

Paliau Maloat was also critical:-

We hear stories about visits of our Ministerial Members to Australia and America. These stories fill the newspapers. These members speak about wars and futile things, their speeches are issued in printed form. Our attendants are weary and their backs ache from the efforts of distributing this printed matter. ⁸

A Minister had only limited means of exercising initiatives even after 1970, because, despite his enlarged powers, funds control was still firmly in the hands of Treasury which was not a transferred authority. He could, and sometimes did, argue a case for a variation in the allocation of funds through the AEC, but otherwise he could operate only on the financial margins within his own Department.

Langro
During the life of the second House there was only one defection from Ministerial ranks. Paul Langro, the AMM for Information and Extension Services, whose spiritual home was in the Pangu Pati, resigned and became a member of that party. He was replaced by Wesani Iwoksim from the Telefomin area in the mountainous hinterland of the Sepik. Iwoksim had been a Baptist pastor before his election. He became Minister for a new Department, Social Development and Home Affairs. The Information portfolio remained vacant until 1971 when the advent of the Peoples' Progress Party led to the appointment of one of its members, Donatas Mola, to that office.

opposed
One particular Ministerial problem was the difficulty in finding sufficient time to cope with the many demands upon them and this particularly applied to members of the AEC. There were Departmental responsibilities which included travel on Departmental business, meetings with visitors from other countries, AEC meetings, time spent in the House and parliamentary committees, and duties to the electorate. The House met four times a year with meetings lasting at least two weeks and sometimes three. In 1970 there were 47 actual sitting days plus ten days for House Standing Committees and nine week-ends. House business would thus occupy a Minister almost exclusively during those 75 days, all of them in Port Moresby. Most Ministers were also involved in one or other of the House Select Committees, for instance Toliman, Giregire

Abal and Oala-Rarua were members of the time-consuming Select Committee on Constitutional Development. AEC meetings took up possibly 45-50 days. There was not too much time for Ministerial leisure activities.

There were complaints from Ministers that they would face inevitable defeat at the next election unless they could pay more attention to the voters, and, in response, the Administration, via the AEC, arranged for an additional allowance to enable the employment of an electoral secretary for each member and the hire of an office in each electorate. Also a senior Departmental officer was to be exclusively at the Minister's service in Port Moresby. Perhaps it helped, for of the Ministerial Members only Ashton and Kapena lost their seats and the disruption in Kapena's life was minimal because he was domiciled in Port Moresby within his electorate of Hiri.

4 The Administrator's Executive Council consisted of the Administrator as Chairman, all seven Ministerial Members plus the Administrator's nominee, Leahy, the two Assistant Administrators and the Director of the Department of District Administration. Ministerial Membership remained constant throughout though officials varied with the death of Henderson and the movement of Hay to Canberra. For the last two years of the House the AEC had myself as Chairman, Newman by then the sole Assistant Administrator, Ellis from District Administration and Jim Ritchie, the Treasurer, the last named not to be confused with his later replacement, Harry Ritchie (no relation).

The AEC usually met three or four times each month, the meeting sometimes extending into the second day. The meetings were usually in Port Moresby but regularly we visited other

District centres to expose the AEC members to the outside world but also to let the people see their government at work. In 1971 the Council visited the Sepik District centred on Wewak, New Britain where Rabaul was the centre and Lae in the Morobe District. There were forty four actual meeting days during that year.

There was a good deal of routine in each meeting for the AEC was also the Executive Council and was required to approve such things as Statutory appointments, Land Board ~~accommodations~~ ^{recommendations}, deportations, exemptions from duty and the like. As the signatory to all of these I had to set aside a 'signing' period in each week. The bulk of the Council's business was consideration of Departmental sub missions, the carriage of which lay with each Minister. As these might require a re-allocation of funds, Ministers would not lightly consent to such proposals. If assent to a submission required ^{legislation} the Council would have another look at it when the draft Bill was available. Some matters which had not yet been delegated to PNG Ministers did not formally require the Council's consideration, the Public Order Bill referred to in another Chapter was an example, but they were always listed for discussion and amended if a Ministerial consensus required it, otherwise we could not have counted on Ministerial support in the House. A Ministerial defection in the House when a division was called was rare, though occasionally abstention was resorted to - or absence from the premises which came down to the same thing. Toliman, in particular, suffered agonies of conscience when measures to control the Mataungan Association were discussed, for even though his particular electorate, the Gazelle open, was not a Mataungan stronghold they were all fellow Tolais being subject to pressures from outsiders.

Legislation A

Another area of Council business was the review of Administration proposals for policy initiatives. It should be said that our Ministers were not active in bringing forward ideas other than those generated within their Departments, they reacted to suggestions brought to their notice, sometimes strongly, but individual initiative was rare.

Like with their fellow parliamentarians the annual budget attracted most attention from Council members and discussion occupied most of the time of the meetings preceding its presentation to parliament. There was always vigorous discussion and, naturally enough, keen competition to ensure adequate funds for individual Departments and electorates. Revenue measures were always a contentious issue and a concern to the Administration, for our members were not noted for keeping secrets, so that any new tax imposts had to be dealt with circumspectly and restricted to a 'need to know' few. Final decisions for Council approval were left until the last minute but even so there always seemed to be some, and sometimes many, who had divined the Budget secrets. From 1970 onwards appropriate Ministers accompanied by officials visited Canberra each year to negotiate the nature and extent of the Australian grant.

Though the AEC members were nominated by the House the relationship between the Council and the House was an 'arms length' one. David Hay, when speaking ^{to} the House prior to his departure in 1970, put the situation succinctly:-

In the AEC the important decisions affecting the Territory are discussed and opinions of all the members are heard and debated. The predominant part is played by the elected members. The Administrator acts very much as a Chairman... no votes have been taken... conclusions have been arrived at by consensus.

The AEC is not responsible to this House but it

is responsive to it. Its responsiveness would be more obvious if the House had more time to devote to its affairs. As it is it has invariably been the practice to refer major matters for endorsement by this House. This applies both to policy and to major matters on which exclusive decisions have or will be taken.⁹

The 1970 changes did not materially affect that situation, nor could they until a parliamentary group, or party, emerged with the numbers and the will to control the Ministerial Nominations Committee and require its nominees to put forward specific measures to implement policies. The numbers were there but the will was not.

An almost constant preoccupation of the Council was the problem confronting the Administration in Rabaul, Bougainville and later in Papua. Ministers supported strong action against the Mataungans (except for Toliman) but were indecisive on Bougainville. In both cases there was considerable reluctance to visit the centres of disturbance; they saw no personal political advantage in being abused as stooges of the Australian Government by discontented Tolais and Bougainvillians while they recognised that given the Australian Government's firm position they had little to bargain with if they did seek to intervene. In fact, in Council meetings there were no serious disagreements on these matters with the policies pursued by the Colonial power.

After the extension of Ministerial powers and AEC responsibilities the pressure of work on the Council required the establishment of three committees to deal with the formal matters requiring AEC assent. These were the Legislation Committee which checked draft Bills, the General Administration Committee which dealt with

statutory business and the Works and Estimates Committee which had a preliminary look at proposals, particularly those listed for inclusion in the Works Programme. The 1970 changes also brought an increase in status to the Administrator's nominee on the Council, Tom Leahy, who, thereafter as Spokesman assumed a higher profile in the House and in Council discussions.

A year after the extension of powers I wrote to the Minister for External Territories giving my view of the effectiveness of the new arrangements:

In collective deliberations within the AEC the performance of Ministerial Members has been a good deal better (in comparison to command of their individual portfolios). There has been a very considerable growth in understanding the complex problems of government, and a readiness to press points of view strongly. In many areas members of the AEC still look for official guidance, but I think that it may be fairly claimed that the AEC is fulfilling its intended function in most areas of government. ¹⁰

Of the elected members of the AEC, Leahy had most to say but as a representative of a resident clan of Australians (he claimed over a hundred relatives in PNG) his viewpoint was inclined to be partial to expatriate interests though he claimed fealty to his adopted country: 'my elderly relatives did not retire to Australia. No, they died here. I was here as a youth, I married here, my wife had children here and my aged relatives died here.'¹¹ He was one of only four members who advocated deferring the creation of a Constitutional Committee. I have previously mentioned the Ministerial capacities of Toliman

and Lokoloko. The latter had the best grasp of the broader issues before the Council while Bilas was also an effective member. Kapena was a man of few words but strong opinions on matters which touched the welfare of his own people. Giregire was more noted for the volume rather than the weight of his contributions though he was knowledgeable on matters touching the coffee industry. Ashton was not a notable contributor and Abal was the voice of the Highlanders and the guarantee of their support.

I have said nothing about official members of the House, though, in a sense, they were also Ministers, at least six of them were, the two Assistant Administrators¹² and the Directors of the Department of Lands, Law, Treasury and District Administration. On my retirement from the House in 1970 I had a few words to say about official members;

The most remarkable feature of these six years of parliamentary growth has been the growth in self confidence of the House as a body and of its individual members, and the growth of what one might properly call in Papua and New Guinea, a clan spirit ---The official membership has always tried to be part of the House ---official membership has had to be a bridge between what was largely an expatriate administration and a largely indigenous political organisation in the House of Assembly. The position of official members, of course, is always a transitory one in the development of any parliament. How transitory (here) will depend upon the report of the Constitutional Committee.¹³

In general official members spoke only when presenting Bills within our departmental responsibilities, to explain Administration actions, answer questions and to lend a hand to Ministers when necessary. We had a high profile in the

first year or two of the House but thereafter it diminished. Particularly after the constitutional changes in 1970 officials intervened in debate as little as possible. I think that it may be fairly claimed that all official members were fluent speakers and from the nature of their positions and experience knew a great deal more about the problems of government than any other House member. At this stage of political development the background of knowledge and expertise was necessary to make the work of parliament effective. We had created a system which predicated a party support group and that was provided by the colonial administration.

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Notes; Chapter XXI

1. HAD Vol I No 13 p2340
2. Address to the UPNG seminar on 'Politics in Melanesia.'
Papers edited by Marion Ward.
3. HAD Vol II No4 p1013
4. ibid No13 p3817
5. Despatch:Administrator to Minister for External Territories
9th January 1971 (National Archives)
6. HAD Vol II No14 p4333
7. ibid No13 p3817
8. ibid No10 p2991
9. ibid No 10 p2853
10. Despatch 9 Jan 1971 op cit
11. HAD Vol II No 16 p4685
12. After my own withdrawal from the House in 1970 the official
vacancy in the House was not filled.
13. HAD Vol II No 9 p2621

Chapter XXII.

Personalities.

Matiabe Yuwi: Yuwi came from Tari in the Southern Highlands, one of the remote electorates which had had only sporadic contact with the outside world until recent times. His predecessor in the first House was Handabe Tiaba, a famous fight leader, who admitted to ten wives and spoke only his native language. The only access to Tari at the time of the election was by air or foot. Yuwi was one of the successes in the House for despite the drawbacks of isolation and limited background he rapidly accustomed himself to the procedures of the House, gained an understanding of the important issues and spoke sensibly about them.

At the time of his election he was thirty three years of age and may not have had the questionable privilege of meeting a white man before he was twenty. In the succeeding years he learned to read and write in Pidgin, as well as his local language, Huri, had served as a medical orderly, had then established his own trade store, had become President of the Tari Local Government Council and finally was elected to the House of Assembly. As with a good many members most of these accomplishments were due in no small measure to the presence and efforts of the Catholic Mission ~~establishment~~ in the area.

Yuwi was short, perhaps 163 cm (5 ft 4 ins) but of robust build and, unusually for a Papua New Guinean, sported a small toothbrush moustache. He had a pleasant, outgoing personality but was a pertinacious advocate for his electorate, ^{Tari} for the Southern Highlands, and for the undeveloped regions in general. He was intensely concerned about educational opportunities, or lack of them, but equally interested in the preservation of tradition. The first question on notice asked in the second House came from Yuwi:-

1. Is it a fact that the Southern Highlands District has relatively fewer schools than any other District and that large numbers of children have no chance of getting an education?
2. When will the number of teachers posted to the District be substantially increased? ¹

He followed up immediately with another one:

Will the Administration provide funds to enable the people to establish a community hospital at Tari to serve the population of Tari, Koroba and Komo? ²

Up to and including June 1970 he had listed 185 questions and in that June meeting he asked thirty questions, nineteen of them directly related to electorate problems, roads in particular, the others ranging from air-communications, trunkroad construction, staff shortages, and the training of local public servants. During that meeting he intervened in debate eight times and moved a motion about preservation 'of the good things from our traditional way of life.' A related matter also attracted his views when an Administration amendment to an existing Ordinance was introduced to bring legislation relating to the age of consent in the two Territories into line. At the time it was fourteen years of age in Papua (adopted from Queensland) and seventeen in New Guinea. The amendment proposed a uniform sixteen. Yuwi agreed and cast some light on the past custom of the Huri people:

Before the Europeans came to my area in Tari and Huri the young boys were not allowed to see young girls. These young men were allowed to get married when the elders thought they had reached the age of maturity. This was our traditional custom. Young girls were treated the same. This was a very good customary law. ³

As a member of the Select Committee on Constitutional Development he benefited greatly from the travel membership offered, both within and without Papua New Guinea, but particularly to developing countries overseas. He was not slow to make the most of these opportunities: for instance when visiting Canberra with the Committee he took himself to North Queensland: 'I paid my own fare to Cairns and over there I visited the cane farms at work, also the owners of cattle stations - What I saw was that they were hard working people. From these observations I got the impression that Papuans and New Guineans were just too lazy to work.' 4

Like most of his Highlands colleagues he was opposed to early self-government because of the lack of understanding of the processes of Government by his people -

There is a population of about 300,000 in our District of the Southern Highlands. All these people do not know a thing about political education, the House of Assembly of Local Government Councils and their functions. These people know nothing about what we do with Bills we pass in the House and how amendments are proposed and passed. These people know only their cash cropping and keep on with their traditional customs. They do not know how schools are run, businesses are operated or disease combated.

Perhaps it was a somewhat overstated view given that Yuwi was President of the Local Government Council for Tari. Having had experience as a medical orderly he was also strongly interested in Health matters, a persistent questioner and mover of motions to increase health education, health services, staff and hospitals for the country as a whole. Nor was he one to be left out of the unity debate. He first referred to it in deploring separatist activities:- 'this news which has emanated

from Rabaul and Bougainville seems to be having the effect of splitting Papua and New Guinea into various parts. In my opinion this is very wrong ...It is apparent that only by working as a unified whole is this country going to develop and benefit.' ⁵ It was Yuwi also who suggested that the vexed question of Papua versus New Guinea should be resolved by redrawing District boundaries ^{so} that some Districts would encompass parts of both Papua and New Guinea thus, in effect, abolishing the existing boundary between Papua and New Guinea. Regrettably such a measure was not possible because of the different legal status of the two Territories, one an Australian colony the other a United Nations Trust Territory.

Fortunately Matiabe Yuwi has been able to continue his political career. He is a man of intelligence, determination and understanding who has given worthy service to his electorate and to Papua New Guinea as a whole.

Oscar Tammur: Any outline of personalities in the second House would be deficient without the inclusion of the ubiquitous member for Kokopo, Oscar Tammur. Tammur was a demagogue in his electorate and beyond but in the House, in some respects, he was an isolated figure fighting the unpopular cause of the Mataungan Association of which he was both founder and patron. He was undoubtedly the most voluble member of the House and his defence of the Association and his attacks upon its rivals and upon the Administration's attempts at its suppression occupy innumerable columns in the record of debates.

Tammur, physically, was a substantial figure, not tall but plump with a naturally cheerful face. He had spent some years in Australian schools and hence spoke fluent English. He was an orator of considerable dimensions in both English

and Pidgin. Undoubtedly he was even better in his native Kuanua. He was not merely a one issue member but worked hard for his electorate with education his particular interest. In fact schools were available for almost all Tolai children and he was even constrained to ask if there could be some compulsion on students to attend: *in fact* In the Gazelle Peninsula it is very difficult to persuade children to attend school. The parents do not like to chastise their children and so they allow them to remain in the village and not attend school. I ask whether compulsory education can be introduced in the Gazelle Peninsula. ⁶

It was a question which aroused envious comments from his Highland colleagues who had schools for only a meagre proportion of their children all of whom were eager to attend school.

Tammur was particularly keen to get a high school established in the heart of his electorate and eventually, in the 1970 Works Programme, he found one listed for construction. Neville, possibly with tongue in cheek, promptly moved for the deletion of Kokopo and the substitution of Toma, or some other deserving area. Toma was the centre of Tolai opposition to the Mataungan Association. Tammur responded -

If this motion is passed the people of Kokopo will secede. ⁷

The Works Programme remained unamended but it is doubtful that his threat was responsible.

Tammur always gave the impression that he was a man of ingenuous simplicity. It was some distance from the truth. There was a deal of duplicity in the various propositions he put forward to resolve the problems of the Gazelle Peninsula. A number of mediating efforts had been made which he referred

to in a motion with a final segment which read :- 'That the House recommends that no prosecutions of tax defaulters be made until the House is informed of the outcome of these investigations into the feelings of the community concerned'.⁸ It was a delaying tactic which Leahy challenged by asking if, in the event of the House accepting the motion, the MA would put the money they had collected into a general fund to maintain the services which had run down badly because of the refusal of Mataungan members to pay Local Government Council taxes. Leahy also asked if the MA would agree to a secret ballot to determine the wishes of the Tolai people ...Tammur equivocated. It was a familiar tactic, never at any time did there appear to be any possibility of a compromise.

Despite his continuing failure to convince the House of the justice of the Mataungan cause Tammur retained a wry sense of humour with elements of self-mockery. He wore his prison sentence for failure to pay Council tax like a resplendent robe: 'Mr. Speaker, all members can now have a good look at me. I will return to go to gaol. I wish to say in this House that I am pleased to go to gaol!'⁹ He certainly did go to gaol but served the sentence comfortably in the infirmary and was discharged early. He could also be caustic as when he alluded to the expenditure on facilities for the police in his electorate which were to cater for the enlarged police presence there:

I now turn my attention to the forgotten electorate of mine, the Kokopo electorate. This electorate has been completely neglected by the Administration. Firstly I wish to express my thanks to the Administrator for providing vehicles for the new police station and also for establishing a corrective institution (gaol) in the area. Mr. Speaker once again on behalf of the Kokopo electorate I wish to thank the Administrator for his generosity in providing us with

a better police station and other benefits..¹⁰

Ellis, bitter after the murder of his friend and colleague, Emanuel, departed from official practice to launch a personal attack on Tammur:-

It is the mark of a good leader ...that he guides his people in building up a better way of life for them. But, Sir, what kind of a leader stands by without condemning crimes, riots and individual actions which can destroy, if they are not checked, the peace and well being and the confidence of the society of basically good and progressive people.'

Mr.Tammur apparently aspires to be that kind of leader.¹¹

The embattled Tammur responded:

I often hear it said in Parliament 'the man who makes all the trouble is standing up' These remarks come from all corners of the House...I am a man, I am not one to be easily frightened by a few voices within parliament....I have been in gaol twice.¹²

and on an earlier occasion, after attacks by some of his parliamentary colleagues:-

A member of the House can be rubbished in front of his fellow members so that his reputation is ruined. Why did my people elect me? They elected me to bring matters that concern them to the attention of this House If something arises which would harm their interests am I to sit down and say nothing? Mr.Speaker, I must speak, it is my duty.¹³

Whatever the criticisms in the House his constituents had faith in him. He was re-elected in 1972 and in 1977 and reached Ministerial rank as Minister for Education, one of his strongest interests. He was defeated in 1982 but continues to devote himself to improving education in Ulagunan village and adjacent areas.

Ulagunan x

Michael Somare: Michael Somare is now sufficiently well known not to require a descriptive analysis in these pages. I write of him as a freshman member of the second House of Assembly, a slight, youthful looking man of thirty two years, beardless and brash but with great personal charm. He was leader of a fledgling political party which was at odds with a very large majority of the members of the House. For him the four years of the second House were difficult, frustrating but formative. He grew in stature and confidence quite remarkably in that period.

He had been disappointed in the preliminaries leading up to the House in that recruitment of new members to the party had been sparse in the extreme and that during the life of the House Pangu fared little better. But although the parliamentary membership was small Pangu did represent a very considerable group outside the House. Somare and his party carried with them the aspirations of virtually all Papua New Guinea public servants and students in higher secondary and tertiary education institutions. The party also had the resources of most of the academic community to support them but they did not have the numbers in the House to affect colonial policies and practices significantly.

As leader of his party most of Somare's speeches in the House put forward Pangu policies and Pangu's views on matters before the House. There were plenty of policy initiatives but little success. There was strong Pangu opposition to some of the measures introduced by the Administration but little numerical support for that opposition. It is not surprising that he erupted occasionally and was a notable interjector. He found Tei Abal's dogged conservatism particularly irritating and there were a number of clashes when the subject under discussion was progress towards self-government,

one of which is recorded in Chapter XV. In later times Somare has been glad of the support of Tei Abal and the United Party.

Pangu Pati initiatives are documented elsewhere in these pages but its leader had personal convictions which he pursued vigorously. Two of these were inter-related, the need for education and the urgency of pursuing an active localisation programme. He, himself, as a staff member of the Department of Information, had suffered from the slow progress in localisation in that Department. Without upgrading education it was difficult to expedite localisation. He was particularly supportive of the Administration's Education Bills to amalgamate Administration and Mission teachers in a common service:

I worked for some time as a Government teacher and I know that many questions arise in the minds of teachers. Many questions also arise in the minds of Christian Mission teachers. It is said that we are all teaching the children of this country. They are not children of another country and therefore why should the work of the Department of Education not be combined with the work of the Christian Missions? The step which Papua New Guinea is taking today will make very important changes. All the people of this country believe that education must continue in this country.

I heartily support the new Bill which the Ministerial Member for Education has introduced. ¹⁴

In his localisation campaign his particular target was the Department of District Administration, previously the Department of Native Affairs, which until recent years had been the top dog in the Department hierarchy. Many educated Papua New Guineans had been affronted by some of the veteran

officers in this Department who had not caught up with the times:- 'It is high time that this Department accelerated the programme of training for Papua New Guineans as District officers and Assistant District officers. ¹⁵ I see no point in getting more and more....young patrol officers from Australia this particular Department must be localised.'¹⁶

Discriminatory practices were also a subject of bitter complaint though he sometimes went off half-cocked; There follows a question and answer on the subject:-

q. Mr.Michael Somare asked the Assistant Administrator (Services)

Is it true that the Treasurer delegated power to the Transport office at Wewak to choose whom he wanted to travel on Administration transport? If so was he instructed to refuse local officers who are considered to be filthy and cannot travel with white officers?

A. Mr.L.W.Johnson: There seems to be a certain emotional content in Mr.Somare's remarks which I would like to clear up immediately. All officers of the Administration are officers of the Administration whether they be Papuans or New Guineans or Australians. One would fully expect them to be shown the same courtesy and the same treatment irrespective of racial origin. If this has not happened in Wewak, and I have no knowledge that it has happened except for a newspaper report, we will certainly take appropriate action. ¹⁷

Another major interest of Somare's was the preservation of Papua New Guinean culture. He was a product of the rich artistic productivity of the Sepik River and when the Administration was looking for a Chairman of the PNG Museum's Governing Council I approached Somare and asked him if he

would accept the position. Pangu was a little suspicious of our motives. Were we trying to buy him over to our side? However, he accepted the job. It was an inspired choice for he has played a large part in the development and expansion of the Museum and in the encouragement of the traditional arts of Papua New Guinea. The new Parliament House, and the Prime Minister's rooms in particular, exemplify a remarkable cultural resurgence.

Michael Somare was one of the fortunate ones in that he was one of a small number of public servants given an opportunity to up-grade their education qualifications, (he was a teacher at the time) and then also had the benefit of further training at the Administrative College. For Papua New Guinea he came to politics at the right age and the right time. He and his fellow mature age student public servants were the beneficiaries of the political changes and of the accelerated localisation programme. Somare had to wait awhile to see it but he, himself, was to oversee an avalanche of opportunities for those students of the recent past.

Percy Chatterton: I have referred to Chatterton earlier and of his ombudsmanlike role. He was the patriarch of the House but a very active one and, as befitted forty years with the London Missionary Society, he had a highly developed social conscience and probed some of the rather too numerous weaknesses in the Administration armour. Sometimes his information was inaccurate or his arguments unsound but, in Papua New Guinea, one could always find instances of discriminatory practices, of neglect, of inefficiencies and, of course, of inadequate resources. He claimed independence of all political parties but none-the-less was more often than not numbered with the Pangu Pati in divisions in the House.

The interests he pursued most vigorously were:-

1. West Irian refugees.
2. The establishment of a single Papua New Guinean broadcasting service.
3. Housing for Papua New Guinean families.
4. Discriminatory practices and human rights in general.

Also as the member for Port Moresby he had a lively interest in the affairs of the Public Service and of those who worked for it. In retrospect he set out what he considered had been his general interests:

Searching for a common thread running through my very diverse political interests I think it is to be found in my concern for the unfortunate and the underprivileged, - shanty dwellers, school drop-outs, inmates of mental hospitals, West Irian refugees and such like. ¹⁸

As previously noted Chatterton held the record for Questions in the House, almost invariably on notice and carefully prepared, with the problems of West Irian refugees an important concern. He was their defender and protector in the House of Assembly. There are twenty questions about them from him stretching through the life of the House ranging from queries about how many claiming refugee status had been sent back, how many had been granted permissive residence and how many had found employment. Indeed the number of arrivals was a considerable embarrassment to the Administration but most were permitted to stay and became integrated with the work force.

Another of Chatterton's pre-occupations was broadcasting and in particular the fusion of the Australian Broadcasting Commission operating out of Port Moresby, mainly in English, with the Administration service broadcasting from a number of district centres using Pidgin and local languages, to create a national system. His questions on this matter were

frequent and, as progress towards the desired end seemed tardy he attempted to hurry it up by proposing a motion in June 1970:-

That this House calls upon the Administration and the Australian Government to establish without delay a Papua New Guinea National Broadcasting Commission to take over and extend the broadcasting facilities now operated in the Territory by the Australian Broadcasting Commission and the Administration to promote the Territory wide dissemination of entertainment and information and to provide a forum for the expansion of a variety of views on the social, economic and political problems of Papua and New Guinea. ¹⁹

and followed up with a question: 'Has any action been taken as a result of the resolution by this House recommending the establishment of a National Broadcasting Commission? If so what action? If not why not?' The Administration had no quarrel with such an establishment but negotiation, through the Australian Government, with the ABC while protecting the interests of our own broadcasting network was time consuming. It was not until 1973 that the marriage was consummated and the National Broadcasting Commission came into being with Sam Piniau, a Tolai, as its chief.

Discriminatory practices had always been a target of Chatterton's and it was no surprise when he introduced an amending Bill to the Discriminatory Practices Ordinance aimed at tightening up its provisions. In its original form the Ordinance read that on licensed premises it was an offence 1. to act in an insulting, provocative or offensive manner towards a person of different race or colour as such, or 2. to incite or endeavour to incite another person to do so. Chatterton's amendment proposed that these strictures should not only apply to licensed premises but should: 'cover behaviour of this kind not only in hotels and taverns but in public places and public meetings and also cover printed or written matter which is threatening, abusive, insulting,

provocative or offensive to people of other races or tribes.' He had his way without opposition.

He also waged a war of attrition against the Administration concerning the standard and architecture of low covenant housing in Port Moresby. It must be said that low wages, hence low rents associated with tight Administration budgets and a high demand for housing from a rapidly growing urban population had required the strictest economies in construction costs, a problem which was not always apparent to critical members.

However, Chatterton's great push related to his general concern for what^{are} sometimes loosely termed 'human rights' and in 1970 he produced a Bill of Rights - 'to declare and protect the rights and freedoms to be enjoyed by every citizen in Papua New Guinea subject only to respect for the rights and freedoms of other citizens and for the public interest.'²⁰ It breezed through the House. No-one dared to be critical and Chatterton claimed his great triumph. Many years later in his book 'Day that I have loved' he wrote 'my one substantial win was in securing the passage of the Human Rights Bill!²¹ He would have been gratified to know that the Papua New Guinea Constitution sets those rights out very clearly in thirty three separate items and with another one of Chatterton's hobby horses, ~~an~~ Ombudsmen, to support them. After that victory his profile in the House diminished. He wrote:- 'After the passage of the Human Rights Ordinance I was able to relax and, as it were, freewheel down hill to the final meeting of the second House in November 1971.'²²

I suppose that it could be said that Chatterton operated on the fringes of the main parliamentary concerns and perhaps sought simplistic solutions to complex problems, but he

constantly pressed on the tender spots in Administration policies and practices. When the second House concluded he retired from Parliament but not from an interest in public affairs. Had he remained succeeding Papua New Guinea governments would have found his criticisms of their stewardship quite as stringent as those he had directed at the colonial administration. He continued to write on Papua New Guinea affairs but died shortly after he had seen the opening of PNG's new Parliament House in 1984. He had made a significant contribution to Papua New Guinea's parliamentary life.

Paul Lapun: Paul Lapun has had a deal of space already in these pages but has clear claims to be one of the prominent personalities of the House. He entered parliament in 1964 then aged 41. He had been an under-Secretary in the first House and, on the advent of the Pangu Pati, its parliamentary leader, and thus was one of the more experienced members of the second House. He had been a seminarian in the Catholic Church and a teacher in the Mission schools on Bougainville, but later developed farming and trade store interests. He retained his seat in the 1968 elections with 82 per cent of the vote but with particularly strong support in those segments of the electorate notable for their supernatural or cargoist beliefs and anti-European attitudes.

He was a complex man, a devout Catholic but part mystic, a traditionalist and a bitter but not overt anti-colonialist and something of a prude. He had that indefinable quality called 'charisma'. He was an orator of distinction and although he spoke good English he customarily, and characteristically, used Pidgin in the House. He frequently used imagery to emphasise his points, for instance speaking in opposition to the Public Order Bill he said, 'This House is like a tap which conveys water from the reservoir to Papua New Guinean's who drink it without questioning whether or not it is good for their health and we are patted on the

distinction

back for it.²³ He also had an acid tongue which he used to belabour colonial administration. On the 1971 Budget he commented:-

As a representative of South Bougainville I would like to express our words of appreciation to the Government for the money allocated for the development of Arawa town this year. I neither praise nor criticise the Government at the moment; I know that the Government ...would not have spent a cent on Bougainville had copper not been discovered.²⁴

and also 'I will repeat again that the people of Bougainville were neglected by you good Christians. Your Christian charity has arisen since minerals were discovered in Bougainville.'²⁵

I have said that Lapun was a prude. He seemed to have an undue interest in the dress and activities of young girls, in particular the fate of girls going to secular High Schools attracted his criticism:-

This is what they learn when they go to big schools; they learn music and how to play instruments, how to go about wearing mini-skirts so short that when they lean or bend forward parts of the body, which should otherwise be clothed, are exposed to sight.. ..it is a fact that when girls are in the village they do not wash and polish themselves as much to attract attention from white men and indigenes. However, when they go to school they have a daily bath, grow their hair long and beautiful and are after the first person they can get.²⁶

Lapun deplored what was happening in Bougainville and urged a return to the simple life of the past:- 'We want to retain our good old ways of life, - our culture -- our race must be preserved and traditional marriage systems must be preserved,'²⁷ and on the same theme:-

The people of Kieta have been working very hard to purchase outboard motors which will enable them to catch fish. Your ancestors did nothing but spend all day sitting down looking out to sea for fish. When he saw the fish he blew his conch shell. All his relations gathered around and they caught thousands of fish in an hour. If this traditional culture existed today they could earn thousands of dollars. Today there is no living person who knows this culture. ²⁸

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Lapun was a tough politician who, although he led from the front, always explained himself as merely a mouthpiece of his people. He was a good deal more than his sometime description of himself as 'a poor black man'.

Notes: Chapter XXII.

1. HAD Vol II No. p9
2. Ibid
3. ibid No.10 p2771
4. ibid No 6 p1772
5. " No3 p623
6. " No12 p3518
7. " No11 p3381
8. " No 10 p2984
9. " No 12 p3720
10. " No10 p2995
11. " No18 p4984
12. " p5162
13. " No 12 p3751
14. " No 10 p2808-9
15. The progression in this Department was from Patrol Officer to Assistant District Officer, then District Officer and finally to District Commissioner.
16. HAD Vol II No10 p2731
17. " Vol II No7 p2103
18. 'Day that I have loved' Pacific Publication, Sydney 1974 p96.
19. HAD Vol II No10 p2775
20. ibid No 12 p3523
21. 'Day that I have loved.'op cit
22. ibid p111
23. " No 11 p3314
24. " No 18 p 4904
25. " No 9 p2510
27. ibid
28. " No 10 p2740



Chief Minister Michael Somare being sworn in on Self-Government Day December 1st 1973.



Michael and the Johnsons in the garden of Government House on Self-Government night.1973.

Chapter XXIII.

The Last Meeting.

The last meeting of the second House of Assembly extended over the period of 8th November to 26th November in 1971 and began with a formidable Notice Paper which listed eighteen Administration notices, including nine Bills and thirty notices from private members and political parties of which eight were Bills. It was a list which continued to grow during the meeting. A good many of the motions listed were last minute attempts to get a score on the board before facing the electors, for, as at the conclusion of the first House most were apprehensive as to their political future. Michael Kaninba wanted the Wau-Bulolo road upgraded, Cecil Abel proposed a higher subsidy from the Copra Industry Stabilisation fund for copra producers, Momei Pangial's notice of motion seeking the construction of a road from the Southern Highlands to the Papuan coast (Mendi to Kikori) was still there, Pita Lus wanted compensation for damage to crops in his electorate from road construction activities, Mek Nugintz proposed to reduce the number of potential rivals by seeking to have electoral nomination refused for those who had served six months in gaol either from individual sentences or cumulative ones, and Oscar Tammur produced two motions concerning Gazelle Peninsula problems which, on the surface, would promote conciliation between the hostile factions. There were many more of a similar nature.

But there were some motions or Bills of wider significance, many of which seemed unlikely to get the attention they might deserve in the limited time available. Lussick's earlier notice of a Bill to establish a Department of Local Government still languished on the Notice Paper, it was

an issue which had been around for a long time, Olewale again raised the issue of the inequalities in the border between Australia and Papua New Guinea, Tom Leahy had his two integrity Bills (parliament and public service) to pilot through the House, Uroe hoped to make hanging a mandatory sentence for wilful murder and Dutton wanted hanging removed altogether. Giregire was concerned about Papua New Guinea's small quota allotted by the International Coffee Organisation and Paul Lapuna about the continual problem of obtaining spare parts for unserviceable motor vehicles, Oala-Rarua proposed to set up a committee of experts to advise on constitutional development 'in view of the obvious need for the problems of political and constitutional development to be investigated in greater depth with more expertise and technical knowledge than a series of Select Committees.'

Apart from some routine Bills the Administration was anxious to get House endorsement of its Revised Five Year Economic Development Programme which it did with Papuan members again voicing their discontent with their neglected status. They got little joy from Oala-Rarua's statement 'making the best of the meagre results of the visit of Papua Ministers to Canberra, referred to in Chapter XVI 'The delegation experienced general satisfaction with the outcome of its discussions with the Minister for External Territories. It felt that the Minister is now very much more aware of the importance that Papuans place on the development of Papua.'¹

Then Tom Leahy proceeded with his two Bills to keep corruption out of parliament and the public service. Oddly enough the House approved his Parliamentary Integrity Bill 40/11 but negated the Public Officers' Integrity Bill by a narrow margin 30 to 26. Tammur's plausible motions to

the Gazelle dispute were regarded by the House with a jaundiced eye. They had heard it all before. The two contradictory Bills on capital punishment were treated impartially by the House. They rejected both of them.

But the central debate was really about the next election and arose out of the introduction of a Matter of Public Importance, 'Misleading Political Literature'. The matter was introduced by Tim Ward, who had replaced the deceased Evenett, and directed at the Pangu Pati. It centred around a letter, copies of which were being circulated in Lae and adjacent areas. The letter advocated support for the Pangu Pati offering cargo cult inducements

- Pangu
LAW
1. A big ship belonging to the Pangu Pati and carrying supporters of Tony Voutas came to Lae.
 2. When the ship berthed the passengers threw ^{ew} money overboard.
 3. The passengers distributed cigarettes and other goods when they came ashore.
 4. The Chinese stores were forced to decrease their prices.
 5. Houses, money, goods and food would be distributed.
 6. There would no longer be any need to work in the garden.
 7. Taxes would be sharply reduced.²

There was a heated vituperative debate with insults flying back and forth across the Chamber -

Somare to Buchanan:- 'You shut up. Shut up, you nitwit.

Abal: of the Pangu Pati: 'They have nothing in their heads, like the empty drum.'

Voutas denied authorisation of any such statement and pointed out that the letter was presumably based on the entry to the Lae harbour of a tourist ship where the prodigal behavior of some of the visitors caused some misunderstanding among elements of the local population.

Other examples of excesses in election propaganda were produced and the Pangu Pati responded with another

debate on a Matter of Public Importance citing a letter from Anton Parao, the youthful secretary of the United Party to young Highlanders. The United Party was concerned that many of the young and better educated Highlanders were deserting to the political progressives and in particular to the Highlands based New Guinea National Party led by Thomas Kavali. Parao's circular letter set out to draw them back to the fold:

I am very sorry to say that there are some young Highlanders who are complete 'big heads' and they pretend not to be Highlanders. They are a small group of fellows with Thomas Kavali ...There are quite a few smart coastal fellows who... have realised that now is their time to get all the top positions in Government and in private enterprise. They have put us into the grass cutting level and reckon that we will always be there. Just because of our discovery and late start in education our fellows who have some education are only junior officers.³

Kavali could hold his own in debate with his fellow Highlanders:- 'The United Party is damaging the morale of the people who are capable of running the country. This United Party is a perfidious party. It should be abolished. The United Party has no planned policy.'⁴ On the whole the two sides fought a draw but the debate did not do too much to restrain the flow of 'misleading political literature.'

Re-election misgivings also produced a Bill from Sabumei Kofikai to double the deposit required of candidates nominating for the next election from \$50 to \$100 and thus, perhaps, reduce the competition. Despite contrary arguments it won the support of the House 30 to 18.

On the last day members were in a sombre mood, justifiably so in many cases, for their parliamentary careers were shortly to be in jeopardy. Question Time was a pale shadow of its past - there were only seven questions on notice, though ten without notice. Government business was soon disposed of - a debate on decisions reached on broadcasts by political parties in the forthcoming election campaign and two reports from the House Public Accounts Committee. Broadcasting by politicians was always a controversial problem. The limited distribution of radio outlets meant that many members would not have the advantage of speaking to their electors and where stations were available the requirement that, even from one station, five or six languages might need to be used meant that monitoring would be impossible. It should be borne in mind that in very many cases language used had not been transcribed so that written scripts could not be provided. It was decided to limit access to the ten Administration radio stations to nominees of the political parties, each to explain the party's policies. Access to individual members was denied.

Then the House galloped through as much of the Notice Paper as could be encompassed in the time remaining. Abel lost his motion to help the copra producers, Giregire won support for the coffee growers though the International Coffee Organisation was unlikely to bend to the will of the Papua New Guinea House of Assembly. Lapun's motion on vehicle spare parts had plenty of support, many members had suffered from the difficulty of obtaining spares to keep vehicles on the road.

The Adjournment Debate was largely devoted to various expressions of appreciation for the Speaker and the parliamentary staff, but Olewale did prophesy accurately that:-
'Next year a very important parliament will be elected

and I am sure a cabinet formed government will come into being' Wesani Iwoksim expressed the feelings of many of his colleagues:- 'This is the last meeting of the House and as I said, I am going home empty handed. I have not achieved anything.' Lus complimented the Speaker on his capacity to calm his, Lus' outbursts:- 'You always give orders to keep me calm.' Such orders were often necessary. John Guise had deliberately chosen the impartiality of the Speaker's chair but made sure that he maintained a high public profile. Some of his rulings, to outsiders, might have seemed idiosyncratic, but he knew his members. He could be tough and authoritarian when it was required, but fair, and even indulgent to those not well versed in parliamentary procedures. He was sharpest of all to those whom he thought were challenging his authority. I believe that the House could not have been better served.

The second House concluded at 5.37 pm on November 26th 1971 and everyone went home to woo once again, the electorate, but with misgivings as to the reception they might get.

The execution was salutary. The spokesman for the AEC was defeated and almost all of the other expatriate members disappeared; only Neville, Middleton, Ward and Chan remained. Voutas and Chatterton did not stand. The indigenous members fared somewhat better. Of sixty three members thirty eight were re-elected, some for the third time, including Lus, Urekit, Abal, Guise, Giregire, Lapun, Diria, Pangial, Toliman and Mano. For Neville it was his third parliament.

The Ministerial Members fared rather better than average, scoring five out of seven, only Ashton and Kapena being defeated but the Assistant Ministerial Members were

less fortunate, only Wabiria, Mola and Diria were left. A striking feature of the voting was the loyalty to sitting members shown by the Southern Highlanders, only Tegi Ebei'al losing his seat. Six out of seven in PNG politics was almost miraculous.

Excluding days set aside for Committee meetings and so on the House had sat for 172 days with the longest meeting that from the 30th August to 1st October with, however, only sixteen actual sitting days. Invariably the longest meetings were those when the Budget was presented, thirteen days in both 1968 and 1969 and fifteen and sixteen respectively in the two following years. 5866 questions on notice had been asked - and answered, and perhaps as many as 2000 questions without notice. It had seen a complete transformation in Australian Government attitudes towards Papua New Guinea self-government and independence and equally, a revolution in PNG members' thoughts about themselves and their country.

As a final act of vanity I conclude with an extract from my address in a farewell to House members at their last meeting:-

If we are all here today we have twenty three of those who were present when the first House of Assembly meeting began in 1964, twenty one elected members and Mr. Newman and I....In 1964 we were uncertain about our role and indeed of our future. Now this uncertainty has gone. The House knows its present powers and influences and uses them. The House knows that the third House of Assembly elected next year is likely to be the most important one in the past and future history of Papua New Guinea. That

House may well have to choose the constitutional path on which we finally travel... We have grown to think of Papua New Guinea as one country. It has happened because we, in the House, have had to make decisions which have affected all Papua New Guineans. The members from the Sepik have had to think about the problems of Bougainville, those from the Chimbu have had to think about the Kiwais, and the Engas of the Tolais. This has been a national parliament and it has been the genesis of national feeling.

In 1964 the House had very considerable powers but the people of Papua New Guinea did not think of government as something belonging to them. The Government is now free to grow from the will of the people. I hope that all of us in Papua New Guinea will think of it as 'our' Government.

The other great event is the way that membership of the House has changed us all. Each member knows that he has been changed by meeting new people, by going to new places, doing new things and thinking about new ideas. In a way we are all new men, but I hope not so new that we have lost touch with the people who have supported us...

In pidgin:-

Taim mi lukluk raun Haus, me hamamas long lukim planti pren bilong olgeta hap bilong Papua New Guinea. I gat sampela New Guineans, sampela Papuans, sampela Australians na sampela bilong ol arapela kantri tu, tasol

yumi algeta ibin wok wantaim long girapim Papua New Guinea. Namba tu Haus ov Asembli ibin bringim Papua New Guinea pinis long doa bilong taim emi kamap olsem wanpela Kantri, ai ting bai namba tri Haus inap long opim dispela doa bai yumi ken go insait long dispela taim.

(In Motu)

Iseda gado badana ta be Motu. Ia namo lau hereva inai gado dekenai mauri namona bona iboumui ai mai moale danu noho. Namu iseda tanobada goadana. Iboumui ai bamahuta.

Notes : Chapter XXIII.

1. HAD Vol II No19 p5129
2. " No 19 p5072
3. " No 20 p5309
4. " p5313
5. Administrator's address to the House 23 Nov 1971.
Translation from Pidgin:-

As I look around the House I am proud to say that I can see many friends from all parts of Papua New Guinea. There are New Guineans and Papuans and Australians and some from other countries too, but we have all worked together for the good of Papua New Guinea. The second House of Assembly has brought Papua New Guinea to the door of nationhood, the third House may well open that door so that we may enter.

from Motu.
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Our other official language is Motu.
May I say in that language good health and prosperity to you all. May our country Papua New Guinea grow to nationhood. Goodbye to you all.



The Queen in Kieta accompanied by Paul Lapun, in the background
the Duke of Edinburgh and Veronica and Michael Somare. 1974

Epilogue.

The third House elected in March 1972 bore out the predictions which concluded the previous chapter. Surprisingly at that time, it produced a majority coalition led by the Pangu Pati, including the People's Progress Party, somewhat reluctant bedfellows, and representatives of the Mataungan Association and Bougainville members. Somare had become, and remained a dominant figure in Papua New Guinea politics. Among the new members were some who were to play a conspicuous part in their country's affairs, Father John Momis of Bougainville, John Kaputin a Mataungan leader, and Iambakey Okuk from the Highlands. Josephine Abaijah became the first woman to be an elected member. Others prominent among the re-elected were Chan, Guise, Kavali, Abal and Toliman. White elected membership had been sharply reduced while official representation had shrunk to four as against the previous ten.

After a shaky start when the coalition just managed to get its nominee for Speaker elected by one vote it got down to business and made its intentions clearly known. A new Ministry would take firm charge of Papua New Guinea's affairs, and a time-table for self-government and independence would be established. By late April 1972 a Ministry had been established which encompassed responsibility for virtually all the country's affairs though still subject to restraining powers of the colonial power, restraint which in fact was never exercised.

By September of the same year the Somare ministry felt confident enough of its majority to propose that self-government should be achieved by December 1st 1973 'or as soon as possible thereafter' the conditional phrase being included to mollify the conservatives in the House. The vote on the proposal was won comfortably, 52 to 34 with 13 abstentions. The Australian government saw no problems arising and during 1973 final responsibility for all government functions except Foreign Affairs and Defence was transferred. An informal agreement was reached between Somare

and the responsible Australian Minister, Morrison, that a possible date for independence would be September 15th 1974.

This somewhat ambitious programme could not be fulfilled because of the establishment of a Parliamentary Constitutional Planning Committee led by John Momis which insisted that a prior requirement for an independent nation was to have a home grown Constitution, the development of which seemed to take an inordinate length of time. However, at last the third House of Assembly endorsed the Constitution and on September 16th 1975 the independent nation of Papua New Guinea was proclaimed with John Guise as its Governor-General and Michael Somare its Prime Minister.

It is fitting to conclude with the pre-ample to that Constitution -

'WE, THE PEOPLE OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA-

- : united in one nation
- : pay homage to the memory of our ancestors-
the source of our strength and origin of our
combined heritage
- : acknowledge the worthy customs and traditional
wisdoms of our people- which have come down to us
from generation to generation
- : pledge ourselves to guard and pass on to those who
come after us our noble traditions and the Christian
principles that are ours now.
- : By authority of our inherent right as ancient,
free and independent peoples

WE, THE PEOPLE, do now establish this sovereign nation
and declare ourselves, under the guiding hand of
God, to be the independent State of Papua New Guinea.

AND WE ASSERT, by virtue of that authority

- : That all power belongs to the people - acting
through their duly elected representatives
- : that respect for the dignity of the individual
and community interdependence are basic principles
of our society

- : that we guard with our lives our national identity, integrity and self respect
- : that we reject violence and seek consensus as a means of solving our common problems
- : that our national wealth, won by honest, hard work be equitably shared by all."