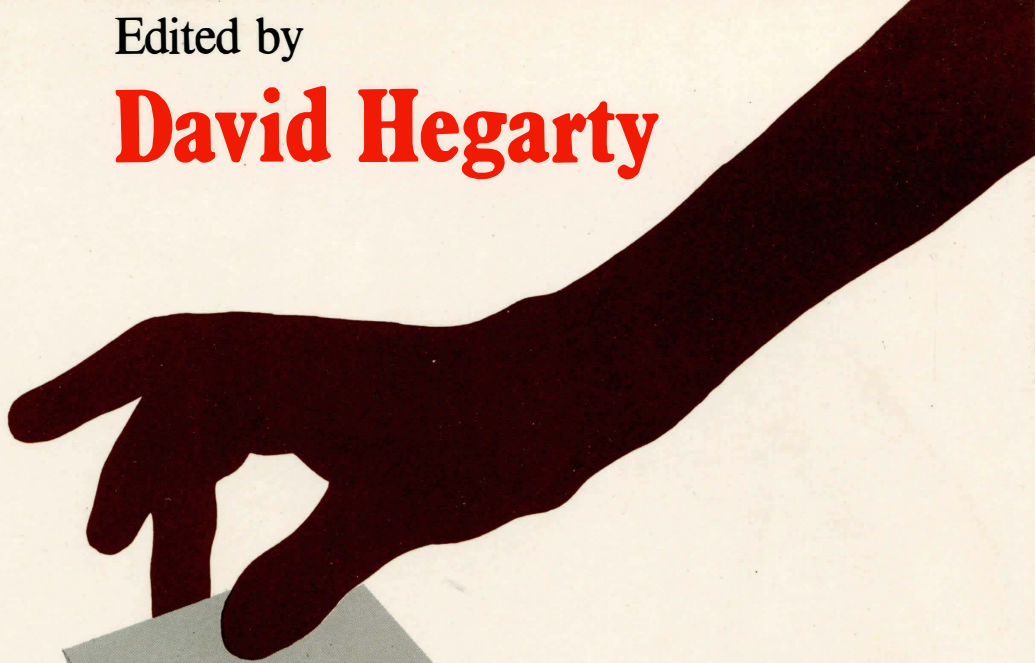


Edited by

David Hegarty



**ELECTORAL
POLITICS**

in

**Papua New
Guinea**

**STUDIES ON THE 1977
NATIONAL ELECTIONS**



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**ELECTORAL POLITICS IN
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STUDIES ON THE 1977
NATIONAL ELECTIONS**

**David Hegarty
(Editor)**

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GUINEA PRESS**

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PREFACE

In mid-1977 Papua New Guinea conducted its first national elections since independence. In the five years which had elapsed since the preceding general election of 1972, the political context had changed dramatically. In 1972 Papua New Guinea was still an Australian colony. The elections of that year, however, produced a national coalition government led by Mr. Michael Somare, which successfully steered the country first to self-government in December 1973, and then to independence in September 1975. The coalition government, on assuming office, had immediately commenced negotiations with Australia for a rapid transfer of powers, and had addressed a wide range of economic and social policy issues. In 1972 the then House of Assembly had established an all-party Constitutional Planning Committee to devise an autochthonous constitution. Within three years the transfer of power had been completed and a liberal democratic constitution based on a parliamentary system of government had been adopted. On 16 September 1975, the Governor-General, Sir John Guise, declared Papua New Guinea an independent sovereign state.

The politics of decolonization of that period were characterised by a considerable degree of tension. Initially a substantial section of the community had opposed a rapid transition to independence. The proposals of the constitutional planners had created rifts within the political leadership. The two separatist movements in Bougainville and Papua had seriously threatened the fragile unity of the new state on the eve of independence by unilaterally declaring their own independence from the rest of the country. These tensions, however, were to a large extent accommodated, and the Somare-led coalition government continued in office until the June-July elections of 1977. This volume does not include a survey of the final decolonization period but the following texts provide useful analyses of those years: D. Woolford: *Papua New Guinea-Initiation and Independence*, University of Queensland Press, 1976; J. Griffin, H. Nelson and S. Firth: *Papua New Guinea: A Political History*, Heineman, Australia, 1979; A. Amarshi, K. Good, R. Mortimer: *Development and Dependency — The Political Economy of Papua New Guinea*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1979; J. Goldring: *The Constitution of Papua New Guinea*, Law Book Co., Sydney, 1978.

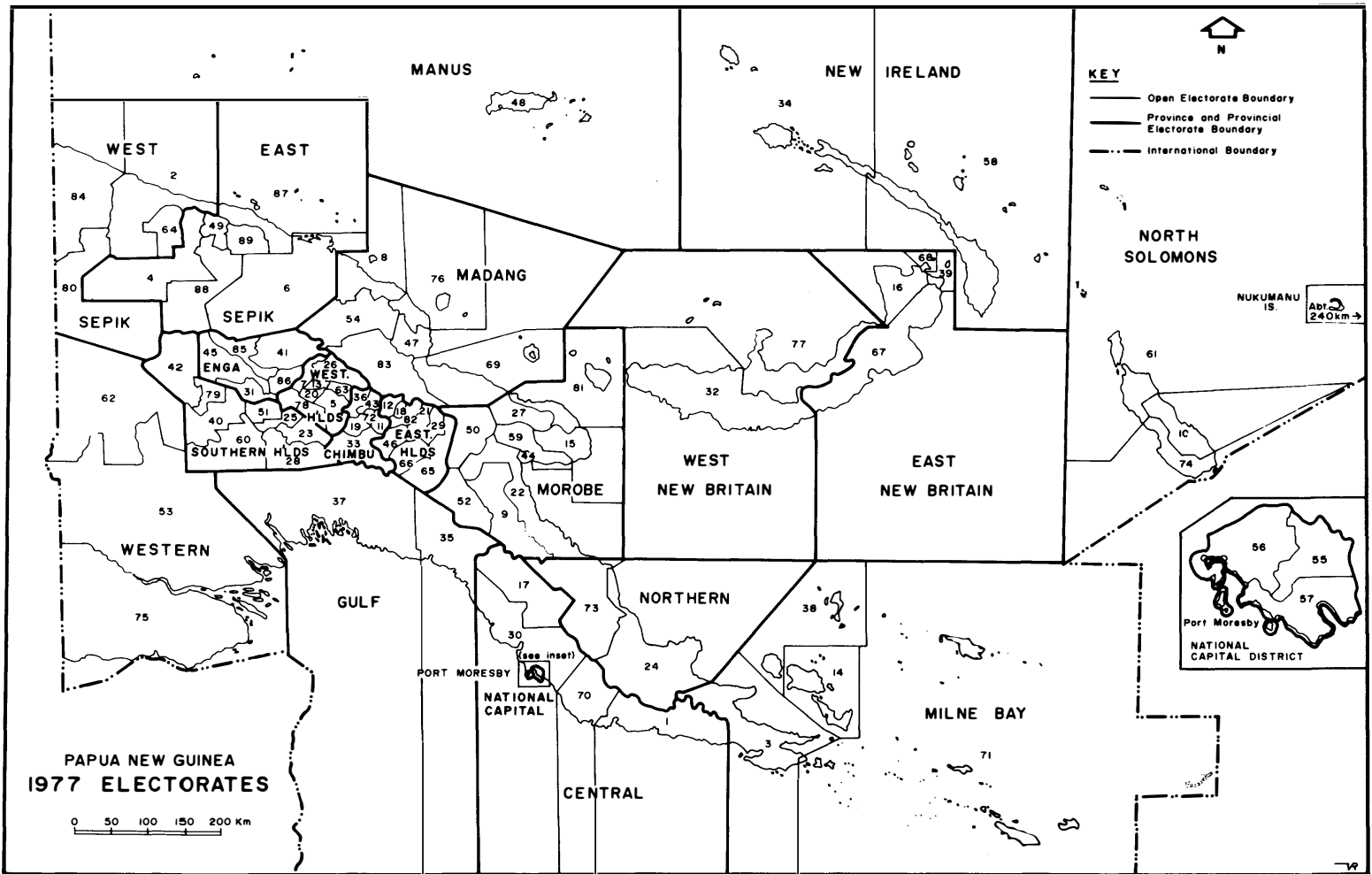
The 1977 election studies presented in this volume are the product of a research project co-ordinated by the Department of Political and Administrative Studies at the University of Papua New Guinea. The participants included staff and students from various departments of UPNG, and field researchers from a variety of overseas universities. The original intention of the project was for a comprehensive survey of the elections within the evolving political economy of Papua New Guinea. However a limited budget, teaching commitments and a high turnover of academics at UPNG reduced the project to one of selected studies in various parts of the country. An election seminar was held at UPNG immediately after the poll, but unfortunately many of the field reports were not prepared for subsequent publication. A list of these reports appears at the end of this volume and the manuscripts, together with a copy of the tape of the seminar, are deposited in the UPNG library.

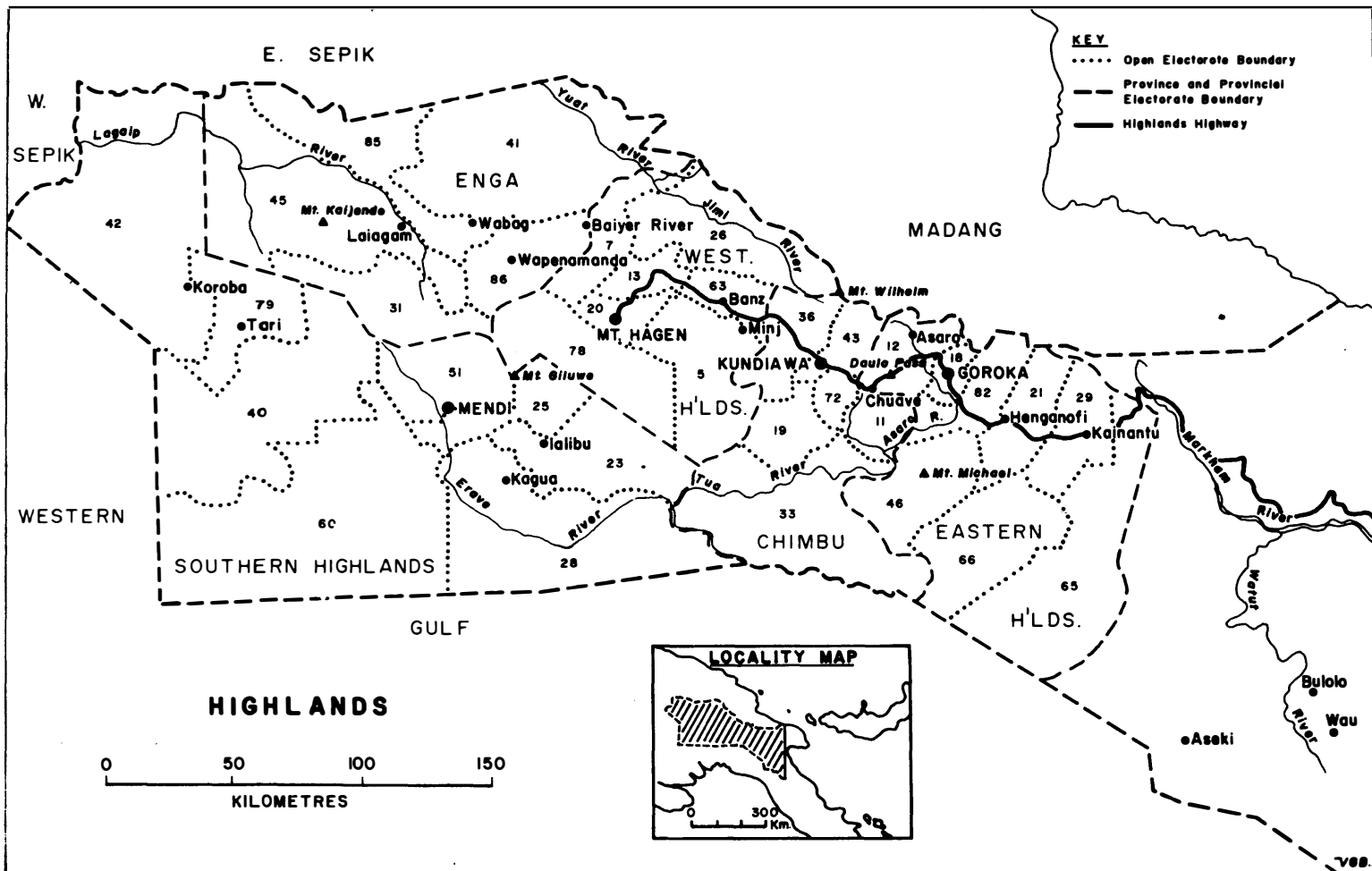
The volume is organised in the following manner: chapter one provides a brief overview of the elections; chapters two to four examine three electorates in the Papuan region; chapters five to ten examine the elections in parts of the Highlands region; chapters eleven to fourteen cover parts of the New Guinea coastal region; and chapters fifteen and sixteen provide short surveys of two

electorates in the New Guinea islands region. It is hoped that this volume complements those of the 1964, 1968 and 1972 general elections: D.G. Bettison, C.A. Hughes, P.W. van der Veur (eds.): *The Papua New Guinea Elections 1964*, ANU Canberra 1964; A.L. Epstein, R.S. Parker, Marie Reay (eds.): *The Politics of Dependence: Papua New Guinea 1968*, ANU Press, Canberra, 1971; D. Stone (ed.): *Prelude to Self-Government: Electoral Politics in Papua New Guinea 1972*, UPNG and ANU, Canberra, 1976.

Acknowledgements are due to the following: the research committee of UPNG which funded most of the project and the publications committee of UPNG which subsidised publication; the Electoral Commissioner, Mr James Mileng, and his field staff for their unstinting assistance to researchers and for his Report to the National Parliament: *First National General Elections, 1977*; film-makers Denis O'Rourke and Gary Kildea who produced the excellent documentary "Ileksen", and who co-operated with the project in many ways; students of UPNG who actively participated in the study; Loraine Blaxter, then of the Sociology Department, who organised much of the student research; UPNG administrative staff, Pala Vagi and Sandy Sandbach, who assisted in organising the post-election seminar; the National Mapping Bureau for supplying maps, and Vagi Raula and the cartography staff of the Geography Department, UPNG, for drawing them; and Mrs Molly Pouru, Mrs Leila Lisa and Mrs Oini Hau who painstakingly typed and re-typed and manuscripts. Finally I would like to thank my colleagues in the Department of Political and Administrative Studies, the late Rex Mortimer, David Baker, Ralph Premdas, Ken Good, Kwasi Nyamekye, Ngen Isana, Ellison ToWallom, Stephen Pokawin, Nao Badu, Aruru Matiabe, and more recently Yaw Saffu and Peter Larmour for their assistance and encouragement. Peter King presided over the last stages of editing, and Adri Govers for UPNG Press gave invaluable technical help.

David Hegarty
Department of Political and Administrative Studies
University of Papua New Guinea, December, 1982





Key to National
and Highlands Open
Electorate Maps

(The 19 provinces and the National Capital District make up 20 additional electorates.)

| <i>Map No.</i> | <i>Electorate</i> | <i>Province</i> |
|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Abau | Central |
| 2 | Aitape-Lumi | West Sepik |
| 3 | Alotau | Milne Bay |
| 4 | Ambunti-Dreikikir | East Sepik |
| 5 | Angalimp-South Wahgi | Western Highlands |
| 6 | Angoram | East Sepik |
| 7 | Baiyer-Mul | Western Highlands |
| 8 | Bogia | Madang |
| 9 | Bulolo | Morobe |
| 10 | Central Bougainville | Bougainville |
| 11 | Chuave | Chimbu |
| 12 | Daulo | Eastern Highlands |
| 13 | Dei | Western Highlands |
| 14 | Esa'ala | Milne Bay |
| 15 | Finschhafen | Morobe |
| 16 | Gazelle | East New Britain |
| 17 | Goilala | Central |
| 18 | Goroka | Eastern Highlands |
| 19 | Gumine | Chimbu |
| 20 | Hagen | Western Highlands |
| 21 | Henganofi | Eastern Highlands |
| 22 | Huon Gulf | Morobe |
| 23 | Ialibu-Pangia | Southern Highlands |
| 24 | Ijivitari | Northern |
| 25 | Imbonggu | Southern Highlands |
| 26 | Jimi | Western Highlands |
| 27 | Kabwum | Morobe |
| 28 | Kagua-Erave | Southern Highlands |
| 29 | Kainantu | Eastern Highlands |
| 30 | Kairuku-Hiri | Central |
| 31 | Kandep | Enga |
| 32 | Kandrian-Gloucester | West New Britain |
| 33 | Karimui-Nomane | Chimbu |
| 34 | Kavieng | New Ireland |
| 35 | Kerema | Gulf |
| 36 | Kerowagi | Chimbu |
| 37 | Kikori | Gulf |
| 38 | Kiriwina-Goodenough | Milne Bay |
| 39 | Kokopo | East New Britain |
| 40 | Komo-Margarima | Southern Highlands |
| 41 | Kompam-Ambum | Enga |
| 42 | Koroba-Lake Kopiago | Southern Highlands |

| <i>Map No.</i> | <i>Electorate</i> | <i>Province</i> |
|----------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| 43 | Kundiawa | Chimbu |
| 44 | Lae | Morobe |
| 45 | Lagaip-Porgera | Enga |
| 46 | Lufa | Eastern Highlands |
| 47 | Madang | Madang |
| 48 | Manus | Manus |
| 49 | Maprik | East Sepik |
| 50 | Markham | Morobe |
| 51 | Mendi | Southern Highlands |
| 52 | Menyamyua | Morobe |
| 53 | Middle Fly | Western |
| 54 | Middle Ramu | Madang |
| 55 | Moresby North-East | National Capital Dist. |
| 56 | Moresby North-West | National Capital Dist. |
| 57 | Moresby South | National Capital Dist. |
| 58 | Namatanai | New Ireland |
| 59 | Nawae | Morobe |
| 60 | Nipa-Kutubu | Southern Highlands |
| 61 | North Bougainville | Bougainville |
| 62 | North Fly | Western |
| 63 | North Wahgi | Western Highlands |
| 64 | Nuku | West Sepik |
| 65 | Obura-Wonenara | Eastern Highlands |
| 66 | Okapa | Eastern Highlands |
| 67 | Pomio | East New Britain |
| 68 | Rabaul | East New Britain |
| 69 | Rai Coast | Madang |
| 70 | Rigo | Central |
| 71 | Samarai-Murua | Milne Bay |
| 72 | Sinasina-Yonggamugl | Chimbu |
| 73 | Sohe | Northern |
| 74 | South Bougainville | Bougainville |
| 75 | South Fly | Western |
| 76 | Sumkar | Madang |
| 77 | Talasea | West New Britain |
| 78 | Tambul-Nebilyer | Western Highlands |
| 79 | Tari | Southern Highlands |
| 80 | Telefomin | West Sepik |
| 81 | Tewai-Siassi | Morobe |
| 82 | Unggai-Bena | Eastern Highlands |
| 83 | Usino-Bundi | Madang |
| 84 | Vanimo-Green River | West Sepik |
| 85 | Wabag | Enga |
| 86 | Wapenamanda | Enga |
| 87 | Wewak | East Sepik |
| 88 | Wosera-Gauai | East Sepik |
| 89 | Yangoru-Saussia | East Sepik |

Chapter 1

THE 1977 NATIONAL ELECTIONS IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA: AN OVERVIEW.

David Hegarty

Introduction

The first national elections since independence dominated political affairs in Papua New Guinea throughout most of 1977. Campaigning had commenced in the early part of the year, polling had been conducted over a three-week period in June and July and the government was formed in the first session of the new Parliament in August. The outcome of the election was the formation of a coalition government led by Pangu Party leader, Michael Somare who again became Prime Minister, and by Peoples' Progress Party leader, Julius Chan, who became deputy Prime Minister. Somare, first as Chief Minister and after independence as Prime Minister, had led a multiparty coalition since 1972. On this occasion Pangu and the Peoples' Progress Party had sufficient members in Parliament to form a two-party government. The United Party, which had been the major opposition party since 1972, again filled the opposition benches, although this time with depleted ranks and its organisation in considerable disarray.

Immediately after the completion of the count in early July, a period of uncertainty prevailed, similar to that following the poll in 1972. Despite the increased impact which parties had made in this election, their lack of nationwide, mass support, produced a post-election situation in which the loyalties and affiliations of many winning candidates were not known with any certainty. This precipitated an intense period of lobbying by parties for the support of newly-elected, independent MPs.

To most observers it appeared that Pangu and the Peoples' Progress Party (PPP) would have the required number — at least 55 in a Parliament of 109 — to form the government. The United Party (UP), however, in a bid to wrest power from the incumbents, proposed that a "National Alliance" led by former Governor-General, Sir John Guise, with UP leader Sir Tei Abal as his deputy and incorporating the members of the United, National and Country parties, Papua Besena and other independents, had sufficient numbers to govern.¹ A small and hastily formed group known as the "Alliance for Progress and Regional Development" (APRD) led by John Kaputin and Fr. John Momis which claimed the support of most New Guinea Islands MP's as well as the support of the Bougainville and East New Britain Provincial Governments, attempted to play a "balance — of — power" role between the two bigger blocs. When the numbers were ultimately tested in the vote for Prime Minister in Parliament on 9 August, Mr. Somare decisively defeated Sir John by 69 votes to 36.² The "National Alliance" had seriously miscalculated its strength and neither the "balancing" role nor the claimed numerical support materialized for the APRD.

Prime Minister Somare, exercising politician's license, exuberantly claimed

that voters had given his coalition a mandate to continue governing. But elections in Papua New Guinea are not about “mandates” in the sense that they are tests of public opinion on government performance and policy issues. Elections remain essentially electorate-level contests between competing clan candidates and personalities, with the government being pulled together afterward in the legislative arena. To say also that the government had been “returned” is also, in a sense, somewhat misleading. The turnover of politicians was high; 35 of the 91 who sought re-election being returned, with 9 of the 18 ministers in the former government losing their seats.

Pre-Election Climate

The elections were held in the wake of PNG’s independence; a constitutional independence which had been achieved rapidly but smoothly.³ Independence had been attained in 1975 without struggle, with only sporadic mobilization against the colonial regime, and with little change to the political institutions and policies laid down by the colonial power. Despite an initial period of enthusiasm by the first Somare government for re-orienting the colonial system, the structure of the economy, characterised by a high degree of foreign ownership and by a heavy dependence on aid and foreign capital, remained basically unaltered.⁴ Considerable social differentiation, however, had become apparent during the transitional period. The small politico-bureaucratic elite which had aspired to independence inherited command of the colonial state apparatus.⁵ In rural PNG a rich peasantry had emerged and a class of “middlemen”, (coffee buyers, traders, truckers), had rapidly moved into business.⁶ The basic social cleavages in society were not, however, class based. Emerging class interests were transcended by clan and ethnic linkages. Loyalties remained essentially parochial although the tendencies to regionalism noted throughout the transition period, exemplified in the Bougainville secessionist and Papuan separatist movements, had begun to solidify. Regional economic inequalities generated during the colonial period persisted after independence.

The Somare coalition government had managed the transition period capably, and in the first 18 months or so since independence the economic and political climate remained generally favourable to it. The first six months of 1977 during which the election campaigns were conducted were no exception. The economy had been buoyed not only by the guarantee of continued Australian aid (c. \$200m 1977), but by relatively high commodity prices (especially those of coffee and cocoa) which maintained an upward trend until mid-way through the year (See Table 1). The return from the sale of these commodities benefitted planters, both expatriate and national, national middlemen, and much flowed back to small producers.⁷ A number of development corporations involved in crop production and processing declared substantial profits. The cost-of-living, based on what many considered to be an out-dated consumer price index, rose in the December quarter of 1976, but in fact fell in the March quarter of 1977. Price control on certain items; the maintenance of a hard currency strategy; and a revaluation of the Kina against the Australian dollar by 13% in December 1976 accounted for the fall in the Consumer Price Index. The hard currency strategy, however, had not attracted foreign investment: in fact, disinvestment had occurred. There was a slight fall in the enumerated labour force and a drop in real wages, but neither appeared to have had short-term political repercussions. The International Monetary Fund had commented favourably on the stability and

management of the economy and PNG's credit was obviously reasonably good with international lending agencies.

Table 1 Export Commodity Prices in PNG Currency

| COMMODITY | % SMALL-HOLDER PRODUCTION* | AVERAGE PRICE MARCH 1976 | AVERAGE PRICE MARCH 1977 |
|-----------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Cocoa | 35 | K910 per tonne | K2,006 per tonne |
| Copra | 40 | K130 per tonne | K230 per tonne |
| Coffee | 75 | K1.46 per kilo | K4.56 per kilo |
| Tea | 25 | K0.95 per kilo | K2.57 per kilo |
| Rubber | 3 | K0.615 per kilo | K0.777 per kilo |
| (Copper | — | K1.6 per kilo | K1.2 per kilo) |

* 1971-74 figures

Source: Bank of PNG: Quarterly Economic Bulletin, March 1977.

In broad areas of public policy and of bureaucratic and political management the government had performed satisfactorily. Despite some deterioration in standards, particularly in the delivery of health services, public services and infrastructural development were generally maintained at pre-independence levels. In 1976 Parliament had adopted, without dissent, a "National Development Strategy" drawn up by the Central Planning Office which called for a promotion of economic growth through increased agricultural productivity and the exploitation of natural resource projects (particularly in minerals, fisheries, and timber).⁸ The Director of the Central Planning Office, Charles Lepani, had earlier in the year argued that economic dependency was a fact of life in PNG's small and open economy and that the government had few options other than to continue its reliance on aid and investment capital.⁹ Since the collapse in 1975 of the small "Nationalist Pressure Group" which had formed in Parliament during the Constitutional debates, the government had encountered little opposition on its economic strategy. The government had also strengthened its relationships with the major economic pressure groups. In April 1977 it had defused a potential conflict with the powerful Public Service Association by negotiating a three-year "pay deal" in which public service salaries were to be adjusted each six months in line with rises in the CPI, and in which long service leave credits were made commensurate with those in the private sector.¹⁰ The Employers Federation and Chamber of Commerce had also, by this time, established working relationship with the government. Throughout the campaign period neither economic strategy nor the general question of dependence became an election issue.

The policy area which aroused some consternation prior to the poll was that of foreign affairs, and particularly that of PNG's relations with Indonesia. PNG's foreign policy, labelled "Universalism" and popularly described as "friends to all-enemies to none", was premised on a reluctance to offend other nations and consequently to avoid international conflict situations. With regard to the border between PNG and the Indonesian province of Irian Jaya and to the small Irianese liberation movement operating around that border, the government had maintained a strictly conventional stance. The border was subject to an agreement negotiated between two sovereign states, and the Irianese guerrilla operations were a matter of Indonesian domestic concern.

However, considerable opinion within the PNG elite was sympathetic to the “Melanesian brothers” cause in Irian Jaya and to the flow of refugees into PNG from that province. In January, 1977, Mr Somare visited Djakarta and discussed with President Soeharto the border situation. On his return he denied any agreement with Indonesia that “Irian Jayans hostile to Indonesia” would be repatriated.¹¹ In May shortly after the Indonesian elections, about 300 Irianese were reported to have crossed the border into the Western Province, and it was alleged that a West Sepik villager had been shot by Indonesian soldiers.¹² The government announced that it would send the refugees back and disclaimed any knowledge on the situation across the border. This brought angry reactions from journalists who were refused access to the border and from Paul Langro, shadow Minister for Foreign Relations, whose electorate is the West Sepik. Langro alleged that a deal had been made permitting “hot pursuit” of guerrillas. Mr. Somare appealed on the radio for people not to “panic” over the border problems. Although the issue did not translate into any electoral significance (Langro, however, lost his seat but for unrelated reasons), it is bound to be a continuing source of friction in PNG politics.¹³

Government policy which had undoubted appeal and which had begun to generate popular support was that of the introduction of Provincial Governments (PG). In February the Constitution had been amended to include provision for provincial-level governments for each of the 19 provinces. The government’s prime motive for introducing a two-tier system was to placate the demands of the Bougainville secessionists, but momentum had built up, particularly through the efforts of the Constitutional Planning Committee in the early 1970’s, for decentralisation. By mid-1977, six PGs were in existence and the government was in process of devising appropriate implementation strategies. Many structural, financial and legal problems were anticipated in the conversion to a two-tier governmental system, but, electorally, the establishment of PGs was an obvious “plus” for the Somare government. Astute candidates in the election were quick to see the advantages of association with their PG. While PGs generally did not have much impact on these elections, over time, the changed power structure is bound to affect future electoral outcomes.

In the years since independence political tension within the elite had been frequent, but it was not of the magnitude of turbulence which characterised the years prior to 1975. The “Nationalist Pressure Group” which had formed to lobby the Constitutional Planning Committee’s proposals through Parliament, had dissolved. Fr Momis, the CPC leader and his Bougainvillean colleague, Raphael Bele, had resigned their seats in 1976 in protest at the central government’s handling of the Bougainville issue. The secessionists, however, appeared placated by the introduction of Provincial Government. Papua Besena’s unilateral declaration of independence in March 1975 had amounted only to a symbolic protest, but its representatives, Josephine Abaijah and James Mopio remained in Parliament. Early in 1976 Prime Minister Somare had dismissed two National Party ministers, Iambakey Okuk (Transport) and Thomas Kavali (Lands) over their accusation that Somare had been “dictatorial” in his approach to portfolio allocations. In the final session of the 1975-77 National Parliament held in February-March, the attention of most MPs was focussed on their campaigns. Tore Lokoloko, the UP member for Kerema, was elected to succeed Sir John Guise as Governor General; Sir John having resigned to re-enter the political arena. Former Minister, Okuk,

who had attempted to rally a “Highlands bloc” of MPs, provided most of the criticism from the opposition benches. Perhaps surprisingly the political party concept again came in for criticism by MPs from a variety of viewpoints.¹⁴ Most, however, emphasised the “divisive” nature of party politics.

Public awareness of the impending election varied throughout the country. In some parts people only realised that an election was being held when the polling team arrived, but the overall turnout of voters (62 per cent) was consistent with previous elections. The pro-government *Post-Courier* gave the campaigning wide coverage and the elections attracted considerable interest from foreign embassy staff, with the Australian High Commission being particularly interested in the outcome. For a time early in the year it appeared that the UP had a chance of winning power — an impression supported by a seeming indifference to Pangu, of public criticism of ministerial performance, and of disillusionment among Port Moresby-based public servants with a “tired government”. On a short tour of parts of the country prior to polling it appeared, to this writer at least, that the popularity of Somare was widespread; the UP leadership was divided; no substantial criticism of the government had crystallised; and that the advantages of incumbency in terms of patronage would enable the governing parties to attract a larger number of the uncommitted candidates (should they win) than would the opposition.

The Electoral Act had been amended for these elections. First-past-the-post voting replaced the optional preferential system, and absentee voters were now required to vote in their place of residence. The voting age remained at 18, although candidates had to be at least 25 years of age. Approximately one and a half million people were eligible to vote, but voting was not compulsory. Electoral boundaries had been revised providing for 89 Open seats (an increase of nine) based roughly on a population of 30,000. The twenty Provincial seats based on the old administrative divisions and now Provinces, were retained. The Papuan region was allocated 24 seats; the Highlands region, 39; the New Guinea coastal region, 29; and the New Guinea islands, 17.

Polling was delayed from May to June largely as a result of the Electoral Commission’s difficulties in compiling the rolls. Few census patrols had been conducted in the intervening years and, as James Mileng, the Electoral Commissioner, correctly pointed out, Parliament itself contributed to the delay by rejecting the proposed boundary distribution earlier in the year. Polling was conducted quite smoothly despite the omission of candidates’ photographs from ballot papers in all but 19 electorates.

Candidates and Campaigns

A total of 881 candidates stood for the 109 seats (611 candidates for 100 seats in 1972) and they included about 80 public servants some of whom had held senior positions. The socio-economic characteristics of candidates differed somewhat from those of previous elections. In part these differences reflect the social differentiation occurring in PNG. These elections saw the demise of the older-style “big-men” and the rise of the “new men” drawn from the rural and urban elites. The bulk of candidates tended to be “businessmen” of some sort, or to have had a corporation or salaried income as a base (some, in fact, had all three). As well general education levels among candidates were higher than in the past. The tenor of the campaigns varied considerably but in many electorates there was an awareness among the candidates at least that power, privilege, and access to government resources was at stake now that the colonial “referee” had departed. This was the first

national election to be conducted on a “first-part-the-post” system and there was obviously a greater awareness among candidates of the “arithmetic” of the electorate. Candidates and party organisers, particularly in the Highlands, calculated clan voting strengths and in many instances vote-splitting tactics were employed whereby a candidate would persuade (often with financial incentives) other-clan candidates to run, thus reducing the chances of their opponents. There was also wider recognition that a financial resource base and organisation was necessary for success which led many to actively seek out party endorsement. Provincial electorate candidates in some cases linked themselves with Open candidates and campaigned for each other: a method which proved strikingly successful for Fr. Momis and his “ticket” on Bougainville. Many Ministers as would be expected sought maximum publicity for the various activities (official openings, etc.) and some like Boyamo Sali, Minister for Primary Industry, were in a position to regularly announce increases in commodity export prices and to propose small resource projects (e.g. forests) in their electorates. The amounts of money spent on campaigns increased dramatically. In the Chimbu for example the three leading Provincial electorate candidates — Okuk, Kale and Nilkare — each spent an estimated K20,000 or more. Expenditures for all candidates are difficult to assess but most winners probably spent in excess of K4,000 on their campaigns. In contrast however, in areas where early political mobilization had occurred, expenditure appeared considerably lower. The successful Mataungans (although they may be an exception) probably had individual expenditures of less than K1,000.

Political Parties

In the intervening years between elections party organizations had generally atrophied. None had attempted to build a mass base and such organisation as existed was dominated by a core of leaders and officials in Port Moresby. The only significant development had been their entry into business — usually real estate — with the aim of generating an on-going source of funds. The lack of grass-roots organization meant that parties pre-selected candidates in an *ad hoc* manner with party officials attempting to “spot” likely winners with large clan bases. Parties, however, had a more significant impact on these elections than in the past. Pangu, PPP and UP endorsed 295 candidates (144 of 611 in 1972) and had reached private “agreements” with many others should they win. Party “labels” were more widely known throughout and although the concept of parties had not penetrated to the villages many candidates were aware of their significance both in terms of the financial support they could offer and their linkage role at the national parliamentary level. There were more direct contests between endorsed party candidates than occurred in 1972; the “fear” of party attachment noted in previous elections having largely dissipated. Disputants in local level conflicts on occasions adopted national party labels — a feature not uncharacteristic of polities without a developed party system.

In the months prior to the elections all parties produced platforms which reflected a clear convergence of ideology and policy.¹⁵ They were bland documents all emphasising rural development programmes; foreign investment to stimulate industry and mineral resource projects; extension of road and transport infrastructure; more education; law and order; and the maintenance of stable government. Despite claims by Pangu officials after the elections that policy differences with the PPP had to be ironed out, the only discernible differences appeared to be Pangu’s slightly more cautious

approach to foreign investment (e.g. investment “which truly benefits the people”, compared with the PPP’s “appropriate incentives” and returns for investors and “reasonable royalties” for the people). The PPP was also less emphatic about decentralization and it urged PNG’s active co-operation with ASEAN. The UP platform was little different in substance but was critical of the government on a number of points urging changes in the Electoral Act; a four-year parliamentary term; a Royal Commission into the public service; abolition of political appointments to the public service; a re-organization of the Education Department; and lower-cost embassies. One novel suggestion, that is for the UP, was for the establishment of state farms. Papua Besena’s brief platform was interesting for the fact that no mention was made of separation from New Guinea although it was implicit in advertisements. Besena had three slogans: “Justice” the thrust of which was connected with the return of alienated land; “Integrity”, a critique of governmental and ministerial extravagance; and “Development” which tended to emphasize the problems of urban Port Moresby. The Country Party produced a Ten-Point Plan which was actually a regurgitation of the government’s Eight Point Plan of 1973.

“*Sanap Wantaim Somare*”. (Stand with or support Somare). Pangu’s campaign was premised on the popularity of the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister and his organisers toured the country rejuvenating branches where they had once existed and endorsing candidates whose chances looked good. Policy issues were rarely discussed although some play was made of the symbolic achievements of the government: self-government, independence, Air Niugini, and the new currency. Pangu endorsed 82 candidates and made a determined push into the Highlands. Advertisements in the *Port-Courier* urged those who desired Somare to remain as Prime Minister to vote for Pangu candidates. In complete contrast to Pangu’s campaign expenditure in 1972, its 1977 campaign cost in excess of K200,000, financed largely by expatriate business interests and by a mortgage on party-owned real estate.¹⁶

Papa Bilong Kina na Toea. (Father of PNG’s currency). Although less explicitly based on the personality of its leader the PPP’s image and appeal nevertheless derived from Julius Chan’s reputation as the most able minister in the government. His ability to organise a tightly-knit, disciplined party and his power to dispense patronage was an obvious factor in attracting candidates, particularly for the many public servants who sought PPP endorsement. Chan toured extensively and candidates were equipped with loud hailers, cassette recorders with messages from the leader, and pamphlets. The estimated cost of the PPP campaign was K100,000. The party maintained its slogan of “strong, stable, progressive government” but again candidates concerned themselves with local issues. The PPP endorsed 68 candidates concentrating mainly on the New Guinea Islands’ and mainland Provinces and other select areas such as the Southern Highlands and Milne Bay.

“*Taim nau — sensim gavman — makim United Party*”. (It’s time — change the government — vote United Party). Throughout much of the campaign period there was some enthusiasm about the UP’s chances. Despite the lack of overt policy differences the UP appeared to have acquired a “radical” wing in the form of young educated candidates critical of government and who had had no previous attachment to the planter-inspired UP. Sir Tei campaigned extensively throughout the country in support of his candidates. One ploy thought to be effective was to publicize the alleged K43 million discrepancy in government spending.¹⁷

But the parliamentary wing of UP for some time had been seriously divided

into at least three camps. Members tended to group themselves around either Sir Tei or his deputy Paul Langro with smaller support for Anton Parao. At the UP's convention at Lae in March, Parao and an Engan, Kakarya, were expelled from the party. The divisions arose over a dispute between Sir Tei and Parao (which resulted in a court decision that Parao pay K10,000 in defamation costs) and over dissatisfaction with Sir Tei's leadership. Party dissidents suggested that Sir Tei lacked the ability and confidence to become Prime Minister and he was less interested in providing an alternative to the government than in supporting it. Sir Tei's campaign was, in fact, rather curious. He often publicly expressed satisfaction with Somare's leadership and declared relatively unqualified support for the government. The power struggle within the party was obvious for often immediately after Sir Tei had spoken Okuk would then roundly condemn the "Somare — Chan regime". Party backbenchers had become discontented with their opposition role. "Mi les long askim kwestin" (I'm tired of (simply) asking questions), was a common complaint. A complaint which signified not necessarily a desire for the UP to win but for the MP to be in government led by whichever party. In addition the UP had to cope with members like Angmai Bilas (Madang) who declared his support for Somare as Prime Minister but urged voters to vote for him as a UP man.

Once self-government and independence had become non-issues there was little left for the UP to oppose. The expatriate backers of the party in 1972 had either withdrawn from overt politics or switched their financial support to Pangu. The UP campaign cost an estimated K100,000 but unlike the other parties it had some difficulty in raising finance. It endorsed 145 candidates permitting multiple endorsements in Highlands seats — a strategy designed to net as many winners as possible.

"*Papua Dainai, Mauri Dainai, Tano Dainai*". (For Papua, our way of life, our country). Papua Besena was hopeful of winning 14 or more seats in Papua. Its campaign was built around Josephine Abaijah's appeal to a specifically Papuan sentiment and identity, but organisationally it was even less viable than the other parties. An attempt by Besena candidates and sympathisers to formalize the movement by adopting a constitution was thwarted by Miss Abaijah. She insists that Papua Besena is a "movement" and her attitude to its leadership and organisation is decidedly charismatic. In a *Post-Courier* article she wrote:

"The basic organisational structure of Papua Besena is not based on that of a foreign political party in a Westminster system of government. It is based on an old and very efficient traditional Papuan social structure of "fission and fusion" or coming together and drawing apart as each circumstance arises.

If a person wants to establish some Papua Besena organisation or conduct some Papua Besena activity he can call it any name he likes and the leaders of Papua Besena will support it.

Papua Besena comes together. If the organisation happens to become a power base of individual (sic) or for promoting interests or activities contrary to the principles of Papua Besena then we draw apart. Nobody is injured, nobody is hurt and nobody is disgraced.

It is a strict policy of Papua Besena that leadership must arise where it will throughout Papuan society and leaders must never be appointed. Leadership may assert itself in any form in any situation."¹⁸

In the event Besena ran a low-key campaign and fielded a "collection" of candidates although some refused "endorsement".

The Mataungan Association, revived for the East New Britain PG elections in May, overcame a split in its leadership and ran its three incumbent MP's — Kaputin, Kereku, and Tammur. Kaputin was not initially re-endorsed but later regained his place on the ticket. Mataungan (and particularly Kaputin's) chances were enhanced by the announcements of K128,000 profit for its business arm, the New Guinea Development Corporation, and a loss of K200,000 for its rival, the New Guinea Islands Produce Company.¹⁹

Country Party candidates campaigned almost exclusively in the Eastern Highlands, while the National Party by time of the elections had all but dissolved.

Results and Coalition Formation

The composition of the new Parliament was substantially different from that of the old. Education levels of MPs was generally higher with 38 per cent having at least completed secondary schooling compared with 19 per cent in 1972. The number of MPs with no formal schooling fell from 25 per cent to 13 per cent. The average age of MPs was also lower with 50 per cent falling in the age range of 26-35 compared with 42 per cent in that age bracket in the previous Parliament. A core of party stalwarts were returned but many incumbents were dumped heavily. Of the 91 MPs who sought re-election only 35 were returned reflecting in large part Members' loss of touch with their electorates and their inability to deliver the goods and, in lesser part, the redistribution and the new voting system. The number of expatriates (now naturalized citizens) in Parliament declined from nine to three.

There were some significant individual results. Michael Somare won his East Sepik Provincial seat collecting a massive 87% of the vote. Julius Chan, thought at one stage to be in trouble, polled 56% of the vote in Namatani. Sir Tei Abal, also considered to be under pressure won with 49% in Wabag. Two senior Pangu men Barry Holloway (Eastern Highlands) and Boyamo Sali (Morobe) opposed by two of the young "new men" of the UP, Kimoro Vira and Utula Samana, won with votes of 64% and 69% respectively. In Bougainville Fr. Momis defeated Leo Hannett by 52% of the vote to 33%, and his "ticket" which had the tacit support of the PG won the other three seats. Former Foreign Minister, Sir Maori Kiki, committed political suicide by contesting against Josephine Abaijah who outpolled him by two to one. John Middleton (Sumkar) an influential UP frontbencher managed only 24% of the vote. Sinake Giregire, UP leader, lost his seat with 19% of the vote. A number of incumbents met very heavy defeat. Ninkama Bomai (Gumine), for example, a member of all previous Parliaments polled only 6% in his electorate. Three of the nine women candidates, Miss Abaijah, Mrs. Rooney (Manus) and Mrs. Clowes (Middle Fly) were successful.

The post-election scene, however, belonged to the parties and their leaders. In the lobbying for power which followed the counting Pangu and PPP operated from a position of strength. Of the 109 winners, 76 had been endorsed by parties or movements and 48 of them were aligned with the coalition. Somare and Chan reaffirmed their partnership agreeing that Chan should become Deputy Prime Minister and that portfolios would be distributed, 6 PPP, 9 Pangu and 3 for Pangu-independents.²⁰ The major problem as they saw it was to obtain wide regional representation in the Ministry. Pangu toyed with the idea of a "grand coalition" and, in fact, offered Sir Tei two ministries provided he delivered 14 MP's to the government. The UP rejected this and when the "National Alliance" was

announced with Sir John Guise as its leader the division hardened. Somare was particularly antagonistic to Guise having campaigned against him in Milne Bay. Guise, however, extracted a statement from Chan to the effect that he (Guise) was a great national leader. The entry of the Alliance for Progress and Regional Development onto the scene posed two problems for Pangu: it tended to reinforce regionalist sentiment; and it appeared to split Fr. Momis, whom Pangu was anxious to have in the cabinet, from the coalition. Momis, however, was wary of Guise's intention to hold the Provincial Affairs portfolio himself, and when both he and Kaputin realised the numbers were with the coalition decided to support it.

The vote for the Prime Ministership on 9 August revealed the following support for Somare and Guise:

Table 2 Vote for the Prime Ministership

| <i>Somare</i> | | <i>Guise</i> | |
|---------------|----|--------------|----|
| Pangu | 38 | United Party | 25 |
| PPP | 19 | Independents | 5 |
| Independents | 10 | Papua Besena | 6 |
| United Party | 2 | Total | 36 |
| Total | 69 | | |

The independents voting for Somare included the four Bougainvilleans, two Mataungans, two United Party members who crossed the floor, and four Western Highlands MP's who decided to join the coalition. The independents voting for Guise included Guise himself, Okuk, Pondros, Edimani and Mrs. Clowes. The three-non-voters were Dibela (Speaker), Kaputin who abstained, and Urekit who was absent.

Party strengths in the new Parliament (adjusted figures to include all 109 seats) were calculated as follows:

Table 3 Party Strengths in New Parliament

| <i>Government</i> | | <i>Opposition</i> | |
|-------------------|----|-------------------|----|
| Pangu | 38 | United Party | 27 |
| PPP | 20 | Independents | 6 |
| Independents | 11 | Papua Besena | 7 |
| Total | 69 | Total | 40 |

The following Table (Table IV) shows basic party strengths and government — opposition support at three times over the past five years: April 1972, when the National Coalition was formed; March 1977, the last session of Parliament; and August, 1977, the first session of the new Parliament. The Table of course does not reveal the fluidity of voting particularly in the pre-independence period when the government came close to defeat nor does it show the personalities who switched parties during the life of old Parliament. Party strength figures are based on calculations by party and legislative officials. Members crossed the floor in both directions on many issues.

Table 4
Government — Opposition Support by Parties, 1972-77

| | APRIL 1972 (100 seats) | MARCH 1977 (102 seats) | AUGUST 1977 (109 seats) |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>Government</i> | | | |
| Pangu | 24 | 25 | 38 |
| PPP | 10 | 16 | 20 |
| Independent | 12 | 7 | 9 |
| MA | 3 | 3 | 2 ⁽³⁾ |
| National ⁽¹⁾ | 7 | 3 | — ⁽⁴⁾ |
| (Total Government) | (54) | (54) | (69) |
| <i>Opposition</i> | | | |
| United | 42 | 32 | 27 |
| Country ⁽²⁾ | — | 10 | 1 ⁽⁵⁾ |
| National | — | 3 | 1 ⁽⁶⁾ |
| Independent | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Papua Besena | 1 | 2 | 7 |
| (Total Opposition) | (46) | (48) | (40) |

Notes: (1) National Party split early in 1976 with the expulsion of Okuk and Kavali from the Ministry.

(2) Country Party was formed in May, 1974.

(3) Kaputin, still MA, abstained from voting in election for PM, but supported the government.

(4) Kavali, once leader of National party, now described himself as “pro-Pangu independent”

(5) Pondros

(6) Okuk

The most obvious result of these elections has been the rise in strength of the two major governing parties and the decline of the United Party. The explanation for this can be reduced to five factors; (1) the favourable political and economic climate which has prevailed since the government took office in 1972; (2) the notion among MP's that being “with the government” is essential to access to goods, services and rewards; (3) the absence of a credible alternative; (4) the popularity of Somare and Chan (i.e. the personality factor); and (5) sound patronage politicking by those two leaders.

The regional representation of the government was now quite wide — the only Provinces in which it had minimal support were Enga, National Capital, and Central. Pangu, in addition to its support bases in Morobe and East Sepik, improved its membership in West Sepik, Madang, Chimbu and, quite strikingly in the Eastern Highlands. With the two Mataungans, Tammur and Kereku, and Kavali and three Western Highland MP's joining Pangu as pro-Pangu independents its strength was considerable. Pangu, however, lost ground in Papua notably with the loss of three Ministers — Kiki, Rea and Taureka. The PPP improved its membership in the Papuan Provinces of Milne Bay and Western and gained surprising support from the Southern Highlands where Chan had assiduously cultivated Area Authority members.

The United Party lost ground in Madang, West Sepik, Chimbu and the Eastern and Southern Highlands. It was now more obviously a Highlands based

party. Papua Besena won all but two of the eight seats in the National Capital and Central Provinces, but, despite considerable support, failed to make electoral ground in the rest of Papua.

The new government settled into office quickly and announced that, since it had received popular endorsement, there would be no change in its approach to policy. That approach had been essentially one of “managing” an inherited political and economic framework rather than “reforming” it. The one major departure made since independence was that of decentralisation which received considerable impetus late in 1977 with the appointment of Fr. Momis to that portfolio. The institutional stresses likely to flow from the full elaboration of this policy are bound to occupy bureaucrats and politicians well into the next decade. In an attempt to foster unity and a broader support base Prime Minister Somare appointed at least one Minister to his cabinet from each province. That move taken together with the government’s substantially increased majority, however, did not necessarily increase its security in office. The fluidity of parliamentary alliances, the potential for personality disputes and conflict over particular policies, together with pressures arising from the condition of economic dependence, lent a degree of fragility to an apparently stable, liberal democratic system.

The 1977 Election Study

The study of an election in a rapidly changing socio-political environment cannot provide a comprehensive view of a country’s power structure and political system. It can, however, offer insights into the nature and character of the political process. The following chapters in this volume concentrate largely on electoral behaviour in various part of PNG, but they also illustrate some of the more general features of PNG politics. In particular they provide indicators of the country’s evolving political style.

The rise of political party activity at the parliamentary level provided something of a focus for most participants in the study. The parties which contested the elections emerged essentially as parliamentary factions in the late 1960’s and early 1970’s. With the partial exception of Pangu, none had developed a mass base of popular support nor had they developed a substantial extra-parliamentary organisation. Within Parliament, few parties could exercise discipline over their supporters and the switching of sides by individual MPs was a frequent phenomenon. Six months prior to these elections all parties established an electoral machine of some sort, raised finance, and attempted to pre-select candidates.

There is little doubt that parties had had some impact on the election in that the ‘names’ of parties were more widely known throughout the community, party endorsement was sought by candidates, and in some electorates the contest was conducted between clearly identified party candidates (Ballard ch 9). Party endorsement, however, was often more one of convenience than of commitment to a philosophy, platform, or leader. Some candidates developed a rudimentary form of organisation by using *komiti*, or electoral agents, to foster support, but the commitment of these *komiti* was directed largely to the candidate and not the party.

Most of the studies in this volume show that parties had very little impact at all on the voter. Goode (ch 7), in his study of a “village view” of the election, shows that neither parties nor national issues were of concern to the voters. Goode suggests that villagers evaluate candidates in terms of the language group to which they belong; residential proximity; maturity; political and

educational experience; kinship linkages; the place and origin of the candidate's wife or wives; and their perceived honesty and integrity. Most of these findings are supported by other studies and are borne out by the tables in the chapters by Standish (ch 5) and Rooney (ch 16), which show the location of voting support for candidates. There was some evidence that secondary associations, for example development associations, were useful as vote mobilising agencies (Isana ch 15), but, in general, elections remain very much local level contests between candidates who draw their voting support from clan or personal loyalties (Westermarck ch 8).

A partial exception to this pattern is perhaps found in the urban areas with more heterogeneous populations (Premdas and Steves ch 2, Adams ch 11). Premdas and Steeves argue that, in one Port Moresby electorate, the contest was essentially one of competing party candidates, but obviously personality and other linkage factors were of considerable importance to the outcome. On present indications PNG's multi-party "system" is likely to continue to operate in weak and spasmodic fashion, although the party which attempts to build an electoral base in the intervening years between elections could reap considerable benefit.

The prize of political office attracted a field of 881 candidates which represented a 44% increase over the number contesting in 1972. This increase was largely due to the fact that, with independence, political power was at stake, and the fact that the first-past-the-post voting system gave candidates with a reasonably strong clan base a chance of winning. Candidates generally had attained higher levels of education and more importantly had demonstrated some skills in the "modern" economic sector. Candidates often emphasised that they were men of "bisnis" and many of the field reports indicated that voters were impressed by this claim. Good and Donaldson (ch 6) provide an interesting exception to this pattern. In their chapter which focusses more broadly on the political economy of the Eastern Highlands than on the electoral contests, they note that the more successful rural businessmen ("rural capitalists") declined to enter the political fray. The attitude of these men is summed up in the *pidgin* expression: "Maski, mi no laik dispela kain pilai — bisnis tasol". (Forget (politics), I don't like this game — business interests are sufficient).

A better-than-average economic base and a "modern" image, however, was no sure guarantee of success. The roots of local-level politics, of inter- and intra-clan disputes, of relative status, of social obligations met or unmet and of personal jealousies, run deep, posing considerable hazards for candidates. In an unpublished field report on the Baiyer-Mul electorate in the Western Highlands, Absalom Paypowa described the situation confronting a candidate with a potentially strong support base.²¹ This candidate faced problems within his extended family particularly over his step-brothers' claim to their father's land. The unpopularity of his two elder brothers, one of whom had been a village court magistrate and the other president of the local government council, also posed problems in his campaign. In the event the candidate ran second to another from a more populous part of the electorate, re-inforcing the general point that, despite intra-clan tensions, a candidate nevertheless carries the weight of his kin.

Styles of campaigning varied throughout the country, from the frenetic barnstorming approach by Okuk in the highly volatile Simbu Province (Standish ch 5) to the quieter, consensual, grass-roots approach by many candidates in the lowlands and islands (Townsend and Wamma ch 12,

Nyameye ch 13), Winnett and May (ch 14, Rooney ch 16). In areas where pre-independence mobilisation had occurred as in the Gazelle Peninsula, Bougainville and the Central Province of Papua, leaders of those movements were well known and all polled well. For example the Mataungan Association returned its three MPs, the Bougainville secession movement (despite the schism between Hannett and Momis) made a clean sweep of all four seats, and in the Central Province Papua Besena captured seven of the nine seats (Premdas and Steeves ch 3), and was later to win an eighth in a by-election. In areas where previous mobilization had not occurred, candidates who covered much of their electorates and who “showed their face” to voters scored more heavily than others (Jackson ch 4).

Issues were rarely canvassed by candidates, nor was it expected of them by voters. Voters were more concerned to “see the face” of the candidate and to attempt to judge his character rather than be harangued by candidates and be drawn into discussions of policies. While we have noted the importance of a loyal clan base to electoral success, patronage, in the form of money, gifts, feasts, beer, etc., which incurs at least some temporary obligations on the “clients” or recipients of such favours, is an increasingly important method of securing support. Standish’s chapter (ch 5), in particular, highlights this mode of vote mobilisation which may well become a standard pattern in future elections.

One recurring theme in the studies is the question of the legitimacy or acceptability of both the electoral process and the representative system. Since 1964 national elections have been conducted fairly, democratically, and in accordance with constitutional requirements.²² Voters’ experience with national elections has been consolidated by elections for local government councils and more recently for provincial governments. In this election Courts of Disputed Returns deliberated on nine challenges to the results and upheld five, ordering a re-election in each of those cases. The courts were particularly concerned to disqualify candidates who, in their opinion, had exercised “undue influence” (for example, threats of imprisonment or fines made by candidates to their constituents) over the voters.

Significantly, voting turnout was high in all electorates, with an overall turnout of 62 per cent. Given the absence of compulsory voting and the often difficult terrain over which polls are conducted, this figure appears to indicate a broad acceptance of the electoral process. But there are three points raised in the study which tend to take the gloss off this picture (Standish ch 5, Sillitoe Ch 10, Townsend and Wamma ch 12). In Simbu, Standish notes, many losing candidates refused to accept the outcome of the ballot and the post-election scene was quite acrimonious. Such behaviour, he suggests, could lead not only to disenchantment with the system, but to possible intimidatory tactics, both of voters and polling officials, in future elections. Sillitoe makes the point that in less developed regions an election is something of a ritual, and voters generally have little understanding of either the role of an MP or of the connection between the election, the work of an MP and the Parliament in Port Moresby. Townsend and Wamma note a degree of disenchantment, indifference, and even anger towards elections and politics: “em i samting belong ol taun man tasol”.

The high turnover of incumbents in PNG elections also reflects both on the legitimacy of the political process and on voters’ expectations. In these elections 35 of the 91 MPs who re-contested were successful, compared with 38 of 73 in 1972, and 23 of 46 in 1968. While it may be considered by some that

unstable voting patterns and a consequent loss of continuity in parliamentary experience represents something of a legitimacy crisis, others might well consider that a turnover of 60 per cent of incumbents represents a continuing interest and awareness on the part of voters. Many voters' expectations of their MPs appear to be geared toward "distributive" politics. In most parts of the country voters do expect some return or delivery of goods from their MPs. All of the studies highlight the question uppermost in voters' minds: "What has he done for us?" With the apparent decline in a government "presence" in rural electorates since the mid-1970's it could be expected that sitting MPs will be under even greater pressure to "deliver" over the next five years and a style of "pork-barrel" politics can be expected to increase in the legislature. As well, when Provincial Governments become fully operational the fear of redundancy by national MPs might also enhance this legislative style.

There are, however, some important exceptions to these "distributive" expectations. The only Province in which all sitting MPs were returned was East New Britain where none of the incumbents had overtly reminded constituents of the material benefits procured through their individual effort. In Bougainville where all incumbents were unseated the explanation lies in the question of secession and not in the delivery of goods. All incumbents there were perceived to have been "soft" on the issue of Bougainville's secession, and were replaced by members who had played a major role in the secession movement. In the West Sepik, however, the only other province in which all incumbents were defeated, it does appear that failure to service the electorate was a significant factor. One further point is relevant here. Politicians themselves often argue that being "in government" enhances their chances of greater access to patronage and spoils, and, hopefully, of re-election. In 1977, 50 per cent of government supporters and 60 per cent of opposition supporters in the outgoing parliament were defeated.

Finally, a note on the voting system. The use of the first-part-the-post voting system in these elections had implications both for the representative nature of Parliament and for the style of political campaigning. First-past-the-post voting replaced the optional preferential system used in previous elections on the grounds that it was simpler, and that in these earlier elections the leading candidate was defeated through the distribution of preferences in only a small minority of cases (11 in 1968, 16 in 1972). The 1977 results, however, revealed that seven of the 109 seats were won by candidates obtaining less than 20 per cent of the valid vote, and overall, 42 seats were won by candidates with less than 30 per cent of the vote. None of the election studies yield evidence of voter disenchantment with this lack of "representativeness," but some point to other consequences of first-past-the-post voting. The most important was that first-past-the-post led to vote-splitting tactics which in turn heightened tension between clans and groups and in some cases polarized electorates to the point of violent conflict. Although more a feature of Highlands electorates than other parts of the country, this situation contrasted markedly with campaigning styles in previous elections where opposing candidates often toured their electorates together urging voters to cast preferences. A continuation of such aggressive campaigning in future elections could well weaken the credibility of the electoral system.

In summary, the 1977 elections were characterised by as much continuity as change. Political parties remained relatively weak, non-integrative institutions. The separatist movements, while still somewhat ambivalent about remaining in the new state, contested the elections and obtained a strong

minority voice in Parliament. The relative affluence of the candidates and elected MPs indicated a further consolidation of the political elite, yet entry into that elite remained relatively open. The resources and strategies employed by candidates in their campaigns were geared primarily toward mobilizing a clan or ethnic vote; the effect being that the elections provided only a temporary form of political participation for the populace at large. The voters' response to both candidates and the system as a whole was pragmatic and characterised by materialist expectations. An attitude persisted among voters that the "government" was still somewhat remote and that, in being entertained by candidates and in casting a vote, they were participating in a kind of political "game". Their willingness to play that "game", however, indicated in some ways a continuing acceptance, rather than salience, of the electoral system. The great issues of nation-building raised in the early 1970's both by the government and the Constitutional Planning Committee, and the underlying relationships between the economy, underdevelopment and future political stability were of little moment in the electoral contest.

The study of the 1968 national elections by Epstein *et al*, was oriented toward a search for indications of the emergence of specifically "national" politics, and of the evolution of ideas and behaviour away from dependence toward autonomy.²³ In the 1972 election study, Stone suggested that the "turning point" in that evolutionary process had been reached with the formation of the first indigenous, national coalition government.²⁴ Politics became national, in fact, through the mobilising activities in 1973 and 1974 of the Constitutional Planning Committee, with the adoption of the Constitution, and with the attainment of independence itself in September 1975. The study of the 1977 elections revealed something of the pattern of post-colonial politics in this new state. That pattern and style of politics is essentially non-ideological, materialist and non-coercive. Cleavages and tensions within the political fabric are approached and resolved, temporarily at least, through accommodation. Candidates, voters, and political leaders alike, all appeared willing to make use of the liberal-democratic forms and institutions adopted at independence.

NOTES

1. Post Courier, 21 July, 1977.
2. Post Courier 10 August. The method used to elect a PM is interesting. The constitution-makers, recognising the weakness of the party system, provided for the election of the PM from the floor of the legislature. To ensure that the PM knew who his supporters were, Standing Orders were amended to provide for an open ballot in which MP's grouped themselves behind the nominees.
3. D. Woolford: *Papua New Guinea: Initiation and Independence*, Uni. of Queensland Press, Brisbane, 1976.
J. Griffin: "Political Chronicle for Papua New Guinea", *Australian Journal of Politics and History* (hereafter *AJPH*) Vol XXII No. 1, April 1976.
4. R. Berry: "Some Observations on the Political Economy of Development in Papua New Guinea: Recent Performance and Future Prospects", *Yagl-Ambu*, Vol 4 No 3, 1977.
5. D. Denoon: "Political Chronicle for Papua New Guinea", *AJPH* Vol XXII, No 3, December 1976.
D. Hegarty: "Political Chronicle for Papua New Guinea", *AJPH*, Vol XXIII, No 1, April 1977.

6. A Amarshi, K. Good, R. Mortimer: *Development and Dependency: The Political Economy of Papua New Guinea*, O.U.P. Melbourne, 1979.
7. D. Townsend: "Local Stresses from International Trade", *Yagl-Ambu*, Vol 4 No 3, 1977.
8. Papua New Guinea: *The Post-Independence National Development Strategy*. Central Planning Office, October, 1976.
9. Charles Lepani: "Planning In Small Dependent Economies — A Case Study of Papua New Guinea", Central Planning Office, April, 1976.
10. Post Courier, 26 April, 1977. The Police and Teachers' Associations negotiated similar agreements.
11. Post Courier, 14 January, 1977
12. Post Courier, 25 and 30 May, 1977.
13. The Torres Strait border issue was also discussed early in 1977 but after passing important legislation concerning "National Sea Boundaries", the government omitted the item from the agenda of discussions with Australian Prime Minister, Fraser, who visited PNG in February. Post Courier, 3 February, 1977.
14. Post Courier, 10 January (Okuk); 17 February (Wabiria), 16 March (Kaputin)
15. For summaries of party platforms, see Post Courier, 7 January (Pangu); 23 February (PPP); 4 April (UP); 2 May (Country Party); 26 May (Papua Besena).
16. The Organic Law prohibiting foreign contributions to party campaign funds had not come into force.
17. An auditor-general's report in mid-1976 pointed to financial mismanagement. The figure was subsequently corrected to K3 million.
18. Post Courier, 16 June, 1977.
19. Post Courier, 18 and 25 March, 1977
20. Somare later enlarged the Ministry (without consulting Chan) to 22, giving each Province representation. Nine Parliamentary Secretaryships were also created.
21. Absalom Paypowa: "The Baiyer-Mul Open Electorate of the Western Highlands Province". Unpublished Ms, June 1977.
22. From an administrative point of view the elections were well conducted. The Common Roll, however, was considerably inaccurate. In most urbanised electorates "Section 141 votes" outnumbered registered voters, and the proportion of these voters was also high in many rural electorates. Section 141 of the Electoral Act allows non-registered persons, who can legitimately claim to have resided in an electorate for six months prior to the poll, to vote. After the poll there were allegations that candidates had transported supporters from outside the electorate in to vote, as well as allegations that some voters had voted twice. The "whisper ballot" also caused some concern with allegations that polling clerks had deliberately marked the wrong candidate. No charges emanated from these allegations, but the Electoral Commission should consider using indelible ink to mark voters, and to upgrade the training of polling officials for future elections.
23. A.L. Epstein, R.S. Parker, Marie Reay (Eds): *The Politics of Dependence: Papua New Guinea 1968*. A.N.U. Press, Canberra, 1971.
24. David Stone (ed): *Prelude to Self-Government: Electoral Politics in Papua New Guinea 1972*, UPNG and ANU, Canberra, 1976.

Chapter 2

PARTIES AND THE ELECTIONS: A CASE STUDY OF THE MORESBY NORTH-EAST OPEN ELECTORATE

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Since World War II most colonies in Africa and Asia achieved their independence through the mechanism of a political party. Manned by westernised elites, "the parties of independence" mobilised mass support pressuring the imperial powers to relinquish control to an indigenous government.¹ A review of their record as agents for delivering the rewards of modernization and promoting national unity shows a mixed performance. Generally, these parties, at first mass-based and democratic, resorted to political repression of their opponents, neglected their foundation grassroots, and virtually became the symbols of ethnic favoritism, corruption, and divisiveness.² Their mantle of legitimacy was quickly dissipated as they resorted to varieties of authoritarian rule under pressure of coping simultaneously with increased popular demands for higher standards of living, but with a weak and under-developed economic base to meet these needs. Within ten years, many of the liberated Third World Countries would have proceeded full circle moving from colonial domination by alien power to dictatorial repression by an indigenous elite. Soon thereafter another stage was attained. The military seized power inaugurating a cycle of civilian and military exchanges in controlling the government.

This picture is not exactly uniform for every case, but points generally to a pattern of Third World politics in which the promise of plenty and popular participation by an independence movement spearheaded by a mass based party progressively deteriorates into a form of government in which political instability, disunity, and repression are its most evident characteristics. Even where the military seizes power, it may in time sponsor its own party to restore a semblance legitimate civilian democratic rule while preserving its role as final arbiter in the resolution of political conflicts. In this event, the party apparatus is viewed cynically as a democratic expedient to link the will of the people with uncontroversial decisions of government. However, the perverse use of the party institution to promote elitist power does not negate the potential of political parties, where they are massbased and democratically composed, to mobilise popular sentiment for national development and unity.³ It is in this mystique that countries which have come late to the anti-colonial liberation process, such as Papua New Guinea, continue to be obsessed with parties and political development. The full cycle of party evolution from a force for national independence, unity, and modernization, to an agent of repression and disunity is practically ignored. The emergence of a full-fledged party system for the liberation newcomers is viewed positively.

In the late 1960s when the first meaningful impulse towards national

autonomy gained a glimmer of hope in Papua New Guinea (PNG), much political discussion surrounded the emergence of parties both as a sign of political maturity and an agent of accelerated political change.⁴ After ten years of experimentation, a fairly stable competitive party system emerged at the national level in PNG. The Australians who as late as the mid 1960s had anticipated that PNG would not attain full sovereignty until the end of the century were pressured by the U.N. Trusteeship Council and an embryonic nationalist group to speed up the process of devolving decision-making to the indigenous people.⁵ From a tardy and reluctant start, the Australians almost abruptly relinquished control so that by the end of 1973 internal self-government was granted and full independence followed two years later in September, 1975.⁶

The parties that emerged to facilitate this speedy process had a history of five years or less. By the 1972 elections, they had assumed a minimal organizational form at the national and headquarters level, but generally failed to penetrate to the grassroots. The Papua New Guinean political elites were for the most part locally educated unlike their foreign-educated African and Asian counterparts. The country's 700 linguistic groups remained mostly village-based, parochial, illiterate, and unaware of the political transformation occurring in their name. Without an experienced leadership and adequately developed party system, linkages between PNG's nearly three million citizens and the new national government were weak, sporadic, or absent. In most regions, where the party was introduced, it was viewed as an object of distrust. Conservative expatriate planters and businessmen fostered an atmosphere of fear regarding political parties associating them in the popular mind with cargo cults, anarchy, communism, and the mass departure of Europeans.

In PNG, as the prospect of early self-government appeared inevitable,⁷ public and official discussion of party development became frequent. Fears were expressed that without a stable party system supported by a significant part of the population, the objectives of national unity, mobilization, and modernization would not eventuate. Many political observers felt that it was important that parties develop and become embedded as a functional part of the parliamentary apparatus that was quickly being transferred to the country. To indigenous leaders and expatriate administrators alike the development of parties, party competition, and party government was viewed as crucial for a stable and democratic future. To them, little thought was given to the fate and function of parties in the older liberated African and Asian countries. Great hope was attached to the salutary effects attributed to the evolution of a competitive party system, national in scope, as a means of promoting national unity and modernization. Not any kind of party system was desired, certainly not one based on ethnic cleavages and parochial interests.⁸ PNG's ethnic fragmentation stood as a chief obstacle of development. A party system anchored among a broad cross-section of the populace could integrate the state and establish a vital pre-condition for economic development.

Up until the 1977 general elections in PNG, only half of the expectations regarding the emergence of the particular type of party system had evolved. That half was a competitive, fairly stable party system mainly expressed at the national level. What was still to be achieved was the component that dealt with a multi-ethnic cross-section membership so that the parties could project a national image and recruit supporters for reasons other than ethnic, linguistic, or regional sentiments. Previous elections in PNG have provided an arena for parties to test their sources of support. The record of all the parties to date had

been distressing in this regard. Generally, they obtained support from a population that responded most sensitively to the ethnic and regional affiliation of candidates.⁹ The party itself had proven itself an insignificant determinant of voter preference. This was so in spite of the fact that the major parties claimed multi-ethnic support, advocated regionally balanced programs, and assiduously attempted to project a cross-national image.

The results of the general elections of 1977, the first since independence, confirmed the general pattern that primordial factors determine voter preference.¹⁰ Party and programmatic factors continue to play a negligible role. Unless the other half of the party formula is met, it would seem that parties might not be able to fulfil the critical function of promoting national unity. If that is so, then the government faces frustrations emanating from challenges to its authority. Its legitimacy as a representative of a cross-section of the people will be in doubt. From this eventuality, in turn, will be generated attempts at non-cooperation, regional fragmentation, secession etc. Much of this has already started in PNG.¹¹ Scarce funds vitally needed for economic development are being expended on maintaining basic political order. This is only the first step in the direction that points to a deterioration in the evolution of the political system where increasingly frustrated decision-makers turn to authoritarian methods to preserve political stability and their power. The competitive multi-party system may itself fall prey to these events being blamed for instigating agitation and causing disunity. A one-party system dominated by one group may replace it altering the character of the political system. The role of the party thereafter is likely to be less integrative succumbing to ethnic or regional favoritism, repression, and neglect of the party grassroots. The rest of the cycle is familiar.

In PNG, the prevailing competitive multi-party system has not yet been altered in favor of a one-party system although calls for the abolition of party competition in the name of facilitating national consensus-building have been frequent.¹² We hold no brief in support of either a one-party or multi-party system. Both systems can be based on primordial cleavages such as race, religion, or ethnicity, thereby promoting disunity and waste of resources. What is required is a party system — one, two, or multi — which elicits support for economic and achievement factors drawing on a membership that cuts across divisive primordial lines organizing and mobilizing cross-nation support for its programs. We believe that we have found in PNG a single most important case in the 1977 elections where a multi-party contest based essentially on non-primordial programs occurred. The electorate in question is the Moresby North-East electorate. We believe that an analysis of this case shows that in PNG an election was fought out for the first time by political parties in which votes were cast because of economic and performance factors. In this case, we shall show the sorts of social and economic conditions that must prevail before non-ethnic party competition can occur. We do not believe that the conditions that we point to are the only ones for such an eventuality. But the factors at play clearly suggest that a party system based on pragmatic appeals can emerge in PNG, if only in a number of electorates. The lessons to be learnt and insights to be gained from this case may be instructive for public policy. If taken seriously, they can conceivably provide an optimistic beginning in the construction of conditions for a party system that can serve national unity.

The Emergence of a Party System in PNG

In PNG, popularly-based political parties emerged as a consequence of the

liberalization of the franchise. In 1964, the first national general elections were held under universal adult suffrage. Parties, however, did not develop up to this point; the 1964 elections were contested by individual independent candidates from constituency to constituency. In this very unusual partyless situation, political responsibility at the legislative level was difficult to establish. The newly elected indigenous members of the House of Assembly, although most were illiterate and did not speak English, soon realised that some sort of parliamentary grouping was necessary to bring coherence and order to parliamentary politics. Also, since a number of these legislators would return to their electorates to seek re-election, the need was felt for an extra parliamentary device to link activities in the House of Assembly with various interests in their constituencies. Several attempts were made to form both parliamentary and extra-parliamentary parties but they all failed partly because of the inexperience of the initiators and partly because of the determined efforts by certain conservative expatriate elements to discourage the formation of parties since they perceived them as hastening the stages towards self-government. It was not until 1967 in anticipation of the 1968 elections that the first successful attempt would be launched by a combination of indigenous persons and sympathetic expatriates to form a popularly based party. This was the Pangu Pati which was led by Maori Kiki, Michael Somare, Tony Voutas, among others. The Pangu Pati was bold, for it demanded early self-government with a target date explicitly stated. The Pangu Pati won several seats in the House of Assembly and maintained a cohesive vocal presence in the backbenches. Its main opponent called themselves the Independent Members Group, refusing to use the label "party" as its collective designation.

Internal divisions and conflicting interests within the Independent Members' Group led to its disintegration. From it sprang three groups in 1971 each calling itself a party. The major splinter was called the United Party composed of the most conservative elements and based largely in the New Guinea Highlands. A second small progressive splinter group emerged calling itself the Peoples' Progress Party, while the smallest splinter called itself the National Party.

Hence, in the 1972 elections, PNG had for the first time a number of political parties which entered the electoral race. The outcome was astounding. While party label or affiliation was rarely displayed during the electoral contest, when the elected candidates met in Port Moresby all but a tiny handful associated themselves with one of the four parties. To be sure, many for the first time adopted a party label however loosely, but many more had party sympathies all along. However, no single party commanded a majority. The United Party had the largest bloc and took it for granted that it would form the next government. This however was monumental miscalculation since while its leaders bickered among themselves about the form of the next government, the Pangu Pati, Peoples' Progress Party, the National Party, and a number of independents decided to coalesce and form the next government.

From the 1972 elections, then, emerged a rudimentary party system and a party government. The governing coalition was led by Pangu's Leader Michael Somare assisted by Julius Chan, leader of the PPP, Thomas Kavali leader of the National Party, and Dr. John Guise, leader of a small group of independent legislators. The Opposition was the United Party led at first by Tei Abal, then subsequently by Mathias Toliman. For nearly five years, the coalition parties survived as a stabilising element in PNG politics. In the meanwhile, the country successfully weathered through two critical phases: first self-

government in December 1973, and independence in September 1975.

In the context of our discussion, it is important to underline that while parties and party government became a fact of PNG life, the party system was weakly anchored by grassroots support. None of the parties had more than skeletal staff at headquarters in Port Moresby during the 1972-1977 period. Just as significantly, each of the party was associated with a particular regional grouping. The Pangu Pati was associated with the East Sepik and Morobe Provinces; it was called a coastal party. The PPP was associated with the New Guinea islands and Madang; it was also called a coastal party. The National Party was viewed as radical splinter from the Highlands-based United Party.

At the grassroots, no one took the parties seriously. Candidates competed against each other as individuals from different clans or linguistic groups. Generally, they concealed or de-emphasized their party affiliation or sympathy. Parties played a minimal supportive role in their campaigns. The determinants of voter preference were the following factors with the first the most overwhelming in significance:-

- (1) primordial sentiments such as common clan, tribal, or linguistic affiliation;
- (2) personal status, reputation, and record;
- (3) secondary affiliations such as common church, association group, trade unions, or political parties.

In effect, a candidate's prospect of victory depended substantially on his membership in a large tribe or linguistic group. This however did not mean that personal reputation or secondary affiliation were at all times insignificant factors. They would qualify the first factor depending on the person in question and the area of the country. Stated differently, the three factors were intermixed as determinants of voter preference, with the second and third factors playing a smaller or a larger role, but rarely of such proportions as to overtake the significance of the first factor. In turn, this led to a strategy of political campaigning that emphasized primary group solidarity. In this sense, the elections underscored if not accentuated linguistic, clan, and regional differences in PNG.

Without doubt, this pattern of voting preference derived from two facts:

- (1) a population that was mostly rural and village based; and
- (2) the topographical, social and cultural fragmentation of PNG society.

It seemed that so long as these factors prevailed, the chances of secondary factors strongly influencing voting preference would not alter.

The Urban Setting

The PNG urban setting has been changing however. Large numbers of persons have been gravitating to towns requiring new ethnic groupings to be formed and allowing a greater play of secondary factors in their lives. Even though urban migrants tended to congregate in settlements constituted of their own *wantoks*, their clustering with strangers with whom they shared closely contiguous territory, a common work place, unions, churches, and political parties, required them to consider a wider range of complex factors in sorting out a formula that best promoted their security.

The movement to urban areas has involved three different groups of people:

- (1) Papua New Guineans who served as public servants, trainees in schools, institutes, colleges, universities;
- (2) recruits for plantations, and missions; and
- (3) voluntary migrants who moved to towns looking for jobs.

In a city such as Port Moresby, these different groups lived in different residential areas with persons from the first category occupying suburbs with schools, water, electricity, and urban amenities.¹³ The second group lived neither in villages nor towns, but tended eventually to join the third group. It is the third group of migrants who moved to the fringes of the cities and towns, and established squatter settlements. They generally found some sort of work in factories, and in homes as domestics and gardeners.

The city imposed its own requirements for survival. Its social setting was much more complex than the rural environment. Individuals in squatter settlements tended even if they lived in *wantok* groupings, to participate in a wider range of activities than in the village. They discovered other criteria for friendships and neighbours. In the case of civil servants, generally they lived in government-owned houses which were not allocated on a primordial affiliation basis. As trained and educated people, they lived and worked in offices which were mixed ethnically. For them, while they maintained *wantok* links, they were influenced in their behavior by secondary affiliations more than any other group. Ethnically mixed marriages were many, and long periods of separation from villages accentuated the role of secondary factors in friendships and associations. We posit that it is these factors which were at play in making the electoral contest in the North East electorate unique.

Structure of the Moresby North East Open Electorate

Since the general elections of 1964, Moresby has been progressively divided into a single constituency to four constituencies reflecting dramatic population increases. Today, it has one regional and three open electorates. The three open electorates constitute the regional constituency. Each of the three open constituencies (Moresby North-East; Moresby South; and Moresby North-West) is different from the other. We shall begin our study of the North-East electorate by describing its physical, demographic, and social structure.

The population of Port Moresby is approximately 120,000. The city began on the Ela coast in the vicinity of the Motuan and Koitabu villages where a nucleus of administrative buildings and facilities of the capital city was established. Over the years especially in the 1960s, the city would expand towards its immediate hinterland across a ridge of hills into open and valley spaces. The original site had the advantage of being contiguous to a port and a population centre. However, as the scope of activities increased beyond the task of elementary administration, new areas were needed for industrial and housing settlements. The inward hinterland thrust progressively deepened facilitated by the construction of new highways and a new air port. More civil servants and more businesses meant more land and houses were required. These could not be obtained without dismantling the villages of the traditional coastal dwellers. The inward thrust was therefore necessary. From it sprung up a city sprawling beyond the coastal ridge into new suburban settlements each with its housing facilities, shops, roads, etc.

From the inward drive, the North-East electorate would derive its unique character very much unlike the coastal areas in population composition and physical facilities. The elements which constitute Moresby North-East can be divided into six categories.

- (1) Residential areas including the suburbs of Boroko, Gordons, Taurama, and Korobosea;
- (2) Industrial and Commercial sites primarily in Gordons and Boroko;

- (3) Institutional facilities including Bomana College; Taurama Hospital; C.I.S. College; High Schools and Primary Schools; Training facilities; churches etc;
- (4) Recreation areas including rugby, cricket and football fields; swimming pools; theatres; clubs etc;
- (5) Urban settlements — at 9 mile quarry; 6 mile; Gordonia; Korobosea No. 2; and
- (6) One traditional village at Korobosea.

Most of this area was occupied by the first four categories. The urban settlements were relatively small in this constituency tucked away at the edges of the electorate as semi-isolated islands away from the main residential, industrial, and institutional facilities. There is only one very small traditional village at Korobosea.

Table I gives a graphic description of the ethnic, occupational and class categories who occupy this electorate. Several features stand out:-

(a) Professionally, this electorate is dominated by Papua New Guinea and expatriate salaried civil servants. Boroko and Gordons were two sprawling residential settlements originally established to accommodate civil servants who staff the headquarters of the Government. Over half of PNG's 50,000 civil servants live in Port Moresby. Boroko, Gordons, Korobosea, and Taurama are major residential areas for civil servants including the highest concentration of expatriate advisers and experts. Many of the highest paid senior ranking Papua New Guineans live in Boroko and Gordons.

Large numbers of private wage and salaried persons also reside in the North-East electorate ranging from domestic house boys and gardeners to clerks, typists, and junior executives. Some of these people live in domestic quarters and private housing facilities set up by their employers. Most, however, are likely to live in the traditional villages, urban settlements, and lower covenant houses found in the other two electorates.

(b) Ethnically, this is a very mixed area drawing its constituents from all parts of PNG reflecting the government's recruitment procedures. In terms of the two components, Papua and New Guinea, the Moresby North-East electorate is the only electorate in Papua with a majority of New Guineans, about 60% of the total. This unusual situation resulted from the fact that with the exception of the Koitabus living in the traditional village, Korobosea No. 1, everyone living in this electorate was born outside the electorate many of whom coming from New Guinea as civil servants, workers and urban migrants. This demographic distribution has resulted in three of the six candidates being New Guineans and three Papuans. Apart from the squatter settlements in the electorate, the people in this electorate are residentially mixed.

In the squatter settlements, Table I gives a description of their preponderant ethnic origins. Noteworthy is that about half or more of these settlers are from New Guinea from such places as Chimbu, Eastern Highlands and Morobe. As in other urban areas in PNG, people from one region or province cluster together in a *wantok* security community. However, it is significant to note that most of these settlers who cluster together, apart from their close kinsmen, would not have known each other or come from the same language group. The urban drift has created new ethnic boundaries and solidarity groups. In turn, this has meant that their cohesiveness is not as tight as in their original village setting. This has allowed secondary factors such as church, union, and factory associations to modify in important ways the demands of primordially-based group loyalty.

Table 1

Ethnic and Class Breakdown of Port Moresby Communities

| AREAS | ETHNIC CATEGORY | CLASS CATEGORY |
|--------------------------------|--|--|
| 1. Residential Areas: | | |
| a) Boroko | 1. Expatriates | 1. Public servants |
| b) Korobosea | 2. Mixture of Papua New Guineans | 2. Business owners |
| c) Gordons | | 3. Private Sector-salaried workers |
| | | 4. Wage earners (live-in domestics) |
| 2. Traditional Village: | | |
| Korobosea No. 1 | Koitabus | 1. Wage earners |
| | | 2. Gardeners |
| | | 3. Unemployed |
| 3. Settlements: | | |
| — 9 Mile | Gulf Goilalas | 1. Unemployed |
| | | 2. House boys |
| | | 3. Gardeners for |
| — 6 Mile | Chimbus Goilalas Morobeans Southern Highlanders | 3. expatriates |
| | | 4. Gardeners — cash cropping |
| — 7 Mile | Goilalas | 5. Wage workers at factories, industrial sites |
| — Gordonia | Chimbus Eastern Highlanders | 6. Plantation workers at Sogeri, Brown River; quarry, workers, Rouna |
| — 10 Mile | Keremas | |
| — Korobosea No. 2 | Central District | 7. Shop-boys; bar, cinema and hotel workers; |
| — Small Settlements | Gulf | 8. Market vendors |
| | | 9. Fisher people |
| — Erima | Papuans | |

(c) Finally, note must be taken of the salient point that most of these people are permanent residents who may visit their villages from time to time but who plan to make Moresby their home. The variety of complex secondary forces in the city has the effect of creating a person unlike the villager whose political and social horizons are strongly delimited by village-based primordial attachments. In the city, new national symbols are espoused; new groups are formed; new interests evolve. Children of the migrants develop a new identity and are cast in different roles. In effect, while practically everyone in the Moresby North-East electorate has been born in a village outside the electorate, their living in a city over a long period of time would modify and even re-cast their orientations and attachments to new symbols and associations. The impact this would have on political choice would make the Moresby North-East electorate almost unique in PNG.

The Candidates

Six candidates competed for the North-East electorate. Three were born in New Guinea; three in Papua. All six candidates were openly or covertly supported by a major political party or movement. Their backgrounds reveal that each has had professional training in some occupation. They were all well educated, informed, and organizationally-minded. Each had a fairly clear idea as to the ethnic and occupational structure of the electorate, and while each felt that some sort of primordial factor may mobilise votes for him or her, each knew that secondary and reputation factors would play the critical part in determining the outcome. Accordingly, the strategy and techniques of campaigning as well as programs had to be tailored to meet the special constraints and requirements of the electorate. Emphatically, each candidate realised that the mixed ethnic nature of the electorate and its unusual educational levels required that appeals for support be based on reasoned arguments, political affiliation, and organizational capability. In turn, this meant that the political party gained in ascendancy as a critical variable determining the outcome. We shall examine each candidate individually.

Patterson Lowa: was born in West New Britain. He was 34 years old. He was married, had one son, and was brought up the United Church. He spoke English, Pidgin, and his *tok ples*. Professionally, Lowa was trained as a soldier. He attended the Army Staff College in Victoria, Australia. He was one of the two highest ranking officers in PNG Defence Force at the time of independence. He had attained the status of lieutenant colonel and was in competition with another candidate for the position of Commander of the Defence Force. Upon not being awarded that position, he resigned from the Defence Force. He held a number of administrative positions in the private sector immediately thereafter. In 1977 he joined the Prime Minister's personal staff until April when he resigned to campaign for his election.

When Lowa left the military, it was clear that he was one of the few administratively well-trained citizens in PNG. He had offers to enter into politics, but did not succumb until 1977 when he joined the Pangu Pati. He rose very swiftly to its top echelons. For the 1977 general elections, partly because of his organizational skills, he was appointed to the critical position of campaign manager for the Pangu Pati. He had also declared his candidacy for the North-East electorate. Hence, with little experience in politics, he has had to handle two very demanding tasks simultaneously.

When asked where his votes were likely to come from, Lowa replied that he saw the battle of the North-East electorate as primarily a party contest. As the Pangu candidate, he expected to receive votes from Pangu supporters and sympathizers. Because of Pangu's record in leading the country to independence, maintaining political stability, and expanding and localizing the public service, he expected to get most of his votes from public servants. He also expected to win votes from police officers and businessmen from whom he had received much encouragement. He had also emphasized that he expected votes from the squatter settlements; the Goilala Association in particular had expressed support for him.

Lowa felt that he had no program apart from Pangu's. He expected to receive some support from his party mainly in the form of money, pamphlets, T-shirts, etc., but the greater part of his expenses would have to be defrayed from personal funds. He estimated that he would spend about K2,000. He saw Harry Hoerler, the United Party candidate, as his main opponent, but still expected to win.

Harry Hoerler: was born in Vunapope, East New Britain. He was 34 years old. He was mixed-raced, married and had three children. He was Catholic and spoke English, Pidgin and German. At the time of the elections, Hoerler was a small businessman engaged in providing truck-lift waterfront services, but was trained and experienced mainly as a ship-master. He had spent much of his work experience on ships as a stevedore foreman and supervisor. In 1960, he took a linesman course, and obtained a captain's diploma in 1963. Prior to his election debut in the 1977 general elections, he had never run for an elective public office.

Hoerler was the endorsed United Party candidate for the North-East electorate. Because of the predominance of New Guineans in this electorate, the United Party felt it had a good chance of winning. This is not because it expected all New Guineans to vote for it, but rather because the ethnic mix in the population gave everyone a fair chance. As a mixed-race person Hoerler himself would have been at a loss to tap a "natural" group for support apart from other likeminded mixed-race people. The battle, then, for Hoerler was one in which his chances strongly revolved around the popularity of the United Party among voters. Hoerler's given reason for running was to re-instate honesty in government. He strongly believed in the capitalist system and foreign investment. The United Party payed his candidate's deposit, allocated him some funds, provided about a third of his posters, and paid for his advertisement in the newspapers. He had expected to spend up to K5,000 if necessary most of this coming from personal funds. He felt Lowa was his strongest opponent, but still expected to win.

Goasa Damena: was born in Papa Village, in the Central Province. He was 41 years old. He was married, had five children, and a regular United Church medical doctor. He obtained his medical degree from the Fiji School of Medicine and did post-graduate research in Waikato, New Zealand. Until a year prior to the elections when he entered private practice, Dr. Damena worked with the public service. He has had some experience in politics before entering the contest for the North-East electorate. He served as a local government councillor for twenty-five years and was a village court magistrate and land mediator. He was deputy — president and then President of the powerful Public Service Association for PNG in 1976.

Damena ran as an independent candidate after refusing the endorsement of the secessionist Papua Besena movement to be its official representative. Dr. Damena is recognised as one of the major leaders in Papua Besena although he is personally not for secession but for Papuan regional autonomy. He felt that running as an independent candidate would increase his prospects of winning a seat. Because of his earlier prominence in the Public Service Association and the high incidence of civil servants in the electorate, many observers felt that he was the most likely candidate to win. Damena himself expected overwhelming public service support from private professional people such as nurses, doctors, teachers etc. But privately, he had also expected the votes of Papuans. He is a Koitabu and expected the votes of the small Koitabu village at Korobosea. He decided to run because he was unhappy with the performance of the coalition government. He felt that there was a lack of educated people in Parliament and that a society was being erected in which inequality increased while foreigners controlled the economy. He was also strongly against the uncontrolled urban drift in PNG. Damena received no financial assistance from Papua Besena which gave none of its overt or covert candidates any form of financial support. He expected to spend K1,800 for the

campaign, most of it his own money. He felt that Lahui Tau was his strongest opponent.

Lahui Tau: was originally from Tubuseria village, Central Province. He was 36 years old. He was married, had six children, and belonged to the United Church. He spoke English, Motu, and Pidgin. Tau was a small businessman. He had completed his Queensland Junior Certificate and worked as a journalist for six years. Tau, however, is known more for his involvement in the trade union movement among waterside workers and teachers. He served for one year as secretary of the PNG Teachers' Association. He had more political experience than any other the candidates competing in his electorate. At the time of the elections, he was a city councillor from Boroko and was Chairman of the Bavaroko Community School Board of Management.

Tau, like Damena, was a very prominent member within the Papua Besena leadership hierarchy. He, however, chose to run as an independent candidate so as to maximise his chances of winning. He expected support from public servants, union workers, teachers, and parents of school children in recognition of his service. He expected a concentration of his votes to come from Boroko, his city council constituency. He chose to run because of his political experience. He advocated free primary education. He paid for his own campaign expenses expecting to spend about K500. He said that Fide Bale was his main opponent but expected to win.

Fide Bale: was born in Finschafen, Morobe Province. She was 38 years old. She was married to an Australian and had four children. She was a Lutheran and spoke English and Pidgin. Mrs. Bale was a business woman engaged in running two small food catering restaurants. However, she was a professionally trained teacher. She obtained a teaching diploma from Port Moresby Teacher's College in 1960 and taught for several years as a school teacher. She did not hold an elective public post previously, but had extensive experience in the Y.W.C.A. where she was a member of the Board of Directors, and in the Lutheran Church.

Mrs. Bale was the endorsed PPP candidate. Because of the reputation of the PPP for its efficiency in the coalition government, she expected to receive the votes of PPP supporters and sympathizers, particularly public servants. As a woman, Mrs. Bale expected the women's vote, a politically unorganized bloc of unknown solidarity or preference. As a business person, she also anticipated support from businessmen. She stressed the neglect of women and advocated equality. She also expected support from teachers and Lutherans. She mentioned the possibility of obtaining the votes from the Morobe people many of whom worked as house boys and lived at the 6 Mile urban settlements. She chose to run because she said that she was from a politically-minded family and wanted to get a women's point of view represented in parliament. She received a variety of assistance from the PPP including pamphlets, T-shirts, campaign buttons, advertisement in the newspaper, a bull-horn, a cassette-tape recorder etc. She expected to spend about K600 of her own funds. She felt that Goasa Damena was her chief opponent but expected to win.

Gilbert Kose: was born in the Gulf Province. He was 34 years old. He was married, had four children, and belonged to the Catholic Church. He spoke English, Pidgin, and Motu. Professionally, he was a Health Education Officer.

He received a medical assistant certificate and a diploma in health. He took further training in Sydney in middle management. He had worked as a public servant for twelve years and had held several high administrative positions such as secretary for a Minister of State, and assistant to a Minister of Education. He was also previously the administrative director for the PNG Arts Festival. He had never had elective public office.

Kose was a covert Pangu endorsed candidate. However, it seemed that his candidacy was sponsored as a means to facilitate victory for other openly endorsed Pangu candidates in the North-East Open and the Regional. Because Kose was a Papuan from the Gulf, he was capable of diverting Papuan votes that might go to Damena in the Open and Abaijah in the regional, thereby enabling the Pangu candidates, Lowa and Kiki, to increase their margin over their Papua Besena opponents. This was a speculative and unproductive strategy that had to be altered late in the campaign as will be explained later. Pangu provided financial and other support for Kose. He received his candidate's deposit from Pangu as well as pamphlets, and finance. Kose had expected that his campaign would cost about K2,000 to K5,000.

The Campaigns

By studying the campaign strategy and techniques of each candidate, several points became clear to us. First, it provided operational proof of how each candidate perceived his electorate's social structure and its needs. Second, it pointed to the ranking each candidate gave to primordial, secondary, and reputation factors in persuading voters how to make their choice. Finally, it suggested conditions under which new adaptations in campaign strategy were made depending upon the changes and characteristics within an electorate. We shall describe briefly below the role of organizational and party factors in structuring political choice in the Moresby North-East open electorate.

The campaign conducted by all the candidates quickly revealed that two kinds of strategy were required reflecting the two general residential patterns that existed within the North-East electorate. The first type of strategy can be called traditional and was directed at the squatter settlements. Here, people with little education, income, and skills lived; they tended to cluster in *wantok* communities. The strategy that each candidate used here was to find an influential leader who would serve as a "contact point" to penetrate a *wantok* group. If the community in question was of the same ethnic or regional affiliation as the candidate, then he or she found such a person easily accessible. For example, Gilbert Kose was from the Gulf Province, while a substantial segment of the 9-Mile settlement was also from the same area. Kose had been able to gain easy access to leaders and extract many promises from this community. It is important to note that Kose worked indirectly to get the votes of this community. If another candidate from another province or ethnic group wanted to penetrate the 9-Mile settlement, he/she also used the same general indirect approach via a community leader except in this case a different kind of criteria was used to select the community leader. For example, if Lahui Tau wanted to persuade 9-Mile settlement voters to cast their ballots in his favour, he might use as his contact point a union worker or a city council ward committee representative or a school teacher of some prominence to speak to the community on his behalf. In a traditional village situation, if Kose faced Tau, the chances would be excellent that Kose would practically sweep the community. However, in Moresby where the occupational and interest structure of the 9-Mile community was likely to be very different from that of

a traditional Gulf village, the chances were that a number of residents would respond to the appeals of a unionist such as Tau or pro-woman candidate such as Bale. But, on balance, one would still expect that Kose would get most votes, but that he would have to face challenges to maintain the tenacity of his primordial appeal.

The second type of campaign strategy appealed to secondary and reputation factors and invoked reason and issues to get at voters. The voters in question would be the residents in government and company provided houses. They would be civil servants and private sector white and blue collar workers living mainly in Gordons and Boroko. Here the technique was to resort to a combination of house to house persuasion; to mass meetings; to pamphlets; and to the media. To be sure, a candidate might search for a *wantok* connection, but mostly he would rely on his campaign organization to distribute pamphlets and approach people from house to house explaining the candidate's program, expounding on the issues etc.

Of all the candidates, Patterson Lowa excelled in the second strategy. He mobilised a large campaign committee of Pangu activists who went from house to house campaigning for him. The Pangu label was intensely used. Pamphlets carrying the picture of Lowa and the message of Pangu were distributed in practically every home. In conjunction with this technique, the Pangu Pati frequently ran advertisements on the radio and press to convince the voter that Somare and Pangu were best for PNG's future. Mass meetings were held at various points where people gathered such as shopping centers, markets, and community centres. Voluntary associations or their officers were enlisted where possible. As the election grew nearer, all these activities intensified. The resources of Pangu showed its superiority to the candidates who had little financial support from their organizations. On polling day, the Pangu organization mobilised large numbers of activists including a sizable segment of volunteers from the University of PNG, and a large number of trucks, cars, buses etc., to carry voters to polling booths.

The display of Pangu's organizational strength was only matched by Harry Hoerler who, like Lowa, depended upon the United Party to provide personnel to distribute pamphlets, make house to house calls, and mobilise large numbers of volunteers and vehicles during the last few days before elections. Hoerler's campaign in particular was distinctive for its massive use of pamphlets. Like Lowa, he sought the endorsement of as many secondary associations and community groups as possible to strengthen his candidacy. He also held numerous meetings at markets, shopping centres etc.

Fide Bale's campaign had the support of the PPP, the party that had the reputation for cohesiveness and organizational capability. The PPP provided an infra-structure of contacts and volunteer personnel for campaigning. Unlike Lowa and Hoerler, however, Bale campaigned mostly part-time and in a subdued way. To be sure, Bale had assembled a large campaign committee drawn from everywhere in the electorate. They were very active as evinced from the number of posters and pamphlets distributed, but one got the feeling during the campaign that Bale felt somewhat overwhelmed by the massive effort overtly displayed by Lowa and Hoerler. Moreover, Bale soon discovered that her candidacy based on equality for women received much less support from women than she had expected. She indicated that in the squatter settlements, more men came to greet her and listen to her. She held fewer public meetings than Lowa and Hoerler, spent less on the media campaign, and emphasized small group meetings. Partly this stemmed from the fact that she

budgeted much less than Lowa and Hoerler, and found it much easier to communicate to smaller groups of people.

Goasa Damena surprised everyone by running a barely visible campaign. He did mobilise a small group of persons to serve as contact points, but together his campaign organization was small and rarely met as a group. He confidently expected to receive the votes of civil servants on the basis of his Public Service Association Presidency; but he did little direct house to house campaigning for their votes. One suspected too that his Papua Besena connections which he deliberately attempted to conceal from the electorate did not escape the eyes of many public servants, many of whom were familiar with politics in Moresby. Damena found it necessary to resort to his Papuan sources for scrutineers and other forms of help. He had hoped to get most of the votes from Boroko, his city council constituency and that his opponents would split up the Gordons and settlements vote leaving him with a slender winning plurality. He had also expected to receive most of the votes from Korobosea village. Without much funds, Tau depended on personal reputation and less party organization support for votes. It seemed that he did utilize the Papua Besena affiliation covertly where it stood to his advantage. It is quite conceivable that for Tau and Damena their Papua Besena connections served more against them than for them.

Gilbert Kose concentrated overwhelmingly on his Kerema Papuan connections and a few pamphlets to win. His campaign was not convincing. Towards the end of the campaign as Hoerler and Bale intensified their campaign, he switched his appeal asking his supporters to vote for Lowa.

An overview of the campaign showed three salient points. First, organization and resources were critical to the outcome. Since Papua Besena gave only its reputation and volunteer personnel to Damena and Tau, but no financial support, it was easily outmatched by the candidates from the established parties that did provide a variety of resources for the campaign. Second, the campaign was very difficult for all the candidates since, unlike the village where ethnicity and other primordial factors decisively determined voting preference, the residential occupational and mixed ethnic structure of the North-East electorate made the outcome extremely hazardous to predict. Indeed, these researchers found an amazing dispersal of predictions among experts, commentators, and citizens about the outcome. Only Gilbert Kose was hardly heard of and given little chance of winning. Finally, the quantity of posters, pamphlets, and media materials disseminated in this electorate had been astounding. We could not find anything comparable to it elsewhere. This may very well suggest that secondary and reputation factors were perceived by the candidates as more salient to the outcome than primordial characteristics.

A comment must be made on the issues. Each of the candidates defined the issues differently, but throughout the campaign issues seemed less significant than the party affiliation and reputation of the candidate. Three candidates Lowa, Hoerler, and Bale emphasized their party connection in all their posters and speeches. While Lowa talked about the problems of housing and the squatter settlements in the Moresby North-East electorate, the greatest prominence was given to the record of the Pangu Pati in steering the country to independence and establishing political stability. Practically, the same sort of emphasis was placed in the campaign by Fide Bale who played up the reputation of the PPP and Julius Chan for efficiency in the coalition government. Hoerler did essentially the same except that his campaign message was to associate unemployment, corruption, and economic stagnation with the co-

alition partners. Hoerler had the periodic campaign services of the United Party Leader, Sir Tei Abal, whose picture appeared on several of Hoerler's pamphlets showing the two people smiling and shaking hands. Similarly, Michael Somare and Julius Chan appeared for their candidates in the North-East electorate. In effect, particularly for Lowa, Bale, and Hoerler, the contest was between the record of the coalition government (although Lowa and Bale campaigned separately) on one hand and the criticisms of the opposition United Party on the other.

Goasa Damena and Lahui Tau, although they sought to downplay their Papua Besena connections in an electorate which had more New Guineans than Papuans, emphasized their own record and reputation. They were caught in a situation in which they were tempted to covertly appeal to Papuan votes, while overtly seeking the votes of everyone including the New Guineans. But they did have very good personal and reputation records which it seemed served to attract a cross-section of votes from public servants and others, but not enough to obtain the winning plurality. In other Moresby electorates where the ethnic residential, and occupational structure were very different, Papua Besena candidates openly and proudly declared their affiliation to the movement. In the Moresby North-East Open, however, this was a decided disadvantage. Tau and Damena emphasized their reputation, record, and experience, but not their primordial attachment. They severely criticised the coalition government and emphasized local issues dealing with unemployment, squatter settlements, inequality etc., but they did not openly invoke the label of their movement in the same manner as Lowa, Bale, and Hoerler. In summary, all the candidates with the possible exception of Kose, used secondary and reputation factors to persuade voters to cast their ballots in favor of them in the Moresby North-East Open electorate.

The Results

In analysing the results of practically all the electorates in PNG, clear patterns of voter preference reflecting a close association between the ethnicity of a candidate and the sources of his support is evident. It is relatively easy to cross-check this observation since the population is dispersed in rural areas and villages to which candidates can be easily traced. By examining the results in ballot boxes from different clusters of villages, one can show a pattern of voting that underlines the role of ethnic and regional factors in determining voter preference.

In examining the results of the Moresby North-East open electorate, we shall attempt to find out if similar voting patterns exist. Clearly however the structure of the North-East electorate is very different from that of a typical traditional village. It is more complex and a wider range of forces is operative in the individual's life moulding new interests and recasting the calculus of his political preference. We shall examine the results, then, partly with an eye to extracting any features suggestive of primordial influences. We shall not automatically infer that their absence from the data signifies that they do not play a part in determining voter preference. That is not our point. We believe that they are still operative today, but in a hierarchy of determinants, they are relegated to a lower or secondary role. While the election data cannot be conclusive, we believe that our knowledge and familiarity with the electorate, enriched by numerous interviews and discussion with candidates and constituents, can support our general conclusions indicating a pattern of change away from the village. First, we shall give the general results making some

broad observations on election administration and trends. Second, we shall present a breakdown of the results describing how the votes were cast from area to area, and the possible implications these may have.

(a) *Overview of the General Results*

The results of the elections for the Moresby North-East Open electorate were as follows:-

Table 2 Election Results

| <i>Candidates</i> | <i>Votes</i> |
|-----------------------------|--------------|
| 1. Gilbert Kose (pro-Pangu) | 382 |
| 2. Fide Bale (PPP) | 517 |
| 3. Goasa Damena (Ind.-PB) | 614 |
| 4. Harry Hoerler (UP) | 705 |
| 5. Lahui Tau (Ind.-PB) | 643 |
| 6. Patterson Lowa (Pangu) | 1,423 |
| Informal | 463 |
| Total | 4,747 |

The victor was Pangu's Patterson Lowa. Although his total votes were over 700 more than his closest rival, Lowa's total constituted only 29.9% of the number of votes cast. Lowa apart, the other candidates ran fairly close to each other with no one losing his or her deposit. Voting turnout was about 37% although three days were allocated for voting. This was about 20% less than the average constituency in PNG. Several possible reasons account for the low turnout. First, the campaign was allowed to continue during polling. This meant that all the candidates, their trucks, loudhailers, scrutineers, crowds of cheerleaders etc. tended to cluster and clutter around the polling booths especially in the two high density population areas, Boroko and Gordons. The results show that out of 4757 votes cast 2089 came from Gordons, that is, 50% of the votes were concentrated here. Boroko was next with a total of 947 votes cast or about 20% of the total. Together, Gordons and Boroko provided about 70% of the total votes cast. For practically all of the three days, the two polling booths at Gordons and Boroko were so cluttered, particularly at Boroko, as to discourage voting participation. Second, to compound the first factor, citizens who were not pre-registered to vote were allowed to cast their ballot in a slow process that involved filling out a long form and making a declaration of oath indicating that one was resident within the electorate. As it happened, it seemed that over 30% of the voters fell into the unregistered category. The upshot was the creation of long slow-moving lines which meshed with the cluttering that occurred outside the polling booths. The typical voter had to spend three to four hours and sometimes longer to cast a ballot. Women voters in particular were intimidated by the obstreperous crowds, the noise, and the pushing and jostling that occurred. In addition, many workers who were given time off to vote felt that it was more profitable to use a half a day as holiday instead of having to face the long lines. Exactly who were the determined voters is unclear. The low voting turnout could have influenced the outcome. However, given Lowa's lead, it is doubtful that an uncluttered and well-organized polling booth would have upset his victory.

(b) *Polling Booth Breakdown of the Results**Table 3 Polling Booth Results*

| AREA | KOSE | BALE | DAMENA | HOERLER | TAU | LOWA | INF. | TOTAL |
|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| 1. YWCA | 11 | 18 | 31 | 9 | 56 | 73 | 27 | 225 |
| 2. Boroko | 52 | 135 | 131 | 199 | 151 | 279 | 153 | 947 |
| 3. C.A.A. | 9 | 60 | 8 | 30 | 26 | 166 | 0 | 299 |
| 4. Gordons | 189 | 180 | 287 | 374 | 293 | 591 | 155 | 2089 |
| 5. 9-Mile | 49 | 49 | 4 | 3 | 25 | 36 | 45 | 211 |
| 6. Bomana | 19 | 21 | 6 | 35 | 34 | 83 | 31 | 229 |
| 7. Taurama Hos. | 18 | 18 | 39 | 35 | 18 | 69 | 16 | 213 |
| 8. Bavaroko | 8 | 19 | 48 | 11 | 25 | 60 | 10 | 181 |
| 9. Erima | 26 | 16 | 55 | 9 | 15 | 27 | 26 | 174 |
| 10. Postal | 1 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 19 | 0 | 26 |
| Total | <u>382</u> | <u>517</u> | <u>614</u> | <u>705</u> | <u>643</u> | <u>1423</u> | <u>492</u> | <u>4757</u> |

Total New Guinea candidate votes: $517 + 1423 = 2645$

$4757 - 492 = 62\%$

Total Pangu + PPP votes: $382 + 517 + 1423 = 2322$

$4265 = 54\%$

Two preliminary points should be made at the outset. First, while most persons voted in their polling-booth area, a number of persons voted in other places away from their area of residence. Particularly, this was possible among unregistered voters who could make claims that they lived elsewhere. Indeed, we are certain that the ease with which an unregistered person was allowed to make a declaration of oath facilitated some double voting, or even voting by persons from outside the electorate. Second, since most of the population was concentrated in Boroko and Gordons, given the ethnic mixes and the deployment of only two polling booths for these areas, it was impossible to identify precisely what sort of person voted for which candidate. We were able, however, to make some educated speculation of a pattern in a few polling booth areas with which a particular settlement was most closely contiguous.

The polling booth breakdowns display the following:-

1. Lowa obtained the highest votes in all the polling booth areas except 9-mile and Erima. His highest plurality came from Gordons where he obtained more than 200 than his closest rival, Hoerler. Gordons, an ethnically mixed and civil-servant dominated area, gave Lowa his biggest bloc of votes. Lowa did not do as well in Boroko, but again he outstripped his closest rival, Hoerler, by over 80 votes. Overall, the Lowa vote was impressive for it clearly showed that even in polling booth areas that others considered their stronghold such as Tau's claimed strength in Boroko, Damena's claimed strength at Taurama Hospital and Bale's claimed strength at C.A.A. (that includes the 6-mile settlement of Morobeans), he outvoted everyone.
2. Hoerler's vote of 705 was the closest to Lowa's total. Hoerler, like Lowa, a New Guinean, but a mixed-race without primordial attachments, probably demonstrated just as well the role of secondary, particularly the party, factor in determining voter preference. Hoerler came in second in three polling booth areas namely Gordons, Boroko, and Bomana.
3. The votes by Bale, Tau, and Damena were very close. Bale did very well at 9-mile where she might have gotten her 49 votes from Morobeans in that area.

That is a small figure as a part of her total of 517, most of which was obtained in Gordons and Boroko. It is possible that her good showing in these two areas reflected preferences of civil servants and business people for the PPP. Damena and Tau's vote also came from Gordons and Boroko. It is difficult to quite sort out their sources; one can only infer them from the structure of these areas reflecting mixed ethnicity, civil servants, professionals etc. One can legitimately expect Damena in particular to have picked up most of his votes from his civil service connections.

4. Finally, what discernible role did primordial factors play in any of the polling booth areas? We think that the 9-mile area which was mainly Kerema and voted strongly for Kose, and the Erima village, largely Papuan and voted strongly for Damena, were the main areas in which some qualified evidence suggested the preponderant play of ethnicity as a voter determinant. Yet in these two areas the collective vote of the other candidates outnumbered that of the candidate with the primordial connection.

Overall, then, the results in our opinion show that the pattern of voter determinants was very different from that of a traditional village. We are confident that secondary and reputation factors were pre-eminent. We would argue that the showing of Lowa of the Pangu Pati which was the senior partner in the governing coalition and Hoerler of the opposition United Party, indicate that the struggle in the Moresby North-East Open electorate was predominantly a party contest.

Conclusion

The North-East Open electorate is unique in PNG, for among the 109 constituencies it is the only one in which party competition based primarily on secondary appeals has emerged. Clearly, a party system that is based on ethnic or regional appeals is likely to be dysfunctional for national unity. But for a viable alternative system to exist, a particular electorate with a specific social structure must emerge. In such an electorate the secondary role of primordial attachments would facilitate subdued competition. As well, partisan conflict would be less likely to be about absolute cultural and ethnic symbols on which compromises and rational arguments are difficult to attain.

The fact that only one electorate out of 109 fulfils that pre-requisite for a viable competitive party system and that it took over ten years of party experimentation for it to emerge is not very encouraging. PNG's rate of urbanization is very high at about 10 to 12%. Migrants however congregate in ethnic residential clusters as have already happened in other parts of PNG and in the Third World. The North-East electorate is almost artificial. It is new, planned, and contiguous to the headquarters of the Central Government drawing to it a specific kind of population. The problem in PNG is for the creation of electorates that facilitate a party system based on secondary appeals so as to promote unity. The future in this regard is not too bright. Sooner or later, as the urban agglomerations grow, unplanned cities with discrete ethnic clusters would predominate. It would be difficult for anything but an ethnically — based party system to emerge in this situation. What will happen next is not encouraging.

Editor's Note: Damena later successfully challenged the declaration of the Poll on the grounds that Lowa had not satisfied the two-year residential qualification enabling him to stand for Moresby North-east. In a by-election held in July 1978 Damena defeated Kiki. Pangu split its vote when it endorsed

Kiki against Lowa. Lowa stood as an independent.

Table 4 1978 By-election Results

| | |
|--------------|-------------|
| Damena | 1031 |
| Kiki | 1003 |
| Boyce | 842 |
| Hoerler | 769 |
| Lowa | 525 |
| Bale | 166 |
| Godwin | 82 |
| Informal | 386 |
| <u>Total</u> | <u>4742</u> |

NOTES

1. See Joseph La Palombara and Myron Weiner, "The Origin and Development of Political Parties", in La Palombara and Weiner, (eds.), *Political Parties and Political Development* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969); also, C.G. Rosberg and James Coleman, (eds.) *Political Parties and National Integration in Africa* (Berkeley, 1964); also, Aristide Zolberg, *Creating Political Order: The Party States of West Africa* (Rand McNally, 1966).
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Chapter 3

SECESSIONISTS VERSUS CENTRAL AUTHORITY: PAPUA BESENA IN THE ELECTIONS

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The multi-ethnic social structure typically found in most Third World countries has bedevilled the quest for national unity.¹ Challenges to the authority of the central government have come from sub-state ethnonationalist movements which demand the right to govern themselves. They invoke the same sacred principle of self-determination utilised by leaders of the new nation vis-a-vis their overseas imperial masters. Invariably, the national indigenous leaders of the newly independent state replied that unity must be preserved at all cost denying to secessionists the right to a separate sovereign existence.² The integrity of the state was held paramount to the claims of sub-national units for self-determination. Regional, ethnic, or tribal fragmentation had to be avoided and discouraged.

The internal ethnonationalist movements were frequently challenged for their authenticity in representing the best interests of their constituents. Their leaders were likely to be charged with being power hungry, intent on promoting their own selfish interests. Hence, initial exchanges between the central government and separatists revolved around each other's legitimacy to represent their respective populations. Each side, however, would assert the right to pursue its objective justifying its course of action on popular endorsement. The question of their relative popular strength might never had the opportunity to be ascertained peacefully before violence was applied to resolve the disparate claims to legitimacy made by each side. Even if they agreed to a peaceful referendum, they were likely to disagree as to the population that should vote on it. The central government generally insisted that the referendum be conducted among all citizens of the country to determine the fate of the sub-nationalist unit. The separatists on the other hand were likely to counter by demanding that only their own regional or ethnic unit vote on deciding their destiny. The stalemate, however, was not likely to be resolved through debate. But on occasions in certain countries an unintended event such as a general election might arise providing a convenient arena for the contestants to confront each other peacefully. Normally, each side would not explicitly declare that the contest provided the opportunity in which its relative popular strength over the issue of national unity would be tested. Enough ambiguity would be left in the meaning of the outcome so that a defeat or victory could be equally interpreted by each side as either related or unrelated to the issue of secession.

In Papua New Guinea, where the central government has been challenged by a Papuan separatist movement, the cycle of assertion and counter-assertion delineated above had reached a stalemate with no compromise in sight. How-

ever, the general elections of 1977, provided an arena for the two entities to face each other. Neither side publicly conceded that the electoral contest was a referendum on the right of a group to secede and establish its own government. But each side mounted its best candidate and effort in the struggle.

This paper attempts an inquiry into the strength, sources of support, and means of mobilization of the Papuan secessionist movement as displayed in the general elections of 1977. Although support for Papua Besena (as the secessionist movement was known) was thought to be strong both in the National Capital District and the surrounding Central Province, our research focussed only on the four electorates in Port Moresby.

Background to Papua Besena.

Papua New Guinea became independent as a single country on September 16, 1975. Prior to this time, Papua and New Guinea were legally two separate entities. Papua was an Australian colony having been acquired by the Australian Commonwealth in 1906. New Guinea was formerly a German colony, but was lost to Australia during WW I when it became a Mandated Territory under the League of Nations. After WW II, New Guinea continued under Australian control, this time as a U.N. Trust Territory. In 1949, Australia formally unified the two countries under a single administrative system called the Territory of Papua and New Guinea. On the occasion of the 1949 administrative union, Australian representatives reassured the Trusteeship Council that "when the inhabitants of the two territories had attained a certain degree of development, they would be free to choose the form of government which suited them and, in particular, would be free to decide whether they wished the administrative union to continue ... or whether they wished to become independent."³

The manner in which Australia administered Papua and New Guinea until WW II provides ample evidence that the two countries were separate. Papua had a different government from New Guinea, each with its own administrator, and there was little contact between their people.⁴ The *lingua franca* for many Papuans was Police Motu, while it was Pidgin for New Guineans. Papuans were regarded as proto — Australian citizens, while New Guineans were Australian Protected Persons. During WW II, separate infantry battalions were maintained for Papuans and New Guineans respectively. But after 1949, notwithstanding their undertaking to the U.N. Trusteeship Council, the Australian purpose, viewed through their administrative acts, pointed to a determination to forge a new nation out of the two entities. From time to time, Papuan nationalists such as Oala Oala Rarua, Ebia Olewale, and John Guise expressed fear for Papua's future, especially when comparisons were made between the greater economic progress made in New Guinea. In 1971, these sentiments were vigorously articulated when the final report on the Select Committee on Constitutional Development was tabled in the House of Assembly. Papuan legislators complained of the economic discrimination against their electorates and successfully passed a resolution in the House of Assembly in June 1971 demanding that the status of Papua not be altered without the consent of the Papuan people or their representatives.⁵

In the 1972 general elections, Josephine Abaijah, an unusually well-educated Papuan woman from Milne Bay Province, appeared on the political scene running successfully for a seat in the parliament, basing her campaign on a platform demanding "a fair go for Papua" and "Papua for Papuans". She was the only Papuan representative in the House of Assembly to vigorously

assert the rights of Papuans to remain Australian citizens until they “were ready to take over the independent government of their own country”.⁶ Abaijah quickly emerged as the chief spokesperson for the Papuan cause. On June 3, 1973, she formed a movement called “Papua Besena” meaning “Papuan Tribe or Nation” to encompass, represent, and promote the objectives of Papuan nationalists.⁷ Said Abaijah: “The aim of the Papuan Movement is that Papua should remain a separate country legally as it is at the present and Papua should form an independent Papuan Nation governed by the Papuan people.”⁸ In particular, Abaijah and her sympathizers feared that when Papua became integrated with New Guinea as a separate sovereign nation, the latter through its superior numbers and resources, would dominate the former reducing it to an internal colony. To the Papua Besena leader, colonial control by New Guinea would be worse than Australian colonialism. She envisaged Papua being converted “into a baby farm to provide temporary labor for the political and economic development of New Guinea.”⁹ The struggle then is deemed to be anti-colonial in character. Abaijah emphasized this point: “The aim of Papua Besena is to wipe out all forms of colonialism in Papua — white colonialism and black colonialism — to achieve a free and independent Papuan people.”¹⁰ On March 16, 1976, Papua Besena unilaterally declared Papua’s independence from Australia. The action was taken in anticipation of a united Papua New Guinea’s independence scheduled a few months later so as to symbolically pre-empt Papua from inclusion in nationwide celebrations.

Papua Besena asserts its claims to a separate identity on both primordial and non-primordial grounds. The primordial bases are language and cultural values. Ironically, it is on these foundations that Papuan ethnonationalism is weakest, for internally, Papua has a diverse population. The linguistic base is Police Motu, a language group which only extends to a substantial minority of Papuans. Most of the Motu speakers are found in and around Port Moresby, in the Central, Milne Bay, and Gulf Provinces. Together, Motu speakers constitute only about 22% of the Papuan population.¹¹ The second primordial base is cultural values by which I mean both a separate way of life (from which a “we-ness” dimension is derived) plus fear of another group’s values (from which a “they-ness” aspect is imparted). The “we-they” dimension in values contributes to cultural distinctiveness and provides the catalytic force for group solidarity. Abaijah stimulates Papuan group solidarity by invoking contrasting stereotypes held by Papuans of New Guineans who are regarded as barbaric and belligerent.¹² On the other hand, Papuans are described as civilised and peaceful. However, based on objective data, the separatist leader has seriously distorted many widely accepted facts. Anthropologists regard Papuans and New Guineans as Melanesians who share a common complex of cultural values and orientations. A hypothesis that probably goes a long way towards explaining Papua Besena’s success in making many Papuans believe that they are culturally different from New Guineans, however, is that often stereotyping is used as a group defence mechanism.¹³ Specifically, internal migration has led to dramatic population increases in Port Moresby where, traditionally, large numbers of Motu-speaking Papuans live. Many of these migrants are New Guinea Highlanders who came to town without a job, without their families, and without a fixed place to sleep. Consequently, Motuan villagers faced job competition from highlanders, their women were occasionally assaulted or raped, and their land illegally occupied by Highlanders. New Guinea — Papuan conflict, then, ostensibly has an objective basis.

The non-primordial basis on which Papua Besena asserts its case for self — determination is the economic neglect of Papua by Australian colonialism. Abaijah articulates the economic argument thus: “Australia’s colonial rule of Papua was noted for indifference, neglect, and lack of political and economic development. The main achievement of Australia in Papua was to produce in the Papua people a servility and ignorance which Australia, in turn, successfully used to further its own material aims and to avoid its responsibilities to Papua”.¹⁴ The economic injustice arguments have provided the main impetus initially for the successes scored by Papua Besena. But once the movement had gathered momentum and a widespread following, its collective psychological aspect assumed a life of its own and substantially freed its strength and credibility from the supportive bases that originally gave it its justification.

Prime Minister Michael Somare has conceded that Papua was neglected. However, his government has disclaimed any responsibility for Papua’s economic difficulties and has appealed instead to the separatists to give him the opportunity to correct the colonial wrongs. He has offered provincial autonomy to them as well as economic programs to offset Papua’s relative economic backwardness vis-a-vis New Guinea. In turn, he expects the demand for secession to be dropped. On this score many Papuan nationalists are ambivalent. Abaijah however refuses to accede to any compromises short of full independence for Papua. The Prime Minister in frustration has referred to the separatists leader as “mentally-ill” and sought to belittle the strength of the movement by calling it a *liklik lain* (a small group).¹⁵ Papua Besena on the other hand proceeded to challenge the government’s authority by mounting periodic demonstrations and participating in local elections. In the latter area, the secessionists have stunned the government. In 1974, in Port Moresby, the City Council fell under the control of an overwhelming Papua Besena majority. On February 25, 1975, the council voted to support independence for Papua. In February 1976, in an important by-election for the Central Provincial seat in Papua, the Papua Besena candidate resoundingly defeated the President of Somare’s own party, the Pangu Pati. Since these events, the government and Papua Besena have exchanged heated words regarding their performance, support, and legitimacy. Papua Besena appeared to have gained increased support, but no one knew its exact or even approximate strength. Further, its cohesiveness, leadership, and mobilization capabilities were all unknown factors. Similarly, the government’s claim to superior support was untested. The general election of 1977 as it occurred in the capital city, which is perhaps Papua Besena’s area of strongest support, provided a rare opportunity to answer some of these questions.

Port Moresby and the General Elections

a) *Port Moresby*

The city of Port Moresby is the capital of Papua New Guinea. It contains the headquarters of the central government and is the centre of national decision-making for nearly three million people distributed over 178,260 square miles of national territory. Most of the country’s 50,000 public servants live among Moresby’s nearly 120,000 people. Indeed, the economy of the city is dominated by government administrative activities; some 40% of total employment is directly provided by the government.¹⁶ The headquarters of most of PNG large private firms, financial institutions and insurance companies are located in the capital. Commercial and manufacturing activities in the country are concentrated almost equally in the two largest cities, Port

Moresby and Lae. However, most of the private commercial enterprises in Moresby are in foreign hands. Food needs of civil servants and wage earners are only met partially by local sources such as local markets selling fresh vegetables, fish, and fruits. About 25% of Moresby's food requirements are imported primarily from Australia and New Zealand. Finally, no account of the Moresby economy, however brief, should fail to mention that it is the main producer of trained and professional personnel. The country's major training institutions are within the capital city including the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG), the medical and dental colleges, the Administrative College, a Teachers' College etc. The army and Police headquarters are also here. Together, these institutions add to the complexity of the city as a challenging place to live.¹⁷

Until World War II, Moresby has been a small, sleepy administrative town with less than 5,000 people. After the war, Moresby and PNG's strategic value to Australia was underscored. The country was slated to receive unprecedented attention in aid and development grants. In 1951-52, aid was \$10 million; in 1955-56, about \$15 million; but these figures grew astronomically in the late 1960s to \$135 million in 1967-68, and to over \$200 million in 1969-70. Accompanying the increases in aid was expansion of the public service. The population of Moresby skyrocketed as an integral part of the rapid growth, since most of the aid, trade, and expanded supply of Australian skilled personnel had to be channelled through the capital city. In 1954, Moresby's population was 15,688 including 12,000 indigenous people and 3,688 expatriates. In 1961, it grew to a total of 24,357; by 1966, it was 41,376 and in 1971, it was 76,506.¹⁸ By 1977, it had reached about 120,000. Apart from sheer numbers, the composition had shifted decisively to a city populated overwhelmingly by indigenous Melanesians with expatriates reduced to a small minority.

The impact of these events was the inexorable physical expansion of the city and its facilities. From a small town that occupied a thin coastal belt, the urban area expanded inland across a ridge of hills into the flatlands of the Boroko and June Valley. From this inland thrust, partly dictated by the unavailability of native traditional land on the coast, emerged a sprawling city with planned residential suburbs, squatter settlements, industrial sites, and commercial centers. The traditional Motu and Koitabu villages which preceded the existence of the city site were incorporated within the city limits. From these new settlement patterns, new forces would be released stratifying the city into different and opposing elements giving a peculiar cast to its politics. We provide a sketch of the chief components in the structure of the city. These materials are essential to an understanding of the 1977 elections in which the secessionists campaigned to assert their strength.

b) *Migrants and Urban Settlements*

Initially, the movement of indigenous people to urban areas in PNG was controlled by a system of labour indenture. Consequently, the few towns that existed prior to 1949 were small and preponderantly European in structure. But thereafter as rules of urban residence were relaxed, roads built and the public service expanded, voluntary movement replaced indentured recruitment. What was a trickle in the fifties and early sixties turned into a flood between 1966 and 1971. In Moresby the annual migration rate in that period was about 17% almost doubling the population from about 41,000 in 1966 to about 75,100 in 1971.¹⁹ The first migrants came from the contiguous Papuan Gulf and Central provinces. They were mainly single males who had acquired

skills during the war. They came looking for wage employment. Most lived on native traditional land with permission of the owners. Then they came in successive waves from Morobe Province the Goilala Sub-District, the New Guinea Highlands, and the Sepik. In all, however, the migration was overwhelmingly from the Papuan provinces. Even when the New Guineans came to Moresby in large numbers from the mid sixties to the early 1970^s, they did not constitute more than 9.1% of the migrant population.²⁰ The total New Guinea migrant population, including the Highlanders, did not exceed 25% of the total. The Gulf province in Papua was the main source of migrants providing by 1971 about 57% of the total in Moresby. While many of the migrants built their own houses on traditional Motu and Koitabu land with permission of the owners, many others “squatted” illegally on both government and traditional native land. We shall refer to the places where migrants built their houses, with or without permission, as “urban” or “squatter settlements”.

The number of urban settlements has increased steadily in Moresby. In 1950, there were 14; in 1964, about 18; in 1970 about 40; today about 42 to 45. All settlements exhibit a certain consistency in residential ethnic segregation. Generally, migrants cluster close to their *wantoks* who are people from their own provinces or even village. A large settlement is a mosaic of ethnic group — clusters based on home area origins.²¹ Small settlements tend to be constituted predominantly of one kind of people. All settlements are male dominated, but over the years, many migrants have come to regard Moresby as their home bringing increasingly their wives and children. Overall, living conditions in the settlements are still the worst in Moresby with a high unemployment rate ranging from 25 to 35%. Finally, note must be taken of one salient fact to migrant politics. Papuan-dominated migrant settlements share with the traditional native villagers of Moresby deep hostility to New Guinean Highlanders.

c) *Traditional Villages*

When the first Europeans arrived in the Moresby area, they met the native Motu and Koitabu people who inhabited villages along the coast. The Motu and Koitabu, although belonging to different language groups, have inter-married and peacefully co-existed. The original town limits excluded the villages. Native land was brought under Administration control so that private sales were prohibited. The Motu and Koitabu people were among the first to benefit from the schools established by the missionaries. When the public service expanded after World War II, they were the first to be recruited because of their acquisition of westernised ways and skills. By 1966, only about 16% of the total indigenous population in Moresby lived in the traditional villages which had been incorporated as part of the city. Today, despite the fact that many villagers live in government and business-provided houses in inland residential areas, the villages remain vibrant areas of traditional life. They assert a separate socio-cultural identity that sets them apart from the rest of the city. They are militantly anti — New Guinean and provide solid support for Papua Besena.

d) *Residential Suburbs*

Whenever one discusses the sprawling physical spread that characterises Port Moresby today, one is usually thinking of the planned residential areas. At first, Europeans lived at Ela and at Paga and Tuaguba hills which were racially segregated enclaves. When the forces of change were released after World War II, new residential areas had to be found to accommodate the in-

creased number of civil servants and wage earners. Economic expansion drove the city inland. Residential suburbs were erected at Boroko in the early fifties, but their inadequacy led to expansion to Hohola, then to Gordons, Waigani, Gerehu, and Tokarara. Each suburb was planned with modern municipal services making them among the best furnished housing facilities in PNG. When the Housing Commission was established in 1967, it initiated a system of mixed racial and ethnic residential patterns. The first inland settlement at Boroko was mainly European, but as localization proceeded briskly in the public service, the residential areas would be occupied predominantly by Papua New Guineans. Today, the residential areas are ethnically and racially integrated accommodating Papua New Guineans who are fairly well-educated and well-off as compared with most of their countrymen who continue to live in subsistence villages. When the government headquarters were transferred in 1975 to Waigani from the coast, this event triggered off a significant movement of facilities and auxiliary businesses from the old coastal town area to the inland valleys. Industrial areas have been established at 6 - mile and Gordons estate, although some industrial activities continue at Badili, Newtown, and old Peninsular Moresby. The city centre had shifted inland leaving the traditional villages, a large number of squatter settlements, and a few industrial and residential areas on the coast.

e) *The Moresby Electorates*

From 1964 to 1977, the electorates in Moresby had changed consistently for the general elections. In 1964, a separate Moresby electorate did not even exist. In 1968, as the city's population increased, one seat was allocated to it. In 1972, the number grew to two seats as the population continued its rapid growth; simultaneously, the boundaries of the city limits expanded as far north to the Laloki River; east to Pari village; and west to Barune including the government marine establishment at Napa Napa. By 1977, while the city boundaries remained essentially the same, the Capital District Province was created so that Moresby was given its own provincial seat. Further, the city now with over 100,000 people, was divided into three open seats, giving it a total of four seats in Parliament. The Moresby Open electorates were: (1) The North-East open; (2) The South Open; and (3) The North-West open.

Other changes in the Electoral Act for the 1977 elections also affected the parameters of Moresby politics. During previous elections, the government undertook to register voters; in 1977, voters had to register themselves. The Electoral Commission which had insisted that unregistered voters should only vote under unusual circumstances succumbed to political pressure during the final week prior to the elections to relax this stringent rule. The consequence was that pandemonium literally prevailed at most Moresby polling stations where large numbers of unregistered voters sought to exercise the franchise. As well, because of its greater simplicity, a first-past-the-post simple plurality system of voting was adopted, replacing the optional preferential system. Finally, 1977 witnessed the discontinuation of the "absentee home district vote" under which a migrant voter could opt to cast his ballot either for candidates in the district of his birth or of his current residence. In 1977 a voter was required to cast his ballot in the electorate where he had lived the previous six months.

Papua Besena's Performance in each Electorate

During the 1977 elections for the first time each political party contested for seats in Moresby. They would each have to face a common foe of unknown

strength, the Papua Besena movement led by Josephine Abaijah. In this part, we examine the performance of Papua Besena's candidates in each electorate to ascertain aspects of the movement's features such as organization, resources, cohesiveness, mobilization, and sources of strength. We shall present each open electorate separately describing the structure of the electorate, the background of the Papua Besena candidate, the structure of the contest, and an analysis of the results.

a) *The South Open Electorate.* This electorate has an estimated population of 29,267. The number of registered voters was 16,663 including 13,965 males and 2,698 females. The most distinctive aspect of the South Open was the very high concentration of squatter settlements in it. Of the 42 to 45 such areas in the city, over three-fourths were found in this electorate. Further, the South Open contained the main unplanned areas of the city. It is Papuan, dominated primarily by migrants who arrive everyday to join their urban *wantoks* in already overcrowded facilities. There were also four traditional villages in the South Open including Vabukori, Pari, Mahuru, and Kila Kila. Residential areas were at Paga and Tuaguba Hills, Newtown and Ela, the original places of European settlement. There were industrial areas at Badili, Newtown, and peninsular Moresby. The South Open faced the coastal sea and basically represented "the old city" where the first administrative buildings, residential areas, industrial sites, and overcrowded migrant settlements were located. But as the city moved inland, large numbers of civil servants and wage earners would in turn migrate to the flat inland valleys leaving a heavy residue of poverty-stricken migrants in the electorate.

Eight candidates competed for the South Open seat. None was a New Guinean. One was a European, another a naturalized citizen from Irian Jaya, and the others were all Papuans. Three candidates were affiliated to a political party or movement; the others were independents. The United Party's candidate was the former city mayor, Oala Oala Rarua; the Pangu Pati's candidate was Bill Rudd; and Papua Besena's endorsed candidate was Sevese Morea. The PPP had no candidate endorsed in this electorate. We shall discuss the candidacy and performance of Morea since he was the Papua Besena nominee.

Sevese Morea lived in Vabukori village and was 34 years old. He was a professional radio announcer, but simultaneously held a seat in the Port Moresby City Council where he rose to the position of Deputy Mayor. In the South Open, no doubt existed as to the identification of the Papua Besena candidate for Morea was widely known and hundreds of posters bearing both his photograph and Josephine Abaijah's were distributed and prominently displayed at public places throughout the electorate. However, since Papua Besena claimed that organizationally it was "amorphous", "keeps no records, writes no names and does not divulge its membership"²² some room existed for other candidates to declare that they were sympathetic to the movement hoping thereby to win votes for their electoral effort. Two such candidates existed in the South Open. Ravu Samuel, an independent candidate with strong church links to the urban settlements, said he was a Besena supporter. He, however, did not emphasize this point during his campaign; besides, he was absent from the electorate for most of the period immediately prior to polling. Oala Oala Rarua, the United Party candidate, was one of the Papuan nationalists in the early 1970^s to have expressed openly his criticisms of economic neglect of Papua. He, however, stood for a united PNG within which Papuan aspirations were to be redressed. In 1975 he was appointed

PNG's High Commissioner to Australia, but returned in early 1977 to contest for a Moresby seat in the general elections. On his return, he sought to organize a Papua Besena meeting to endorse his candidacy for the South Open, but the meeting itself was challenged on the grounds that it had no authority to endorse Papua Besena candidates. Subsequently, Oala joined the United Party but throughout the campaign this fact was rarely prominently projected.

Morea then had practically sole endorsement as the Papua Besena candidate. His financial resources were about K1,000 most drawn from his own resources since Papua Besena had no central treasury to give any of its candidates financial support. However, Morea was able to call forth a large cadre of Besena activists to provide volunteer service campaigning on his behalf throughout the electorate.

Morea's campaign organization was built essentially around community leaders and the City Council's ward committee system. The squatter settlements and traditional villages respond not to direct media appeals but through an indirect system of community leaders who interpret political events and advise entire communities how to cast their ballot. The City Council, controlled by a Papua Besena majority, appointed throughout the electorate a network of ward committee representatives who, for a small salary, link the opinions, demands, and complaints of their respective areas to the activities of the City Council. Many ward committee members were community leaders who Morea recruited to serve on his campaign organization. The City Council's performance was impressive in the squatter settlements and traditional villages. Community leaders impressed upon residents that continued improvements required them to support Sevese Morea. To a substantial extent, this was an unnecessary appeal since Morea's role in delivering services to these places was widely known throughout the electorate. Because most of residents in the villages and settlements were Papuans, this coincided with the primordial appeal of the secessionist movement. Morea, however, emphasized that they were not blindly casting their ballots for Papua Besena because they were Papuans, but because the movement, unlike the central government, responded to their needs. During the three days allocated for polling, Papua Besena's supporters came out in large numbers providing massive expressive demonstrations displaying the movement's strength and cohesiveness in the electorate.

Table 1 gives a polling booth by polling booth breakdown of the results. The victor in the South Open was Morea. His total of 3,537 votes was overwhelming; even if one adds the votes of his two closest rivals, they would still fall short of Morea's total by 700 votes. Morea obtained 36.7% which is less than a majority of votes cast. However, in a contest involving eight candidates, his plurality must nevertheless be considered impressive. The polling booths were located at points where the results could substantially be identified with particular squatter settlements, traditional villages, or planned residential areas. Although there were eight polling booths, most of the votes were cast at Kaugere, Koki, and the District Office. At Koki and Kaugere alone, Morea had piled up a total of 2,000 out of his final score of 3,537 votes. At all the polling stations contiguous to squatter settlements, Badili, Koki, Kaugere, Sabama, Saraga, and Kila, the Besena candidate won handily. The movement's support in these areas was overwhelming and undisputed. In the traditional villages, however, the results are mixed. Because of the location of the polling booths, only two village results at Pari and Vabukori were identi-

able. At Vabukori which was Morea's village he won over 80% of the votes cast. However, at Pari where both Oala Oala Rarua and Bill Rudd lived, Morea clearly lost heavily to these two candidates. Clearly, the traditional villages voted to support their own village candidates. At the residential areas, the results from the District Office were very striking. Here government civil servants and union wage workers predominated. Normally, this would be the sort of base that would support a Pangu Pati candidate. Bill Rudd, the Pangu candidate, won in this polling booth. At Newtown and Ela Beach where residential areas were mixed with quarters for domestics and workers, Morea won but not by as large margins as in the squatter areas. Finally, note must be taken of the Taurama polling station contiguous to the army barracks containing an ethnically mixed population. Here the secessionist candidate lost heavily. The evidence suggest, then, that at residential areas and at a barracks, where ethnically mixed communities exist and where public servants and wage earners predominate, the Papua Besena candidate did not do very well. Morea himself made little attempt to campaign among New Guineans especially in ethnically-mixed residential areas.

b) *The North-West Open Electorate*

This electorate had a population of 23,494, with 12,378 registered voters including 7,829 females. The North-West electorate was distinctive for its inclusion of both coastal villages and inland residential areas. It was almost like two separate worlds, one on the coast dominated by Motu villages and the other inland dominated by ethnically mixed civil servants, soldiers, and students living in planned residential areas, barracks, and dormitories. The traditional villages were Hanuabada, Baruni, and Tatana which together served as a counterweight against the inland population living in low-to-medium covenant residential areas at Hohola, Waigani, Tokarara, and Gerehu. There were also a few squatter settlements at June Valley, Morata, Badihagwa, and Gabi. Important institutional facilities in this electorate include the University of Papua New Guinea, the Administrative College, Murray Barracks, the Central Government Headquarters Buildings, the City Council, the PNG Arts Institute, and the Port Moresby Teachers' College.

Ten candidates competed for the North-West Open seat. Eight were Papuans and two New Guineans. All three of the established parties in PNG posted candidates. However, for Papua Besena, there was some confusion. There appeared to be two Papua Besena candidates, Patterson Kila, and Mahuru Rarua Rarua. The former explicitly used the Besena label openly, but the latter, who is an established leader among pro-Papuan nationalists, ran as an independent. Investigation revealed that there was a significant split at the leadership level in the secessionist movement resulting in the formation of two opposing committees that individually arrogated to themselves the power to nominate Besena candidates. In some cases including the North-West Open, this cleavage came to public light, although this was not the case in all electorates where Besena candidates competed. The nominating committee established by Abaijah chose Patterson Kila to represent Papua Besena even though Mahuru Rarua Rarua was the most prominent Besena leader living in the North-West constituency. Rarua could have stood as the candidate of the other Besena nominating committee, but chose instead to stand as an independent knowing full well that his public image is that of a major Papuan nationalist. Two reasons have been given for the Abaijah nominating committee by-passing Rarua. First, he had recently suffered from prolonged illness so that his health was in doubt. Second, but more credible, was the fact

Table 1 Moresby South: Polling Booth Results

| Candidates | Koki | Kaugere | Vabukori | Sabama | Pari | Taurama | Daugo | Kila | Saraga | Ela Beach | New Town | District H.Q. |
|------------|------|---------|----------|--------|------|---------|-------|------|--------|-----------|----------|---------------|
| Toka | 114 | 89 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 10 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 31 | 10 | 118 |
| Samuel | 73 | 211 | 13 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 25 | 14 | 26 | 12 | 15 | 28 |
| Seaka | 55 | 207 | 6 | 99 | 5 | 31 | 1 | 11 | 7 | 20 | 8 | 168 |
| Au | 146 | 28 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 117 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 12 | 5 | 86 |
| Rumbiak | 61 | 42 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 7 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 10 | 2 | 31 |
| Morea | 988 | 1,132 | 253 | 151 | 16 | 89 | 49 | 185 | 68 | 127 | 110 | 365 |
| Rarua | 225 | 166 | 12 | 18 | 226 | 278 | 9 | 16 | 13 | 39 | 49 | 268 |
| Rudd | 88 | 193 | 12 | 42 | 109 | 52 | 3 | 62 | 24 | 106 | 74 | 413 |

that Rarua was very independent-minded, had his own personal Besena base located in the Motu traditional villages, and advocated greater Papuan internal autonomy but not secession. As Lord Mayor of Port Moresby, he had the additional advantage of controlling the City Council. Importantly, both Papuan nationalists, who were for outright secession, and those who advocated greater Papuan internal autonomy within a united PNG, together adhered to the Papua Besena label. Patterson Kila selected by the Abaijah committee was for secession. The elections demonstrated that the "secession versus greater autonomy" differences between Besena advocates went as far as an open fight with one group pitching its candidate against the other.

Mahuru Rarua Rarua was born in Hanuabada village. He expected most of his votes to come from the traditional villages in Moresby which would provide a nucleus of support to build a winning plurality. He expected additional votes from the inland residential areas because he felt that as Mayor of Moresby he performed well in those areas. He, however, restricted most of his campaign activities to the traditional villages working on the strategy that the other candidates would so split the votes from the inland sector of the electorate that he would win by controlling the large bloc of votes from Hanuabada, Tatana, and Baruni. Patterson Kila was born in the Gulf Province but lived in Hohola. He expected few votes from the traditional villages which he considered as Rarua's preserve, but expected votes from the many Papuans who lived in the ethnically-mixed residential areas at Hohola, Tokarara, Waigani and Gerehu. He stood on a platform that advocated Papuan rights and secession, delivered his public speeches only in Motu, and did not expect New Guineans to support him.

During the elections, Rarua and Kila mounted separate campaign organizations with the former drawing Besena volunteers primarily from the villages while the latter recruited them from the residential areas. The struggle then was as much among the various party candidates as between the competing Besena candidates. Until the final week before polling began, this division persisted. But then something very significant occurred. The Pangu Pati candidate, Gavera Rea, who was earlier regarded as "bound to lose" because he allegedly neglected the coastal segment of this electorate which voted him into office in 1972, assembled a large volunteer organization that intensified its campaign throughout the electorate. Rea's effort caused consternation among Besena supporters from both camps. The result was that Abaijah reached a partial accommodation with Rarua and began campaigning for him. Kila's campaign which had failed to develop momentum was not eliminated however. But it became clear that the threat of a Pangu candidate winning a seat in one of Papua Besena's self-described strongholds was strong enough to lead Besena supporters and leaders from both camps to close ranks on the hustings against the common Pangu foe. The massive mobilization of volunteers, trucks, and scrutineers displayed by Rea on the first day of polling caused a further consolidation of the two Besena organizations which pooled their resources on the two final days of polling urging voters to support Rarua first, or if the voter did not like Rarua, to vote for Kila. Under threat, the Besena candidates and supporters practically coalesced and collaborated in their efforts. They showed that while a leadership struggle existed, their common opponent was the Pangu Pati.

Table II gives a polling booth by booth breakdown of the results. The victor was Rarua, but an indication of the intensity of the electoral battle was the fact that he won over Pangu's Rea by only 25 votes. Together, Rarua and Rea

Table 2 Moresby Northwest: Polling Booth Results

| Candidates | Tatana | Hanuabada | Kanudi | Hagara | Gerehu | Waigani | Tokarara | Hohola | Elcom | Napa Napa | Murray Barracks |
|-------------|--------|-----------|--------|--------|--------|---------|----------|--------|-------|--------------|--------------------|
| Daure Gaigo | 252 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 92 | 34 | 5 | 18 | 0 | 1 | 41 |
| Okona | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 33 | 19 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 30 |
| Rea | 84 | 123 | 86 | 154 | 917 | 676 | 125 | 187 | 69 | 20 | 658 |
| Kila | 9 | 5 | 11 | 2 | 289 | 143 | 38 | 129 | 35 | 0 | 171 |
| Isorua | 15 | 3 | 13 | 0 | 152 | 67 | 10 | 37 | 11 | 1 | 93 |
| Rarua | 269 | 659 | 69 | 544 | 390 | 355 | 72 | 140 | 58 | 17 | 573 |
| Goava | 15 | 106 | 8 | 58 | 138 | 32 | 15 | 22 | 8 | 3 | 110 |
| Bobby Gaigo | 47 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 16 | 7 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 29 |
| Ivaraoa | 6 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 57 | 46 | 10 | 45 | 5 | 0 | 117 |

Traditional Villages

| | RARUA | REA |
|------------------------|---------------|-------|
| 1. Hanuabada | 659 | 123 |
| 2. Tatana (and Baruni) | 269 | 84 |
| 3. Hagara | 544 | 154 |
| 4. Kanudi | 69 | 86 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | 1,541 | 447 |
| DIFFERENCE | 1,541 – 447 = | 1,094 |

Residential Settlements including Squatter Areas:

| | RARUA | REA |
|--------------|---------------|-------|
| 1. Gerehu | 390 | 917 |
| 2. Waigani | 355 | 676 |
| 3. Tokarara | 72 | 125 |
| 4. Hohola | 140 | 137 |
| 5. Elcom | 58 | 69 |
| 6. Napa Napa | 17 | 20 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | 1022 | 1994 |
| DIFFERENCE = | 1994 – 1022 = | 972 |

practically dominated the electoral contest. The polarised battle occurred in striking correspondence to the two geographical physical wings of the electorate represented on one hand by the coastal traditional villages and on the other by the inland residential settlements. Tables III and IV illustrate these points.

Rarua's margin of 1,094 votes in the villages was not substantially different from Rea's margin of 972 votes in the residential areas. At the polling booth at Murray Barracks, Rea scored 658 votes to 573 for Rarua closing the gap by almost a hundred votes. Clearly, Rarua's strength was concentrated in the traditional villages. He was born there but so was Rea. But Rea's popularity had fallen enormously in his own village while Rarua, who directed funds from the City Council to be utilised to improve roads, water supply, street lighting etc. in the villages, had both his pragmatic performance in distributing services as well as the Motu fear of New Guineans to capitalise on. Abaijah was unable to redirect village votes from Rarua to Kila because of Rarua's personal strength. Finally, Rarua who did little campaigning in the inland residential areas, did obtain many votes there. It is quite possible that had Kila not run, most of his 847 votes would have gone to Rarua making the margin of victory much more decisive. The results also demonstrated that in residential areas dominated by public servants and wage earners, Pangu was very strong.

c) *The North-East Electorate*

The authors have analysed this electorate in Chapter 2 of this volume. Moresby North-East had a population of 26,907 with 6,431 registered voters divided into 4,239 males and 2,192 females. The occupational, class, and ethnic mixture in this electorate is unique. Professionally, the electorate is dominated by salaried civil servants and wage earners who live preponderantly at Gordons and Boroko. Further, of all the Moresby electorates, only this one had a majority of New Guineans over Papuans. Clearly, Papua Besena

candidates would find in the electorate a fairly hostile environment for their electoral prospects. Six candidates competed for the North-East seat, three Papuans and three New Guineans. All three major parties mounted candidates. The Pangu Pati placed Patterson Lowa, its campaign manager, while the United Party, feeling that the preponderance of New Guineans over Papuans offered an opportunity to win its first urban seat, entered Harry Hoerler, an articulate and aggressive mixed-race New Guinean. The PPP placed Fide Bale, an attractive Morobe woman who was previously a school teacher, but at the time of the elections a businesswoman.

Papua Besena knew that the North-East electorate would be difficult. Unlike the other electorates that had large identifiable and sympathetic Papuan settlements the North-East was dominated by residential areas with educated and well-off people most of whom owed directly or indirectly their employment to the government. As in the North-West, Papua Besena faced problems in selecting a single representative. The upshot was that two highly regarded Besena leaders entered the race, but in a manoeuvre calculated to maximise their chances of winning, both declared that they were independent candidates. However, among most Papuans they were known. What they could not count on was that ethnicity in this electorate would be determinative of voter preference. Secondary associations such as clubs, neighborhood groups, sporting organizations, Parent-teachers' Associations, unions etc. — all ethnically-mixed were likely to recast the interests and priorities of the voter rendering his choice of candidate less influenced by primordial factors as by criteria of performance, record, issues, economic interests, and the like. These facts also strongly influenced the type of campaign strategy and techniques that were employed in this electorate. Whereas in the traditional villages and squatter settlements it was necessary to recruit community leaders to obtain votes, in the ethnically-mixed residential areas, as were preponderantly found in the North-East electorate, effective appeals had to be based on the media and house-to-house campaign that emphasized one's own performance, political affiliation, and record.

The two covert Papua Besena candidates were Lahui Tau and Goasa Damena. Tau was an elected member of the City Council from Boroko. He was an able trade unionist and served as chairman of the Bavoroko Community School Board. Tau expected votes to come from Boroko where he insisted that he was popular because of his service as a city councillor and a community leader, but, he also expected votes from Papuans particularly from those living at the Korobosea Koitabu Village, 9-Mile and Erima. Tau allocated only K500 to his campaign obtained from personal funds. Damena was a medical doctor who had worked as a public servant for several years. He had risen to the presidency of the Public Service Association, a fact that led many observers to predict that he would win. He expected the votes of most Papuans especially those who lived at Erima and Korobosea village, but calculated that his victory plurality would come from public servants. He conducted a low-keyed campaign that budgetted for only K1,300 and was barely visible throughout the elections. Neither Tau nor Damena utilised large campaign organizations or held public rallies. They ran highly personalised campaigns that linked their candidacy to the voters through a system of "contact points". But it was clear that the comparatively meagre financial and volunteer personnel resources that were available to Papua Besena in this electorate had to be split between Tau and Damena.

Neither of the Besena candidates was prepared for the sort of systematic and

vigorous campaign that came from Patterson Lowa and Harry Hoerler. In particular Lowa, a highly trained ex-professional soldier who at one time was in a position to become head of the PNG Defence Force, mounted a massive mobilization of vehicles and volunteers that practically obliterated the visibility of Damena and Tau on polling day. Only Hoerler was capable of putting up a similar display of strength and then only at the polling booth at Boroko. Table 5 gives the polling booth breakdown of the results.

The victor by a decisive margin was Pangu's Patterson Lowa. Although his votes were 716 more than his closest rival, the total constituted only 29.9% of the votes cast. But Lowa's victory was very significant for it was to be the only seat in Moresby that the Pangu Pati won defeating the Papua Besena challenge. The sources of Lowa's votes attest to Papua Besena's archilles heel. The Gordon and Boroko polling booths which together provided 70% of all votes cast gave Lowa his greatest support. These were ethnically-mixed residential areas with a high density of public servants and wage workers. An examination of the polling booth results in the South and North-West open would also show that in these residential areas the Papua Besena candidates performed badly. Lowa's victory margin although concentrated at Boroko and Gordon's, was spread over the entire electorate; he won at all but two of the polling booth areas. Equally noteworthy as Lowa's victory was the fact that the United Party's Harry Hoerler received the second highest votes. The total of Tau and Damena votes (614 + 643 = 1257) was less than Lowa's total of 1,423 and less than half of the combined votes of the New Guinea candidates. Overall, the votes were much more spread out among the candidates than in other Moresby electorates. The victory of Lowa would throw an important qualifier to the claims that Papua Besena held undisputed control over the capital. It seemed that where wage earners and salaried civil servants predominated so as to constitute a majority in an electorate, the Papua Besena cause had little chance of flourishing.

Table 3 Moresby North-East: Polling Booth Results

| Area | Kose | Bale | Damena | Hoerler | Tau | Lowa | Informal | Total |
|----------|------|------|--------|---------|-----|------|----------|-------|
| YWCA | 11 | 18 | 31 | 9 | 56 | 73 | 27 | 225 |
| Boroko | 52 | 135 | 131 | 199 | 151 | 279 | 153 | 947 |
| C.A.A. | 9 | 60 | 8 | 30 | 26 | 166 | 0 | 299 |
| Gordons | 189 | 180 | 287 | 374 | 293 | 591 | 155 | 2,089 |
| 9-Mile | 49 | 49 | 4 | 3 | 25 | 36 | 45 | 211 |
| Bomana | 19 | 21 | 6 | 35 | 34 | 83 | 31 | 229 |
| Taurama | | | | | | | | |
| Hospital | 18 | 18 | 39 | 35 | 18 | 69 | 16 | 213 |
| Bavaroko | 8 | 19 | 48 | 11 | 25 | 60 | 10 | 181 |
| Erima | 26 | 16 | 55 | 9 | 15 | 27 | 0 | 174 |
| Postal | 1 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 19 | 0 | 26 |
| Total: | 382 | 517 | 614 | 705 | 643 | 1423 | 492 | 4,757 |

d) The National Capital Provincial Electorate

This electorate consisted of the combined Moresby open electorates. In one of

the most suspenseful electoral battles during the 1977 general elections, Josephine Abaijah, the acknowledged leader of the Papua Besena secessionist movement, faced Sir Maori Kiki, Deputy Prime Minister and the second most powerful person after Michael Somare in the Pangu Pati. Abaijah represented as much a challenge to the authority of the government to rule as to the integrity of the country to remain in one piece. Hence, beyond the mere mathematics of the electoral contest were larger symbolic issues which went to the fundamentals of the PNG political system.

Five candidates competed for the regional seat. Two were independents while the remaining three were party or movement candidates. However it was clear that the battle was essentially a two way affair between Abaijah and Kiki. The remaining candidates would be eclipsed by this larger struggle.

Unlike the other Moresby electorates where Papua Besena's nominees were divided, in the regional Abaijah without equivocation was the movement's sole representative. Her stature had grown immensely over the preceding years so that an element of charisma surrounded her candidacy. She was still young in her late thirties and her consistent performance as a vocal advocate of Papuan rights rendered her a formidable figure.

Abaijah's strategy was simple. Her target was the Papuan population largely concentrated in the traditional Motu and Koitabu villages, and in the Papuan dominated squatter settlements located for the most part in the South open electorate. The strategy did not entail the neglect of Papuans who were civil servants living in the residential areas of the city. She did expect some votes from them, but felt that since they owed their livelihood to the government, their attachment to the movement would be qualified and diluted. The strength of Abaijah's campaign was developed around a wide network of community leaders many of whom were linked to the City Council. Her campaign did not suffer from the same sorts of division in resources caused by the presence of two competing Papua Besena candidates running for the same seat. Practically all Besena candidates regardless of whether they belonged to one or the other nomination committee in the movement's leadership endorsed and campaigned for Abaijah as the choice for the regional seat. Since the voter had two ballots to cast one for an open candidate and one for a regional, the presence of only one conspicuous Besena candidate for the regional facilitated maximum mobilization of Besena sympathizers of all nuances to cast their ballot for Abaijah. What partly facilitated this cohesiveness and mobilization was the fact that Abaijah de-emphasized the secession issue pointing mainly to the economic neglect of Papua.

Sir Maori Kiki, a Papuan from the Gulf Province, was one of the best known PNG nationalists. He was at the forefront in organizing the formation of the Pangu Pati that vigorously advocated the independence of PNG as a united country. In 1972 when he won the Inland Moresby seat, he built his majority on the votes of wage earners, civil servants, and squatters from both Papua and New Guinea. But since 1972, Kiki was charged with major national responsibilities of a fledgling government. He was responsible for Foreign Affairs and Defence, a portfolio that engaged most of his efforts on matters unrelated to the interests of his electorate. While Kiki was pre-occupied with matters specifically related to the transfer of independence status to PNG, the Papua Besena movement erected its credibility on criticisms of government neglect of Moresby. On that platform, Besena successfully captured a majority of seats in the City Council and exploited that base to demonstrate that it could best attend to the demands of the people for water, roads, electricity,

sewerage facilities, employment and housing opportunities etc. When Kiki came to the regional contest he faced a movement that was much more than symbolic rhetoric. It had delivered on its promises; it had a pragmatic basis in performance. Nevertheless, allegations were made that the City Council tilted its budgetary allocations in favour of Papuan villages and settlements giving only peripheral attention to areas where New Guineans and expatriates resided. This accusation provided a wedge which the Kiki campaign would exploit suggesting to the electorate, particularly New Guineans, that a fair government representative of all interests could not be expected from a Papua Besena government.

Kiki's campaign was tied into the organizational efforts of the other Pangu candidates in the open electorates. It was well organized, extensively utilised the media, and plentifully supplied by financial and volunteer resources. Kiki realised that his best hopes were in concentrating on the residential settlements where civil servants and wage earners lived; the army barracks, and certain squatter settlements. Not much attention was given to the traditional Motuan villages. Outwardly, Kiki's campaign appeared to have picked up sufficient momentum during the final days of the elections so that predictions of an Abaijah victory became tentative.

Table 4 National Capital District Results

| <i>CANDIDATES</i> | <i>VOTES</i> |
|-------------------|--------------|
| John Banono | 1,693 |
| Tom Kimala | 1,132 |
| Ron Boyce | 393 |
| Albert M. Kiki | 6,191 |
| Josephine Abaijah | 12,905 |

Abaijah was the victor obtaining more than twice as many votes as Kiki. The results also show that the battle was essentially between Abaijah and Kiki. The polling booth results can be divided into four groups for analysis, namely those from:

- (1) Urban settlements
- (2) traditional villages
- (3) residential housing areas and
- (4) the army barracks.

Abaijah's largest margin of victory was obtained from polling booths located in the squatter settlements.

Urban Settlements

| | KIKI | ABAIJAH |
|------------|------|---------|
| 1. Koki | 293 | 1,447 |
| 2. Kaugere | 273 | 1,593 |
| 3. Sabama | 66 | 235 |
| 4. Kila | 76 | 187 |
| 5. Saraga | 29 | 91 |
| 6. 9 Mile | 113 | 33 |
| | 850 | 3,588 |

DIFFERENCE

3,588 – 850 = 2,738 votes

Abaijah's performance in the squatter settlements over Kiki was only slightly better than her performance over him in the traditional villages.

Traditional Villages

| <i>VILLAGES</i> | KIKI | ABAIJAH |
|----------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| 1. Tatana and Baruni | 68 | 558 |
| 2. Hanuabada | 107 | 774 |
| 3. Kanudi | 77 | 111 |
| 4. Hagara | 112 | 720 |
| 5. Vabukori | 38 | 196 |
| 6. Pari | 73 | 272 |
| | <u>477</u> | <u>2,631</u> |
| DIFFERENCE | 2,631 - 477 = 2,154 | |

The group with the largest concentration of votes was the residential housing settlements. In a number of cases, the polling booths situated here drew upon squatter settlers who resided nearby. But, substantially, the votes cast at these polling stations were from residents in the planned housing settlements. In these areas, Abaijah also defeated Kiki but her margin was considerably less than in the villages and squatter settlements. The results suggest that not only did more Papuans in these areas vote for Abaijah than for Besena candidates in the open electorates, but that Abaijah herself was something of a populist to whom much admiration was directed if only because of her persistence in criticising a central government that had allegedly become indifferent to the needs of Moresby electorates. However, this is not to suggest that Abaijah received any support from New Guineans, but that many Papuan civil servants and wage earners found in Kiki an object in which to cast a negative vote against the government. The results for the residential are as follows:-

Residential Areas

| | KIKI | ABAIJAH |
|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| 1. Gerehu | 342 | 1,143 |
| 2. Waigani | 640 | 647 |
| 3. Tokarara | 110 | 165 |
| 4. Hohola | 167 | 425 |
| 5. Elcom | 65 | 136 |
| 6. Newtown | 95 | 163 |
| 7. District Office | 481 | 735 |
| 8. Ela Beach | 124 | 211 |
| 9. Boroko | 438 | 313 |
| 10. Gordons | 695 | 760 |
| 11. Bavoroko | 86 | 62 |
| 12. Taurama Hospital | 100 | 73 |
| 13. Erima | 42 | 109 |
| TOTAL | <u>3,915</u> | <u>4,942</u> |
| DIFFERENCE: | 4,942 - 3,915 = 1,027 | |

Before proceeding to the polling booths at the army barracks one significant point should be made. It is that on an electorate by open electorate basis, Kiki lost to Abaijah in the South Open and North-West open, but won against her in the North-East open by a margin of 306 votes. Partly, this can be explained by the fact that in addition to a preponderance of residential areas found in the North-East was the equally significant point that the electorate had a majority of New Guinean voters. Confronted with Abaijah who is anathema to New Guineans, conceivably they rallied together voting for Kiki. The results for the regional in the North-East electorate were as follows:-

Kiki/Abaijah Voting Support in the North-East Electorate

| <i>POLLING PLACE</i> | KIKI | ABAIJAH |
|----------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| 1. YWCA | 75 | 86 |
| 2. Boroko | 438 | 313 |
| 3. CAA | 185 | 49 |
| 4. Gordons | 695 | 760 |
| 5. 9 Mile | 113 | 37 |
| 6. Bomana | 95 | 53 |
| 7. Taurama Hospital | 100 | 73 |
| 8. Bavoroko | 86 | 62 |
| 9. Erima | 42 | 109 |
| 10. Postal | 21 | 4 |
| TOTAL | <u>1,850</u> | <u>1,546</u> |
| DIFFERENCE: | 1,850 – 1,546 = 304 | |

Finally, the polling booths at the soldiers' barracks were significant. Many analysts projected that Kiki, the Minister of Defence, would carry these votes overwhelmingly. However, a more informed opinion would have pointed to the generally felt feelings among many soldiers that Kiki had mistreated their military commander and had allegedly paid more attention to his personal farm than to the needs and interests of the soldiers. One caveat should be inserted, however, about Abaijah's victory at the barracks polling stations. It is that many soldiers did not vote and that many residents in areas contiguous to the barracks voted at the polling stations there. The results were:-

Military Barracks and Contiguous Areas

| <i>PLACES</i> | KIKI | ABAIJAH |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1. Taurama | 59 | 156 |
| 2. Murray | <u>506</u> | <u>1,052</u> |
| TOTAL | <u>565</u> | <u>1,208</u> |
| DIFFERENCE: | 1,208 – 565 = 643 | |

Summary and Conclusion

The most striking aspect that emerged about Papua Besena during the elections was the leadership split that led to the formation of two separate nomination committees. The schism spilled over to other provinces where

Besena entered the elections. This was especially conspicuous in the Rigo Open and the Kairuku-Hiri Open, both electorates belonging to the Central Province. To a certain extent the leadership division coincided with another significant point that the elections brought out, namely, the cleavage between supporters of secession versus advocates of increased Papuan autonomy within a larger PNG nationhood. Papua Besena supporters as a whole down-played the secessionist theme during the elections, but a significant majority of candidates in particular felt that it was “too late” to pursue separation, choosing to demand that the Papuan provinces be given maximum powers to govern their own internal affairs.

Organizationally, the movement does seem “amorphous”, a fact that facilitated, but did not create, the public expression of the leadership split. The movement seemed to be highly decentralised in the sense that individual Besena leaders appeared to have their separate and discrete following in different parts of Moresby and the Central Province. For example, Morea’s supporters were highly localised within the South electorate, while Rarua felt sufficiently strong independently in the Motu villages of Hanuabada, Tatana, and Baruni, to challenge Josephine’s choice of a nominee for the North-West electorate. A local Besena leader evidently builds his support around his own village, clan, or ethnic group, then increases his following in geographically contiguous areas by utilizing secondary factors such as character, record, and performance. Both Morea and Rarua anchored their nucleus of their support in their own village, then sought additional votes from other constituencies based on their city council performance. Perhaps, one of the reasons that accounted for Damena and Tau losing in the North-East electorate was the absence of a similar nucleus group of fairly equivalent strength of either Vabukori or Rarua’s clan in Hanuabada.

The single most powerful linkage that gave Papua Besena some overall organizational cohesiveness and purpose was the candidacy of Josephine Abaijah. In the Central Province, the Papua Besena regional candidate, James Mopio, served a similar function for Papua Besena candidates in the Open electorates. When the Pangu Pati mobilised its huge campaign machine that practically overwhelmed all other candidates during polling days in Moresby, the combined effort of Abaijah and Mopio (who was so convinced of winning his own seat that he spent much of his time campaigning for other Besena candidates in the Capital) rallied the Besena troops to offer some opposition especially during the final day of polling. In effect, in the face of an attack from their arch adversary, the Pangu Pati, it appeared that Abaijah and Mopio were able to temporarily bridge the differences among Besena supporters and candidates for a concerted and cohesive counter-attack. The absence of external pressure, however, seems to provide the occasion for internal differences to surface splitting the cohesiveness and strength of the movement.

The popularity of Papua Besena in Moresby derived from its control of the City Council. Each of the Besena candidates, especially Tau, Morea, and Rarua, who were City Councillors, utilised ward committee representatives to campaign on their behalf. It was a most effective vehicle of persuasion since it simultaneously recruited prominent community leaders and pointed to the performance and achievements of the candidates through the Besena-controlled City Council. The growth in popularity of Papua Besena could be attributed to this nexus — the linking of performance with symbolic appeals.

Finally, the sources of support for Papua Besena have been fairly clearly

delineated by these elections. First there was no gainsaying the fact that, with rare exceptions, it was supported only by Papuans. Second, not all Papuans in Moresby supported the movement. Had this been so, given that Moresby is very preponderantly (about 70%) a Papuan town, the Besena majorities should have been more decisive. It lost the North-East Open and barely won by 25 votes the North-West Open. It is now left for us to identify broadly Besena areas of support. Clearly, the Papua-dominated squatter settlements especially those in the South Open overwhelmingly supported Papua Besena. These are essentially poor areas with a high incidence of unemployment. We have no evidence to suggest that New Guinea residents in a similar socio-economic category supported the separatists. Indeed, it is quite credible as suggested in the beginning of this paper that the Papuan squatters see their New Guinean counterparts as competitors for scarce jobs and services. The traditional villages, with the exception of Pari in the South Open but not in the Regional, gave overwhelming support also to Papua Besena. Here, the Motu and Koitabu villagers might have also reacted to the competition for jobs by New Guineans, but to this was added the problems associated with the loss of their traditional land either through illegal squatting or through sale to accommodate the expansion of the city. Finally, the planned residential areas which were ethnically-mixed and dominated by civil servants and wage earners threw up the most resistance to Papua Besena. In the North-East Open, these areas gave Kiki the edge over Abaijah; similarly in the North-West Open, these areas provided Rea with a counter-weight against the large majorities compiled by Rarua in the traditional village; in the South Open, Morea lost to Rudd in the major residential area represented by the District Office, although overall Morea won in the residential settlements but by slim margins. Abaijah on the other hand did much better than the Besena Open candidates in these same constituencies. What is clear is that the residential areas are not unequivocally Besena or Pangu territory in the same decisive way the squatter settlements and traditional villages are the preserve of Besena. An important factor that must be inserted in this regard is that during the elections the PNG economy and Port Moresby in particular had continued to suffer from relative economic stagnation largely derived from the failure of enough foreign investment to enter the country. To control inflation, the government had applied a tight rein on the demand for wage and salary increases from workers and civil servants. Papua Besena hammered away very effectively at the economic performance factors during the campaign, carefully under-playing its political secessionist aspirations. Consequently, it is very difficult to gauge how much of the support Besena received, especially in the residential areas, was more a negative reaction against the economic policies of the government than an affirmation of the separatist movement's platform.

The 1977 election in Moresby was not very decisive. To be sure, Papua Besena won three out of four seats conceding only one to Pangu. One of the three seats won was by only 26 votes. However, what is undisputable is that Moresby, previously a Pangu stronghold, had practically fallen into Besena's hands via the outcome of the 1977 general elections and earlier via the outcome of the 1974 city council elections. On these grounds Besena can claim popular endorsement of its program. The government can counter with equal force that the results in 1977 were not decisive, and just as significantly, since Papua Besena won by criticising the government's economic performance and under-playing its separatist aspirations, the results could not be interpreted as a referendum on the national unity issue. Further, one of the three successful

Besena candidates, Rarua, had indicated that he was against secession, but supported greater Papuan autonomy within a larger PNG nationhood. The latter position the government has now conceded in its devolution of powers to the provinces so that this new concession is likely to split the Papua Besena leadership further. It would be inaccurate, however, to suggest that the movement had lost its momentum. Practical concessions may not be related to the needs of a movement founded on primordial and value premises.

NOTES

1. For studies emphasizing this relationship, see Rupert Emerson, *From Empire to Nation* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1960); Charles W. Anderson, et. al., *Issues of Political Development* (Prentice-Hall, 1967).
2. See Walker Connor, "Self-Determination: The New Phase", *World Politics*, Vol. 20, 1967, p. 51.
3. Paul van der Veur, *Search For New Guinea's Boundaries* (Canberra, 1966), p. 154
4. J.L. Goldring, "One Nation or Two?" *The Australian Quarterly*, September, 1971, p. 109
5. See Ralph R. Premdas, "Secession and Political Change: The Case of Papua Besena", *Oceania*, June, 1977, pp. 266-269
6. Boio Bess Daro, *The Papua Besena Movement: Papua Dainai, Tano Dainai, Mauri Dainai* (Institute of Applied Social and Economic Research, Waigani, 1976), p. 9
7. See Percy Chatterton, "Perspective on Papua Besena", *Meanjin Quarterly*, September, 1975, p. 284
8. Josephine Abaijah, "Papua's Colonial Experience with Australia and New Guinea". Paper delivered on April 2, 1975, at the ANU's New Guinea Research Unit, p. 1
9. *Ibid.*, p. 7
10. *Ibid.*, p. 3
11. T.E. Dutton and C.L. Voorhoeve, *Beginning Hiri Motu* (Canberra: Pacific Linguistics Series, Series D, No. 24) p. ix
12. See Premdas, *op. cit.*, "Secession and Political Change", pp. 269-271.
13. Michael Banton, *Race Relations* (London: Tavistock Publications, 1967), p. 302
14. Abaijah, *op. cit.*, p. 13
15. See "Somare: Big 'If' to Papua Poll Plea", *Post-Courier*, March 11, 1975, p. 1
16. J. Langmore, "Economic and Demographic Forecasts", in *Port Moresby* edited by Langmore and Oram (Waigani: New Guinea Research Bulletin, No. 14, 1967)
17. See Nigel D. Oram, *Colonial Town To Melanesian City* (Canberra: ANU Press, 1976)
18. See A.V. Surmon and R. Gerard Ward, *Port Moresby* (Waigani: UPNG Printery, 1973), Geography Department, Occasional Paper, No. 1
19. See Richard Jackson, "The Urban Hierarchy in Papua New Guinea", in *An Introduction to Urban Geography of Papua New Guinea* edited by R. Jackson (Waigani, 1976), Geography Department, Occasional Paper No. 13, p. 1
20. N. Oram *op. cit.*
21. Richard Jackson, "The Social Geography of Papua New Guinea: A Small Start", in Jackson *op. cit.*, p. 53
22. Boio, *op. cit.*, p. 13

Chapter 4

ON THE PERIPHERY: NORTH FLY OPEN

Richard Jackson

This chapter concentrates on the North Fly Open electorate. However as a prologue one or two comments on the Western Province in general need to be made.

The Province is easily the largest in Papua New Guinea with an area of 37,700 square miles — bigger than the Benelux countries combined. The total population is a little over 70,000, of whom approximately 37,500 are over eighteen years of age. It would be interesting to know what the cost of collecting each vote is in such a thinly inhabited region. More importantly, the size of the province combined with its meagre population density made the Electoral Boundaries Commission's task of dividing it into reasonably representative electorates extremely difficult.

Before this election, Western Province returned three members to Parliament, from two Open electorates (North Fly and South Fly) and one Regional. Theoretically, these electorates could have been retained without exceeding the maximum limits for Open electorate populations (36,470) set down by the Constitution. Moreover, the existing two Open electorates did conform well with the local populations' perceptions of their province; that is, of two zones separated by thousands of square miles of uninhabited swamp grasslands. As will be seen later, it is perhaps just as well, however, that such a dichotomy was not further formalised. Certainly the division of Western Province into three Open electorates gives it rather more representation in the new Parliament than the national norm: one member per 17,700 persons as opposed to one per 22,400 for PNG. One electorate, South Fly, has a population some way below the constitutionally established minimum, and the other two, Middle and North Fly, are only just above that minimum.

In such a vast, thinly populated area the drawing of boundaries necessarily throws together very disparate groups and (less necessarily) divides culturally homogeneous or like groups. The Middle Fly electorate is especially odd in the former respect bringing together the peoples of the Aramia Valley and those of the Lake Murray/Suki areas, who are separated by vast, uninhabited tracts. This combination of disparate cultural groups was the reason for the only major objection to the EBC's proposals for Western Province: that the Lake Murray and Nomad areas be removed from the Middle Fly to the North Fly "because of linguistic and customary ties"¹. Had this objection been sustained the Middle Fly electorate would have been reduced to a size almost impossible to justify, fewer than 16,000 persons. The objection was overruled because of this rather than because of any lack of intrinsic logic or truth in the objection.

In the last Parliament all the representatives for the Province were Pangu supporters: Mr. Krenem Wonhenai (North Fly), Mr. Naipuri Maina (Western Regional) and Mr. Ebia Olewale (South Fly). As a result of the elections, the Province was represented by two P.P.P. members, one Pangu, and one United Party supporter. This should not be taken to mean that party politics

have a strong grip in the Province; far from it — in many areas the people were not even aware that an election was to be held until the election patrols arrived. Some might interpret the results as indicating a reverse for Pangu; in my view, it should be viewed rather as a reverse for individuals. If Pangu did err it was in backing individuals who, well before the election date and right up to it, seemed likely losers. Probably the only party line which could be expected to gain a strong following in the Province would be that of Papua Besena. In 1974 there were definite signs that in this (arguably the least developed) area of the country, Ms. Abaijah's arguments — if not her person — were receiving a favourable response in Daru and the coastal areas. It is a reflection of Mr. Olewale's political skills that he not only managed to control this response, but effectively smothered Besena sentiments. Further, in the elections, he retained his seat in a convincing fashion when many had predicted his defeat, and was the only sitting member in the Province to do so. Even so, one of the most interesting features of the election was the importance of the issue of secession; not, however, of Papua from PNG, but of North Fly from the rest of Western Province. Why?

Daru has been the headquarters of Western Province for more than 80 years. Its location as an administrative centre is far from ideal. It is almost 900 km by river from the source of the Fly. However, since for over half a century most of the northern half of the Province was ignored by Konedobu, Daru's isolation from the north hardly mattered. Daru's centrality as a labour recruitment centre for the Kiwai and other southern groups was sufficient. Occasional patrols ventured north of Lake Murray but in general the administration was content to leave the area to Dutch missionaries, Malay traders and, in some areas, to Dutch administration. The general opinion was summed up by one patrol officer "until muddy water assumes an economic importance, I think we may as well become relegated (sic) to the fact that economic development in this area is virtually impossible"². Kiunga Patrol Post was only established in 1952 when oil companies entered the area (unsuccessfully). Only when Indonesia took over Irian Jaya was any further interest shown. On this occasion a couple more patrol posts were built and two strategically located airstrips were sited at Kiunga and Ningerum. The area's development was otherwise left to the missions, the French Canadian Montfort Catholic Mission and the Asia Pacific Christian Mission.

The discovery of copper at Mt. Fubilan by Kennecott in 1969 has rather changed matters. The giant copper finds in the supposedly uninhabited Star Mountains of Papua were, for a while, everybody's idea of an economic saviour: they were to provide central government with alternatives with which to face secessionist demands from Bougainville; they were to provide the key economic support of a separate Papua; they were to provide jobs and opportunities in a province which had seen almost no economic development in 90 years. For various reasons the exploitation of Fubilan's wealth has been delayed now for more than eight years. In the course of this delay Waigani, Besena and Daru have all had time to reflect, to realise that the Fubilan mine could be another Bougainville in more senses than one, that the Star Mountains are inhabited by people with rights, and that the project will be located in the long ignored Kiunga district. Conversely, although annoyed by the delay in the opening of the mine, the North Fly people have themselves had the opportunity to reflect on the effect the mine's location could have on their status, and on the way their demands might now be heard. The proposals that Provincial Governments be funded to the extent of 1¼% of the value of each

province's exports are rather attractive to an area with K8 billion-worth of copper at hand, especially when that area has been neglected by Moresby and Daru alike for so long.

Proposals to move the Provincial Headquarters from Daru have long been made but not, till now, seriously considered. Today, in the face of growing agitation for a separate North Fly Province, it has become an important issue even for the Kiwai who would have found it difficult to have entertained such a proposal a few years ago. At the end of 1976 the Kiunga Local Government Council voted that North Fly (i.e. Kiunga District plus Nomad and Lake Murray) be declared a separate province. Immediately afterwards, the Fly River Area Authority, where North Fly representatives were no longer poor relations, actively sought, for the first time, alternatives to Daru. The northern representatives were diffident in their response; they did not wish Kiunga to be declared PHQ since that would inevitably tie them to the Western Province in its present form. Associations of North Fly residents in Daru and Port Moresby began at the same time to lobby for secession. A Deputy Provincial Commissioner was appointed to Kiunga. Kiunga (and Telefomin) landowners were accorded preferential treatment under the terms of the Ok Tedi Mining Agreement between the PNG government and BHP's subsidiary, Damco. The National Executive Council accepted that Kiunga District should receive special developmental assistance. Parties of surveyors, researchers, investigators and consultants (including the present writer) were despatched to the District.

In other words, this election took place at a fairly critical time for the unity of Western Province, and a major focus of interest in the election was, not which parties but, which individuals would win seats, and what would be the attitudes of these individuals towards the question of North Fly secession from Western Province.

The North Fly Electorate

Under the Organic Laws of the Constitution, electorates cannot straddle provincial boundaries. The copper deposits of the Star Mountains lie in land belonging to a people collectively known as the Min. In PNG there are approximately 23,000 Min, of whom about 5,000 live in Western Province and the remainder just across the provincial boundary in West Sepik. For several years, and especially since the copper discoveries, the Min have made representations for an electorate of their own. In this they have had support from those who were interested in ensuring that the people who would be most affected if mining proceeded should have some political representation. Partly as a result of this pressure a new Telefomin electorate was created by the EBC but, because of the Organic Laws, it only includes those Min in the West Sepik and does not include the Western Province Min nor the proposed mine site. The Western Province Min remain in the North Fly Open where they constitute about 19% of the electorate. The new Telefomin seat does include the Frieda River and some other smaller copper prospects. It is one of the smallest electorates in the country with a population of only 21,052 but it recorded a very high proportional turn-out during voting: 10,750 votes were cast, suggesting a turn-out of over 90%.

As mentioned above, the southern boundary of the electorate of North Fly Open excludes the Lake Murray area which is part of the Middle Fly. There is no doubt that Lake Murray people see themselves as part of any future North Fly Province. In the Nomad area the electoral boundary is particularly odd. Of

the seven Census Divisions in the Nomad District one is unpopulated, three were included in the Middle Fly and three in the North Fly. Although some division was necessary if both these electorates were to attain minimum population sizes, this division had an important bearing on the election result. It meant that a group (the Biami) of over 3,000 people were included in the North Fly having virtually nothing in common with the remainder of the electorate.

The northern quarter of the electorate is of extremely rugged, mountainous terrain peopled by the Min taro cultivators. South of the mountains, the country drops quickly down to altitudes below 1,000', to the ridges and swamps that are the home of the Ningerum, Yungum and Awin (Aekyom) peoples. The first two of these groups are split by the international border with Indonesia. Perhaps a third of the Yungum and rather more of the Ningerum are on the PNG side of the border. Border crossings in both directions are very common. Each group forms about 15% of the electorate. The Awin form the largest single group in the electorate with approximately 33% of the total population.

The whole of the electorate is poor. For a dozen or so villages in the south around the main centre Kiunga smallholder rubber plots earn cash. At Tabubil, the mine prospecting camp in the upper reaches of the Ok Tedi, the Min have gained good employment, health, and educational opportunities and facilities. But elsewhere there are almost no sources of income, no roads, poor educational facilities, and severe health problems. Because of lack of funds some areas have not even been patrolled for two, three or even four years. Consequently administration control is weak.³

The Candidates

The question of who did not stand for election is as interesting as who did: indeed it helped determine the winner. Given the Biami area's isolation and lack of common interest with the rest of the electorate, a Biami candidate assured of that area's block vote would have stood a good chance of winning. However, there was no Biami candidate. Nor was there a candidate from the Min area. Noah Daikimeng, a catechist with the Montfort Catholic Mission for many years and a resident of Golgubip village, seriously considered standing. However, he was persuaded that if he did stand, and was elected, then the vegetable growing projects of the mountain villages might collapse in his absence. Norbert Makmop, a Min from Bolivip, a public servant with the Office of Information, and a member of the Ok Tedi Development Company board, also considered standing. He spent several weeks at home testing conditions, and finalising his bride-price ceremonies. As virtually the only Min in public office, Makmop is continually expected and called upon to advise virtually all parties on 'what the Min want' or 'how will the Min feel about this'. In addition he is courted by a variety of organisations — government departments, provincial bodies — all hoping to get him 'on side'. In the end he seems to have decided that his present position gives him (a) enough inside knowledge of what is being planned by all levels of administration which would affect the Min and (b) enough freedom to ensure that in any attempt to act on behalf of the Min he would not be over-compromised by any official status. In any case, internal divisions amongst the Min meant that he could not be sure of their block vote.

The most interesting of the non-candidates was a kiap of some years experience in the Western Province, Charles Brillante. A fluent Motu and Pidgin

speaker he had never been on good terms with other expatriate kiaps in the Province, these people rather resenting his thorough-going self-identification with villagers. In becoming a citizen he had localised his name to Sali Birilanti and was a familiar sight, clad only in shorts and without footwear, on bush tracks in many parts of the Western Province. He was first to nominate for the North Fly seat and was out campaigning vigorously by early April. He was a Pangu sympathiser. By the third week in April he had walked from Ningerum to Kiunga campaigning in each village as he went; thence he had passed through all the north Yungum villages along the border. His campaigning was patient and strenuous. He took no carriers and made a big impression, especially on the Yungum. In one village, where our paths crossed, Kungim, he held three meetings in twenty four hours, one with each line in the village, but avoided completely any contact with the Catholic missionaries nearby, sleeping in the barrack house of the village. Wherever we went in the western half of the electorate gathering opinions for the development plan, villages would refer to Sali in enthusiastic tones. Unfortunately, Birilanti was not properly qualified to stand as a candidate and there were irregularities uncovered in his nomination papers. Consequently his nomination was disbarred and an appeal against this disqualification was rejected by the courts in Moresby.

In the end then, there were six candidates for the North Fly seat. The sitting member, Mr. Krenem Wonhenai, was at first diffident about standing once more. He had made virtually no speeches to Parliament during his term, handicapped by his ignorance of English. He relied rather heavily on the guidance of Naipuri Maina, the Regional Member. In the 1972 elections, he had been a surprise winner through fifth preferences, although with hindsight it was clear that his role as a founder member of Ningerum LGC had helped him secure a large batch of the Ningerum and West and North Awin vote. Wonhenai is a resident of Ienkenai village in West Awin a few miles south of Ningerum Patrol Post. In the late sixties and early seventies the population of West Awin, previously scattered in small bush hamlets, had moved en masse into large consolidated villages on the four-wheel-drive track running from Ningerum to Rumginae. In doing so, the West Awins were following the example of the South Awins who had made a similar move a few years previously to the Rumginae-Kiunga road. In the South Awin case, the move had been largely successful in forcing DASF to supply the new villages with rubber seedlings. The West Awin moved hoping that they too would get a similar sort of business. Unfortunately for them, the Ningerum area is much wetter than the Kiunga area, indeed with over 7,500mm rain a year it is one of the wettest places in the country. DASF considered that rubber could not be introduced in such an environment. Consequently, the West Awin found that they had uprooted themselves to no avail. Rubber seedlings were not forthcoming and other business was impeded by the abysmal state of the road and the absence of a reliable means of crossing the Ok Mart at Rumginae to join up with the much better Rumginae/Kiunga road. At the time of the last election, optimism was still ascendant. By 1977, despondency had set in. At least two of the large roadside villages had abandoned hope and had returned to their original bush sites. In this atmosphere of gloom, Wonhenai could not be at all sure of local support. Eventually he did decide to stand, as the official Pangu candidate.

Of the remaining five candidates, two were regarded as particularly strong contenders. The first, Sam Wingen, was an East Awin who had settled in Timindemasuk, a South Awin village close to Kiunga, in order to obtain adequate medical attention for his child, a polio victim. Wingen had been a

government interpreter in the sixties and had acted as such during the negotiations of land purchase by government in connection with the village rubber schemes and associated spontaneous resettlement. He had been a founder member of the Kiunga LGC in 1966 and had been chairman of it for several years. He had worked hard for the development of the area and it is no coincidence that the villages of his birth and adoption between them accounted for more than half the total rubber production of the Kiunga area in 1975/6. He was a reliable source of information to the villagers (insofar as the information he received was reliable) on what central government and provincial bodies had in mind for the area. He had advised villagers of the dangers of having their settlements too close to the Kiunga/Rumginae road if mining at Fubilan were to proceed. In the course of our own work, his adopted village, Timindemasuk, stood out as being vociferous, well-informed, and possessed of clear intentions. In several other villages we found that ideas from Wingen had been influential in the formation of village opinions on development goals. Well before the elections, Wingen had obtained and distributed general publicity posters for Pangu around the villages.

Furthermore, Wingen was (is) one of the main proponents of the demands for a North Fly Province. It was he who persuaded the Kiunga LGC in November 1976 to vote in favour of a motion supporting secession from Western Province. It was through this agitation that he succeeded in obtaining the posting of a Deputy Provincial Commissioner to Kiunga. He consequently gained considerable respect for his views from the Fly River Area Authority of which he was a member. He was called in by them to work on the constitution of and regulations governing the proposed provincial government. The time he devoted to this had a detrimental effect on his election chances. Further, when the Office of Minerals and Energy organised a major seminar in Port Moresby in late June to discuss proposals for the development of Kiunga District, it was Wingen who was invited to attend to represent local interests. He has also been a leading figure in the successful fight to obtain a High School for Kiunga. Lastly, he, together with Kala Swokin (his cousin) who was a candidate for the provincial seat, has ancestral ties with the Min being of mixed Awin-Min parentage. For many months before the election he had been building up a dossier of evidence to back his claim to certain land rights in the Tabubil area. In the absence of a Min candidate, many people the present writer included, believed he had a good chance of attracting votes from Imigabip (his ancestral village) and neighbouring mountain areas.

The other candidate regarded before the election as a strong contender was Warren Dutton. Dutton was the member for the North Fly from 1968 to 1972 having previously been a patrol officer at Olsobip and Lake Murray (then part of the North Fly electorate). He had become a PPP organiser in the early days of that party, having close ties with John Poe in particular. In the 1972 elections he was beaten by both Wonhenai and Wingen having failed, despite quite an intensive campaign, to get more than a score or so votes from the Nomad area and very few from Ningerum. Many people in the area believed that Dutton had a valid cause for complaint in this matter, alleging that members of the electoral patrol team used undue influence to persuade people not to vote for Dutton. However, he took no action. Instead he established a transport company at Kiunga (Ningerum Transport Co.) which was, outside of retailing, the only business in the area. The aim of the business was to cart Ok Tedi Development Co. materials from Kiunga by road to Ningerum under contract. Unfortunately the miserable condition of the road rather hindered

this venture, which cannot have paid well to date, if at all. Dutton, like Wonhenai, was doubtful about standing. If Birilanti stood then Dutton could not count on the vote of those, still numerous, who believed that a European could do a better job as an MP for the area than any local. He knew that Wingen stood a good chance and that few Awin were likely to vote for him with three Awin candidates (Wonhenai, Wingen, Simik) to choose from. He sounded out opinion in several areas and of several influential councillors, but did not get an overly-encouraging response. Some told him to concentrate on getting his business firmly established before considering politics again. This must have been a rather appealing argument for Dutton. However, when it became clear that Birilanti would be disqualified Dutton's chances seemed brighter, and he nominated only a few days before the deadline.

The remaining three candidates could not be considered as really serious contenders by any but their closest kin. But it was possible that they could affect, negatively, the chances of the other candidates in a first-past-the-post system. Isidore Kaseng, a schoolteacher from the rubber-growing village of Karengu in Moian CD and a Catholic, was known as a good public speaker. But he had few contacts outside his home area. Yangtem Katie was also a schoolteacher. Previously at the Protestant Atkamba school, he had been transferred to Debepari Community School in the Pare CD as headmaster in January 1977. He was unknown to most people in Kiunga. It seemed certain that he and Kaseng, both Yungums, would sew up that group's votes between them, thus diminishing Wingen's chances in particular. What was less certain was how much influence Katie had managed to acquire during his short stay in the eastern part of the electorate. Although the votes of the Pa CD could be his, they would make up only 4% of the total vote. Still, it was possible, if doubtful, that he had gained support in the much more populous Biami area. Simik Tetra, the final candidate, was a government employee, having succeeded Wingen as the Awin interpreter for the Kiunga District Office. With a European standing, the 'access to masta' factor was hardly operative on Simik's behalf, whilst the far more extensive contacts of Wingen and Wonhenai seemed to rule out Simik altogether. He had been heavily defeated in the 1972 election. Nevertheless, he could have taken a few vital votes away from the other two Awin candidates in the event of a close finish.

In summary then, six candidates fielded. Three were Awin, two Yungum, and one a naturalised citizen. Wonhenai stood as the official Pangu candidate and Dutton as the official PPP candidate. Of the others, Kaseng was endorsed by the United Party but seemingly received no material assistance from them. Wingen was no-one's official candidate but I believe he did receive concrete support from Pangu. Katie and Simik were independents. Of the six, four had stood in the 1972 election.

The Campaign

The North Fly Electorate covers well over 7,500 square miles of swamp, difficult ridge country, and extremely rugged, karst mountains. A candidate wishing to contact even half the electors would have to travel hundreds of miles. Birilanti, who had already done this before his disqualification, was exceptional in even attempting to personally contact a majority of the electors. Katie did attempt to campaign by means of lengthy foot patrols, indeed he had to do so if he was to stand any chance of winning. Without external finance his self-imposed task was a brave and impossible one. Indeed, the first point to be made about this campaign must be that, without finance to cover airfares,

even the most enthusiastic candidate would have very great difficulty in even making himself known to this electorate, let alone winning it. Kaseng, Katie and Simik had no chance of doing this; even though Simik was at least widely known in much of Awin through his work. Wingen, through his work on the Council and through contacts made on the Fly River Area Authority already had an established network of contacts. Dutton, Wingen, and Wonhenai had, relatively speaking, much greater financial resources at their disposal. The contrast between Katie — walking from village to village, haversack on back and with a young wantok for company — and Dutton and Wingen was almost pitiful. Dutton flew in from Port Moresby on a charter flight laden with goodies for his campaign and those of other PPP candidates in the Province — loudhailers, posters, party programmes, T-shirts, enamel badges, and cassette recorders complete with taped messages from On High. Pretty tame stuff compared with the enormous expenditure which occurred in some Highland electorates, but in relative terms a great advantage. The eventual first three place-getters were all funded candidates.

The second point, however, is that no candidate had the resources or the time to campaign in all areas of the electorate. Consequently each candidate, in theory, had to work out which areas would reap maximum returns for a minimum expenditure of resources. Assuming that almost all the Yungum and Awin votes would go to the five of the candidates who were themselves Awin or Yungum, then such a 'cost-benefit' analysis was restricted to four groups: the Min, Biامي, Ningerum, and Ba. From Dutton's point of view these were the vital groups, especially since the Awin and Yungum make up about 50% of the electors.

Table 1 Electors by Tribal Group

| Group | Population* | Estimated Voters** | Percentage of total votes |
|----------------------------|-------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| MIN | 4,927 | 2500 | 17.9 |
| BIAMI (& Upper Strickland) | 3,497 | 1820 | 13.0 |
| BA | 1,439 | 750 | 5.4 |
| NINGERUM | 3,000 | 1770 | 12.7 |
| YUNGUM | 3,056 | 1505 | 10.8 |
| AWIN*** | 10,814 | 5600 | 40.2 |
| Totals | 26,733 | 13945 | 100 |

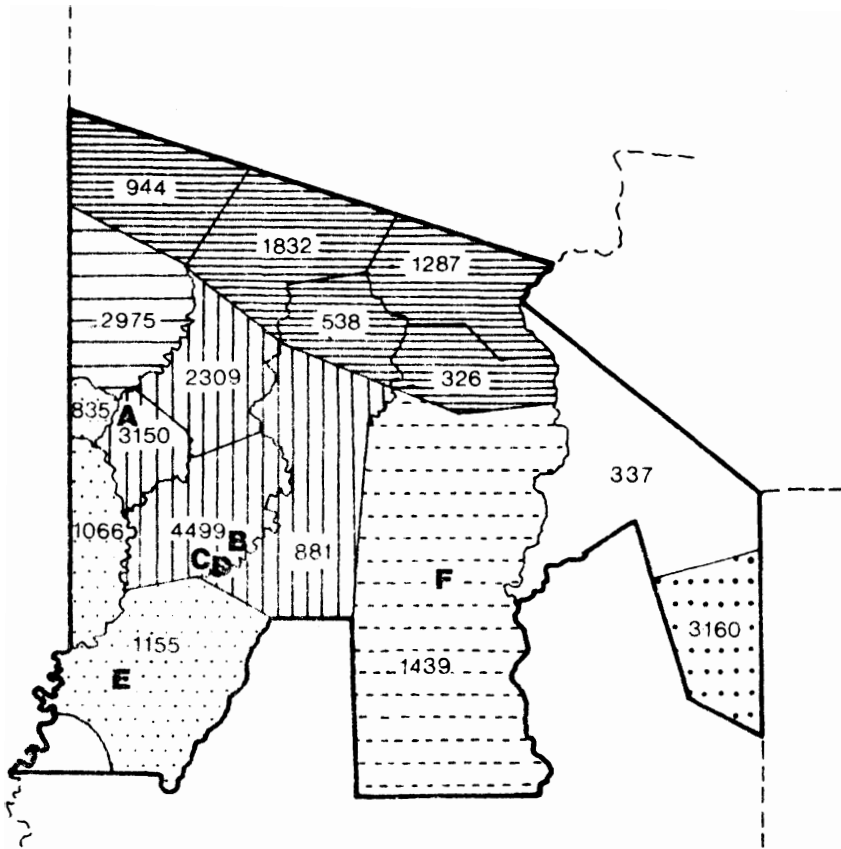
* For all but Biامي and Ba (which are taken from the EBC's estimates) all figures refer to censuses taken between 1973 and 1975.

** Estimated voters are those censused as being 18 years and over, except for Biامي and Ba where 52% of the population have been assumed to be in this age group. All figures are likely to be underestimates by 4-10% given likely growth rates since last census.

*** These figures included the populations of Rumginae and Kiunga, many of whom are not Awin. Awin probably make up 75-80% of these figures.

Looking at each of these four groups in turn, I believe it is quite easy to rank them according to a priority listing from the candidates' point of view. Given Katie's likely support amongst the Ba and this group's size and scattered nature, none of the other candidates would have been wise to make much effort there. The next smallest group, controlling about 13% of the vote, are

NORTH FLY OPEN: POPULATION



GROUPS

| | |
|--|----------|
| | Awin |
| | Min |
| | Biarni |
| | Ningerum |
| | Yungum |
| | Ba |
| | Others |

CANDIDATES

| | |
|----------|----------|
| A | Wonhenai |
| B | Wingen |
| C | Dutton |
| D | Tetra |
| E | Kaseng |
| F | Katie |

the Ningerum. Although not very numerous, they are easily the most accessible of the peripheral groups. A foot patrol of seven or eight days would, given good weather, be sufficient to visit almost all the Ningerum villages. Of the candidates only Dutton tried this, and, although he was hampered by flooded rivers, his trip paid dividends. The Biemi with a further 13% of the votes are important because they too are closely settled; their area is difficult to get into, but once there the candidate has access to a relatively large number of voters. The Min, though making up 18% of the voters, live in the most difficult country in the electorate. They are difficult of access in the extreme. The Murray Valley and Blucher Census Divisions have not been patrolled for four years; no candidate could hope to get there without very great expense, and none did. Only the Faiwolmin and the Star Mts. seemed possible targets, if difficult ones. The first because within one day's walk of Olsobip airstrip lie Imigabip and Golgubip villages containing around 500 electors, and the second because many of the Star Mts. people are now semi-permanent residents around the Tabubil mine camp, which has its own airstrip. Wingen hoped to collect votes amongst the Faiwolmin because of his blood ties. Dutton had hopes because Makmop, a non-candidate, and other Min in his employ were likely to recommend him to their kin, and also because of his period as a patrol officer at Olsobip. Furthermore, given the Min's extremely favourable reactions to 'Company' activities at Ok Tedi, Dutton could expect this to rebound in his favour. Wonhenai could assume that he would be hard put to get any Min votes, since Ningerum LGC, of which he is a member, had expelled the Min representatives from its deliberations two years previously. For all candidates, on the whole, the Ningerum and Biemi areas appeared to be the most promising targets, with the Min holding some hope for Dutton and Wingen.

Dutton had one other major advantage over his opponents in these remoter areas where the candidates were not well known. The North Fly was one of those nineteen electorates in which candidates' photographs were shown on the ballot papers. There could be no mistaking which candidate was Warren Herbert De Courcy Dutton under these circumstances.

Campaigning was, therefore, a basic matter of letting the voters know you were standing and what you looked like. Despite the fact that, therefore, policies played a minor role, they were, nonetheless, interesting. Wonhenai issued a poster in which the first plank of his platform was stated to be the need for a separate province for the North Fly. Since Wonhenai had not been closely associated with this campaign previously, indeed had been closely associated with Naipuri Maina whose support for such an idea must be minimal, one must assume that this was a device to take the wind out of other candidates' (notably Wingen's) sails. In his description of his achievements as a member Wonhenai claimed credit for the decision to build a High School at Kiunga, a claim which annoyed those (including Wingen) who had worked for several years on this project. Wingen's own campaign also emphasised the need for a separate province, although it is doubtful if this meant much to the key peripheral areas, whilst amongst those for whom secession meant something (the Awin and Yungum) votes were more likely to be given according to personal and kinship ties. Wingen also stressed the need for a road to link Nomad with Kiunga and Lake Murray. This might appear odd since neither place is actually in the North Fly electorate; indeed it was probably a mistake. But as a statement of intended policy it reflected Wingen's

view of the need to physically unite his conception of the parts of the new province. He also advocated, as he had for many months, that access to the outside world should be via Nomad to a road to Kerema to link up with an extended Hiritano Highway. Such a road would obviate, in his view, the necessity of having anything to do with the South Fly area; copper concentrates could be trucked out to the Gulf.

Dutton's policies were not very specific, and his generality did him no harm. He concentrated on winning votes rather than saying what he would do if elected. Posters and policies won few votes. In any case even assuming one could distribute posters, who was going to (could) read them? Wingen's posters were more prominent in Daru than in Kiunga. Wonhenai's was in Pidgin — for an area where the lingua franca is Hiri Motu.

The attitudes of the candidates towards campaigning varied. Dutton tried to plan a campaign based on numbers, concentrating on the Ningerum and Biama areas personally, whilst sending agents to the Min area and, less hopefully, to the Awin and Yungum villages which were relatively accessible. In doing this, of course, he knew he was tempting fate; any sort of planning in the Kiunga District which relies on efficient transport is automatically doomed. Dutton was indeed affected in this way. After spending a couple of days in Biama he was then stranded in Nomad for a week finally getting back to Kiunga via Mt. Hagen! Nevertheless, he still managed a shortened patrol in Ningerum. He was frustrated there somewhat by bad weather. He had left the Yungum areas till last hoping to campaign briefly a day or so in advance of the electoral patrol. He had just set off down the Fly to do this when he met the patrol team on its way back, having completed the collection of votes in record time.

Wonhenai had been a diffident candidate to start with and this attitude continued into the campaign period. He did some lobbying of Ningerum Council members; this must have made him realise what little chance he stood, since all the indications were that the Ningerum were solidly for Dutton and had no intention of voting for an Awin such as Wonhenai, even if he did happen to be grouped with them for LGC purposes. He then resorted to a different tactic: any Ningerum who voted for Dutton would go to jail after the election. To balance matters out, some supporters of Dutton at Kungim, a Yungum village near the Ningerum area, spread the same rumour but with Wonhenai's name replacing that of Dutton.

Wingen was confident of winning the election, or at least, he told many people that he would win. He spent much of the campaign period in Daru working on the Provincial Government regulations. He did visit the Biama briefly, but relied heavily on agents. He was correct in assuming that he would have support from the Min, but that support was severely eroded in the absence of a personal visit from Wingen and in the presence of one of Dutton's agents — a forceful young lady who had been Dutton's domestic servant (with her husband) for some years. Wingen must also have believed that Dutton would have some difficulty in co-operating with the PPP provincial candidate. This was Kala Swokin, an Awin, and Wingen's cousin. Swokin's sympathies were thus divided by party allegiance and blood ties. Swokin told us that the North Fly seat would be a very close thing. This, however, was a rather interesting remark, since at the time it was made, the end of May, many people, including myself, were convinced by Wingen's own confidence, and believed Dutton to be the underdog. As it turned out Swokin, like me, was very wrong, and Wingen must have been extremely annoyed at himself.

The Results

Out of an estimated electorate of 14,300*, a total of 9,946 (70%) cast their votes. In view of the difficulties involved in mounting electoral patrols this is a really remarkably high figure and reflects well on the efforts of the election staff. Of the votes cast Dutton won nearly 47% winning easily. In fact he polled more than the second (Wingen), third (Wonhenai) and fourth (Katie) candidates put together. An overwhelming win.

Table 2 The Results

| Candidate | Votes received | Percentage | Index of concentration* |
|-----------------|----------------|------------|-------------------------|
| Isidore Kaseng | 493 | 5.0 | 64 |
| Simik Tetra | 400 | 4.0 | 48 |
| Krenem Wonhenai | 1665 | 16.7 | 72 |
| Sam Wingen | 1822 | 18.3 | 52 |
| Warren Dutton | 4624 | 46.5 | 38 |
| Yangtem Kati | 942 | 9.5 | 46 |

* The statistical equivalent of a Lorenz curve. The lower the value the more evenly spread over the whole electorate were a candidate's votes.

Counting was conducted at Kiunga District Office. The first five ballot boxes opened were those from the Moian and South Ok Tedi Census Divisions, both Yungum areas. As expected almost all these votes were split between Kaseng (from Moian) and Katie (South Ok Tedi). Wingen scored a few votes, but Dutton's scrutineers were dismayed to find only one vote in the five boxes for their candidate. The next batch of boxes came from the Awin CDs. Wonhenai got nearly 80% of the North and West Awin vote (his home area); whilst Wingen got 97% of the valid votes cast by the East Awin (his people). The only minor break in this type of pattern was that Dutton did rather well in almost all the villages along the Kiunga-Ningerum road. However, when counting stopped on the first night the pattern of voting was almost exactly as one would have forecast: local boy makes good, but only locally. The really interesting boxes remained, but at this stage Wonhenai led narrowly from Wingen with Dutton a long way behind in third place.

From the remaining boxes, Wonhenai collected barely more than a hundred votes. Of the Ningerum vote, Dutton scooped nearly 98%, an almost incredibly high proportion which could barely have been bettered if Dutton had had armed men standing over the ballot box. He received more than three-quarters of the Biambi vote, Katie and Wingen picking up the rest, and two-thirds of the Min vote. Katie did not do well in Pare, Wingen receiving 60% of the vote. The pattern was crystal clear: Yungum voted for Yungum, Awin for Awin, and nearly everybody else voted for Warren Dutton.

Clearly, Dutton won not just because he is white, and not just because the peripheral groups had no candidate of their own, but because he was the only candidate who really campaigned at a basic level. Had Birilanti stood, then, undoubtedly his task would have been difficult, but, I suspect, the battle would still have been between the two Europeans since they both campaigned.

* The Electoral and Supplementary Rolls listed a total of 14,508 persons. When voters eligible under Section 141(1) are included this is increased to 15,513 I think the Rolls may overestimate the actual size of the electorate.

Wingen seems to have no-one but himself to blame for his defeat since he was not without funds and did start off with a solid political base and social contacts. Wonhenai's diffidence on standing at all was justified by the results. One wonders why, like so many other sitting members, he did stand; even more, one wonders why Pangu should have endorsed him as the official candidate. Katie could be reasonably pleased with his result even if it was somewhat worse than his campaign efforts deserved. Had he had more time to build up a campaign and had more finance, his willingness to go out to the people, even to those whom he could hardly expect to support him, would have been better rewarded.

For the country as a whole, two points emerge out of the election in the North Fly. No doubt the fact of Karl Kitchens' win over Paul Langro in the West Sepik Province will be linked with that of Dutton, and the comment will be made that whitey still clings on in the electoral backwoods. I can say nothing of Kitchens' win, but Dutton's win was not solely a matter of the 'masta' complex. In addition to the point of campaigning, he had also no rival who, through ethnic allegiances, would split his vote in his areas of influence. In any case the alternative to Dutton would have been a candidate who won with a very small proportion of the vote simply because he belonged to the largest of several small groups. However, it is certainly true that the activities associated with 'masta' at Tabubil and Mt. Fubilan — which, so far, have been enthusiastically received by most Kiunga District people — must have helped Dutton. The fact that in many of the remoter areas of the electorate the only services available to the people are those brought by white missionaries must be added to this.

Secondly, Dutton was, as far as I am aware, no overt secessionist, whilst Wingen certainly was and Wonhenai claimed he was. The voting clearly showed that secession was, as a political issue, irrelevant for most voters. But then, policy issues in general seem to have been irrelevant in this constituency. This is not to say that secession from Western Province will remain irrelevant; indeed the failure of secessionist minded leaders to win the seat could well increase both the agitation of the movement and the difficulties of placating (buying off, incorporating) such agitation. Ironically, although Wingen and Wonhenai lost, another secessionist, Kala Swokin did win the Provincial seat. Swokin appears to have swept up almost all the North Fly votes, the remainder being split by the southern candidates. Consequently, the Western Province was represented in the new Parliament by a man who wished to see Western Province split, or, at the very least, wanted to see a far greater share of the Western Province budget going in future to the Kiunga/Lake Murray/Momad areas.

So, for the people of the area which is most likely to be affected by mining, should Ok Tedi (and/or Frieda River) proceed, the political makeup of the new Parliament was much more satisfactory than in the old. They now had three representatives — Dutton, Swokin, and Iwoksिम Wesani (from Telefomin) — as opposed to one (Wonhenai) previously. Even though one might express some dissatisfaction with a regional system of appointing cabinet ministers which results in the Ministry of Mines going to none of these representatives, there is hardly ground for further complaint from the area of inadequate representation.

Acknowledgement: I would like to acknowledge here the debt I owe to Budai Tapari, Teaching Fellow of the Dept. of Geography, University of Papua New

Guinea who was my colleague during our fieldwork February-June 1977 in the collection of data for our Kiunga development study.

Notes:

1. *Report* of the Electoral Boundaries Commission, 1976, p. 21.
2. Kiunga Patrol Reports No. 1 of 1962/3.
3. For a more detailed description of the difficulties facing Kiunga District see R. Jackson, 1977, *Kiunga Development Study*, Dept. of Finance.

Chapter 5

‘THEY WANT TO BE THE HIGHEST ALWAYS’: THE ELECTIONS IN SIMBU

Bill Standish

The 1977 campaigns in Simbu differed from those of 1972 (Kuabaal 1976, Standish 1976b) because not only had political power been transferred with Independence but so too had the paths to great wealth been opened. In the colonial dusk of 1972 young men with few cash resources had struggled to travel around the electorates, speaking quietly or shouting to get their messages across. But in the post-Independence dawn the noise from the electronic amplifiers on their four-wheel-drive vehicles was deafening, and their generosity to followers and strangers was breath-taking. In both instances they had to contend with — and sometimes utilise — the parochialism of clan and tribal loyalties. In 1972 they had also tried unsuccessfully to use existing institutions such as the churches and local government councils to mobilise voters, almost all of whom lived in rural areas. In 1977 the expected rewards were great, so it was an intense campaign, and as one winner nicely put it, an ‘expensive’ one.

The intensity of the campaign, however, did not necessarily indicate the health of the democratic process in Simbu. Being mobilized to vote is not the same as being an aware participant in political processes, and the fact of political competition does not itself mean that the best men win — or even enter — the race. The political culture and social structure, as well as the political economy and individual personalities, affected the outcome of the campaign.

This paper¹ concentrates upon the campaign for the Chimbu Provincial seat, because it best illustrates the changes taking place in Simbu, but it also notes the linkages between Provincial and Open candidates, and members of the Simbu Interim Provincial Government (hereafter SIPG).² National politics permeates clan politics, and *vice versa*, so this paper takes the whole of Simbu as its arena. It opens with a brief discussion of the Simbu environment and the peoples’ political cultures and values, and a description of changes in the economy and political institutions since 1972. It sketches the context of political competition in 1977, and the activities of parties. The core of the paper is a description of the nomination and campaign periods in April-July 1977, and is followed by an analysis of voting patterns and their significance. The paper then briefly examines electoral administration and the violent aftermath of the elections, in an attempt to assess the legitimacy of the electoral process as a whole.

The Context

There are 214,000 Simbu people, 179,000 of them living on precipitous slopes in 5,890 sq km of the rugged central highlands.³ Sweet potato (*kau kau*) is their staple diet, and the pig is central to both their religious system and their social exchanges. Some 35,000 Simbu people have left their crowded home

environment seeking employment opportunities elsewhere in the country, and in a few instances have found land for resettlement. Throughout Papua New Guinea, Simbu men have acquired an unenviable reputation for belligerence. Population pressures within Simbu vary greatly in different ecological zones. Only about 10,000 people live in the southern half of the province, in the 500-1,100 m altitudinal zone known as the Karimui-Bomai. This is a warmer area with twice the rainfall of the northern Simbu; it has only a thin layer of topsoil which breaks down quickly. The Karimui-Bomai people have adapted to their ecological zone and become shifting cultivators; a few are virtually nomadic. Malaria, malnutrition and leprosy have kept population densities in this zone at around 3 per sq km. The people are distinct in their material and spiritual cultures from the rest of the Simbu population who live in the 1,200-2,500 m zone, where the population density reaches 200 per sq km.

Topographical features as much as population concentration have influenced infrastructure and economic development in Simbu. The Waghi River enters the Province in Kerowagi District from the west through a wide valley which also forms the route of the Highlands Highway. The Waghi then cuts south east to Gumine and Nomane before moving south west through the low-lying, barely populated Karimui-Bomai areas (see Map 1). Because of barrier terrain and pressure of population on scarce land, as well as remoteness and difficult access from the centres of governmental power, areas to the south of Waghi have received relatively few developmental inputs. This is clearly demonstrated by the concentration in the north, near the highway, of government credit and minor roads (Howlett *et al.* 1976, 246, 197). There are ten airstrips, but these are vital only to the people in the Karimui-Bomai area where there is no road access. The province is crossed by some 58 km of the main Highlands Highway, and there are 614 km of roads of standards varying from hair-raising to atrocious, which generally require four-wheel drive vehicles even during the 'dry' season (which coincided with the 1977 election period). This network was barely expanded in 1972-77, although the Gembogl-Gumine road on the north-south axis was upgraded considerably, as was also the Nambaiyufa 'loop' road during 1977.

Roads are the outlet for coffee, which apart from a little cardamom in the south is virtually the Simbu area's sole cash crop. They also provide access for government, the churches and commerce, and — during election time — political campaigners. Most rural people have moved down off the hills and live within an hour's walk of some sort of road, and a few hour's drive from provincial headquarters. Despite its population density, Simbu is not highly urbanized. Kundiawa has 3,500 people (a rise of 50 per cent on 1971), and Kerowagi district headquarters about 1,000 people only (a slight decline). There are four other main government stations, the district headquarters at Chuave on the Highway, to the east, at Gembogl on the Upper Chimbu River to the north, at Gumine to the south and at Kamtai (in Sinasina) in the centre, with patrol posts at Kilau (Nomane), at Karimui, and at Kup (south of the Waghi in the Kerowagi district).

Service industries and government aside, the modern economy consists almost exclusively of coffee growing, marketing and processing. There are some 40,000 smallholder coffee growers in Simbu (and no 'plantations' worth mentioning) and about 100 Simbu coffee buyers, each with a pickup vehicle. The buyers are loosely attached by credit arrangements to the province's two processing factories, Chimbu Coffee Co-operative Ltd (also known as the 'Society' and 'Wara Simbu') which has some 15,000 shareholders, and the

private company Chimbu Developments Ltd. (usually known as 'Wandi Coffee').⁴ Since 1970, with one brief gap, the Simbu market has been controlled, ostensibly in order to protect the Society from outside competition. The protection means that while growers may transport their own coffee to factories in the neighbouring Western and Eastern Highlands, it has been illegal for them to carry *other* people's coffee or for outside traders to cross the provincial border with Simbu-grown coffee. The subject of constant political contention, the 'coffee border' restrictions were frequently flouted in 1977, and this matter did arise during the 1977 election campaign.

By entering the world coffee trade the Simbu people lost their economic autonomy and entered the peasantry, a class of rural people which by definition is subordinate economically and politically. While Simbu productive effort is largely subsistence oriented, nowadays a surplus is extracted through the coffee industry. Cash is needed for certain household essentials, clothes, taxes and school fees, but coffee prices and hence incomes are dependent upon external market forces. Given the small size of their holdings and the sustained low prices, Simbu's 40,000 coffee growers earned, on average, less than K50 each from coffee in the years 1967-75. Very few Simbu work in wage labour within the province: 1,649 of a workforce of 2,425 in 1973 (Howlett *et al.* 1976, 288).

There were wider opportunities for a few wealthier men as the 1970s progressed. By 1978 there were some 199 cattle projects, with an average of about ten beasts each. There was no commercial abattoir and the cattle are mostly used for ceremonial and ultimately political purposes by their owners, usually middle-aged men whom I have here categorized as 'big peasants'. The usual road to commercial success in the 1960s and early 1970s was *via* a village trade-store, at which point many older entrepreneurs bogged down. But some stores became viable, and a small number of rural people became successful traders, that is, capitalists, while keeping up their subsistence and cash-cropping activities. In the 1970s coffee-buying and passenger carrying gained popularity with younger men. In 1977 picture-show houses (powered from portable generators) became a new trend, and after bottled beer sales taverns (called 'clubs') were usually the next step planned by rural capitalists.

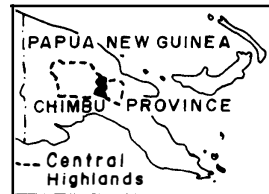
Social and cultural factors impinge upon Simbu politics as much as economic ones, although they can only be briefly sketched here. In addition to the *lingua franca* (*tok pisin*) and English, there are some thirteen languages in Simbu. Of these the most widespread, Kuman, is spoken by some 80,000 or more people in the north and west of the Province. Large groups of people speak the Golin (Gumine) language (26,700), Chuave (24,000), Sinasina (19,000), Dom (9,300) and Siane (now officially 'Siani', 8,000), some of which are closely related to Kuman (Howlett *et al.* 1975, 20). But these linguistic groupings do not generally form political entities.

The basic political unit in Simbu, for ceremonial exchange and for warfare, is the named exogamous clan, of average size around 700 people. Some clans are strongly allied with others forming phratries. Frequently several clans trace themselves from a common founder, and act together as a named political unit best called a tribe, numbering up to 5,000 people. Colonial political decisions, such as the selection of village officials on clan and tribal bases and subsequently using kinship units for local government elections and also administrative processes such as censussing, served to preserve the identity of clans and indeed to reinforce their potential role in contemporary institutional politics. In large electorates such as those for the Open seats in the National

Map 1 CHIMBU PROVINCE



- District headquarters
- Province boundary
- District boundary
- - - Census division boundary
- Highlands highway



SOURCE: ADAPTED FROM HOWLETT EL AT. 1976,

Parliament which cover around 30,000 people, political aspirants must first of all attempt to ensure they are the only candidate within their own clan and tribal base, and be sure of mobilizing their kinsmen and women to vote as their primary catchment of support, before utilising existing alliances with other groupings and finally appealing to the electorate at large.

The desired qualities of leaders have varied with circumstances, as will be illustrated by this paper, but they can be listed briefly. By way of an ideological statement, Simbu leaders and ordinary villagers nowadays argue that there is an hereditary element in leadership: leaders must be the sons of leaders, a principle which is often observed. Yet many are eligible by this criterion, and indeed genealogies can be bent and fabricated; in fact the strongest sub-clans usually provide the leaders. Early missionary observers noted that major clan decisions were often made by a group of older leaders, without a single dominant leader. There are recorded cases of despotism by clan leaders in pre- and early- colonial times, and it would be a mistake to see Simbu leadership as solely consensual (Standish 1978). As elsewhere in the highlands (cf. Read 1959), Simbu people perceive 'strength' as being the attribute and/or characteristic which allowed a man to become prominent, to gain influence and ultimately power.

Before colonial pacification, a tough physique and fearlessness and skill in warfare were important elements in making a name for oneself, but usually not enough to win a leadership role. Energy and the capacity to work hard and produce wealth were necessary to build up the wherewithal for exchange relationships which in turn would increase the resources available for further exchanges. While a leader extracted resources from members of his group, he also had to redistribute some of his wealth and gain a name for generosity. This economic aspect of his political activities required great skill in the management and manipulation of men and women, and was usually accompanied by oratorical skill and a reputation for wisdom. Ambitious men might thus take decades to reach the top of their society, although the stresses of warfare might facilitate the rise of the more fiery personalities whose bullying dominance would be accepted, given the need for unity and discipline in times of threat.

In the colonial era adept men who collaborated with the new rulers often gained prominence, cleverly utilizing the power of the *kiap* (patrol officer) and the police as well as the introduced wealth of the white men in entrepreneurial ways. Another early avenue for advancement was through the Christian missions. The Catholics can now claim some 50 per cent of Simbu people as adherents. Although only two Simbu have been ordained as priests the church appeared to this observer in the 1970s to be strengthening its local political influence by encouraging lay 'mission leaders' to take an active role in religious and other community affairs in the name of the church. Women and men hold prayer sessions and political discussions at night in the men's houses in rural areas. More churches were being built (another manifestation of tribal and clan consciousness), and some of the older, formerly polygamous, big-men are being baptized. The Lutheran Church, now with most of its expatriate clergy replaced by Simbu, has also been an obvious ladder to political prominence. But it seemed to me to be losing some of its influence during the 1970s, as other avenues for advancement opened, as it reduced the services it offered (such as schools), and as there was a resurgence of traditional practices (such as the ceremonial pig-kills) previously discouraged by the church and its indigenous evangelists.

Skill in *bisnis* (business), and *save* (knowledge of the new ways) became increasingly important with the spread of the cash economy and modern education in the 1960s, so that by the early 1970s the most obvious common dimension of political conflict was that between generations. Middle-aged, non-literate, pidgin-speaking colonial politicians such as councillors and parliamentarians, often with essentially peasant economic activities (large coffee holdings and pulpers, modern enclosed piggeries and cattle projects and in some cases still village trade-stores), were confronted increasingly by a politically ambitious younger generation of English-educated public servants and commercial entrepreneurs.

Change in Simbu 1972-76

The most dramatic single phenomenon in Simbu life in the 1970s was the resurgence, after a twenty year lull, of tribal or clan warfare. This simple statement covers complex and varied processes. I have argued elsewhere that the fighting resulted from stresses on Simbu society, including population increase and land pressures arising from cash cropping. One also finds disillusionment with the modern economy leading to frustration and boredom. The return of fighting coincided with the run-up to Self-government and Independence, a time of great uncertainty when fears were held in many parts of the highlands that a national government would be unable to maintain public order. Feeling insecure, the clans sought to strengthen and assert themselves, by force. With their legitimacy undermined in the era of decolonization, and having lost operational control of police in most areas along the Highway, the members of the colonial field administration relaxed their grip and were impotent, and old clan grudges were remembered and new disputes allowed to fester. In the context of political confusion in the transitional era, older clan leaders chose to revive precolonial forms of fighting with the aims of increasing both clan solidarity and their own local political stature (Standish 1973).

Competitiveness between clans which had lacked expression through the colonial era was revived quite deliberately in these new struggles, many of which have lasted several years (Kerpi 1976). The old men taught the youngsters the ancient war skills and battle tactics, and young men were keen to participate because it gave them unassailable rights within their clan to land and assistance with collecting their bride-price. While prestige *bisnis* activities were often destroyed so as to hurt one's opponents' pride, some men of *bisnis* actually encouraged warfare. This had the side-effect of distracting the poorer members of their group resentful of the unequal distribution of nominally clan-owned resources such as land. Inter-clan and -tribal conflict thus inhibited the development of class consciousness, but did not eliminate the inevitable competition between generations in a rapidly changing society.

In terms of the 'development' school of political science (Pye 1965), Simbu was a rapidly modernizing society (Deutsch 1961) in the 1970s, which partially explains the increase in conflict and the heightened ethnic consciousness in Simbu, which was noted during modernization elsewhere (Melson and Wolpe, 1971). Communication had greatly improved: not only did almost all adult men under 50 years speak *tok pisin* but Radio Kundiawa had started broadcasting daily in *tok pisin* and Kuman in late 1972. Transistor radios became common especially after the coffee boom started in 1975: by 1977 there were three in the dozen houses within earshot of my residence in Mintima village 8 km west of Kundiawa. The roads have improved, and (although accurate figures of motor registrations are unobtainable) Simbu vehicle

ownership increased several-fold. But the most striking figures showing the change in the society relate to the new generation of young people (still mostly men) who received formal education in the decade before the 1977 elections. In 1965, only 20 per cent of the school age population were in school; the proportion reached 50 per cent in 1972 and stayed at that level. Each year in the mid-1970s over 3,000 pupils left school, mostly hoping to enter the job market. Post-primary enrolments rose from 120 in 1965 to 1,800 in 1977. In 1974, some 332 graduated from Simbu high schools with grade 10 certificates and expectations of well-paid, powerful and prestigious employment, yet by then the main localization phase within the public service has slackened. By 1977, this first large generation of school leavers was competing in both the economic and political arenas in Simbu.

The young men of Simbu who gained economic prominence in the 1970s did not do so as peasant producers, but as traders. Perhaps using extended family (sub-sub-clan) money, their basic resource was thus capital, rather than land, and often (in the first instance) the labour of kinsmen. Village trade-stores are often run for prestige purposes, are subsidized by coffee earnings, and frequently wane at the end of the coffee harvest or 'flush' (April-August), when social pressures for credit and declining cash flows prevent restocking. In 1972 some 2,072 store licenses were sold by local government councils, for K6.00 a piece, and to my knowledge no-one was declined a licence. The number remained fairly steady during the prolonged slump in coffee prices 1973-75, but grew to 2,565 in 1977 with the coffee boom (ECL 1979, 191). Where businessmen appear to be running trade-stores which are viable on their own, rather than using coffee to subsidize the stores, I have classified them in this paper as traders rather than peasants.

There have been very few successful Simbu traders. Wholesaling has remained an expatriate dominated preserve. One storekeeper from Gembogl expanded his operations with the help of the Development Bank, buying a large shop in urban Goroka for K200,000, but his case was unique. Only three Simbu businessmen managed to build up and maintain small fleets of large trucks on government roadwork contracts, and only two kept vehicles going in long-distance highway haulage. Two started service stations but only one of these operations survived.

Coffee buying seemed an appropriate level for the managerial skills of the budding Simbu businessmen of the 1970s. This is a ruthless and sometimes cut-throat trade, requiring a sharp brain and thick hide as buyers and growers try to outface and outwit each other (with the price paid dependent on the quality of the beans and their weight, the amount of water and even the number of pebbles in the bags), and the buyers attempt to stake out exclusive territory for their operations. In 1972 most of the thirty-four licensed Simbu buyers were employed by expatriates, or by the two factories. In 1977 there were about 100 Simbu buyers, only fifteen employed directly by the factories, with the rest operating on informal contracts with the factories which provided cash advances (totalling up to K0.5m at a time) and which sometimes also helped finance the vehicles which every buyer needs. Some were buying for Western Highlands factories and others acting as 'dummies' or front men for expatriates married to Simbu and Western Highlands women. Basically, however, we can say that the Simbu by 1977 had taken over coffee buying, a process hastened by 1974 changes to the coffee industry legislation. Only one of Simbu's older generation politician-entrepreneurs survived in this tough game, and he always used young drivers, clerks and other hands (*boskru*) who

are effectively bodyguards. In the age of the electronic calculator, coffee buying is a young man's game.

The world coffee market is extremely volatile, and Papua New Guinea roadside buying, processing and exporting so competitive that roadside prices for 'parchment' coffee paid to smallholders will rise within twenty-four hours of a frost in Brazil. From 1967 to mid 1975 roadside prices were in a long slump, as low as 22t/kg, but they rose steeply from July 1975 to a peak of K1.76 in April 1977 and fell rapidly to about K1.10 in July 1977. Buyers' costs for delivery to the factory are about 11t/kg, and their profit margin depends on their skill and ruthlessness and the competition at the roadhead. Depending on managerial skill in making forward contracts, and luck in anticipating market trends, the greatest profits are to be made by the processors and exporters, as is indicated by the graph in Figure 1. But in a rising market all stages of the industry can make large profits, because buyers return to the factories to find the price of parchment coffee has risen in the few days since they were given their advance and suggested roadside buying prices. Similarly, processors and exporters selling 'green bean' find prices may have risen since they placed their orders. I saw hardworking and intelligent buyers build up businesses with assets worth tens of thousands of kina in a few months in the 1975-77 boom, and the two Simbu factories made annual profits of over K500,000 at that time, over 100 per cent of their capital.

The peak coffee prices, and the 1977 harvest, coincided with the 1977 elections. Total Simbu earnings from coffee rose from around K5m annually in 1972-75 to K15m in 1976-77, and average peasant incomes from K50 to K200. The pattern described by Townsend for the Highlands as a whole in 1976 was clearly shown in Simbu. He estimates that of about K28m returned to highland smallholders, roughly K6m was spent on vehicles, K3m on savings, K2m on council taxes and commercial businesses, K9m on school fees, air travel, clothing, cigarettes, tools and food.

A massive K8m was spent on beer in the highlands (Townsend 1977, 168), much of which entered the exchange network, for example as part of marriage and funerary payments, a phenomenon which in Simbu had started in the 1960s. The graphs in Figures 1-3 show that the peak prices for coffee, and the coffee flush, were matched by massive beer sales in Simbu. Beer is a prestige commodity and its formal gift (prestation) boosts the renown of those who provide it in a way not dissimilar to the kudos gained by those who make prestations of pork in the competitive inter-clan ceremonial exchanges. To make this simile explicit, for the first time in 1977 I heard some witty young English speakers in Simbu describing beer as 'small pig'. Functionally, the purpose of beer prestation may be similar to that of home grown meat, but beer brings less status. The productive base is quite different because purchase of beer only requires cash, while the production of animals requires land and labour. Abundance has brought a slight decline in the value of beer, just as in earlier days the shells the whiteman used as trade goods were devalued (Strathern 1976; Hughes 1977), but beer nonetheless is still very much a prestige food. Young traders may raise very few of their own beasts, but they can outshine all but the most wealthy peasants in their prestations of beer.

At a higher level of business organization the close links between government, politics and business are clearly demonstrated. The Chimbu Coffee Co-operative started as a heavily government sponsored venture in 1964, and has survived outside competition only with the protection of successive governments unwilling to lose political face through its collapse. As the largest enter-

FIGURE 1 : Prices at different stages of coffee processing,
Papua New Guinea averages 1973-77

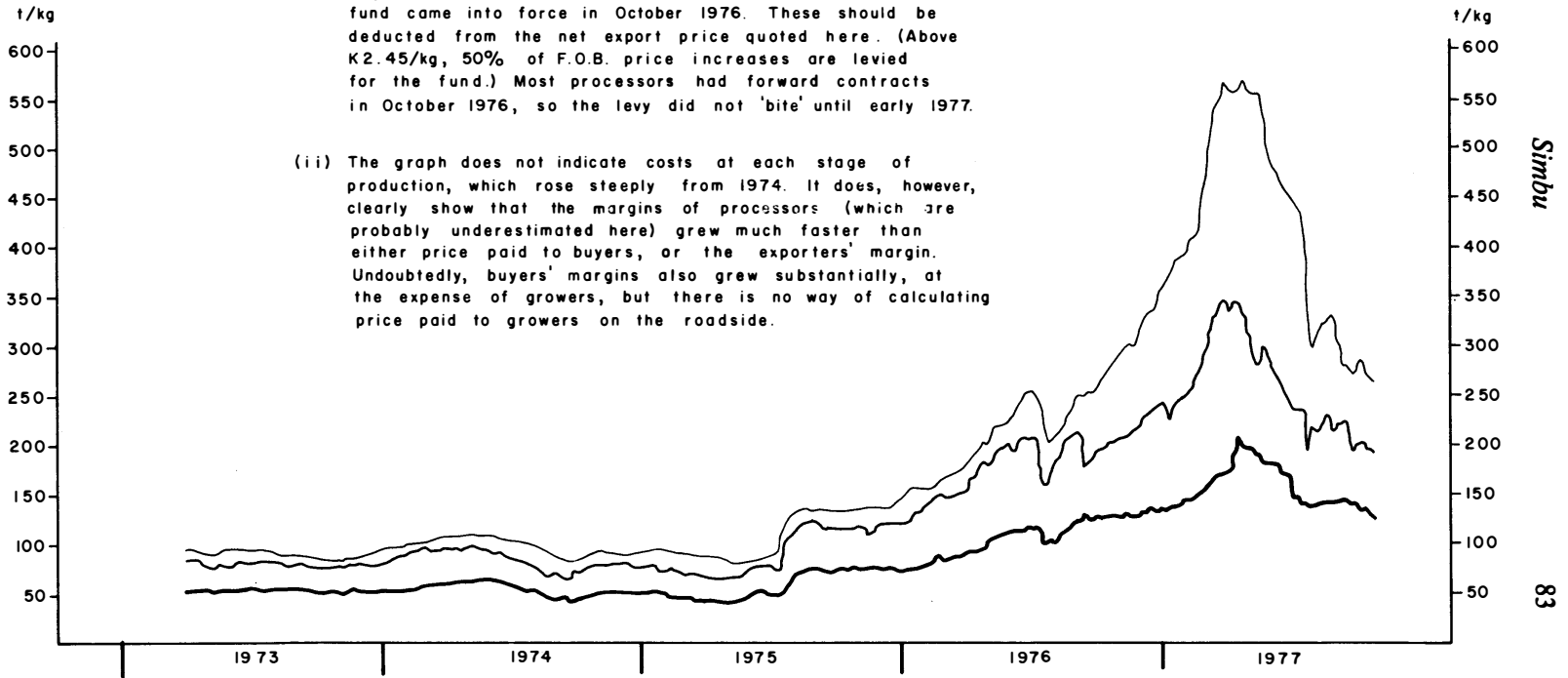
Key :

- Bottom graph: Factory door prices quoted for parchment coffee.
(NB: Add approx. 20-30% for 'green bean equivalent' price.)
- Middle graph: Price for Y-grade green bean coffee, in-store Lae. (Factory quote.)
- Top graph: F.O.B. Lae price for Y-grade green bean coffee (exporter's price.)

Source : Coffee Industry Board, Goroka

NB : (i) Higher levy rates for the coffee price stabilisation fund came into force in October 1976. These should be deducted from the net export price quoted here. (Above K2.45/kg, 50% of F.O.B. price increases are levied for the fund.) Most processors had forward contracts in October 1976, so the levy did not 'bite' until early 1977.

(ii) The graph does not indicate costs at each stage of production, which rose steeply from 1974. It does, however, clearly show that the margins of processors (which are probably underestimated here) grew much faster than either price paid to buyers, or the exporters' margin. Undoubtedly, buyers' margins also grew substantially, at the expense of growers, but there is no way of calculating price paid to growers on the roadside.

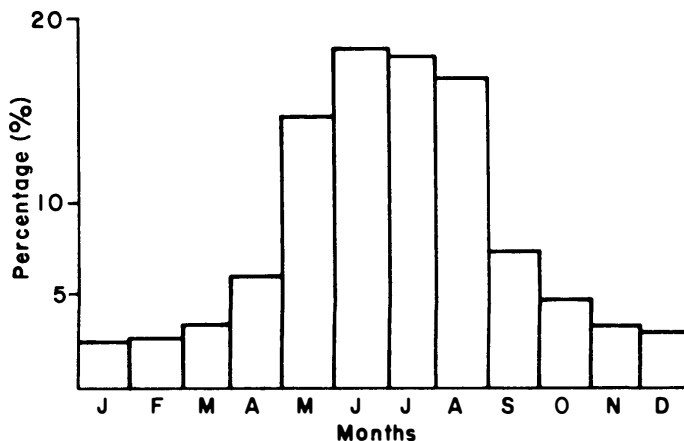


prise in the province apart from government, it is a potential source of great patronage in the form of jobs, credit and vehicles — all immensely useful political resources. Its profitability has fluctuated wildly and it has been the subject of constant political struggle (which may or may not have been resolved in late 1979 when the interim provincial government bought in and took control). Apart from its large factory, buildings and plant, it has small experimental plantations at Bomai in southern Simbu. The Lutheran church in 1972 expanded its own supply lines into forming a trading arm, Kuman Holdings, to fund its operations. It invested in rental housing, stores, a motel and a service station in Kundiawa and a clothing factory at Kerowagi, as well as a coffee processing factory at Banz in the Western Highlands. As I note below, some of these activities required government cooperation in varying the purposes of land leases. The Chimbu Area Authority set up a business arm, Chimbu Holdings Enterprises, (known at CHE) in 1976, and initially invested in urban real estate, buses, and a service station. In 1977 it was negotiating to buy land for plantations, and seeking shares in Wandu Coffee. Expatriates have been heavily involved in managing all three of these enterprises. A fourth corporation was formed by the Regional member for Chimbu, Iambakey Okuk, in 1974, which I discuss in detail in the next section.

Chimbu Politics 1972-77

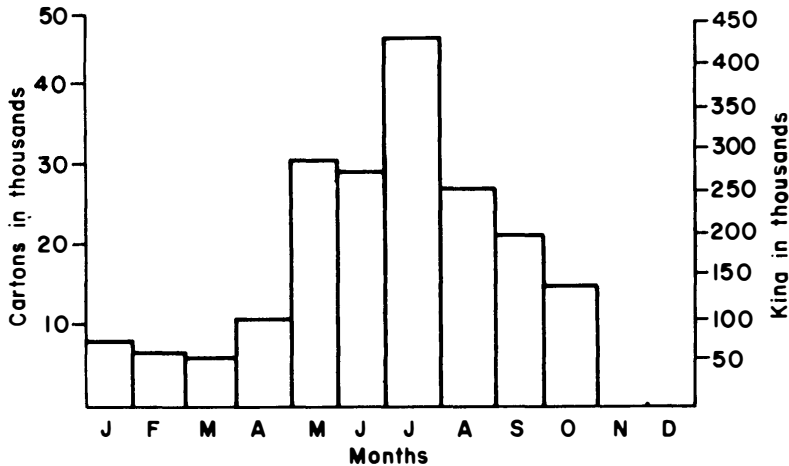
The main issue separating the candidates in the 1972 election was that of attitudes to Papua New Guinea-wide Self-government and Independence, and by implication the governmental and economic roles of foreigners. Although with few exceptions Simbu politicians were gradualist concerning constitutional change, the matter went beyond Simbu control when the Somare National Coalition was formed. Several symbolic protests were staged in 1972-73, including the tearing-down and burning of the new national flag by people who feared that the highlands' late start would prevent people of the region gaining sufficient economic development or administrative preferment. Self-government came in December 1973, Independence came in September 1975, and the public service was largely localized by 1977. More importantly

*Figure 2 Annual cycle, parchment coffee sales, Chimbu**



*Chimbu Coffee Co-op purchases as percentages of annual totals: 4 year means 1971-74. Source: Howlett *et al.* 1976, 231.

Figure 3 Estimated beer sales, Chimbu Province, 1977: volume and expenditure



Source: Calculated from field data, Marion Christie.

for Chimbu Province, local political control passed to the SIPG in February 1977, although it took some time to fully utilize its powers.

In early 1973 Simbu leaders spoke to me of the *kiaps* still ruling them, and although they did sometimes mention local government councils both these institutions were already waning in importance. The expatriate *kiaps* saw history passing them by, but few indigenous *kiaps* attained quite the same aura of authority, or gained the confidence of their own former school-mates who were the first generation nationalist cohort. The local government councils had passed through their initial expansionist phase of infrastructure-building and now spent most of their budgets on routine maintenance work, just as paternalist *kiap* supervision was withdrawn. Villagers saw reduced council works programmes and increased waste and extravagance, and started withholding their annual tax payments.

As council legitimacy declined, a new Simbu-wide political body was set up in December 1972, initially with only an advisory role, comprising delegates from each of the eight (later nine) councils. The members of this body, the Area Authority, were middle-aged colonial politicians,⁵ mostly with a rural base, many of them failed candidates in the 1972 national elections. Eventually they were delegated some power over the Rural Improvement Programme (RIP). This was a funding system which, until the Village Economic Development Fund (VEDF) got properly under way in 1976, was the allocative process which handled most pork-barrel developmental funds. Thus the Area Authority also reduced council stature. When the Constitutional Planning Committee (CPC) proffered increased powers in the form of 'district [later provincial] government', Simbu leaders grabbed at the chance to share in the self-government process. In this campaign, they were greatly assisted in 1975-76 by a former university student and ministerial staffer, a coffee buyer who had previously been national secretary to the Niugini National Party, Barunke Kaman. Kaman had previously clashed with Iambakey Okuk, and on his return to Simbu was initially humiliated by the Area Authority members jealous of their stature. But eventually he formed a symbiotic alliance with his illiterate elders, trading his skills, energy and *save* for an important provincial power-base as Provincial Secretary (Standish 1979).

As Simbu's best known anti-colonialist, the former mechanic Iambakey Okuk dominated the 1972 campaign for the Regional seat, and won by a narrow margin with 27 per cent of the valid vote, but only 17 per cent of the total. (62,656) Okuk continued to be central to Simbu involvement in national political affairs. With John Kaupa, the young health worker elected in Chuave, he swung two other Chimbu members into the National Party away from the United Party (UP), the then expatriate-run 'go-slow' group which retained the loyalty of the majority of the highlanders. Kobale Kale, newly elected member for Sinasina, stayed with National, but after an alleged death threat one other Simbu recruit fell back into the UP, which thus held five of Simbu's seven Open members. Okuk had been assisted with campaign funds by Pangu, and joined the Somare coalition as Deputy Leader of the National Party and Minister for Agriculture.

Frightened by this split, the Simbu political elite were intensely hostile to what they saw as Okuk's betrayal in treating with the feared Pangu devils. Okuk, too, was the subject of an alleged death threat by a defeated rival. A large public demonstration was organized in May 1972 against his move into the Pangu-led government, but after a rather timorous first day back in Kundiawa Okuk, backed by statements from the Acting Chief Minister Guise and a strong *kiap* and police presence, addressed meetings at Miggende mission and Mintima village. He is remembered there as having said that *he*, Iambakey, was the boss of Simbu and they had no choice but to go along with the changes determined in Port Moresby. He capitalized on visits by Somare and UP opposition leader Toliman who said Australia's departure was voluntary and not because of pressure from radical nationalists. But Okuk remained unpopular and largely isolated in Simbu, as was shown in 1973 when the Area Authority denied him office space in Kundiawa. He rarely visited his home district, yet soon became one of the more widely travelled of Somare's ministers. Okuk did, however, acquire some land and built a *kunai* grass roofed house at Kundiawa. He paid for this at a massive memorial feast hosted by his stepfather, at which were distributed 30 pigs, 100 cartons of beer and 13 cattle carcasses bought through Agriculture Department auspices. Nonetheless his political stocks remained low, and to me he expressed the feeling in 1973 that he would probably lose the election then scheduled for 1976.

With the important exceptions of roadworks funding and the coffee industry, Okuk barely concerned himself with local Simbu affairs. He played pork-barrel politics to the extent of moving expenditure already planned for the upgrading of the Gembogl trunk road from that road to the Gumine road and he claimed political credit for the roadwork and compensation payments involved. He also took credit for K0.5m voted in the 1975-76 budget for improvements to the Nambaiyufa road in Chuave District. As foreshadowed in his 1972 campaign, he engaged in a bitter personal feud with Mike Collins, the expatriate manager of Chimbu Coffee Cooperative, who had years before sacked Okuk (Standish 1976b). Under pressure from Okuk, the directors eventually sacked Collins and paid up his contract, and the Chimbu Coffee moved from a profitability to a loss-making phase. The next manager failed and was soon removed, to be replaced by George Leahy, a cousin of Collins. He returned the Society to profitability but in late 1976 was also sacked in a move led by directors who were close to Okuk. Okuk never gained effective control of the board, however, and his Simbu nominees for management positions were never appointed. The Society directors, with their own power base, were seen as rivals by the institutional politicians throughout the decade.

As Agriculture Minister, Okuk drafted new laws to exclude expatriates from roadside coffee buying, despite advice from the Coffee Marketing Board that there was a continuing need for roadside buying cash advances — which would provide the means for expatriates to retain control of the industry. Real power would remain with the then mostly expatriate-owned factories, and any benefits to growers would be marginal. The Board was right, but a number of nationals have done very well out of buying. Okuk was never a man to take advice once his mind was fixed and he tended to follow the Whitlamesque approach of ‘crash through, or crash’. An impulsive and determined man with a well-developed capacity to manufacture anger instantly, he rarely achieved good working relationships with either his own staff or his departmental officers. Nor did he often bother to ‘turn on the charm’ while in Simbu, where he remained embattled.

Okuk’s best organized antagonists within Simbu were the young coffee buyers and the staff of Chimbu Coffee, whose political connections had been with the UP. While there were no signs that Mike Colins was involved in their manoeuvres, these men did use Society facilities in late 1973 to set up a short-lived Simbu Pressure Group known as Chimbu *Pre-Pol Sinaminga Bung*, which claimed to be a non-party watchdog over Simbu affairs. One of the main organizers, Matthew Numambo Siune, was a kinsman of Okuk’s who in the name of UP had opposed him in 1972 and organized protests after the election. Numambo then worked for Chimbu Coffee but was sacked in 1974 and subsequently prosecuted by George Leahy over the loss of some monies, and then he moved with his father into Okuk’s camp. Meanwhile, with other coffee buyers in 1973 Numambo Siune revived his 1972 tactic of trying to form an alliance with older leaders and councillors. The young men in *Pre-Pol Sinaminga Bung* praised the golden days under the village officials and sought their wise counsel while offering to help as ‘policemen’ or ‘watchmen’ to check unwelcome trends in Simbu, and throughout Papua New Guinea. This was an explicitly conservative, implicitly anti-Okuk grouping. A few meetings were held at the Kundiawa Hotel lounge with six leaders from each of the councils who were then driven home in state, each with a carton of beer for his trouble. This group soon disappeared in a formal sense, but it set a pattern that was to be repeated, that of young businessmen seeking to form alliances with older peasant leaders, using resources gained from the coffee trade. The personal linkages these men revealed became important well before the 1977 election.

To help local-level development and also no doubt to recoup his political fortunes, in June 1974 Okuk set up the Kamanegu Corporation, named for his tribe. To win over Kamanegu leaders, he appointed five as directors and a further nineteen as delegates, with Numambo Siune’s father as chairman. (This structure was similar to Chimbu Coffee’s board). Okuk was managing director, Numambo Siune treasurer. Okuk never engaged in the lengthy educational programme used by John Kaputin in setting up the New Guinea Development Corporation, which he took as his model. None of the Kamanegu directors was able to give a coherent account of the Corporation’s affairs. The Corporation’s formal statement of intent was that profits from business enterprises would be used for community infrastructural facilities for the Kamanegu. Although Okuk told me only 10 per cent of the 3,000 people who contributed funds were Kamanegu tribesmen, he was criticized for favouring his own group and subsequently he changed the body’s name to Chimbu Yomba Corporation. *Yomba*, a hardwood tree, symbolizes the strength of the clan, and by extension means ‘people’.

The corporation soon expanded rapidly, tapping reserves of government and private credit. In February 1974, Okuk had become Minister for Transport. The corporation's first ventures were haulage, with a government fuel contract and a fuel agency. It held an Air Niugini agency, and used a Collins and Leahy owned building for a picture-house and dance-hall which incorporated a thriving liquor outlet and a token trade store. The corporation bought a K70,000 house for an expatriate manager (who never appeared), Okuk personally providing some of the capital. However, the corporation was unprofitable; by early 1976 it had debts of some K196,00. Okuk subsequently told me he blamed thieving kinsmen for its failure. He himself took over ownership of the house when the corporation struck trouble, and in 1978 he listed a corporation truck and the liquor outlet amongst his personal assets, saying he was using them to repay the corporation's debts (*Post-Courier* 8 August 1978).

Politicians in Papua New Guinea appear to have no trouble in raising finance and the shrewder ones have converted this into political credit as well. Okuk announced his assets in 1978, saying 'I have no Swiss bank accounts, no secret investments, or dummy companies. I have nothing to be ashamed of.' He said he owned one third of a small quarry, a K70-80,000 block of flats in Port Moresby (bought with a bank loan), and a hire car business (*Post-Courier* 8 and 9 August 1980). Late in the 1977 campaign his most obvious business activity was building the Tokma Limited coffee processing factory on the outskirts of Kundiawa, which he jointly owned with his wife, aided by what he told me was a K50,000 loan from the Development Bank. This factory symbolizes his emergence from near penury in 1972 to being Simbu's richest man, who controlled the resources and held the position to play both patron and broker (cf. Boissevain, 1974).

Okuk found employment in the corporation and in the government for both political allies and former opponents. He set up a government financed Asian 'study trip' for a local businessman named Anton Aba, previously an opponent, who became a strong political ally. He told me he always gave away the flash watches presented to him by visiting Japanese delegations, so no one could say he was influenced by these gifts. He complained that his constituents were draining him of funds with their constant requests for contributions towards death payments, bride wealth and so on, a traditional aspect of the big-man's role. In all this, he was creating obligations that must, by custom, be repaid; but he did so amongst those who were unable to reciprocate in kind, which creates a sense of unease amongst Melanesians. At once obligated and grateful, they were thus drawn into his camp, and many eventually became active members of his faction. This process occurs in all political arenas at all times: there are no free lunches.

But all was not smooth; Okuk's ministerial career was the most turbulent in the first Somare government. His overseas travel attracted criticism from students. His committal of the government to the purchase of a fleet of Mercedes-Benz cars became a major scandal. The Public Accounts Committee criticized his department's unapproved purchase of a large Datsun sedan for Okuk's use in his own electorate. He put pressure on foreign firms to use national owner-drivers as haulage sub-contractors, and his use of the language of race inspired fear amongst expatriate businessmen (*Nation-Review* October 31 — November 6, 1975). Somare apparently grew tired of protecting him, and as more highlanders were recruited into the coalition and as Somare's legitimacy grew in their region, the Prime Minister's need for Okuk declined.

Serious policy conflict between Okuk and Somare became public during the

1975 constitutional debates, during which Okuk wanted to restrict the rights to compensation for freehold land of expatriates who became citizens, and to deny them rights to hold political office. This last move would have excluded Peoples Progress Party (PPP) leader Julius Chan from office. Okuk, who had long associated privately with regionalists such as the Highlands Liberation Front (Mel 1981, Standish 1981) while publicly taking a nationalist position (Standish 1976a), was party to a planned, but stillborn, move by highlands parliamentarians to oust Somare just before Independence. Okuk and Somare also clashed in 1975 over Chimbu Coffee Society management and the coffee border restrictions.

In December 1975 Okuk was transferred by Somare from the Transport portfolio to Education; a portfolio which, as one National Party staff member told me, needed a strong minister, but which 'lacked opportunities'. Okuk agreed with me in late 1977 that he had lost Transport because of his dealings with the Boeing Corporation of Seattle. After spending some weeks in America with his National Party colleague, Kobale Kale, Okuk had felt that Air Niugini should buy Boeing aircraft, but cabinet wanted a leasing arrangement and that is what Air Niugini eventually adopted. As Minister for Transport, Okuk had brought a Boeing executive to Papua New Guinea, and for some years after continued to advocate the purchase of Boeings.

Okuk's response to this perceived demotion was a clear demonstration of his tactical audacity and sheer political will-power. He initially sought to rally highlands support to regain his portfolio, and then by a series of joint statements with National Party leader Thomas Kavali (Jimi) he provoked Somare to sack them both from the ministry by describing the reshuffle as dictatorial. The denouement almost appeared to be scripted in advance. The day Somare demanded his resignation, Okuk threw a party in Kundiawa for some hundreds of Simbu leaders and some prominent expatriates (whose presence served to show his acceptability). I costed this exercise at K1,400 for meat and drink alone. His welcoming speech to his guests was brilliant. In sorrow more than anger, he explained that he had been removed by 'coastals' who dominated cabinet because he had struggled for the highlands people. Thereafter on every possible public occasion he distanced himself from the 'Somare/Chan, Pangu/PPP *gavman*' and blamed it for Simbu's lack of development. He bitterly attacked what he called coastal dominance of government (especially of the public service) and sought to build up a broad regional alliance based on a sense of 'highlands identity'.

Several of the province's leading politicians expressed quiet pleasure at Okuk's fall, but almost instantaneously many older, local-level leaders (who had felt a Pangu-led coalition was a *giaman* or 'false' government because of its low highlands representation) rallied to his side. With no ministerial responsibilities, Okuk was able (as well as forced) to concentrate on his electorate for the first time since 1972. He occasionally with John Kaupa used the National Party label, but he mainly set about building up a personal following in Simbu rather than a party machine. By the end of 1976 he had won over most of the members of the Area Authority (which was later subsumed into the SIPG) with his generous hospitality and his ready interpretations of national political events based on inside knowledge of national politics which far surpassed that of all but one or two fellow Simbu. His 1976 reversal was the start of his 1977 comeback.

To preserve the cabinet's regional balance, Somare chose to replace Okuk with the Member for Sinasina, thereby ignoring former CPC member Kaupa from Chuave who is another volatile personality with strong regionalist

tendencies (Standish 1976a). Kobale Kale had told me in mid 1975 after he successfully moved for the deferment of the national elections from 1976 to 1977 that he had been promised the next ministerial vacancy. Kale was an unusual politician for Simbu. A conscientious local member with Grade 5 education, he lacked the usual brash, boasting Simbu leader's style, and since becoming a Seventh-Day Adventist had not been a drinker. Along with other National Party ministers who chose to keep their portfolios rather than follow their leaders out of government, he was expelled from that party forthwith. Somare arranged for him to have as private secretary an ex-seminarian, a Pangu man from the East Speik, the Prime Minister's base area. During 1976 Kale teamed up with Pangu.

Once he was a minister, Kale became a new man. He travelled to West Africa for a UNESCO conference, and returned to Simbu displaying elephant hair bracelets and gold-mounted lion's claws. Indeed, he seemed to acquire some of the strength of an elephant and the courage of a lion. His business activities, two tipper trucks on charter to the government, and a block at Karimui, were not ostentatious; in fact he sought to play them down. But more than any previous minister he forcefully played pork-barrel politics with Education Department resources around the country, and in Simbu in particular. He located new high schools where they would best help Pangu, converted day schools to boarding ones, and he plucked Simbu education officers from obscurity and promoted them rapidly. Furthermore, he loudly proclaimed these deeds at every opportunity.

While Okuk built up a faction based on personal linkages,⁶ Kale sought to build up a machine using institutional alliances. The two clans in Kale's Dinga tribe had fought each other in 1976, and Kale might well have been challenged for Sinasina Open in 1977 by the new council president, a coffee buyer named Clement Poiye, who came from another Dinga clan. Despite his informal efforts to resettle kinsmen in Karimui, Kale was unpopular at home and lived with his wife's people in the Seventh-Day area at Moruma, west of Kerowagi. He gladly accepted outside offers of help, which came from James Arba, who had attended seminary with Kale's secretary. A rather freewheeling public servant who was then closely tied to the Chief Ombudsman, Ignatius Kilage (who had opposed Okuk in 1972), Arba worked as organiser of a Simbu-wide rural *bisnis* movement for women, and men, misnamed Kuman *Yangpela Didiman* (Young Agriculturalists). This essentially elite body, with twenty one constituent clubs, was primarily interested in commercial activities and bore no resemblance to the Lutheran church inspired movement bearing the same *tok pisin* name. Arba promised Kale to use the movement to deliver a Simbu-wide vote to Kale, and he became a Pangu activist. Kale was thus in late 1976 persuaded to challenge Okuk for the Provincial seat and to leave Sinasina Open to Poiye. Although some leading Simbu Lutherans had campaigned for Okuk in 1972, apparently because of rivalries with the Lutheran *bisnis* arm, Kuman Holdings, he had turned against them in 1976. The Rev. Boniepe Agere, President of both the church and Kuman Holdings, had successfully lobbied the Prime Minister through Kobale in order to regularise some mission leases of land being used for *bisnis* purposes. In gratitude Rev. Agere set up a Pangu Branch in Simbu with himself as President, and he became the endorsed Pangu candidate for Kerowagi Open. To complete these linkages, Kale became Vice-President of the party branch and of Kuman Holdings. At the end of 1976 the 1977 Provincial campaign was shaping up to be a competition between Okuk and Kale.

But a third prominent Simbu, John Nilkare, was also planning to stand. As

Chief Liquor Licensing Commissioner, he had spent little time in the province in recent years. Nilkare had been a Churchill Fellow, was well-travelled overseas and well-known in political and business circles. He did not formally start campaigning until the writs were issued in April, because he was a public servant. Australian schooled and university trained, very well dressed and westernized in manner, Nilkare was a former magistrate and footballer in Simbu, whose father had been Gumine council president and whose wife came from a family prominent in Kobale's clan. His sister's husband was a former Chairman of Chimbu Coffee, whose trade-store had a liquor licence, and John Nilkare had set up his father as a coffee buyer. He also had his own business interest, a satellite farm attached to the large expatriate enterprise, Ilimo Farm, near Port Moresby. In the year preceding the election numerous liquor licenses were awarded by Nilkare's commission to rural trade-stores in Simbu, in the belief that decentralized drinking would reduce the violence and road accidents (and subsequent compensation cases and fighting) caused by the centralized drinking at Kundiawa township. Although a former National Party member who openly supported Somare, Nilkare was closely linked to the UP oriented group of coffee buyers already mentioned. They agreed to campaign for him in their home areas, provided he did not stand for Pangu, but he had no party organization, or even a large faction, behind him.

The most visible political party was the UP, which had a full-time organizer in Simbu from 1975 onwards who used the office of Kundiawa MP Joseph Tiene Iunga. Initially, this role was filled by Jerry Geri, a smooth and bright but volatile young man with an unstable career pattern including work as a *kiap*, businessman and teacher. Geri had acted as Okuk's campaign manager in 1972 but broke with him after Okuk failed to take him on to his personal staff. He set about identifying and befriending strong potential candidates throughout Simbu, an area which had always paid lip-service to UP but which till 1975 had no organization on the ground. Geri was sacked in late 1976 after a row with UP over party monies (*Post-Courier* 23 November 1976). He was replaced by one Dick Dee, a former army sergeant who was a kinsman of the Member for Kundiawa. Dee told me that Geri had taken the UP records and then joined up with Sinake Giregire's new Country Party, which left the politically inexperienced Dee floundering for some time. He said there had been thousands of UP members in Simbu who had made cash contributions but he had no statistics. The UP's potential strength was its old claim to being the traditional party of the Highlands, but it needed organization to use that advantage when nomination and campaign time arrived.

Always intensely competitive, politics were virtually the only avenue for advancement for Simbu men who had missed out on chances for higher training and bureaucratic careers. While most men who had been elected to represent Simbu in previous years had had some small-scale *bisnis* such as trade-stores, as parliamentarians all had automatically received incomes many times those of their kinsmen, and most also took advantage of their positions to utilize public financial credit and government agriculture and business extension services to the hilt. Contrary to the popular belief in Papua New Guinea that wealthy men enter politics, most Simbu leaders became successful businessmen only after their election to office rather than before. Not surprisingly, many rivals emerged in the years 1972-77 with the aim of taking their place.

It is fair generalization that the sitting Open Members in Simbu were unpopular throughout most of their various electorates. They had won with a low proportion of the vote, and most people from other clans had voted

against them. As tensions and clan warfare grew from 1972 on, they rarely felt able to move freely around electorates which comprised (in part) traditional enemies. Sometimes they were unfairly criticized: thus the conscientious local member Joseph Tiene was accused of failing to visit the Naregu tribe at Mintima, when I know he visited at least four times between 1972 and 1976. Rightly or wrongly, the Members were seen by most of their constituents as lazy nest-featherers. The Simbu men of ambition were incensed by the decision in 1975 to defer the elections from 1976 until 1977.

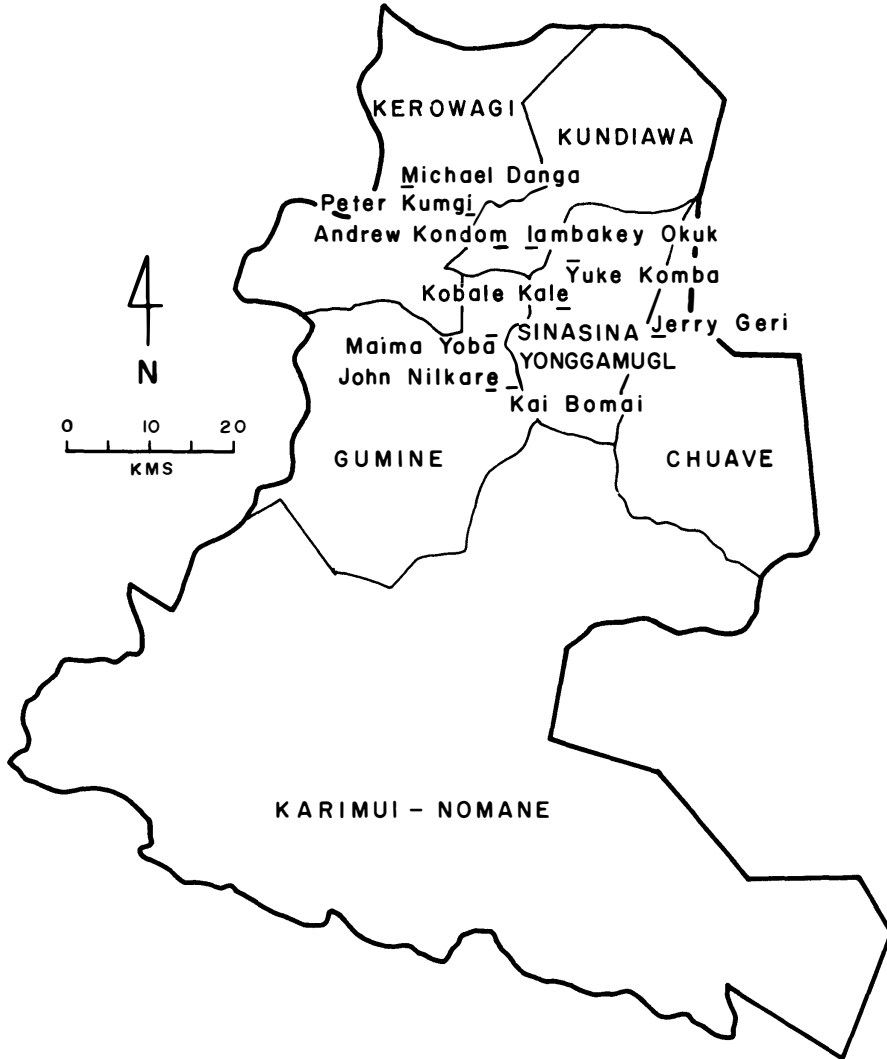
All Simbu activists were further angered when the Electoral Boundaries Commission recommended that on the most recent (1971) census figures the province was entitled to only six (not seven) Open seats. It proposed new electoral boundaries that removed some census divisions from the familiar existing administrative district-cum-council areas and put them in with other census divisions in the new electorates. Kundiawa District was to be divided up between Gumine Open electorate (which took in the Dom people) and Sinasina (the Yonggamugl). The former Mt. Wilhelm electorate (Gembogl District) was then amalgamated with the rump of Kundiawa District, Waiye Census Division, to form the Kundiawa Open electorate. Years of planning were thus frustrated by these changes. Okuk and Siwi Kurondo, the Premier of the Interim Provincial Government, gained easy political kudos in November 1976 by leading demonstrations against these changes. The national government was accused of deliberately and unjustly 'downing' highlanders, of 'greasing' and deceiving people, and of (statistically) 'killing' some 9,000 people while filling its own pockets. The rhetoric reached new heights; at the Simbu Interim Provincial Government opening in February 1977 Okuk proclaimed 'If I am a man of principle, I must boycott the election'.

1977 Nominations

The Provincial contest in 1977 drew ten candidates. All, in their various ways, were members of the new elite, aged 26 to 35 years, all married with young children, all involved in modern sector employment and all having considerable experience outside Simbu. Their average formal education was 11 years. Kobale Kale was the only one who would not (because of insufficient education) have been eligible to stand for the old Chimbu Regional seat in 1968 or 1972. It is interesting that no other such men were attracted to the provincial seat. Kale was well placed to know the changed eligibility rules and as a Minister he had considerable resources at his disposal. Several older political figures with whom I spoke knew that there were no longer any educational barriers to Provincial candidature, and so their abstention was not solely for lack of information. Perhaps more important was the sheer energy needed to campaign throughout the province, and the advantage given by access to a vehicle and the funds needed to keep it on the road. Even more important still, as we shall explore in this paper, was the kind of confidence and modern *savoir faire* which education and travel can give a young man who does not have strong linkages in traditional exchange networks but hopes to swing votes with policy statements and ideological appeals.

All the Provincial candidates were engaged in modern activities and none were peasants. Their professed motives for standing varied greatly. Peter Kumgi from the Siambuga-Wauga phratry in Kerowagi District had some renown as a former footballer, and hoped his six years as Rural Development Officer in various parts of Simbu would help him. He had been befriended by Sir Tei Abal during a posting in Enga province, which assured him of the UP endorsement. He said he decided to stand because he saw development by-

Map 2 : Chimbu Electorates, 1977 showing Provincial candidates' home locations



KUNDIAWA, CHUAVE
 SINASINA - YONGGAMUGL, GUMINE
 KEROWAGI, & KARIMUI - NOMANE
 OPEN ELECTORATES

CHIMBU PROVINCE

SOURCE : ADAPTED FROM PAPUA NEW GUINEA, ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES COMMISSION REVISED ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES 1977, PORT MORESBY, GOVERNMENT PRINTER, SHEET 20

passing the little men, because of laziness, self-interest and corruption amongst existing MPs and especially because of what he called the opportunism of the National Party. He particularly resented Iambakey Okuk for ignoring departmental advice on agricultural matters.

Another candidate who stood to help block Okuk was Andrew Kombri Kondom, a former medical assistant who had worked in the Upper Simbu, now a storekeeper and cattle owner and the son of a famous Simbu leader of colonial times (Brown 1967). Kondom's tribe, the Naregu, abuts Okuk's Kamanegu, and he was early on encouraged to stand by some old Kamanegu leaders on the strength of their friendship with his father and perhaps also resentment of Okuk. (Some of these same men later campaigned strongly for Okuk.) Soon after nominating, Kondom felt that he had little chance of winning. He even considered withdrawing, but decided to stay in the ring so as to make his name known for later Provincial Assembly elections, and because Jerry Geri asked him to stay to try to reduce Okuk's vote amongst Kuman speakers; the Country Party refunded his K100 deposit. He did not campaign vigorously, however.

'Vote-splitting' motives were attributed to other candidates, too, most notably Kai Bomai and Michael Danga, both pro-UP independents. People in Simbu political circles were shocked by the early nomination of the politically unknown Kai Bomai. Youthful (27), ever-smiling, fast-talking manager of the Chimbu Savings and Loan Society, Kai came from the same village as John Nilkare, Omkolai in Gumine District. He was not related to the sitting Member for Gumine, Ninkama Bomai (UP). With matrikin in the Salt area and in-laws in the Gunangi (Sinatina) Census Division, Kai was sure to cut deeply into Nilkare's potential vote bank. He had not made known any plans to stand and told me he only decided when he started three months' leave from work. Although many people knew of Nilkare's desire to stand, he and Kai each pleaded ignorance of the other's intentions. Kai refused to pull out when Nilkare so requested him. Not surprisingly, Kai said that Okuk had expressed delight at this turn of events when they had met by chance in Goroka. Nilkare did not allege any collusion on their part. Kai's position gave him considerable control over several hundred thousand kina on loan to Savings and Loan Society members, and he took the golden opportunity to use members as his campaigners. While manager he had greatly increased both memberships and loans in the Gumine area (ECL 1979, III, 199) whereas before his time the Society had little role there (Howlett *et al.* 1976, 252-57).

The second candidate of whom 'vote-splitting' was alleged was Michael Danga, a former international representative footballer and a schools inspector in Simbu who had resigned from teaching to campaign. He was buying coffee and attempting to initiate his own small development corporation to run a tavern at Kerowagi, he also set up a 'Simbu Association' early in 1977 to promote political cooperation amongst Simbu leaders, but that soon died. His father had left his natal Kamanegu (Okuk's tribe) to settle at Kerowagi, where he became Simbu's largest cattle grazer and a perennial losing candidate at national elections. In the year before the election, Danga senior contributed nine cattle (worth around K3,600) to peace-making feasts in widespread locations throughout Simbu. This generosity was an extension of customary mediatory roles and a spectacular way to win friends politically. This investment helped make his son well-known. In 1977 he stood yet again in the Kerowagi Open seat and lost badly, but in so doing he kept up his own claims to political as well as business leadership. Kumgi alleged that Michael Danga's intended role in the Provincial contest was to reduce Kumgi's vote in the

Kerowagi area. Although Danga's campaign effort was less wholehearted, his main slogan 'Consider a new leader' painted on his truck was a swipe at Okuk and Kobale together. He attacked Okuk at a UP rally and in private talks criticized him for pursuing his self-interest. Their policies differed, and no links were visible. Indeed, one of Danga's recurrent themes was that Simbu people were incapable of co-operation: '*Olaman Simbu, individual tumas!*'

There were three other minor candidates. Jerry Geri, a cousin of John Kaupa's from Aran village in Chuauve, has already been mentioned. His maternal family links were towards Sinasina and Kundiawa rather than towards Elimbari and Nambaiyufa (Siani). This left these latter areas without a provincial candidate. A political *apparatchik* rather than a showman, Geri spent much of the campaign helping organize the Country Party campaign nationally. Iambakey argued that James Maima Yoba, a 27-year-old school-teacher from Dom Census Division would undermine his vote in that area. The Dom is in Kundiawa District, but has its own language. It is part of Gumine Open electorate, and Maima Yoba would at that time more likely have taken votes from the two Omkolai candidates. (Later, fights broke out between the Doms and the Gumine groups.) An earnest young ex-seminarian, Maima Yoba lacked the money and resources for a showy campaign. Initially he described himself as a Pangu man, but on being refused Pangu endorsement and funds he was recruited by the Country Party. Another somewhat impoverished candidate was the Lutheran pastor, Yuke Komba, who until the election had worked in Lae. Despite some overseas travel, Komba appeared somewhat naive politically and showed the stylized humility of many western clergy. He said he had come back to Simbu of his own accord to help block Okuk, because the latter was attacking the church and because Okuk had only helped his own group's economic advancement. Komba's own campaign poster was a rather bland plea for development and Christian unity for all provinces. His home area, Yonggamugl, is Okuk's mother's natal area, so Yuke was well-placed to reduce the incumbent's vote.

At the opening of the SIPG in February 1977 Okuk had stated that 'People don't respect leaders: everyone wants to be a leader', a proposition at least partly verified in April 1977 when 95 men (and no women) stood for the six Open seats in Simbu, by far the most intense competition in the country. Dick Dee from UP had earlier spoken of some 60 intending to stand for Sinasina alone, but the final figure there, 21, was a national record. Clement Poiye asked 'Why do so many want to be politicians? I think it is because they are Simbu. They want to be the highest always'. Several older leaders, not candidates, said the competitors were crazy and that the people were confused. Some 76 per cent of the candidates were standing for the first time, and only 24 per cent were or had been councillors. All were married and 10 per cent were polygynists (including some young businessmen). So these were not old-time Simbu leaders but ambitious young men.

Crude data collected by Returning Officers supplemented by my own field notes enables me to provide a general picture of Simbu candidates, Open and Provincial. (See Table 1) My categories are somewhat arbitrary, because many men could fit under more than one heading. Peasants whose economic basis is land, businessmen who build upon capital, and salaried workers who sell their educational skills may all employ labour. My categorization is thus not an attempt to give rigid class labels to men who do not fit single categories. Rather, it is a broadbrush attempt to show the main economic activities of the candidates. I have attempted to balance out the distortions. To take an example: where two candidates have relatively large farms with cattle, as well

Table 1 Candidates in Chimbu Elections 1972 and 1977 (a)

| 1.1 General Data | 1972 | | | 1977 | | |
|---------------------------------|------|----------|-------|------|------------|-------|
| | Open | Regional | Total | Open | Provincial | Total |
| Number standing | 66 | 5 | 71 | 95 | 10 | 105 |
| Av. age — candidates | 36 | 25 | 35 | 34 | 31 | 34 |
| — winners | 35 | 28 | 34 | 37 | 33 | 36 |
| Av. education (years) | | | | | | |
| — candidates | 2 | 11 | 3 | 6 | 11 | 9 |
| — winners | 3 | 10 | 4 | 8 | 10 | 8 |
| <i>Tok pisin</i> literacy (b) | 20 | 5 | 25 | 65 | 10 | 75 |
| 1.2 Experience (%) (c) | | | | | | |
| Village Official | 9 | 0 | 8 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Councillor | 35 | 0 | 33 | 25 | 10 | 24 |
| National candidate | 45 | 20 | 44 | 24 | 20 | 24 |
| Parliamentarian | 8 | 0 | 7 | 7 | 20 | 9 |
| 1.3 Occupation (%) | | | | | | |
| Small peasant (d) | 12 | 0 | 11 | 9 | 0 | 9 |
| Big peasant (e) | 21 | 0 | 20 | 16 | 0 | 13 |
| Coffee & trade-store (f) | 11 | 0 | 10 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| (Peasant total) | (44) | (0) | (41) | (27) | (0) | (24) |
| Store owner (g) | 8 | 5 | 7 | 9 | 20 | 11 |
| Coffee buyer (h) | 8 | 5 | 7 | 17 | 20 | 17 |
| Trucker (i) | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 10 | 3 |
| (Businessman total) (j) | (18) | (12) | (17) | (29) | (50) | (31) |
| Public servants & clerks (k) | 15 | 20 | 15 | 21 | 30 | 22 |
| Teachers (l) | 5 | 40 | 7 | 12 | 10 | 11 |
| Church workers (m) | 9 | 20 | 10 | 8 | 10 | 9 |
| (White-collar total) | (29) | (80) | (32) | (41) | (50) | (42) |
| Blue-collar (n) | 9 | 20 | 10 | 3 | 0 | 3 |

Notes to Table 1:

(a) Sources: PNG 1972 and 1977, corrected in accord with my field data. All percentages are rounded. Occupational categories are generally those at the time the writs were issued, and are necessarily somewhat arbitrarily placed in the category judged most significant for that individual in the Simbu context.

(b) Some of the claimed *tok pisin* literacy is at best marginal.

(c) Here a candidate may well appear under more than one category.

(d) Except at the highest altitudes, most rural people in northern Simbu grow coffee, yet they have been recorded by Returning Officers as 'subsistence farmers'. Some so designated were in fact teachers, clerks, coffee buyers, *et cetera*. 'Peasants' are defined here as people whose main economic activity is land-based. 'Small peasants' is a relative term here used where no special record is made of the size of coffee holdings or other economic activities.

(e) 'Big peasants' here include those with very large coffee holdings, and/or cattle and/or introduced pig stock (*pig susu*).

(f) The income these men receive from coffee sales usually supports their trade-stores (which are almost as seasonal as the coffee crop), and so the basic income source is agrarian. The owners of viable stores are broadly classified as businessmen.

- (g) 'Store owners' here include proprietors of viable stores and liquor sellers.
- (h) 'Coffee buyers' tend to be younger men with less access to land than their elders, but some also grow coffee and run stores.
- (i) The 'trucker' category includes those hiring plant to public works authorities, plus passenger and cargo carriers.
- (j) Businessmen, as here categorized, are those whose main activities are commercial rather than agrarian. Like some big peasants, and peasant traders, mostly they employ at least some non-family labour on a wage basis.
- (k) This heading includes some non-literate public servants such as aid post orderlies and interpreters, as well as clerks in privately owned enterprises.
- (l) This category includes teachers in mission schools.
- (m) This heading includes non-literate catechists and evangelists as well as tertiary educated clergy.
- (n) This includes skilled tradesmen, labourers and drivers. The last-mentioned group have lost much of their prestige as their skills have spread.

as large and viable stores, one is here classified as a big peasant, the other as a store owner. The importance of these categories is that both are men of wealth in rural Simbu: neither is a 'little' man.

The 1977 Simbu candidates were slightly younger but much less politically experienced than those in 1972, but they had much more formal education and there were more of them. Some 105 men stood, an increase of 48 per cent. With one fewer seat available, fifteen stood per seat in 1977, compared to nine in 1972. The average age of candidates and winners remained fairly static, about 35 years, but taken alone this figure disguises considerable changes in the type of man standing, because within the same age-group we can see the changes taking place in Simbu society. A few old-style polygynous clan leaders and indeed some younger businessmen stood aside to prevent splitting their clan or tribe's vote, but mostly it was the old men who dropped out of the race altogether. Former village officials numbered only 2 per cent (8 per cent in 1972), councillors 24 per cent (33 per cent), and only 24 per cent had stood previously in national elections (44 per cent). In 1972 Simbu candidates' formal education averaged 3 years, and winners' 4 years, whereas in 1977 the figures were 9 and 8 years, respectively.

More significant, perhaps, is the changed economic base of many of the 1977 candidates. Again reflecting the changes in Simbu society, the candidates now included much of the resident modernizing Simbu elite.

The clearest change in 1977 was that there was almost a doubling in the proportion of candidates who were businessmen (31 per cent compared to 17 per cent in 1972) with 11 per cent having stores (as against 7 per cent) and buyers (17 per cent, previously 7 per cent). The proportion of salaried (mostly white collar) workers rose from 32 per cent in 1972 to 42 per cent, especially teachers (7 to 11 per cent) and public servants and other clerical workers (15 to 22 per cent). This category includes slightly fewer mission workers (9 as against 10 per cent), which perhaps indicates either that ambitious Simbu were in other occupations, or that Simbu church workers had increasing faith in their own eventual reward.

More significant, perhaps, is that proportion of men based on the land and categorized here as peasants (whether 'big' or 'small') fell from 41 per cent of candidates in 1972 to 24 per cent in 1977, and men known to be big peasants dropped from 20 per cent to 13 per cent of candidates. Also blue collar workers (who were relatively prestigious in colonial days) fell from 10 per cent to 3 per cent. In other words, the 1977 Simbu candidates were most likely to be capitalist entrepreneurs, and/or members of the salariat (a total of 73 per

cent), whereas in 1972 half (51 per cent) had been peasants or blue collar workers.

National politics was being seen as a game for better educated and more affluent men than previously. Coming from the older tradition, the former policeman, parliamentarian and now Premier of Simbu, Siwi Kurondo, expressed his feelings about the candidates by saying that 'rubbish-men' and English educated literates were standing, men who had not proved themselves as real workers, and he sourly told me they were motivated by greed.

The Campaign

As an overture to the 1977 campaign the Lutheran Church invited Michael Somare to open the Kuman Holdings clothing factory at Kerowagi on 21 January. Foul weather held up the Prime Minister's aircraft, and some 5,000 people waited as storm clouds built up and eventually washed out the event before Somare's arrival. Excluded from the programme, a tired and emotional Okuk pushed through the crowd carrying a child saying the whites and missions had fouled the people, and that the rain was a sign of God's displeasure at the occasion. Some 3,000 attended the next day when the ceremony was held, featuring the Premier, Kale, Mrs Anna Nombri (President of Kuman *Yangpela Didiman*, and wife of a schoolmate of Somare's), Rev. Boniepe Agere together with the Prime Minister and the Defence Force Commander, Brigadier-General Ted Diro, as guests. The church spent some K2,000 on Simbu dance groups, gave K20 to each of the speakers and paid the Defence Force bagpiper's motel bills. Okuk ostentatiously remained on the perimeter of the proceedings, nodding sourly when named by some of the speakers (but not Somare, who simply referred to 'other Members' in the crowd). Later that day he responded with a statement run by the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) saying that the exercise was a Pangu propaganda show, part of the coastal plan for domination of the highlands.

In February-March 1977 the conflict was intense. In parliament Okuk blamed the Somare government in the Prime Minister's presence for the lack of development which was the root of highlands fighting, because, as he put it at the SIPG opening, 'a hungry dog barks'. Given that he had been a minister for four of the previous five years, his tactical flexibility was breathtaking. Somare, in private talks, has blamed Okuk for blocking the 1976 Public Order Bill, which he says was designed to meet Simbu requests for tougher government action against fighting. Okuk told me he was '*spaking* with talk' (literally drunk with his own words) in his powerful speech at the SIPG opening, but added he was prepared to antagonize some people in public and would not *tok baksait*, slander, in their absence. In the dying twitches of the old house the government struggled to sustain a quorum and Okuk led several successful moves to block coalition bills.

Okuk firmly put the question of corruption on the political agenda, not only for parliament but also for the election, when on 17 February he moved

That in view of

(a) much suspicion and mistrust surrounding the assests [sic], business connections, receipt of gifts, benefits and other services and the awarding of government contracts to private business;

[here followed a list of allegations against the government]

(g) ... this parliament resolves that

(1) an independent tribunal ... investigate and publish information concerning matters listed above in the Post-Courier newspaper by June next; and

(2) the Ombudsman Commission present to Parliament and subsequently publish in the Post-Courier the detailed submissions of the assets, the income, the business connections, the directorships, the business transactions, the granting of government contracts, gifts, services, privileges, liabilities and other personal relationships of the leaders as defined under the Leadership Code.⁷

Complete information of this kind would indeed be interesting, but Okuk's motion was not debated by the parliament, although his own affairs were to become an issue in the Simbu campaign. Perhaps in response to Okuk's motion, Pangu backbencher and Party president Tom Koraea asked Somare whether Okuk had improperly gained a lease for valuable land in Waigani without the required advertisement for tender, a question which the Prime Minister said he would investigate. For whatever reason, after a few days of digging, all attempts at using political mud from the Waigani swamps ceased.

Okuk cemented an alliance with various 'young Turk' UP leaders at meetings in different highlands centres in late March, and pushing the need for 'highlands identity' he won them over to the need for joint action by the National Party with UP to gain control of the next government. He had already discussed this with Sir Tei Abal, the Opposition Leader, in November 1976. Although never spelt out coherently in his speeches, the ideas were those of the defunct Highlands Liberation Front (Mel 1981, Standish 1981), calling for increased development in the highlands and for preferment of highlanders to remove the regional imbalance in public employment which was considerable (Welch 1976). National Party leader Thomas Kavali announced on the NBC that the two parties would work together in the campaign. But he did not visit Simbu in the succeeding months and even before the count was finished he told people he had privately switched his allegiance to Somare. Indeed the National Party as such had no visible party organisation to help its candidates, although a kinsman of Okuk's was made party president and wrote a begging letter to businesses. Okuk's only hope of gaining office was in a broad coalition with a larger group, and he played this strategy well.

In a virulent Saturday rally on 20 March, Okuk told the crowd of shoppers and flirting teenagers about his planned coalition, saying he would be the next Prime Minister. The NBC journalist in Simbu said his language was 'too hot' to report. By late March Okuk had covered Kundiawa with the first 200 of his planned 10,000 posters, and he initially refused to remove a cloth banner so large that it broke electoral regulations. (He finally moved it, just out of town, but pointed out that the anachronistic regulation was not being enforced in Lae and other centres.) He was also campaigning early along the Highway and at rural food markets. At one incident at Ganigle near Kerowagi he was asked by a former council president what he had done while in government. I was told Okuk flared up and insulted the man, and then to cool tempers brought three carloads of men to Kundiawa for drinks.

When the nominations period started the campaign proper opened with a crescendo (soon to be a cacophony) of sound. Okuk had bought a new Landcruiser and fitted it with a microphone connected to loudspeakers and a cassette player. Nominations effectively opened on 12 April, and from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. he bombarded Kunidawa township with speeches repeating his name over and over. Surrounded by perhaps one hundred (mostly youthful) supporters and a few hundred pedestrians, he initially had the streets to himself. But the next day, just after noon, an outsider braved his territory. Buaki Singeri, the tiny Country Party member for Kabwum in Morobe, walked up the main street shouting 'Country Party *bai halpim yupela*' (The

Country Party will help you) and then clambered on the bonnet of a battered Toyota to speak. Okuk cruised up in his smart new car, the speaker blaring a mixture of English and *tok pisin*.

O: *Hei spakman yu mekim wanem?* [What are you doing, you drunk?]

S: *Toktok tasol.* [Just talking.]

O: *Yu spakman. Bladi longlong pik. Kam daun, Kam daun, Kam daun!* [You drunkard. Bloody crazy pig. Get down! Come down!]

S: *Pikinini!* [My child!] I brought the mission here.

O: Shut up. We don't want you. I'm the leader here. You'd like to hold us back. You should be ashamed. *Pissoff, spakman.* You and Sinake⁸ can't come here. *Piss off!*

S: I helped you often.

O: You didn't help. I don't need your help. I don't need bloody Pangu and you.

S: I helped you.

O: Don't cry now. Go and campaign in your own place.

Okuk drove off, circling a crowd of 500 people whom he continued to harangue through the speakers, his voice cracking, near hysteria: '*Ol man bilong giaman long paua.* [These men are lying to get power.] Bloody coastals.' Singeri and his three companions left rather sheepishly, while Okuk crowed that despite them quaking no hurt was done.

Okuk's continuing *tok pisin* and Kuman language diatribe included some of the themes of his campaign, and is worth quoting at length.

Kobale Kale is Michael Somare's *manki masta* [personal servant]. Before you cut rubber and were *namki mastas*. Now you stand on your own legs with your own businesses. It was not just coastals who fought for self-government and Independence. I helped Somare but he turned his back on me and Thomas Kavali and kicked us out. I'm for unity. Do you want equality? Papua New Guinea should have equality. You should not work for *mastas* [white rulers]. Who are those who want to be black *mastas*? Somare and Oscar Tammur! For provincial government they only gave K25,000 in February.⁹ . . . Chan and Somare are hungry for power. They *gris* [grease, flatter] for Pangu's sake only. They say we Chimbu are the *foulman* [spoilors], troublemakers, fighters. This is not so. They had troubles all over Papua New Guinea, too . . . Why do [my rivals] seek power? They can try, but pity if they lose. It's bad if people say we're cowboys. Singeri is a drunkard. I speak in full public view and say Sinake is a real drunk. We are real workers; we made our own roads, and now have coffee and cars . . . [In Kuman language:] Whites — without them we would have to carry the coffee to the factory. We need them for work, and should work together with them. [In *tok pisin*:] They sacked me as a minister but I'm still the Member and am being paid. Do you want someone to replace me? He'll just grab money for himself. [Kuman:] If you vote for me I'll run your business and get money here for you and you'll have lots of money . . . [*tok pisin*:] The Ministers are all 'yes men'. Somare said I could return but I refused.

I'll join with United Party, but I support National to join with United in a coalition. Miss Abaijah can join us in a coalition with United Party. Pangu will be in opposition. The government has not run the economy well; it has fouled the management of the economy and money. K40 million is missing.¹⁰ Ministers blame the public service and public servants blame the ministers. . . Simbu is not getting its share. . . There'll be K200 million income from coffee this year: we [highlanders] are the strongest in Papua New Guinea. These smart educated people want to run things. Our highlands leaders were the real fighters with a warrior tradition, and our leaders are those with lots of pigs. We will send our true leaders and speak out. People say the Eight Points¹¹ are fouled up. No more Pangu here! [Kuman:] Do you agree? Do you agree? [A few Kamanegu men in the crowd say 'Yes', rather slowly while some others say hostile things.] [*Tok pisin*:] I'll be forming the government with the

United Party . . . Don't forget this: *bisnis* and money will come to you if you vote for me, I'll get you these. [Later, in Kuman, he added:] Don't listen to the coastal *gris*. They eat snake and should stay at home. Do you hear me? Other districts shouldn't compete with Iambakey Okuk. Don't waste your money, you other candidates. You could lose it — what a pity to waste it!

At which point a drunken supporter from Gembogl shouted 'Okuk has won already!'

On 13 April Okuk kept this performance going for two hours until he lost the crowd, his efforts helped by the presence of a film crew. He offered the microphone to prominent leaders from various parts of the province, and being greatly flattered they gave the ear-splitting yodel and shouted endorsements of Okuk in their vernacular language. Okuk recorded these plugs for use in a verbal montage rather like a poster he had made up showing recognizable photographs of Simbu leaders apparently supporting him; and he replayed the tapes — feedback distortion and all — for the remainder of the campaign, interspersed with his own vitriolic comments and the soothing sounds of well-chosen pop-songs ('I'm on top of the world. . .', and 'Don't forget to remember me'). He would drive throughout the province, speakers blaring unintelligibly. Although villagers complained about the noise Okuk and other candidates using speakers thereby succeeded in asserting their presence.

As is apparent above, Okuk used the Kuman language for his strongest appeals to highlands regionalism.

Hear me! We're not the cargo-boys for the coastal people . . . Don't listen to the coastal people, they'll fool you . . . We will always be dominated by them . . . don't let it happen again. It's us who are your traditional leaders. Who organised the pig-killing ceremonies? Tell me!

We see the fruit on the trees but we're not allowed to eat . . . All the businesses are being controlled from the coast . . . we get nothing and we suffer! That's why I broke with them and came to help you. Hear me!¹²

The initial response from Pangu was mild. On 15 April Pangu held a rally with all its nine endorsed candidates and about 300 people in Kundiawa. Kale had come to town with two cars (one government vehicle) filled with singing Sinasina people, a few older councillors, and a less powerful loudspeaker. All the candidates spoke, with Kale strongly outlining Pangu's achievements including the moves by nationals into large businesses, plantations and also coffee buying. He stressed his foreign travel and his ministerial role, and said he wanted the Provincial seat because he had seen all of Chimbu Province being fouled. Rev. Agere concluded the meeting saying 'Pangu is the breast that has fed you. It's no use turning your back on them and throwing sticks.' Then rain stopped play.

These events require an *excursis*. Okuk's jibes, especially the anal imagery, (which is made publicly but is too contentious to report here), are of the kind used in the past — and still today — to antagonise opponents. In Simbu cultural terms, while showing himself to be fearless, Okuk was acting somewhat provocatively, and risked involving the Kamanegu in conflict. Kamanegu relations with Kale's Dinga tribe had been tense since 1975 when after a drinking session a Kamanegu school headmaster was murdered in Kundiawa beside a Sinasina vehicle. Confrontations over compensation twice led to fighting. Although the town is now government land and hence neutral, it was essentially under Kamanegu control at the first colonial contact. Okuk was by implication flouting the neutrality convention and asserting his

dominance over all Simbu, while Kale was re-asserting the convention and challenging Okuk at Kamanegu's front door, saying (in effect) that his modern party and his ancestral tribe would not take Okuk's insults lying down.

Okuk was out of town, but in a reflex to the Pangu rally, when sunshine returned, his close supporters replied by getting the Chimbu Yomba beer truck and filled it with Kamanegu tribesmen. They specifically excluded other supporters, because if there was trouble they wanted no compensation problems. The crowd of 1,000 split into two groups on opposite street corners, clustered around the two trucks with speakers exchanging abuse. Young Kamanegu, drunk, told all other group members to get out of Kundiawa, and the tension was deliberately raised further by Nilkare cruising through with a siren blaring into a crowd which swelled as the hotel discharged the lunchtime drinkers. (Some time later the Nilkare team ostentatiously called for calm.) Many Simbu expected a full-scale riot that afternoon. Despite the tension I believe there was no riot because few of the spectators were intensely mobilized.

The row continued all that afternoon. Pangu's strongest speaker was Delba Biri from the Dom area, who was standing for Gumine. A former policeman who had been one of Okuk's henchmen, he asked what Okuk had done when in office, saying he was a *mauswara man* (politely translated as 'waffler') who only helped Kamanegu. Okuk eventually heard of this attack, and incensed at such *tok baksait* raced back to Kundiawa with his more powerful speakers. Round and round the trucks went, bellowing like angry bulls, halting, confronting, backing-off, and chasing each other. Okuk topped his remark to one candidate 'You're a driver. Driver's are rubbish!', with the hilarious crack 'Get out of town: I've met white bastards better than you!'

For three days these sound battles had continued. Councillor Siune and older Kamanegu leaders tried to mute their juniors for fear of full-scale tribal warfare. Nilkare senior tried to mediate between the two parliamentarians, and the next week the SIPG Assembly sought vainly to bring them together for a talking-to. Then, as if by agreement, except for UP rallies the campaign teams moved out of town to where the voters lived and so the early crises passed.

Okuk staged a meeting on Saturday 16 April to catch a huge crowd in town for a demonstration bout by the national boxing champion Martin Beni. In this Okuk was aided by the formidable presence of Raphael Doa, the Western Highlands member. Doa discussed the K43m of mislaid government funds, which were later found again (see note 9), in terms even more libellous than Okuk's. Both accused the government of lavish, campaign-oriented spending. A number of UP sitting members, John Kaupa and other political hopefuls spoke, the former all stressing their political *save* but lacking Okuk's passionate intensity. It is hard for an observer to judge the response of a crowd from the centre of a meeting where core followers echo their leaders, but as the speakers whipped themselves into a frenzy one comment heard at the time, which perhaps reflected more detached Simbu villagers' responses, was the eloquent phrase '*mauswara politik*' which I translated as 'tricky political waffle'. They had come to town to watch another kind of fight.

Okuk dominated the Simbu campaigns without having any effective party organization of his own. He and John Kaupa sometimes used the label 'National Party', but only two other candidates were generally thought to be National. Okuk had separate relationships with the various individuals who sought leadership in UP, men who were rivals amongst themselves. His main organizational ally was the Simbu UP branch president Anton Aba, the

businessman who Okuk had won over in 1975. Helped by his speaker system, and much more than that by his sheer will to power, Okuk's genius was to make himself central to the UP campaign; he was rather like a huge tree which overshadowed rivals of its own species but which attracted various hangers-on, creepers which competed with each other. So lesser men served to emphasize Okuk's pre-eminence.

Okuk overwhelmed the UP at a rally on 20 April at which party endorsements were to be announced. Sitting UP parliamentarians received automatic nomination, payment of the K100 nomination fee, plus 2,000 individual posters on a standard format and limited access to Dick Dee's UP vehicle. Given the fragmentation of the electorate these candidates did not object to multiple nominations; the time for shoring-up their vote bank against splitters was already over. At least 60 men sought the party nod, but when Sir Tei Abal arrived endorsements were not decided. While Dee and Abal sat in the comfortable Chimbu Lodge to finalize the party tickets, Okuk stressed his separate National Party identity to the UP hopefuls, and his alliance with UP as a good highlander. He challenged Abal's alleged weakness for failing to topple Somare. 'You are a bullshit organization — useless! I don't support Tei, but I support UP. Tei wants to be big at the Lodge — I'll go and get him.'

Abal came and on Dee's advice announced a total of 14 endorsements for the six Open seats, plus the sitting MPs and Kumgi. Dee's local knowledge was limited but he had the sense to see the potential of two eventual winners. One strong candidate, Clement Poiye, was not endorsed by UP although Abal authorized his posters. Dee said that as a businessman Poiye could afford his own campaign, but he was free to bargain with anyone after the election — which Poiye did without success. Peter Kumgi gained the UP endorsement ahead of Michael Danga, yet these two with Kai Bomai and Yuke Komba were again overshadowed by Okuk. They jokingly took up his mocking taunt of *manki* (young boy). Abal's homily about the need for parties and the inevitability of Self-government and Independence was well behind the Simbu debate, and he was alone in explicitly rejecting Okuk's regionalism. Forty angry candidates who had nominated but been ignored by UP were not placated by a party luncheon held at the Chimbu Lodge, and Dee sought to deflect their anger onto Abal's staff. Pangu in Port Moresby was asked by five of these men for help, but that party stuck with its original nine nominations. The Country Party picked up a few, and finally had about six candidates on its list. None of the rejects, except Poiye who was close to Nilkare and was fence-sitting, won a seat.

They were nonetheless a valuable political resource. Okuk shrewdly offered to print K200 worth of posters for some 15 of these 'UP' rejects who gladly accepted and were thus immediately incorporated into Okuk's faction in a series of classic dyadic (two person) instrumental transactions. Okuk rarely used the National Party label, although John Kaupa and perhaps two other candidates thought of themselves as National Party men. Okuk had individual links with these men and with most of the UP candidates who travelled on his vehicles and introduced him into their *lains* (clans and tribes), but he personally distanced himself from the competition between these men in their various Open electorates. These men, with others in the SIPG (including — late in the piece — the Premier Swii Kurondo), brought to the Okuk campaign their own close henchmen, lesser followers and kin. While UP remained a formal, slightly impersonal political party organization, it lacked a distinct ideological drive and earnestly sought a national spread of votes. Okuk's factional machine had the single purpose of re-electing him and was

buttressed by his appeal to highlands ethnicity. It was based on a series of personal transactions he initiated by shrewd use of his massive financial resources. Political parties are often riven by internal factionalism. Dick Dee, who was not close to Okuk, explained the MP had started apart from UP but because he was fighting for that party and helped UP a lot, they had come together. So the Okuk faction, starting from outside the UP, virtually absorbed that entire party in Simbu, with the exception of Okuk's own direct rivals for the Provincial seat. Pre-planned or spontaneous, it was brilliant political strategy.

On 4 June the UP held a Saturday rally at Kundiawa in which 23 vehicles took part, eleven of them from the Western Highlands. Although invited, Eastern Highlanders did not appear. Okuk and Raphael Doa dominated the rally while the endorsed candidate Kumgi protested that he, Peter, was the official candidate. Kumgi niggled Okuk, asking what had been done. 'Now power is with the people, who should use it and act? Days pass and leaders should change. I'm not a political prostitute. I'm a learner!' At which point Okuk interrupted softly in Kuman: 'Shutup!' Kumgi finished off: 'Enough. If Okuk wins he wants to come in with us, but it's up to Tei.' Using Okuk's speaker truck, Tei was cornered into ambivalence: 'Many young men are standing', he said. 'Look well, and choose a good man. Peter is UP. Iambakey is strong to help us. We want a strong man — Peter or Iambakey'.

Okuk was not only thinking of the elections within Simbu, but the post-election lobbying. There was a party at his house that night, with K200 of beer provided by UP, K200 by Chimbu Yomba and K100 by Okuk personally. He gave whole cartons to sitting MPs and some others from the Western Highlands. Longer-term thinking no doubt motivated his travel to four highlands provinces, and a special trip with Wagua Goiye (the winning UP Kerowagi nominee) all the way to New Ireland in an attempt to block Julius Chan's re-election for Namatanai Open. *En route* they entered the fray at Rabaul, where racial issues had arisen. Chan's People's Progress Party barely had a toehold in Simbu with one businessman endorsed, in contrast to the real effort PPP invested in Southern and Eastern Highlands, Okuk accused Nilkare of being a covert PPP candidate. Okuk bracketed Chan and PPP with Somare and Pangu, but Dee was more pragmatic. 'We'll get PPP in coalition — they'll share any bed,' he told me.

Campaign fever had taken hold in April, and for the next two months the travelling political circuses were less visible on the main roads. Nilkare used more gimmickry than others, with lapel badges and car stickers, and cowboy films shown in villages at night before the soft-sell. He even funded rock bands to play for high school dances; no speeches were made, but his generosity was known. He was not just a very modern Nilkare; he said he did not visit Mintima because he did not have a friend there to introduce him in the customary way. He simply had not allowed time to create personal exchange relationships. Okuk was unable to hire commercial films because of Chimbu Yomba's bad debts, but he did show two potently symbolic pictures, one — *Bugla Yunggu* — depicting a huge ceremonial pig feast at Mintima in 1972 (from which, ironically, Okuk had allegedly been chased away for offending some Naregu), and another film of himself boldly and resolutely braving the evil spirits on Mount Wilhelm (Simbu and Papua New Guinea's highest mountain), and setting up the new national flag there. *Iambakey* is the Kuman name of the Lesser Bird of Paradise which adorns the flag and national crest, and exploiting this symbol he had a picture of this bird beautifully painted

onto the door of his vehicle. Kai Bomai used Savings and Loans Society films in his campaign. These clearly political events were sometimes announced on the NBC's Radio Kundiawa, which in general did not report the campaign. Pangu used no razzamatazz, and its hand-held loud-hailers were insignificant in that about 200 of these were sold in the highlands at K60-K90 each during the campaign.

Whatever it signified, the sound and fury did penetrate most of Simbu apart from Karimui, including remote Nomane. As in previous elections, most Open candidates concentrated on the members of their own *lain*. Mostly having fewer resources than the main Provincial candidates they travelled less, with one reason for this being the deep insecurities of a society racked with clan warfare. So it was Provincial candidates who were most visible and most audible. Nilkare in particular forced Okuk to keep running after his first opening sprint. Okuk lost 16 kg in his bold and resolute drive for power. There was one clash between Okuk's and Kale's followers at Chuave market, Okuk somehow lost a tooth during the campaign, and a windscreen was lost in a Gumine argument, but the early confrontations had proved useful warnings and real violence was avoided during the campaign period before polling.

These men were over-tired, and a road accident brought death into the political arena just as polling opened. At dawn on 17 June Kale overturned his vehicle and a young Nimai girl from Koge village was killed. Kale sensibly fled for safety to Dinga territory before giving himself up to police, who charged him with manslaughter. The politicians of Simbu were shocked, but Okuk gloated around Kundiawa that this was God's justice because Kale had slandered him. John Kaupa also crowed with glee in a sickening celebration at Chimbu Lodge. Most thought that the accident would damage Kale's chances irreparably, but when a magistrate (quite properly) allowed bail that afternoon Kale's supporters toured the town reasserting his campaign. Such accidents often lead to fighting, and in this case the temptations for candidates to meddle were great. One Sinasina candidate with some of Nilkare's group clearly raised tensions amongst the girl's relatives. On 21 June Kale rejected *kiap* advice and rather foolishly drove through Koge where he met a road-block, was attacked, and again he was lucky to escape with his life. He cried for revenge and fighting erupted immediately between Dinga and Nimai people. Many were injured and Kale's uncle was one of four killed in battles that included several neighbouring clans. The fighting lasted a month — despite a heavy police riot squad presence — with a short truce for polling teams to collect votes. As in a number of Simbu disputes during the election, other candidates were keen to act as mediators. At one stage the Premier loudly repeated his support of Okuk. Fears of a compensation claim against Pangu probably led to the cancellation of a visit by the Prime Minister on 20 June, during which it was planned that he would open the Siani Council — a task which Premier Kurondo had performed a year previously! Kale somehow survived the ordeal, and kept on campaigning. Subsequently he was goaled for nine months for dangerous driving causing death.

Campaign Issues

The most contentious debate in the 1972 campaign had been about decolonization, and had centred around Okuk, but in 1977 policies were not the real issue and ideological differences were hard to discern. The Simbu Pangu Branch had no policy details, but an attempt by a public servant to distribute Pangu posters through government offices was intercepted. An

Office of Information booklet listing party platforms arrived too late and in too few numbers to be distributed. Electoral officials banned the official display of another poster from the same source which listed policies of only the three major government and opposition parties. To the extent policies mattered, local issues were paramount. Most candidates mouthed the maxim that promises were worthless, yet all wanted more *bisnis*, roads, bridges, health facilities and schools, as well as the cessation of warfare and specific provincial powers to settle land disputes, even the wise man whose poster said '*Mi gat mausgras — mi no laik promis*' ('I have a beard — so I won't make promises'). Land for resettlement was not an issue that came to my attention and the coffee border rule was mostly seen as basically a provincial problem.

The coffee boom became Okuk's greatest electoral asset. I was told repeatedly in several parts of the province that villagers, especially older people, really believed that Okuk — personally — had raised the prices. One of his core supporters, Provincial Assembly member Asuwe Kawage, openly proclaimed this, and I heard Okuk reply that what Asuwe said was true. Generally, though, Okuk said that he fought for the prices to be raised, a more subtle formulation, and he proclaimed that he had gained local control of the coffee industry. Despite his opponent's explanations that prices were set outside Papua New Guinea following world price fluctuations, the message went across that Okuk's 1970 by-election promise to raise coffee prices had finally come about in August 1975! He was lucky, indeed, that coffee prices did not start falling rapidly until the last few days of voting.

Pangu appealed to the wealthier and more prominent villagers with its stress on high schools, village courts and *bisnis* — limited though entrepreneurial opportunities and activities are in Simbu. Somare had pushed similar themes in the Eastern Highlands. Okuk, while personally courting businessmen, publicly appealed to all levels of Simbu with his coastal dominance rationale for Simbu economic stagnation. Highlands regionalism was his main issue, and he drew a response with it. Danga was unusual amongst educated Simbu with his witty comment on government that 'You need a mixture to make it sweet: it is boring just to have *kau kau* by itself.'

Few young men, to my knowledge, mentioned generational conflict, a real fissure within Simbu society, although it was often implicit when younger men stressed their formal education and modern *save*, as shown for instance by their skilled employment. One very young candidate did condemn older generation politicians who could not cope with parliamentary business and so drank and slept through meetings, but he was drubbed. In contrast, it was older leaders who felt under some challenge who mocked the youngsters, saying they lacked Okuk's strength, wisdom or experience, or were motivated by sheer greed. Two older MPs who were rivals in this election were like a comedy duo walking around Kundiawa town, jesting 'We're going bald, but we know the ropes, unlike those English-speakers.'

Ancient rivalry between neighbouring *lains* was most important in the Open electorates; in the Provincial seat it was the tension between different geographic sectors of the province. Okuk's opponents sought to utilize resentment against the Kamanegu for allegedly usurping the provincial headquarters for themselves, Nilkare generalizing this even further into a so-called '*bomai* alliance' against the 'highway-men'. As already mentioned, most development is near the highway, while to the south (*bomai*) there is little. *Bomai* is also used to mean 'bush unsophisticate', a typical Simbu pun

nicely used by Nilkare. Not only did he speak of modern development but he very effectively reminded the Kumai people of Kup that his ancestors had sheltered theirs in precolonial times of warfare. Kai Bomai also used a local appeal in saying he would ensure that more of his Society's loans went to Gumine, Salt and Nomane people. He had some credibility, in that he was already in a position to honour his promise — even though he would lose it once elected!

The personality, integrity and credibility of candidates was a muted issue. Okuk told Joseph Tiene he was a rubbish-man because he lacked a car with speakers. He told Kale he was the son of a bad man, not a big man. In discussing Okuk's claim to be the next Prime Minister, a close supporter of Kale told me 'A man who is cross like that cannot be Prime Minister, not one who attacks people like that'. A very politically aware Simbu public servant expressed amazement late in the campaign when he said 'Okuk is so smart. He can twist people around his finger. They can't see how he is operating. They can't see what he is doing. They believe him'. There were some who disbelieved, however, such as the Provincial Secretary, Barunke Kaman, who had a standup row with Okuk in the main street of Kundiawa in January, accusing him of corruption. Four months later, mid-campaign, Okuk launched criminal charges (spreading false reports so as to create disaffection between people) which is the classic way to silence someone. The matter was adjourned to enable Kaman to prepare his defence, and Okuk let the matter lapse after the election. It had served its purpose. Pangu supporters were well aware of the laws of libel, too, but quietly raised Okuk's business activities and his use of government resources with me and quite possibly others.

These matters came to a head as the last big issue of the campaign. In June, while Okuk was in New Ireland, the Lutheran churchmen who were directors of Kuman Holdings discovered that their Banz coffee factory manager had lent Okuk some K22,000 for coffee buying, an amount which was overdue for some two months. (Normally a good coffee buyer will 'turn around' his buying advance and 'acquit' it with coffee and take his profit within a week.) Incensed, the directors sacked the manager (who started working for Okuk), and attempted to recall the money. On his return to Simbu in mid-June Okuk freely admitted the debt (and actually showed me his documents), but was furious. He said the Lutherans took it to mean that he had stolen the money because he had had an expensive campaign. Beginning on 13 June his full fury was directed at the senior expatriate Lutheran, an American, whom Okuk accused of being a U.S. Central Intelligence Agency operative. He said he would have him deported, and called him *Namba Tu Satan* (Satan's Deputy). Those of Okuk's kin close to the Lutherans at Kundiawa dissociated themselves from this attack on the missionary, who had in April told me that 'I can't see why people try to use us, although we are close to the people'. Now he asserted that he had 75,000 people behind him and that attacking the church was equivalent to criticizing motherhood. A Kamanegu said that Okuk had cost his fellow-tribesmen so dearly that if he failed to win the election he would die. Characteristically, when told that Lutheran church services in the Gembogl area had been used to attack him, Okuk broadcast the allegations of theft, and he was planning legal action against Kale on the day of the road accident. Okuk's faithful supporter Wagua Goiye defended him publicly at Kerowagi, saying that Okuk was not a thief, but rather a rich man, one who had cars. The role of wealth in the campaign needs deeper exploration.

Gifts and Generosity: 'wokim liklik bribery nabaut'

Simbu was financially flush during the coffee boom, with few investment opportunities apart from social exchange relationships such as marriage and death payments and — in 1977 — electioneering. This section discusses whether one candidate's creole phrase quoted above ('doing a little bit of bribery around and about') fairly describes the use of money during the elections. In the first instance, there was the straightforward cost of vehicles (some were bought on hire purchase and reclaimed after the election), petrol, sound equipment, the printing of posters and (for four candidates) charter costs for aircraft used in leaflet droppings. Less readily judged were the large payments made to campaign helpers by some candidates, or the over-generous prices paid for coffee by Michael Danga and several others. Finally, there were gifts. Peter Kumgi gave K300 to several communities for church improvements, to good effect. One non-drinker's poster warned about those who used *gris*: '*Ol member bilong beer tasol long hotel na town tasol*' (Their electorate will be hotel and town, they will only represent beer!). Dick Dee urged people in a public notice played over Radio Kundiawa to vote for the best man and not the party, and not to vote for those who were trying to buy votes with beer and cash. In a speech discussing Okuk and Kumgi, Sir Tei Abal made the same point, adding that people should take the gifts but not to give their votes in return. Amongst several who loudly protested their incorruptibility, one councillor in the Gumine area happily told me he had taken Okuk's proffered K30, but said he was suggesting to his *lain* that they voted for Kai Bomai or Nilkare, the local men.

Such statements go against Simbu cultural mores, in which reciprocity is a strong value, and a gift incurs an obligation and opens a continuing exchange relationship. So I am sure that some of these men protested too much. Meanwhile, the local-level leaders made their own harvest in the electoral sunshine. 'Custom' is legally defined in Papua New Guinea as what people do, and traditions are constantly changing. It was thus possible for all candidates to give generously towards major prestations in their home areas as a customary gesture, even though thousands of kina changed hands. Yet like John Nilkare, who made massive contributions of beer and beasts to death payments in certain areas well away from his home base, they regarded this an electoral 'investment'.

Beer had been used as electoral *gris* in a minor way since the 1964 House of Assembly elections in Simbu (Kuabaal 1976), but in 1977 it was the outstanding feature of the campaign. Huge parties were heavily subsidized by the major Provincial candidates in some areas, especially Gunanggi in Sinasina. Local leaders were repeatedly given cartons by the more affluent candidates, while others (such as Kai Bomai) cleverly stirred up the resentment of those voters who missed out. John Kaupa persuaded the brewery supplying his local Elimbari Corporation to prepare the tavern at Chuave for opening in three days flat, just before voting started. Despite Chimbu Yomba's K1,000 contribution many missed out on free beef, pork and 'small pig' at the opening. Huge parties were held in many parts of the province. Prompted by a follower, Okuk told me he had not given out any beer, but that such parties had been laid on for him in several places in spontaneous demonstrations of support.

Cash was also used quite spectacularly, and here I exclude Lutheran leaders refunding shareholders in the church company, Namasu. Although it was sometimes difficult to distinguish between a gift for electoral purposes and an

advance of a few thousand kina to buy coffee (which may or may not be delivered), a few cases can be documented. Thus Okuk gave K200 to Asuwe Kawage, who then danced across the main street of Kundiawa holding the money aloft shouting that he had been given it to support him, and others should vote for him too. One winner told me he pressed K2 into the hands of women on the roadside if they looked sad, and one loser told me he surreptitiously gave cash to clan leaders when they were drunk. Money was given out quite freely in several parts of the province by Open and Provincial candidates. Some villagers were clearly reluctant to discuss this with strangers, so there was some sense of impropriety. Yet Wagua Goiye used Okuk's speaker in Kerowagi on 14 June to proclaim 'We're not greasing you, giving money or beer in an underhand way. We're doing it in the public eye.'

Given the fact of the coffee flush, some candidates had the resources to drive each other into increasingly reckless acts of generosity. In this competition they were giving to third parties, rather than directly to each other as in Massim (Young 1971). Probably the candidates themselves kept no books, but five Open candidates told me they spent K25,000 in total. All lost. The following campaign expenditures were freely admitted by Provincial candidates: Kumgi, K480; Bomai, K1,500; Geri, K6,000; Nilkare, K7,000; Kale, K11,000; while Okuk told me on 9 July in front of several people 'I've spent around K21,000 and I haven't counted yet all that I've given out'.¹³ Needless to say, most candidates estimated the others' expenditure to be even higher.

With 105 candidates in Simbu it is not unreasonable to argue that well over K150,000 or K2 per voter was spent in Simbu on the election. When the average cash income in Simbu is well below K100 *per annum*, not only is this a significant amount of money, but it also shows how all but a very few are excluded from entering such a costly race. Few expatriate businessmen in Simbu admitted giving cash to candidates who approached them, preferring to help in kind (with petrol for instance), although several Western Highlands businessmen regard a K50 present to all-comers as standard practice. Pangu headquarters gave Kale K9,000, Geri used K2,000 of Country Party cash. Nilkare told me he had been given K2,000 by 'friends', and although their contributions were only in varying degrees voluntary the Simbu coffee factories still had almost K100,000 unacquitted advances at the end of 1977!¹⁴

Assessing all this generosity is complex. Michael Danga said 'The Simbu sway like leaves in the breeze. I give you cash you praise me to the skies. I go and you kick me under a car.' Bribery and treating with drink so as to influence voting are criminal offences. The National Constitution prohibits foreign firms or individuals giving money for political purposes to Papua New Guinean political parties or individuals, but the Organic Law which is needed to spell out these provisions was conveniently not enacted before the election, nor had it been by the 1982 elections. Bribery or the exercise of 'undue influence' are sufficient grounds under the electoral law for declaring a poll null and void. A possible defence against some charges might be that gift exchange for prestige purposes is a customary practice, with generosity and display being intrinsic to the Melanesian way to leadership. Proving the intent to bribe, let alone the efficacy of any gift, might well be difficult. Yet gifts to local leaders did win support, although the village people may have voted as advised for a variety of other reasons, including indifference. The modern-day exchange relationship may not necessarily win votes by incurring an obligation, but because a candidate is seen as being a good, generous person who has also demonstrated the capacity to work one part of the modern system (*bisnis*), by

extension he or she might then (in a continuation of the relationship) be able to deliver the goods from the governmental arena as well.

Even if voters merely took the presents and voted as they chose, I feel safe in predicting that staggering electoral expenditures have become a new Simbu tradition until such time as large organisations such as political parties can reliably deliver large blocks of votes.

The Count

Voting itself was a peaceful process, but the shouting only stopped after a three week poll. The count got underway to reveal a slightly higher turnout by enrolled voters than in 1972, 58 per cent (76,705 votes) as against 55 per cent (62,656 votes) (see Table 2). The high number (19.2 per cent) of voters not located on the electoral rolls in 1977 leads to over-estimation of voting turnout, as in 1972 (Standish 1976b, 342). Yet there was a clear increase in participation especially the 20 per cent rise in Chuave and Kerowagi (two electorates using the old boundaries) which were areas of extravagant campaigning. Once again the turnout generally was lowest in the most developed areas: Kunidawa, had only 40 per cent. Remote Karimui-Nomane's 85 per cent vote reflects the fact that people there were lined up to vote by *kiaps* and police in the worst authoritarian 'colonial' style. But the spread of voting was wide, and in particular the Provincial candidates succeeded much better in getting out the vote in 1977. The informal vote was again negligible for the Open seats, and for the Provincial seat it dropped from 36.1 to 6.2 per cent. The informal vote in Karimui-Nomane was still the highest, reflecting poor penetration, especially in the remotest areas off the road network, but fell from 83 per cent in 1972 to 25 per cent in 1977.

The breakdown of votes by ballot-box in Open seats shows most clearly the importance of real or implied kinship, the way whole clans and tribes vote almost unanimously for a single candidate. This reflects a corporate approach to political action, whether or not it resulted from leaders' suggestions. Most often people voted for the man with whose group they had closest continuing social relationships. With the exception of *Yangpela Didiman* President Anna Nombri, who for a long time was considered to be a potential candidate, women had not taken an active, visible part in the campaign. The female vote was as high as the men's. Although some men jested that they could not *gris* their wives on how to vote, the solidity of voting by ballot box indicates that men and women voted the same way in the same places. (Most marriages take place between neighbouring clans, however, so commonality of political interest is likely.) With the first-past-the-post system being used for the first time, the dangers of splitting the votes of a *lain* were greatly increased. All the winners had taken a long time to shore up substantial populations against rivals, with one exception. In Kerowagi an eloquent young prison warder (Wagua Goiye) attached himself to Okuk and made a generalized appeal in a hotly-contested electorate. In four months he managed to overturn the somewhat ineffectual sitting Member — who came from the same clan and the same party (UP). Not one sitting Open member was returned. Deliberate moves to set up friends to block rivals succeeded in several instances. John Kaupa had said 'This is the dirty politics' but he was to be beaten at his own game.

Party allegiance appeared to be quite irrelevant in rural Simbu, where modern political institutions are used to play out old clan rivalries. Here I disagree with Sir Tei Abal, who at one rally compared party conflict with clan warfare. Parties are significant in parliament, but not on the hustings (cf.

Table 2
Chimbu Provincial Election, 1977: Interim Count by Open Electorate
(Candidates' home electorate vote underlined)

| | CHUAVE | GUMINE | KARIUMI/ NOMANE | KEROWAGI | KUNDIAWA | SINASINA/ YONGGAMUGL | CHIMBU PROVINCIAL TOTAL | PERCENTAGES |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|
| Peter Kumgi | 158 | 161 | 248 | <u>4138</u> | 387 | 37 | 5129 | 6.7 |
| John Mua Nilkare | 2105 | <u>4049</u> | 680 | 2475 | 554 | 1609 | 11472 | 15.0 |
| Kobale Kale | 4026 | <u>449</u> | 2238 | 1535 | 992 | <u>2787</u> | 11962 | 15.6 |
| Andrew K. Kondom | 8 | 4 | 13 | 18 | <u>794</u> | 16 | 846 | 1.1 |
| Kai Bomai | 52 | <u>3889</u> | 4700 | 62 | 55 | 1498 | 10266 | 13.4 |
| Michael Danga | 21 | 2 | 206 | <u>1289*</u> | <u>164*</u> | 9 | 1691 | 2.2 |
| Jerry K. Geri | <u>1985</u> | 6 | 325 | 9 | 26 | 397 | 2748 | 3.6 |
| Maima Yoba | 5 | <u>3935</u> | 21 | 639 | 37 | 820 | 5447 | 7.1 |
| Iambakey Okuk | 4333 | <u>284</u> | 165 | 3342 | <u>7694</u> | 819 | 16909 | 22.0 |
| Yuke Komba | 315 | 9 | 49 | 72 | 91 | <u>4933</u> | 5471 | 7.1 |
| INFORMAL | 946 | 409 | 2875 | 229 | 103 | 194 | 4756 | 6.2 |
| INFORMAL (%) | (6.8) | (3.1) | (25.0) | (1.7) | (0.9) | (1.5) | (6.2) | |
| TOTAL | 13954 | 13197 | 11520 | 13808 | 11097 | 13111 | 76705 | 100 |
| Votes cast as % of persons enrolled | 76 | 55 | 85 | 69 | 40 | 46 | 58 | |

**Note:* Michael Danga is a Kamanegu tribesman born in Kundiawa, but has settled with his father near Kerowagi, outside the Kundiawa electorate.

Source: Adapted from preliminary figures prepared by Chimbu Provincial Returning Officer; the 'Total' column, which comes from his statistical return does not quite tally with the sum of the Open Electorate votes.

Hegarty 1979). The instrumental nature of commitment to parties was shown by candidates who, for years had declared their loyalty to one party, changed allegiance overnight when denied endorsement and funding. Of endorsed candidates, Pangu had three winners and UP two; Poiye went with Okuk when he failed to gain a ministry. Within a year all Simbu members joined Okuk's faction, having broken with Pangu or UP to do so. These men would most probably have won on the hustings whatever party embraced them, given the potency of local loyalties. The Open winners were relatively young, educated and wealthy.

Broadly sketching the Provincial result, Okuk won with 22 per cent of the vote, beating the closely clustered Kale (15.6 per cent), Nilkare (15.0 per cent) and Kai Bomai (13.4 per cent) with the other six well behind. The candidates' spread of appeal varied greatly. Looking at their votes by Open electorate, the minor candidates gained from 72 to 93 per cent of their votes inside their home territory. The major candidates had obviously shown a more general appeal, some of which can be attributed to kinship, some to party and factional and religious linkages, some to personal friendship, and some to straight generosity. I do not have complete information on all these factors, and so cannot weigh their relative importance. Shortage of time and space preclude detailed analysis of the contents of 200 ballot boxes here.

The '*bomai* strategy' (saying Okuk's re-election would make southerners the servants of highway people) was a potential winner, judged by votes available, but failed for lack of coordination and cooperation between Nilkare and Kai Bomai which led to splitting. Maima Yoba helped divide the two southerners, although he also may have hindered Okuk by winning a solid block of votes in Dom, his home area. Kai Bomai polled very strongly in his base area Gumine, and also in Nomane, where his mother's people come from. He has some family ties into the Gunanggi part of Sinasina; he picked up almost 1,500 votes in that electorate. All this was territory which Nilkare (and to a lesser extent Kale) hoped to harvest. Although Kai Bomai and Nilkare reduced Okuk's vote in Gumine from 2,000 votes in 1972 to 284 in 1977, they helped Okuk by destroying each other, and by excluding Kale. Nilkare's ties with the province's young elite of coffee buyers apparently helped him a great deal, for example in Chuave where the winning Pangu candidate, the coffee-buyer Robert Kaki Yabara, helped Nilkare gain 2,100 votes. Interestingly, Nilkare collected almost 2,500 votes in Kup census division south of the Waghi river. As mentioned this reflects not only his modern-day southern appeal but also his recalling of his clan's historic debt. He won 1,500 votes in Kobale's Sinasina area. Again, there was lack of cooperation between these near-relatives. Simbu politicians were amazed, immediately after the elections, when Nilkare started mustering successful candidates on behalf of Pangu. Subsequently it emerged that through the campaign he had been a member of that party's National Executive!

Given that his accident had cast real doubt on his future, Kale's unspectacular pork-barrel approach served him very well to take him into second place. His share of the vote in Sinasina was low (21 per cent) but this was possibly only in part because of the fighting under way during the polling. He had been a conscientious local member, and he even won votes amongst what were then enemy *lains*. There are signs, apart from any help from his Lutheran connections, that the favourable comments about Kale which I heard from Seventh-Day leaders — including expatriates — helped him win votes where this church was strong. Conflicts within *Yangpela Didiman* over money

matters and Arba's blatantly political use of that association's vehicle possibly stopped it delivering many votes to Kale. In addition, many leading association members were already tied up with other political factions. If Poiye's offer to stand aside for Kale was genuine, the latter had grounds to regret abandoning Sinasina.

Okuk's vote is harder to explain. He maintained his high vote in Kundiawa, especially in the Chimbu valley where he took credit for road improvements. His attempt to use the Gumine road works failed, if only because of the presence of two strong local opponents, although he had done well there in 1972. Despite Kerowagi being Kumgi's home area, Okuk polled strongly there, in alliance with the Open winner Goiye. Although he lost votes in the Kuman language area to Komba, Kumgi, Danga and Kondom, and some to Geri in Chuave, their narrow appeal meant they posed no threat. Indeed, Okuk's greatest gain was in Chuave, where identical boundaries enable direct comparison with the 1972 vote. Okuk's total rose from 1,240 to 4,333, with almost all this gain located in the Nambaiyufa Census Division. Nambaiyufa was the most isolated 'neutral' area — in terms of kinship linkages — of any major population centre in the entire province. Here Okuk took credit for the roadworks in progress, and had set up a base camp for his coffee buying operation. He had also cultivated very close ties with local leaders. They held a big party for him and his generosity was well known. Okuk pulled in virtually all the votes from much of Nambaiyufa. If any single area influenced the election, I should say it was this census division with its own language, a large population, and a quite separate geographic identity. Okuk succeeded in Nambaiyufa despite the efforts of a traditional leader — the former MHA, modern businessman and Provincial assemblyman, Yauwe Wauwe — to swing Provincial votes to Kale and Pangu.

Counting lasted four nights and three days; on the second day Okuk arose from his post-campaign depression, proclaimed his coming victory to Kundiawa town, and held yet another party for his followers.

Public Servants and Electoral Administration

The Simbu count and indeed the whole voting process were complicated because Papua New Guinea has had the misfortune to inherit some very complex electoral procedures, which are ill-suited to a country with an inexperienced bureaucracy and a largely non-literate population scattered across some of the world's roughest terrain. In addition, rapid localization of the public service meant that few national officials had previous experience in running elections. With the rundown of the *kiap* field service, there was no effective census from 1972 to 1978 in Simbu, and the electoral rolls — never really accurate — were thoroughly obsolete. Private individuals, including one Clement Poiye, were paid to help update these rolls. There were 'computer foulups' (human errors) locating whole *lains* in the wrong electorate, or even losing them altogether. It was no surprise, then, that the names of 14,703 voters (19.2 per cent) could not be located on the rolls, compared with 4,103 (6.5 per cent) in 1972.

Returning Officers for all seats in Simbu criticized the rolls and several recommended their abandonment. After an attempt at dubious practices in Kundiawa township was foiled, a master roll (on which all votes taken for the electorate were checked off daily) was used in the Kamanegu area. In most electorates polling teams were using up to four rolls simultaneously. The possibility thus existed for double — or multiple — voting and some preposterous

allegations to that effect were rife. The system of declarations made by those whose names are not on the roll is not foolproof. Nor can Voter Identification Tribunals comprising local notables (which were tried in the 1970 Chimbu Regional By-election) guarantee propriety. Candidates' scrutineers would be a partial check only on false statements by such Tribunals. Heavy voting in urban areas always leaves the possibility of doubling-up in rural areas. The only system which would prevent this is use of an indelible dye on the hand or fingernail that lasts for the polling period — which should be as brief as possible. This system was successfully tried in the Eastern Highlands Provincial Government election in 1978. No roll is needed for this system, thus greatly speeding the voting procedure and saving the large sums of money now spent preparing a roll which is inadequate, as shown by the high number of declaration voters all over Papua New Guinea. Some Simbu electoral officials proposed that voter cards be issued and then surrendered or punched, but these could well be 'lost' before the election, and would still pose the same problems of identification as does the present roll system, thereby still requiring a system of declaration. The United Nations team observing the 1972 election recommended the use of dye, and in my opinion it remains the best available option. Although it requires rapid polling with less complex procedures this should be possible.

Starting with the announcement of the 1976 recommendations for boundary redistribution, allegations of partisan bias by officials abounded. The Provincial Returning Officer reported of the 1976 redistribution (which was accepted in 1977) that

It may seem a small matter yet its effect in Chimbu was such that the elections and electoral officials popularly were held in disrepute well before the start of polling, even more so than in previous elections.¹⁵

He believed that this problem in part arose because of poor communication by Electoral Commission staff of details of the new Organic Law on Elections. Briefing of interested members of the public fell to officials in other departments, who were often new to the job and/or unaware of changes to the electoral law. The need for intending candidates to be on the roll for the seat where they wanted to stand caused considerable confusion and added to the levels of tension and the acrimony in Simbu.

Former candidates who lost in 1972 and even winners like Okuk had for years alleged that Simbu students acting as poll clerks had 'rigged' the ballot while assisting illiterate voters using the 'whisper' system, and so by general consensus the 1977 candidates initially asked the officials to exclude all highlanders from polling teams. After polling started, perhaps afraid of coastal backlash after the regionalist extremes of the campaign, they demanded that coastal officers be replaced with Simbu. As a compromise, teams were then balanced out with coastal officers and highlanders paired off and voters were reminded they each could take a witness into the booth. Some educated youths feigned illiteracy so as to check the clerks who were recording their whispered vote. Only one claimed his vote had been wrongly recorded, a doubtful allegation which was not made until long after the event. Every effort was made by those in charge of the electoral organization in Simbu to develop public credibility, a difficult task when few people — and certainly not all the officials — could follow the procedures.

After the elections several allegations were made that polling officials had

been drinking with certain Open candidates, despite previous dire warnings from the Secretary for Provincial Affairs. In two proven instances where fraternization involved drinking with a Provincial candidate and giving him a lift in a government car¹⁶ the public servants involved were transferred out, or sacked. One official interpreter campaigned quietly for Okuk, and perhaps others had similar loyalties. Delba Biri's workmates in the government transport pool tended to support him, as Kumgi's in the Department of Primary Industry. Before the poll Kale's group reported an alleged conspiracy by senior officials who were members of a gambling school to ensure that Okuk won. Although no solid evidence was produced, Cabinet was said to have believed this wild story. One of the men allegedly involved was embarking on furlough for the election period. The complex mechanics of a conspiracy involving seven returning officers and twenty five polling teams seem to make this allegation preposterous. The Simbu Premier greatly upset coastal officials in warning them publicly not to cheat, a sign of the suspicion harboured by illiterate people towards the educated.

The atmosphere was such, then, that losing candidates had ready-made rationalizations for their defeat. Certainly some minor malpractice was tolerated, like outsize posters, but I believe there were sufficient checks and balances to prevent gross abuses. But the losing candidates had had a lot at stake. Either they could not or would not understand the system, no matter how often it was explained to them, or they would nod their heads and go away repeating their allegations of malpractice, perhaps just to save face. There were so many requests for information on how to lodge Disputed Return appeals that the Provincial Returning Officer printed and distributed in bulk a slip giving the Public Solicitor's address. Apart from bribery (which no-one alleged in this context), the vanquished wanted to report slander, multiple voting and illegal trucking in of large numbers of ineligible voters.¹⁷ The first is not a ground for appeal, and the latter must be shown to have materially affected the result. On 9 July Okuk told me he had trucked in 2,800 Simbu from the Western Highlands who had not been away six months and were thus eligible voters. This was not in itself grounds for an appeal, as it would not have materially affected the result because his winning margin was 4,945. Okuk's rival's Danga and Nilkare who were initially thinking of appealing against the result were unable to muster sufficient evidence, or energy, and eventually decided to let the issue lie. Some, at least, of these problems could be avoided by amending the Electoral Act and procedures.

In the immediate aftermath of the elections, candidates who could not tolerate their shame and loss of face tended to take their frustrations out on electoral officials. The reasons are clear enough. Being unable to blame either themselves, their own *lains* (to whom they were mostly deeply obligated, even where the *lain's* vote had been split), or neighbouring *lains* (which would raise the chances of fights erupting), they took the easy road of blaming somewhat defenceless and — in Simbu terms — tribally neutral, public servants. In each Open electorate in Simbu there were menacing confrontations involving ugly demonstrations at government offices and/or vehicle holdups on roads. Severe damage was done by stones thrown at government housing at Sinasina which injured the wife of one official. The Acting Provincial Commissioner shrewdly replayed over Radio Kundiawa a speech by the Prime Minister, saying that the losers had only themselves to blame, and that their kinsmen should not be duped into attacking officials. The storm subsided in a few days. However, while one outgoing member had previously threatened to blast off with his

shotgun if he lost, it was another who actually did so in a harmless but terrifying rampage around a government station that terminated in a short term of imprisonment. Other failed candidates tightened bows and loosed arrows, and there was a very angry brawl at Omkolai village between the two losing candidates' families there. Serious fighting erupted in the Laiagam area of Enga Province and was threatened elsewhere, so Simbu again was not unique in this regard.

Such 'wild man' behaviour when frustration becomes intolerable is not uncommon in the highlands (Clarke 1973), and people have learnt to live with it; but it also clearly raises doubts as to the administration of the electoral process. One immediate result was the demand from all staff at Sinasina District Headquarters for immediate transfer out of Simbu, and understandable expressions of reluctance by public servants in Simbu to officiate during any future elections there. Ultimately, of course, the village people will suffer from the resultant decline in services, which will lead to increased frustration, in a vicious, descending, spiral.

Conclusion

Chimbu is not a happy province; life is harsh and local politics always tense. The struggle to climb into the political kingdom is doubly bitter when the whole society is under stress. Social turmoil was manifest in the 1977 campaign, but was not caused by the elections — although they intensified it. Nor were internal problems resolved. Clan fighting continued through into 1982, with only a temporary lull during the 1979 State of Emergency. After the elections Okuk clashed with the SIPG, and a series of demonstrations in 1978 perhaps showed the low public acceptance of that body. Provincial government elections will give a further chance to test the observations made and trends identified in this paper. In 1978, it appeared to me that Okuk had kept his faction together in preparation for these elections, and there was some continuing party involvement too. Meanwhile, the most significant issues discussed here relate to the nature and legitimacy of the electoral process in changing Simbu society. In discussing the legitimacy of the election it helps to distinguish between the accepted process of campaigning and the actual result, the acceptance or otherwise of the winner.

As usual, an accepted gap between rhetoric and reality is implicit in the campaign process. Candidates made pledges even while denying the validity of election promises. The efficacy of *gris* was denied yet there was a huge flow of electorally-motivated giving. Recipients often asserted their autonomy but behaved as though obligated, and could not help but be impressed by the wealth and generosity of candidates even when they knew its source and motivation. There was very clever manipulation of cultural mores, under the guise of modern politics, and similarly quite modern political activity was dressed up as 'traditional'. It is widely accepted in the social sciences that tradition/modernity dichotomy is false (Gusfield 1966), and certainly in Simbu they cannot be separated. Yet while villagers expressed niggling doubts as to the morality of the electoral *gris*, campaigns have become progressively more lavish over the years as Simbu people move further into the capitalist economy. The coffee-cash-campaigning nexus seems likely to last. There is an acceptance of the ritual of the campaign beer party, while making a half-hearted denial of its effectiveness. Perhaps only 15 per cent of beer consumption during the campaign was electoral *gris*. There is also, at last, some understanding of the nature and mechanisms of political parties, highly

personalized though these are in Papua New Guinea (cf. Hegarty 1979, Standish 1977).

Parliamentarians are expected to fill several roles, all of which affect the public acceptance of the result of elections in a society with highly divided, particularist local loyalties. Most importantly, a Member is expected to 'bring home the bacon' in the form of projects and employment for his electorate (Gadbois *et al.* 1978), and especially for his own *lain*. Groups who have gambled — which is *their* concept — on losing candidates thus feel they have wasted their effort. A Member is expected to be a delegate, rather than a representative with freedom of political judgement. Perhaps most important, the elections are contests between the clans and tribes, a poorly sublimated manifestation of traditional rivalries. Again, local kinship loyalties preclude the transfer of much trust to the member of a potentially (or actually) hostile *lian*.

Electoral defeat brings humiliation — just as victory brings pride — not just to candidates themselves but to whole *lains*. The kinship divisions in Simbu are real: they are not merely a colonial divide-and-rule ploy, and are intensifying with increasing pressure on available resources. With so much at stake, it is not surprising that one winner needed a police escort while another had to fly to Kundiawa via Goroka in order to avoid roadblocks set up by the vanquished. One winner could visit only a tiny proportion of his electorate in the following two years because of warfare.

To a far greater extent than Open Members, the Provincial Member can be above such intense parochialism, and thus have a wider legitimacy. But his effectiveness as a representative is reduced because he has to cover such a large constituency. Having Provincial Members does help smaller provinces in the National Parliament. Yet incumbent parliamentarians are unlikely to make the necessary constitutional amendments to get rid of the Provincial Member system, and so it will no doubt stay.

The potency of parochialism makes it possible for wealthy leaders to manipulate kinship loyalty. In this case they are dividing the peasantry vertically rather than building up horizontal class consciousness and allegiances. The 'peasantry' is an analytical category only, and Marx's famous simile which compared the divided peasantry to a sack of potatoes holds as true for Simbu today as it did for France a century ago. There are both ascribed and achieved elements in clan and tribal leadership (Standish 1978), and broker and patron-client linkages which open the way to influence for young educated men in key positions. Properly played, these advantages can enable young men to gain the commitment of their elders and to recruit or neutralize possible opponents in that key part of the electoral process, the hidden lobbying before nominations even open.

The candidates were clearly men of some stature or potential within village Simbu, and were mostly already members of the rural elite. The winners were not a fair cross-section of the range of candidates. Three were businessmen (coffee buyer politicians), and three white-collar workers (one a teacher), while only one was a blue-collar worker (who also sometimes bought coffee). None are peasants, big or small. The average age of winners was 35 years and their education level Grade 9, which compares with the outgoing members' age of 42 and three years' schooling. Most of these modern young men got few votes outside their own *lains*, however. So while there was a changing of the guard in 1977, it was performed to the old parochial tune, and the successors were amongst the wealthier men in their areas.

As elsewhere in Papua New Guinea (Groves *et al.* 1971) and overseas (Edelman 1972) personality, symbolism and political style were important in the Provincial race and in some of the Open seats. Parties were unimportant except where they became part of personal political factional machines. Policies were essentially unimportant, although regionalism — in the nation and province — was. Patronage links mattered for some candidates. One unusual campaign was that of Wagua Goiye, the young prison warder who enmeshed himself with Okuk and whose rhetorical skill was such that an opponent said his words were like butter. Goiye collected a sufficiently wide spread of votes throughout Kerowagi to defeat the sitting member from his own *lain*. Okuk and the UP provided resources to give him a high profile, and he had already won many friends amongst those imprisoned for fighting. Kobale lacked Okuk's assertive, thrusting personality and so the Pangu team's figurehead throughout the campaign was Michael Somare. By attacking Somare, Okuk by implication raised himself to the same level and thereby put Kobale down. I have seen profound awe inspired amongst village people by Okuk's presence and the mention of his absentee protagonist Somare, and also servile deference accorded to both from prominent local leaders. Some might call this charisma (Willner and Willner 1965). Okuk did not have this before gaining high office, and so (following Tucker) I am reluctant to call this 'charisma' (Tucker 1968). Okuk won many votes in the Provincial electorate from people who voted for Pangu candidates in the Open seats, and so the conflict with Somare did not engender watertight political allegiances. Indeed one Simbu graduate told me that his people liked both men and were quite happy to watch them locked in continuing conflict. This is not just a flip comment about a warrior culture, however, as two strong men might provide useful checks and balances on government.

As befits a highlands leader, Okuk was able to draw favourable responses from various levels of the Simbu audience. He vigorously played on a provincial scale the old tricks of a clan leader, and as Burrige has said it is real big-men who 'transcend the system' (Young 1971, 113), thereby creating new rules. He was tough-minded, bold and resolute, combative in public and quietly smiling and manipulative in private. He had built up friendships that in turn added more and more subsidiary patron-client networks to his pyramidal faction. He voiced reasons for Simbu's troubles, a regionalist appeal to those in urban employment, and he played upon the coffee price issue for the rural people. He was able to take credit for a few government projects, although he had not used the pork-barrel well. This was his third election campaign in seven years, he was the incumbent, and he had been a government minister — so his name was by far the best known in the province. As in 1970 and 1972, he was the main target of his opponents and thereby gained even further publicity. In 1977 he increased his vote by 57 per cent compared with his 1972 primary poll, yet this time his vote was far less evenly spread throughout the province (cf. Standish 1976b, 344). He used every gimmick, from traditional symbolism to car stickers and printed shirts, started in front and remained the strongest candidate.

This story leads me to a number of propositions about political participation in Simbu, and elsewhere. Following Parry, I take political participation to mean the opportunity to significantly influence policy and the course of events (Parry 1972). Improved communications and other aspects of modernization, especially the increased cash flow, enabled the greatly increased penetration of Simbu rural society by members of the political elite, especially in the

Provincial contest, which led to the improved mobilization to vote indicated by the 79 per cent drop in the informal vote. Parochial ties and personality had greater potency than party or policy. Because of the gutter-brawl nature of some of the slogans which gained currency amongst rural people, and massive political ignorance, I conclude that votes were not made on the basis of informed political judgement. The proposition of John Kaputin, Member for Rabaul Open, that 'We Tolai have political consciousness; a few beers are not enough to swing votes' is not relevant for Simbu. Yet even during the campaign most people gave only passing attention to the political antics around them, and although they discussed politics in the men's houses the criteria used in collective decision-making would not impress the founding fathers of liberal democracy.

After the colonial interlude, then, Simbu people probably have less political participation in affairs that concern them than before colonial contact. Their views are sought even less assiduously than in the colonial era, and they certainly were not masters of their destiny then. They now vote, but they do not accept the outcome of the poll, whereas in the colonial era the Administration's role as arbiter had some legitimacy. Modern politics and government in Simbu are in upheaval, expressed as much in inter-clan rivalry as in the local, provincial and national arenas. The ground-rules have not been internalized at any institutional level, as is exemplified by the resurgence of local warfare, which feeds into conflict in the modern institutions. Thus I echo Huntington in saying that there is not much 'political development' (in the sense of institutionalization), but rather the opposite: Simbu politics is in a state of 'decay' (Huntington 1965), perhaps 'terminal development' (Howlett 1973).

Yet it can be argued that given the range of candidates presenting themselves in 1977, the Simbu people were not duped. There is a tradition of tolerating the extravagant use and display of public resources for the purposes of individual and group glorification. Villagers shrug and say '*pasin bilong ol*' ('that is the way' of big-men). The Australian administration merely adapted Simbu customs in this regard. There is some grumbling about exploitation, usually concerning the leaders of other groups but sometimes — in a very low voice — about one's own. If village people have some connection with a leader, however tenuous, they may feel also some faint chance of receiving some future spinoff in a continuation of the relationship. So from the point of view of the 'fatalistic' peasant minimizing his risks and choosing the limited good (Foster 1965), it is perfectly rational for him to give his vote and ultimately the highest head-dress to the politician he knows rather than to the one he does not. This is what happened in Simbu in 1977.

In the villages and hamlets the party is over, and life goes on.

NOTES

1. Most of my material is based upon some thirty months of field work 1972-78 supported by UPNG, ANU and the PNG Institute of Applied Social and Economic Research. I am particularly thankful to the politicians and officials in Chimbu for their generous help and to those who commented on earlier versions of this paper. My greatest debt is to my astute field assistants and to villagers in many parts of Simbu.

Interviews were in *tok pisin* or English; Kuman speeches were interpreted into *tok pisin* for me. My research techniques were (a) personal observation of public events, (b) interviews with candidates, (c) gathering the impressions of other non-

Simbu residents, and (d) noting comments as they arose in talks with village people around Simbu. I did not survey political attitudes or awareness by formal questionnaires for three reasons: (a) cost, lack of time to organize, and shortage of suitable interviewers; (b) problems of sample selection and the near impossibility in Simbu society of speaking in private with single individuals; (c) the danger of questions themselves influencing opinion (cf. Edelman 1972). The last matter was especially important when the level of awareness of the election was itself a subject of study. There is also some (healthy) suspicion of outsiders and some tendency to provide opinions thought to be acceptable to them. The Gallup tradition does not reach peasant society.

By the time of the 1977 election I was quite well known and was often spontaneously approached for political discussions by strangers. These generally required a passive stance on my part. The research is thus informed by specific inputs from hundreds of people from all areas of the province and by observation over time of the expressive behaviour of thousands.

2. The Provincial Electorate for the National Parliament retains the colonial spelling 'Chimbu', which in late 1979 remains the proper name of the province, although the provincial government uses 'Simbu'. I will use the later name for what I broadly call the Simbu culture area, that is most of the province north of the Karumui/Bomai section (see Map 1).
3. For general data on Simbu see Howlett *et al.* 1976, ECL 1979, and for specific studies of my base area see Brookfield and Brown 1963 and Brown 1972.
4. Sixty-six per cent of shares are owned by Angco, the Goroka-based processor and exporter which was bought by the Investment Corporation in 1976, 30 per cent by an expatriate (who was in 1977 the Manager), and the remainder by Simbu Coffee buyer-politicians.
5. For some socio-economic data on this group of politicians see Standish 1979, 56-60.
6. For a discussion of the concepts of factionalism and clientelism see Scott 1972 and Nicholas 1977.
7. National Parliament, Routine of Business No. 76, 17 February 1977.
8. Sinake Giregire, Member for Daulo 1964-77, Country Party Leader.
9. This was the first half of an 'establishment grant'; another grant of K85,000 was made for the *bisnis* arm as well as a K100,000 interest-free loan.
10. In late 1976 the Auditor-General reported that K43m was astray in government accounts. This was almost all due to accounting errors and to the computer compounding the same debit items. The government quickly tacked down the 'missing' funds and made full explanation. See *Post-Courier* November-December 1976.
11. These are the Somare government's quasi-ideology, the Eight Aims for National Development.
12. Quotation from translated subtitles for O'Rourke and Kildea's film '*Ileksen: Politics in Papua New Guinea 1977*' which has extensive sequences showing the Simbu campaign.
13. While Okuk's total expenditure may have been even higher, the scale of his extravagance was not unique: his friend Anton Parao lightly told me that he had spent K24,000 in losing the 1977 Enga Provincial seat.
14. When coffee prices are falling, factories and buyers are likely to lose money unless they drop their buying price very quickly indeed, which tactic carries some risk of them losing their raw material supply to other factories. So not all the 1977 losses were due to electioneering nor to those over-generous or merely naive candidates who burnt their fingers by mixing *bisnis* and politics and bought coffee at inflated prices.
15. J.C. Corrigan, 'Report, 1977 National General Elections, Chimbu Province'. Kundiawa 1978 (Typescript). After raising important problems over identification of voters, Corrigan went on to propose a seminar of returning officers to pinpoint difficulties in electoral procedure in order to propose appropriate amendments, warning of the need to be prepared for snap elections and by-elections. No such action was taken by the end of 1979 and the national legislation has now been replicated for most provincial governments.

16. Unlike 1972, when the use of public vehicles was a hot issue, no candidate challenged Kale or Biri's constant use of a government landcruiser. (The Secretary for Provincial Affairs had circularized staff saying, *inter alia*, that it was not for a public servant to decide whether a Minister's use of transport was for official purposes or not!).
17. On one occasion a Kamanegu policeman attached to a polling team warned a merry truckload of voters that they were ineligible, having been away more than six months. He also told them they would lose their rights to land in the Western Highlands if they voted in Simbu, so they then left. A few days later the same group turned up at a rural polling booth, saw the same policeman and team on duty, turned tail and departed! For a newspaper letter concerning trucking and treating see *Wantok*, 4 November 1978.
18. Hon. John Kaputin, MP, at UPNG Seminar July 1977.

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Chapter 6

COFFEE, CLASS AND POLITICS: THE ELECTIONS IN THE EASTERN HIGHLANDS

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Class Formation Nationally and in the Eastern Highlands.

In seeking to understand the development of any historically determinate social formation it is necessary to establish how the modes of production that make up that social formation relate to, link with, and affect each other. The struggles and alliances of the various classes, class "blocs", strata and fractions of classes within a particular social formation are the stuff of politics and history. The struggles between and within the various classes in a social formation are fundamentally concerned with which classes or class groups will gain control over productive resources, and which will be denied control.

In Papua New Guinea, the present struggle for control of productive resources has deep roots.¹ Significant social inequalities and embryonic class divisions were present in precapitalist PNG, for example, the 'big man' as accumulator as well as distributor; the existence of at least some chiefly systems; and the stratification among the Mbowamb of Mt. Hagen and in Bougainville-Buka. Colonial capitalism was subsequently established upon these inequalities, and utilised important "traditional" institutions, and values (such as the 'big man' and the emphasis upon acquisitiveness and profitmaking in certain societies) to form linkages between Melanesian precapitalist economies and the global capitalist system. Certain hierarchical tendencies evident in the social relations in the pre-capitalist modes of production were strengthened in the slow and complex process of linking together pre-capitalist and capitalist production systems. With relatively weak and dependent Australia as the main colonial power, economic development in PNG has occurred only in agriculture, commerce, mining, and recently, in very limited light manufacturing. Consequential class formation may be broadly characterised, accordingly, in terms of a large peasantry, a small and scattered working class, and most recently, by the production of a small educated petty bourgeoisie.

The peasantry in general is defined as comprising village and family-based producers of cash crops largely for export in a dependent relationship with the market and state. Its formation is most advanced in areas of intense cash crop production (copra and cocoa on the Islands, coffee in the Highlands), leading to the creation of class divisions within it. Specifically, the last two decades have seen the emergence of a rich peasant class (and more recently of rural capitalists) and, less visibly, of middle and poor peasants. There is no "terminal" stage in the formation of a peasantry.

This process derives out of the old inequalities but is also based upon, particularly rapidly since the 1950s, the development strategies of the state,

mainly expressed through DASF extension services and Development Bank (and other) loans in support of cash crop production by peasants. The general policy has been that of providing material and financial resources to the "efficient" producer. The acquisition of legal ownership of land and the exploitation of wage labour by the rich rural classes are recent and still rather restricted developments. The control of these resources has developed out of individual access to clan land and access to clan labour in varied forms. Land ownership and the use of wage labour are of course related to a certain scale of production, but control of land by individuals is also connected with certain types of enterprise e.g., the fencing of cattle runs (McKillop, 1976). These and other developments are greatly modifying "traditional" rights to land in several parts of the country.

The rich rural classes in the Eastern Highlands are in general terms characterised by ownership of relatively large coffee farms and numbers of coffee trees. In 1976 43 percent of the country's plantation coffee and 26 percent of its small holder coffee came from the Eastern Highlands. It is the production of coffee which is the primary mechanism of the integration of previously subsistence agriculturalists in the Highlands into world capitalism. Some eighty percent of the adults in the Province are engaged in coffee growing. Wilson and Evans (1975: 14) estimate that eighty percent of these cultivate less than 0.2. hectares (less than 500 trees). This was the average holding in the late sixties, and there is evidence to suggest that the size of the average holding is decreasing. From 1972-73 to 1975-76 the number of growers in the province increased by 115 percent but the hectareage under cultivation increased by only 47 percent (personal interview, Joe Nietzsche, 1977 and Wilson and Evans, 1975: 11-12). The average cultivated presently is about 0.1 hectare (about 250 trees). In addition the percentage of growers in 1973 under 25 years old was 3.3 percent in the Eastern Highlands, compared with 34.6 percent in the Northern Province (Wilson and Evans, 1975: 12). This suggests that it is becoming increasingly difficult for young men to become large-scale coffee growers. More specifically, the rich peasantry would at least be those holding in excess of 1,000 trees, that is, cultivating more than 0.5 hectares. Anderson (1977: 10) estimated that in the Chimbu, Eastern and Western Highlands, only 6 percent of the growers held more than 1,000 trees.² These men also tend to be older (over 35) and to be, or be capable of becoming, "traditional leaders".

Not only is access to land for coffee cultivation important but so too is access to the necessary means of production. A higher price for coffee can be obtained if the grower sells it as parchment but this necessitates the pulping of the coffee berry. In the 1972-73 coffee season the price of a coffee pulper was about equal to the average grower's annual income. Accordingly collective ownership, often with more than five other growers, is the norm. Anderson (1975: 5-6) found that only seven percent of his sample of growers owned their own pulpers. The ownership of pulpers is important also because it is a source of additional income, non-owners paying for their use at a flat rate per season or at a flat rate per bag. Ownership of pulpers, then, is a further determinant of class position within the peasantry.³

As well as ownership of productive resources, employment of wage labour is a primary determinant of class position. As mentioned above the process of the linking of pre-capitalist and capitalist production systems is slow and complex. The use of "free" or clan labour is still a feature of rich peasant production and even occasionally of rural capitalist production,⁴ but is

decreasingly so with the accelerating reconstruction of social relations. The employment of wage labour which characterises the rural capitalists is both a cause and a consequence of the size of their holdings. Like the rich peasants, the rural capitalists are generally based in coffee production, but they are also active in various combinations of the following: tradestores, shops, taverns, real estate, coffee buying, commercial vegetable growing, livestock raising, taxis, passenger motor vehicles (P.M.V.'s), trucks.

In the 1960's Finney's (1973: 55) ten selected leading businessmen each owned on average some 9,000 trees and gained a gross income including trading of more than \$4,500 per annum with several enjoying more than \$10,000. Today there are several whose net income is in excess of K20,000. The per capita income in Goroka in the late sixties was about \$25 per annum (Finney, 1973: 68). Over a wider area in 1973 the average return from coffee after expenses was only \$10.15. Due to world shortages of coffee and consequent price rises, however, the average peasant's income in 1976/77 was about K300. The dramatically more advanced position of the rural capitalists is considered in detail below. But the strength and superiority of the rich peasantry vis a vis middle and poor peasants must also be considered in relation to such mass phenomena as the conditions of infant malnutrition and declining food consumption experienced in the Eastern (and Western) Highlands, and with the growing incidence of landlessness in certain areas. The very poor position of the mass of the peasantry may also be inferred from, among other things, the inchoate class action of coffee stealing directed mainly against the bigger growers.

Over all, therefore, the rich peasantry and rural capitalists (the rich rural classes) are solidly based within "traditional" society (possessing or able to acquire 'big man' status) as well as within the now well established and deepening system of agricultural and trading capitalism.

The formation of the working class in PNG has a lesser dynamism to it. It has occurred out of and against the limitations presented by the long-lasting indentured labour system and the continuing concentration by foreign investors on agricultural and trading capitalism. The mineral extractive industries that have emerged relatively recently have been dependent on the importation of capital intensive means of production and highly skilled foreign expertise. These factors have encouraged the growth of only a fragmented (some 'thousand islands' of wage labour), unskilled, and impermanent work force, and when more permanent and skilled workers began to appear following the development of the sixties, specific controls were already in the hands of the state to contain the new class politically. Some relatively strong unions have appeared in the towns, and mining enclaves, but rural workers remain largely unorganized. There are urban manual workers' unions such as the Central District Waterside Workers Union and the Bougainville Mining and General Workers Union, both of which have reasonable organization and have shown a capacity for action in pursuit of basic working class goals, but the former also displays a specific ethnic character and is small in size and the role of the latter is limited physically to the Panguna mining enclave. Trade unions have thus a potentiality for organized action which is, however, localized and limited, not least by the absence of dynamism within the capitalist economy and thus by the static nature of working class formation.

The production of the educated petty bourgeoisie contrasts with the formation of both of the other main classes in its newness and rapidity, and in the fact that the members of this social category have little or no control over the

means of production at present. They have arisen in collaborative relationship with the colonial state largely to fulfill the function of controllers of the independent state. They are skilled and urban and because of these recently acquired attributes and bureaucratic position, they are far more knowledgeable about the outside world than are the more productive rich rural classes. The educated petty bourgeoisie are highly biased towards "Coastals" and Islanders in ethnic and regional terms. The four Highlands Provinces,⁵ when compared to the other fifteen provinces, ranked last in terms of the percentage of the population literate in any language, last in percentage of the population who have received or are receiving any education, and last in percentage of the population qualified in any field (Friday and Luton, 1976 table II, III, IV). An examination of all the National Scholarship holders, who comprise the vast majority of tertiary students, attending the twenty-three tertiary institutions in 1977 demonstrates that the Eastern Highlands Province is the most disadvantaged province in the country in terms of male students per capita and the second most disadvantaged in terms of female students. There are no students at all from the Wonenara District (the least developed area) in the Eastern Highlands. (See Weeks, 1977: Appendix III Table Ia).

On political organization in general in PNG, no Marxism is required to recognise the saliency of the bureaucratic state (see, for example, Tordoff and Watts, 1974). And there is a similarly wide consensus about the relative unimportance of political parties as distinct and autonomous organisations, and agreement that they exist rather as convenient devices for assembling candidates at national elections (Hegarty, 1979). The organised strength (numbers, finances, infrastructure of headquarters and branches) of such unions as the Public Service Association and the Teachers Association is therefore particularly notable, although their location within the bureaucracy, their close links with the state and its largely educated petty bourgeois leadership, restricts the likelihood of such unions' acting as instruments of the working class.

Over all, the type of organization which stands in significance closest to that of the dominant state, we would like to suggest, is the new and uniquely home-grown Development Corporation. Whether as the New Guinea Development Corporation of the Gazelle Peninsula or more particularly the Bena and the Gouna Development Corporations of the Eastern Highlands, it is these organizations which appear to assert a populism and developmentalism most comparable to that of the developmental state. These organisations tend to express the class interests of the rich peasantry and rural capitalists. Their action, we would further suggest, is also an expression of the relations between the rich peasantry and rural capitalists in the countryside and the educated petty bourgeoisie in the state. It is in fact the dynamic relationship between these leading rural and urban classes which appears to lie at the heart of the political economy of independent PNG. It is at present a relationship of tacit alliance which is expressed and mediated at the regional level through a number of cross-cutting institutional linkages — the Local Government Councils (LGCs) and Interim Provincial Government (IPG) at one level in the Eastern Highlands, and the Savings and Loans Society and the Chamber of Commerce at another. Just as the specific classes are not represented by particular political parties nor is the alliance formulated by a national political party. Adjustments are therefore possible within this ruling class alliance, but only in relation to the narrow limits of the established capitalist and bureaucratic system, and with regard for the preferences of the industrial bourgeoisie

beyond these borders. Perhaps it is ultimately the dominance of the metropolitan bourgeoisie over the alliance of the rich rural classes and educated petty bourgeoisie which best explains the quiescent nature of these domestic social relations.

The class and political action of the rich peasantry and rural capitalists is directed pre-eminently to the growth of the Development Corporations in a complex relationship, as will be seen below, with existing expatriate owned firms and with the above mentioned organizations. In the Eastern Highlands the most important political activity (in terms of numbers involved, and in terms of economic and developmental impact) is not carried on by the political parties. Action is expressed in efforts to gain still more assistance from the state and from influential members of the educated petty bourgeoisie. (In these ways intra-class competition, too, exists). Class conflict occurs in efforts to gain easier ownership over land, against rural workers particularly with regard to wages, and in relation to what has been referred to somewhat inadequately as the mass of the peasantry (e.g., in the demands for tougher action against theft and the sort of criminal behaviour which has characterised the action of the poor peasantry in many other places). Over all, the superiority of the Development Corporations and associated organizations exists because they are located within the established system of agricultural and trading capitalism and because they largely represent the interests of the leading classes within the regional economy.

Class and Political Action in the Eastern Highlands.

(a) *The Local Government Councils and the Interim Provincial Government*

Local Government Councils (LGC's) were designed specifically to fit into local social organisation and to be effective at the village level. They were to be built on customary institutions and were to maintain "tribal discipline" (Simpson 1976: 13-14). It is not surprising then that those councils without 'big man' support in the Eastern Highlands tended to be rather ineffective (for an account of the early Bena Bena Council see Langness 1963: 151-170), nor that rural capitalists and rich peasants firmly based as they were in "traditional society" should emerge partly through their control of the LGC's. Finney's (1973: 117) study of Gorokan business leaders in the late sixties clearly demonstrated this inter-relationship of politics and business. Of the ten men studied, five had been local government councillors and seven had contested the national elections in 1968. This tendency has also been noted by Gerritsen (1976: 9-11), along with what he considered to be a "rapid decline" of the LGC's. It is not, however, that the LGC's as institutions are in decline (as long as Rural Improvement Funds are channelled through them their future is assured) or that they have failed to satisfy expectations, but that some members of the rich rural classes have left them precisely because they *have* served an important function: they have been stepping stones to greater political-economic power. For some, the Area Authority and then the Provincial Government were the next steps along the way.

In October 1976 the Interim Provincial Government (IPG) superseded the Area Authority in the Eastern Highlands as the main provincial level political organisation. At the present, though, its function remains much the same as (and the main core of its membership, the 17 LGC representatives, is practically identical to) that of the old Area Authority. The IPG controls substantial resources. At its inception it received an interest-free loan of K100,000 from the central government, a first annual per capita grant totalling

K134,575, and a Derivation Grant of K62,000 for produce exported from the province in 1974-75. In addition the IPG controls the allocation of Rural Improvement Funds to the various LGC's. This amounted to K380,000 in 1976-77. There are also significant direct and visible benefits accruing to IPG members. Each received in May 1976 a K7 per day meeting allowance, which would annually bring in more than K200, plus where appropriate the following annual payments: President, K960, Vice President, K720, executive committee member, K600, member K480. By February 1978 the Premier was receiving K5278 per annum, the Deputy Premier, K3978, Minister, K3848, ordinary members, K2496. The K7 per day meeting allowance remains in effect also. The IPG allocated K80,000 for its members salaries in 1978. (Post Courier, 23 February 1978).

Part of the establishment grant from the central government was used to set up a provincial government business wing, Nokondi. Nokondi has K16,000 worth of shares in the expatriate-dominated Eastern Highlands Farmers and Settlers Association Co-operative. It also owns and runs Kotuni Trout Farm, has a forty percent share in Goroka's leading hotel, has K40,000 invested in Pacific Helicopters Pty Limited, and the same amount invested in the Gouna Development Corporation. That the IPG should have a large (but not the major) shareholding in a private company is not surprising given its class composition. A study of ten of the 17 members referred to above indicated that all were either rural capitalists or rich peasants. Like the Area Authority earlier and the LGC's, the IPG is another mechanism for the advancement of the rich rural classes.

The IPG's shareholding in Pacific Helicopters is indicative of its general orientation towards capitalist development. The Area Authority meeting, in December 1975 passed a resolution (no. 113/75) stating that the Authority "does not want politics to interfere with development". The Authority, like the IPG after it, saw its role as promoting "development" by assisting local businessmen. In January 1975, the Authority rejected a plan for the formation of a Highlands bus company to be owned by the Highlands Area Authorities "because it could take money away from local businessmen". In July that year, as well as investing money in Pacific Helicopters Pty Limited, the Authority passed a resolution stating that it "fully supported the company and agreed to write a letter to the Chairman of the Supply and Tenders Board asking that he give special consideration to Pacific Helicopters Pty Limited in any application for work in or including the Eastern Highlands District".

Not surprisingly the ownership and utilisation of land has been of major concern for the Area Authority/IPG. In 1974 two resolutions (numbers 91 and 92/74) were passed, one asking the Director of Lands Survey and Mines to find ways to speed up and simplify land acquisition and leasing procedures, and the other requesting that the Area Authority be given power to initiate forfeiture action with respect to undeveloped leases. This was reiterated by Premier James Yanepa in December 1976 soon after the inception of the IPG. Yanepa stated that the laws protecting traditional landholders "hinder the more active people who wish to get involved in business". He also suggested that the laws should be amended "to allow different groups of Papua New Guineans to buy properties in other areas or provinces" (Post-Courier, 9 November 1976: 11). This echoes a complaint made by prominent business leader Auwo Ketauwo (see below) some months earlier. Ketauwo had complained of the policy which required first option on expatriate lands up for sale to go to the "papa bilong graun", the traditional landowners, and that the

traditional land-owners' permission had to be sought before it could be leased or sold out of the group. He said that the policy was "detering many Papua New Guineans from developing the land" (Post-Courier, 12 April 1976: 4).

The IPG has become increasingly concerned about what may be described as inchoate class action of the poor peasantry and with the position of the working class. Resistance to the rich rural classes has taken a number of forms to-date, among them a recrudescence of sorcery and an increase in the frequency and magnitude of coffee stealing. The former was discussed at some length at two Area Authority meetings in April and June 1974, and the latter was recently referred to by Premier Yanepa who firmly declared that the "police must be tougher and the penalties must be higher" (Post-Courier, 27 April 1977: 1). The Area Authority also acted to prevent rises in the rural minimum wage, a sub-committee of the Area Authority appearing before the Minimum wages Board in June 1974 (Area Authority Minutes, June 1974).

So heavy is the preponderance of rich peasants and rural capitalists on the IPG that they are occasionally disadvantaged by it. In particular, the educated petty bourgeoisie are noticeably absent on the IPG (as in Province as a whole, see above). At the November 1976 meeting of the IPG, Deputy-Premier Iyape Noruka explained the difficulties encountered in drawing up a constitution "without having the benefit of one educated Eastern Highlander come to influence or help us" (Post-Courier, 9 November 1976: 15). The absence of the educated petty bourgeoisie in the Eastern Highlands makes itself felt within this important organisation that the rich rural classes utilise to advance their position.

(b) The Chamber of Commerce, Savings and Loans, and the Development Corporations.

The interests and action of the Goroka Chamber of Commerce overlap with those of the leading rural classes in the province. In the recent period, the chamber has formed a secretariat designed to promote businesses in the town and has made efforts to assist national businessmen. It too has tried to improve law and order in the Eastern Highlands particularly through encouraging the police force and agitating on their behalf, and it is involved in the land issue. It believes that problems over land ownership are stopping the development of Goroka largely because, in the words of a spokesman, "there are no clear freehold titles and obtaining land from local people has become a very complicated and difficult process". It has suggested switching to a freehold system, so that new businesses might be started, and it has called on the Provincial Government to formulate a new policy on land ownership in Goroka (Post-Courier, 10 August 1977: 10, 14). Once a totally expatriate body, the new President in 1977, is Paul Ine, significantly a national businessman and a member of the Interim Provincial Government and an influential director of the Gouna Development Corporation. While the Savings and Loans Society is far less active politically, it is important because of the money it controls and through the position of its leading personalities. With savings of nearly K1.7 million, the Eastern Highlands Savings and Loans Society, in 1977, was the biggest rural financial group in the country. This success had been achieved over four years, and could largely be attributed to the first manager of the society, Kumoro Vira, who was also a member of the Goroka Local Government Council, and who resigned as manager during the year to contest the Regional seat in the national elections. Hari Gotoha and Auwo Ketauwo of the Gouna Corporation are both Directors of Eastern Highlands

Savings and Loans. Finally, the PNG Federation of Savings and Loans Societies, at the end of 1976, controlled assets worth some K10.4 million, when its Chairman of the Board of Directors was Auwo Ketauwo, a leading Eastern Highlands' rural capitalist and, specifically, Chairman of Directors of Gouna.

The outstanding significance of the Development Corporation is that they not only mobilize rural savings but also put the money directly to work seemingly in the interests of all members of the community. John Kaputin has said of the New Guinea Development Corporation, of which he is chairman of directors, that "the corporation has done a great deal to develop and promote the concept of group participation in economic development through-out the country" (Post-Courier, 16 June 1977: 12). An anonymous correspondent from Goroka ("village boi") says in addition that

village-based groups such as the Mataungan Association and the Gouna Development Group... show more meaning and are more effective (than the political parties) when it comes to actual village development. Here the individual is moved because he sees the benefits coming and th(i)s stimulates him to contribute his efforts and resources to the development initiated at his level (Post-Courier, 17 June 1977: 10).

But while all of this is to a large extent true, there are perhaps more important aspects to the operations of the Development Corporation.

The last two years has seen the rise of the Development Corporation in the Eastern Highlands. There are today two main ones, the Bena Corporation and Gouna Corporation, with the Asaro-Watabung Rural Development Corporation as a smaller operation, and the Lowa Investment Corporation as the latest and limited expression of an earlier and unsuccessful grouping (for consideration of Lowa Corporation see Gerritsen, 1975, and Good, 1977). A conspicuous characteristic of both Bena and Gouna is the extensiveness of their involvement within the existing system of agricultural and trading capitalism. Both represent the large-scale ownership by Papua New Guineans of land, crops, equipment, and many other resources, and the employment of wage-labour to a quite significant extent. Thus, Bena Corporation owns four coffee plantations (and is negotiating for a fifth), with the biggest of these, Urona plantation possessing a large processing factory. In 1976 the Corporation processed some 800 tonnes. Bena employed a large permanent labour force, and at the height of the season the number of its wage labourers rose to more than 1,200 (Post Courier, 29 March 1971: 17; and personal interview, Akepa Miakwe, 4 May 1977). Gouna Corporation's acquisitions are different only in their diversification and greater involvement in commercial and trading activities; thus, it owns or has shareholdings in a Goroka book and sports shop, shopping arcade (in association with Collins and Leahy), taxi company, petrol station, tyre and battery service, softdrink company, and a helicopter company. But it also owns some 260 acres of coffee (its largest plantation was formerly held by Jim Leahy), a poultry farm producing, in 1977, some 9,000 birds, and a modern piggery. The value of its total fixed assets are at present some K700,000. It is clearly an extensive employer of wage-labour.

Another characteristic of both corporations, distinguishing them clearly from all of the political parties, is their large memberships and the equally large investment funds they have mobilised from among villagers. Bena has now a membership of approximately 15,500 people, and from its members of two year's earlier it raised K50,000 with which it obtained a government and a

bank loan and purchased its plantations and processing works (Post-Courier, 29 March 1977: 17). Gouna, organized in a slightly different way, has 2-3,000 “shareholders” which, while mainly based upon village groups, also includes Nokondi, the business arm of the Provincial Government. These members have contributed about K125,000, with another K40,000 coming directly from Nokondi (Personal interview, Anders Bergvist, 4 July 1977). These figures are impressive in themselves and they also compare favourably with the earlier work of the New Guinea Development Corporation where, according to John Kaputin, K125,000 was mobilised in two and-a-half years (Post-Courier, 31 August 1977: 10). The developmentalism and populism expressed by the Development Corporations of the Eastern Highlands and the Gazelle has obviously had real meaning for and obtained an effective response from the people of the area.

It is less obvious but at least equally important that these large organizations were formed and are controlled by the rich rural classes, usually in collaboration with expatriate businessmen and managers and members of the educated petty bourgeoisie. Thus, Hari Gotoha set about the formation of Gouna, towards the mid-seventies, after think about “how Europeans start businesses” (Personal interview, Hari Gotoha, 5 May 1977). Gotoha was already in possession of property indentifying him as a rural capitalist — near the end of the sixties he owned 1,400 coffee trees, a trade store, two trucks, and 10 cattle (Finney, 1973: 85) — but he subsequently acquired ownership of Kumul taxis and Goroka tyre and battery service, and became the largest single national shareholder in Pacific Helicopters (holding shares worth K10,000). Indeed, Gotoha’s personal property ownership and that of Gouna Corporation now seem closely inter-twined. Thus, ownership of the new softdrink company is 30 percent Gotoha personally, 15 percent Gouna, and with Nokondi holding a share of the remainder, while in Pacific Helicopters, Gotoha, Auwo Ketauwo, Kumoro Vira, and Goroka Tyre and Battery (both a Gouna firm and Gotoha’s property) together control more than the largest single (expatriate) shareholder. In a process where the expansion of Gotoha’s assets and the development of Gouna have, at very least, gone on together, Hari Gotoha and his close associates possess a controlling influence within the Corporation. Gotoha, Auwo Ketauwo, and Anders Bergvist, the expatriate manager, constitute an executive committee of the board of directors (which as noted includes Paul Ine), and this small group makes the effective decisions. It is also notable that Gotoha and Ketauwo are business partners of long standing, and that Gotoha himself (Secretary of the Corporation) personally collects the money from villagers investing in Gouna and keeps groups’ deposit books in his house. (Personal interviews, Hari Gotoha 5 May and 4 July 1977). Hari Gotoha has thus a strong and complex personal interest, and a preponderant influence, in the large and successful Gouna Corporation. He is nevertheless, deeply conscious of his own lack of education which renders him dependent on certain others for information about the outside world and its changing impact on the regional economy in which he operates. The services of a paid expatriate manager are one solution to the problem, and another is association with a young educated Highlander like Kumoro Vira who advises on outside events and is therefore seen by Gotoha as “like a son” (Personal interviews, 5 May and 4 July 1977). But the lack of education remains as a serious weakness of the rich rural classes in the Eastern Highlands.

Akepa Miakwe, similarly, was virtually the founder of Bena Corporation (Post Courier, 29 March 1977: 17), and today his personal prosperity is such

that he owns among other things 8,000 coffee trees, two coffee pulpers, and a commercial vegetable garden, and claims an annual income of K30,000 (1977 Election Study, information on Candidates). He was and has remained a member of the National Parliament. But Bena management services, under the terms of an agreement lasting four years, are supplied by ANGCO which, as the company buys and exports the Corporation's coffee, is possibly in a good position to manage Bena in its own interests rather than those of the Corporation.⁶ This situation was not improved when, March 1977, ANGCO sold out to the government's Investment Corporation rather than to Bena. While Bena did not possess sufficient capital to buy ANGCO, it is possible that the government could have made the money available through a state lending agency. Perhaps, however, the educated petty bourgeois controllers of the state were not prepared to permit a rich peasant controlled corporation to become quite so powerful, quite so fast; the resources commanded by ANGCO were considerable and, in terms of output-value it was, in the 1973-74 financial year, the number one company in the country. And it is finally to be noted that the economic position of the Secretary-Manager of the much smaller Asaro-Watabung Rural Development Corporation, Sailas Atopare, is also considerable as the owner of six motor vehicles, with an estimated annual income in 1977 of K20,000 (Personal communication, Carrol Poyep, 26 May 1977). Unusually Atopare is, in addition, a young and educated man.

Relations between Bena and Gouna Development Corporations are apparently cordial. Akepa Miakwe considers that Bena and Gouna have agreed, so to speak, to a division of labour; Bena will remain in coffee; Gouna will take the rest. Gotoha accepts the general thrust of the supposed agreement, in part because he considers the coffee market too unreliable. At the moment, though, the relationship is good; Gotoha is a shareholder in Bena, and Bena has lent Gouna K110,000 for its purchase of a Jim Leahy plantation. There was an earlier suggestion that Bena, Gouna, and Nokondi might merge, but this was rejected by the two corporations in favour of the present arrangement (Personal interviews, 4 and 5 May 1977).

It has been suggested already that the Interim Provincial Government is a political base of the rich peasantry. Relations between the corporations (controlled by the rich rural classes), on the one hand, and the Interim Provincial Government, on the other, are therefore potentially critical. Both Gotoha and Kumoro Vira are agreed that the members of the IPG are 'not real businessmen', and Miakwe takes this attitude further by saying that the people's true leaders are not represented to the IPG (Personal interview, Kumoro Vira, 28 April 1977; *Post-Courier*, 9 November 1976: 15). Despite the fact that Nokondi has invested substantially in Gouna, both corporations believe that Provincial and local government should keep out of a direct involvement in business; their role should be (and at the moment generally is) to facilitate national private enterprise (Personal interviews, 4 and 5 May 1977). Gouna and Bena have before them the example of the Kainantu LGC, the business arm of which has broken the monopoly of expatriate business in Kainantu town, and runs among other things four plantations, a coffee buying operation and factory, a bulk store and banking service. The Kainantu LGC has assets worth more than K600,000, and its wage bill topped K160,000 in 1976 (Personal interview, Kainantu Council official, 27 April 1977).⁷ Barry Holloway's support for the Kainantu developments (he is a director of the KLGC's business arm) is well known, as is his advocacy that this system of

mixed ‘local state capitalism’ should become more widespread. But Hari Gotoha also plans that Gouna should become the biggest capitalist operation in the Province, and his strategy aims specifically to eventually buy-up Collins and Leahy and so oust them from their leading positions, at the appropriate time (Personal interview, 5 May 1977). It is clear, over all, that for Gotoha (and Ketauwo) politics is a means to better business; in Miakwe’s case it is not quite so clear. The main organizations in the Province are thus involved in serious competition on a number of levels. This is reflected in contests for the 1977 national elections and will undoubtedly be seen again in the subsequent elections for the Provincial Government. Given the forces involved, however, the success of particular development strategy or organization is unlikely to be settled at any ballot box.

(c) *The 1977 National Elections in the Eastern Highlands.*⁸

A feature of the election in the Eastern Highlands was the success of the Pangu Party which, in a province returning nine members to the House of Assembly, increased its representation from two (including, Sasakila Sana as a pro-government member) to six. This was achieved at the expense of the country party whose representation fell from six (one member, Sunaivi Otio, defected to Pangu during the campaign) to zero, with the party leader, Sinake Giregire, suffering heavy personal defeat in a seat he had held for 13 years. The United Party, on the other hand, increased its representation from one to three in the final outcome. Akepa Maikwe was returned as member for Unggai-Bena, and Sailas Atopare in Goroka, and Billy Hai in Okapa, both of whom ran as Independent candidates, expressed their allegiance to the United Party some time after the declaration of the results.

Previous election studies have tended to concentrate on “primordial politics”, the politics of place and line, and on political parties. While these are no doubt important, new local political organisations have developed whose function as vehicles for the advancement of class interests must be considered especially as the process of class formation accelerates. Two of these organisations as we have seen are the Local Government Councils and the Interim Provincial Government.

Of the 45 candidates sampled from six of the eight council areas in the province, 16 were members of the LGC’s. Their distribution by Council Area is outlined below in Table 1:

Table 1 Councillors in the Elections

| Council Area | Number of Councillors Contesting Elections | Electorates Contested |
|--------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Kainantu | 3 | Kainantu (2); Obura-Wonenara (1) |
| Lamari | 2 | Obura-Wonenara |
| Goroka | 3 | Unggai-Bena |
| Henganofi | 5 | Henganofi |
| Lufa | 1 | Regional |
| Okapa | 2 | Okapa |

Thirteen of these sixteen were rich peasants or rural capitalists. 65 percent of the members of these two classes in the sample were Local Government Councillors. Of those sampled, the average number of votes received by LGC

members contesting the open electorates was higher than that received by non-LGC members.

The success of those who were prominent in local political organisations is even more striking when the Interim Provincial Government is considered. Of the 17 members of the IPG who held office by virtue of election, seven contested the elections. That these seven men were actively involved in provincial affairs is clear from the fact that six of them sat on the eleven-man committee set up in March 1975 to establish the Interim Provincial Government. Table 2 below details information relevant to the success of the seven. The seven IPG members contested five of the nine electorates and scored two wins and three seconds. Despite the fact that in two electorates IPG members campaigned against each other, the over all outcome is significant in itself and in comparison with that of the political parties.

In the case of the Development Corporations, Akepa Miakwe of the Bena Corporation was returned in Unggai-Bena (he was previously member for Goroka) against a number of strong candidates including the Deputy Premier of the IPG. While the Gouna Corporation was not directly involved in the election in this fashion, Hari Gotoha gave his personal support to Kumoro Vira in the Regional electorate, to Bebes Korowaro in Goroka, and to Akepa Miakwe. With Vira and Korowaro what was at work was the possibility, referred to above, of seeing young and educated men with links to Gouna elected to the national parliament. In the upshot, Vira was defeated by the then Speaker of the Assembly, Barry Holloway, and Korowaro went down to Sailas Atopare but this was tempered by Gotoha's declared readiness to work with whoever was in government in Port Moresby, by his general instrumental view of politics as a means to better business, and by at least to some extent Miakwe's success.

As noted directly above, Atopare of the Asaro Watabung Rural Development Corporation was the winner in Goroka. The victory of Miakwe and Atopare may also stand as a measure of the political failure of Sinake Giregire, once the richest of Finney's (1973: 85) ten businessmen, but subsequently not the leader of any populist development corporation nor noticeably efficient as a businessman today. By contrast, a large number of people benefit to a varying extent from the work of the Bena Corporation either as members or in more indirect ways, and Miakwe drew public attention to the Corporation's success and endeavoured to make use of his position in the organization to ensure his re-election.⁹ The final result, with both Miakwe and Atopare elected, was a significant indication of the position of the Bena and the Asaro-Watabung Corporations, but the success of the different, 'non-political' strategy of Gouna could only be fully tested in the long-term.

Finally, some recognition has been given elsewhere to the importance of class, one way or another, in elections in the Eastern Highlands. It was Finney's (1973: 116-119) view that "it (was) from the most successful of the *bisnisman* that the leaders of the councils and the members who represent Goroka in the House of Assembly were drawn", and he concluded that "the House of Assembly elections are, in effect, contests between rival business leaders". Similarly, on the eve of the 1977 elections, the country's national newspaper surveyed the situation in the Eastern Highlands under the heading "business key to votes", and noted that "this pre-occupation with business is shown by the number of candidates with an economic background" (Post-Courier, 17 June 1977: 4). Our own sample of 45 candidates showed that, in terms of the class criteria discussed above, there were 11 rural capitalists; 9 rich

Table 2 Electoral Success of Interim Provincial Government Members

| Electorate of IPG Candidate | Candidate's Political Party | Position Won in the Election | Number of Candidates Contesting | Percentage of the Vote Gained by the Candidate | Percentage of the Vote Gained by the Winner | Percentage of the Vote Gained by the Last Runner |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Henganofi | Pangu | 1 | 12 | 21.0 | 21.0 | 4.2 |
| Henganofi | Pangu | 2 | 12 | 10.6 | 21.0 | 4.2 |
| Obura-Wonenara | Pangu | 1 | 11 | 24.0 | 24.0 | 1.0 |
| Obura-Wonenara | United | 4 | 11 | 12.1 | 24.0 | 1.0 |
| Unggai-Bena | Pangu | 2 | 6 | 23.6 | 26.0 | 7.9 |
| Okapa | United | 2 | 12 | 11.6 | 22.6 | 0.8 |
| Kainantu | Country | 6 | 11 | 7.2 | 22.8 | 5.3 |

peasants; 10 educated petty bourgeoisie; 3 middle peasants; and 12 others who displayed mixed class characteristics. No link was, however, shown between the class position of candidates and their party affiliation (see Table 3 below), suggesting the relative unimportance of party in terms of the key issues of the campaign.

Table 3 Candidates by Class and Political Party Affiliation

| <i>Class</i> | <i>United</i> | <i>Country</i> | <i>PPP</i> | <i>Pangu</i> | <i>Independent</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|----------------------------|---------------|----------------|------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Rural Capitalist | 4 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 11 |
| Rich Peasant | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 9 |
| Educated Petty Bourgeoisie | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 10 |
| Middle Peasant | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Others | 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 12 |
| Totals | 11 | 11 | 3 | 8 | 12 | 45 |

On the other hand, a correlation existed between the class position of candidates in the eight Open electorates and the percentage of votes each received (see Table 4 below). The candidates of the rich rural classes received the most votes and in our sample the four winners were all rural capitalists.

Table 4 Candidates' Class Position and Votes Received (the eight Open electorates)

| <i>Class</i> | <i>Percentage of Vote Received</i> | | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | <i>0-4%</i> | <i>5-9%</i> | <i>10-14%</i> | <i>15-20%</i> | <i>21 + %</i> |
| Rural Capitalist | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 4* |
| Rich Peasant | 1 | 3 | 3 | | 1 |
| Middle Peasant | 2 | 1 | | | |
| Educated Petty Bourgeoisie | 3 | 4 | 2 | | |
| Others | 2** | 5*** | 2 | 2 | |

* These were the four winners of Open seats in the sample. The vote they received ranged from 21 to 27.3 percent.

** Of the three in our sample who ran last, one came from here.

*** Of the three in our sample who ran last, two came from here.

Seventy-three percent of the rural capitalists in the sample and 50 percent of the rich peasants received more than 10 percent of the votes cast in their respective electorates. One hundred percent of the middle peasantry, 78 percent of the educated petty bourgeoisie and 64 percent of the "others" category received less than 10 percent of the vote.

What the election did not show however was the underlying tensions between the two rich rural classes each with their different relations to the system of coffee production (the rich peasants confined to the growing and pulping stages and the rural capitalists involved in all the domestic stages of production). Nor did the results reflect the importance of the educated petty bourgeoisie within the range of political organization, and the absence of this category raises many national and international problems for the rich rural classes. In the shorter term the election graphically demonstrates the incapacity

of the 'educated elite' for independent action. Given that the immediately profitable option for the educated is political alliance with the rich rural classes, the mass of the peasantry are left with no alternative but to continue to support their 'traditional' and successful *bisnis* leaders.

Acknowledgements

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This research was carried out with assistance from the U.P.N.G. Research Committee.

NOTES

1. Much of the first third of this paper, the observations on class formation generally, are based upon Good (1977).
2. This is in contrast to Gerritsen (1975: 4) who estimated that 25 percent of the peasantry in the province were "big peasants". Of Gerritsen's "big peasant" sample in the Eastern Highlands, 28 percent possessed more than 1,000 trees (Gerritsen, 1975: Appendix A, 5). The rather large size of Gerritsen's "big peasantry" and their comparatively weaker control over productive resources such as coffee trees, is the result of his choice of class criteria, viz., primarily membership of farmers' clubs. Position within such political organizations is, however best regarded as a form of class action rather than a determinant of class position (or formation). What is significant about Gerritsen's "big peasant" sample is not that those who were influential in the farmers' clubs had a large number of trees but, that those who controlled substantial productive resources (e.g. coffee trees) had taken this particular form of class action at this particular time.
3. In our sample more than 25 percent of the rich peasants and rural capitalists owned two or three pulpers.
4. Thus Sinake Giregire, when he was already an established coffee grower, built his processing factory (Gire Coffee Factory) with, as it was reported, \$70,000 in money "and a lot of friendly labour at no direct cost" (Post-Courier, 11 September 1974: 8).
5. Enga Province was part of Western Highlands Province until 1973.
6. This may be alleviated to a degree by the appointment of Ben Sabumei to a managing position in ANGCO. Sabumei was a high ranking official in the Department of Foreign Affairs. He resigned his position in April 1978. His father is Sabumei Kofikai, leading IPG member, member of the Bena Corporation and election candidate for Unggai-Bena.
7. See Uyassi (1978) for a more detailed analysis of the Kainantu LGC.
8. In April and May 1977 we spent two weeks in the Eastern Highlands Province interviewing candidates contesting the national election. This visit was preceded by others in November 1976 and February 1977 in which we commenced studying the Interim Provincial Government and the Development Corporations, and was followed by another in July 1977. The candidates were interviewed with the help of two student research assistants, Zebby Marere and Nang Bapi, and some Assistant District Officers in the respective sub-provinces. To check interviewer reliability students and A.D.O.'s each interviewed the same candidates in seven cases. There was no obvious bias. Our sample of candidates numbered 47. A total of 81 candidates finally contested the elections.

Table 5 Distribution of Candidate Sample by Electorates

| Electorates | Number of Intending Candidates Interviewed (end of April 1977) | Number of Candidates Contesting (end of May 1977) |
|----------------|--|---|
| Regional | 2 | 3 |
| Daulo | 0 | 9 |
| Goroka | 1 | 9 |
| Henganofi | 12 | 12 |
| Kainantuu | 12 | 11 |
| Lufa | 0 | 8 |
| Obura-Wonenara | 7 | 11 |
| Okapa | 6 | 12 |
| Unggai-Bena | 7 | 6 |
| Totals | 47 | 81 |

Of candidates interviewed one of the Regional candidates was foreign born, and insufficient data was collected on one from Okapa. They were excluded from further consideration, giving a working sample of 45. Some of the men who were candidates in April 1977, had withdrawn from the race by the time the elections were held.

9. For example, it was widely rumoured that Miakwe was promising that Bena would not pay a dividend unless he was re-elected. The Corporation's expatriate manager insisted, however, that a dividend would most certainly be paid.

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Chapter 7

THE VILLAGE PERSPECTIVE: VOTER DECISION-MAKING IN A TAIRORA VILLAGE, OBURA-WONENARA OPEN

B. Goode

The people of Ko-ae batuka,¹ a Tairora village, voted in the Obura-Wonenara Open and Eastern Highlands Provincial electorates during the fourth national elections. The factors determining their voting behaviour in the two electorates differed significantly. I will examine the people's attitudes towards the elections, the criteria they used to assess the desirability of the candidates, and their perception of changes in the post-independence period to portray the context in which voting decisions were made and to help understand the election results. Thus, this paper is concerned with the national elections from the perspective of a single village, though reference will be made to larger political units.

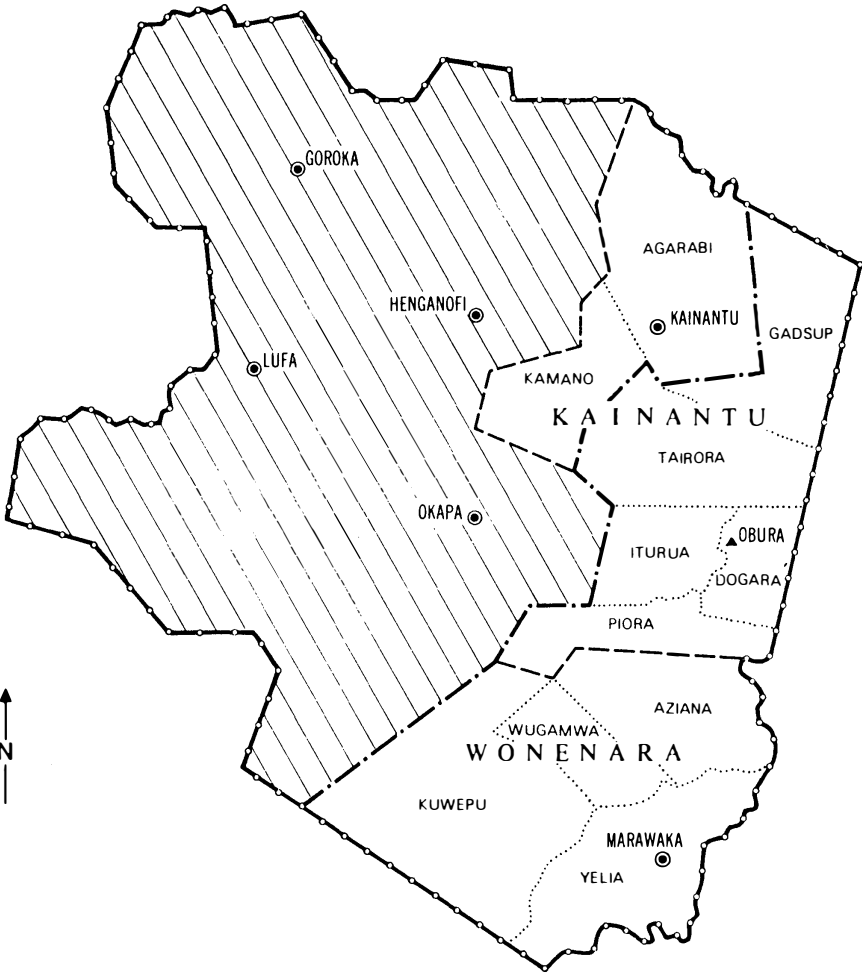
Village Setting




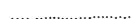
Ko-ae batuka lies in the Tairora Census Division of the Kainantu District. As is true of many areas of the Eastern Highlands Province, grasslands dominate the landscape of Ko-ae batuka and rainforests survive at the boundaries of the village territory. The terrain is less rugged than other areas in the highlands. The cultural landscape is composed of both traditional and introduced elements. The people of Ko-ae batuka exploit several ecological zones, employ a form of shifting cultivation with various fallow periods depending upon garden site and situation, and plant a variety of crop combinations particularly suited to the different areas. The dominant crop, sweet potato, is grown not only for human consumption but also to feed the ever-hungry pig herd. The typical nucleated settlement pattern of the eastern highlands region is evident, with the houses clustered along the unsealed road to the nearest town, Kainantu, some 15 kilometres away. Central to the hamlets is the *Eria Komuniti* centre with its gaol and courthouse, where the village judge adjudicates misdemeanors and breaches of traditional custom. People gather at the centre to hear the talks given by government officials on various topics of economic, social, and political importance. It is also the site where polling is conducted.



Bisnis, or cash-earning activity, is a major preoccupation of the people of Ko-ae batuka. Evidence of cash earning enterprises is ubiquitous. Coffee groves are near the hamlets, trade stores are interspersed with the houses, and the fences of the several village cattle projects crisscross the land. Participation in cash-earning enterprises is stimulated by a preference for a higher standard of living, by the prestige associated with conspicuous investments (Finney, 1973), and by the desire to obtain money to increase one's ability to participate in exchanges within the village which augment one's prestige. A respected man is one who not only helps his kinsmen, is generous, is a hard worker with many

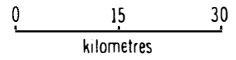
Map 1

OBURA-WONENARA OPEN ELECTORATE



-  Eastern Highlands Provincial Electorate Boundary
-  Obura-Wonenara Open Electorate Boundary
-  District Boundary
-  Census Division Boundary

-  District Headquarters
-  Patrol Post



gardens and pigs, and is an adequate provider for his family; he must also be a man of *bisnis* who is engaged in various cash enterprises. *Bisnis* activity in and of itself is considered good. Not to be involved in such enterprises invites the label of *rabisman*, a man of no worth or consequence and not commanding respect.

Most of the village income is generated by *bisnis* activities during the height of the coffee picking season — from May until August. A considerable portion of this is expended on exchanges involving beer and on gambling which is a major form of recreation. Both beer drinking and card playing are integral parts of Ko-ae batuka social life.

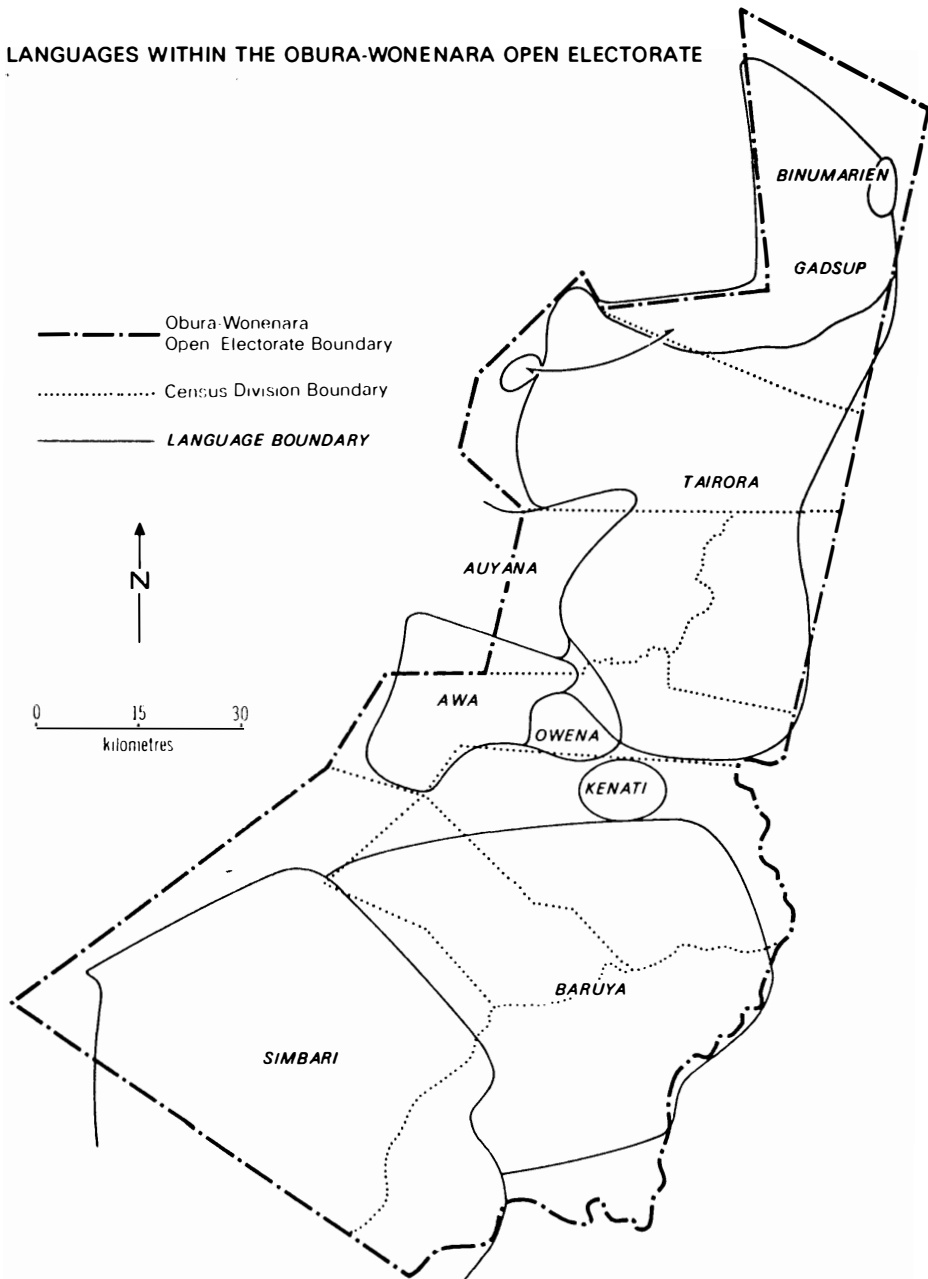
Traditionally, the village was the autonomous political unit. With the imposition of Australian control and the creation of larger political units such as the local government council and the more recent *Komuniti Eria* system, a certain measure of autonomy has been lost. Nevertheless, most activities in the village are still determined by decisions made by the people of Ko-ae batuka. Independent households make most daily decisions concerning subsistence, eating, visiting, and cash-cropping. Issues affecting descent groups, resident units, and the village as a whole are often determined by consensus, with men of prestige moulding and influencing public opinion. The nature of decision-making has relevance to voting behaviour. Leininger (1964) and Watson (1964) stressed the importance of group consensus in determining voting behaviour in the 1964 House of Assembly elections in the Kainantu Open electorate. In the 1977 national elections, the people of Ko-ae batuka also attempted to achieve a consensus, though this was countered by individual initiative in voter decision-making.

The Obura-Wonenara Open Electorate and the Candidates

The census divisions of Gadsup, Tairora, Iturua, Dogara, and Piora of the Kainantu District and all four census divisions of the Wonenara District are situated in the Open electorate (see Map 1). Administratively, the area is divided into three regions. The Tairora and Gadsup Census Divisions (together with those of the Agarabi and Kamano) are under the direct control of the District headquarters in Kainantu. The Iturua, Dogara, and Piora Census Divisions, though part of the Kainantu District, are administered from the patrol post at Obura in the Dogara Census Division; these three census divisions comprise the region generally known also as Obura. The Wonenara District is the third political unit, with its headquarters at Marawaka in the Yelia Census Division. The boundaries of the Kainantu, Obura, and Wonenara regions are conterminous with those of the Kainantu, Lamari, and Yelia Local Government Councils respectively. In addition to administrative diversity, there are many language groups within the Open electorate and several in each administrative region (see Map 2).

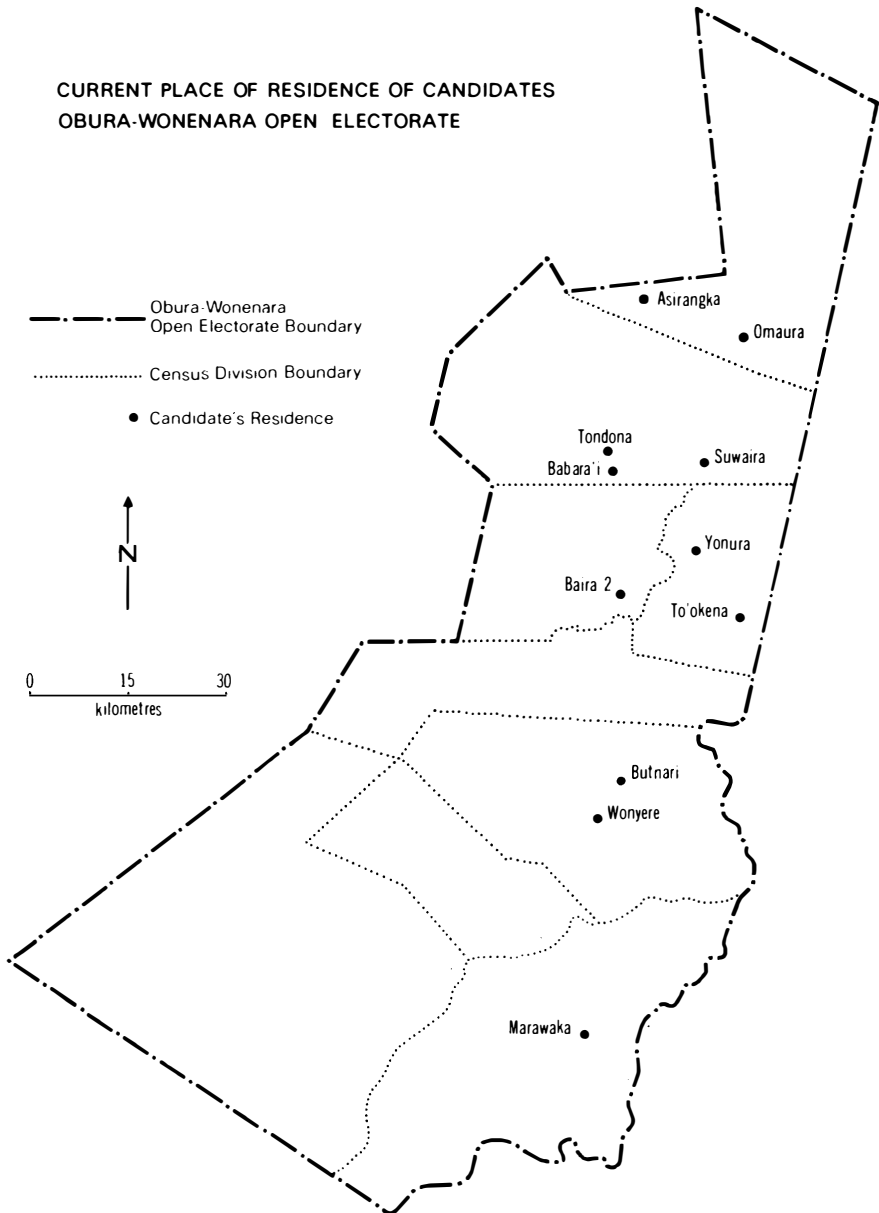
Electorate boundaries were redrawn in 1976. In the national elections in 1972, the people of Ko-ae batuka and other voters in the Tairora Census Division were combined with the members of the Gadsup, Kamano, and Agarabi Census Divisions to form the Kainantu Open electorate. The people who voted in the Kainantu Open in 1972 shared a common background by participating in the same local government council and by being administered from the same centre. They are all known as “Kainantu people.” However, in the 1977 national elections the Tairora were situated in the same electorate with people more alien culturally and politically. Some people in the Tairora area as well as in other parts of the Kainantu region believe the people further

Map 2



Source: Adapted from Language Maps of the Highlands Provinces, Papua New Guinea
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Map 3



south in the Obura region and especially in the Wonenara District are less sophisticated, less knowledgeable of the workings of government, and less respectful of the law. With such different groups within the electorate, the emergence of regionalism in voting behaviour was to be expected.

Eleven male candidates from throughout the Open electorate entered the 1977 contest. Their current places of residence are indicated in Map 3. Table 1 provides a brief description of the candidates.

In terms of age, educational and political experience, and occupation there was considerable diversity among the candidates. Several men were relatively young compared to traditional village leaders who are usually at least 35 or 40 years old. Three candidates had no formal education, one had a university degree, and the rest had received levels of education in between these extremes. The extent of their official political experience varied, ranging from the village, local government council, provincial government, and the national government. There were also occupational differences. Two candidates were subsistence farmers, several were employed in a variety of government positions, and two were Members of Parliament. The successful candidates from the Kainantu and Obura Open electorates in 1972, Sasakila Sana and Onamauta Beibi respectively, both competed in the Obura-Wonenara Open electorate in 1977.

The Campaign Period

In early March 1977, a local government council official who is highly respected in the village came to Ko-ae batuka to deliver the first political speech of the campaign. He said it was important that all people in the highlands region vote for the United Party, which he called the party of the highlands people. The Prime Minister, Michael Somare, is from the coastal region, he declared, but it is the highlands people who have the most experience and knowledge about running various business enterprises. Upon finishing his talk on the contrasting virtues of highland versus coastal politicians, he also requested that everyone in the village give up two things — drinking beer and gambling. Most in attendance nodded politely. However, his speech was delivered as an exchange ceremony accompanied by beer drinking and card playing was in progress. Given the importance of beer drinking and card playing in Ko-ae batuka social life, the speech would have tarnished the image of the United Party had political party affiliation been important to the villagers. However, party labels are meaningless; the people vote for candidates, not political parties. Similarly, the issue of coastal/highlands rivalry stimulated little response; for the people of Ko-ae batuka it was no issue at all.

By April, a few campaign posters with pictures of the various candidates had been put on the sides of houses and trade stores in the village. Some people were given the posters in Kainantu, and others received them from the candidates or their supporters driving through the village. Although some individuals displayed the posters of the candidates that they favoured, others simply put them up as a form of decoration. One man in particular was quite adamant that he disliked the person whose poster he had placed on the wall of his house.

In the same month, local government council officials visited Ko-oe batuka to inform the people about such things as taxes, beer licensing, village cleanliness, and the Kainantu hospital. They also discussed the forthcoming national election. The officials told the villagers that they must vote for a good

man, a man of work, one who would 'talk strong' and help the people. On the same day, the first candidate to visit Ko-ae batuka also arrived. After explaining his own qualifications and proposals for helping the people, he admonished them not to vote for any candidate who tried to curry their favour by giving them beer, though no candidate ever did attempt to do so in Ko-ae batuka. Subsequently, seven of the eleven candidates in the Open electorate and Kumoro Vira from the Provicincial electorate visited the village to seek support. In the Obura-Wonenara contest, only those candidates from the Obura region and the Gadsup and Tairora Census Divisions came to Ko-ae batuka. Those further south in the more inaccessible area of the Wonenara District did not campaign in the village.

The level of knowledge about the candidates, the election, and the procedures in the National Parliament varied greatly among the people of Ko-ae batuka. Many people supported the Prime Minister but no one realised that voting for the Pangu Party candidates would in any way help him to retain his position. Some, such as the elected village officials, knew the names of most of the candidates and the party affiliations of some. Many others, however, knew the names of only one or two candidates and several knew none. This, however, does not imply apathy. The people's reaction to the election in the Open electorate can be characterised as displaying a 'concerned scepticism'.

There was scepticism because many people doubted whether the successful Open candidate would provide them with any tangible benefits. Statements by two Ko-ae batuka men illustrate this scepticism. One man declared (translated from Pidgin):

We vote in vain. We vote the candidates their salary. They receive a big salary, buy beer, and perhaps even go to prostitutes with the K200 or K300 they earn each fortnight. I'm tired of this. The candidates promise us everything but they deceive us. They don't work hard; they earn their money the easy way. We in the village earn money too, but we have to work hard for it.

A second man noted:

Before, we voted many men to the House of Assembly, but they just draw big salaries and drink beer. A good person would bring us something. He would bring us the knowledge of the white man so we can understand, but no one does this.

The 'white man's knowledge' referred to here is the admired ability to run government offices with a high level of efficiency and the knowledge of the proper procedures for conducting business enterprises which provide the expatriates with such large incomes compared with those of the villagers.

Even though scepticism was evident, concern was also expressed in the discussions of the relative merits of the candidates. Initially, many villagers claimed that a consensus would first have to be reached within the village and then everyone would vote for the candidate so chosen. However, as early as April 1977 a few political pundits in the village were predicting that this would not occur and that the village vote would be split between at least two candidates in the Open electorate. Nevertheless, men began discussing the attributes of the candidates at various informal gatherings formed when people played cards, attended parties and exchanges, and visited one another at night. Occasionally, the night silence was punctuated by the shouts of someone expressing his opinion on the election. Such discussions did not dominate life in the period just before the voting, but that they were held demonstrates a lack of apathy and some concern.

A strong consensus to vote for Barry Holloway (see below) in the Provincial electorate was reached rather early. Consensus in relation to the Open electorate was more elusive. By May, many people decided to vote for Sasakila, the incumbent Member of Parliament, in order to return a Tairora Census Division candidate to the National Parliament. However, soon afterwards support for him completely collapsed due to the arguments of others that because Sasakila had committed some wrongdoing while in the National Parliament he should not receive their support. Although no one knew exactly what the nature of the offence was, they felt such conduct was inappropriate for a Member of Parliament.

The desire to achieve a consensus was not only expressed as an intravillage concern. The villagers also stated that they would communicate any decision reached to other villages, so that the Tairora as a whole could unite and vote for one candidate. People knew that if the voting was divided among the different Tairora candidates, the chances of winning against candidates from elsewhere would be poor. As the election results show, however, such intervillage efforts were particularly ineffective in uniting the Tairora behind any single candidate.

The Criteria by which Candidates were Judged — the Obura-Wonenara Open Electorate

To rank the criteria by which candidates were evaluated would give a false impression of accuracy. It is more appropriate to list them and note that different individuals evaluated candidates differently, some putting stress on certain characteristics while others ignored these and based their decisions on different criteria. No one person in Ko-ae batuka expressed all the following preferences, though some listed several of them. This list is a compilation from the statements of different people who did attempt to evaluate the candidates. An unknown percentage of the village population followed the advice of others, often the influential men. Other criteria, such as party affiliation, which may be important in other areas, are not noted here because they were not stated by the people of Ko-ae batuka.

1. *Linguistic Similarity*: Many people in Ko-ae batuka expressed a preference for a Tairora-speaking candidate, believing that a politician from one's own language group would provide greater assistance than one from another language group. Also, if a candidate from another language group won, they reasoned, the people of that group would deride the Tairora and claim that they had beaten them and hence could control them. In this election, Tairora-speaking candidates came from the Tairora, Dogara, and Iturua Census Divisions. The villagers recognise major dialect differences between the people of the Tairora Census Division and the Tairora-speakers of the Obura area. When they spoke of a preference for a Tairora candidate, they usually meant a Tairora-speaking candidate from the Tairora Census Division. However, the term 'Tairora-speaking' does not necessarily imply that a person is of Tairora descent, but can also refer to an individual of another linguistic group who resides in the Tairora area and speaks the language. The villagers felt that Bakuta, who currently resides in a Tairora village, was a Tairora candidate because he had 'joined the Tairora' even though everyone knew he was born and raised in the Agarabi Census Division.

2. *Propinquity*: Nearness of place of residence of a candidate is another important factor, and though it may operate in conjunction with the desire to have a candidate from one's own linguistic group, it is not quite the same

Table 2 Voting in Tairora Census Division (percentages)

| Candidates | <i>Origin of votes</i> | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| | Ko-ae batuka village (estimate) | Ko-ae batuka plus nearby villages | Tairora Census Division |
| Aparima Ampo'o | 40-45 | 50 | 34 |
| Bakuta Billio | 50 | 42 | 28 |
| Inkata Nanape | 5-10 | 5 | 2 |
| Onamauta Beibi | △ | △ | 17 |
| Sasakila Sana | △ | 2 | 12 |
| B. Wesley Mataora | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| Other | △ | △ | △ |

△ = less than one per cent

evaluate because the voters to Ko-ae batuka recognised that all of the Tairora Census Division candidates and Aparima from the Gadsup Census Division had relevant government experience. Thus, even though government experience was viewed as a prerequisite for national office, because most of the candidates had such experience other factors such as propinquity or language affiliation became important in choosing among candidates. Aparima's university education, for example, helped to differentiate him from these other candidates and no doubt was partly responsible for his excellent showing in Ko-ae batuka and the nearby villages.

The Tairora results also illuminate the importance of the criteria of age, kinship links, and honesty in evaluating a candidate. Aparima, the youngest candidate, won a plurality in the Tairora Census Division. Although he may have lost votes because of his youth, his excellent showing demonstrates that the age criterion mentioned by some of the Ko-ae batuka people was not a predominant factor. Aparima received additional support from the voters of Ko-ae batuka because of his kinship links. Almost all of Inkata's support in the village came from the patrilineage to which he claimed a kinship relationship. Finally, Sasakila did so poorly in Ko-ae batuka as well as in his own census division because of his tarnished reputation, thereby demonstrating the importance attached to the criterion of honesty and integrity.

Within the Tairora Census Division the Gadsup candidate Aparima received a plurality of votes, in part because the vote for the Tairora-speaking candidates was split. However, the strength of his appeal was demonstrated by receiving 50 per cent of the vote from Ko-ae batuka and the nearby villages. Given the stress placed by Ko-ae batuka voters on the importance of electing a

Tairora-speaking candidate, the results may appear surprising. Aparima's appeal in Ko-ae batuka and the Tairora area was broadly based upon several factors: his demonstrable kinship links to Tairora people, a university education, experience in the National Parliament as a ministerial research officer, and a campaign style which included staying overnight in Ko-ae batuka and several other Tairora villages in order to communicate more effectively with voters.

To understand Aparima's appeal in the Tairora area as well as to explain the general results of the Open electorate, another factor has to be considered, one not mentioned by the people of Ko-ae batuka. That is, a sense of common identity based upon the political regions created by both administrative units and local government councils is a crucial factor in defining the geographical range of suitable candidates. Both the Gadsup and Tairora Census Divisions are administered from Kainantu and their inhabitants are constituents of the Kainantu Local Government Council. The people of both census divisions are "Kainantu people" as opposed to those in the Obura and Wonenara regions, and they share a sense of unity based upon common participation in these imposed political units. The units are imposed because they join together people from different linguistic groups who were not a political unit traditionally. Ballard (1978) has also stressed the influence of administrative centres in creating a sense of common identity among the people served by the centres, where no such consciousness existed previously.

The context for relevant social identity can shift according to place and time, and an individual may have a choice of identities depending on the context (*ibid*:4).

In this light, the reason for the number of Tairora people voting for a Gadsup candidate becomes clearer. Such a perceived unity can override language differences.

The importance of political regions imposed by the administrative units and local government councils is also revealed in the general results of the Open electorate (see Table 3)⁽⁴⁾. Candidates received from 84 to 100 per cent of their votes from the people within these regions. Aparima, Undapmaina, Kuwamba, and Bakuta all demonstrated the ability to draw a large number of votes from their own linguistic groups and from members of different linguistic groups from within their political regions, but outside these regions their ability to do so dropped markedly⁽⁵⁾. The most dramatic example was provided by the results of the successful candidate, Undapmaina. He polled 3506 votes from the people of the Wonenara District; his support from all four census divisions there was uniform. Outside this political region he polled only nine votes! Wesley and Inkata, however, were able to obtain voter support from outside their political regions, though Wesley drew the support from his own linguistic group, the Tairora. Their ability to do so probably reflected the areal extent of their campaigning, for it is likely that some candidates campaigned only within their own political region. Thus, the characteristic of drawing most of one's votes from within one's political region is as much a result of a sense of common identity as of the restricted range of campaigning, although this in itself may be a function of the candidate's perception of such unity.

The Eastern Highlands Provincial Electorate

In the Eastern Highlands Provincial electorate there were only three opposing candidates. Roy Opis Erave from the Agarabi Census Division and

Kumoro Vira, who lives in Goroka, are both Papua New Guinean nationals. The third candidate, Barry Holloway, a Papua New Guinean citizen who was born in Australia, is well known in the Kainantu area. In the early 1960s he was a patrol officer in Kainantu. He was the first Member of the House of Assembly to be elected from the Kainantu Open electorate in 1964 and was the incumbent Member of Parliament from the Eastern Highlands Province. In addition, his name was often heard on the radio in relation to proceedings in the National Parliament, of which he was Speaker, and thus voter recognition was no problem for him.

In Ko-ae batuka there was never any doubt that everyone would vote for Holloway. Part of the overwhelming support for Holloway can be explained by name recognition and the factor of propinquity (he maintains a residence in Kainantu). However, more significant from the Ko-ae batuka perspective is their contrasting stereotypes of Papua New Guineans and expatriates⁽⁶⁾ which have emerged in the post-independence period. Since independence there has been an increase in the changeover in government personnel, with many expatriates leaving posts and Papua New Guineans relacing them. The people of Ko-ae batuka are alarmed at this change because they feel that the level and quality of the services provided to them have declined as a result of the changeover, and they expect this trend to continue. The villagers claim that the expatriates are better able to provide them with the services they need, especially those services related to cash-earning enterprises. They characterise a majority of the expatriates as being competent, powerful, helpful, and concerned about progress in the village.

Although examples of the decline in government services provided in general were noted, the subject of most concern to the people of Ko-ae batuka was the perceived decreasing government input into the village commercial sector. This decline in the quality and quantity of the services provided by the government is perceived as threatening the potential for *bisnis* activity within the village. By retaining as many expatriates as possible, the people believe that any future decline will be halted and perhaps rectified. The voters' concerns were expressed in materialistic terms; one man claimed the villagers voted for Holloway because 'we think of money'. Indeed, several men believed that it was Holloway's directive that raised the price of coffee. Others felt that Holloway's presence in government would assure continued assistance from Australia. The reasons stated for voting for Holloway reflected the stereotypes just noted. No one suggested that the villagers voted for him because he was a 'Kainantu man'.

It is impossible to speculate how much support a different expatriate would have received. The distinction between Papua New Guineans and expatriates is not applied universally, and the villagers in particular have bitter memories of the treatment they received from one expatriate *kiap* a decade ago. Nevertheless, people voted in the Provincial electorate in accordance with their stereotype of many expatriates as competent, powerful, and helpful. In the villagers' view, Holloway was already associated with improving *bisnis* activity by raising the price of coffee. This demonstrated his power to manipulate the government and his desire to help the people. Thus, the voters image of Holloway was similar to the stereotype of the desirable expatriate. In addition, re-electing him symbolised the continuity of the expatriate presence. A vote for Holloway was a vote for improving and restoring the level of services provided by the government to the rural sector. Holloway belongs to a category of people who, in the villagers' view, can accomplish this most effectively.

That the people of the Ko-ae batuka reached a high degree of consensus in

the Provincial electorate is evident in the overwhelming vote that Holloway received. From the people of Ko-ae batuka and the surrounding villages, he received 97 per cent of the vote⁽⁷⁾.

Holloway's support was not uniform throughout the area of the Open electorate. Below is a listing of the total and percentage of votes each candidate received in the various census divisions:

*Table 4 Votes Received by Census Division
Eastern Highlands Provincial Electorate*

| <i>Census Division</i> | <i>Candidates</i> | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| | Barry Holloway | Kumoro Vira | Roy Opis Erave |
| Yelia | 1505 (98) | 24 (2) | 12 (Δ) |
| Kuwepu | 701 (99) | 5(Δ) | 1 (Δ) |
| Wugamwa | 713 (99) | 7 (1) | 2 (Δ) |
| Aziana | 811 (98) | 16 (2) | 3 (Δ) |
| Wonenara Region Total | 3730 (98) = = = = | 52 (1) = = = = | 18 (Δ) = = = = |
| Piora | 205 (29) | 514 (71) | 0 (Δ) |
| Dogara | 494 (56) | 209 (23) | 183 (21) |
| Iturua | 1790 (93) | 24 (1) | 121 (6) |
| Obura Region Total | 2489 (70) = = = = | 747 (21) = = = = | 304 (9) = = = = |
| Tairora | 2402 (94) | 95 (4) | 68 (2) |
| Gadsup | 4252 (93) | 232 (5) | 94 (2) |
| Kainantu Region Total | 6654 (93) = = = = | 327 (5) = = = = | 162 (2) = = = = |
| TOTAL | 12873 (89) | 1126 (8) | 484 (3) |

Δ = less than one per cent

Note: Percentage of votes in parenthesis

The commitment to Holloway as the favoured candidate in the Tairora and Gadsup Census Divisions of the Kainantu District and in all census divisions of the Wonenara District is clear. However, in the Obura region (especially in the Piora Census Division) he did not do as well, thus showing the limited applicability of the sentiments expressed in *Ko-ae batuka*. Any speculation concerning the contrasting support he received in Wonenara and Obura would be unwarranted due to the limited scope of my research concerning the election.

Conclusion

The *Ka-ae batuka* response to the Open and Provincial electorates differed significantly. In the former, no substantive issue motivated the people, voters expressed several criteria for evaluating the desirability of the candidates, and the attempt to achieve a consensus in voting was shifting and ephemeral. In the latter, alarm at the perceived changes in the post-independence period gave rise to the predominance of a single criterion defining the preferred candidate, and a strong consensus to support one candidate was achieved early in the campaign.

The people of *Ko-ae batuka* expressed an ideology of achieving a consensus and voting for the candidate so chosen; this was at variance with their split vote in the Open. The multiplicity of criteria was a reflection of the difference of opinion within the village concerning the most suitable candidate. However, the acceptance of various criteria will not necessarily lead to a split vote. Voters were influenced by the informal discussions concerning the candidates, and during these meetings not one but several positive (or negative) characteristics of a single candidate were stated. Different attributes of the same candidate may appeal to different voters. A possible explanation for the split vote within the village is that pre-existing factions within the village determined the outcome. Overlapping divisions exist within the village based on kinship and descent, residence, and the followings of leaders, or 'big-men'. However, the village voting pattern was not exclusively determined by these divisions, though voters were certainly influenced in these contexts. There were cases of neighbours, agnates, and at least one instance of a husband and wife voting for different candidates. Thus a certain amount of individualism in voter behaviour was manifest. Indeed, the nature of voter decision-making in the village concerning the Open electorate was a reflection of their society — a combination of efforts at group consensus and individual initiatives.

Nevertheless, the potential for group consensus was demonstrated in the unanimous support for Holloway in the Provincial electorate. The different results in relation to the degree of consensus in the voting in the two electorates can be explained by the perceived benefits in electing the candidates. The villagers were convinced that the re-election of Holloway would materially benefit them. However, in the case of the Open electorate, people were sceptical about the possibility of any candidate helping the village, and this militated against any sense of urgency in uniting behind a single candidate.

Various criteria by which the people in a single Tairora village judged the candidates have been examined. In the Open electorate, kinship links, linguistic similarity, honesty and integrity, propinquity, education and experience, and a shared sense of identity based upon administrative and local government council territories were the predominant criteria. In the Provincial electorate, the deciding factor was the desire to retain expatriates in the country to ensure a continued level of government services to the rural people

in the post-independence period. None of the criteria alone can explain the pattern of the election results and exceptions to them can be found within the electorate. What is certain is that multiple criteria were consciously employed by the voters of a single village.

The influence of different criteria can produce the same spatial pattern of voting within a limited area, and this raises a basic problem in the social sciences in general — the difficulty of predicting motives from resultant patterns. Analysing the spatial pattern of voting will not necessarily provide the key to understanding the motives of the voters precisely because the influence of different criteria can produce the same pattern. Therefore, in some instances, it may be inappropriate to conclude that the voting results were determined by a single factor such as linguistic affiliation or propinquity without inquiring into the motives of the voters.

Much has changed economically, socially, and politically since the first election in 1964. Leininger (1964) and Watson (1964, 1965) provide accounts of the 1964 House of Assembly election in the Kainantu Open, and their reports contrast markedly with the 1977 elections. The prominent characteristics of the events in the 1964 election can be summarised as follows: all the national candidates came from villages close to the expatriate-dominated centres of Kainantu and the Highlands Agricultural Experimental Station at Aiyura; during the campaign, there were slight overtones of anti-Australian sentiments; village voting patterns were determined by consensus and block voting by language groups predominated; participation in the election was viewed as potentially dangerous, and magical substances were used to protect voters; and a considerable time elapsed before people in the rural areas knew the election results.

In 1977 the Open candidates came from many parts of the electorate. There were certainly no anti-Australian sentiments expressed in the village of Ko-ae batuka, though to what extent this was also true in the Obura area where Holloway did not receive such a large majority of the votes, I do not know. To the voters of Ko-ae batuka, being of Australian origin was a decided advantage. The degree to which a consensus was reached in the villages of the Open electorate varied. In the Wonenara District, one candidate received 91 per cent of the vote. In the Obura area and the Tairora and Gadsup Census Divisions, the vote was split among several candidates. Although linguistic affiliations were important, a wider consciousness defined by imposed political boundaries also seemed influential in determining the spatial patterning of voting. The election process itself was conceived of in purely secular terms in Ko-ae batuka and no form of magical protection was used when voting in the village. Lastly, by 10 July news that Undapmaina had won the Open reached the village.

Many of the changes noted can be attributed to the people's increased mobility, better communication links with the town centre, the spatial expansion of government services throughout the region, experience in local government activities, and a better understanding of national political processes aided in part by the political education provided by visiting government officers. Social and economic changes in the post-independence period were also influential in determining voting behaviour.

NOTES

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1. The village is given the fictitious name of Ko-ae batuka to preserve the confidentiality of the voters.
2. People in rural areas do not vote in the town centres. The government designates certain villages as the polling sites for other villages in the vicinity, and the electoral patrols composed of government officials travel to the chosen villages to conduct the voting. Ko-ae batuka was one such voting centre.
3. Tairora-speakers are not the only inhabitants of the Tairora Census Division. The people of Ontenu village speak the Gadsup language and those of Tondona village speak both the Auyana and Tairora languages. Because the results from these villages were combined with those from other villages, it was impossible to discover whether there was any difference between the pattern of voting in these villages and others within the Tairora Census Division.
4. In both Tables 3 and 4 the election results are presented by census division. Unfortunately, in a few cases the same ballot box was used in different census divisions. To overcome this problem the candidates' votes were apportioned to the census divisions according to the ratio of the number of villages within a census division using a ballot box to the total number of villages using it. This had to be done for three of the twelve ballot boxes used in the Wonenara region and for two of the seven boxes in the Obura region. No such problem occurred in the Tairora and Gadsup Census Divisions. No ballot box was used in more than one administrative region.
5. Although Sasakila did receive 278 votes from the Gadsup Census Division, 257 of those votes came from the box used by the inhabitants of six villages, three of which are Tairora-speaking. It is most likely that his support from here came from the Tairora-speaking villages, because his wife is a member of one of these Tairora villages. Therefore, I have not included Sasakila with those candidates receiving support from people outside their language groups.
6. Barry Holloway is still considered to be an expatriate by the people of Ko-ae batuka.
7. Barry Holloway was the winner in the Eastern Highlands Provincial electorate.

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Chapter 8

LOCAL ALLIANCES AND POLITICS: KAINANTU OPEN

George D. Westermarck

Introduction

In 1977 what had been the Kainantu Open electorate of the Eastern Highlands Province was divided into two separate electorates, one to retain the name Kainantu and the second to be called Obura-Wonenara. The division meant that where there had been an electorate of roughly 55,000 population, covering 1,400 square miles, the Kainantu Open now consisted of the heavily populated northern region of the former electorate, and Obura-Wonenara would cover the more remote, lightly populated, southern portion. The new Kainantu Open would include the Kamano and Agarabi Census Divisions, along with Kainantu town, and it is the election in this electorate that this paper considers.²

Besides the redrawing of electoral boundaries, the 1977 election presented the people of the Kainantu Open, as it did in some ways the entire country, with a number of firsts. This would be the first national election since Independence in 1975; the first without preferential balloting; the first since the establishment of the *Eria Komuniti* system. The latter is a unique attempt in the Kainantu District to bring government one step closer to the grass-roots level through the organization of political units based on village alliances. With the Village Courts introduced in 1975, the *Eria Komuniti* concept put power into the hands of the people, and made the initial move toward the realization of true village government in Papua New Guinea.

These factors also made the 1977 Kainantu Open particularly interesting for research on political development. The new electorate would include the most politically and economically sophisticated areas of the former electorate, areas which in the intervening years since the last election had experienced several innovations in government. These alterations had distributed political responsibility to a wider segment of the electorate's population, and it was reasonable to suppose that these changes would mean an increased awareness and interest in the political arena, and in national institutions like the National Parliament and the various political parties. In addition, since the electorate had been previously studied at the time of the first election in 1964 (Watson, 1965), the 1977 election could be contrasted with events in that earlier period and thus give some insight into the long term political trends.

Political Development

Since the beginning of European movement into the Highlands, the Kainantu area has been a door to the remainder of the region, and this has made it particularly susceptible to varied agencies of change. The intrusion of first missionaries, then miners and finally government officers altered the evolution of Highland's societies beginning in the 1930's, and gave them a direction along which they accelerated in the post-World War II era. For the sake of simplicity, political development in the area can be divided into six stages.

Stage 1 covers the pre-European period. Traditional political life reflected the continual warfare and associated military preparedness which existed. Endemic hostilities resulted in small fluctuating groups with leaders selected for their talents in fighting. Defeat in warfare led to the breakup of settlements, the migration of blocs of refugees in search of friendly territory and the consequent restructuring of alliances. Shifts of this kind caused imbalances elsewhere in the field of inter-group power relations causing a cycle of group strength, defeat and migration. The lack of an extensive system of exchange as found in some other areas of the Highlands increased the instability of Kainantu political alliances.³

Stage 2 began with the migration of Europeans to Kainantu. The Australian policy of establishing law and order quickly halted inter-group fighting, and warfare as it had been known was finished. Two consequences of this revolution in political relations were the freezing of the alliance system and the under-mining of the basis for leadership. The process of group fission and re-combination ceased, and many refugees returned to the sites of former settlements. Village officials, the *luluais*, were appointed by the government, and the centralization of authority began. The Highlands first *luluai* was appointed and the first census taken in the Agarabi in 1933.⁴

Stage 3 in political development was the introduction of the local government council system. This initiated a gradual process of decentralizing political authority, the intent of which was to increase the self-reliance of village people. The first council in Kainantu was organized in the Agarabi in 1960, and was followed by the organization of the Kamano Council in 1963, just prior to the first election. Councils were begun in the Tairora and Gadsup census divisions, though they later merged to form the Erandora Council, as had the Agarabi and Kamano Councils to form the Kainantu Council. In 1970 these two councils combined to form the Kainantu Council of today which represents the four census divisions.

Stage 4 began in 1964 with the first election for the House of Assembly. The group of candidates for this election included five nationals and one expatriate, and of the Papua New Guinean candidates, all were experienced in some aspect of the new society which emerged in the post-World War II era. As was noted at the time: "All the candidates were identified with activities developed in the past ten years or so. No candidates standing or qualifications for candidacy were based, even in part, on a traditional activity" (Watson 1965: 99). The sole expatriate was Barry Holloway, a former Patrol Officer who had organized the Agarabi and Kamano Councils. Campaigning in the election was limited by the national candidates to familiar territory, and voting proved equally as parochial with most voters giving their first preferences to candidates from their own ethnolinguistic groups. Only Holloway campaigned extensively throughout the electorate, and his collection of first and second preference votes gave him victory over the national candidates. The implication of these results was that broader political identities transcending traditional loyalties emerged in 1964. However transitory, the first national election provided a context in which the people of Kainantu could see themselves in opposition to adversaries larger and more remote than the neighboring village.

Though we do not have a break down of voting patterns by area in 1968 as we do for 1964, it is likely that similar processes were at work. The field of candidates again consisted of five nationals and one expatriate, and of the nationals, there were four Councillors and an aid-post orderly. The election was

again won by the expatriate, this time by Mick Casey, a coffee planter who had stood for the South Markham Special electorate in 1964 (Watson, 1965). In 1972 there was an entirely national slate of candidates, and two of these men were making a second attempt at the Kainantu Open. The field was again dominated by Councillors, and was won by one of them, Moses Sasikila, from the Tairora. Moses had the advantage of having lived in a number of areas in the District during his service as an aid-post orderly, and this may account for his victory. He was appointed a Minister in the coalition government of Michael Somare, but his failure to make public his private assets as required of Ministers led to his removal from office in 1976, and the calling of a By-Election. Though Moses' removal was soon declared illegal and the By-Election cancelled, this was not before a group of nine candidates had nominated and begun their campaigns. Four of these men would stand for the Kainantu Open in 1977.

Stage 6 has occurred in the 1970s with the inception of *Eria Komunitis* and Village Courts. *Erias* began in the District in 1973 with four established in the Agarabi and Kamano. They have since expanded to number thirty-five and cover the entire District. An *Eria* consists of anywhere from two to ten villages which feel that they can work effectively together. The *Eria* collects its own taxes and can use them for whatever projects it desires. A president and committee of *Eria* men are elected to guide the work of the *Eria*, as well as Councillors who represent the *Eria* in the Kainantu Council. The *Eria* has minor legislative powers, and with the beginning of Village Courts in 1975, their acts can be enforced. Village Courts do not correspond precisely to *Eria Komunitis* as some *Erias* are too small in the government's eyes to warrant the expense of an individual court. However, with twenty-one courts serving the thirty-five *Erias* and magistrates drawn from all the villages, they can maintain close contact with each other. The *Eria* concept seeks not only to bring government closer to the people, but to do so by continuing the process of decentralization through placing political responsibilities back in the village.⁵

Candidates

The unusual fact about the group of candidates for the 1977 Open was the absence of experienced Kainantu political figures. Only Ono Aia and Babanki Aburase had served with the Councils in the area, whereas nearly all of the candidates in the previous two Open elections had Council experience. A number of factors may explain this change in candidate background. The first elections for the Eastern Highlands Provincial Assembly were scheduled to be held early in 1978,⁶ and it is likely that the creation of this new position between the national and local levels influenced the decisions of Councillors. Two prominent Councillors told the author that they preferred to stand in the Provincial elections. The electoral process itself eliminated two Council leaders from the Kainantu Open: the change in electorate boundaries placed the Council President within the Obura-Wonanara Open,⁷ and the previous Council President, an Open candidate in 1972, decided to nominate in his home region, the Finschafen Open. Perhaps more significant than these considerations is the fact that of the candidates who did nominate, there were a large number of young men, the majority of whom had a good education and some of whom had experience in business or government outside Kainantu. This contrasts with the background of Councillors who are for the most part middle aged men with little, if any, formal education, and may indicate that a new generation of political leaders has emerged in Kainantu.

Tepi Ya'ato, of Barapa village in the Bus Kamano *Eria*, was 29 years old. A strong advocate of the work of the churches, he was himself a Seventh-Day Adventist. He was educated to Form 4 at the S.D.A. Kabiufa High School near Goroka, and followed this with seven months of employment with the Finance Department in Goroka. At the time of the election he owned a vehicle and was working as a coffee buyer. A United Party candidate, he had nominated for the By-Election in 1976. He was also an active rugby player, and Vice-President of the Kainantu Sports Council.

Peter Wai, 32, and a Country Party candidate, had ten years experience as a driver both for the government and as a privately employed businessman. In mid-1977 he was operating his own passenger vehicle and buying coffee. Originally from Garufi in the Garufi-Tafesa *Eria*, he had also lived in the northern Kamano in his wife's village, and during his employment with the government, in Kainantu town. He attended school to the Standard 5 level and was a member of the Salvation Army Church.

Bofeno Mitio was the son of a Lutheran pastor from Bitebe village in the Eyevinota *Eria Komuniti*, and was educated to Form 4 at Asaroka High School near Goroka. He also received a Public Service Higher Certificate from the Administrative College in Port Moresby which he attended in 1976. At 31 years of age, he had served for six and one-half years in Goroka as a Finance Officer. He was a Country Party member.

Thomas Pasangu, 29, was educated to Form 4 at Goroka High School and held a Public Service Highest Certificate from the Administrative College in Port Moresby. He joined the public service in 1971, and served in Port Moresby, Mt. Hagen and Goroka with the Electoral Commission, the Property and Accommodation Department and the Liquor Licensing Commission. He was one of the two independent candidates in the election.

Siuras Kavani, 27, was the only university graduate and author among the eleven candidates (Kavani 1974, 1975). He had spent most of the eight years prior to the election in Port Moresby, first at the University of Papua New Guinea. Then at the Administrative College, one year on the personal staff of the previous Member from Kainantu, Moses Sasikila, a year as Executive Assistant with the Division of Sports, and nearly a year as Director of Sports. From Tuempinka in the Ramu *Eria*, he was the sole People's Progress Party candidate.

Bob Tanna, 29, from Doienakenu village in the Yonki *Eria*, was employed as a hotel manager in Kundiawa prior to the election. He completed Form 4 at Goroka High School, then worked as a Council Administrative Officer in Rabaul for one year. From 1969-1972, he was a radio announcer with Radio Goroka, and then moved on to serve as a news reporter with the National Broadcasting Commission in Port Moresby during 1972-73. While with the NBC, he attended a one month broadcasting course in Malaysia sponsored by UNESCO, and a three months course in communications at the International Training Institute, Sydney, sponsored by the Papua New Guinea government. In 1974 he took his first hotel manager position in Goroka for one year before transferring to Kundiawa in 1975. He was a Country Party candidate.

Ono Aia, 49, and a Country Party member, was the most politically experienced of the Open candidates. Beginning in 1960 as first President of the Agarabi Council, he served nearly continuously as a Councillor throughout the following seventeen years, several times as a President or Vice-President of the Kainantu Council. He was appointed by the Council to the Eastern

Highlands District Area Authority when it began in 1973, and remained a member when the Eastern Highlands Provincial government was initiated. He served as President of the Area Authority from 1973-76, and was Deputy Speaker for the Provincial Assembly at the time of the 1977 election. Besides these efforts in Local and Provincial government, he was a candidate for the Kainantu Open in 1964 and 1972, nominated for the By-Election of 1976, and was a Village Court magistrate. In 1962 he accompanied Barry Holloway on a visit to Australia, and while there took a one month course on political education in Canberra. As an Area Authority member, he had toured Malaysia in 1975 to observe appropriate technology. He is from Kainantu Village in The Ankuantenu *Eria*.

Akila Inivigo, a United Party member, was the only candidate besides Ono who had previously stood for an Open election. In 1964, having just completed Form 2 at Goroka High School, he stood for the first Kainantu Open. Only eighteen then, he had since had thirteen years experience as a Mines Officer for the Natural Resources Department. Besides his work for the government, he and his five brothers had started the M.M. Bros. Company in Kainantu. The company's interests included a large trade and second-hand clothes store in Kainantu town, two trade stores outside of town, a coffee plantation, a cattle ranch and piggery, and several trucks. Akila is from Nomura village in the Onapinka *Eria*.

Koy Anakime, 33, was a Country party candidate and a member of the Seventh Day Adventist church. He worked for twelve years as a heavy equipment operator in road construction in several parts of Papua New Guinea. From Tirokave in the Sohe *Eria*, he returned to Kainantu in 1974 and has business interests in a truck and small trade store.

Yubiti Yulaki, 33, from Uninufintenu in the Anonantu *Eria*, was educated to Standard 3 in Seventh Day Adventist schools and is a member of that church. From 1960-68, he worked as a domestic and driver in Bougainville and Port Moresby. Returning to Kainantu in 1969, he worked as a coffee buyer for Barry Holloway, and assisted in the latter's successful campaign for the 1972 Eastern Highlands Regional electorate. After Holloway's election, Yubiti began his own coffee buying business which he has since expanded to include transport between Goroka and Lae, and a small herd of cattle.

Babanki Aburase, 48, from Kainoa village in the Ankuantenu *Eria* Komuniti, was a Councillor in the Agarabi Council where he served as Vice-President for six years. He had worked as a carpenter for a number of years before being elected a Village Court magistrate in 1975. He was a member of the Seventh-Day Adventist church, and one of the two independent candidates in the Open.

Campaign

In the months preceding July, one was hard pressed to find evidence that there was an impending election in Kainantu. The only sign of political activity was the appearance of the candidates posters which began to materialize in early April on the windows of stores and government buildings in town, and at the *Eria Komuniti* centers. Yet, by this time most of the candidates had begun their travels around the electorate in search of votes. The style of campaigning was generally low-key in the early days of electioneering, the candidates concentrating on meeting with small groups of people outside their own regions to familiarize them with their names and faces.⁸ The extent to which they were successful in this effort seemed to correspond to the distance from

their home village, though as several of the candidates recognized, with eleven candidates competing for votes, a strong vote in one region could provide the margin for victory.⁹

The geographic breadth of their campaigning divides the candidates into two groups. The first group includes those who campaigned extensively throughout the electorate, not limiting themselves to one region.¹⁰ These candidates possessed both transportation and party support, a combination which made their far-ranging campaigns possible. With the efficient system of roads in Kainantu, vehicles were an asset which enabled candidates to visit several villages a day and search out places where villagers had gathered. The *Eria Komuniti* system schedules monthly meetings for each *Eria* at which *Komuniti* officers from the Council meet with villagers to discuss problems and projects. *Erias* also schedule work days where work on community projects is performed, and there are also work days at the many primary schools in the District where parents gather. The candidates with vehicles at their disposal could take advantage of such meetings in their campaigning. The second group of candidates includes those whose campaign travels were restricted, either because their strategy called for them to ignore one of the electorate's regions, or because they were without transport.¹¹ All of these candidates but one lacked personal transportation. They include the two independent candidates and three of the Country Party candidates. Some of these candidates did make brief forays further afield, but they largely stayed within their home region.

Though nine of the eleven candidates established party affiliations, and some of them made a point of emphasizing the ideas and programs of their parties during their campaigning, it is safe to say that party identity was more significant in the minds of the candidates than it was in those of the voters. As one of the candidate's put it: "Only half of the people know the meaning of politics and parties. The other half are in confusion. They think a party is a social event." Despite this lack of familiarity on the part of voters, parties did play a part in the support of their candidates. Parties assisted some by supplying vehicles and the money to maintain them. For example, Siuras had his car supplied to him by PPP, Yubiti had major repairs to his car paid for by Pangu, and Tepi and Akila, though each had his own vehicle, often went out in the United Party car campaigning with their Provincial electorate candidate. Parties also supplied money to purchase campaign posters, and lent some candidates loud-speakers.

The party candidates had the additional benefit of campaign assistance from party leaders and other party candidates. Three national party leaders visited Kainantu in support of their candidates prior to the election,¹² and the United and Pangu party candidates could avail themselves of aid from their Provincial electorate candidates, Kumoro Vila and Barry Holloway respectively. As noted above, the United candidates took advantage of the United Party car, and were often seen with Kumoro in the last weeks before the election. Whether this was of more benefit to Akila and Tepi, or to Kumoro, is open to question. Holloway, as an experienced Kainantu politician, provided Yubiti with campaign strategy, as well as with logistical support from his campaign staff and vehicles. Holloway's familiarity with the voters may also have won Yubiti some votes.

Party identities were most clearly defined on those occasions where candidates encountered each other campaigning. One such incident was the visit to Kainantu of the Prime Minister, Michael Somare. Accompanied by

Peter Lus, then Minister for Police, Holloway, at the time Speaker of the House of Assembly, and Yubiti, Somare visited two meetings arranged for his visit at *Eria Komuniti* centers in the Kamano. Most of the Open candidates were present at the meetings, and after listening to the Pangu members recount the role they had played in the independence movement and the aspects of development Pangu was responsible for in Papua New Guinea, they used the opportunity to challenge the Pangu side. They called for them to clarify for the people that it was not a Pangu but a coalition government, in which PPP and independents participated, and that the Opposition had a role to play as watch-dog of the government. This led to some heated exchange between the two sides, but probably served most to demonstrate the self-confidence of the candidates in the face of the 'big-men' of the government.

Just as parties were not significant factors in mobilizing voter support for the candidates, no dominant issues emerged to divide the candidates in the minds of the voters. At one of the Somare meetings, Ono Aia raised two issues of some concern to the District: the closure of the Kainantu air strip and the hoped for division of the Eastern Highlands Province into Kainantu and Goroka provinces. While the former issue was relevant to people throughout the District, and the latter more limited to the desires of Councillors, this was one of the few times either was mentioned in the campaign. In any case, the attitudes of the candidates would probably have been quite similar toward each issue. A general problem which most of the candidates dealt with in their campaign talks and in their posters was the question of business development in the District. All of the candidates were obviously in favor of development, though there were few specific proposals. One plan was made public at the April Kainantu Council meeting by Akila Inivgo. He called for the creation of what he called the Kainantu Movement Association, an organization which would join the resources from the thirty-five *Eria Komunitis* to finance business projects in the District. Akila gave duplicated copies of his proposal to each of the Councillors, and to other village leaders, but nothing came of his plan, before or after the election.

Results

The election was won with a wide margin by the Pangu candidate, Yubiti. The second highest vote-getter was Tepi, over seven hundred votes behind the victor. Two other candidates, Peter and Akila, topped the one thousand vote mark. A precise analysis of the voting results is made difficult by the fact that votes from different villages, sometimes from widely separated areas, were combined in the same ballot box. However, the votes in each box came from villages in only one or two *Eria Komunitis*, and a ballot box breakdown does demonstrate several general points (see Table 1).¹³

First, it is clear that the majority of each candidate's votes came from within his own ethnolinguistic region, and that the heaviest concentration of these votes came from his own *Eria Komuniti*. Thomas, for instance, had only 36 votes outside the southern Kamano region though he came fifth with 830 votes, and Tepi received nearly half his votes from his Bus Kamano *Eria*. This suggests that the ethnic bloc voting noted for the 1964 election (Watson 1965:114) continues to be a strong force in the voting pattern today. Further, with eleven candidates dividing a much smaller electorate than in previous elections, the political alliances reflected in the *Eria Komuniti* system were also influential.

Second, the mobility of the candidates appears to have affected the results.

Table 1
Kainantu Open: Ballot-box Breakdown

| BALLOT BOX | TOTAL | INFORMAL | BABANKI ABURASE | BOB TANA | YUBITI- YULAKI | SIURAS KAVANI | KOY ANAKIME | AKILA INVIGO | PETER WAI | ONA AIA | THOMAS PASANGU | BOFENU MITO | TEPI YA'ATO |
|---------------------------|-------|----------|--------------------|-------------|-------------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------|---------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1 K SHOE | 2 | 7 | 139 | | 10 | 3 | 270 | | 1 | | | | 436 |
| 2 K GARUFI | 7 | | 298 | 4 | 137 | 3 | 2 | | 1 | | 1 | 5 | 458 |
| 3 K USARUFA | 14 | 3 | 153 | 17 | 100 | 4 | | 58 | | | 5 | 11 | 331 |
| 4 K YAMASO ONAMUGA | 4 | 1 | 72 | 2 | 225 | 8 | 1 | | 7 | | | 11 | 331 |
| 5 K ONAMUGA EYEVINITO | 28 | 232 | 101 | 6 | 45 | 58 | 1 | | 5 | | 1 | 4 | 481 |
| 6 K EYEVINITO | 27 | 82 | 21 | 5 | 67 | 92 | 2 | | 5 | 2 | | 2 | 305 |
| 7 K BUS KAMANO | 102 | | | 106 | 13 | 91 | | 1 | 2 | 1 | | 9 | 325 |
| 8 K/A BUS KAMANO YONKI | 456 | 1 | 1 | | 2 | 2 | | 4 | 80 | 327 | | 7 | 880 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|-----|--------------------|------|-----|-----|-----|------|------|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|------|
| 9 | A | RAMU | 20 | | 2 | 40 | 10 | 9 | 1 | 154 | 35 | 5 | 12 | 1 | 289 |
| 10 | A | KAINANTU TOWN | 92 | 9 | 14 | 76 | 153 | 60 | 8 | 55 | 145 | 13 | 26 | 21 | 672 |
| 11 | A | AUPBANA YONKI | 161 | | 1 | 124 | 3 | 1 | | 1 | 211 | 15 | 17 | 12 | 546 |
| 12 | A | OKINON PAKINOE | 118 | | | 5 | | 36 | | 5 | 272 | | | 10 | 446 |
| 13 | A | ANONONA ANKUANTENU | 24 | | | 33 | 1 | | | 4 | 445 | 7 | 76 | 5 | 605 |
| 14 | A/K | ANKUANTENU EBA | 20 | | | 162 | 37 | 129 | | 8 | 50 | 11 | 181 | 9 | 607 |
| 15 | K | EBA | 40 | 3 | 2 | | 191 | 144 | 1 | 76 | 30 | | | 2 | 489 |
| 16 | K | ONAMPINGKA | 6 | | | 19 | 70 | 139 | | 3 | 14 | | | 6 | 257 |
| 17 | K | ANAWA-YONKI | 63 | 1 | 1 | 9 | | 36 | | | 541 | 46 | 6 | 5 | 708 |
| 18 | K | ONAMPINEKA | 8 | | 25 | 1 | 10 | 265 | | 1 | 4 | | | 2 | 316 |
| TOTAL | | | 1192 | 339 | 830 | 609 | 1074 | 1080 | 286 | 312 | 1916 | 427 | 320 | 120 | 8505 |

The group of mobile candidates received the most votes in the election, and collected them from the widest range of *Eria Komunitis*. While their votes from many ballot boxes were not significant in number, they show the effect of transportation on the election. The candidates with vehicles were also those who earned the most votes in town, which again may stem from their greater mobility.

Third, the lack of strong vote-getters in the Agarabi other than Yubiti was a critical aspect of the election. If we subtract the votes Ono won in the Kamano and in town, no other candidate but Yubiti received 500 Agarabi votes. In contrast, there were three candidates in the Kamano — Akila, Peter and Thomas — who collected large votes. Tepi is an unusual case because, though his village is from the Agarabi, it is on the border with the Kamano and is politically aligned with Kamano villages in the Bus Kamano *Eria*. Tepi also received a sizeable vote in some Agarabi *Erias* (Boxes 11 & 12) where he is matrilocally related. Thus, more than any other candidate, he was able to earn votes in both the Agarabi and Kamano.

Fourth, voter turn-out was lower than in previous elections. There was an estimated 41 per cent voter participation in the Kamano and 57 per cent in the Agarabai, or an overall participation of 49 per cent.¹⁴ In 1964 it was estimated that there was a turn-out of 58 per cent in the Kamano and an 80 per cent Agarabi turn-out (Watson 1965:113). Though we do not have estimates for the 1968 and 1972 elections, it is likely that this decrease represents a trend rather than a radical change since 1964.¹⁵ An equal voter participation from both Agarabi and Kamano would have meant 1700 more Kamano votes, a figure which could have altered the outcome of the election.

Conclusion

When a number of the losing candidates and some political leaders in Kainantu were asked to explain Yubiti's victory, they offered one of two answers: either he won because, as a coffee buyer who travelled throughout the District in his work, he was well known in the electorate and had been able to do numerous favors for people, or, he won because of his association with Barry Holloway and Pangu. Undoubtedly there is an element of the truth in both answers. Before the election Yubiti offered a similar response when asked by the author why he thought he would win.

A look at the voting results offers support for at least one of the two explanations for Yubiti's success. The top four vote-getters in the election — Yubiti, Tepi, Akila and Peter — were all men recognized for their interests in business, religious or sporting activities in the District. Three of these four — Yubiti, Tepi and Peter — had been resident in their home areas for a number of years prior to the election and they had therefore been able to maintain themselves within the web of local socio-political relations. These two factors — local recognition and social involvement — contrasts them with four of the other candidates — Bob, Bofenu, Siuras and Thomas — who, though they were respected because of the distinguished positions they held in business and government, had not maintained ties at the local level.

Two other aspects of the election mentioned in the previous section are important for analyzing the outcome. First, the large number of candidates who nominated for the Open divided the electorate and encouraged voting according to local political alliances. In the three previous national elections of 1964, 1968 and 1972 there had been five, five and seven candidates respectively, and in an electorate at least twice the size of the 1977 Kainantu Open. It

may be that the introduction of the *Eria Komuniti* system with its division of the single council into smaller political units encouraged an increase in the number of candidates, though reports from the national newspaper indicate that such increases were a general phenomenon in 1977.¹⁶ Second, the absence of a strong Agarabi opponent for Yubiti meant that he collected strong votes from many of the Agarabi *Erias*. Some political observers in Kainantu commented that Ono, the number two Agarabi vote-getter and the most politically experienced candidate, suffered in the eyes of voters from his two previous defeats in Open elections, as well as from a burden of political antagonism built up over the years.

The victory by Yubiti appears to be attributable to a combination of the following factors: (1) the support he received from his business associations and local involvement, (2) his association with Barry Holloway and Pangu, (3) the division of electorate voting by a large number of candidates, and (4) the lack of strong competition in the Agarabi. It is difficult to single out any one of these as being more significant than another.

The long-term political trends indicated by the 1977 Kainantu Open are most striking in candidate background and voter alignment. The changes which have occurred in candidates can be characterized as the opposition between "opening-men" and "drop-outs".¹⁷ "Opening-men" refers to that generation of men whose childhood and adulthood have followed the sequence of innovations begun in the Highlands in the 1930s. They have "opened" the social, technological and political changes experienced in the last half century. In the 1977 election they were conspicuous for their absence after having dominated the previous elections. Instead, in 1977 a younger generation came into prominence. The term "drop-outs" can only be applied to them in a relative way though, for the individuals vary in the degree they participate in village society. Yet, in a broader sense, they have all "dropped-out" of a traditional society radically altered since their birth in the post-World War II era. Whether this represents an immediate trend toward younger men taking up leadership positions at all levels in the political hierarchy has yet to be seen, but may be clarified in the forthcoming Eastern Highlands Provincial elections.

Though the background of candidates had changed, voters continued to align themselves by ethnic areas and political alliances. Rather than suffer a decline, this aspect of neo-traditional political relations seems to have been boosted by the moves to self-government and independence in Papua New Guinea, and by the introduction of new, local-level political institutions in Kainantu. That local alliances persist as an important element in the village scene was demonstrated in the months following the July election when Kainantu suffered an outbreak of tribal fighting, the first such fighting of note since independence. The pattern of inter-group alliances then, remains a significant factor in electoral behaviour, and while other considerations also affect the choices made by voters, the influence of local groups shows no signs of decreasing in the near future.

NOTES

1. I would like to acknowledge the assistance in Kainantu of James Taya, Returning Officer, Kainantu Open, of Craig McConaghey, District Coordinator, Kainantu, and of Henry van Leeuw, Executive Officer, Kainantu Council. The research

- upon which this paper is based was made possible by grants from the Bollingen Foundation and the Department of Anthropology, University of Washington.
2. References to “the Kamano” or “the Agarabi” should be understood as applying to the two census divisions of those names. The census division boundaries correspond to the distribution of the Kamano and Agarabi languages in the Kainantu District.
 3. See Berndt (1969) and Watson (1967, 1970) for detailed descriptions of traditional socio-political organization in Kainantu.
 4. See Radford (1972) for an account of early post-contact history in Kainantu.
 5. For discussions of *Eria Komuniti* and Village Courts in Kainantu, see Uyassi (1973) and Warren (1976).
 6. This election had not taken place by mid-1978.
 7. Where he did not stand because local leaders had given support to his cousin, the Pangu candidate.
 8. Photos of the candidates were intended to appear on the ballots alongside their names, but due to technical problems the photos were not included.
 9. The author was resident in the Kainantu District for the four months prior to the election, and in informal discussion with villagers from throughout the electorate, found that few could identify candidates from outside their own region. In the weeks before the election, a survey of twenty-five heads-of-household was made in an Agarabi village of approximately one hundred households. The village borders Kainantu town and residents can therefore be presumed to have greater access to political information than the residents of most other villages in the District. It was found that of those questioned none could identify more than four of the candidates, and these four were nearly always Agarabi.
 10. Siuras, Ono, Tepi, Akila, Peter and Yubiti.
 11. Bob, Bofeno, Koy, Babanki and Thomas.
 12. Julius Chan (PPP), Sinake Giregire (Country) and Michael Somare (Pangu).
 13. Table 1 lists the votes received by each candidate from the eighteen ballot boxes used in the election. Each box is identified by the name, or names, of the *Eria Komuniti* voting in that box.
 14. The estimate is based on combining a tally of voters from the electoral roll with Section voters. It can only be a rough estimate due to the inadequacy of the roll and the unknown number of potential Section voters who did not participate.
 15. See Stone (1976:529).
 16. Post-Courier May 10, 1977, p. 1 and May 23, 1977, p. 1.
 17. The term “opening-men” is taken from Waston (1960), though used in a slightly different sense. “Drop-outs” was derived from an autobiographical account by one of the Open candidates (Kavani, 1974).

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Chapter 9

SHAPING A POLITICAL ARENA: THE ELECTIONS IN THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS.

J.A. Ballard

Society, Economy and Administration

The rugged topography and remoteness of the Southern Highlands are distinguishing features which have shaped its recent history and politics. Most of the province's population of 237,000 is concentrated in highland valleys and basins between 5000 and 8000 feet in altitude, very sharply separated from one another by limestone ridges running northwest-southeast and by five massive volcanic cones. Because of its isolated position the Southern Highlands was the last major populated area penetrated by Australian colonial administration. Apart from limited exploratory patrols and the temporary establishment of a base camp at Lake Kutubu in the late 1930s, the Southern Highlands was left untouched until 1949 when exploration recommenced (Sinclair 1966: 107-177). The Southern Highlands District was created in 1950-51 when a patrol post was set up at Mendi and the other district centres were established during the following ten years.

Lack of access by road prior to the late 1960s meant that the Southern Highlands did not share with other Highlands districts in the period of expatriate plantation establishment and early cash crop development, and the absence of articulate business interests left the Southern Highlands firmly in the hands of Australian administrative staff and Christian missions. During the 1960s Australian colonial policy favoured concentration of investment in areas of greatest return. The Southern Highlands, with no export crop, served as a reservoir of unskilled labour (see figures in Skeldon 1977) and received only limited services. The province today is heir to this colonial policy, ranking last or nearly last among provinces in most indices of social and economic development.

Because of production restrictions under an international coffee agreement the Southern Highlands was not officially permitted to plant coffee (apart from two small expatriate plantations) until 1972 and thus the province did not share in the coffee boom of 1975-77. Its estimated production in 1976 was a mere 150 tonnes, and not until 1980 will production justify construction of a processing factory in the province. There are an estimated 3300 head of cattle on projects sponsored by the Department of Primary Industry since 1968, producing meat for local abattoirs but not for export. Only after protest were arrangements made for the province to participate, albeit marginally, in the national fresh food procurement and marketing program. Opportunities for earning money within the province have remained very limited.

The retarded position of the province is clearest in the fields of health and education. The Southern Highlands ranks highest among all provinces in urban and rural child mortality and lowest in urban and rural life expectancy. Despite this it also ranked last in expenditure per capita on health services in 1973-4 and it is next to last in its ratio of health aid posts to population and in

accessibility of aid posts. The gap between the Southern Highlands and the best developed provinces is greatest in education. At primary, secondary and tertiary levels the province has ranked last in attendance (though it was overtaken in this honour by neighbouring Enga Province after its creation in 1975). As a result the Southern Highlands has produced the lowest per capita number of national public servants, particularly at senior levels (Welch 1976), and so has had a much more limited network of *wantok* officials in Port Moresby than have other provinces. It must rely heavily on initiatives by provincial officials and MPs to obtain assistance.

From 1972-3 the province began to benefit from the change in development approach under the new Papua New Guinea government. The shift in priorities from concentration of investment for rapid growth towards a policy of geographically balanced development made the Southern Highlands an obvious target for special treatment, and national institutions such as the Development Bank made special efforts to improve the province's access to services. But special treatment for the Southern Highlands is not so much the result of allocation decisions within the central government as of effective mobilisation by the provincial administration to compete for resources. The political impact of this mobilisation is dealt with below, but in a survey of development of the province an awareness of the special qualities of administration in the province is essential (see Ballard 1978). The remoteness of the Southern Highlands and the absence of foreign capital penetration meant that most new activities were dominated and co-ordinated by kiaps, and exceptionally able District Commissioners reinforced this pattern. There has been a firm tradition of coordination among departments, resisting pressures from Port Moresby departmental headquarters, and a resultant high morale among public servants at both the provincial and district level which is rare in Papua New Guinea. Kiap domination also meant that authoritarian methods of control and the use of free labour for road construction, which were no longer acceptable elsewhere, survived in the Southern Highlands until the early 1970s, and in Nipa as late as 1977. Kiap control had its useful side-effects. At least part of the explanation of the fact that the Southern Highlands was not seriously troubled in the early 1970s by the problems of law order prevalent in other Highland provinces lay in extensive patrolling to maintain close contact with settlements, and on the kiaps' continued operational control over police. By 1977, however, kiap numbers, morale and patrolling had declined seriously, even in this most kiap-oriented of provinces.

Most of the exceptional strength of Local Government Councils derives from the fact that they were organised only a few years after the establishment of administrative control, and that departments were consistently encouraged to work through them. When the Southern Highlands Area Authority, made up of representatives (usually the presidents) of the Local Government Councils, was established in 1972, the provincial administration channelled most provincial decision-making through it and set up under its auspices the most effective system of Rural Improvement Programme management in the country.

In order to compensate for the absence of private enterprise in developing major cash crops, the administration set up under the Area Authority in 1974 a Southern Highlands Development Authority (the first in PNG) and obtained a commitment from Cabinet for a five-year programme to establish coffee and tea plantations under Local Government Council ownership. When funds for this were allocated through the new Village Economic Development Fund and

Table 1 Southern Highlands Results

* = elected

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------|---------------------------------|--------|
| <i>Southern Highlands Provincial</i> | | <i>Kagua-Erave Open</i> | |
| Agilo Kunini | 5,162 | Yano Belo | 5,163* |
| Dus Mapun | 3,762 | Henry Ae | 1,194 |
| Peren Mune Dick | 15,190 | Alphonse Aria | 165 |
| Francis Pusal | 19,122 | Jack Ipapua | 2,880 |
| Nelson Humbi Piribu | 6,465 | Michael Mane | 68 |
| Waya Angoea Tadabe | 10,539 | Mata Mura | 2,806 |
| Gaba Agea Kulembe | 2,592 | Ais Andia | 255 |
| Rarua Pula | 5,589 | Informal | 36 |
| Maya Habia Babe | 4,541 | Total | 13,567 |
| Anthony Yarnak Temo | 11,271 | | |
| Wiwa Korowi | 19,586* | <i>Komo-Margarima Open</i> | |
| Informal | 728 | Tia Piwana | 471 |
| Total | 104,547 | Samson Pulube | 1,057 |
| | | Mamu Yugili | 1,053 |
| <i>Ialibu-Pangia Open</i> | | Aya Dabuma Dabamu | 1,927 |
| Pundia Kange | 6,079* | Dambali Habe | 2,122* |
| Rambu Melo | 413 | Aliape Pongoli | 535 |
| Karia Wanu | 366 | Noah Yalon | 26 |
| Iandabia Warawia | 704 | Kau Lumbi | 1,126 |
| Undi Nandi | 1,901 | Edward Ega | 1,425 |
| Pangano Suma | 1,970 | Peter Tangeria Herebe | 981 |
| Thomas Laua Nou | 330 | Wemp Agop | 1,885 |
| John Susa Tage | 656 | Informal | 19 |
| Turi Wari | 150 | Total | 12,627 |
| Koke Itua | 2,263 | | |
| Informal | 14 | <i>Koroba-Lake Kopiago Open</i> | |
| Total | 14,832 | Andrew Wabiria | 3,019 |
| | | Paiale Elo | 3,163* |
| <i>Imbonggu Open</i> | | Timothy Palaki | 149 |
| Tom Tundu Soru | 563 | Peta Katare | 468 |
| Joseph Yamba | 751 | Paburi Piberale | 1,961 |
| Boli Nawi | 690 | Matiabe Peta | 2,433 |
| Stephen Kasu Rot | 625 | Aruru Matiabe | 2,078 |
| Gapi Moli | 2,529 | Informal | 24 |
| Pawa Kombea | 987 | Total | 13,295 |
| Yako Nolibu | 1,680 | | |
| Aloysius Nale | 446 | <i>Mendi Open</i> | |
| Pondo Pongo | 415 | Momei Pangial | 3,759 |
| Glaimi Warena | 3,274* | Jeffrey Tara Nek | 458 |
| Informal | 10 | Posu Ank | 5,955* |
| Total | 11,970 | Homalen Agnes Kongum | 37 |

| | | | |
|-------------------------|--------|---|--------|
| Sonduwei Womp | 672 | Total | 14,680 |
| Tubiri Wagep | 1,220 | | |
| Tombe Paul | 480 | <i>Tari Open</i> | |
| Informal | 14 | Matiabe Yuwi | 6,692* |
| Total | 12,581 | Gambana Henry Gaiyalu | 400 |
| | | Haralu Mai | 3,754 |
| <i>Nipa-Kutubu Open</i> | | Mule Agua | 205 |
| Kone Iorei | 1,263 | Iragali Harabe | 913 |
| Homena Kiribu | 702 | Informal | 9 |
| Paulus Kombo Mong | 1,122 | Total | 11,973 |
| Awakep Ponge | 1,174 | | |
| Tombol Unguniabe | 1,700 | <i>1978 Koroba-Lake Kopiago</i> | |
| Tegi Ebei'al | 2,386 | <i>By-Election</i> | |
| Kapi Nato | 810 | Aruru Matiabe | 2,830 |
| Elal Bol | 1,207 | Andrew Wabiria | 3,266 |
| Wgil Pondip | 196 | Paiele Elo | 5,003* |
| Ibne Kor | 2,905* | Matiabe Angina Peta | 1,377 |
| Tui Tondapen | 692 | Informal | 5 |
| David Songk | 466 | Total | 12,681 |
| Yeki Tidima | 57 | | |
| Informal | 8 | <i>Source: Port Courier, July 13, 1977.</i> | |

then were cut off by the Ministry of Finance in the second year, the provincial administration and Area Authority maintained the programme through allocations from the only funds under their control, those of the Rural Improvement Programme. At the time of the 1977 election provincial officials had worked up a proposal for integrated rural development involving further coffee and tea development, roads, rural health, and an integrated extension and training programme and were awaiting appraisal by the World Bank of the feasibility of a loan of \$US 22 million for a five-year project. No other province had displayed a capacity for planning and a potential for implementation on this scale, but because there were very few experienced Southern Highlands public servants that capacity remained essentially expatriate.

It would be wrong to give an impression of complete administrative control over the provision of services in the Southern Highlands, for the province is also exceptional for the number of missions represented (16) and the enthusiasm they evoke from their followers. The inaccessibility of the Southern Highlands, the last densely populated "Unevangelised Field" opened up after the large missions were firmly established elsewhere, made it particularly attractive to very small fundamentalist missions (see Robin 1981).

Although most missions were based near government stations, others were isolated and served as the main focus of contact with western society. The missions had their own air transport links, radio communication and an alternative network of supplies which meant that for many people they could deliver when the administration could not. Enthusiasm for the various missions can, therefore, partly be explained by the fact that the spread of government services was thin. For many people the missions have provided substantial services — health centres and aid posts, schools, transport and a market for fruit and vegetables, a store and occasionally employment or agricultural extension work or technical training — while the administration has been an occasional and transient visitor. The missions' presence has expanded in recent years as administrative patrolling has been reduced. The period of intense mission activity coincided with the first active stage of administrative intrusion in many places. Two groups of white men making new rules of behaviour were not seen as separate by many people. The mission and administration bolstered one another's prestige. It was only later when conflict between kiaps and priests or pastors came into the open — for example over the burning of cult objects in Pangia — that the two authorities began to be seen separately.

In the Southern Highlands the churches were active in the 1977 election, as they had been in all previous elections. Pastors spoke for certain candidates at church meetings; candidates declared their Christianity or accused their opponents of being heathen; others suggested the need for a national Ministry of Religion.

Patterns of Political and Social Identity

During the pre-contact period political identity seldom extended beyond the level of the clan and language group and the world as a whole was largely, but not exclusively, enclosed within the limestone walls of a valley or basin. The establishment of Local Government Councils provided the first modern arena for political action and the administration's encouragement of Councils gave them considerable authority and prestige. Council boundaries were set largely in geographical terms rather than on strictly linguistic and cultural lines, but

these appear initially to have been acceptable, e.g., in Ialibu which contains both Imbonggu and Kewabe speakers living in the Ialibu Basin, and in Mendi, where Imbonggu, Mendi and Kewabe speakers were placed together. Councils were reinforced as political arenas by the fact that House of Assembly electoral boundaries for 1968 and 1972 were drawn on Council lines, with one major council per electorate except for the pairing of Ialibu and Pangia. After 1972 Councils began to serve explicitly political functions in the allocation of Rural Improvement Programme funds.

Consciousness of political identity on the level of the province developed first within the Australian administration, organised under a succession of able District Commissioners who fostered the notion that the Southern Highlands needed to work hard in unified fashion to make up for its retarded position as the 'last' province. This notion affected activity among the province's political spokesmen. In the first House of Assembly elections, held in 1964, Ron Neville, a kiap who had served in the early patrol period in Mendi, Tari and Koroba, won a seat for the special (expatriate) West Papua electorate covering the Southern Highlands. He had already joined with several other senior kiaps in establishing a business firm, Coecon, which developed a leading role in trade, catering and the few plantations in the Southern Highlands. Neville became the leading spokesman for the province in Port Moresby, in close collaboration with his former patrolling colleague, Des Clancy, who was District Commissioner for the Southern Highlands from 1966 to 1973. Neville served as mentor for the other Southern Highlands Members, none of them literate in English, from 1964 to 1971, and they worked together as the best unified district bloc in the House of Assembly during that period.

Building on the Local Government Councils, the Southern Highlands administration took seriously the nascent consultative institutions at provincial level, the District Councils Conference and District Advisory Council, and in 1972 it was one of the first to replace these with an Area Authority. Clancy assigned one of his ablest kiaps to serve as its executive officer and RIP co-ordinator and ensured that all department heads were regularly in attendance at Authority meetings. Area Authority proceedings were broadcast extensively on Radio Mendi (*Nek bilong Muruk*) and the enthusiasm of the provincial administration for tackling central departments on their failures in the province was expressed through the Area Authority. After each meeting letters were despatched to ministers in Port Moresby and pungent press releases to the *Post Courier* and National Broadcasting Commission decried lack of attention to the exceptional problems of the Southern Highlands. Although Local Government Council representatives on the Area Authority lacked secondary education and broad experience outside their own areas, they quickly picked up a district-level perspective vis-a-vis national headquarters.

A few students were sent from the Southern Highlands for secondary schooling to other Highlands provinces and to Western Province, but the lack of secondary schools in the province until 1967 meant that its educated elite was both small and dispersed. From 1972-73, as numbers at the University of Papua New Guinea increased, the few Southern Highlands students, like those from other provinces, grouped together calling themselves the Amene Association. (Amene is a greeting common to most languages in the province.) Following student criticism of administration in the province and demands for more information officials of the Area Authority invited the students in 1975

to an annual joint seminar with Area Authority members. Much of the student antagonism was focused on Neville's prominent political and economic position in the province.

Other forms of area identity have arisen within the provincial arena. The two western districts of Tari and Koroba, predominantly Huli in language and culture, were isolated from the rest of the province until the June 1977 opening of the Tari-Margarima road. Distance and lack of road access meant that inevitably the west was the last to obtain services. Although the distribution of government staff within the province was exceptionally evenly matched with population, capital works and Development Authority expenditure heavily favoured other parts of the province and a sense of relative deprivation was expressed in recurrent demands for a separate province (e.g., Wabiria in *Post-Courier*, 14 March 1975). At the least, this gave the Huli west a sense of identity separate from the rest of the province.

In the east, on the other hand, the relative ease of access for Pangia and Kagua, and especially Ialibu, to the better developed economic and educational services of the Western Highlands meant that cash crops were developed furthest in this area and that it had a slight lead in the number of secondary and tertiary students. Of the eight students from the University of Papua New Guinea who had completed a degree by mid-1977 five were from Ialibu, three from Mendi (cf Weeks 1976).

The political impact of these relatively slight regional differences in access, accentuated in the west by Huli unity, has been the development of an increasingly explicit three-way division within the province. In all elections within the Area Authority there was a sharing of positions among the west, east and centre. For several years prior to the 1977 elections the two vice-presidents were the presidents of the Ialibu and Tari Local Government Councils, while the President, Posu Ank, was from the centre — not from Mendi, which is looked upon with some suspicion by the rest of the province, but from the 'neutral' Lai Valley. At the University of Papua New Guinea, Ialibu had been predominant within the Amene Association until 1976 when Huli students became the most numerous contingent and won the presidency. Incidents between Ialibu and Huli students almost split the association, but unity was restored by 1977 under neutral presidents from the centre. Neville's identification with the province as a whole prevented the regional electorate from becoming a battleground for areas within the province prior to 1977.

Few associations of political significance have developed outside the official framework of councils. Most of those that have emerged are in at least partial opposition to the councils and to their close links with the administration. During 1971 the intrusion of wage labour into Ialibu with the construction of the Highlands Highway brought about considerable dislocation and unrest. The first two Ialibu university students, Peter Paypool and Roya Yaki, organised the Ialibu Basin Association to protest against administrative measures and to mobilise a successful demand for the location of a sawmill in the Ialibu area. Later the Association became more concerned with social services and cultural activities, the students gradually withdrew, and by 1977 the Association was in the hands of young opponents of the Ialibu Council. As the only articulate source of criticism of councils and their domination by older, less educated, men, the Amene Association and Ialibu Basin Association were viewed by the Area Authority with suspicion and hostility.

In Tari the Rev. Aya Dabuma, who set up the province's first Pangu Pati branch in 1974, sponsored what amounted to a local anti-council association. He proposed that East and South Tari Basin secede from the Tari Local

Government Council, which was dominated by the United Party and supporters of the sitting MHA, Matiabe Yuwi. Farmers' associations in various districts, organised largely among cattle project owners, have also taken anti-council positions, e.g., in Tari, and a group in Kagua has suggested running services outside the framework of the Council. On the whole, however, the Councils have proved too strong to be seriously threatened by opposition, and opponents have attacked not the system, but the performance of individual councils and councillors.

The differences between generations of elites reflected in the opposition of educated young men of the Amene Association and the Ialibu Basin Association to the established big men in the councils and the Area Authority are more clearly marked than emergent local class distinctions. The lack of opportunities for business activity has prevented substantial accumulation of wealth. In Ialibu, however, with the first cash cropping and major cattle projects in the province, a few men have distinguished themselves by their wealth, obtained largely as successful clients of the missions or of agricultural extension officers. These men are seen largely as objects of emulation rather than jealousy, and the successful 1977 candidate in Imbonggu was one of the best known Ialibu businessmen. Elsewhere opportunities for obtaining wealth from outside sources were limited to Presidents of Local Government Councils and, especially, MPs. Their political office gave them special access, legitimate or otherwise, to council resources such as transport and to national government largesse such as VEDF grants. In so far as this special access was publicly perceived it was either accepted as the perquisite of a big man and source of prestige for his community or resented, particularly by those who sought to obtain similar access for themselves. In Kagua where the incumbent MP, a minister in the national government, and his perennial rival, the President of the Local Government Council, had become the two wealthiest businessmen through their official connexions, voters sought to persuade the Australian kiap to stand as a candidate.

Recent Political Developments

The elections to the first House of Assembly in 1964 preceded the establishment of most Local Government Councils and were for most areas in the Southern Highlands the first exercise in voting. In the Special regional electorate for non-indigenous voters the Southern Highlands was part of a West Papua electorate including also Gulf and Western Provinces, but a candidate with a Southern Highlands base was elected when Ron Neville defeated Ron Slaughter of Kairuku and then established himself as the leading expatriate entrepreneur of the province. In the four open electorates of Ialibu, Mendi, Tari and Kutubu, with nine, five, six and four candidates respectively, most candidates had very little if any formal education but those elected had had substantial contact with the administration as interpreters or in other capacities (see Bettison et al 1965: 407-408 re Tari election).

In 1968 Neville was unopposed for the Southern Highlands regional electorate; no expatriate challenged him and no Southern Highlander had the educational qualifications required. The six open electorates allocated to the Southern Highlands (Ialibu, Kagua, Mendi, Nipa, Tari, Koroba) were contested by an average of eight candidates each, twelve of whom had contested in 1964. Generally younger candidates with some limited education were elected and only one of the incumbent MHAs, Momei Pangial of Mendi, was re-elected.

None of the Southern Highlanders save Neville left a significant mark on the

and investment and felt that the rush to self-government, independence and localisation would only perpetuate the province's retarded position within the country. At the same time, despite the increased proportion of government expenditure in the province under the new government, the MHAs and Area Authority, supported by the provincial administration, felt betrayed by the failure to respond further to provincial proposals and to the province's excellent record of project management. There was particularly vehement bitterness in 1975 when restrictions on government expenditure led to a cutback of planned road construction, a renegeing on promises to support the Development Authority's five-year plantation programme, and opposition to the Area Authority's purchase of expatriate businesses. In July 1975, the MHAs of the province threatened to boycott the national Constituent Assembly on these grounds. By the end of that year, however, the MHAs were under attack in the Area Authority for lack of concerted action to support provincial demands and it became increasingly clear that most of the leading figures in the Area Authority would again be challenging the incumbent MHAs in the next election, then expected in 1976.

Much of the antagonism of the Area Authority was focussed on Neville, whose political and economic dominance came under serious challenge for the first time. Although both Neville and Wabiria held positions in the United Party's shadow cabinet, Neville provided the province's chief link with the party. As his position weakened vis-a-vis the other MHAs and the Area Authority, and as self-government and independence passed without disaster, the links with the United Party grew weaker and were based more on habit than on conviction. During 1974-75 Julius Chan, Minister of Finance and leader of the People's Progress Party, established contact with the Area Authority President, Posu Ank, and Posu joined the PPP. As the provincial representative on a committee considering expatriate applications for citizenship, Posu vehemently opposed Neville's application. Only through the intervention of the Minister for Foreign Affairs did Neville become a citizen and retain eligibility for political office. Neville and other United Party MPs in turn accused Posu of receiving a personal allocation from the Village Economic Development Fund, controlled by Chan's ministry, to purchase four vehicles. (*National Parliament Debates* 1 (19): 2531-32, 4 February 1977). Posu gradually formed a PPP network among Area Authority members who intended to challenge the sitting United Party Members. In the elections, four Area Authority members stood with the support of PPP; only one stood for the United Party, against Yano Belo who had tacit PPP support.

In May 1975, following encouragement from the national government to proceed towards the establishment of provincial government, the provincial administration took the lead in organising a constituent assembly, composed of all 14 Area Authority members, 3 MPs, 3 church and 3 community representatives (in all cases, one each from the east, west and centre), one woman and one student. Consultations in 1975 showed no enthusiasm for the devolution of national powers to the province, but late in 1976 constitutional proposals were drawn up by a small committee composed of the Provincial Commissioner (then Patrick Gaiyer from the Western Highlands) and a few Southern Highlands graduates and diplomats. During tours by assembly members at the end of 1976 to gather opinions from Local Government Councils and other groups, it was clear that there was little understanding of the meaning of provincial government and considerable doubt, even hostility, concerning further institutional change. Within the Area Authority, however,

1968-71 House, although Andrew Wabiria of Koroba served as an Assistant Ministerial Member and Matiabe Yuwi of Tari travelled abroad as a member of the Select Committee on Constitutional Development. The Southern Highlanders voted consistently as a bloc, following Neville's leadership, and together they joined the United Party in opposition to every initiative taken by Pangu. A solid phalanx of Southern Highlands MHAs marched together into administration offices in Port Moresby to demand improved allocation of services for their district. By 1972, solidarity behind Neville had begun to founder on personal differences between him and some of the other MHAs, but all firmly supported the United Party's conservative stance on constitutional advance.

In the 1972 elections no other party challenged the United Party's hold on the Southern Highlands and it was not necessary for the party to endorse candidates formally. Neville was challenged for the regional seat by three educated young Southern Highlanders but he was seen as the chief exponent of economic development in the district and captured 75% of the formal vote. The district was allocated a seventh open electorate and this was carved out of the south-west as Poroma-Kutubu. In the other open electorates each of the incumbent MHAs was a candidate and each was challenged by leaders of the Local Government Councils, with an average of almost seven candidates per electorate, 17 of whom had been candidates in 1968. Five of the six incumbent MHAs were re-elected, Yano Belo (Kangu-Erave), Matiabe Yuwi (Tari-Komo) and Andrew Wabiria (Koroba-Kopiago) by very comfortable margins, Turi Wari (Ialibu-Pangia) (see Paypool 1976) and Momei Pangial (Mendi) only after exhausting all preferences. Tegi Ebei'al, MAH Nipa, was defeated by Ibne Kor, and Awali Ungunaibe was narrowly elected for the new seat of Poroma-Kutubu. When Ungunaibe died early in 1975 his younger brother, Tombol Ungunaibe, was endorsed by the United Party and won a by-election against three others on the first count; although he was probably well below the minimum qualifying age no one challenged his election.

After the 1972 elections the MHAs from the Southern Highlands lined up again with the United Party in opposition to the Coalition government, leaving it the only province apart from Manus without representation in the Coalition ministry. Yano Belo crossed to the National Party in July 1972 and was appointed Minister for Works in August 1973, giving the Southern Highlands a voice within the government. His defection created disagreement among the other MHAs and within the Area Authority as to whether the break in party unity was worth the potential increase in access to power. Neville firmly opposed Belo's action while Matiabe Yuwi supported Belo's right to change party. Matiabe, who served as a member of the Constitutional Planning Committee in 1972-74, was easily the most independent of the province's MHA's and the most respected in Parliament. During 1973, as the Papua Besena movement flowered in Port Moresby, some Southern Highlands MHAs flirted with it, largely in sympathy with claims of Papuan and Southern Highlands relative deprivation rather than in support of secession (*Post-Courier*, 28 June and 4 September 1973).

The dominant issues for the Southern Highlands were those of constitutional change and the allocation of services and investment to the province. The Southern Highlands MHAs and Area Authority, speaking for the great majority of articulate people in the province, were firmly opposed to the rapid pace of constitutional advance set by the government. They saw their only hope for economic and social development in the retention of expatriate skills

there was recognition of the fact that provincial government would largely serve to strengthen existing arrangements and there was a willingness to move cautiously. Andrew Andaijah of Tari, who succeeded Posu Ank as President of the Authority, decided against contesting the parliamentary elections in favour of standing for the provincial premiership. There was also some indication that Neville was considering an active role in the future provincial government. Provincial government itself, however, was not an issue in the parliamentary election campaigns.

Electoral Boundaries

The electoral boundaries for the three earlier House of Assembly elections, though they had changed with the increase from four to six to seven open electorates in the Southern Highlands, had kept Local Government Council units intact at the expense of equity of representation. While Ialibu-Pangia and Tari-Komo were among the largest electorates in the country, Poroma-Kutubu was the very smallest. When the national Electoral Boundaries Commission visited Mendi in July 1976 there were general demands for an increase in the number of electorates in the province. There were also requests for specific new electorates (drafted usually by eventual candidates) and particularly for the creation of a Pangia electorate separate from Ialibu, whose candidates had consistently won the Ialibu-Pangia seat (Paypool 1976). The Commission's provisional proposals rejected the request for an additional electorate and left Ialibu-Pangia intact as the fourth largest electorate in the country. On the other hand it took Komo from Tari and added it to Poroma-Kutubu to balance size, though the proposed Komo-Kutubu-Poroma electorate remained the second smallest in the country. There were strong complaints both from Pangia and from Tari, where Matiabe Yuwi and the Local Government Councils protested strongly against the removal of Komo, which appeared to jeopardise Matiabe's chances of re-election. Both Pangia and Komo councils threatened that their people would refuse to vote in the elections.

Responding to these protests, but still refusing an additional electorate, the Boundaries Commission proposed in December a complete realignment cutting across council boundaries. Ialibu was divided between a Pangia-dominated Ialibu-Pangia and a Mendi-dominated Mendi electorate, Tari-Komo lost a few peripheral areas to a new Nipa-Kutubu, and other portions of Nipa and Mendi containing Margarima and Lai Valley councils were grouped together as Margarima electorate. These were the proposals put to Parliament as the Commission's final report, and in Parliament the United Party opposition and other members mustered a majority to reject the report, partly on grounds of failure to provide an additional electorate for the Southern Highlands. The Commission thereupon conceded an eighth open electorate to the Southern Highlands and returned to the drawing board to carve totally new electorates.

The Commission's initial solution was to combine Komo with Margarima and Lai Valley and, by juggling census divisions across council boundaries and even by cutting across census divisions, to create an Imbonggu-Kambiri electorate snaking from Ialibu to the Nembi Valley. After discussion with the Southern Highlands MPs the Commission revised these proposals to keep Huli unity within the boundaries of three electorates, eliminating Lai Valley from Komo-Margarima, and to establish a clear Ialibu dominance within Imbonggu electorate. The Southern Highlands had gained its additional electorate at

considerable loss to the coherence of established political units but with due regard to the interests of the more vocal sitting MPs. The final report of the Commission was adopted by Parliament in February 1977 but there were continued complaints by the United Party and the Area Authority about the effects of reapportionment in the Southern Highlands.

One result of the realignment was the absence of incumbent MPs and Area Authority leaders in the two 'new' electorates, Komo-Margarima and Imbonggu, and their clustering in the remaining electorates, particularly in Ialibu-Pangia and Nipa. Another result was the disaffection of census divisions which were severed from their council areas in order to balance electorates, particularly Kuare in Kagua (placed in Ialibu-Pangia) and Paru in Koroba (placed in Tari). Both of these threatened to burn bridges connecting them to their new electorates and warned that they would refuse to vote, but both were fairly rapidly mollified, Kuare by the prospect that candidates from Kagua might win two parliamentary seats. Officials were surprised by the relative ease with which people accepted the changes, which were publicised primarily by the candidates themselves.

Candidacies and Party Endorsement

Apart from the sitting MPs and Area Authority members, other Council leaders were likely candidates for 1977. 20 of the 70 candidates for the eight open seats had been candidates in previous elections and most of these were established leaders already holding elective office. None of these men had any secondary education, but since 1972 substantial numbers of young men with some secondary training had established themselves as public servants, council clerks and mission pastors. Many of these young men also sought election, particularly in the provincial electorate and the two 'new' open electorates where there were no established leaders contesting.

The number of candidates in the eight open electorates ranged from five to eleven, with an average of nine (matching the average in other Highland provinces except Chimbu, which had 15). For the provincial electorate all eleven candidates were between 26 and 33 years of age. For the open electorates the age range was wider, although only 6 candidates were over 40 and none were over 46 years of age. Few candidates with no education came forward apart from those who were established politicians, but only 13% of open candidates had Form 4 or higher education. Apart from the 21 candidates (30%) who were established politicians as MPs or Council leaders, all of them with business interests, there were 5 other businessmen, 25 government employees, 5 private employees, 8 pastors and catechists, 3 subsistence farmers, 2 students and 1 housewife (the first female candidate in the province and wife of a Mendi expatriate who did most of her campaigning).

Among the few students who had completed tertiary education there was considerable interest in Ron Neville's provincial seat from as early as 1973. One of the first two UPNG graduates from the province was Dus Mapun of Mendi who returned early in 1974 as the province's Community Development Officer and made clear his intention of running against Neville. As the Southern Highlands representative for the Village Development Task Force attached to Somare's office, he was seen as pro-Pangu. Wiwa Korowi of Ialibu, a diplomate of Goroka Teachers' College, had taught at Mendi High School before serving as ministerial secretary to Yano Belo and then joining the Department of Foreign Affairs and serving overseas. From Brussels in

1975 he wrote to Local Government Councils and other groups asking for their support and he also sounded out the Ialibu graduates on their intentions. On his return to Port Moresby he sought support from the MPs and from University students.

The few others who had completed tertiary education were from Mendi and Ialibu and they did not attempt to challenge Dus and Wiwa. During 1976 however, Dus began to be suspected of using funds from National Cultural Council and National Sports Council grants to purchase a Toyota truck for campaign purposes. At the same time it became apparent that Neville would probably not stand for re-election. Francis Pusal of Mendi, the first Southern Highlander to complete his diploma in agriculture at Vudal, had returned in 1974 to serve the Southern Highlands as a didiman in the field and at Mendi, where he was acting department head in late 1976. Having discovered Dus's alleged misappropriation of funds, Pusal decided to contest the provincial seat.

Yet another Mendi man, a government clerk named Anthony Temo, was also planning to stand as candidate. In 1974 he was active in leading a protest demonstration by his clan demanding compensation for land used by the administration in Mendi, and from this protest arose Temo's own Amene Association (not to be confused with the student association of the same name). Temo was posted to Tari, where he organised a branch of his association to raise funds for a cultural centre through an agricultural show, and he was later posted to Komo.

In Port Moresby Peren Mune Dick, a police officer from Nipa, decided to contest the provincial seat and four young men from Tari all decided to seek the support of the Huli bloc for the seat as well: Nelson Humbi, an announcer on Radio Mendi; Angoea Tadabe, a law student at UPNG; and later, Agilo Kunini, a teacher at Erave and son of a renowned Huli leader, and Maya Habia Babe, a teachers' college student at Tari. The Tari Local Government Council leaders attempted to get the other three candidates to withdraw in favour of Angoea but did not succeed. Finally, in the east, Pula Rarua, who had been the United Party organiser at Kagua, decided to run and Gaba Kulembe, a Ialibu teacher, was put forward by the United Party in Wiwa's home area. All eleven candidates were between the ages of 26 and 33 and all had at least Form 4 education.

The United Party was assumed to have strong support in the province and its endorsement was sought by those who felt they might win it. Dus Mapun was too clearly identified with radical Pangu groups in Port Moresby to be considered, but Wiwa, Pusal, Humbi, Temo and Angoea actively sought United Party endorsement. Wiwa had been a founding member of the United Party and he attended its convention at Lae in February 1977 at his own expense. However he had crossed swords with Neville over their respective interests in a tea plantation in Wiwa's home area in Ialibu and, as Neville wavered in indecision about his own candidacy, Wiwa turned to Chan and the PPP for support.

United Party endorsement in the province proved to be a confused affair, primarily because of uncertainty about Neville's plans. Late in February 1977, Sir Tei Abal, the United Party leader, visited Mendi to interview candidates for endorsement with Neville and the Mendi MP, Momei Pangial. Sir Tei and Neville were dissatisfied with the answers to questions about expatriate business given by Pusal, the leading candidate for endorsement, and after seeing Humbi and Temo as well the leaders decided against any endorsement

at that time. Neville, who had privately promised support to both Humbi and Pusal, then reconsidered his own intention to contest the election and rumour circulated that he had been offered the prospect of the Ministry of Finance in a future United Party government. Pusal, who had submitted his resignation from the public service in January, refused to withdraw his candidacy and had several angry confrontations with Neville.

Late in April, while nominations were being received, Sir Tei and Wally Lussick returned to Mendi for a second endorsement session. The young men of the party, led by Pusal and supported by several MPs, made clear their strong opposition to Neville's candidacy. Finally, on the counsel of friends concerned with the needs of his family and business, as well as the need for harmony in the province, Neville announced on 26 April that he would not stand. Pusal was formally endorsed, but habits bred by the preferential system of 1968 and 1972 lingered on and Sir Tei and Lussick later also endorsed Humbi and almost endorsed Temo as well. Unlike the PPP the UP endorsed several candidates in an electorate if they were considered to stand a chance of winning. No one doubted that Neville's traditional support would have defeated any opposition had he chosen to stand.

Once the provincial endorsement was settled there was no problem in endorsing loyal incumbent MPs for the open electorates. Momei Pangial, Andrew Wabiria, Matiabe Yuwi and Ibne Kor (in preference to Tombol Ungunaibe, also contesting Nipa-Kutubu) were endorsed, but Turi Wari was passed over for failure to vote regularly with the party in parliament. Elsewhere the UP endorsed, largely on the judgement of the endorsed MPs, one candidate each for Imbonggu (the Ialibu Basin Association president) and Ialibu-Pangi, but two each for Kagua-Erave and Komo-Margarima.

Having endorsed Wiwa Korowi for the provincial seat and Posu Ank for Mendi, the PPP relied largely on Posu's advice in endorsing Area Authority members in three other open electorates and one other candidate. Glaimi Warena of Imbonggu appears to have arranged his own affiliation with the PPP during Chan's visit to Mendi in June 1977.

In addition to the candidates endorsed by the UP and PPP, there were a few sponsored by Pangu. Yano Belo, the Minister of Housing, had moved after the 1975 split in the National Party towards Pangu and was clearly identified with the coalition government. No opponents were raised against him by either Pangu or PPP in Kagua-Erave but neither party was certain of his loyalty. In South Tari, Aya Dabuma, a United Church minister who had run against Yuwi in 1972, had established a Pangu Party branch in 1974 and his area was now located in the new electorate of Komo-Margarima (an arrangement which he had proposed to the Electoral Boundaries Commission). Peren Mune Dick, the provincial candidate, was also affiliated with Pangu, having earlier had links with Posu Ank and the PPP until Wiwa became clearly favoured for PPP endorsement. Dick's Pangu links were explained as personal support for Somare as Prime Minister, as were those of a minor candidate in Ialibu-Pangia. A few other candidates in open electorates were endorsed by Pangu Pati officials who visited the province, but Pangu had clearly left the province largely to the PPP and Aya Dabuma was the only Southern Highlander depicted in Pangu's national advertisements of its candidates. All but Dabuma and Dick proved to be weak candidates who lost their deposits. Because of the long tradition of anti-Pangu propaganda by the United Party, open affiliation with Pangu was considered foolhardy, and candidates were slandered by being accused as 'secret' Pangu supporters.

The Campaign

During the campaign the provincial candidates, particularly Wiwa and Pusal, served as focal points for the coalescence of rival parties in the province, largely but not exclusively identified with the PPP and United Party. The open electorate candidates endorsed by the UP served as an electoral network for Pusal, with the exception of Matiabe Yuwi, who could not afford to alienate the support of the four Tari candidates for the provincial seat. But large numbers of other candidates, although unendorsed, were UP supporters and also aided Pusal. The PPP-based network was much less openly identified with that party since it did not wish to alienate traditional UP sympathies among the voters by professing support for the coalition government. For this reason Wiwa, to the annoyance of PPP national organisers, avoided public identification with the party and used his own posters rather than those produced for him by the PPP. The PPP linkage was confined to the Area Authority network built up by Posu Ank, which was strongest in the east, and it tacitly included Yano Belo, who Wiwa Korowi had served as private secretary in Yano's first months as a minister. More than half of all open electorate candidates were linked formally or informally with either Pusal or Wiwa, and none of the other provincial candidates was able to establish a comparable network, though Dick and Temo had a few scattered supporters among open candidates.

Because of the development of rival parties in the province and also because of the competitiveness induced by the first-past-the-post system, leaving no incentive for collaboration through shared preferences, the campaign in the Southern Highlands was much more aggressive than in previous elections. In the past it was common for candidates to travel together, since rarely did they have access to their own vehicles, and it was also common for them to ask people to 'Vote for the best candidate; if you think I am the best, vote for me, but if you think someone else is best give me your second preference'. Some candidates in 1977 still conducted their campaign in this style and voters were made uncomfortable by the open criticisms candidates made of one another. There were frequent, if minor, complaints by candidates to returning officers against the abuse which they received, some feeling that instruction by others to vote against them was an illegitimate tactic. The campaign was also better financed and made much noisier by the omnipresence of loud-hailers.

Those endorsed by parties had their nomination fees paid and posters printed and received a small campaign allowance as well. Independents were told by the United Party that their campaign costs would be reimbursed if they won election and joined the party. Endorsed provincial candidates received some of their petrol free and one Mendi firm made a truck available to the UP to allocate among its candidates. This only partly offset the support given indirectly to Posu Ank by the PPP through the Village Economic Development Fund. Posu's application for funds for a trucking business was turned down initially by the provincial administration and Development Bank, but reconsidered favourably later on instructions from Chan's Ministry of Finance, and he had four vehicles in 1977. Of the provincial candidates, only Pusal, Wiwa, Dus, Dick and Temo had their own trucks and could move with relative freedom throughout the province. Pusal had bought his land-cruiser second-hand from savings; Wiwa raised funds through a cousin's business in Mt. Hagen which he had helped to start; Dus had allegedly used part of his Sports Council grant to buy a land-cruiser (when it was seized he used a motorbike); Temo was thought to have raised funds through the Amene

Association. Trucks were vital to mobility and also to a candidate's ability to carry around with him supporters from his local committees. Thus Humbi, with only a motorbike, was at a substantial disadvantage. In the open electorates, the incumbent MPs and Area Authority members almost all had their own transport, as did a few other businessmen. The Area Authority members also had the advantage of official travel to Authority meetings in Mendi. These provided opportunities for campaign alliances and planning and for use of the Authority telephone.

Only five of the provincial candidates, Wiwa, Pusal, Temo, Dick and Dus, attempted to campaign throughout the province and then with varying degrees of concentration. Dus and Pusal had the advantage of considerable exposure through official travel since 1974 and Temo had used his official postings to various centres to organise support. In addition Humbi (and two open candidates, Pundia Kange of Pangia and Paulus Kombo of Nipa-Katubu) were known widely as announcers on Radio Mendi. Wiwa, Pusal, Dus and Temo planned their campaigns with some care so as to attend Area Authority and Local Government Council meetings, singsings, markets and church services. Others attempted within local areas to do the same, but only these four campaigned extensively, had wide networks of contacts, and circulated posters throughout the province. By the time nominations closed Ialibu and Kagua in the east had been largely conceded by other candidates to Wiwa because of his own efforts in Ialibu and those of Yano Belo in Kagua. Only token visits were paid there by the other candidates except for the two local United Party spoilers, Gaba Kulembe in Ialibu and Pula Rarua in Kagua. On the other hand, after a confrontation with Pusal and Andrew Wabiria at Mendi in early June, Wiwa wrote off Koroba. Dus was preoccupied with his court case, whose committal hearings were conducted during the campaign period. Temo concentrated his efforts in the west; Dick in his home district, Nipa; and the four Tari candidates made little or no campaign effort outside Huli country.

Neville's participation in the campaign was expected to be a source of strength for UP candidates. In the Huli areas, where he had captured a large majority against a Huli candidate in 1972, voters threatened not to vote unless Neville's name were on the ballot, and older people throughout the province waited for his advice on how to vote. But the campaign which Neville promised for the last two weeks before voting never materialised, to the considerable resentment of UP candidates who blamed Neville if they lost and gave him no credit if they won. Neville's United Party image was further blunted by his accompanying Chan and Somare on their visits to the province during the campaign. This could only weaken traditional support for the United Party against the government. Somare, Chan, Sir Tei and other Highlands leaders also paid brief visits to Mendi during the campaign, concerned with negotiation rather than campaigning. It was clear from the welcome for Somare that the traditional antagonism of the province towards Pangu did not extend personally to him.

The issues aired in the campaign were primarily those which agitated the Area Authority — the need for more investment and services in the Southern Highlands and in local areas within the province. The only divisive issues were based on an assessment of the record of the coalition government and the councils. UP candidates quickly picked up the line pushed by Raphael Doa in the Western Highlands, alleging that the coalition government was responsible for the disappearance of K43 — or K64 or K66 — million, figures based on the

Auditor General's report and fully explained by Chan in Parliament but not adequately in the provinces. Wiwa and others were accused of sharing in the responsibility by supporting coalition parties. Various other exaggerated versions of the central government and the UP performance in Port Moresby were retailed, but it seems certain that local identities and loyalties were of much greater impact than wider issues.

Results

Voter participation in the Southern Highlands remained higher than in other provinces in the 1977 elections, with 104,514 ballots cast in the provincial electorate. Morobe Province, despite its larger number of registered voters, had a substantially lower turnout. The tradition of electoral participation may reflect conformity with official encouragement — comparable to council tax payments — rather than enthusiasm. However the fact that voter turnout exceeded official registration figures in Nipa suggests that problems of registration in remote areas had a bearing on participation statistics.

In the provincial electorate Wiwa Korowi's margin of victory over Francis Pusal, 2.4%, was among the smallest in the country and much smaller than in any other provincial electorate. Despite the large number of candidates for the provincial seat each of the eleven attracted at least 2500 votes and none was in danger of forfeiting his deposit. Candidate support was, however, strongly localised and only the party support which Wiwa and Pusal received from their networks of allies lifted their totals significantly above the ruck.

The pattern of localised support was not surprising in view of the well established tendency throughout PNG to vote for the candidate most likely to promote local development because of his local ties, a tendency reinforced by the narrowly focused campaigning of most candidates. Thus all four Huli candidates received at least 90% of their votes from Huli areas. Angoea, who had the support of the Tari Council and most educated Huli, did best and he and Habia Babe received widespread support throughout Tari and Komo, with Angoea winning support in adjacent areas of Koroba and Kutubu as well. Agilo's support was limited to his own census division in Western Tari and to adjacent areas of Koroba, while Humbi's was concentrated in northern Margarima, near his wife's home. Dick, having no other local rivals from Nipa, captured 92% of the very large vote in northern Nipa and southern Margarima. 85% of his total vote came from this area and another 11% from adjacent portions of Mendi. Dus Mapun received 86% of his vote from his home Mendi council area, and of the two local candidates running against Wiwa in the east, Gaba Kulembe received over 90% of his support from within Ialibu council area and Rarua received almost 99% of his votes from Kagua and neighbouring areas of Pangia.

The most remarkable result was that achieved by Anthony Temo. The spread of his support was matched only by that of the United Party candidate, Pusal. He received at least small numbers of votes throughout the province, and substantial numbers in his home area of Mendi and his wife's home in Kagua, as well as wide support in Tari and Komo, where he had served as clerk and spread his Amene Association. But 67% of his vote came from Koroba-Lake Kopiago, where he received 57% of the vote despite the fact that he had no connection with the area before the campaign. He appears to have caught the fancy of electors who chanted his name 'Temotemotemotemo' like the lyrics of a hit song and who chose to ignore the young Huli candidates from Tari who spent relatively little of their time campaigning in Koroba. Pusal,

who had expected to win strong support in Koroba, felt that Temo had persuaded voters that it was illegal to vote for a 'didiman' (government agricultural officer), the only name by which Pusal was known in the area. Temo's support among the Huli, who otherwise voted almost exclusively for Huli candidates, would seem to merit further study.

The two serious party candidates, Wiwa and Pusal, also had their home support although Dus took about 3000 votes from Pusal in the Mendi area and Gaba Kulembe about 2300 from Wiwa in Ialibu. Neither did well in the west where there were strong local candidates, although Pusal, who campaigned actively in Huli areas, received over 900 votes in Koroba and over 1000 in Nipa. In other areas, much of the support for the two candidates was raised by their party allies among the open electorate candidates. Posu Ank was able to deliver Lai Valley to Wiwa, and Yano Belo's home area in Kagua gave Wiwa his strong majority there, while Mata Mura, Yano's rival, was able to swing only part of his own local support away from Rarua to Pusal. In Ialibu-Pangia the United Party open candidate. Pundia Kange, succeeded in mobilising Pangia sentiment against Ialibu's earlier dominance of the electorate and carried Pangia's votes for Pusal against Wiwa of Ialibu. Wiwa's winning margin was so narrow that no one portion of his support could be said to have been more crucial than others. It is clear, however, that if the preferential voting system of 1972 had been in operation Pusal, with wider support throughout the province, would have won the election.

In the open electorates localisation of support varied with the nature of the arenas established by the new electorate boundaries. Tari, with its geographical and cultural unity, lay at one extreme. As an assiduous Member for the area since 1968 Matiabe Yuwi was well known throughout the electorate, but the fact that he topped the poll in all but two localities and made a respectable showing in these as well, capturing 55.9% of the formal vote, is also a commentary on ease of communication within the Tari Basin. Kagua-Erave, Mendi, and Koroba-Kopiago, despite some electoral boundary adjustments, were also well established political arenas and their major candidates were able to recruit at least some votes outside their home areas.

In the new electorates, however, localisation of voting was very marked. In Imbonggu the major candidates were able to obtain support widely within either the Ialibu or the Mendi portion of the electorate, but not in both, and Ialibu-Pangia saw a similar dichotomy. In the more remote electorates of Nipa-Kutubu and Komo-Margarima, with very limited internal communication and no tradition as arenas, voting was entirely local, with support largely limited to the level of census divisions based on valleys. The number of candidates contesting was highest in these two electorates and the victor's share of the votes cast, 19.8 and 16.8 per cent, was among the very lowest in the country.

The majority of open electorate contests shaped up eventually as replays of the 1972 battles between leading candidates. This was true for Kagua-Erave and Nipa-Kutubu, where Yano Belo and Ibne Kor maintained their seats against renewed challenges from Mata Mura and Tegi Ebeial, and for Mendi and Koroba-Kopiago, where Posu Ank and Paiale Elo finally unseated Momei Pangial and Andrew Wabiria. In these electorates, the battles between Area Authority leaders and incumbent MPs were fought out as central dramas in the core areas, despite the intrusion of large numbers of new candidate faces. The new faces in Koroba-Kopiago, however, split the Huli vote and made for the difference in Wabiria's fortunes.

In Ialibu-Pungia, where the redrawing of boundaries favoured Pangia candidates, an exceptionally large number of previous candidates contested: the incumbent MP, Turi Wari, and four of his five leading opponents from 1972, including the two council Presidents, both of them Area Authority members. All of these men were spurned by the United Party for its endorsement, which was given to a young NBC announcer from Pangia, Pundia Kange, who was the only well educated candidate and who won solid backing from Pangia to produce the widest margin of victory in the Highlands. Turi Wari was the only Southern Highlands MP to suffer defeat ignominiously; collecting only 150 votes he forfeited his deposit. In the 'new' electorates of Imbonggu and Komo-Margarima new faces were certain to emerge, but in each there was one candidate who had contested and done well in 1972. Of these Glaimi Warena won Imbonggu while Aya Dabuma came second to Dambali Habe in Komo-Margarima.

Those candidates who held endorsement by the United Party or the PPP tended to do better than others. This resulted largely from the fact that endorsement had been given to obviously leading candidates in electorates where 1972 patterns of candidate prominence were maintained; thus in Mendi, Koroba-Kopiago and Kagua-Erave the two candidates who did best were those who represented the UP and PPP. This was also true in the provincial electorate and in Ialibu-Pungia where the coincidence of party endorsement and voter support was more clearly the result of astute choice in party endorsement. In Tari and Nipa-Kutubu the United Party had a monopoly on leading candidates. On the other hand, the 'new' electorates presented selection problems for the parties and it was here that endorsed candidates made their weakest showing. In Imbonggu the United Party candidate came 4th and the PPP candidate 8th out of 10, though the two most successful candidates were known to have sympathies with the two major parties. In Komo-Margarima, where the PPP made no endorsement, the United Party candidate came 4th out of 11. Pangu had only one established candidate recognised in its national advertisement, Aya Dabuma, who came second in Komo-Margarima. Peren Mune Dick, who obtained Pangu endorsement for the provincial electorate came 3rd, but others who had Pangu support came 7th in Imbonggu and 8th in Ialibu-Pungia and lost their deposits.

A total of 17 candidates forfeited their deposits by obtaining less than 10% of the winning candidate's vote; if the same rules had applied in 1972 only one candidate in the open electorates would have lost his deposit. This is the clearest evidence of the ephemeral nature of many of the candidacies attracted by the new electoral system and by the opportunities seemingly available to young educated men.

Government Formation

Immediately after the election results became known in Port Moresby there was considerable speculation about the possibility that either the United Party or PPP could obtain the support of the entire Southern Highlands delegation and thus swing a bloc of nine votes into a potential government coalition. This seemed more feasible for the PPP than for the United Party. Posu Ank and Yano Belo had clearly broken their links with the United Party, and Wiwa Korowi, Paiale Elo and Glaimi Warena were counted as being at least favourable to the PPP, the first two having been endorsed by the party. At the same time, the United Party's most faithful supporters, Andrew Wabiria and Momei Pangial, had been defeated, and the position of Matiabe Yuwi, Ibne

Kor and Pundia Kange, despite their endorsement by the United Party, was considered open to negotiation. Dambali Habe was unendorsed and his preferences were unknown.

The Pangu-PPP coalition had done better than expected throughout the country, but the United Party had maintained a strong regional base in the Highlands. While Pangu made significant inroads into the Eastern Highlands and Chimbu, and the PPP into the Southern Highlands, the Western Highlands and Enga looked potentially solid for the United Party, which called a meeting of its Highlands supporters at Mt. Hagen during the first week after counting of votes began. Matiabe Yuwi brought with him the other two western MPs, Paiale Elo and Dambali Habe, and Pundia Kange also attended. So did Yano Belo, though only in the role of observer. During the feverish negotiations of the following weeks, as two potential governing coalitions coalesced, the only Southern Highlanders who played leading roles were Wiwa Korowi, who served as the PPP's Highlands spokesman in Port Moresby, and Andrew Wabiria who, though defeated, continued to take an active part in United Party affairs.

Shortly before Parliament assembled on 9 August to elect a Prime Minister, the United Party made a last attempt through the Southern Highlands graduates to enlist support for a solid front among the province's bloc of MPs (cf also a letter to the *Post-Courier*, 5 August 1977). The graduates, however, and perhaps the MPs themselves, were not displeased with a division that ensured the province's representation in government no matter which coalition won. In the vote by which Somare defeated Sir John Guise, the Southern Highlands MPs split 5-4 in favour of Somare. Ibne Kor crossed from the United Party to join Wiwa, Yano, Posu and Glaimi, while the four who had attended the United Party's Mt. Hagen meeting remained with the opposition.

The province then did remarkably well in the allocation of offices, largely because four of its government supporters constituted the whole of the PPP representation from the Highlands. With Posu Ank as the senior representative of this group and a member of the party's executive committee, the group chose its best educated member, Wiwa Korowi, rather than the ex-minister, Yano Belo, for a ministry and Wiwa was allocated the major portfolio of Health. A few days later the number of ministries was expanded from 18 to 21 so as to give representation to each of the 20 provinces, and the additional three ministers were all Pangu men. There was controversy between Pangu and PPP concerning the events which led to Yano Belo's being named the 22nd minister (he was the only ex-minister in the coalition ranks who had not been reappointed). It is clear that there was pressure both for more Highlands and more PPP representation in the Cabinet and that Somare announced Yano Belo's re-appointment to Works and Supply Before PPP backbenchers had been consulted. At the same time eight Parliamentary Secretaries were appointed, two from each region, with Posu Ank among them and attached to Wiwa's Ministry of Health. The Southern Highlands ended up as the only province with three representatives in the government, a very prominent component among the PPP's ten ministers and parliamentary secretaries and among the eight Highlanders in the government. This was a reversal of form from 1972 when the Southern Highlands and tiny Manus were the only provinces without ministerial representation.

In the opposition's shadow ministry, Matiabe Yuwi was named spokesman for Environment, Conservation and Human Resources, and Pundia Kange for Media, making the Southern Highlands one of three provinces with two

representatives on the opposition front benches. Matiabe Yuwi's subsequent resignation from the United Party, in part on the grounds that he had not been consulted on his shadow ministry appointment, but also on the grounds that he could not continue to represent the interests of his electorate while in opposition to the government, was the first open break in the opposition ranks.

In October 1977 a new election was ordered in Koroba-Kopiago open electorate, one of five in the country whose results were invalidated. The defeated incumbent MP, Andrew Wabiria, had successfully petitioned against the election of Paiale Elo on the grounds that he had threatened voters in the remote Hewa area with gaol or a fine of K200 if they did not vote for him. In the by-election, held in June-July 1978, Wabiria was confronted with the same two strong Huli candidates from his home area in Koroba, while Paiale's only rival for Duna support in Kopiago, and northern Koroba did not stand again. With voting support heavily localised, Paiale obtained almost 40% to win easily.

Aftermath

The election served to confirm the Southern Highlands Province as a political arena for active politicians. The MPs and members of the Area Authority had already had several years of interaction at the provincial level, but their political ambitions were focused on open electorates. Only with the development of rival campaign networks of provincial and open electorate candidates did party begin to mean something other than vague links with parliamentary groups in Port Moresby, and only then too did the province 'jell' politically.

It is important to note, however, that the networks operated primarily in the east and centre of the province. The west, already alienated by a sense of relative deprivation, was further alienated by the outcome of the election. Although the four western open electorates had 49% of the voters they contributed only 1.3% of Wiwa's winning total in the provincial electorate. Wiwa was seen as a representative of the east, not of the province as Neville had been, and the three Southern Highlanders who took office in the new Somare coalition were all men of the east and centre while the westerners sat initially on the opposition benches. This situation raised fears that the west would fall yet further behind in government investment, and in Tari and among Huli students there was a revival of secessionist discussion. The more feasible alternative to secession lay in capturing control over the forthcoming provincial government and Andrew Andaijah, the new Huli president of the Area Authority, began organising support for the next struggle within the provincial arena.

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Chapter 10

‘SIGNS OF DEVELOPMENT?’: NIPA-KUTUBU OPEN

Paul Sillitoe

Ibne Kor¹, the sitting Member for the old Nipa-Margarima Open Electorate, won the new Nipa-Kutuba seat² in the 1977 general elections to the National Parliament. But the relatively even distribution of votes between some of the candidates (see table 5) shows that his election was a near thing in a closely run race, and with only 19.8% of the votes Ibne cannot say he has the confidence of many people in his electorate. But as this paper argues, the understanding which they have of government in this area, and their subsequent voting behaviour, precludes any other result.



The Nipa and Lake Kutubu region

The geographical, ethnographic and linguistic variety of the area included within the electorate, which is the largest in the Southern Highlands both in geographical area and size of population, gives a hint of the difficulties faced by candidates trying to carry the whole region in an election. Broadly speaking, there are two geographical regions within the electorate which, because of differences in altitude, have markedly different environments and inhabitants who lead very different ways of life. The north-eastern quarter of the region³ lies mostly between 5,000 and 6,000 feet above sea level, and the people who live here are Highlanders. They are shifting cultivators and their staple crop is sweet potato, which they supplement with bananas, pumpkins, various greens and other vegetables. They keep large numbers of pigs which, along with other things (such as pearl shells), constitute the wealth they hand on to one another in the ceremonial exchanges that characterize all their important social events. Their settlement pattern is scattered, men living in separate houses from women, and their social organization is acephalous, with a few men achieving some influence through success in ceremonial exchange. The people who live in the Nembi valley around Nipa and in the Was valley are Wola speakers, and those who live lower down the Nembi valley around Poroma are Kewa speakers.


The south-western three-quarters of the electorate lies mostly between 3,000 and 4,000 feet, and the people here depend for their livelihood on sago; fish and vegetables, which they grow in gardens that are poorly tended in comparison to those of their Highland neighbours. They live in long houses and their social organization is acephalous, but the considerably lower population density here makes the maintenance of social order easier, and this possibly explains why the ceremonial exchange of wealth does not figure so prominently in their lives. A small population occupying a vast area, these people speak five languages. On the slopes of Mount Bosavi they speak Kaluli and Sonia, to the east on the Hegigio river they speak Hawalisi and Fasu, and to the east again around Lake Kutubu and on the Mubi river they speak Foi'i (in the forest to the north of the Lake there are a small number of Huli speaking settlements, but these colonists from the Tari Basin make up only a tiny fraction of the population)⁴.

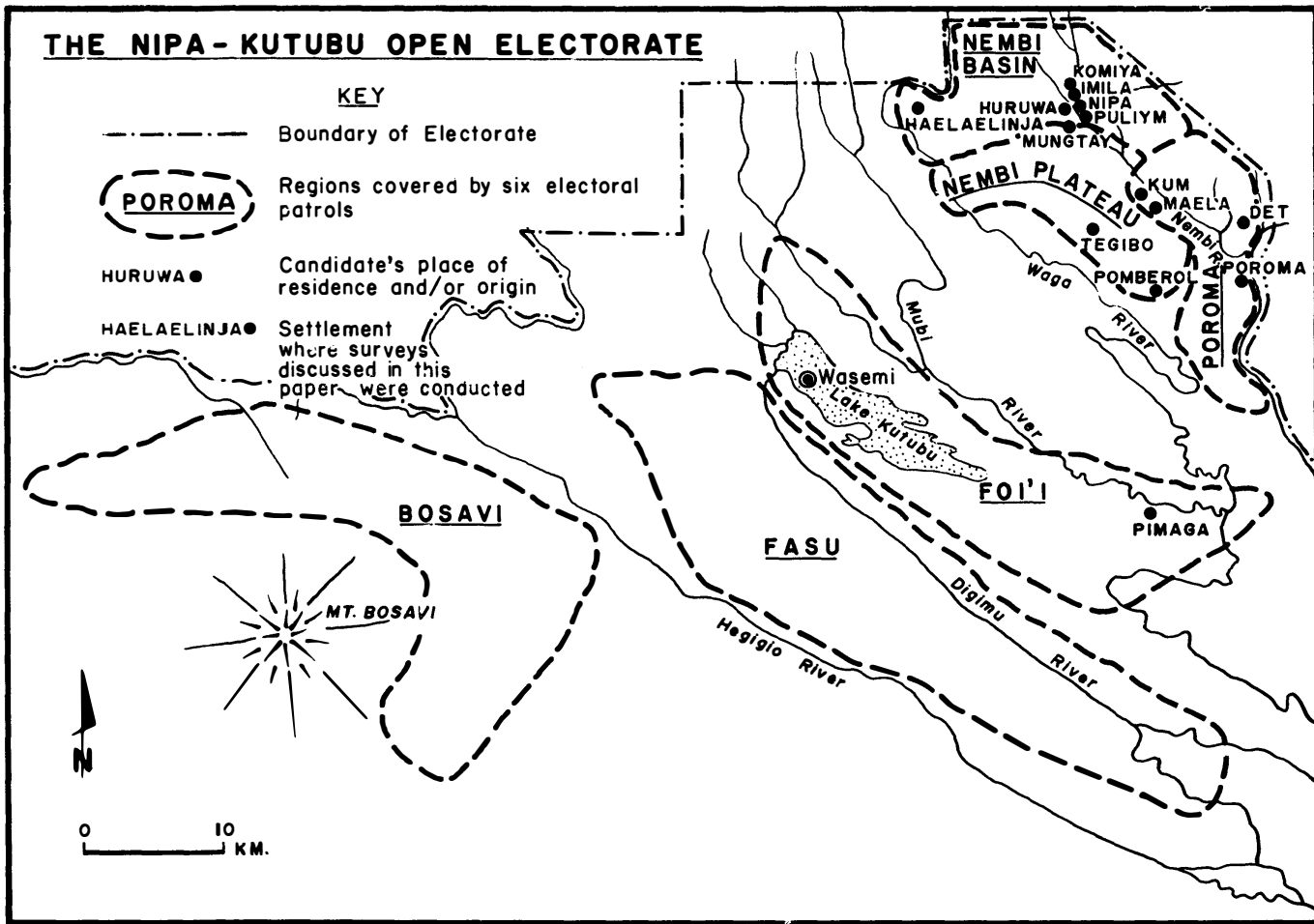
THE NIPA - KUTUBU OPEN ELECTORATE

KEY

-  Boundary of Electorate
-  Regions covered by six electoral patrols

 HURUWA ● Candidate's place of residence and/or origin

 HAELAEIJJA ● Settlement where surveys discussed in this paper were conducted



The Australian administration found the people living around Lake Kutubu in the mid-1930s and subjected them to a brief period of control, but they did not effectively administer the area until the early 1950s. They patrolled the highland part of the electorate somewhat from Kutubu and Mendi, but they did not bring this area under control until the 1960s when they established stations at Nipa and Poroma.

Although the administration brought them under control over a decade before their Highland neighbours, it is probable that the lowland people will fall behind them in economic growth. There are pitifully few ways people throughout all of the electorate can earn money today; they grow hardly any of the cash crops from which those in other areas earn their wealth. But in the Highlands, close to Nipa and Poroma, the Department of Primary Industry, in conjunction with the Local Government Councils, are planting extensive coffee blocks, in an attempt to demonstrate to the people how profitable it would be for them to do likewise in their gardens. Also, since the 1970s, and with work continuing today, the Highland area has a network of tracks which are negotiable in four wheel drive vehicles, and the construction of the Highlands Highway between Mendi and Nipa will effectively link these with the Highlands region as a whole. People are beginning to move beyond their home areas as a result of this growth in communications, moving from reliance on government and mission airstrips to the use of roads, and they are returning with ideas from regions which are similar but economically more advanced than theirs, particularly the Western Highlands. In the past year or so for example, people in the Nipa area have started to show an interest in planting coffee and talking about purchasing their own vehicles.

The people who live in the lowland region on the other hand are not receiving the same stimulations to develop because there has been no comparable growth in communications in their area, or between it and the Highlands (because of both the small and scattered population there, and the forested, sometimes swampy, and precipitous terrain). This, plus the intractable nature of the country which they occupy making the development of any cash crops on a commercial scale difficult, has resulted in a relative stagnation to which there are no obvious and simple solutions.

Issues at stake

It will come as no surprise, given the backwardness of the electorate, that the issue which dominated the thinking of voters was the development of their area, and that the Highlands, with a far larger population, dominated the election⁵. But an appreciation of the way people voted depends not only on an awareness of their under-development and demand for better things, but also on how they think economic advancement will come to them and the part the MP will play in this.

Although they have elected members of their settlements to Local Government Councils, and have also participated in two previous general elections, the people in the area only had the haziest ideas of what they were doing in the election or why they were doing it. When asked what they were doing at the election they always replied that they were marking their *memba*; the problems came when asked why they were doing this and what the Member's task would be when elected.

When asked the first question, why they were bothering to vote⁶, people invariably replied that the government would imprison them if they did not have a good excuse for not coming along, such as illness, or inability because

of age, or because they had gone to live elsewhere. They compounded this erroneous idea with a rumour circulating prior to the election (a rumour which I heard some candidates reinforce by warning people to heed it) that the administration would imprison for six months anyone who named two or more candidates on the same ballot paper (as in previous preferential elections). The outcome of these fictitious ideas was that the election frightened most people, even young and confident men, but the turnout, at approximately 101.6% of the electorate⁷, was very good!

When asked the second question, what they thought a member does when elected, people's replies show that they are not too clear. Table 1 lists the replies given by 118 people (59 men and 59 women) to the question: "What do you think a Member of the Parliament does?" The large number who replied frankly that they did not know points to the cloudiness of mind with which people approached the election. Although, when asked why they intended to support the candidate they named as the person who would have their vote, some of those who replied that they did not know what a Member does revealed that they thought some of the responsibility for encouraging development fell on him. They said that they supported the man they named because they thought that he would encourage development the best, but as to how he would do this they claimed no knowledge⁸. Thirty five of the forty nine people who replied that they did not know were women (and two others were mentally sub-normal males), and this accords with the realities of traditional life where women play a small role in the limited politics entailed in the acephalous organization of the region and, because their influence is indirect, express less interest.

Over half of those questioned replied that the duty of a Member of the Parliament is to go to meetings in Port Moresby to tell those in power how they want their region developed and argue strongly so that they give them the money and facilities needed to do it (Hagen people think the same — see Strathern 1970). The popularity of this reply shows that the need for economic development was the main theme of the election in the minds of the electorate, and Table 2 lists the things they specified as necessary for their advancement⁹.

The items listed are those found in more developed parts of the Highlands. But those who gave this reply revealed their political unawareness when they said who they thought was in power. Thirty (46.9%) of them said that the Member has to approach Europeans to ask for the development Nipa needs, and only 2 (3.1%) said it was Somare's clan¹⁰. Three (4.7%) said they were not sure and twenty nine mentioned no one.

The third and fourth replies listed in Table 1 also reflect this idea, that Europeans still control the country. Indeed the other major electoral issue was the return of Europeans. Few people mentioned this as a duty of the Member because the idea of independence confuses them and they are not sure that it is something which concerns him, but nearly everyone in the area said they want him to arrange for European government officers to return if he can.

Three elderly women gave the fifth, rather eccentric reply, in the erroneous belief that as Europeans make the Australian Dollar there must be far more of these than Kina, and so if the country changes back there will be more money for everyone.

This discussion of people's ideas shows that the majority think that in an election they mark someone to go and promote their interests with the powers that be in Port Moresby (the Wola use for this the phrase *maemb beray* which

Table 1 Opinion Survey on the Duties of a Member

| <i>The duties of a Member Parliament are:</i> | <i>Number of people giving reply:</i> | <i>% of respondents giving reply:</i> |
|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Goes to meetings in Moresby to tell those in power what development people want in Nipa, and to argue strongly so that they give them money and facilities for it. | 64 | 54.2 |
| 2. Do not know | 49 | 41.5 |
| 3. Goes to Moresby to argue and arrange for return of European government officers. | 6 | 51 |
| 4. Goes to Moresby to receive instructions from Europeans on what people at Nipa need to do for development. | 3 | 2.5 |
| 5. Goes to Moresby to arrange for them to change back from the Kina to the Australian Dollar. | 3 | 2.5 |

Table 2 Opinion Survey on Development

| <i>Items of development specified by those giving reply 1. in table 1:</i> | <i>Number of people giving reply:</i> | <i>% of respondents giving reply:</i> |
|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Crops (primarily coffee, some mentioned tea & other agricultural development). | 13 | 20.3% |
| 2. Roads (2 specified the Highlands Highway). | 13 | 20.3% |
| 3. Livestock (primarily cows, although some mentioned pigs). | 9 | 14.1% |
| 4. Medical aid posts & hospitals | 8 | 12.5% |
| 5. Schools (1 specified a high school). | 8 | 12.5% |
| 6. Payment for work they are obliged to do (e.g. roadwork). | 7 | 10.9% |
| 7. The ownership of vehicles. | 5 | 7.8% |
| 8. Businesses & companies | 3 | 4.7% |
| 9. Expansion of Nipa station. | 1 | 1.6% |

means to lookout for something belonging to someone else). The person marked goes to meetings to persuade those with the knowledge, resources and money to start development projects in their area so that they can earn money and in turn spend this to advance their standard of living¹¹; they say that he goes to inform those in power of the things for which they are *hem kayom* (that is worried or anxious to have)¹². When explaining what a Member does, people often drew an explicit parallel with ceremonial exchange in their own life. In these a man needs to speak out strongly and argue well to secure the wealth he wants, so a Member must speak out well and convincingly if he is to pull the money and development they need to their region.

People's desire for a strong European presence is related to their often voiced concern with their present way of life and the need to change it. They fear that educated Papua New Guineans in more developed regions are playing some trick on them. These people have reaped some of the benefits of European knowledge and are out to stop its spread to backward places like theirs by insisting that those who have it leave. They are doing this to keep them weak so that they can exploit them in some way (or worst of all, come and take away their land when they are strong enough, and develop it for themselves).

The candidates.

The ideas which candidates held about the duties of a Member of Parliament did not differ much from those of the electorate. There was, for example, a lack of understanding of the powers of Government or how it functions (for instance only one out of eight candidates interviewed mentioned the legislative duties of a Member, or the importance of convincing Ministries to secure funds for development projects — and he was a previous MHA). But this unawareness of the potential power which goes with the office for which they were competing follows from their upbringing in an acephalous society which does not invest power over others in any institution or person (for example, to my knowledge the Wola language has no word to convey the idea of exercising power over the actions of others, they refer to the power of patrol officers in this regard as *bosim bay* (from the Pidgin *bosim*, to boss or order)).

In keeping with the views of the electorate, all eight candidates interviewed¹³ stressed that their job if elected would be to encourage economic development in the area. Five of them specified the development of crops (coffee and tea), five of them the construction of roads (three mentioned the Highlands Highway), five of them the building of schools (two referred to a high school, one of them said he would insist on a boarding high school, and one referred to the need for an agricultural school), three of them specified the building of aid posts and hospitals, two of them the introduction of livestock (cows, pigs and chickens), one of them business in general, and one the ownership of vehicles (one candidate said he would discourage this until people had been taught how to care for them and had adequate roads on which to drive them). Other issues which candidates said would claim their attention were a police station in Nipa, which one man thought necessary. Another said that he would fight to have the region linked in to the national electricity grid and that he was also concerned over the dispute about the international boundary running between the Torres Straits Islands (the same person referred to the legislative duties of a Member, and was probably, to judge from his comments, the most politically sophisticated candidate).

While the candidates' backgrounds vary in detail, they have a number of particulars in common. They are youngish men approaching middle age (the average age of the eight interviewed is 32 years) and in contrast to older men, who are entrenched in their traditional way of life, they are a cross section of the small and young vanguard which is experimenting with European ways. Indeed, by the standards of the region, they represent those most experienced in these ways, something which they signal to others by the shirts and shorts which they wear¹⁴. Although the extent of their experience in different fields varies, between them they represent the most educated, the most experienced in salaried occupations, the most experienced in Government, and the most tried in projects of economic development.

This experience seems a prerequisite for standing in a national election, not only because without it a person would be unlikely to have the nerve to venture into such an enterprise, but also because the electorate look to men with it as those most likely to cope with the job (see Criper 1965:133 and the Stratherns 1964:210 who say that the Chimbu and Hagen people have the same view). They say they need to mark a man who is not intimidated by Europeans and who, by virtue of this, will not be afraid to speak out strongly in meetings and so win the best for those he represents. What better qualifications they ask, than a proven ability in European ways. It is this line of thinking which explains in part why the three former Members of the House of Assembly each won more votes than any other candidate — so far as the electorate was concerned they had experience of the job and had proven themselves because when in office no disaster had fallen on the area¹⁵.

The question of why so many men from this backward region nominated themselves to stand in the election is difficult to answer. They had all thought about nominating sometime before the election because when nominations opened at Nipa District Office on the 7th April several of them came forward to nominate on that day, and all of them within a few days. Nobody mentioned that other people urged them to stand, and this was unlikely given their disdain for interference in the lives of others— so far as they were concerned it was up to the individual alone whether he nominated or not. When asked why they had nominated themselves all candidates replied that it was obvious: they wanted to be elected to the House of Assembly. When asked further why they wanted to be elected they became evasive; for example when asked if they thought they could do the job better than any of the other candidates they said they did not know.

In the opinion of many people it was the lure of what for the region is an astronomical income that prompted candidates to stand for election. The money was important, but it would be incorrect to think that was all. The candidates were all young men eager to embrace a European life style and the material advantages which they think this will bring, and they all saw the election as an unparalleled opportunity to further these ambitions.

An ambition to win some power did not figure in their decision. People in this area are unaware of the potential power and opportunities for personal advancement which a system of central government places in the hands of elected politicians, and the egalitarian ethos of their acephalous traditional society still guides their lives. But, although nobody has realized the power associated with elected offices and used the opportunity to rise above others and win personal regard¹⁶, it is interesting that at this interface between the old and new ways a person may wish for election to use the high income of the office in ceremonial exchanges and so win renown in the traditional way (for

example one MHA did this by converting some of his money income into pigs and distributing them, something which played a significant part in his campaign).

The campaign

In the elections of many other democracies, politicians try to hide their distasteful ambitions, try to disguise their egotism and wish for power over the actions of others, behind a facade of concern and wish to improve the lives of those they represent, but in Nipa, where such motives did not spur on the candidates, they had no need to resort to sweet talk and promises to hide them. Everyone admitted that the candidates stood for election to further their own advancement, not by gaining power over others but by gaining access to European ways, and any mincing of words to put an altruistic motive on their actions would have struck the electorate as ridiculous. Also, unlike democracies elsewhere, the candidates did not try to appeal to certain members of the electorate by expressing support for different policies which would promote their personal interests over those of others; there are currently no such interest groups, based on such ill-defined criteria as social class, in the Nipa region.

The need to campaign all but evaporated without these concerns. While all the candidates referred to the need for economic development in their region, none of them said that they were more able to secure this than their rivals. The result was that their campaigns hardly deserved that word to describe them¹⁷.

The candidates travelled around the region prior to the election to let people, as they said, “see their faces” (*na elwil hondokemi* in Wola). If they were “happy” (*turiy biy* in Wola) with what they saw then they would mark them in the election. What candidates were saying was that they presented themselves to people so they could make some kind of appraisal of their character and suitability for the job. But the election talks which they gave when they visited places were notable for the absence of any promises of what they would do for the electorate if elected. When tackled about this people gave two reasons. They disparaged such electioneering methods because they thought that it amounted to trying to pull the wool over electors’ eyes. They said that to *mor borway* (a Wola term for trick or fool) or *tok gris* (a Pidgin term for butter up with sweet talk) is not acceptable election practice because how can candidates make promises about improving their area when they do not know what those in power in Port Moresby will sanction. The second reason they gave was that candidates who pushed themselves forward with big talk about what they planned to do would make a poor impression. This opinion is rooted in traditional values which consider it unseemly for a successful man to shout his praises, of offends against the egalitarian ethic which pervades their society.

The old Member and successful candidate, Ibne, appealed to this egalitarian ethic in his election talks by stressing the need for equal shares in the fruits of development for all. He said that Pangu pays higher salaries to its Members than other MHA’s (possibly a confused reference to the higher incomes of Ministers) and gives more money to their home areas, but the United Party (and by inference himself as a member of it) would reverse this policy of the Government and give equal shares to all, which would mean large sums for backward areas like Nipa to finance development until they reached the same level as the rest of the country. Throughout his tenure of a seat in the House of Assembly Ibne has lived according to these egalitarian ideas and has

distributed his income far and wide. He made a point of this in his election talks, saying that although he often wore shirts and shorts (as was necessary for someone going to Port Moresby) he did not spend money on shoes and spectacles (symbols of European affluence in their eyes), and further that it was not unusual to see him in a bark belt with woven apron and cordyline leaves. In this way he was pointing out that he has not spent his high income on raising the standard of his life with manufactured goods, but has distributed it, largely through the ceremonial exchange system, to all those within his social universe. These people, who only make up a small part of the electorate, admire his behaviour and, according to their traditional values, accord him high status for it.

Throughout the region people point to the other previous Member, Tegi, as someone who did not behave like this but spent his income on himself (investing heavily in a new trade store established in Nipa, building himself a large house nearby, and buying himself the first truck in Nipa). Various incidents with him also rankle with them. One, to which several of them referred, concerned his efforts as MHA to talk to people in Nipa, he called to them from the roof of the then Sub-district offices and attracted their attention with the cries *ar*, *anmuw* and *cher* which women use to call in their pigs in the evening to feed them. Men voiced their dislike of his efforts to exert authority over them by complaining “We are men, not pigs for him to push around”. This complaint is an example of how their acephalous values, which eschew personal power and inequality, influence their political thinking, and Ibne’s approach is interesting in contrast for the way he tries to blend traditional requirements with those as an elected member of government. But regardless of his more high-handed behaviour, Tegi won many votes and ran Ibne a close second place. This indicates that forces other than a consideration of the character of candidates guided people when they voted. The pattern of voting belies the idea that some appreciated Tegi’s political sophistication and thought that he would do the job best, while other admired Ibne’s manipulation of his position to everyone’s advantage in the exchange system. Rather it points to them voting for the candidate who lives nearest to them so long as he has the required knowledge of European ways.

Ibne’s election talks were also interesting for the way in which he tried to promote himself. He referred to the developments of the last year or so- the new coffee blocks, the Highlands Highway coming, talk of a high school for Nipa, and work on a hospital (many of which actually owe little to him) — as examples of the equal development that will come with the United Party, and by inference with him. He associated himself so closely with the United Party that any reference to it included himself, and this was as near as any candidate came to talking grease. He had no need to promote the United Party. In fact it could have worked against his interests because nearly all the other candidates claimed allegiance to it too (although it only authorised, and hence helped financially, Ibne and Tegi, but this made no difference to the electorate who were unaware of it). Anyway the United Party did not need selling to the electorate who despised Somare’s clan, Pangu, as those who removed Europeans and hence their chances of rapid development from those who could give it to them.

But people’s understanding of political parties is so poor that any campaign along these lines would have been a waste of time. The way the electorate voted in the Southern Highlands Provincial Election, and to a lesser extent in the Open Election, shows this. Regardless of their dislike for Somare’s clan,

80.7% of the electorate voted for a Pangu candidate in the Provincial election and 7.6% for someone thought by many to be a Pangu man in the Open election. Both men, Peren Mune Dick and Paulus Kombo Mong, come from the same settlement, on whose land Nipa station stands. They led evasive campaigns so that people were not sure where their party allegiance lay, Paulus maintaining that he was an Independent candidate, and this may have thrown electors off. But Michael Somare himself made a brief visit to Nipa to promote Peren Mune Dick and at the count he openly sported a badge: Vote Pangu. Regardless of these and other signals that their sympathies lay with Somare's clan many voted for them and this further demonstrates how they think that it is best to go for the man who lives nearest. This came out clearly in the Provincial election, as table 3 shows. Although Peren Mune Dick polled hopelessly in all Open Electorates but his home one, he came third overall because no one else stood for the Provincial seat from this populous region, so he won the larger part of it on the vote-for-the-nearest-man principle.

Table 3 Provincial Candidates' Support Within Nipa-Kutubu Open

| <i>Candidates.</i> | <i>Total votes won.</i> | <i>Votes won in Nipa-Kutubu Open Electorate.</i> | <i>Percentage of votes won in Nipa-Kutubu Open Electorate.</i> |
|------------------------|-------------------------|--|--|
| Wewa Korowi | 19,587 | 67 | 0.3% |
| Francis Pusal | 18,921 | 1,076 | 5.7% |
| <i>Peren Mune Dick</i> | 13,207 | 11,051 | 83.7% |
| Anthony Yarnak Temo | 11,271 | 78 | 0.7% |
| Waya Angoea Tadabe | 10,539 | 885 | 8.4% |
| Nelson Humbi Piribu | 6,465 | 267 | 4.1% |
| Rarua Pula | 5,588 | 0 | 0 |
| Agilo Kunini | 5,162 | 19 | 0.4% |
| Maya Habia Babe | 4,541 | 9 | 0.2% |
| Dus Mapun | 3,762 | 238 | 6.3% |
| Gaba Agea Kulembe | 2,592 | 8 | 0.3% |

The irrelevance of political parties was inevitable given the absence of any contest in the election between alternative political ideologies (the erroneous idea that Pangu threw Europeans out of the country and that their defeat will lead to their return hardly ranks as a political issue). So the electorate had to choose between thirteen candidates who, as their posters showed, all stood on the same platform. These posters, produced to different standards (some candidates drew up their own by hand and others had theirs printed professionally — for example Ibne and Tegi spent about three-quarters of the K400 they received from the United Party for expenses on them), all referred to the same thing — the need for economic development, for roads, schools, cash crops and the like. Probably their most important feature in a region where nearly everyone is illiterate was a photograph of the candidate to let people see their faces and form some opinion about them (but this would only serve some purpose if people knew the man, a photograph on a poster alone could not win votes).

Seeing faces and forming opinions about character were important issues because there was little else on which people could base a rational choice in an election where all candidates stood on the same platform. And without

different views to present and persuade the electorate to support, the candidates faced an impossible task if they hoped to carry a considerable percentage of the votes in such a large geographical area. The faces of candidates were well known in the areas where they lived and a rival would have been hard pressed to usurp their votes, especially as people calculated that the nearer to their home the Member lives the better for them because any distribution of his large income is more likely to reach them, and that he is certain to favour his home area in pushing for development projects. So a brief visit to an area was unlikely to make any inroads into the support people gave their local candidate, and perhaps the relevant question is not why didn't they campaign more vigorously and competitively? But why did they bother at all?

The desultory campaigns mounted by candidates suggest they were aware of this question, and combined with the difficulties they faced walking round such a large region, it prompted them to concentrate their efforts on their home areas and places nearby. The result, strangely enough, was that they ignored more remote places with no ties to any candidate, where they could have made some impression, and concentrated on places where their support was assured by virtue of their residence or, in the case of several candidates who lived close to one another around government and mission stations, trespassed into one another's strongholds where they had little hope of swinging the vote. This latter kind of campaigning could be seen at Nipa market over a weekend. The market is near to the homes of five candidates and most of the people who attend it are from their settlements, so their rivalry in shouting out their ideas, which was the nearest they came to openly competing, was largely a waste of effort because those present were already committed to someone.

The three Kutubu candidates visited the Highland area a number of times; lacking funds they usually walked back and forth from the lake, a journey which takes a number of days. They campaigned here because they realised that the thin population in their home areas alone would be insufficient to win them the election. On the other hand four of the six Highlanders interviewed did not bother to visit the lake region because they considered the small number of votes they might win not worth the effort. The two who did go travelled down by plane, Tegi paying for it from the funds he received from the United Party and Awakep selling a pig to raise his fare, but the number of votes which they won show their efforts were largely a waste of time, as the others thought they would be (especially as Paulus, presumably because of the fame he has earned over the waves of Radio Mendi, polled one more vote than Awakep and only two less than Tegi, which was less than Awakep deserved for his efforts as he spent two weeks walking to the Bosavi area to show his face).

The Nembi valley and plateau areas of the Highlands, fielding the most candidates and carrying the largest population, were the most thoroughly canvassed regions. All the candidates interviewed spent two weeks or more walking between Nipa and Poroma. They slept at different places on their way and held "meetings" to talk to people. Only two of the candidates occasionally had the use of vehicles; Tegi sometimes borrowed the truck belonging to the store in Nipa, which his mother's brother's son owns (a man from Shumbiy in the Lai valley), and David Songk sometimes used the truck which his settlement, in the more "prosperous" part of the Nembi valley south of Nipa, has recently purchased.

The situation in remoter areas was different, as illustrated by Haelaelinja, a settlement on the Was river where I live. Throughout the campaign only four

candidates made one appearance each here to let people see their faces, and two of these were Kutubu men walking down to the lake and it is doubtful they would have come if the settlement had not been a short detour off their route. A number of candidates came about halfway to the place from Nipa but beyond this point the dense settlement of the Nembi basin gives way to a wedge of population pushing into the forest along the Was valley and beyond. Abutting on to the forest it leads nowhere, and candidates probably thought it a waste of energy to walk in and then have to retrace their footsteps back out (although they could have looped back through the forest and visited a few other settlements further down the Was valley, and then cut across the mountains back to the Nembi basin below Nipa). If they thought that the area was sold on one man, as an opinion poll of how people intended to vote suggests, then they were mistaken, because although 99.1% of the vote went to Ibne, who was geographically the nearest candidate, he, like all the other candidates, had nothing but a few tenuous links with the area and did not interact with anyone there.

Ibne was the last of the four candidates to visit the area, about two weeks before polling started, and this played an important part in winning him its vote. Some men intended to support him anyway because he lived the nearest, but prior to his visit younger men, and also some mature ones whose ideas are significant in shaping public opinion, were voicing dissatisfaction with all the Highland candidates. This followed the visits of the two candidates from Kutubu, which prompted them to ask what the last two MHA's, both Nipa men, have done for the area, and they concluded that they had achieved next to nothing because compared to other areas theirs is *suw dimb* (Wola for inferior ground, a backward area). They reasoned that a Kutubu man, having more experience of European ways, might do better, and one of the Kutubu candidates bolstered this interest by saying that if he was elected he would push for the Government to drive a road through the forest to Kutubu via their area. This created some interest because men think that easier access to the forest will result in improved exploitation of its resources and that they could start up a *bisnis* exporting cassowaries, marsupials and other forest products to areas with limited access to them.

This swing of opinion to a Kutubu candidate indicates that people were not firmly set on supporting anyone and that if candidates had made more vigorous efforts they could have split the vote. But Ibne's timely arrival a little before the election tipped the balance and brought everyone behind him. He was, as he pointed out, a Kaerinj man (that is someone who lives to the west of the Nembi valley — although only just)¹⁸ and the nearest candidate to them, and although he did not interact directly with them, the wealth which he distributed benefited them because some of it reached them second or third hand. He also pointed out that prior to his election there was nothing on the Was river, now a track ran that way (with two others under construction) and there was a mission-founded primary school and medical aid post half way to Nipa, and he intimated that these developments resulted from his concern for the area. This revived people's convictions that a candidate will look after the area nearest his home first, and that perhaps a Kutubu man was not such a good idea because the developments he would naturally encourage at the lake would not benefit them one jot.

But to clinch their support Ibne promised that if he was elected again he would buy two cows to give them to slaughter in one of the stages of a complex ceremonial exchange cycle called the *ser* (which involves a series of dances, and

Table 4 *Nipa-Kutubu Open Results*

| Candidates | Place of residence and/or origin | Bosavi patrol | Fasu patrol | Foi'i patrol | Poroma patrol | Numbi plateau patrol | Nembi Basin patrol | Total |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|----------------------|--------------------|--------|
| Ibne Kor | Huruwa | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 963 | 1,934 | 2,905 |
| Tegi Ebei'al Tombol | Imila | 0 | 1 | 7 | 14 | 641 | 1,721 | 2,386* |
| Ungunaibe | Kum | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1,494 | 200 | 4 | 1,700* |
| Kone Iorei | Wasemi | 672 | 133 | 445 | 6 | 1 | 6 | 1,263 |
| Elal Bol | Tegibo | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1,201 | 2 | 1,207 |
| Awakep Ponge Paulus Kombo | Det | 0 | 0 | 5 | 1,161 | 3 | 5 | 1,174 |
| Mong | Puliyim | 0 | 0 | 6 | 317 | 327 | 471 | 1,122* |
| Kapi Nato | Wasemi | 47 | 357 | 396 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 810 |
| Kemena Kirabu | Pimaga | 31 | 60 | 604 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 702 |
| Tui Pondapen | Maela | 0 | 0 | 0 | 471 | 216 | 5 | 692 |
| David Songk | Mungtay | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 376 | 89 | 466 |
| Wegil Pondip | Komiya | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 195 | 196 |
| Yeki Tidima | Pomborol | 0 | 2 | 3 | 51 | 1 | 0 | 57 |
| Totals | | 750 | 544 | 1,468 | 3,542 | 3,930 | 4,430 | 14,680 |

¹*Difference made up from postal votes (a total of 4 cast).

²Number of spoiled ballot papers = 10

³Each of the above patrols covered a census division within Nipa District (except for the Bosavi one which covered the Orogo census division of Tari District).

cassowary and pig kills) in which people living in the Was valley are currently engaged. It is a new fashion to slaughter cows at a pig kill exchange, and one which carries a great deal of prestige, but the people living in the Was valley lack the resources to secure them and before Ibne's offer they pretended they had no interest in them and tried to make something of conducting their *ser* like their ancestors with pigs only. But Ibne's offer changed opinion over night and the idea that they would be the first settlement in the region ever to kill cows brought everyone behind him. But he went even further and said that if elected, then in two years or so he would help them to purchase a truck, the ownership of which has some over the last year to symbolize a large step forward in economic development.

This was talk everyone understood, signs of development coming at last to pull them firmly away from their recent stone age past. They knew that if elected Ibne would receive a large salary, and it was a share of this that he was offering them, not grease talk of development which depended on him convincing those Europeans in Port Moresby who they think control the purse strings. If he was elected they were certain of these things — or were they? Ibne had similar commitments nearer to home and would undoubtedly meet them first, but at least it was something, a firm offer of things they want, and this was more than any other candidate had offered. But these doubts, combined with a lack of contact with any of the candidates and a general lack of understanding of what the election was about, resulted in them taking little interest in the affair. Whenever I wished to gauge opinion for example, I invariably had to bring the subject up and people showed little interest in discussing it when I did so. I rarely heard them talking of the elections amongst themselves.

The election

Six patrols walked round the electorate to collect the vote. Each one composed of a presiding officer (usually a patrol officer), a poll clerk (usually a school teacher), a policeman and an interpreter, and they walked from one census point to another, camping at each and conducting the election. The presiding officer and clerk sat under a fly-sheet with ballot papers and boxes (separated from the crowd by a vine line), and called people forward from the electoral roll and marked their votes.

Table 4 shows clearly that, as already pointed out, people backed the man who lived nearest to them¹⁹. The Kutubu men picked up their votes from the lake region (the Bosavi, Fasu and Foi'i patrols), and Kone Iorei won most of the Bosavi votes because, in the absence of a candidate from there, he was the best known by virtue of his visits over the last twenty years as the interpreter with government patrols from the lake. The Poroma men picked up their votes from the Poroma region (the Poroma patrol and the southern part of the area covered by the Nembi plateau patrol), and the Nipa men from the Nipa region (the Nembi basin patrol and the northern part of the area covered by the Nembi plateau patrol).

An opinion poll conducted in the settlement of Haelaelinja and its neighbour at Ungubiy predicted this block-pattern of voting²⁰ with only three people out of the three hundred and sixteen²¹ questioned not supporting Ibne — one man said that he intended to vote for Wegil and another for Kone, and one woman said she intended to vote for Tegi. Some of them were also asked why they supported the candidate they name, and table 5 shows their replies. A large percentage of these (68.6%, 120 out of 175 — that is replied 1), 3), 4),

6) & 8)) rest on the idea that the nearest candidate is the best candidate (when people gave the first reply for example, and specified the area they had in mind, they always thought first of their place, secondly of the Nipa area and only thirdly or the electorate as a whole).

Table 5 Electors' Reasons for Supporting Candidates

| <i>Reasons for supporting candidate:</i> | <i>Number of people giving reply:</i> | <i>% of respondents giving reply:</i> |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1). He will look out for the interests of this area best and bring economic development. | 75 | 63.6% |
| 2). Everyone else is. | 38 | 32.2% |
| 3). When M.H.A. before we benefited, and so will again. | 23 | 19.5% |
| 4). He lives the nearest. | 15 | 12.7% |
| 5). He said that he will work to bring back European government officers. | 11 | 9.3% |
| 6). They stand to receive a share of his income. | 5 | 4.2% |
| 7). He will replace the Kina with the Australian Dollar. | 3 | 2.5% |
| 8). He gave him some money when M.H.A. before. | 2 | 1.7% |
| 9). He told the staff of Nipa station that they should pay 20 toea for everything at the market and not 10 toea. | 2 | 1.7% |
| 10). He will fight to prevent anyone selling beer in the area. | 1 | 0.9% |

Several people replied frankly that they intended to vote for a candidate because everyone else was going to mark him too. Twenty five of the thirty eight people who gave this reply also said that they did not know what a M.H.A. does once elected (see table 1), which produces the disturbing statistic that 21.2% of those questioned admitted to complete ignorance about the purpose of the election. Not knowing what it was about they followed the opinion of others on the assumption that however they had reached their decision to vote for a candidate it must be in their interests to support him too. Nobody persuaded them to vote this way, which is hardly surprising with the candidates themselves not really trying to persuade people to support them either.

Thirteen of those who replied that they intended to vote for a candidate because everyone else was were men (2 of them subnormal) and twenty five of them were women, which gives the ratio of two ignorant women to every ignorant man²², but it would be wrong to run away with the idea that many women mindlessly follow public opinion as moulded by their menfolk. Some of them did, but more were able to give reasons for their actions. In fact one of the three people who intended to vote differently to everyone else was a married woman. She named Tegi because contrary to what everyone else was

saying she thought that he was better fitted to the job than Ibne. She had no kin or affinal connections with him, or even ties of friendship, and she based her decision on the belief that he was best.

Only one of the three who intended to vote for a candidate other than Ibne gave a reason which echoed the conviction that the best man to support is the nearest one. He supported Kone Lorei because he has many relatives living in a settlement called Salaenda near the lake Kutubu, and he reasoned that the closer connections between the Highland area and the lower regions around the lake which would probably come with a Member from down there, particularly the idea of a road linking up both areas, would be in his interests²⁴.

The other man who voted differently supported Wegil Pondip, and was exceptional because he did so for reasons other than those subscribed to by everyone else, that the best man was the nearest. Although Wegil lives nearer to Haelaelinja than most other candidates, his home is on the other side of the Nembi river and he is an Aeron man. The distinction the Wola make between people who live on opposite sides of the river, calling them Kaerinj and Aeron, follows a dialect difference, but it also groups together and gives an identity to many settlements, and they assume an Aeron man will favour his side of the valley first in development projects if elected, and a Kaerinj man his side²⁵. Regardless of this man supported Wegil on the basis of their membership of the same mission. He is the mission boy for the area and Wegil's emphasis on doing things God's way impressed him, as did his recent stand in a council meeting against allowing alcohol into the region, something to which the mission is also very opposed (although Wegil denied this was part of his platform in the election).

The small number of vague social connections between the candidates and people in the Was valley did not influence the vote, as the following brief run down on them shows, and this is further evidence of the strength of the conviction that the nearest man is best. Three women married into the area come from Tegi's settlement, and are distant relatives of his, but not one of them or their children supported him (the woman who did lives in a different settlement to those women and is in no way related to them). Also, several generations ago, some people migrated to live in the Was valley from Tegi's settlement and their descendants still have tenuous links there, but not one of the fifteen men and women involved supported him. Four men have distant agnatic links with Elal Bol's settlement and a woman married into the area comes from here too, but none of these people even hinted at any possible support for him. Two women married into the area come from Ibne's settlement and are fairly closely related to him (they are members of the same small kin group which the Wola call a *semgenk*), and one young man living here has married one of Ibne's divorced wives (although he in turn is trying to divorce here too), but although these three people and their relatives supported Ibne, the other examples of relatedness with Tegi and Elal show that a personal connection with a distant candidate, which might give a small share in his personal income as Member, does not swerve people from supporting a nearer candidate. But it is probable that someone with a close tie, and a direct call on his income, will vote for him even if he lives some way off. This was so at Egenda from where one of Ibne's wives comes. This settlement is just east of Nipa, and, sandwiched between Imila and Puliym, the places where Tegi and Paulus live, it was split on the vote-for-the-nearest-candidate principle, between them, except for Ibne's wife's relatives who all voted for him.

Conclusions

Something which comes out in this study is the poor understanding which people had of the election. The fate of a little comic strip put out by the Electoral Commission and entitled *Pasin bilong makim vot . . . long vot pepa* summarizes the efforts made by the administration to educate people about the election. Several bundles arrived the day before voting started and remained on the floor of the returning officer's office. While a proper understanding will only come slowly as the next generation receive a formal education, it is unfortunate that the administration made no effort prior to the election to clear away at least some of the grosser misconceptions which the people had of its purpose²³.

Some of the candidates tried to impart some information about the electoral process in their campaign talks, but their own lack of knowledge probably contributed as much to the misconceptions as it cleared up. But even if the electorate had been more aware of what it was doing it is doubtful that it would have voted differently. People asked themselves, in the best selfish democratic tradition, who would help them most, and having no other yardstick plumped for the nearest man. In this they followed to some extent their traditional acephalous way of doing things where they judge others on the basis of personal knowledge. But there is some confusion between this and the new democratic way, which expects them to judge unknown people, and some people on the Was river showed this when they said (before they heard the rumours of jail sentences for not voting) that they would not vote because they did not know any of the candidates. How, they asked, could they know who was best without knowing those concerned?

There were no political differences of interest on which they could base their decision, and without a knowledge of the governmental process they behaved in the only way which made sense to them. Unfortunately this lack of knowledge meant that they did not think of the electorate as a whole and the candidate who would represent its interests best, which is sad because undue concern for a limited area may lead to petty differences which are in nobody's interests, as the following incident shows. On the night they started counting the votes some of my friends were concerned to remove me from Nipa station because they had heard rumours that some men from the Aeron side of the valley were threatening to start a fight if a Kaerinj man was returned again, and although it would not have been serious (because the administration prohibited men carrying bows and arrows on the station some years ago), it was a sorry indication of how needless parochialism can work against everyone's interests.

Yet the electorate, like Papua New Guinea as a whole²⁶, is lucky if it has no more serious divisions than one region looking out for its interests over another. In elections people living in an area can take a straightforward approach and look for the person who will fight for all their interests, and not a more devious one which promotes some of them, with certain personal interests, at the expense of others. But when several candidates stand in such an election, as in the 1977 Nipa-Kutubu Open, the winner, as pointed out at the beginning of this paper, cannot hope to carry much of his electorate, but this is not bad so long as he does not overly favour his home area to the detriment of the rest of the electorate.

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electorate, for his assistance; the eight candidates interviewed for their co-operation, and, as always, my friends living in the Was valley for telling me how they, the electorate, viewed the election.

NOTES

1. Throughout, this paper spells names as they appeared on the ballot papers, although this differs from the orthography used in my other work (for example my transcription spells Ibne's name as Ibnay Kot).
2. The revision of electoral boundaries united Margarima and Komo into one open electorate, and Nipa with Poroma, Lake Kutubu and the southern Bosavi area into another (the northern part of Bosavi is in the Komo-Margarima electorate).
3. North-east of a line running parallel with, and between the Was and Mubi rivers.
4. See Williams 1940 and Schieffelin 1976 for further ethnographic information on the people living in the lower areas, and Sillitoe 1975 on the Highlanders.
5. The remainder of this paper is written largely from the point of view of the Highlanders, with whom I live and work, although most of the comments apply equally to the people living at lower altitudes.
6. Bother is not too strong a word to refer to the waiting around, six hours or more sometimes, which was inevitable with large numbers of illiterate people voting at one place. Also a number of people had the bother of a three or four hour walk to vote.
7. The hopelessly incorrect electoral roll compiled prior to the election gives this ridiculous statistic because it lists approximately 14,454 names, and 14,690 people voted. But these figures hide the enormity of its errors. 41.1% (6040) of those who voted where not on the roll at all, so strictly speaking only 59.8% (8,650) of the electorate listed on it voted (the mind boggles to think where the 5804 on the roll who did not vote have gone, or where the 6040 not on it came from). At two settlements where I observed voting in detail for example, 55.75% (63 out of 113 voters) and 12.38% (25 out of 202 voters) of the people who voted were not on the roll. At the second, larger settlement the poll clerk called 78 names (27.86% of all those eligible to vote there) but no one came forward. Some of them were dead or away elsewhere, but people had never heard many of the names (even after pronouncing them in all conceivable ways to overcome errors in transcription and pronunciation by the poll clerk). Few people drifted off (for example when the rain came) when they saw that the patrol officer had no way of checking if they were fit to vote or not, and so would not arrest them (this accords with their fear of the administration). Ignoring these absurd figures, it is probable that well over 90% of those eligible to vote did so.
8. It is a moot point in a survey of this kind how far the enquirer should push people for a reply; for example, it is possible, in the light of their replies about why they intended to vote for a certain man, that if I had probed for long enough I may have forced some of these don't knows to give some reply related to economic development, but I have known all those questioned for a number of years and none of them would have feigned lack of knowledge out of fear — I pressed some close friends (men and women), who said that they did not know what a Member does, for a number of minutes without them giving any other answer and I am sure they do not know.
9. Some of those who gave reply 1) on table 1 specified nothing, and others specified two or three things (I left them to come forward with suggestions of their own accord).
10. People refer to the Government or Pangu as Somare *sem* (Somare's clan or family).
11. I use such phrases as economic development and advances in standard of living with tongue in cheek because I think that some of the things which have accompanied changes in other parts of the Highlands (such as drunkenness, an apparent breakdown in law and order, and a resurgence of tribal fighting, to mention the obvious)

represent a degradation, not an advance, in people's lives. But those living in the Nipa area think that what they specify as *developmaen* is desirable and that it will improve the quality of their lives, and when I use these phrases they represent their rose-tinted view of future changes, not mine.

12. The lack of terms, or even adaption of Pidgin terms, for concepts related to the election reflects the poor development of these ideas in the Nipa area. They refer to many of the foreign concepts of circumlocutions, for example to vote is *obun imbiy kay* (to say his name). The election itself they referred to as *laysia* (from the Pidgin word *resis* for races) or *lekshun* (the election).
13. Although I base my comments on candidates on these eight men, they also apply to the five I was unable to meet.
14. This experience is probably the result of their close residence to government or mission stations, young men in more remote places having not yet had the opportunities to experience these things.
15. The low poll of Yeki Tidima, who is only a subsistence gardener, lends support to this point — he failed even to gain the full confidence of his own settlement.
16. It is questionable whether people living to their traditional code would respect an indigenous person with such personal power over others, they may come to resent it. Although changes along these lines in other regions (for example in Chimbu where certain men have secured some power over others by virtue of their ownership of capital equipment (such as trucks & coffee processing equipment)) indicate that the traditional system and its values lack the power to prevent it and people quietly accept the changes, without perhaps respecting those concerned.
17. The same has applied in other places. See Reay's (1971:243-52) comments on the 1968 Wahgi Open campaign — particularly Tumun's comments (p.249) —, & Strathern's (1970; 1976) remarks on the 1968 and 1972 Dei Open elections — the title of his paper "Seven goodmen" comes from people's idea that all the candidates stood on the same platform. Also Paypool (1976:288).
18. The Kaerinj are those living nearest the inhabitants of the Was valley who call themselves Omonol.
19. This voting by regions recurs in the accounts of other elections in the Highlands; see for example Paypool 1976:289 on the 1972 Ialibu-Pangia election, Strathern 1970 on the 1968 Mul-Dei election, and Watson 1965 on the 1964 Kainantu and South Markham elections.
20. Although, as pointed out, a more splintered pattern would have been possible.
21. 115 men and 201 women, only one of whom did not vote, but tired of waiting and left when the rain came.
22. There is no indication that older people are more ignorant; young, middle-aged and old members of both sexes gave this reply.
23. On electoral education in Papua New Guinea see Bettison 1965, Jinks 1967, and May 1976.
24. But there are three or four other people with similar relationships to this settlement and none of them supported a Kutubu candidate.
25. The recent development of a coffee block on the Kaerinj side of Nipa near Ibne's home, while he was in office, has reinforced these beliefs.
26. The electorate is like Papua New Guinea in microcosm, with its regional issues (for example more economic development for Papua or some of the islands at the expense of New Guinea), and regional interests in everyday life (exemplified by the student groups at the University which represent different parts of the country).

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Chapter 11

THE LAE OPEN ELECTORATE: 'YUNION NA PATI-SENIS I NO KAMAP'

Bob Adams

Yunion Na Pati-Senis I No Kamap

“Senis i kam pinis — Pangu i go long haus pek pek” (the time for change has arrived, Pangu will be consigned to the lavatory), shouted Jonathon Saing the Modipe¹/United Party candidate and assistants whilst distributing election material at one of the voting centres on the Saturday morning, the first day of voting in the Lae Open Election. Walking over to the truck the writer was told most emphatically by Saing that “both Sali and Ila are finished — they will be out!” A rapid tour of the voting points during the morning told a different story, a story that repeated in many ways the election five years previously. Pangu had by far the best organisation with solid representation at all voting points, in some cases sole representation, and, despite the initial low turnout, strong Pangu support was clearly evident. Pangu’s, with a base built up since the late 1960’s and with strong trade union support, was the dominant political organisation in the electorate. Change did not appear imminent.

Candidates

Though faces and times had changed, the pattern was very much that of 1972. Ila, the incumbent member was the major constant, challenged by new faces but facing essentially the same opposition forces as in 1972. Candidates contesting the Lae Open comprised Jonathon Saing, Modipe activist and United Party (UP) candidate, Katham Newton, Peoples Progress Party (PPP), Wagan Village; Paul Biro, ‘Independent’, Lae City; and sitting member Toni Ila, Pangu candidate.

Jonathon Saing, self proclaimed ouster of Pangu was one of the two Ahi peri-urban village candidates, both this time coming from Wagan. Thirty three years of age Saing completed an apprenticeship and served for five years with the Defence Force as a keyboard operator. After two years as a salesman and a period with the Department of Civil Aviation he returned to Lae in 1975 to become a Modipe activist and in August 1976 president of the Lae United Party Branch. In the period 1975-77 he quickly gained regular press coverage with extravagant statements and bitter attacks upon Pangu, Sali and Ila, particularly the latter. Whilst his emotional and aggressive personality led to rather intemperate behaviour at times, he provided a major element of dynamism and interest to the election. Similarities may be drawn between his role and approach and that of Stephen Ahi, Ila’s most active opponent during the 1972 election. Stephen Ahi had in fact intended to stand again for the Lae seat and considerable animosity was in consequence engendered between the two Ahi villages². However Stephen was persuaded to contest the regional seat and differences were papered over.

Katham Kauc Newton from Wagan provided a further Ahi Village candidate and if the 1972 metaphor is maintained, there is a correspondence with the

other former Butibam candidates, Eki Vaki and Luther Karo Ahi particularly the former. Thirty seven years old, sixteen years with the Education Department as a teacher, Katham Newton represented a more orderly, petty bourgeois opposition, and appropriately represented the Peoples Progress Party. He had returned to Lae on long service leave at the beginning of 1977 nurturing an active interest in politics, having previously been elected to the Madang Council with PPP support and was subsequently chosen as Madang Council Vice President. He is a quietly spoken, sincere, self-effacing man and though handicapped by long absences from Lae he appeared to have gained firm support from within the Ahi Villages. His nomination was encouraged, he claims, by village big men opposed to Saing's candidacy. Such support however would have arisen as much from antipathy toward Saing as a consequence of indiscretions by that individual and his aggressive, outspoken manner, as from any firm conviction that Newton represented a completely credible and powerful opponent for Ila.

Paul Biro, a fifty eight year old Hungarian sewing machine mechanic, completed the array of fresh candidates standing with the sitting member Toni Ila. Biro presented something of political oddity, complete with east European derived political preoccupations. Servicing and selling sewing machines largely to a Papua New Guinean market he lives somewhat on the fringe of the Lae expatriate community yet apart from business transactions has no close affiliation with any particular segment of the national community.

Whilst restrained in public pronouncement he exhibited a virulent anti-Ila posture during the elections and though something of a 'loner' one suspects particular sections of the expatriate business community found his stance and convictions a useful counterweight to the position held by Ila.

Finally Toni Ila, the sitting member, stood as the endorsed Pangu and Trade Union candidate. In 1972 he was strenuously opposed by expatriate business interests, the colonial establishment and representatives of the Ahi village landowners. Now in 1977 he was opposed by representatives from a somewhat modified social formation, in keeping with the times, but, in essence, the same body of forces. Born in the Ihu District, Gulf Province, Toni received a catholic education first at Yule Island mission then two years of seminary training at Rabaul interrupted by the death of his father. His education was resumed at Sogeri High School and a year in Australia during 1965, encouraged by Justice Prentice, studying Law at Monash University. Returning to PNG in 1966 he was recruited in Moresby by Monier Ltd. as a trainee manager, though his managerial apprenticeship proved less than fully successful. As a close cousin of Sir Albert Maori Kiki, he was much influenced by the activities of Kiki in union and Pangu affairs and in consequence developed a far greater affinity for the company workers than expatriate management and the imperatives of capital. Transferred to Lae at the end of 1966 he progressively established himself in Lae union and political affairs, an involvement which led to severance of his relationship with Monier in 1971. A move to B.H.P. — Titan the same year brought similar problems, and early termination. Anti-Pangu feeling at this time was particularly vehement and Toni as an apparent successor to Michael Kaniniba MHA and President of Morobe Workers Association drew upon himself the ire of the expatriate community. Opposition by the expatriate business sector and colonial administration at a time of emergent anti-colonial feeling enhanced rather than weakened this electoral standing and confirmed Ila's self chosen, 'worker champion' role.

Following his 1972 election success Toni has established himself as the dominant force in the Lae and Morobe Pangu organisation and has been able to consolidate his trade union base establishing unquestioned ascendancy over the movement in Morobe. In 1972 he was elected General Secretary of the Lae Workers Association (now the Lae Miscellaneous Workers Association) and then extended his union involvement beyond Morobe with election in 1973 as President of the Federal Workers Association, the present PNG Trade Union Congress.

Union activities are now centred upon Union House, a modern complex comprising bar, offices and meeting hall, at Omili on the outskirts of Lae. As well as a most active and well publicised industrial relations function, the Ila-led Lae Miscellaneous Worker's Union provides a wide range of member and public services including pre-school education, film nights, housing assistance, the services of the clubhouse, general community aid, worker education, a union taxi service and a soon to be completed health clinic at Taraka, a major Lae low covenant settlement.

Lae City Council has provided a further power base for Ila. With the departure of Voutas and appointment of Boyamo Sali to ministerial rank, he has directed and controlled the Pangu organisation which gained control of the second council in 1973 and the current third council. Toni gained election himself in 1973 after an unsuccessful 1971 nomination and in 1974 occupied the position of Lord Major, subsequently resigning this position due to union and parliamentary work pressures. The activities of Pangu in Morobe are now centred upon Union House and Toni Ila has assumed, to a major degree, the mantle of Toni Voutas, the former founder and 'director' of Pangu Morobe.

Despite non Morobeian origins Toni has established, by dint of hard work, conviction and perspicacity, an extremely strong political base with wide popular support and recognition of achievement. This achievement has not brought significant change in Ila's lifestyle or value system. He has not joined the golf club/party set and still retains an overriding commitment to and affinity with the union workers and the disadvantaged. Though somewhat 'radicalised' by his early experiences and conditioned by his self chosen role and the responses of others to this role, he is essentially a pragmatist rather than ideologue and whilst a strong nationalist he holds no firm extra-national political convictions. Essentially he is a solid union organiser/politician in the early Kiki tradition.

These positive traits and the continued dominance of Pangu in Morobe have not won appropriate recognition for Toni from the centre; quite the contrary. Toni's less than happy relationship with the post-colonial order helps explain something of the nature of the post 1972 changes and underlying aspects of the 1977 election so it is useful to consider this issue a little further.

The politics of confrontation and subordination which prevailed before 1972 have now changed to that of manipulation and accommodation. The business community has achieved a workable accommodation with Pangu and the Government, and protects its interests and advances its objectives much more subtly than previously. Willing compradores and intermediaries have been found, yet an individual such as Ila is seen as a threat by some sections of the community. Whilst Toni has developed a pragmatic approach in his relations with the business community and is viewed as a positive force by some, for others he has exercised too much power and is an obstacle to be removed or neutralised. Funds from sections of the Lae Business community are sent to Port Moresby with admonitions and advice regarding the activities

of Ila. Malleable Morobe political figures echo these views and provide responsive links to the government in Moresby.

This antipathy has been reflected by the disdain that successive Provincial Commissioners have manifested towards Ila. At the national level he was publicly rebuked for supporting the National Pressure Group and being absent from the House of Assembly for important votes³. In 1976 on the occasion of the Lae City Council elections a determined effort was made to engineer Ila's defeat and thereby undermine his council power-base. In the first instance an attempt was made to prevent his automatic re-election in the absence of any opposing nomination. A late opposing nomination for his ward was submitted but the nominee was found to reside one street outside Ila's ward. A further effort was made by way of protest by Modipe against Ila and against another 'radical' John Rodgers⁴ as not fulfilling the six months residency regulations. This move was unsuccessful and following the appointment of the new Council Ila held a closed 'confession' meeting of all the Pangu councillors. Under pressure a leading Pangu councillor admitted to having plotted with Modipe members to effect Ila's defeat.

Further inquiry revealed that this incident went further than personal rivalry and stemmed from a conspiracy involving several Lae business and community figures and extended to certain individuals in Port Moresby. Additional evidence of the anti-Ila pressure can be adduced from the fact that he was one of the last Pangu candidates to receive endorsement for the 1977 election. Extraordinarily Ila's position remained in question until the final stage of preselection. The list of preselected Morobe Pangu candidates published prior to the March pre-election convention⁵ most noticeably did not include Ila's name and some doubt was cast upon Ila's position in the initial convention debate⁶.

Campaign Background

Before providing an outline of the formal campaign some further detail is given of post 1972 developments. As emphasised previously considerable continuity with the past exists and the election and accompanying campaign were but part of an unfolding and continuing process. Rather than a discrete event the elections were the culmination of a range of political developments since 1972. Detail has already been provided of some of the efforts to repress and control Ila given that individual's lack of congruence with the post colonial social formation. It is postulated that his leadership of organised labour and his alliance with the urban 'lumpen proletariat' and elements of the rural 'small peasantry' have prompted this opposition. From this perspective attention will now focus upon the Modipe anti-Ila campaign and the significance of Modipe's role before consideration of the more formal campaign and election activities.

Modipe since 1975 has provided vehement and unremitting opposition to Pangu and Ila and, with the return of Jonathon Saing to Lae in that year, the personal battle lines were clearly established. Modipe rhetoric espouses Morobe political power and control as a necessary vehicle for elimination of exploitative foreign domination, and sees Ila as a foreign, that is, non-Morobe, political opportunist and an obstacle to be removed in their efforts to establish the new order. Whilst Modipe has unquestionably gained significant support from the Morobe 'educated elite' and includes a number of idealistic, committed ideologues, cynical observers are inclined to view their behaviour primarily as the strivings of an elite strata endeavouring to establish

itself in positions of power and status in the post colonial order. In class terms the group may be seen as representative of a post independence bourgeois nationalist movement comprised of a 'bureaucratic bourgeoisie' allied with political elites big peasants and national businessmen. The group shelters behind a regional ethnicity banner as a means of advancing both personal and class interests. Such a judgement may be premature given the fluidity of political relationships and the political values of some of the Modipe activists. Toni Ila's position as the 'champion of workers and peasants' is by no means unequivocal, he will in fact be exceptional if he resists the pressures of incorporation. Pressures to date have been less than subtle, suppressive rather than persuasive, but this will not necessarily continue.

The Modipe/United Party drive for power primarily centred upon unremitting efforts to discredit Ila/Pangu and to deprive Ila of his support bases. Loss of support for a discredited and isolated Ila/Pangu Party would, in the Modipe equation, mean a corresponding gain for Modipe. This approach was essentially negative and shortsighted in so far as it inhibited efforts that could have been directed towards the development of a more positive programme and a strong support base.

Saing in 1975 began a series of continuing public attacks upon Ila, trade unions and Pangu. In January 1976 Ila was criticised for not looking after his constituents and through trade unions, forcing business companies to look elsewhere in the establishment of their factories⁷. This theme was continued by Saing in different forms and on different occasions during 1976 and 1977. The government was called upon to get rid of unions as they were responsible for social disasters in the Morobe Province⁸ and Ila was accused by Saing of brainwashing the people with imported union ideologies⁹.

Recognising that Ila and Pangu drew much support from their dominance of Lae City Council, Modipe made a major effort to displace Pangu during the April 1976 Council elections. Despite a solid effort Modipe only gained two seats and Pangu was returned with a clear majority, securing fifteen of the twenty seats. This defeat prompted periodic attacks by Saing on the council itself. During November/December 1976 confrontation with the Council was contrived over the Council's nomination of Silas Gawi, a Sepik Council member (married to a Morobe and well regarded by Morobeans) to the Morobe Area Authority and the continued use by the Council of the Busu Road dump, allegedly causing discomfort to nearby Nabak settlers. This was followed during December by an allegation that the Council had passed a motion to legalise prostitution in Lae and that some councillors may themselves have been involved in this activity. These attacks certainly secured abundant media coverage but did not improve Saing's credibility. He was forced under threat of Council legal action to unreservedly apologise for his prostitution allegations.

Continuing his attacks on Ila and his union base, Saing publicly called upon Ila to account for the expenditure of union fees. It was alleged "that union finances were misused, that unions were not looking after members, and such was the neglect, the government should set up a dole fund"¹⁰. (These public attacks were linked with a campaign of denigration based upon Ila's non-Morobe origins, a Kerema rather than a 'man bilong as ples' and a person only concerned with Union affairs ('man bilong union tasol') to the detriment of the general welfare of the people.

Whilst these attacks upon Ila and Unions were being pursued an attempt was made to establish an alternative union, the Bumodipe Stevedoring Union

(the prefix Bu is used by coastal Yabims to denote water). Fees were collected from 'members' and in return contributors were promised work on the wharves. Receipts carried the stamp of the Department of Social Development and Home Affairs, a Lae office from whence several Modipe activists operated. Saing, when challenged, disclaimed any Modipe involvement¹¹.

The Saing/Modipe interest in trade unions was further developed during April '77 on the occasion of the Highlands Highway Drivers Association four day strike in protest against lack of police protection for highway drivers. Saing threatened that he had one thousand men with trucks to break the strike and that he would blow up the striker's checkpoint truck and the nearby weighing station if the strikers did not move from the roadside, land he claimed that belonged to his family.

During May and June just prior to the election, the anti-Ila attacks were taken up by Pangu city councillor Roy Pogat. Echoing Saing's attacks he called upon the government to consider taking some control over trade union activities in P.N.G. 'before any unnecessary (and) disastrous strikes occur. Trade unionists in Lae, he claimed, had irresponsibility threatened employers with repatriation and were "forcing improperly educated members to dig deeper into their pockets to benefit only one or two so-called union officials who live in luxury, have a car, take pleasure trips and pay their wives wages even though the wives do not work". He said 'Union members had the right to know how their money was being spent and an independent auditor should be required to check the union books'¹². Pogat's role can be compared with that of Brian Bogagu five years previously when that former Pangu member performed a similar function publicly attacking Ila and waging a campaign against him¹³.

The Campaign

The period of formal campaigning proved somewhat anti-climactic following upon the extended period of manoeuvring, confrontation and media attacks. Toni Ila personally campaigned actively only in the final few weeks before the commencement of voting. He did have, however, the benefit of a strong well established support system and very early had developed a well organised election programme. Immediately following the opening of nominations Pangu 'Komiti' working with their respective ethnic groups collected several thousand signatures from supporters who indicated their intention to vote for Ila and Pangu. The Trade union structure was similarly activated with regular lunch time meetings at factories and other workplaces, with some forty union shop delegates working actively to organise support. Ila handbills, badges and posters small and large were widely distributed throughout Lae well before election day to achieve maximum impact. Two styles of poster were used, one stressing his union affiliation ("wokas yunion bos, vot yunion lida long sapotim yu"), the other as 'Pangu Man' stressing his Pangu endorsement.

In the final few weeks of personal campaigning Ila was able to visit all the major settlements, compounds and workplaces normally receiving a favourable response at all meetings and contacts. No single issue or appeal was advanced but Ila was able to refer to a wide range of achievements secured over the five year period since 1972 and he attempted to give greater emphasis to issues and appeals with special relevance to the particular audience. Meetings generally were of an informal nature, and usually organised by the resident councillor, union delegates or Pangu 'komiti's. Following the pattern established in 1972, one or more leading Pangu figures would introduce Ila

and speak with him in support of his candidacy. Movie films were shown in the settlements on some of these occasions and a low key approach adopted. According to the audience, and the concerns expressed or questions raised, Ila discussed the achievements of the Pangu Government commonly using the analogy of a growing tree and its increasing capacity of bear fruit. He stressed the help given to unions and workers, particularly in dispute settlement and minimum wage increases; Pangu's successful resistance to head tax; support for migrant settlers; the achievements of the Pangu City Council; the services provided by the Omili Union Club; the establishment of the Taraka Clinic; the operation of the Union Taxi Service; and the planned share distribution to members.

As a counter to criticisms raised by Saing/Modipe and Pogat, care was taken to explain the disbursement of union fees and Ila's personal financial situation, emphasising his limited personal assets, the status of his bank account and the fact that no salary was paid to him by the Union. Questioners at meetings generally raised some of the criticisms levelled at Ila and Pangu by Modipe and other critics, most commonly the 'lost' K43 million, but reassurance was given and concerns answered to the apparent satisfaction of the audience. Buko settlers expressed some concern over possible expulsion from Butibam land if Saing was to be elected and expressed fear of Stephen Ahi who had threatened them on a number of occasions.

Jonathon Saing whilst having the advantage of a two and a half year run up to the election failed to develop a substantial power base and though able to secure pockets of voter support he was not able to gain solid support in any of the major settlements or population groupings. As outlined previously he relied upon a campaign of denigration and attack, adopting a strategy that sought the erosion of Ila's support by manoeuvre and attack. The standard United Party appeals were used, particularly those emphasising the time for change. Primary emphasis was given to media publicity and attack upon alleged Pangu/Ila shortcomings, attacks that were given extraordinarily wide media exposure. Apart from combined United Party meetings no major meetings were held by Saing during the campaign and, as with Newton, a number of the Pangu dominated settlements were virtually closed to him. As President of the United Party in Morobe Saing was actively involved in the organisation of the campaigning for other United Party candidates and much energy was expended in this area. However one doubts whether devotion of greater energy to the Lae campaign would have noticeably altered the result.

Where Saing was loud and brash, fellow peri-urban villager Katham Newton was quite restrained in his campaigning though the difference in style was in no way reflected in levels of voter support. Newton spoke at a number of village church meetings, two small meetings at Buko, the small Omili migrant settlement plus a small meeting at the Papuan Compound and Administration Transport Pool. He was well received at the large Boundary Road/Bundi Settlement holding three meetings in this area discussing his candidacy and local settlement problems. Along with Saing he was discouraged from holding meetings in some of the major settlements, all Pangu strongholds.

Newton patiently explained PPP policy in his meetings, emphasising past achievements as a Pangu coalition partner and the need for this good work to be continued after independence. Emphasis was given to the need to elect a capable representative for the new parliament and in this context he outlined his personal history, education, employment and political experience. His emphasis upon his local origins ("man long as ples tru") struck a sympathetic

chord with some Boundary Road settlers (government land) though this was not a viable ploy in other areas where settlers had been threatened and harassed by members by the Ahi Association. Generally his sincerity and quiet approach favourably impressed but apart from Boundary Road he never really penetrated the major settlements and lacked a power base of any significance. His Boundary Road impact was later nullified by the Ila campaign meetings. With little media exposure and having limited time to establish himself he was forced to rely upon the village vote, an inadequate base to challenge such a strongly entrenched opponent as Ila.

Paul Biro brought variety to the pre-election campaign period with sandwich board displays in the main shopping area, personalised press advertisements, a large car-top 'vote Biro' display sign, small policy booklets distributed through commercial outlets and public protest against "unfair" Pangu campaigning. Pangu people were accused of covering up his election posters and contriving through their control of Lae City Council to prohibit a proposed aerial leaflet drop over Lae. A major theme in his campaign appeals was his independent status, his desire to serve the people of Lae and the need for clean, honest politics. Giving primary emphasis to western style media communication rather than personal contact, he was not able to gain foothold with any significant community group but depended upon individual support secured through media communication. Following the completion of voting, he publicly complained of a variety of alleged (Pangu) malpractices.

The Electoral Response

Saturday 18th June, the first polling day and generally the major voting day, proved to be very wet with continuous heavy rain. Voter turnout in consequence was very low, a factor which would appear to have reduced some of the advantage held by the much better organised Pangu team. Pangu organisation easily eclipsed that of rival teams with five or six people at many voting points, large Pangu signs and a solid supply of how to vote papers. In some cases only Pangu personnel were present at some of the major polling centres. The UP/Modipe organisation picked up as the day progressed and a United Party truck, complete with loud hailer, toured the settlements and voting centres attempting to drum up support. However anything UP did, Pangu did bigger and better. Two Pangu trucks were in service, one continuously operating throughout each of the voting days collecting voters and broadcasting the Pangu election song and appeals to supporters. Katham Newton was only able to staff several voting points and Biro aides were not visible during the poll, but Biro himself made good use of a loudspeaker outside the electoral office booth during the final polling days.

Voting continued through Monday 20th June to Wednesday 22nd June, the Wednesday an additional day to compensate for the wet Saturday. Weekday polling saw much better weather and a larger turnout. Six polling centres operated on the Monday and Tuesday and on Wednesday the extra day voting was restricted to the electoral office centre. The final hours on Wednesday at the Electoral Office saw a climax of frenetic activity with candidates and their supporters haranguing voters through loud hailer and amplifier systems. United Party loudly and continuously recited the full catalogue of Pangu failings and misdemeanours, Paul Biro preached the virtues of clean, honest government and personal behaviour in a flat, nasal monotone and Pangu, the principal target of these criticisms, sought vainly to respond with a recitation of Pangu achievements.

A total of 11,316 votes were cast over the four day voting period, an increase

on the 1972 count (8,971), but not a particularly high turnout, somewhat less than half the voting population.

The common roll book held 15,983 registered names but of the 11,316 votes counted 8,759 were Section votes compared to the recorded 2,585 ordinary votes. This extraordinarily high percentage of Section votes which makes accurate voter turnout comparisons extremely difficult must be explained in terms of the mobility of a major element of the population and the failure of the candidates to secure registration of supporters.

Toni Ila received 7415 votes, 71.7 percent of the 10,335 formal votes; a clear and decisive majority over all other candidates and a clear gain on his 1972 vote (57%).¹⁴ Whilst little separated the opposing candidates the resulting ranking came as something of a surprise. Paul Biro with 10.8 percent, whilst not seriously challenging Ila, narrowly topped the list of opposing candidates. Jonathon Saing followed with 9.5 percent and Katham registered the lowest vote with 7.8 percent.

Analysis of the vote count by ballot box shows Ila topping the poll at all voting points with the exception of the Yanga and Wagang Village ballot box where no Pangu team operated and where Newton secured the majority of the village vote. Ila's majority was lower at the University and Lae Technical College. Biro scored best at the University and the electoral office, reflecting possible support from the better educated, higher income voters with whom his media campaign registered with greater effect. Saing secured proportionately higher votes at the University aided by University Modipe/United Party supporters, at Haikoast where some United Party support exists and where a Modipe activist is moderately well established, and at the electoral office location to which some supporters were 'trucked' and where the highly vocal United Party team attracted support during the week day polling. Newton performed more ably at Lae Technical College reflecting teacher/public servant support, at Busu High, at Boundary Road/Bugandi High where he made some impact with his forays into the settlements areas and in his home village area at Wagang/Yanga where he gained the majority of votes.

Although the outcome of the election appeared to be beyond question, both Jonathon Saing and Paul Biro publicly protested against electoral malpractice following the counting of the votes. Saing alleged that Pangu trucked people from West Taraka (excluded by the redrawn boundary) and that poll officials behaved improperly in their administration of counting of votes. Biro in a Lae Nius advertisement alleged that 'voters were forced into trucks, improperly enrolled on voting day, racial discrimination was unfairly practiced, people voted a number of times and voters from outside the Lae Electorate were brought in to vote'¹⁵. The following week Biro placed a similar advertisement in the Lae Nius signed by himself, Saing and Newton plus Joe Maliaki a candidate from the adjoining Huon Electorate.

Investigation by the electoral office staff failed to find evidence to substantiate these claims. It should be noted here that both Saing and Biro were remarkably confident prior to the election. A confidence that would appear to have been fueled by a favourable press and limited contact with a full cross section of the electorate. Subsequent failure obviously proved a bitter pill to swallow.

Analysis and conclusion

Continuing attack upon Ila, Pangu and the union movement with which he was associated initially raised doubts about the outcome. Yet, coldly

considered, an Ila victory was never in jeopardy. Jonathon Saing, despite a vigorous and prolonged campaign against Ila, was never able to present himself as a credible alternative. His constant attacks, particularly through the media, excited attention but not support. Neither he nor UP/Modipe were able to secure a significant bridgehead within this political battleground and Pangu/Ila pre-eminence, though dented, was not seriously threatened. Rather than using the time available and directing energy and resources towards the progressive build-up of personal credibility and solid bases of support, he chose media headline, personal attack and extravagant claim.

Paul Biro appears to have gained some advantage from Saing's constant anti-Ila attacks, one presumes on the basis of his citizenship status and his pleas for 'honest politics' and 'fair play'. Though polling far better than anticipated he would not be able to find much encouragement from his initial foray into PNG. politics.

Katham Kauo Newton the third challenger provided respectable representation for the People's Progress Party and, whilst doing nothing to tarnish that party's bourgeois respectability, failed to attract significant support beyond his village base and small pockets of public service support.

Ila the subject of so much attack was able to meet his challengers with quiet confidence derived from a knowledge of solid support progressively developed and solidly sustained. He had built upon his 1972 victory with impressive effect. The union base has been expanded and he now heads an impressive organisation complete with the modern union building and tax service that has been able to provide very tangible industrial gains and welfare services to members and the public. The Pangu organisation whilst not the same grass roots movement of '72 was still unquestionably the dominant political force in Lae and Morobe, and Ila, still the central figure in that organisation, was able to use his position to good effect. He was able to maintain his credibility and support despite attack, in no small part because of his unquestionable achievement and his continued commitment to principle as well as power. He has learned much since 1972, developing strong support structures and linkages but his position is not unassailable. He is by no means a charismatic figure, he suffers from non-Morobean identity at a time of rising Morobean consciousness and he faces some basic contradictions given the divergent support groups that he has embraced.

It is useful now to consider some broader aspects of the election and move beyond the personal strengths and failings of the candidates. The brief comment upon the ballot box voting pattern revealed across-the-board support for Ila and only small and localised support for the opposing candidates. The opposition was far from strong and neither horizontal nor vertical cleavages within the electorate were sufficiently developed for the opposing political forces in 1977 to seriously challenge the dominance of Ila/Pangu. The corollary of this of course is also that Ila/Pangu was still able to successfully appeal to all major sections of the population. Incipient divisions do however exist between worker and unemployed, Morobe and non-Morobean, rural and urban, 'white collar' public servant and 'blue collar' worker and between elite strata and the emergent proletariat/peasantry strata. Though candidates were unable to successfully exploit the emergent divisions to the disadvantage of Pangu, these differences will increase as consciousness of particular economic interests grows.

The threat to Ila may well be compounded by the establishment of the Morobe Provincial Government and the capture of critical positions within the

Secretariat by Modipe activists. Much will depend upon the status of Pangu and its ability to retain a dominant political position in Morobe. Wide powers have been gained by a non-elected interim provincial government and the appointed secretariat. One would, on the basis of the 1977 results, expect Pangu to sweep the field if a provincial government election was held but the election has been pushed forward to the distant future. Modipe thus would appear to have gained by appointment what it could not gain by electoral process and Ila and Pangu's position must be weakened to that extent.

Finally, what of the background forces that opposed Ila by proxy? As previously emphasised these forces represent at least in part, a neocolonial form of continuity with those anti-Pangu forces of 1972. Operating now by manoeuvre and manipulation they have attempted through intermediaries to defeat and limit the power of Ila and the groups with which he is allied. Modipe in this context has willingly allowed itself to occupy a proxy role to serve interests it saw as coincident with its own. Though Samana, the leading Modipe activist (and later to become Premier of Morobe) is able to articulate a critique of Morobe 'development' and argue a radical alternative, it is difficult to sustain a high level of optimism for positive change given the milieu of opportunism, personal animosity, proto class conflict and administrative decay.

NOTES

1. Modipe — Morobe District Peoples Association.
This association was established in 1973 by members of the Ahi Association and a small number of the young emergent Morobe elite, anxious to secure a place in the Morobe political order. Following settlement of differences with Pangu the Association was publicly disbanded in September 1974 but was reactivated in 1975 by student activists. It has subsequently become the principal vehicle for Morobe activists opposed to Pangu influence. The group allied itself to the United Party in 1976 preparatory to the National elections. See Adams R. "Town & Village: The Ahi Response", pp21-26, mimeo 1975.
2. Stephen Ahi is from Butibam Village, one of the closely related peri-urban villages, formally tied together under the aegis of the Ahi Association.
3. Post Courier, Lae Extra p5, 10/6/78. The Lord Mayor T. Pohai indicated that Pangu Executives had written to Lae Councillors.
4. John Rodgers featured in another incident, October 1976 when it was alleged in Council that arrangements were made by a senior councillor and senior government officer for Rodgers to be transferred out of Lae to a lowly position in the Sepik.
5. Post Courier 11/3/77, p3.
6. Toni Ila has more recently been given the Labour ministry following the Leadership Code debate and the subsequent Pangu — PPP fallout. This promotion was one of several new ministerial appointments extended to leading members of the 'left wing' of Pangu. However it is unlikely that these changes presage changes that will stem the tide of comprador politics. The recent government attacks on trade unionism (Feb. 1979) should dispel any such view.
7. Post Courier 13/1/76 Lae Extra p1, Lae Nius 9/1/76.
8. Post Courier 24/1/77 p4, 21/1/77 p3.
9. Lae Nius 20/5/77 p1.
10. Post Courier 30/3/77 p3.
11. Post Courier 31/3/77 p1, 12/4/77 p3, Lae Nius 23/3/77 p1.
12. Lae Nius 18/5/77 p3, Post Courier 24/5/77 p4, P.C. 14/6/77 p14.
13. On that occasion Bagagu's defection and hostile attacks so aroused the ire of Pangu supporters that he had to approach the police for protection from angry supporters

who attacked his house. Pangu supporters were similiary incensed on this occasion but were restrained from taking any action against Pogat.

14. D. Hegarty and U.U. Samana: "Issues, Expectations and Mobilisation: The Lae Open Electorate", in D. Stone (ed): *Prelude to Self-Government*, ANU & UPNG, 1976.
15. Lae Nius 15/7/77 p16.

Chapter 12

THE ELECTIONS IN FINSCHHAFEN AND KABWUM

Don Townsend and Metone Wamma

Democratic elections are ideally an act of free choice, in the sense that freedom means an absence of coercion. But if we adopt the wider meaning of freedom, as an absence of constraints, then the choice was not free for the majority of rural electors. The first constraint was in the lack of information about elections, electorates, government, political parties and candidates; and the second was in the system of primordial ties and obligations.

Village people understood that the elections were a contest for power, but in many cases misunderstood the rules of the primary contest (elections) and the subsequent contest (forming a government). They were cynical of promises, but understood that the electoral process required them to “suspend their disbelief”. The majority of the rural people could exercise their discretion on people, not policies; on transmitted reputation, not promises; and on parochial issues, not ideology.

During the campaign, we felt that the kinds of political analysis and comment being publicised in the towns, and perhaps reflecting the strategies of the political parties, were largely irrelevant to the decisions being made by the majority of the rural people. So our research concentrated on (1) the kinds of information village people had about politics, elections, parties and candidates; (2) the facts, opinions or impressions which the village people used in their decision-making for the elections.

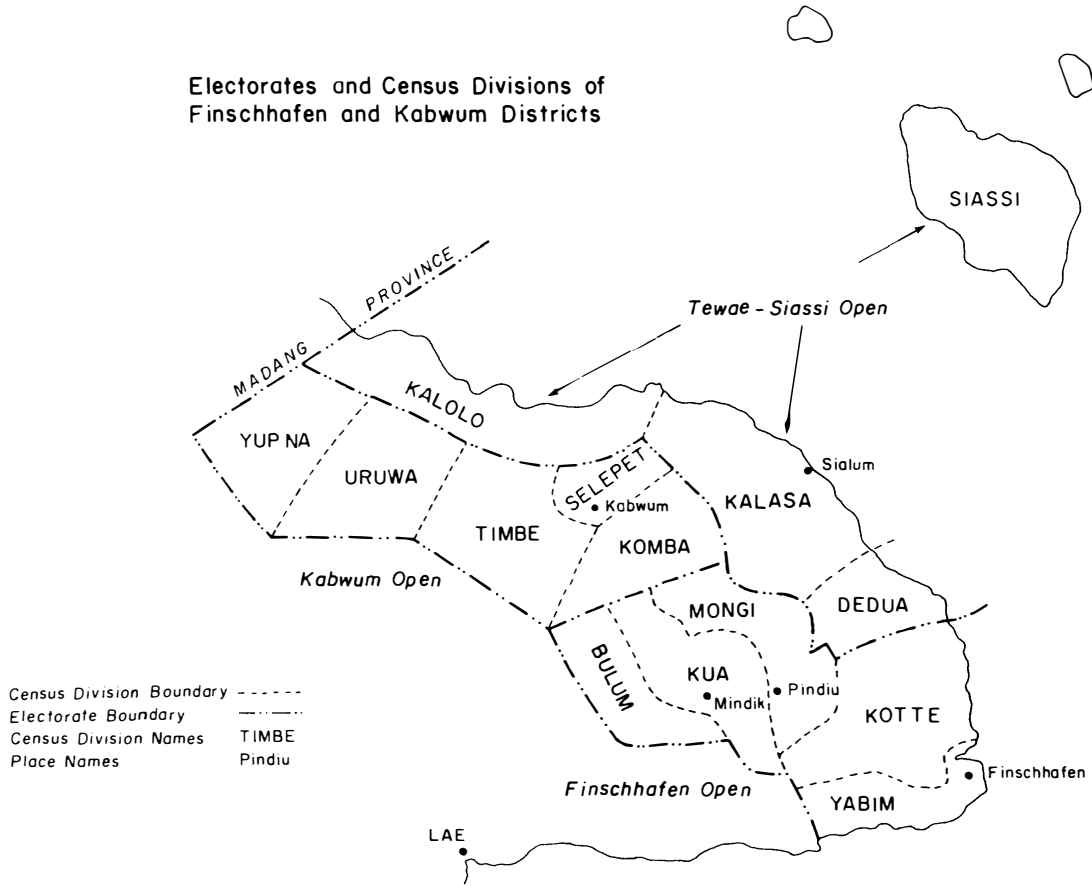
General Conditions of the Electorates

The two districts of Finschhafen and Kabwum occupy the Huon Peninsula and the Siassi islands group (Figure 1). The registered population is about 95 000, of whom about 75 000 (78%) are resident in their electorates. There are twelve distinct language groups in the region, and seven of the fourteen census divisions are formed by clearly demarcated and isolated interior valleys. The barriers of the Saruwaged, Cromwell and Rawlinson Ranges and their extensions, impede internal travel and preserve parochialism. Only along a thin coastal belt, with 20% of the registered population, could travel be considered ‘easy’.

For twenty years in the south, and fifteen years in the north, the populations of the interior valleys have been trying to build, or to have built for them, road access to the coast. They are dependent on ten small airstrips for coffee exports, tradegoods imports and travel to and from Lae. Their cash economy is based almost completely on coffee production, with additions in some cases of money and goods sent back by town-employed relatives. The coastal people earn income from copra, with coffee in the coastal uplands; in the south-east corner, cocoa provides an extra source of income.

The population of the Huon Peninsula has been dominated, in religious and some social matters, by the Lutheran Church. The Peninsula provided much

Electorates and Census Divisions of
Finschhafen and Kabwum Districts



To many of the older people, government is just another introduced system which has failed their expectations — in the same category as missions, churches, new language, coffee, ‘bisnis’, trade stores, cooperatives and schools. That these things “work” in towns but not in their villages, is to them a matter of *context* and not of historical advantage.

c) *The political parties*

People in Finschhafen and Kabwum were strongly impressed by the promotional and organisational methods of the Pangu founders; and though the ‘komiti’ system has been crumbling over the years, the feeling is still strong that this is Pangu territory. Small pockets of awareness and support for United Party remain only because of ‘big-man’ or ‘lain’ identification. People had heard of the Country Party only because of the rather derisive publicity given to the former member for Kabwum, Mr. Singeri. Most had heard of the People’s Progress Party through the radio coverage given to the work of Mr. Julius Chan; through Mr. Chan’s recent visit to Finschhafen, and through the acceptance by Mr. Zibang Zifuyu, a well-known businessman, of PPP-endorsement.

Generally, people were favourable to Pangu because “it is a christian party, it has brought us undependence, our own flag and currency, and has stopped the white man from bossing us around”. People’s desire for peace and stability was served by Pangu — they felt that election of a new party would disrupt their lives and bring in more changes.

Many people were puzzled about the formation of other parties, and what role they could have in running the country. From village affairs, people certainly know about the forming of factions; but their understanding of government on the national scale did not leave space for a continuing, organised opposition. Pangu-minded village leaders have used and encouraged this feeling of Pangu as the “natural” party to run this country with stability and continuity. A typical comment is: “why plant a new garden before harvesting the produce from the first one?”

The opportunism of some candidates and some parties in making party-endorsements discredited the party system. Some people were confused about the identification of the word “party” with the ephemeral social activity of celebrating, dancing and drinking beer. It would be better for organisers to emphasise a new term, such as ‘lain’, which does indicate some system of affiliation, discipline and continuity.

d) *The candidates*

In the week following the closure of nominations, many village people still did not know the full number and names of candidates. However, by polling day, the names at least were known to the vast majority of people.

Visiting by candidates is the crucial activity in electioneering. The isolated, mis-informed or under-informed rural people greatly appreciate the opportunity to make a direct, personal estimation of the candidate. Moreover, the fact of a visit to their village raises their self-esteem, makes them feel that they are included (however temporary it may be) in the national political process. Of close secondary importance is hearing names on the radio or seeing newspaper pictures of candidates — the people feel that the man has been recognised or adopted by the vague wide system from which the people themselves have been so excluded.

In Finschhafen Open electorate, there were seven candidates five of these were from the interior Mongi census division, and included three older men who have been longtime rivals in local politics. People were generally critical of the earlier labour supply to plantations of the New Guinea Islands and to

the goldfields of Wau and Bulolo. The population was also considerably disturbed by the activities of the Japanese war.

So the combination of these earlier experiences with the introduced activities, and the failure to develop any social or economic integration beyond a stagnant dependency on coffee, has led to a high degree of migration from the Peninsula during the last 25 years. Over 80% of the men aged 25 years or more have migrated at some stage. Currently, 41% of the adult (18 years plus) men and 12% of the adult women are absent; in some census divisions, the figures reach 51% and 26% respectively. In recent years, the male rate has been stabilising, while the female rate has been accelerating, an indication of the more acceptable family-living conditions in towns and of the abandonment of the rural struggle for achieving "a better life".

One of the results of this high and persistent migration is the lack of social, economic and political vitality in the rural villages. Leadership, awareness of the wider world and political motivation are not strong — social order and direction have come mainly from the Mission organisation. The rural population is dominated numerically and socially by older men and by women, most of whom have an understandable preference for continuity and stability, and an ignorance — even a deliberate ignorance — of the relatively recent and apparently complicated national political systems.

The records of previous political representatives have not encouraged their faith or optimism in these systems. The political and social life of the national system has overwhelmed, destroyed or distracted three representatives from Kabwum Open and two from Finschhafen Open. The people are ambivalent in their feelings towards Mr. Boyamo Sali, a resident of Finschhafen and the re-elected member for Morobe Regional — they derive some satisfaction from his status and performance as a minister, but feel that they have been neglected in favour of his occupational and social activities at Port Moresby and Lae.

All these things — the natural environment, the isolation, the out-migration, the degeneration of rural populations, and the experience of earlier representatives — led to a low degree of interest in the election campaign. The supply and content of information during the campaign did little to raise interest — a conclusion we reached in our own travels through the electorates, and since borne out by the low turn-out of voters in most areas.

Popular Impressions and Ideas

We shall present in this section some of the impressions and ideas which the people expressed during the campaign. Later, we shall look at some measures of awareness and information, and then go on to a brief analysis of the results.

a) *Elections.*

The people, in a sample of villages chosen to cover the main physiographic divisions of the electorates, were asked about the purpose of elections and especially of these elections. Their responses ranged from excitement to negativism. Higher radio-ownership, and recent contacts with town (residents' visits to Lae, or migrants' visits back home) were the main factors in the positive responses. Some people were excited about the opportunity to remove the previous member who had been a positive disgrace or a regrettable "passenger"; some people were genuinely curious, in an objective way, about the survival of Pangu.

Those who were indifferent said that elections are "part of our obligations to the government. We are not voting in the hope of having someone to fight for us; but because the government said we should vote, and because everyone else is voting too". There have been many movements towards fragmentation

of the 'lain' villages encouraged many years ago by the missionaries and the administrators — a physical expression of the people's view of their position in the world. These people go about their lives with little concern for national affairs, elections or politics — "em i samting bilong ol taun man tasol". A few villages have boycotted council elections because of dissatisfaction with the Councils' work; and their disappointment over the performance of previous national members leads many people to treat all elections as a waste of time and energy.

A minority of people expressed their resentment over elections — that is, the results of past elections have discredited the whole system. This may seem to outsiders a narrow view but these people believe that if something (a system) is good, then the good will rebound to their advantage. But they feel that past members have *used* the people to gain a personal and private advantage only; and, being excluded from the advantage, they despise the system that allows it, for example, a synthesis of common anger goes like this:

"They made us stand in the hot sun or heavy rain, with our babies on our backs, to give them votes. They told us that our votes would give us roads to the coasts. Nothing has changed, for us specifically, in the five years, so we do not want to stand out there again like stupid cattle. We elect men who give nothing but promises. Elections force these men to make promises — we are sick of promises and the elections that bring them. We are not going to take part, and make ourselves stupid again".

In Kabwum, the failure of three previous members damaged the self-esteem of many people. "Three times we have sent our most popular men to Port Moresby, and three times they have been ruined. Does this mean that Kabwum people are not good enough for this national election system. We will try once more, and if this next man is ruined, we will withdraw from that system".

b) *The government system*

Very few village people knew that the Government was in fact a coalition of Pangu and PPP — most people thought that Pangu was on its own.

Many people imagine the government to be a paternal figure or institution that listens to the requests of all the elected members. The "game" is that elected members ingratiate themselves with the paternal figure to gain favours for the electorates. This misunderstanding was obviously an important factor in the chances of United Party candidates — if people felt that non-Pangu or non-PPP members had an equal chance in the "game" of obtaining favours, then they were less reluctant to vote for a minority-party candidate.

Few people understood the system of parliament or ministerial government — the closest experience they have had of elected systems (the Councils) do not have fixed affiliations or delegation of responsibilities. Many could not understand the role of an opposition once the elections had been formally decided.

One exercise of government, in the form of education services, added to their confusion about the total system. Most rural people are expecting their children in school to learn modern skills, but they see the promotion of traditional cultural activities in the schools. They cannot see the relevance or utility of these activities in the modern way of life. There is a contradiction between what they ultimately expect from government, and what the government is providing in its most conspicuous rural service. Many feel that government, and political independence, belongs to the towns — and this influences their interest and participation in elections.

of the candidature of Mr. Meck Singailiongi (MHA in 1968) and Mr. Simonge Kangiong (former president of the Morobe Area Authority) — people felt that they were just contesting with each other, and adding confusion to the election. Mr. Waliong Bugau's candidature was also seen as adding confusion, though people recognised that Pangu, by supporting him yet again, was rewarding his long service as their "komiti". Mr. Inus Lelenga was well known in the interior for his work as the clerk at Pindiu patrol post. Mr. Bolang Zuraina was known in only a small area of the interior — he had been absent for about 17 years, and was for a long time the council president at Kainantu in the Eastern Highlands.

It was clear to the people of the interior that their votes would be fragmented, and that one of the coastal candidates would win. The young educated Mr. Henu Hesingut, an executive officer with the Finschhafen Council, had the task of overcoming the popular reputation of Mr. Zibang Zifuyu Zurenuoc, a local businessman, president of a local development association, member of the board of the Development Bank and member of the family of the Bishop of the Lutheran Church. Henu had another formidable problem of overcoming the conservatism of the people and their prejudice against younger representatives. People were flattered and impressed by the intensive programme of walking and visiting undertaken by Henu, especially compared to Zibang's method of sending spokesmen around to only the central villages.

Tewae-Siassi was a new electorate, taking in the Siassi group of islands and the coastal division of the former Kabwum Open electorate, as far west as the Madang border. None of the seven candidates had a reputation that reached across more than two of the four census divisions. Four of the men were trying to use their "name" as councillor to step up to the national level; one was a former district officer, another a teacher in Port Moresby, and another had local significance from long experience at the Sialum health centre. None of the candidates visited all the areas of the electorate, and many of the people, in the week before the election, did not know the names of all the candidates, nor have clear information about their experience or reputation. Some of the people of Kalolo census division were not aware of the fact that they had been separated from Kabwum Open electorate.

Mr. Jonah Kuso nominated for the Kabwum Open, and found himself cut off from his home base in Kalolo. Another Kabwum candidate, Mr. Fosing Mulu was also weakened by the division, since he had marriage ties within Kalolo. He was one of four candidates campaigning with a tarnished reputation — the others were Mr. Franzing Anzawaing, former council president and recently associated with a "haus-moni" in his home village; Mr. Buaki Singeri, who had had a discreditable career as an MP; and Mr. Buori Eun, a teacher from Madang. In the cases of Buori and Fosing, there was strong rumour but no proof of various malpractices. The electoral law provides protection for candidates against such rumour, but no formal complaints were made to the Returning Officer.

The two strongest candidates were Mr. Tani Kungo, a long-time Pangu man and dominant in the populous Timbe census division; and Mr. Linzon Banban, a council executive officer with an impressive personality and useful experience, but campaigning under the disadvantage (in this conservative electorate) of his youth.

Most of the people did not know the names of all the candidates, even in the week before the election. Impressions of the candidates' were based on

rumours and clan affiliations. Many people in Komba census division expressed the intention of voting for a well-known businessman, unaware of the fact that he had failed to nominate. Only Tani and Linzon travelled widely in the electorate. The printed advertisements for Jonah Kuso arrived the day before polling started.

In the Morobe Regional electorate, the name and experience of Mr. Boyamo Sali was well known. Only in the last week did a significant minority of the people have anything to say about Mr. Utula Samana. Mr. Stephen Ahi was known by a minority in a negative way — as one of the Lae landowners who had made life insecure for the town squatters, many of whom come from the Huon Peninsula. Mr. Wosi Mangwuka was known in small pockets of the Huon Peninsula because of his organising work with a widespread business association.

Generally, the kind of comment on the candidates — where they were actually known was simple, local and personal. On the positive side were comments like —

- he does not drink beer
- he is coming back to his home area to help us
- he has come and sat down to talk with us
- he has strong family connections
- he can speak out strongly

And on the negative side

- he was one of those cargo cult men
- he is a businessman, and cannot give time to public affairs
- he has stayed away too long from the place
- he is only a bush-man
- he could not account for the management of money in his other activities

There was a persistent naive belief amongst the people that improvement in their lives would come if they could just put the “right” man into the political system. Yet there were many contradictions in their minds — between stability and change, age-status and youth, local ties and wider experience, need for yet suspicion of a clear mandate to any candidate. The one reliable constant in the people’s minds was kin ties — only a sustained programme of exposure and information could have resolved the contradictions in favour of a particular candidate.

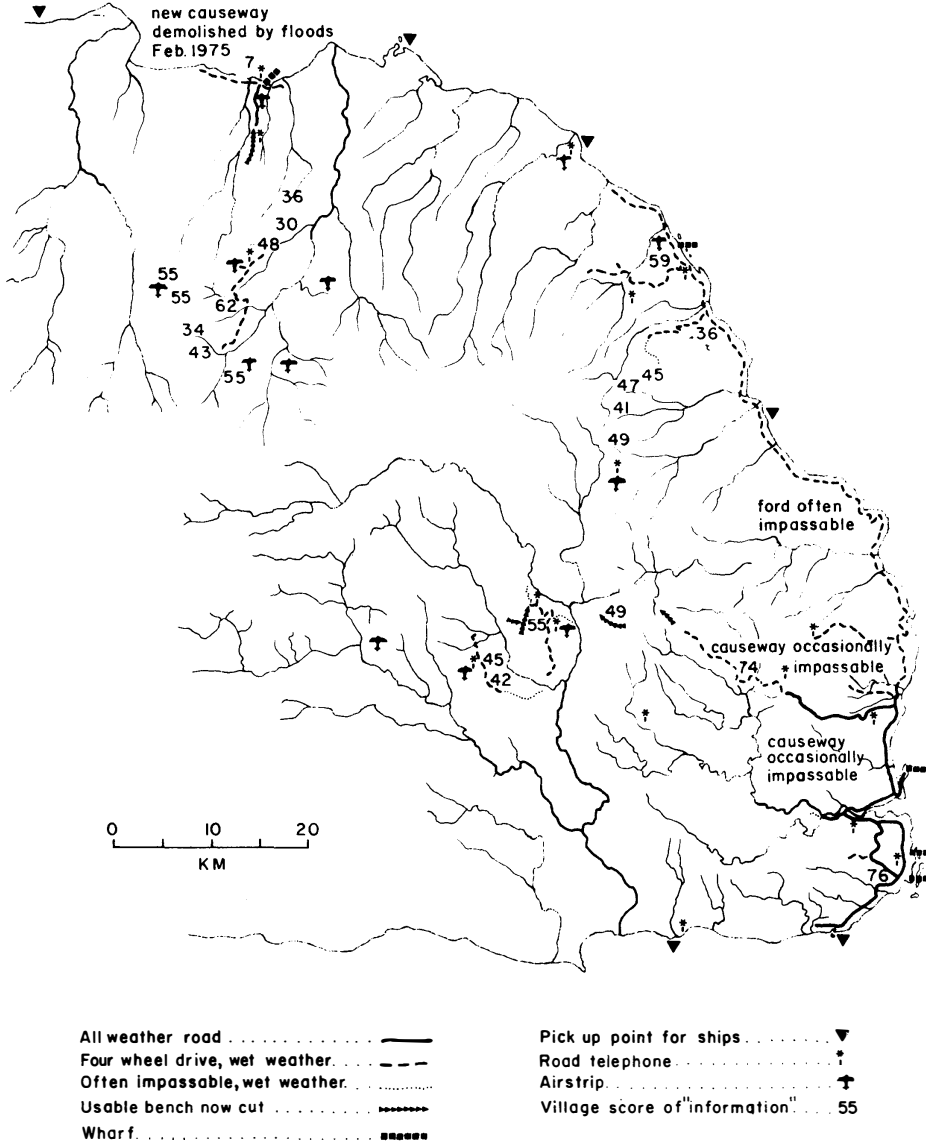
Measures of Awareness and Opinion

The previous, long section has reported on the kinds of impressions and opinions the people have expressed about the system and the candidates. In this section, we provide some systematic and objective data in people’s awareness and knowledge.

Ten questions were asked of representative groups of people in twenty villages throughout the Peninsula, during the two weeks after nominations closed. Some villages had been visited by candidates, some were the home places of candidates. At the end of the campaign, people would have received more information, such that the scores of awareness would be generally higher, and their range narrower.

What the map shows (Figure 2) is the very uneven information field at a particular time, based on questions concerning candidates’ names, origins,

Finschhafen and Kabwum Districts with detail on communications and % scores of "information" (see text)



past experience, party affiliation, and on questions concerning the national party affiliation, and on questions concerning the national party system and the national parliament. Generally, we can see that the most populous regions (interior Kabwum and interior Finschhafen) had the lowest degrees of information or awareness — there are also the areas with the greatest popular disaffection towards the election system. The two conditions (lack of information and disaffection) reinforce each other.

A second measure of opinion was taken from eleven candidates who responded to our questionnaire. In one of the questions, we asked them to comment on the qualities (of other candidates) which they thought would influence public opinion. The order of importance is set out in Table 1, as a frequency of mention, up to a maximum of ten.

Table 1: Ranking of characteristics considered to be important to a candidates' suitability

- 10 Previous public work; effective speaker
- 9 Political experience; well-known locally; projecting good ideas
- 8 Formal education; church work or affiliation
- 7 Council experience; important local man
- 6 Important family connection; an effective campaign
- 5 Business experience; political party support

Many of these characteristics are of course inter-connected and inter-dependent. It is interesting, however, that campaigning, business experience and party support rank so low on this scale; on the other hand, there is strong faith in effective speaking and an accumulated reputation.

Brief Analysis of the Results

In this section we will relate our observations about people's awareness and opinions to the results.

a) Kabwum Open

Only 44% of the enrolled population actually voted. But the Kabwum rolls were not property up-dated; as if we allow for the migrants included in the rolls, then the proportion of actual residents who voted was around 60% (75% of men, 55% of women).

Tani Kungo took almost all the votes from his home census division of Timbe, received virtually nothing from Komba, census division. Linzon Banban got nothing in Timbe, but was well ahead in the remote west of the electorate, and got half the votes in Komba. The votes from eastern Komba, which would have given the seat to Linzon, were surprisingly gathered in to Buaki Singeri — mainly because of his appeal to the basic kin ties, and to his strong words on the issue of timber rights in the easterly section of the Cromwell Ranges. Three villages, which recently had a serious fight with police and government officers, resulting in the imprisonment of 160 men for terms up to six months, gave their votes exclusively to the maverick Buaki Singeri.

Selepet was the crucial census division in the election — they had no local candidate, and are bitterly anti-Council. Their fierce pre-occupation is about a road link to the coast. Linzon took the western half of Selepet, mainly because of good campaigning and use of his mother's kin ties. Tani took a clear margin in central and east Selepet, around Kabwum station, the margin which gave him the electorate. The recent visit to the station by Mr. Michael Somare, and

Table 1

Election Results in Finschhafen, Kabwum and Tewae-siassi Open Electorates

Kabwum Open

Jonah Kuso 232

Bouri Eun 550

Fosing Mulu 86

Tani Kungo 2939 (elected)

Franzing Anzawaung 450

Buaki Singeri 1217

Linzon Ban Ban 2517

Finschhafen Open

Zibang Sifuyu Zurenuoc 3710
(elected)

Waliong Mias Bugau 1139

Simongi Kangiong 214

Henu Hesingut 3091

Inus Lelenga 1196

Meck Singailiongi 392

Bolang Zuraina 560

Tewae-Siassi Open

Ziroc Kalung 2352

Aru Aipoke 2160

Johnny Onjenga 2655 (elected)

Tarosi Advent Gai 604

William Abore 450

Molo Amimong 758

Albert Bomo 586

his promise of immediate financial support for the road, were the deciding factors.

b) *Tewae-Siassi Open*

There was a relatively good turn-out of 75% of the resident adults — mainly because the candidates were drawn from the most populous areas of the electorate and thereby raised the general level of interest.

Aru Aipoke took 70% of the Siassi votes, but virtually none from elsewhere. Two other Siassi candidates, who had no chance in the whole electorate, took away the “home” votes which would have given the election to Aru.

The long-serving Health Officer Ziroc Kalung out-pollled the youthful councillor Onzenga 3:2 in the Dedua-Kalasa areas. But in the north coast census division of Kalolo, added in to form the Tewae-Siassi electorate, Onzenga easily won the margin (931 to Ziroc’s 19) which gave him the election. For Onzenga, a greater effort of campaigning, and the association with the Pangu — Somare names, paid off amongst the Kalolo people, many of whom were confused by the change in electoral boundaries.

c) *Finschhafen Open*

This was regarded as an interesting contest between the well-established businessman Zibang, and the young educated council executive officer Henu. Both had important family connections, the advantage in this being with Zibang, whose brother is Bishop of the influential Lutheran Church. Henu had the advantage of Pangu-endorsement, which was expected to improve his chances with the interior population.

The people of the interior (Pindiu area) split their votes amongst five local contenders. Inus Lelenga, the clerk at Pindiu patrol post, outvoted Waliong, a long-time Pangu organiser. Perhaps it was a mistake for Pangu to endorse both Henu and Waliong — however, it seems from the voting in Pindiu area that Waliong supporters would have voted for “place” (Inus) and not “party” (Henu). In the end, it was the remote and conservative population around Mindik and the Bulum valley that voted clearly for Zibang (735 to Henu’s 204) and confirmed the margin which Zibang had from the coastal areas. Though Henu campaigned energetically in Mindik-Bulum, and Zibang did not, he could not overcome Zibang’s advantages of age, established reputation and Church connections.

An interesting result from the election, which confirms our earlier statements about the lack of awareness or interest amongst the more remote areas, is shown in the percentage turn-out of voters. Using 1975 population census, the turn-out in the coastal areas was 97% of resident adults, and 70% of registered adults; whereas it was 61% and 41% in the interior. If we take just the Mindik-Bulum area — the crucial one for Henu and Zibang — the turn-out was down to about 50% and 33%. Clearly, the older population left in these areas of out-migration have very little interest in elections, especially where there is no local candidate to motivate them through kin and clan connections, as happened on the coast and in Tewae-Siassi.

Conclusion

In the situation of low interest and deficient awareness about government, elections, candidates and parties, the influence of kin association in voting preference remains quite strong. The cynicism and frustration with government in general and previous elected representatives further reduces the interest of people who do not have a “local man”. A peculiar feature of the Finschhafen and Kabwum Districts is the high degree of long-term migration,

which leaves a large proportion of the older, conservative and uninterested population to “decide” the outcome of elections. For party strategists, the only answer is to find candidates who have long associations with the activities which touch on the older people’s everyday lives. However brilliant and eloquent, a young man will always have trouble in being accepted in these areas. Candidates such as Zibang, Ziroc, Aru and Tani did well in voting because of their presence in the electorates over long periods in the past.

Another lesson for party strategists is to identify the crucial areas of voting, especially those which lack a “local” candidate — in these electorates, they were Mindik-Bulum, Kalolo and Selepet. The first went to Zibang, because of age, established reputation and Church connections; the second to Johnny Onzenga, because of better campaigning and the Pangu-Somare name; the third to Tani Kungo, because of age and the timely promise by Michael Somare of a contribution to the Selepet’s main worry of road access to the coast.

None of the successful candidates is “safe” in the long-term. The ageing of the perennial disputants in Pindiu could allow the gathering of the voters around a “place” man to topple the coastal representative; a different array of nominations in Tewae-Siassi could easily swing the majority north from Johnny Onzenga’s home base of Dedua; failure to deliver a road to the frustrated Kabwum’s could finally “down” the Pangu name there. Yet the way is clear for members who want to retain their seats — to maintain a presence in the electorate, and to fill the vacuum of disinterest and unawareness with regular news of their more favourable activities.

Chapter 13

EAST SEPIK: ISSUES, PARTIES AND PERSONALITIES

Kwasi Nyamekye

Introduction:

The East Sepik, with an estimated population of 177,089, covers an area of 16,900 square miles¹. The bulk of the people are subsistence farmers, though coffee, copra, rice and some kaukau (sweet potato) are grown commercially. Like many other provinces in Papua New Guinea, the East Sepik has very diverse sub-cultures. In a political system where political party systems are weak and local loyalties and obligations are very strong, the diversity of sub-cultures can be expected to have significant impact on outcomes.

Missionary activity in the East Sepik is well entrenched. The catholic mission is the most influential, particularly along the coast and the off-shore islands. It runs community schools, vocational centres, high schools and a teachers' college. Because of its diverse activities, the catholic mission has potential influence on East Sepik politics. While no evidence was uncovered to indicate that the catholic church openly endorsed any candidates in the 1977 elections, knowledgeable people of Sepik politics would readily concede that no candidate could afford to antagonize the church.

In terms of transportation, the East Sepik is reasonably well — served by a network of roads. Communication discontinuities however, exist. Wosera — Gaiu electorate is particularly poorly served by roads. In an electoral system where familiarity with local political structures and issues play such a decisive role, communication discontinuities inevitably affect election results. Candidates without clan or extended family ties in the not — so — easily accessible areas stand to lose votes.

A great number of inequalities exist in the East Sepik Province. Wewak, Angoram and Maprik electorates are far ahead of the other electorates in terms of social services and economic development. This fact was exploited with considerable skill in the campaign of John Jaminan for the Yangoru — Saussia seat. The existence of such inequalities affected campaign promises and strategies of many candidates. Opponents of the Somare Government hoped to discredit Somare himself and Pangu Pati by such campaign strategy.

The Electorates

East Sepik province has seven seats in the National Parliament: one provincial seat and six open electorates (Wewak, Angoram, Maprik, Yangoru-Saussia, Ambunti-Dreikikir, and Wosera-Gaiu). For the 1977 National Elections, the Electoral Commission recommended slight boundary changes to those used for the 1972 elections². Ambunti and Dreikikir were combined into one open electorate while the islands of Aua and Wuvulu in the Wewak Open were transferred to Manus Province.

This chapter covers the East Sepik Open electorates of Wewak, Angoram, and Ambunti-Dreikikir. The seat of Yangoru-Saussia is examined in chapter fourteen by Winnett and May, and Woseri-Gaiu is omitted from the study

*Table 1 East Sepik Results
(Successful candidates in italics; party affiliation in brackets)*

| | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| EAST SEPIK PROVINCIAL | WEWAK OPEN |
| Jimmy Simbago 3870 (5%) | Ernest Beata 122 (1%) |
| Joseph Ulaipo 6278 (8%) | Kambegetua Yurapago 112 (1%) |
| <i>Michael Somare</i> 69503 (87%) | Herman Waiki 140 (1.3%) |
| (Pangu) | William Harwary 403 (3.7%) |
| | Nelson Kaspar Galo 515 (4.8%) |
| AMBUNTI-DREIKIKIR OPEN | John Parinjo Simen 879 (8%) |
| Maranganji Tamsan Jumbundu 504 | Tony Wobar 1149 (10.7%) |
| (3.5%) | Jim Paichua 1192 (11%) |
| Kokomo Ulia 766 (5%) | Laura Martin 1343 (12.5%) |
| Thomas Aworel 1001 (7%) | Herman Beri 1792 (16.7%) |
| Tromble Kabai 2043 (14%) | <i>Anthony Luke Bais</i> 3067 (28.6%) |
| Tubuguman Hary Weldon 2474 | (Pangu) |
| (17%) | |
| <i>Asimboro Ston</i> 5169 (36%) | WOSERA-GAUI OPEN |
| (Pangu) | Joseph Anganjouan 118 (0.8%) |
| | Wangi Walimband 140 (1%) |
| ANGORAM OPEN | Jambiambo Gamboram 145 (1%) |
| Gordon Kanaba 325 (2%) | Numbuk Joseph 553 (4%) |
| Leo Unumba 413 (2.6%) | John Akwi 654 (4.7%) |
| Jae Maika 445 (2.8%) | Patrick Kurapaku Kamban 715 (5%) |
| Anton Wopmai 1106 (7%) | Bira Mangalai 709 (5%) |
| Sarry Wimban 1667 (10.6%) | David Parangala Nungwi 982 (7%) |
| Teddy Sane 2652 (17%) | Abel Kusso Gangiwan 1474 (10.6%) |
| Sebastian Okm 2827 (18%) | Ambrose Mautyegumbia 2569 |
| <i>Eichorn William</i> 6198 (40%) | (18.5%) |
| (Pangu) | John Matik 2790 (20%) |
| | <i>Yambumbe Matias</i> 3049 (22%) |
| MAPRIK OPEN | (Pangu) |
| David Nailes Melep 522 (2.8%) | |
| Paul Mawi 554 (3%) | YANGORU-SAUSSIA OPEN |
| Wangiwan Kiami 1221 (6.6%) | Beibi Yambande 22 (0.2%) |
| Satigia Wasandu 1642 (9%) | Linus Hepau 52 (0.4%) |
| Redman Keni Uranoli 1766 (9.6%) | Magandimi Laulimbe 62 (0.5%) |
| Tobias Kuelik Sakaran 2822 (15%) | Kawi Nimiora 391 (3.5%) |
| <i>Pita Lus</i> 9820 (40%) (Pangu) | Narakama Harau 837 (7.4%) |
| | Mathias Yaliwan 1521 (13.5%) |
| | John Wawia 3349 (29.6%) |
| | <i>John Jaminan</i> 3464 (30.6%) |
| | (United Party) |
| | Peter Rony 1588 (14%) |

because of difficulties in travelling to that part of the province. The Provincial seat and Maprik Open are not surveyed for the simple reason that the outcomes were never in doubt. (See Table I for all East Sepik results.)

The Prime Minister, Michael Somare, won the East Sepik Provincial seat collecting a massive 87 per cent of the votes cast. With 69,503 of the 79,651 valid votes cast he overwhelmed his two opponents, Ulaipo and Simbogo, who polled 6,278 (8%) and 3,870 (5%) respectively. Somare is immensely popular

in his home province. He was always mobbed by people as he toured, and school children easily identified him. It is generally assumed that much of the recent development projects in the province is attributable to his personal influence and this fact was strongly stressed by Pangu official candidates.

In spite of the heavy demands of his office, Somare maintains close contact with his home province and his visits are well publicized by the Wewak party branch organization and provincial administrative officers. He toured the province extensively during the campaign, particularly in the closing stages of it, giving support to Pangu-endorsed candidates and defending his record of stable and efficient government³. His opponents were relatively young and less well-known outside the provincial capital of Wewak and their extended family. For these reasons, Somare was expected to win handsomely. What was of greater interest was the extent to which this personal popularity would affect the outcomes of the Pangu-endorsed candidate. The results seem to indicate that with the exception of Angoram electorate, the Prime Minister's personal popularity was just one of the factors affecting the electoral outcomes. This is not saying that Somare does not after all enjoy popular appeal in East Sepik politics. Rather, the suggestion here is that local factors such as candidate popularity, clan ties, and extensive campaigning play greater roles in the open electorates.

Pita Lus also won the Maprik Open seat comfortably. An incumbent and outspoken member of the Somare Government, Lus is generally popular in his electorate because of his record of achievements for the area. He keeps regular contact with the voters and has developed a "Lus Development Corporation" with substantial village membership. In spite of all these advantages, Lus campaigned actively, distributing Pangu T-Shirts and small items like cigarettes, lollies, chewing gums, all of which seemed to please voters.

1. *Wewak Open*

(a) *Candidates*

Wewak Open electorate encompasses But-Boiken, Wewak Islands, Wewak local, and Terebu census divisions. Eleven candidates nominated for the seat: Anthony Bais, Laura Martin, Tony Wobar, John Parinjo Simen, Herman Beri, Jim Paichua, Herman Waiki, Nelson Kaspar Gabo, William Hewary, Ernest Beata and Kambegetua Yurapago.

Tony Bais, 33, married with three children comes from Toanambu on the Sepik highway between Wewak and Yangoru. His father had been an unsuccessful candidate in the 1964 and 1972 elections. Bais contested the 1973 Yangoru-Saussia by-election but polled only 454 votes. In the intervening period he had become better known in Wewak and throughout the province. After his unsuccessful entry into electoral politics, Bais accepted the position of principal private secretary to the Chief Minister, Somare. In March 1974 he was appointed provincial Commissioner for the East Sepik⁴. By profession Bais is a social worker, having obtained a B.A. from the University of Papua New Guinea.

Mrs. Laura Martin, 55, married with three children, is a naturalized citizen. She first came to the country in 1949 and worked as a school teacher. She moved to Wewak in 1952 with her husband, Frank Martin, the member for Madang-Sepik special electorate in the first House of Assembly in 1964. Mrs. Martin is a well-known business woman in Wewak and has been active in women's groups in the area. She is close to the Somare family and would

support Somare loyally in Parliament. She stood as an independent candidate and received a good wishes call from Somare the night before polling started.

Tony Wobar, 38, married with seven children, comes from Koil island off the coast at Terebu. Educated to high school form 3, Wobar has been a teacher and administrative officer within the Province. He has visited Australia and Irian Jaya. He was the representative of the Wewak Islands on the Interim Provincial Government. Although Secretary of the East Sepik Pangu Pati Branch, he ran as an independent Pangu⁵.

John Parinjo Simen, 37, comes from the Boiken area of the But-Boiken census division. He holds a Public Service High School Certificate from the Administrative College and a Diploma of Education. He taught in several schools in East and West Sepik provinces until 1974 when he was appointed a Provincial Liaison Officer for the East Sepik. Simen has visit Australia, American Samoa and Fiji. He was an unsuccessful candidate for the Wewak seat in the 1972 elections. Simen contested the 1977 elections as an independent candidate.

Herman Beri, 38, married with 5 children, comes from Urip village in the But-Boiken census division. Educated to standard five, Beri entered local government politics in 1960. Until he resigned to contest the Wewak seat, he had been the President of Wewak-But local government council for 12 years.

Jim Paichua, 35, married with 3 children comes from Yangiba Village in the Tereba census division. He completed form 3 at Lae Technical college and worked in the Departments of Native Affairs and Provincial Affairs for 15 years. He was later employed as Private Secretary to the Minister for Corrective Institutions and Liquor Licensing, Mr. Pita Lus. A Pangu Member, Paichua contested the Wewak seat as an independent candidate.

Herman Waiki, 43, from Meni village, married with seven children has had no formal education. He joined the Navy in 1949 but returned to his village in 1959. He has been working as a driver at the PNG motors in Wewak. Waiki, a staunch supporter of the Seven Association, an arm of the Peli Association, was endorsed by the Country Party.

Nelson Kaspar Balo, 37, married with six children, comes from Parom village in the But-Boiken census division. He finished form 4 and took a diploma course in radiography. He was employed as a radiographer by the Health Department and has worked in Port Moresby, Goroka, Wewak and Kavieng. Before he nominated for the seat, he was the secretary of the East Sepik Public Service Association.

William Hawary, 35, comes from Koikin village in Wewak. A local businessman, he completed Form 2 at St. Xaviers High School and then went to the Papua Medical College from where he obtained his diploma. An activist with labour union movement in Wewak, Hawary is a member of the Wewak Town Planning Committee and the Interim Provincial Government for the East Sepik. In 1970, the Australian Labour Party sponsored him to visit Australia to study trade unions. he became the organizer of the National Labour Party upon his return.

Kambegetua Yurapago, 45, married with seven children, comes from Nambatui village in Wewak. Between 1952-58, he was a soldier with Pacific Islands Regiment. He resigned and returned home to start subsistence farming. He also owns approximately 400 coconut trees, 500 cocoa trees and 1,000 coffee trees. He contested the election as an independent candidate.

Ernest Beata, 35, is a non-Sepik from Waima village in the Kairuku area of the Central Province. He completed Form 3 and joined the Pacific Islands

Regiment in 1961. In 1964, he joined the Electricity Commission.

(b) *Campaigns*

There was a certain uniformity about the campaign for the Wewak Open seat. All the candidates talked about issues of local importance, particularly more aid posts, bridges, roads, schools, and promotion of more businesses. All promised to be responsive to the needs of the electorates and to keep in close touch with them. With the exception of Bais, Beri and Martin, most of the candidates limited their campaign to the areas where they expected to get more of their votes. Most of the candidates had their own election leaflets and photographs. These leaflets outlined the policy concerns of the candidates. Radio Wewak was used by most of the candidates to reach the voters. The campaign speeches were generally dull, with candidates trying to avoid introducing controversial policies which might alienate voters. The campaigning sparked off little public discussion or activity. It was carried out in a calm and non-abusive manner. Tony Bais, however, had to take out a K50,000 writ against the United Party candidate for Yangoru-Saussia, John Jaminan, because of the latter's accusation that Bais misappropriated Government funds while a Provincial Commissioner. None of the candidates recognized the importance of explaining to voters the mechanics of the voting. Little wonder that so many voters were confused about the procedures.

The most important candidates during the campaign were clearly Tony Bais, Mrs. Martin and Herman Beri. As was indicated earlier, all three candidates were widely known in the electorate. Either because of their official positions, for example, Bais and Beri, or business activities, for example, Mrs. Martin, all three were capable of reaching important segments of the voters. All three were, therefore, expected to campaign actively and to do well. Their names were mentioned more often by respondents during interviews. It is not known how much each of the three candidates spent, but Bais' campaign expenditures would be over K5,000.

Bais, the Pangu-sponsored candidate, stressed the achievements of the Somare Government. While endorsing Pangu's achievements, he was careful to stress his own achievements as a Provincial Commissioner. In places, he reminded the voters that his candidacy was an example of dedication to the interests of the people. He had resigned from an important job in order to contest the election. In keeping with his stand against expatriate business exploitation, Bais' views on business activities of expatriates was very radical. He accused expatriate businessmen of using nationals as mere fronts. He was critical of their dominance in the business sector and their habit of expatriating large profits. During his term of office, Bais wanted expatriate businessmen to accept nationals into their shareholdings. He reserved tourist bus operations for nationals. Thus his critical stand on these issues during the campaign was not an election ploy but was in keeping with his economic philosophy. On the issue of drunkenness, Bais advocated unrestricted drinking as the only way to stop black-marketing. Interestingly, it was largely Bais' critical attitudes towards expatriate businesses which led Mrs. Martin to nominate for the seat.

Bais' campaign was well-organized. He toured the electorate extensively. As well, he used Radio Wewak more extensively than any other candidate. His campaign posters were widely distributed. Mr. Somare also campaigned with him at several stages of the campaign. In addition to direct appeals to the voters, Bais sought the support of councils and councillors. Relying on Councils and Councillors to relay one's message to the voters is an important aspect of electoral politics in Papua New Guinea. Councillors were invited

home by Bais to discuss issues and campaign strategies. Undoubtedly, his strong bid for the support of councillors was partly a response to the candidacy of Herman Beri, the President of Wewak-But Local Government Council. In order to reduce Beri's advantages as Council president, Bais needed influential councillors to commit their followers to his candidacy.

Mrs. Martin's campaign was also extensive. She travelled widely and her campaign posters could be found in several villages and Wewak town. Unlike Bais, Mrs. Martin had no campaign organization. She contested the election largely from a sense of rage about Tony Bais' attacks on expatriate business activities. She strongly believed that she and other expatriate businessmen and women had made important contributions to Wewak and the province at large. Evidently she did not want Bais to win the Wewak seat.

Campaigning on the slogan "vote Laura Martin for Action" she made drunkenness and female participation in policy-making her major concerns. Mrs. Martin's tough stand on drunkenness was initially supported by the Wewak-But Local Government Council. By the middle of the campaign the Council had, however, withdrawn its support for strict drinking laws and adopted Bais' advocacy of 24-hour drinking as the only sensible way to stop black marketing. How much of this withdrawal of support is attributable to the behind-the-scenes lobbying to Tony Bais is difficult to determine. One suspects, though, that Bais might have had a hand in it. After all, he was also wooing the Councillors. Mrs. Martin's racial background could easily be played upon in order to discredit her view on drunkenness. In fact, John Jaminan and Joseph Ulaipo alluded to her racial background during the campaign.

Mrs. Martin deliberately injected the issue of female participation in politics into the campaign and hoped to capture the female vote through this strategy. She visited and spoke to several women's groups. She appeared to have been promised support by these groups. Judged by the heavy turn-out of female voters, had the promise of support materialized, the outcome of the elections would have been much closer. As it turned out, Mrs. Martin's expectations were not met. On election day, many women turned up at voting booths in Pangu T-shirts. Admittedly, wearing a Pangu T-Shirt does not necessarily imply an intention to vote for that Party but in a largely illiterate electorate such symbolic identification opens up opportunities for pressures by Pangu scrutineers. It is entirely possible, too, that women voters had been pressured by their husbands to vote for their favoured candidates.

Herman Beri, the former President of Wewak-But Local Council, and endorsed by the People's Progress Party (PPP) also ran a reasonably impressive campaign. He travelled extensively in the electorate. Like Tony Bais, he emphasized developmental issues in his campaign. Beri's campaign had a big burst in Wewak early in the campaign when the PPP leader, Julius Chan, came to introduce him. However, that momentum could not be sustained when Chan left. By and large the PPP organization was counting on Beri's long tenure as Council President to carry him to victory. There was no PPP machinery in the rural areas to carry on Beri's campaign. Unlike Bais, Beri did not use Radio Wewak. It would seem that he expected his Council colleagues to support his candidacy and to sell his views and virtues to the voters. His campaign posters were, however, widely distributed.

(c) *Results*

Tony Bais won the Wewak seat as was widely expected. The advantage of office, the superiority of his campaign organization over those of Beri and

Mrs. Martin (for example, Pangu scrutineers were found in most of the polling stations), the use of trucks to bring in voters, all seemed to have rewarded Bais handsomely. However, his margin of victory was surprising. On the basis of available figures, Herman Beri and Mrs. Laura Martin did not do as well as they expected. The only place where Beri outpolled Bais was in his native But-Boiken census division. In fact more than two-thirds of Beri's total votes came from But-Boiken and Wewak Local census divisions. Obviously, primordial sentiments better explain the voter preferences. Unfortunately for Beri, his chances of increasing his lead over Tony Bais in his home base were reduced because of the candidacy of another home boy, John Parinjo Simen. Had Simen not run, Beri might have collected most of the 407 votes that he polled in the But-Boiken census division. I do not believe that Pangu Pati put Simen, who stood as an Independent Pangu, in the race to split Beri's votes. His candidacy could be regarded as consistent with his interest in electoral politics. He had been a candidate in the 1972 General Election.

Herman Beri might also have lost some votes in his home area because of an unfortunate car accident. A group of people from his own village are claiming between K2,000-3000 compensation from him for the accident. It is fair to assume that a certain amount of anti-Beri felling existed which was translated into an anti-Beri vote. It might be revealing if it were possible to find out those who voted for Simen and those who gave Bais his 337 votes in the But-Boiken Census division.

Another reason accounting for Bais' margin of victory was the poor performance of Beri and Mrs. Martin in Wewak town and the surrounding villages. Advantage of publicity and the use of trucks certainly helped Bais who collected 1802 of the total 4672 votes. Beri and Mrs. Martin polled only 383 and 554 respectively. Mrs. Martin's performance here is more surprising than Beri's. She made a strong bid for the female vote and although there was a heavy turn-out of female voters, she evidently did not get all of them. As well, in spite of appeals by expatriate businessmen to their workers to vote for Mrs. Martin, most of them did not.

Finally, one must mention the important role played by the Pangu Pati organization in Bais' victory. Although party politics does not play a decisive role in electoral politics in Papua New Guinea, the Pangu Pati machinery helped Bais to carry his candidacy to some of the voters. He emphasized Pangu's achievements and appealed to voters to support the Party's endorsed candidate. Indeed, this was Pangu's national campaign strategy. As well, local Pangu supporters freely gave Bais their trucks to help bring in voters.

2. *Angoram Open*

(a) *Candidates*

Eight candidates nominated for the seat of Angoram: Sebastian Okm, Leo Unumba, Joe Maike, Sarry Wimban, Teddy Sane, Gordon Kanaba, Anton Wopmai and William Eichorn.

Okm, 37, from Porapora is married with three children. He had been a primary school teacher with the Education Department for 13 years. Before he nominated for the seat of Angoram, he was the Headmaster of Angoram Community School. Because of his teaching career, he is reasonably well-known in the electorate. Although not endorsed by the Pangu Pati, Okm contested the election as an independent Pangu and received K250 campaign contribution from the Pangu East Sepik Branch.

Leo Unumba, 26, married with no children, is a trained commercial pilot.

He is from Branda Village. He was formerly a clerk with the Sepik Brothers Development Group. Unumba completed Form 4 and went on to matriculate at the University of Papua New Guinea. He had been in the electorate for more than 2 years when he nominated for the seat of Angoram. Reputed to be a playboy and capable of hard-drinking, he contested the election as an independent candidate.

Joe Maika, 37, married with nine children, is from Moim village in the Angoram district. Educated to Form 3, Maika worked with the Local Government Council for 15 years at Binat, Goroka and Angoram. During his term of office as Council Clerk, he worked hard to improve roads in and around Angoram town. He was influential in the construction of market houses at Angoram. An admirer of the Prime Minister, Mr. Somare, and supporter of Pangu, Maika contested the election as an Independent candidate.

Sarry Wimban, 36, from Mindinbit village, is married with three children. He completed Form 4 at Kambubu High School, Rabaul. Wimban worked with Health Department for twelve years as Health Extension Officer. Before nominating for the Angoram seat, he was the Provincial Health Extension Officer at Wewak General Hospital. Because of the nature of his job, Wimban is very well known in the province. Most knowledgeable people of Angoram politics expected him to be the strongest challenger to the incumbent candidate, William Eichorn. A United Party supporter, Wimban was the party's endorsed candidate.

Teddy Sane, 26, married with no children, is from Koragopa village. After completing Form four at Brandi Provincial High School, he attended Napanapa Nautical Studies as cadet officer. He worked as a merchant navy for 2 years, serving in various merchant ships in Australia, Japan, Pacific Islands and PNG ports. Self employed as a subsistence farmer at the time of nominating for the seat, Sane was endorsed by PPP. Well-liked by his people because he gave up a good job to come home and live with the villagers, Sane expected widespread support from his people in his campaign.

Gordon Kanaba, 38, from Murik Lakes, is married with two children. Educated to standard 4 at S.D.A. Mission School, Goroka, Kanaba was employed at the Department of Public Health for 19 years in various aid posts. A Pangu Pati supporter, he contested the election as an independent candidate. Kanaba received no campaign contribution from the party.

Anton Wopmai, 35, married with four children, comes from Kabrivan village, Amboin sub-district. Before he nominated for the seat of Angoram, he had been a school teacher for ten years. Headmaster of the Chambri Community School before nomination, Wopmai completed Form 4 at Wewak. He took the Headmaster's course at Port Moresby Teachers College for two years.

William Eichorn, 43, married with nine children, is mixed race with an Australian father and Angoram mother. Born in Koragopa village, he completed secondary school in Australia at Marist Brothers College, Ashgrove. After two years of teaching, he went to Bulolo where he obtained a second class engineering certificate. He went to work with his father at his Angoram Sawmill. He took to trading and has been dealing in crocodile skins and timber. He also has PMVs and a cattle project. He was elected councillor for Koragopa ward in 1966-68. The sitting member of Angoram open, Eichorn was Pangu's endorsed candidate and received K55 in campaign contribution from Pangu East Sepik Branch.

(b) *Campaigns.*

As in the Wewak Open campaign, all the candidates for the Angoram seat talked pretty much about the same issues; upgrading the Wewak/Angoram road, enlargement of the Gavien settlement scheme, completion of Timbunke/Wewak and Timboli/Wewak roads, creation of more local businesses, and aid posts. The three party candidates also introduced their respective party platforms to the voters. Sarry Wimban and William Eichorn extolled the leadership qualities of their Pangu party leaders, with Eichorn stressing the achievements of the Somare Government. In an electorate where the name Somare is a household word, the emphasis on his leadership qualities was bound to enhance Eichorn's appeal.

Most of the candidates campaigned extensively within the electorate. However, in recognition of the role of local factors in electoral behaviour in PNG, some candidates focused attention on their home base. A few of them, especially Eichorn, Sane, Okm and Wimban campaigned actively in the more densely populated areas. All candidates distributed campaign posters throughout the electorate. The format of the posters was similar. Each candidate had his portrait on the poster and below it were his campaign promises. All candidates spoke pidgin in their campaign speeches, with those familiar with local dialects using them to underscore their close connections to the area. In a very fragmented polity, such campaign tactics can enhance a candidate's appeal considerably.

As in the Wewak Open campaign, the candidates for the Angoram Open were polite to one another. Although William Eichorn, the incumbent, was criticized by the other candidates for not doing much for the electorate and for isolating himself from the voters, the manner in which the criticism was made was non-abusive. In fact the candidates behaved so gentlemanly that voters without strong identifications with particular candidates must have had a hard time deciding on how to vote.

Another peculiarity of the campaign was the non-confident manner in which the candidates attempted to sell themselves and their objectives to the voters. Unlike Tony Bais in the Wewak campaign, none of the candidates for the Angoram Open seemed to think he had an edge over his opponents. The absence of confidence may explain the cautiousness of the campaign tactics used. It may also explain, at least in part, the reason why several interviewees did not seem interested in the campaign.

The key candidates during the campaign were William Eichorn, Teddy Sane, Sebastian Okm, and Sarry Wimban. All four are very well-known in the electorate. They campaigned actively and extensively. Sane's youthfulness bothered some older voters. Several older voters claimed that while he was a fine man, he was too young for the job.

Eichorn's campaign was well-financed. His posters could be found everywhere. Because of comparative affluence, he was able to provide beer to influential individuals in the areas he campaigned. Although he was criticized for being unimpressive in Parliament and for ignoring the voters of his electorate, Eichorn insisted that he had done much for the electorate. He claimed that a hospital had been built in Angoram, houses had been provided for public servants, and the Gavien Settlement Scheme, financed by the Asian Development Bank, was providing jobs for hundreds of families. Eichorn's claims offended his opponents who insisted that the developments in Angoram had taken place not because of the efforts of Eichorn, but because of the Prime Minister's influence. There is a great deal of truth in the arguments of

Eichorn's opponents. Clearly, Eichorn was attempting to ride on the Prime Minister's coat tail. He was able to do this because the Prime Minister supported his candidacy and actively campaigned on his behalf. Sane, Okm and Wimban were not so fortunate in this respect. Neither the PPP leader Julius Chan nor the United Party leader, Sir Tei Abal, campaigned on behalf of their candidates. It is fair to assume that neither leader wanted to embarrass the Prime Minister in his home electorate.

(c) *Results*

William Eichorn retained his seat by polling 6198 of the total 15,633 valid votes cast (39.6%). His opponents' claim that he was an ineffective representative did not deny him the support he needed to retain his seat. Of all the factors accounting for Eichorn's victory, the support he received from the Prime Minister, particularly during the closing stages of the campaign, was the most decisive. The Angoram campaign was distinctive for the non-confident way in which candidates sold themselves to the voters. By receiving the Prime Minister's enthusiastic support, particularly in the more populous Grass census division, Eichorn's chances of doing well were considerably increased. The Prime Minister, in a real sense, made Eichorn's victory a test of his own popularity in the Angoram district. This may explain the last minute strong campaigning for Eichorn. By pointing to the developments that had taken place in Angoram, the Prime Minister, in effect, called on the voters to support a candidate that he personally endorsed.

Comparative affluence also enabled Eichorn to travel widely to dispel some of the doubts cast on his effectiveness by his opponents. His active campaigning in his own area and the fact that he was the only candidate from that area secured for him most of the votes of the area. With most of his opponents from villages close to one another down the Sepik River expected to split their votes, Eichorn's chances of victory seemed to have been increased. But the single most important factor in the outcome of the Angoram electorate was the support Eichorn received from the Prime Minister. If any individual was capable of winning that seat for any of the candidates, it was Michael Somare.

3. *Ambunti-Dreikikir Open*

As was pointed out earlier, Ambunti-Dreikikir Open electorate is the result of changes in the electoral boundaries recommended by the Electoral Commission. Previously, Dreikikir was a separate Open electorate while Ambunti was formerly Upper Sepik Open electorate. The merging of the two electorates into a single electorate affected the elections not only because it pitted two sitting members against each other but because it heightened the importance of population distribution between the two halves of the electorate.

(a) *Candidates*

Seven candidates nominated for the Ambunti-Dreikikir seat: Tromble Kabai, Kokomo Ulia, Tubuguman Harry Weldon, Thomas Aworel, Anskar Karmel, Maranganji Tamson Jumbundu and Asimboro Ston.

Tromble Kabai, about 35 years old, married with seven children, comes from Bongos village in Dreikikir. With little or no formal education, Kabai was the former member for Dreikikir Open. Formerly a village court magistrate in Dreikikir, he has a trade store, a coffee plantation and a few PMV's. A Pangu supporter, he is well-known for having helped a lot of people to start and run their own coffee plantation. Kabai is well known in the

Dreikikir area because of his concerns for the area's economic development. During his term of office, he maintained a good channel of communication with his constituents.

Kokomo Ulia, about 58, married with 3 wives and eleven children, comes from Emul village in the Dreikikir area. A village court magistrate and businessman, Ulia has no formal education. He worked for 29 years in the Wau goldmines. He joined the PNG constabulary and served for 9 years. He was elected first President for Dreikikir Local Government Council in 1965. Ulia was a former MHA. Well-known in the area, Ulia contested the Ambunti-Dreikikir seat as an independent candidate.

Tubuguman Harry Weldon, 35, married with six children, comes from Bangwis village in Ambunti. Manager of the Sepik Producers Cooperatives Association (SPCA) branch in Ambunti, Weldon is also a member of the Board of Directors of SPCA branch in Maprik. He is also the President of the Ambunti Community School Board of Management. Educated to Form 2 through correspondence school, Weldon completed his ministerial training in 1964. He had been working for the S.D.A. Mission since 1971. Actively involved in economic development activities, Weldon contested the election as an independent candidate. He had unsuccessfully contested the Upper Sepik seat in 1972.

Thomas Aworel, 31, married with two children, comes from Komala village in Dreikikir. Educated to Form 2, he taught at Bongos Community School for 4 years and at Dreikikir for 3 years. Because of the brevity of his teaching career, Aworel is not very well-known in his area. Quiet and unassuming, he does not believe in party politics. Accordingly, Aworel contested the election as an independent candidate.

Anskar Karmel, 35, married with two children, comes from Kaminimit village in the Angoram district. A successful businessman by local standards, Karmel has been living in Ambunti since 1957. Endorsed by Pangu Pati, he was the sitting member for Upper Sepik Open. Karmel is very well-known in the Ambunti district and also further down the Sepik River because he used to buy crocodile skin from the people. It was from his trade that he got enough money to start his trade store business. He has two trade stores and a liquor licence to sell beer and spirits. A number of interviewees were critical of Karmel's candidacy because they felt he had failed to maintain contacts with his electorate since he was voted into Parliament in 1972.

Maranganju Tamsan Jumbundu, 36, married with four children, comes from Avatip village in the Ambunti district. President of Ambunti Local Government Council since 1968, Jumbundu resigned to contest the seat of Ambunti-Dreikikir when nominations were called. Living in the Ambunti area all his life, he is well-known there largely because of his term of office in the Council. A subsistence farmer, Jumbundu contested the election as a United Party candidate.

Asimboro Ston, 42, married with six children, comes from Asiling village in the Dreikikir district. Educated to standard 3 at Borom Central School, Ston has had several jobs — messenger in the District Office, Wewak, Switch board operator and aid post orderly. After completing an aid post supervisor's course in 1966, he was promoted to hospital orderly in 1969. Elected President of the Dreikikir Council in 1965, Ston was an unsuccessful candidate for the seat of Dreikikir Open in 1972. Well-known because of his job as a hospital orderly, Ston is generally popular with the people of both Dreikikir and Ambunti. He contested the election as Independent-Pangu and received K60 campaign contribution from Pangu East Sepik Branch.

(b) *Campaigns*

As in the Angoram Open campaign, the Ambunti-Dreikikir campaign was conducted peacefully. With the exception of the sitting member for formerly Upper Sepik, Anskar Karmel, who is from Angoram, all the candidates were either from Dreikikir or Ambunti. All the candidates discussed issues of local concern; roads, bridges, health centres, education and more local businesses. Specifically, candidates promised to ensure the completion of the Ambunti/Maprik road so that people can transport their coffee to Maprik, upgrade the Dreikikir/Maprik road so as to encourage PMV business, establish a rural health centre for the electorate instead of the present aid posts in Ambunti and Dreikikir, and to find a solution to the school drop-out problem in the area. All candidates used campaign posters to reach the voters. The party endorsed candidates, Askar Karmel (Pangu), and Jumbundu (United Party), also endeavoured to stress what their parties stood for, with Karmel dwelling upon the achievements of the Pangu Pati.

The merging of Ambunti and Dreikikir into one electorate affected the campaign strategy of most the candidates. Generally, popular attitude towards the merger was critical. Most interviewees felt that the two areas were not contiguous: Ambunti is near the Sepik River while Dreikikir is up on the mountains. People felt that their customs were not even close enough to warrant the merger. Accordingly, most candidates tended to concentrate their campaign on their own areas of support. Of the seven candidates, three were from Ambunti (Tubuguman Harry Weldon, Auskar Karmel, and Jumbundu) and four from Dreikikir (Tromble Kabai, Asimboro Ston, Kokomo Ulia, and Thomas Aworel). With population distribution favouring Dreikikir, the more popular of the Dreikikir candidates and particularly the one from the more densely populated group of villages, would seem to have an edge over the other candidates.

The key candidates in the campaign were Kabai (Dreikikir), Ulia (Dreikikir), Weldon (Ambunti), Karmel (Ambunti) and Ston (Dreikikir). Of the five, only Ulia began his campaign late. All were reasonably well-known in their respective areas. With the exception of Ulia, they campaigned actively and reasonably extensively. Given the spread of the electorate, campaigning clearly made heavy demands on candidates' time and resources. Their campaign strategies varied from distribution of printed leaflets to friendly chats with village elders. In the Dreikikir area, Kabai made much of his close contacts with the electorate during his terms of office as their Member of House of Assembly. However, because of the general feeling that he accomplished very little for the Dreikikir electorate, his appeal reached only a limited audience.

Kokomo Ulia's campaign was limited in scope and badly organized he did very little campaigning either because he felt he was well-known, particularly in the Dreikikir area, or because he did not take his candidacy serious enough. His age may also have been a factor, given the nature of the geographical terrain. Respondents did not react too favourably to his campaign because they felt he did little for the area when he was their member in the 1968 House of Assembly.

Weldon waged a determined campaign. Having lost to Karmel in the 1972 elections for the seat of Upper Sepik, he seemed to understand the requirements of electoral success. His campaign posters were widely distributed and he campaigned hard in his native Ambunti area. He spoke about his concern to promote local businesses in the area. In many villages especially further up the Sepik river from Ambunti, Weldon's campaign promises won enthusiastic support. Although he received polite attention from

voters in the Dreikikir area, voter responses to his campaign were rather lukewarm.

Anskar Karmel, the sitting Pangu member for Upper Sepik and the Party's endorsed candidate, pinned his electoral hopes on winning large support in the Ambunti area, although he campaigned in the Dreikikir area, too. Rather dull in his campaign speeches, Karmel tried to focus voters' attention on the achievements of the Somare Government. His own record as a Parliamentarian, however, became an issue in the campaign. Weldon and Jumbundu attacked him for accomplishing nothing for the area and for failing to visit his electorate more often. Karmel's stronghold was in the villages of Malu and Yanahai. Significantly, his crocodile farm is a joint venture with these two villages.

Ston was an unsuccessful candidate for the seat of Dreikikir in the 1972 elections. Involved in a lot of community organizations, he is reputed to be a helpful man in the Dreikikir area. He travelled extensively in the Dreikikir area during the campaign emphasizing local developmental issues. His posters were widely distributed in the Ambunti area. He was widely tipped to win the seat not so much because of his campaign promises but because of his popularity in the Dreikikir area, the more densely — populated half of the electorate of Ambunti-Dreikikir.

(c) *Results*

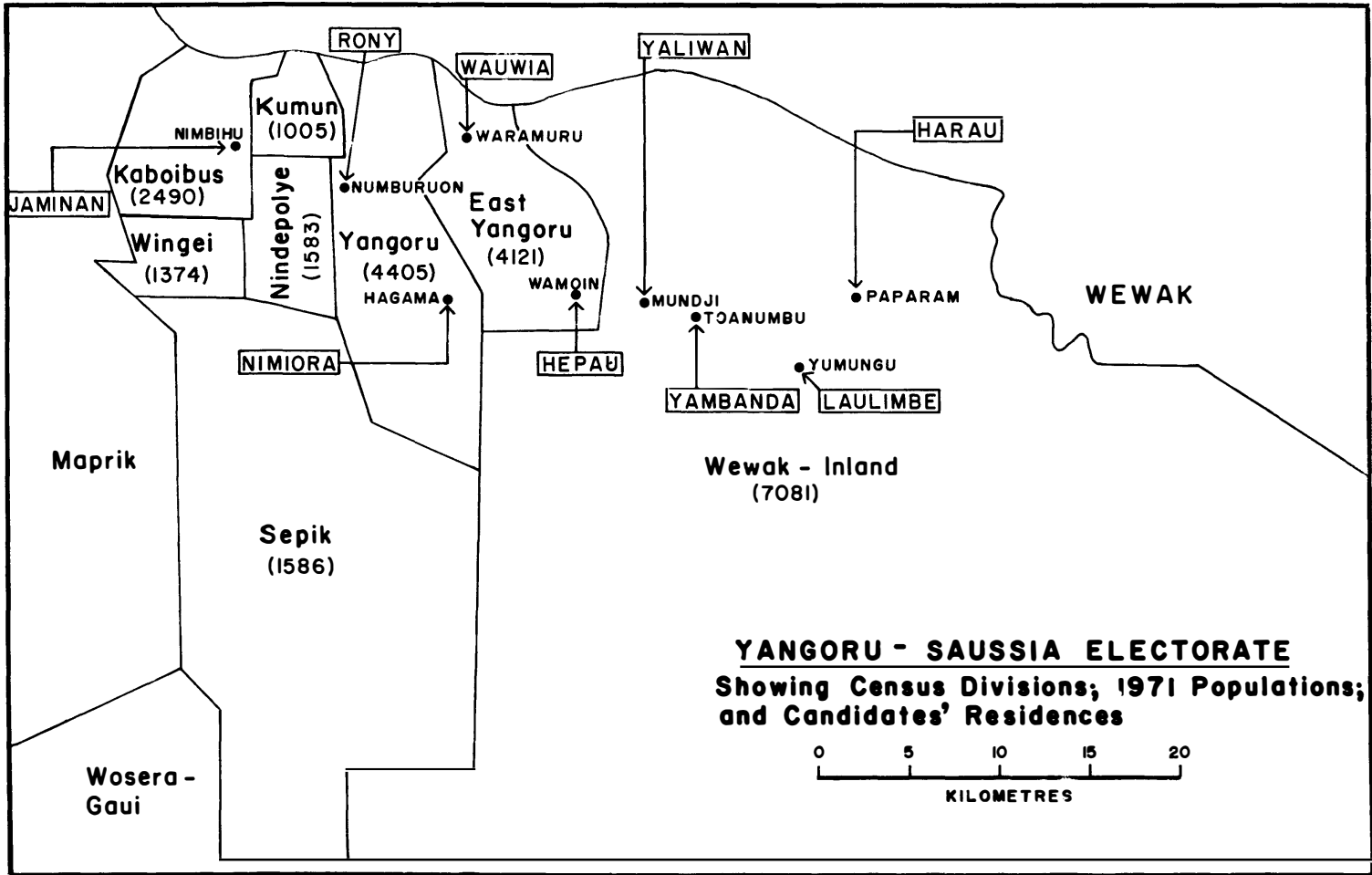
As was widely expected, Asimboro Ston won the seat by polling 5169 of the total 14,400 valid votes cast. His closest rival, Tubuguman Harry Weldon, polled 2,474 votes.

Two factors seem to account for Ston's victory; ethnic factors coupled with geography and popularity. He comes from Asiling village between Maprik and Dreikikir. The villages around the area are densely populated. Ston expected to get most of his votes from these areas. In view of the fact that he was the only candidate from these areas, it can be assumed that most of the voters there voted for him. As well, Dreikikir has a denser population than Ambunti. Secondly, because of his work as a hospital orderly, a lot of people know him in the Dreikikir area as a whole. His work involved considerable travelling and all this helped him not only in the campaign but during the voting.

In addition to these two factors, one must also mention a subsidiary factor; the widespread belief that the two incumbent Parliamentarians (Kabai-Dreikikir Open, and Karmel-Upper Sepik Open) had not done much for the now combined electorate of Ambunti-Dreikikir. With both candidates unlikely to poll heavily outside their immediate group of villages, Ston's chances, as a result of the two factors mentioned earlier, were accordingly enhanced.

Concluding Observations

Firm generalizations about electoral behaviour in PNG are difficult to make. Were party politics the key explanatory variable in voter preferences in PNG elections, one would have little difficulty explaining the outcomes in the East Sepik elections. Pangu Pati candidates and one independent Pangu won six of the seven seats of the Province. Pangu candidate, Wauwia, lost the Yangoru-Saussia seat by only 115 votes. Although Pangu Pati is well known throughout the province because of Michael Somare and a few other Sepik political elites such as Pita Lus, the successes of Pangu candidates are due more to local and candidate factors than to party politics. As is evident in this report, Pangu itself recognized the secondary role of party politics and therefore encouraged the candidacy of bright and attractive individuals for the



same seat. This was the case for all the East Sepik seats except the Provincial and Maprik seats. Parties seem to look for candidates who are strong because of either ethnic factors or business successes or official roles (for example, councillor, government official, traditional big man). For these reasons, scholars' ability to predict electoral outcomes in PNG depends very much upon elaborate knowledge and familiarity with the local scene. Of course, party identifications are important to the extent that parties are well organized and capable of spreading a candidate's message to remote villages. If such an organization exists, then parties can enhance a candidate's chances in a supportive role. This seems to have been the case especially with Tony Bais' campaign in the Wewak Open electorate.

Generally, the conclusion that emerges from this report is that voter preferences are influenced by clan-ties by reputation and by the extent to which candidates are personally known to voters. This requirement of electoral success in PNG places tremendous pressure on candidates to move around, to talk to people and to show sympathy for what they have to say. In Yangoru-Saussia electorate, an otherwise relatively young and unknown candidate recognized these obligations and waged a highly intelligent, if aggressive, successful campaign.

Certain minimal conditions also need to be fulfilled by candidates. Voters' understanding of the mechanics of voting is crucial for aspiring candidates. In the East Sepik elections with the exception of the Provincial seat, no candidate pictures were printed on the ballot papers. This created some confusion in the minds of many voters. Most of the candidates made no attempt to explain to voters the voting procedures with the result that some voters assumed that they were only expected to mark the Provincial ballot paper which happened to show candidates' photographs. Finally, there was a marked absence of concern about larger national issues and Papua New Guinea's place in relation to the external world. Most of the issues discussed were of parochial concern. Although a few of the East Sepik candidates had travelled abroad, none discussed foreign policy issues. Admittedly, foreign policy issues have seldom played a decisive role even in largely literate societies. However, given the country's heavy dependence on the external world and its often difficult relations with Indonesia, the voters were entitled to know the constraints within elected representatives would be expected to work.

NOTES

1. 1971 National Census figure. These figures were recommended to Parliament by the Electoral Boundaries Commission as the basis for the 1977 elections.
2. *PNG Electoral Boundaries Commission: Report and New Recommendations, 1977* (Port Moresby: Government Printer 1975), p. 5.
3. The Prime Minister was expected to campaign in the Chimbu and Enga Province during the closing stages of the campaign but the threat of possible attack on his person forced him to cancel his trip.
4. Tony Bais was appointed Provincial Commissioner for New Ireland in 1976. He held his post before his resignation to contest the seat of Wewak Open.
5. Pangu East Sepik Branch made a cash contribution of K350.00 to Wobar's campaign. Rather interestingly, the Party's endorsed candidate also got K350.00.

Chapter 14

YANGORU-SAUSSIA OPEN: THE DISAPPEARANCE OF AN 83 PER CENT MAJORITY

Bob Winnett and R.J. May

In a recent brief comment on the volume of papers recording the 1972 national elections in Papua New Guinea (Stone 1976), Henry Mayer (1978:61) described the study as 'an endless series of little snippety-snappety election studies' and bewailed the absence of a framework giving some coherence to the collection. The charge is of course valid (and one which might be levelled at a number of similar collections). At the same time, national elections in a rapidly changing polity like that of Papua New Guinea provide the opportunity not only for taking a snapshot of political activity in the nation as a whole (and thus of considering the various electorates within an overall framework) but for seeing, in high relief, some of the particular factors which govern political relationships in a number of local (snippety-snappety) situations, not all of which can be easily accommodated within a satisfactory model of electoral politics at the national level.

Thus, from a broad perspective, one might regard the election in Yangoru-Saussia within the context of a general — though by no means universal — trend in which young, educated, urban-based men and women returned to their home areas to wrest parliamentary power from the more traditionally based elders, exploiting their capacity to act as brokers between the modern state and the village. Such an approach has much to commend it: the two leading candidates were just such young men (though without a proven capacity as brokers). But it would seriously underrate the unusual features of the Yangoru-Saussia situation. In the 1972 elections Yangoru-Saussia attracted national attention as the centre of a semi-mystical mass movement, whose leader was swept to office with a massive majority. In 1977 the situation had clearly changed but the experience of 1972, and a degree of lingering uncertainty, lent the campaign a vicarious interest. In the following account we have attempted to capture some of this interest. But we confess that this is essentially a snippety-snappety study; if it has something general to say about political behaviour, that relates more to the general process of social change in relatively deprived areas than to a model of electoral politics.

The electorate

The Yangoru-Saussia electorate is roughly in the centre of the East Sepik Province. It stretches some 70 km from the Nagam river in the east to Wingei in the west and about 45 km from the Prince Alexander range in the north to the Sepik plains in the south. The electorate is bounded by the Wewak Open electorate to the north, Angoram to the south, Wosera-Gai to the southwest and Maprik to the west. Estimated population of Yangoru-Saussia in 1971 was 23,645, most of whom were concentrated along the Sepik highway which links Wewak to Maprik and the West Sepik. There are small government stations at Yangoru and Kubalia. The electorate covers eight census divisions (see map 1);

in four of these (accounting for 73 per cent of the population) the predominant language is Boiken, although there are a few Sawos speaking people to the south; in the northwest of the electorate Arapesh, or Pukia, is the predominant language in two divisions, and in two others, in the centre-west of the electorate there is a high proportion of Abelam speakers. Ritual-yam displays and pig exchanges and a limited amount of trade still provide occasions for interaction between villages (especially in the northern part of the electorate) but traditional social and political units are typically small. There has been little development in the area. The bulk of the people are subsistence farmers though there is a limited amount of cash cropping, mostly coffee, cocoa and copra. Income is low, and there is a high incidence of malnutrition.¹

The electorate was created as a result of the electoral redistribution of 1971. Prior to this Yangoru-Saussia had been split between the Wewak and Ambunti-Yangoru electorates. In the 1968 elections the voters of Ambunti-Yangoru returned a man from near Ambunti, in what is now the Wosera-Guia electorate, while Beibi Yambanda, a retired police sergeant from Toanambu, now in Yangoru-Saussia, became the MHA for Wewak Open.

In 1972 the House of Assembly elections roughly coincided in the Sepik with the peak of activity of a cult movement which was described by a government official at the time as 'one of the biggest and most potentially explosive cults in the Territory's history'. The cult, centred on the scared mountain of Hurun (Mt. Turu), which dominates the Yangoru patrol post, had quickly spread throughout the East and West Sepik Provinces.² In the Yangoru-Saussia electorate cult leader Matias Yaliwan stood against six other candidates and was elected with 83 per cent of the total votes cast (7684 first preference votes to his nearest opponent's 474). Support for Yaliwan also disrupted voting in the surrounding Wewak, Maprik and Dreikikir electorates³; moreover had he not been precluded, on grounds of education, from contesting the regional electorate, he may well have unseated the sitting regional member, Michael Somare.

The third House of Assembly was opened in April 1972. In a very brief maiden speech Yaliwan declared himself to be the Leader of Papua New Guinea and demanded immediate self-government and independence. Two months later, in response to a statement by the MHA for Maprik Open, Pita Lus, which called on the government to take action against the cult led by Yaliwan, Yaliwan told the House that he had resigned from the movement and had nothing whatsoever to do with it and that his name must not be associated with it any longer. In October 1972 Yaliwan announced that he was resigning from the House of Assembly (though his formal resignation was not received until June 1973).

In the by-election which resulted from Yaliwan's resignation in 1973 there were eight candidates: Lainus Hepau, who had become Yaliwan's secretary in 1973, another Yaliwan supporter, three Pangu Pati candidates (one endorsed and two independent), and three others. Hepau led all the way in a fairly closely contested election, defeating the endorsed Pangu candidate, John Wauwia, on the sixth distribution of preferences.

Hepau, who described himself as a subsistence farmer and prayer leader, was born in Saure village, Wewak around 1938 and had worked there for most of his life. He became a Peli supporter in 1971 and joined Yaliwan first at Marambanja and later at Wamoin. In a speech to the House of Assembly in March 1974 Hepau told members that the people did not want the government

to establish any project on Hurun and that it was now time for all the countries of the world to come together as one big country; he complained that no one had explained to his people the meaning of self-government and independence except Matias Yaliwan and, he said, quoting a biblical reference in support, he believed Yaliwan. Otherwise Hepau was an inconspicuous member of the House, both in Port Moresby and at home in his electorate.

The rise and decline of the Peli movement⁴

The Hurun cult seems to date back to about 1969 when two men, Matias Yaliwan and Daniel Hawina, became convinced that a number of cement survey markers placed on top of Hurun were preventing material benefits from flowing to the people. In December 1969 Yaliwan, Hawina and some others removed one of the markers; they were arrested and sentenced to short terms in gaol. On their release they returned to their preoccupation with the markers and began enlisting support. They visited a number of villages in the area and in the early months of 1971 addressed mass meetings around Wewak. A large sum of money was collected.

The removal of the markers was set down for the seventh day of the seventh month. As this day approached thousands of people converged on Hurun from all over the East and West Sepik Provinces. The government, though obviously concerned and anxious about these developments, recognised that strong opposition to the cult might only strengthen belief in it and adopted what it generally described as a 'low profile approach' of discouraging support for the movement but avoiding confrontation with it. In the event the markers were removed and placed outside the Yangoru patrol post without incident; people gradually returned to their houses and the government took no action against the cultists. Asked what he intended to do with the money which had been collected, Yaliwan told reporters that it would be used to set up an association to bring together people from all over the world.

In July 1971 the formation of the Peli Association was announced. Hawina was named as president; Yaliwan, though acknowledged as 'leader' of the Association, did not take office. Membership of the Association was open and a membership fee was set at 70t (this was distinct from 'contributions' of K12 or so, which had been collected before July 1971 and continued to be collected). Committee members (*komiti*) were appointed for each village or group of villages in which there was support for the Association and between late 1971 and 1973 these journeyed frequently between their own villages and the Association's headquarters at Marambanja to hold discussions with and receive instructions from Yaliwan and Hawina. Beneath the *komiti* there were usually representatives (*bosboi*) at roughly clan or hamlet level and these in turn were assisted by a large number of young men ('workers') and girls ('flowers'), generally chosen by *komiti*.

The objectives of the Peli Association were never clearly stated. At its first public meeting prominence was given to the aims of economic development in the Sepik and control of the funds collected by the cult. Subsequently the Association purchased several trucks which, it was said, would be used for transporting Peli members and carrying copra and coffee bought by the Association. In fact, however, the trucks were used solely for the private transport of members and they had a short life. The Association never did become involved in copra and coffee buying. Towards the end of 1974 the Association purchased a European owned tradestore at Yangoru and acquired the liquor licence that went with it. The liquor licence was subsequently

cancelled and the store sold, at a loss, to Hawina's brother. In its attitude towards both government and missions the Association was generally antipathetic. Although the movement avoided overt confrontation with government it fed upon a sense of dissatisfaction with government generally and local government specifically: in 1972 Peli members were directed not to pay council taxes and some members were prosecuted.

There is little doubt, however, that what attracted the great mass of the Association's following was the hope of 'cargo'. Some believed that Yaliwan and Hawina had discovered the secret of creating money; others, while not really believing, joined the Association just in case; others succumbed to social pressures to conform. Yaliwan staunchly denied that Peli was a cargo cult but both he and Hawina undoubtedly played on people's expectations with a blend of mysticism and ambiguous half-promises. Rituals designed to increase money became a focus of Peli Association activities. 'Power houses' were set up in which 'workers' and 'flowers' 'washed money' or 'fought the dishes' in order to increase the money collected from Peli members. By November 1972 there were about 50 of these and plans to build 600. Graveyards, or 'memorial gardens', were established in which members planted suitcases and waited for their money to increase. In July 1972 it was announced that 800 memorial plots had been sold at Marambanja at a cost of K10 each.

From mid 1971 until well into 1973 support for the Peli Association continued to grow. In March 1972 Yaliwan claimed a membership of over 62,000 and subscriptions amounting to about K100,000. Estimates of the Association's membership at the peak of its activity in 1973 range between 100,000 and 200,000 and funds collected probably exceeded K200,000.

Thus when Yaliwan contested the House of Assembly election in 1972 he was the acknowledged leader of a massive popular movement with a formidable, if vaguely defined, organizational structure. Assisted by Hawina and a Papuan secretary, Yaliwan conducted an extensive campaign travelling from village to village preaching the Peli philosophy, promising an end to council taxes and workdays and cessation of malaria spraying, and calling for national unity and early independence.

Support for the Peli Association continued to grow after Yaliwan's election to the House. But from the early months of 1972 some reaction appears to have set in. In May 1972 Peli supporters organized a public meeting in Yangoru, from which Yaliwan walked out and told Hawina that Yaliwan had until the third session of the House to fulfill his promises. If he had not done so by then, the people said, they would call for a by-election. Soon after there were reports that Peli Association members threatened to destroy all the buildings in Yangoru patrol post if the money they had paid was not returned. And there were other incidents.

Also, Yaliwan began to have misgivings about his role. In retrospect, there was probably always tension in the relation between Yaliwan and Hawina. Yaliwan was the spiritual leader of the Peli movement but Hawina provided the main organizational force and appealed most directly to people's cult-nurtured hopes of monetary gains, exploiting Yaliwan's reputation for having supernatural powers. In June 1972 Yaliwan resigned from Peli, ostensibly because Hawina refused to enforce his orders that Peli members leave Marambanja to return to their villages and that they support their local government councils. In September Yaliwan told the press that there were many things about Peli which disturbed him and the following month when he announced his intention of resigning from the House he said that the Peli Association had employed sorcerers to make him sick in the head. Yaliwan

subsequently withdrew to a hamlet near Wamoin, on the Sepik highway about 35 km to the southeast of Yangoru, where he and some of his followers established a large, fenced compound.

With the resignation of Yaliwan, Hawina took control of Peli, and, it seems, most of the Association's assets. Shortly after, however, Hawina and the Peli vice-president and five other Peli members were arrested as the result of a hotel brawl and sentenced to gaol terms of up to ten months. During their absence there was a pronounced decentralization of Peli activity and with this decentralization came eventual decline.

Meanwhile, towards the end of 1972 Yaliwan announced the formation of the Mt. Hurun Christian Democratic Association, later renamed the Seven Association. As had been the case with the Peli Association, the aims of the Seven Association were somewhat obscure, the sole objective, according to Yaliwan, being to establish the law of God. On Yaliwan's account, the Seven Association had nothing to do with the Peli Association or with power houses or memorial gardens, and had no interest in business or politics; he did, however, invite Peli members to join by paying a 70t membership fee. Hawina, on the other hand, refused to acknowledge that the Peli and Seven Associations had different objectives and when asked in 1975 if Peli would contest the next national elections replied that Peli would support whoever Yaliwan decided to nominate. As for the mass of village people, apart from those directly involved in the dispute between Yaliwan and Hawina few seem to have had any awareness of the split and tended to identify Peli with Yaliwan.

By early 1974 active mass support for the Peli and Seven Associations seems to have largely disappeared and most power houses and memorial gardens had been abandoned. Patrol reports in late 1973 and early 1974 reported frequent threats of violence against Peli officials; yet considering that the movement was generally acknowledged to have failed and that in the process a large number of village people had lost sizeable amounts of money, there was surprisingly little bitterness and though Hawina and his associates appear to have been fairly thoroughly discredited there remained a good deal of vague sympathy towards the movement and a widespread belief that Yaliwan possessed 'special powers'.

In 1975 the government seems to have abandoned its earlier 'low profile' approach to the movement and towards the end of the year two hundred *komiti* (but not including Yaliwan or Hawina) were charged variously with illegally collecting taxes and spreading false reports. One hundred and fifty were sentenced to five to six months imprisonment with hard labour and fifty were fined and released. This change in policy seems to have coincided with the appointment as provincial commissioner of Tony Bais, who had been one of the unsuccessful Pangu candidates in the 1973 by-election.

Summarizing the situation at the end of 1976, May⁵ commented in 1977 that

... there were still pockets of active Peli-Seven supporters and probably a substantial base of potential support which could be activated by strong leadership, given effective organizational support, Yaliwan is probably still capable of assuming this leadership....

Others appeared to be more confident about the demise of Peli and of Yaliwan but an uncertainty lingered in people's minds as the election approached.

Pre-election politics

In the latter part of 1976 May visited a number of villages in the Yangoru-Saussia area and in the course of a wideranging discussion raised the subject of

the approaching national election. With only one or two exceptions villagers were unaware that there was to be an election. Having informed them that this was the case May sought opinions as to who might stand. There was little response to this question. Of those who recognized that Hepau was the sitting member few thought he would be successful again. Many people, however, felt that should Yaliwan stand he would probably be returned.

But while the prospect of a national election did not excite the mass of rural villagers, among a small group of the politically aware there was, to mix metaphors, much sniffing of the air and jockeying for positions.

In the 1973 by-election there had been three Pangu candidates. The endorsed candidate was John Wauwia. Wauwia, aged 40 in 1977, from Waramuru village at the foot of Hurun, was a former primary school teacher, radio announcer and parliamentary interpreter. Early in 1973 he had gained some local prominence as an opponent of the Peli Association. At a meeting at Yangoru in January 1973, attended by a number of students home on vacation, Wauwia informed the people that it had been decided to combat cult activities in the area through the Yangoru Youth Club, a club associated with the Roman Catholic Young Workers' Association. At a later stage, he said, the club would undertake village development, with the cooperation of the village people, and encourage people to help themselves. When first preference votes were counted in 1973 Wauwia was third of the eight candidates, behind Hepau and Peter Rony, but when preferences had been allocated he was in second place with 1839 votes to Hepau's 2451. Subsequently he returned to Port Moresby where he became private secretary to the minister for police (Pita Lus) and later an assistant at the UN Information Centre. The Yangoru Youth Club appears to have languished. In the latter part of 1976 Wauwia visited his home area but he gave no indication as to whether he intended to contest the seat, a fact which created some uncertainty among other prospective Pangu candidates.

Peter Rony, as we have seen, gained the second largest proportion of first preference votes in 1973 but was eventually beaten by both Hepau and Wauwia. Rony, aged 30 in 1977, comes from Numboruon village a few kilometres to the west of Yangoru patrol post. In 1973 Rony had recently returned to the Sepik to take up the position of council clerk (subsequently retitled executive officer) of the greater Maprik Council, to the west of Yangoru. He also became a local secretary of the Pangu Pati and a member of the Board of the Bank of Papua New Guinea. For a young man who had spent much of his life away from home Rony polled well in 1973, though most of the vote was concentrated in his home area. In 1976, however, he was probably better known in the Maprik area than in his native Yangoru and there were suggestions from influential figures within the Maprik electorate that he stand there against the sitting member Pita Lus. Lus had recently antagonized some people in the Maprik area by his opposition to the Maprik based Sepik Producers' Cooperative Association (SPCA), of whose commercial success local villagers were justly proud. Rony, however, had few illusions that he could topple Lus — a Member since 1964, cabinet minister and close colleague of prime minister Somare — and eventually he nominated again for Yangoru-Saussia.

The third Pangu candidate in 1973 was Tony Bais. Bais, 32 in 1977, comes from Toanambu, a large collection of hamlets on the Sepik highway between Yangoru and Wewak. His father had contested the 1964 elections and stood again as a Pangu candidate against Yaliwan in 1972. In 1973 Tony Bais had just completed a B.A. (Social Work) at the University of Papua New Guinea,

having broken his course there to spend some time as community development officer in Wewak. He scored a mere 454 votes and was the first of the eight candidates to be eliminated. After the election Bais accepted the position of principal private secretary to the chief minister and then in March 1974 he became provincial commissioner in the East Sepik, one of several 'political' appointments (i.e., appointments from outside the *kiap* career service) made by the Somare government. Bais proved to be an individualistic and often controversial provincial commissioner and although most rural villagers seem to have admired his style he antagonized some groups. Within his home area he seems, on balance, to have gained support for his strong action against Peli supporters and he was an active supporter of a self-help, business oriented organization in Toanambu. In 1976 few observers in the East Sepik had much doubt that Bais would contest the coming national elections (though Bais himself said he was undecided); the question was, in which electorate. There were rumours that he would contest the regional seat against the sitting member, prime minister Somare, but Bais must have realized that this would be political suicide. With this option closed the alternatives were Yangoru-Saussia, his home area but where he had polled so disappointingly in 1973, and Wewak. In 1972 the Wewak Open electorate had been won by an expatriate who was not a candidate in 1977 and it was something of a Pangu stronghold; but the likely support for Bais was an unknown quantity and there was little secret that most of the few remaining expatriate businessmen in Wewak would lend their weight to oppose him. In the event Bais opted for Wewak and won. (See chapter 13).

Another person whose presence was felt in the electorate during 1976 was Bernard Narakobi. Narakobi, an Australian-educated barrister, consultant to the Constitutional Planning Committee, chairman of the Law Reform Commission and of the National Cultural Council, and frequent contributor to the *Post-Courier*, spent several weeks in his natal Arapesh speaking village of Watugik in the Koboibus area. At the time it was widely rumoured that he intended to contest the 1977 elections in opposition to the coalition government in either the regional or the Wewak Open electorate. In the event Narakobi did not nominate but his outspoken criticism of the Somare government may have eased the way for the eventual winner of the Yangoru-Saussia contest, whose village is not far from Watugik.

While this manouevring was going on, in August 1976 Peli-Seven supporters organized a ceremony on Hurun to dedicate a memorial to Papua New Guinea's independence in the previous year. About five hundred people were addressed by Yaliwan (who seems to have initiated the project), Hawina and Hepau, all of whom expressed their gratitude to the government for bringing the people to independence, and a pig and a case of beer were presented to the officer-in-charge of the Yangoru sub-district. The ceremony was a quiet affair but, those with an eye on the coming elections asked themselves, did it presage a revival of the Peli-Seven movement? By early 1977 there had been no further rallies and the answer appeared to be negative.

The candidates and the campaign.

When nominations closed in Yangoru-Saussia there were nine candidates: Narakama Harau, Lainus Hepau, John Jaminan, Nagandimi Laulimbe, Kawi Nimiora, Peter Rony, John Wauwia, Beibe Yambanda and, to the surprise of most, Matias Yaliwan. (The home villages of candidates are shown on Map 1, which also shows census divisions and 1971 populations.)

Hepau, Rony, Wauwai, Yaliwan and Yambanda have already been in-

roduced. Of the others, the most serious candidates appeared to be Jaminan and Harau.

Jaminan, 34, from the Arapesh speaking village of Nimbihu in the north of the electorate was educated in the East Sepik, in Queensland and at the University of Papua New Guinea. While at UPNG he had adopted the name Vivaldo (after a character in James Baldwin's *Another Country*) Winen, and became a familiar sunglasses figure on the periphery of various student political gatherings. In 1977 Jaminan had been a public servant for eleven years, notably from 1972-75 in the security intelligence branch of the (then) Chief Minister's Department (of which branch he became head) and had travelled extensively outside Papua New Guinea. In 1976 he was the first to receive a Development Fellowship under a scheme which enable public servants to return to their home areas for extended periods, on half pay, to work on local community projects. It was a condition of such fellowships that successful applicants refrain from political activity during the fellowship and for two years after. In 1977 Jaminan stood as a United Party candidate.

Harau, 44, is from Paparam near the eastern boundary of the electorate. As a young man he was employed by the government in Wewak and worked on a coastal vessel. Subsequently he entered local politics and became president of the Saussia Local Government Council and a member of the East Sepik Interim Provincial Government. He has a trade store and small holdings of cattle, coffee and cocoa. Harau contested the 1973 by-election, gaining the second lowest proportion of first preference, votes, but was apparently little known around Yangoru or in the west of the electorate. In 1977 he stood as a PPP candidate.

The other three candidates all had reasonable qualifications as candidates but appeared to have little chance against the better known personalities. Laulimbe, about 40, a farmer from Yumungu near Kubalia, was a former president of the Saussia Council. He stood as an independant Pangu candidate but seemed to have little following outside his immediate home area. Nimiora, 33, lives at Hagama village where he owns a trade store. He went to school in Rabaul and spent five years at the Bainyik (Maprik) Agricultural Centre, subsequently becoming president of the Yeeker Rural Progress Society, a director of the SPCA and a member of the Coffee Marketing Board. As we have already noted, Yambanda, about 67 in 1977, was MHA for Wewak Open in 1968-72. He was caught up in the Hurun cult in 1971 but the following year, standing against Yaliwan, had received only 73 votes.

Although in 1977 government officials were reasonably sanguine that the Peli-Seven movement was moribund, and that on his record as local member there was no chance of Hepau's reelection, with the nomination of Yaliwan (who said God had told him to stand) some entertained fears of a revival of the movement. In the event their fears proved unwarranted. In 1972 Yaliwan, using the Peli Association network, had conducted an extensive and effective campaign but in 1977 he did not venture far from Wamoin and made no attempt to reactivate the Peli-Seven organization. He appears at different times to have described himself as a United Party and as a Country Party candidate (in 1968 and after his election in 1972 he identified himself with the Sepik based Christian Democratic Party). And Hepau, who dissociated himself from Peli and described himself as a Country Party Candidate, made little attempt to locate his earlier supporters.

Nor did Harau, Laulimbe, Nimiora or Yambanda conduct an active campaign, though there was some local canvassing for votes.

Of the remaining three candidates the most active was Jaminan. He campaigned alone, on foot, addressing meetings with a small loudspeaker and staying to talk with people in villages, and achieved the not inconsiderable task of visiting every village in the electorate. Although keeping to a strict schedule in order to cover the electorate, he managed to give the impression of never hurrying or being too busy to listen or speak to anyone; in some villages he stayed for two or three days. Jaminan was generally well received and as he went from village to village he attracted many bigmen who were prepared to give him support. Jaminan stood as a Unity Party candidate and he spoke about the party's platform; but he concentrated his campaign on an attack of the Somare government, accusing it of weaknesses, omissions and excesses. He spoke, in particular, of weakness in the enforcement of law and order; of excessive spending by ministers, especially on overseas trips; of lack of discipline and laxity among public servants, especially the police; of drunkenness and absenteeism in government departments; of abuse of access to government vehicles, and of a complete lack of development in the Yangoru-Saussia electorate. Jaminan effectively contrasted the lack of development in Yangoru-Saussia with the progress achieved in the Angoram and Maprik electorates and he suggested that Somare had denied development in Yangoru-Saussia lest Yaliwan and Peli get the credit for it. He accused the government of being out of touch with the needs and interests of village people, suggesting that if elected he would fight for the people and would not lose touch with the electorate. Jaminan had little to say about the minor candidates and though he campaigned aggressively he concentrated his attacks on the Pangu Pati rather than Wauwia or Rony personally. Though recognizing Somare's strong personal appeal in the Province he did not hesitate to criticize the prime minister, accusing Somare of 'playing dirty politics' and saying that although people thought of Somare as a good leader he was a big businessman and could be seeking personal gain.

As in 1973, it was Wauwia who received the Pangu Pati endorsement. With assistance from the Pangu coordinating team based in Wewak (including a campaign contribution of over K2000), he conducted an extensive campaign, going from village to village and attracting support from a good number of village big men and councillors. Wauwia campaigned very much as a Pangu candidate: he distributed Pangu Pati leaflets and T-shirts and in his speeches he emphasized the benefits — notably the achievement of self-government and independence — which the government had brought to the country during the life of one parliament; his campaign poster urged people to vote for him to ensure the continuation of Michael Somare as prime minister. The softly-spoken Wauwia did not himself emerge as a strong personality, however, and in this respect he probably lost ground to Jaminan. During the campaign Somare made a brief visit to the East Sepik electorates, speaking in Wosera, Maprik and Yangoru on the same day, but his visit to Yangoru was late (about 6.30 p.m.) and brief and since many villagers were disappointed at the brevity of it, it is difficult to say whether on balance the impact of Somare's visit on Wauwia's campaign was positive or negative.

Peter Rony, also, conducted a fairly active campaign, identifying himself with Pangu and promising to work for the development of the electorate. But his campaign does not seem to have had much impact in the eastern part of the electorate.

Interpreting the vote

When votes had been counted the results were as follows:⁶

Table 1 Results

| <i>Candidate</i> | <i>Number of votes</i> | <i>Percentage of votes</i> |
|------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Jaminan | 3,464 | 30.6 |
| Wauwia | 3,349 | 29.6 |
| Rony | 1,588 | 14.0 |
| Yaliwan | 1,521 | 13.4 |
| Harau | 837 | 7.4 |
| Nimiora | 391 | 3.5 |
| Laulimbe | 62 | 0.5 |
| Hepau | 52 | 0.5 |
| Yambanda | 22 | 0.2 |
| Informal | <u>47</u> | <u>0.4</u> |
| | <u>11,333</u> | <u>100.0</u> |

Wauwia called for a recount of votes, but, after checking, the result was confirmed.

From a historical viewpoint, the most noteworthy aspect of the voting was the eclipse of the Peli-Seven movement. In 1972 Yaliwan had received 83 per cent of the vote and in 1973 his little known lieutenant, Hepau, had scored 28 per cent of first preferences. The fact that Hepau, the sitting member, could manage a mere 52 votes in 1977 was a devastating indictment both of his personal performance as local member and of his role as Peli-Seven representative. On the other hand, considering the fact that he had resigned soon after his election in 1972, and that he had not conducted a campaign, Yaliwan's 13 per cent of the vote was impressive, lending some credibility to the cautious judgment of May, quoted above, that he still carried some weight in the area.

Of the other minor candidates, Harau polled quite well in the eastern part of the electorate and Nimiora attracted some local support; Laulimbe polled predictably poorly and as for the aging Yambanda, as Winnett said when he saw the figure of 22 votes, 'A chap of that age would have an extended family much larger than that'.

Peter Rony polled strongly in his home area, which is fairly densely populated, and his work as council clerk in the Abelam speaking Maprik area (in the Maprik Open electorate) probably helped him to gain votes among the Abelam speaking villages in the central-west of the electorate. But he did poorly elsewhere. In contrast to the situation in 1973, he gained fewer than half the votes received by Wauwia.

Jaminan and Wauwia between them took over 60 per cent of the vote. As the endorsed Pangu candidate, and as such able to associate his candidature with Somare, Wauwia probably received a significant 'party' vote from throughout the electorate but it is impossible to gauge how many votes this was worth; given the apparently generally low level of political awareness in Yangoru-Saussia, the limited nature of the Pangu campaign, and a general feeling that the government had neglected the area, it may not have been worth many. In any case Wauwia's vote, like that of other candidates, was concentrated around his home area.

Jaminan, on the other hand, seems to have received little assistance from the United Party and though one might be tempted to interpret support for him at least in part as a conscious vote against the government, any such vote must be

regarded more as the result of an effective personal campaign than as evidence of general support for the United Party. It must be borne in mind that every other open electorate in the East Sepik province returned a Pangu candidate and that in the regional electorate the people of Yangoru-Saussia voted overwhelmingly for Somare. It has been suggested that as the only candidate from the Arapesh speaking section of the electorate Jaminan benefitted by not having his vote split. But though it is true that Jaminan received the vast majority of the votes from the Arapesh speaking villages, this alone cannot explain his success. The Arapesh are concentrated in the northwest of the electorate in the Kaboibus and Kumun census divisions (see map 1). In 1971 the population of Kaboibus and Kumun census divisions (men, women and children — and not all Arapesh) was 3,495, compared to 20,150 in the other seven census divisions, which are predominantly Boiken speaking. In 1977 Jaminan gained 3,464 votes out of the 11,333 cast, indicating extensive support in other parts of the electorate. There can be little doubt that the reason for this support was the extensive and effective campaign which Jaminan had been waging for some months before other candidates had announced their intention of standing. In terms of its physical coverage and the time spent with village people, Jaminan's campaign must rank amongst the most extensive ever conducted in a Papua New Guinea election and it seems to have been pitched at a level, and to have touched on issues, which drew an immediate response from village people.

In retrospect, considering the closeness of the vote, it is tempting to speculate on what the outcome of the election might have been had Rony — the other Pangu man and the candidate geographically closest to Wauwia — not stood. One might also wonder how Yaliwan's candidature effected the vote; although Wauwia was known to be a staunch opponent of Peli, and therefore perhaps unlikely to receive votes from Peli sympathizers, he was the local man from the original heart of Peli support and it is quite likely that had Yaliwan not stood, parochialism would have prevailed over principle and Wauwia would have collected a good proportion of the votes which in the event went to Yaliwan. Finally there is an unanswered question concerning what happened to the votes of those who even in 1973 supported Peli; by themselves the 1977 figures give no reason for suggesting that one candidate benefitted more than another.

Conclusion

We have suggested that the most important single factor in Jaminan's success was the thoroughness of his campaign. This may seem a rather bland conclusion (even conceding that it was a rather bland contest). Yet it might say a lot about the nature of national elections in places like Yangoru-Saussia.

In the analysis of elections in developed western-style political systems it is common to seek explanations primarily in the context of an established political party system: parties provide a framework within which to consider such variables as ideological issues and effects of social, economic and demographic change, and the results of elections may be interpreted in terms of fluctuating party support and changing coalitions. Such an approach, however, has little explanatory value where, as in much of Africa, Asia and the Pacific, there is not a well developed national party system and where local loyalties and obligations are seen to outweigh the importance of national issues. In such situations elections may be better analysed in terms of primarily local political structures and complexes of patron-client relations.

But in Yangoru-Saussia even this sort of model seems inappropriate. Yangoru-Saussia has its 'big men', and ritual yam displays and exchanges still provide a means of competition for status, but (the leaders of the Peli-Seven movement excluded) reputations appear to be quite narrowly localized. The electorate has no remarkably successful businessmen, nor (Peli-Seven again excluded) has it produced any very notable political figures at national or even local level; its only MHAs up to 1977 being Hepau, Yaliwan and Yambanda. Compared with other electorates covered in this volume, there was no real confrontation between the competing candidates, little if any outlay of pork or beer and not even much talk, and apparently little interest on the part of the voters.

Under such circumstances — and there are many electorates like Yangoru-Saussia in this respect — electors are probably most likely to vote for a fellow clansman or a known local figure if there is one, producing geographical clusterings of votes. Beyond this, people probably vote for someone they know, by sight or by reputation, even if they have only a vague knowledge of the person or of what he stands for (unless of course what is known is damning). Simply being known, in other words, is probably more important than being known to support a particular party or policy, hence the importance of getting around the electorate even if it is just to talk to people and listen to what they have to say.⁷ At this level of politicization a candidate's platform is probably of only marginal relevance, though in an area where there is clear evidence of a sense of relative deprivation there are likely to be more votes in criticizing government, and by implication promising something better, than in standing by its past record.

In the Yangoru-Saussia case, it is only with such a model (if it can be called that) that one can explain the victory of a candidate who was little known before 1976 and who campaigned against the government in an area which, in the contest for the provincial electorate, gave such strong support to the prime minister.

Epilogue

Within the first few days of the National Parliament Jaminan had established himself on the opposition front bench as shadow minister for finance and he has been an outspoken critic of the government on a variety of issues. Jaminan was also actively associated with moves to replace Sir Tei Abal as leader of the Opposition, giving his support to Iambakey Okuk and leaving the United Party to join Okuk's People's United Front when Okuk became Opposition leader. In November 1978 Jaminan broke with the Front over a dispute with Okuk as to who should lead the attack on the coalition government's budget. In Yangoru-Saussia people seem proud to have a member of such obvious significance who has, incidentally, given the Yangoru-Saussia electorate a new respectability.

NOTES

1. For a more detailed description of the area see May (1975).
2. For a history and analysis of the Hurun cult see May (1975).
3. Allen (1976) described the struggle between Pangu and Peli in the Dreikikir Open electorate in 1972.
4. The following account is condensed from May (1975).

5. In a revised and updated version of May (1975), to be published in May (ed), *Micronationalism in Melanesia* (forthcoming).
6. Unfortunately a breakdown of voting by polling booths is not available. The following comments on the regional distribution of votes are by Winnett who was present as an observer when votes were being tallied.
7. Compare Voutas's account of his successful election campaigns in 1966 and 1968 (Voutas 1970).

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Chapter 15

KAVIENG OPEN: WANTOK AND ASSOCIATIONS

Ngen Isana

Background

Kavieng Open Electorate is one of the two electorates in the New Ireland Province. It embraces the islands of New Hanover, Nurua, Tench, Djaul and the Tgak group, and on the main island (New Ireland) the electorate extends as far as Bol village on the East coast and Namasalang village on the West coast.

The electorate has a population of about 20,000, of which 14,750 people were eligible voters at the time of the elections. The population is dominated by New Irelanders, although there are some non-New Irelanders in plantations, the township of Kavieng, and other areas where they were brought in to work on such projects as timber and fishing. Kavieng is the main centre of the electorate as well as the province, and it is also the business centre, especially for big shops and the main wharf. It is the headquarters for all government departments in the province. The general hospital is also found there. Business in the town is mostly owned by Chinese, although indigeneous ownership is growing. One large shop is owned by the TIA (Tutukl Isukal Association). It was bought from a Chinese.

The area of the electorate was under European control from German times to Independence, especially mainland New Ireland, where the people were involved in the building of the East coast road, now known as the Boluminski Highway. There was also mission influence. In the electorate as a whole the Catholics, United Church followers and the Seventh Day Adventists (SDA) are strong, but there are also smaller missions, such as Jehovah's Witnesses and Bahai. All missions are actively involved in helping the people develop politically, economically and educationally. The Catholic mission is behind TIA, which is a big force in New Hanover politics. The TIA grew up from the so-called Johnson Cult, named after President Lyndon Johnson. The Johnson Cult grew out of US "cargo" influence on New Hanover during World War II. The Cult crystallized among the Catholic faithful of New Hanover when an American priest, Father Miller, began to advocate grassroots development. The TIA is a farmers' association concerned with village development — especially cash cropping, reliable sea transport and trade stores. An offshoot of TIA on the mainland and in the outer islands is the TFA (Tutukl Farmers' Association), which is also Catholic and accepts TIA leadership despite language differences. Kavieng has several industries set up within its boundaries. The fishing industry benefits people through bait royalties and also employment opportunities. The timber industry is another source of royalties and employment. Nearly the whole population is involved in copra cash cropping. Besides individuals owning plots or plantation, there are also large scale plantations owned by big names like Burns Philp and other expatriate interests. Second to copra is cocoa production, which is widespread through the electorate, but there are few large plantations.

The infrastructure of the electorate makes the population accessible. The

East coast road and the West coast road connect most of the electorate's population and give access to the main shopping area, Kavieng. As for the islands, the main form of transport is boats. Most of the islands close to Kavieng depend on outboard motors, which are sometimes privately owned. The outer islands like Mussau have airstrips where small planes can land, but they also have bigger boats which carry their produce to Kavieng.

Candidates and their Campaigns

In 1977 the Kavieng Open Electorate was contested by seven candidates. They were E. Tito, T. Lapan, C. Mitrap, L. Maris, G. Sigulogo, W. Gukguk and P. Kwan, the sitting member. Six of them were from New Ireland by custom and traditional rights; the other candidate was a mixed race Chinese who considered himself a New Irelander, and was successful in the 1972 elections.

Epel Tito. Aged about 30 at the time of the election, he came originally from a village out of Kavieng, Omo. He reached Senior Cambridge University Entrance in Fiji in 1959, and was a clerk from 1962-67. He was a Savings and Loans Officer from 1969-71. At the time of the election he was staying in his home village.

Epel Tito nominated as an independent candidate but openly claimed that he was a Pangu supporter or sympathizer and foundation member of the party. He campaigned independently, driving up the East Coast Road in his small utility and stopping at each village to talk to the people.

Taviri Lapan. A former Defence Force Officer, aged about 35 years, he was married with three children. He did most of his officer training in Australia and gained an Australian Army Certificate 1st class in 1970. After that he worked as an instructor of cadets. Besides being awarded an MBE in 1970, he has also been president of the PNG Amateur Swimming Union.

Taviri comes from the island of Mussau between New Ireland and Manus. He was the only candidate who was a member of the SDA mission. He nominated as an independent candidate and sympathizer of PPP, but later became a serious PPP candidate when he teamed up with the endorsed PPP candidate for the provincial seat, N. Levi, during the campaigning period. They were seen together on their campaign tours of the electorate. J. Chan's campaign manager dealt with their organizational problems. In his campaign Taviri emphasised the welfare of the town people as well as the villagers. His approach was very simple and open. .

PPP backing was a plus for Taviri, but he had only come to the electorate for the elections; otherwise he was in Moresby, and he was not even known to most of the voters until he nominated for the seat.

Cunibert Mitrap. A fairly well educated person of about 44, Cunibert comes from Lagagon village on the East-Coast of the electorate. Besides being a teacher, he has involved himself with the affairs of his village and is chairman of his village cocoa society. Until he nominated to contest the Kavieng Open Electorate, he was a community school teacher in several areas of the electorate.

Although he nominated as an independent Cunibert leaned to PPP, and used the PPP platform in his campaigns. As a candidate he was very independent; that is, he would not go around with a big group of supporters. In his campaign he stressed the needs of the people and that he would pursue these needs if he was elected. However the people I contacted seemed to treat him as a not very serious candidate simply for the reason that he was never

involved in the politics of the province and therefore not very well known.

Lawrence Maris. At the age of 50, this was his second attempt to win the seat, for he had been a candidate in the 1972 election. He comes from Panachais village on the West Coast of the electorate and has been involved with the people for many years through being a carpenter, catechist, interpreter, teacher, and councillor. He was formerly a member of the United Party Branch in the electorate set up in the 1972 election, and indicated that if he won he would join up with the United Party, although he nominated as an independent. His campaign emphasis was on rural problems, and what he had done for the area.

Gerard Sigulogo. Gerard was a former student of the University of PNG, who later became the public relations officer of the TIA in New Hanover. Whilst with the TIA he represented them in the Area Authority and also helped the association to acquire some plantations around the island of New Hanover. Besides he also helped the TIA buy its shop in Kavieng, the first to be owned by an indigenous organization in town. He was also chairman of the New Ireland Steering Committee which laid the foundations for the formation of the provincial government, and he was the member for South Lovageri in the provincial government.

Whilst campaigning he stressed that his policy was for the people, because previous politicians had been promising things without fulfilling their promises. He also believed that people should have their own businesses and should control their own economy, for they were the owners of land. He stressed that he believed in a strong, stable government.

Although Gerard nominated as an independent candidate, Pangu indicated that they were giving him moral support. Helping out with his campaigns was a group of educated people who attempted to get the support of the young generation. In fact this group accompanied him almost everywhere. His main problem was how to win back the TIA supporters. He had been asked to resign his post in the association.

Walla Gukguk. Walla was the oldest (55) of all the candidates, and was serving as the president of TIA. Walla became prominent in New Hanover politics when he started his career as a councillor from Meteran village during the period of the Johnson Cult. Walla nominated as United Party candidate. He had support in New Hanover through TIA influence. The TIA met his expenses, and made sure that nearly every TIA supporter voted for him.

Perry Kwan. The sitting member was aged about 37. Well educated he can speak English, Pidgin and Chinese and had previously been a commercial artist and photographer. Perry hardly campaigned at all. He was a very unpopular candidate, and was given little chance of retaining his seat. He completely lost contact with the bulk of the electorate's population during his five years as member. What is more, some of the promises he made to the people were never fulfilled. Some people said that he never investigated any development in the electorate or the province for that matter.

Result

Walla Guguk won the seat comfortably with 3118 votes out of 10,173 cast — about 30 per cent of the total. His nearest rival, Gerard Sigulogo, polled less than 20 per cent.

As far as the voting in the electorate was concerned, language linkage meant a lot to the people. Thus if a candidate was a 'wantok' or spoke the same language as the voters, there was a good chance that he was going to get votes

from his language group. This is illustrated below in the table of vote distribution. For instance L. Lapan comes from Mussau language group. Being the only person from that language group who was a candidate he was able to win a majority of the votes from his area.

Where two candidates come from the same language group — for instance G. Sigulogo and W. Gukguk were both from New Hanover — the voters were faced with two ‘wantok’ candidates. In this case Walla secured most of his votes from the TIA supporters, whilst Sigulogo secured most of his votes from the non-TIA areas, or from other small associations around his language area.

The people also looked at the past performance of each candidate and voted for candidates who had been involved with the electorate’s development and had been working among the people for some time.

A candidate such as T. Lapan, who had not been in the electorate for more than a few months benefited most from his church affiliation. He was the only SDA candidate, and propably captured most of his votes from this group. Although his being a PPP man did not play a major role, I feel it helped to secure votes from those who were not his wantoks or SDA, but believed in the PPP platform or J. Chan.

All in all the major determinant of voting in the electorate was language. When the language factor was neutralised it was likely that common membership in an association came into play. This was especially true with TIA and members, who were closely linked although from different language groups. Most votes in the TIA/TKA areas, went to Walla and won him the election. The TIA was the best organised group in the electorate that made sure that almost every TIA and TKA member voted for Walla, their president.

Table 1 Results: Kavieng Open Electorate
(Common Roll Approx. 14,000)

| Polling Teams: | E.Tito | T.Lapan | C.Mitrap | L.Maris | G.Sigulogo | W.Gukguk | P.Kwan |
|----------------|-------------|---------|----------|---------|------------|----------|--------|
| 1 (Town) | 491 | 355 | 230 | 54 | 522* | 482 | 219 |
| 1 (Town) | 347 | 279 | 472* | 212 | 382 | 226 | 369 |
| 2 | 141 | 132 | 36 | 53 | 160 | 318* | 164 |
| 3 | 3 | 33 | 1 | 9 | 470 | 1607* | 24 |
| 4 | 28 | 96 | 10 | 9 | 354 | 480* | 47 |
| 5 & 6 | 31 | 1080* | 5 | — | 15 | 5 | 35 |
| | <u>1041</u> | 1975 | 754 | 337 | 1903 | 3118 | 858 |

Informal = 187 (1.8%) Turnout = 10173 (72%)

KEY:

TEAM 1: — Kavieng town, East Coast Road and part of West Coast Road.

TEAM 2: — Tigak Islands and part of West Coast Road

TEAM 3: — South Coast of New Hanover

TEAM 4: — North Coast of New Hanover

TEAM 5: — Mussau Island

TEAM 6: — Enura Island

* = polled highest in respective team.

The table clearly shows how Walla won the elections. He polled highest in three teams. 66% of his votes were New Hanover votes, compared to G. Sigulogo's 26%. The only area where Sigulogo did well was in the town of Kavieng. He came second in three of the remaining five teams.

The table shows that Walla polled the highest in team 2, which covered the Tigak and West Coast, and is the area where TFA has a lot of influence. It also shows the influence that TIA has over the TFA area, Walla being the president of TIA had no problems in securing support in that area.

Conclusion

The central determinant of votes in the Kavieng electorate was language, followed by common membership in an association. Party politics was never a serious issue in the election or in determining how the people voted. The missions in the area played a minor role. Walla won because he was associated with both a big language group and a well known and highly supported association, the TIA, which had links to the TFA on the mainland.

Chapter 16

ISLAND POLITICS: THE ELECTIONS IN MANUS

Wes Rooney

Introduction

The Manus Province, which has the smallest population and smallest total land area of any province in Papua New Guinea, is spread out over a very large area of ocean which stretches from 1°S of the Equator to 3°S (approximately 250km) and from 144°E to 148° 30' E (approximately 450km).

350km west of the Provincial centre of Lorengau are the scattered and sparsely populated Ninigo and Hermit Islands, while 100km East of Lorengau is the outpost Nauna Island. Along the North Coast and to the west is a string of small low-lying coral islands, while to the South and South East, as well as small flat coral islands and atolls, there are larger islands of volcanic origin, namely Baluan, Lou, Rambutso and M'Buke. These larger South Islands are the most fertile areas of the Province. The Main Island of Manus is approximately 90km long and 30km at its widest point. The population is unevenly distributed over the island, with the larger villages being found along the North and South Coasts. Inland groups concentrate at the Western and Eastern ends of the island. The more mountainous central limestone area is virtually unpopulated.

The 1971 census gave the Manus population as 24,866. With growth estimated at 3% p.a. it is reasonable to assume a population in 1977 of about 29,000, 50% of which would have been under 18 years. Thus a very rough estimate of the total number of possible voters would be about 14,500. This population voted for one Open and one Provincial seat.

The population of Manus is by no means homogenous. It is difficult to say exactly how many distinct language groups are present as the languages are all closely related and the various dialects shade into one another. However most people group the dialects into approximately eight languages, and these in fact appear to form the basis of traditional political groupings. In this election, particularly in the Open electorate, a candidate's ability to secure his own language area as his base made a definite difference to the final result.

As well as language differences there are quite striking social and economic differences between various groups of Manus society. The most obvious dichotomy is between the sea-farers and the land-based people. On the North Coast the seafarers are represented by the people of the island chain fringing the North and West coasts while on the South coast the sea-farers are known as the Manus and are scattered in coastal lagoon locations and on the smaller Southern and Eastern Islands. Traditionally the sea farers have been fishermen and traders and have lived, not always peacefully, in a state of mutual dependence with the land-owning gardening people of the large Islands and Manus mainland. The state of tension between the sea-farers and gardeners is a major political force in the province even to-day, and had its effect on the elections, even though the more modern dichotomy between North coast and

South coast appeared to be more significant. This North-South division may have existed traditionally, but its modern significance is derived from the events of the second world war and the immediate post war years.

Political History

During the Pacific War Manus was a major U.S. military base and in 1944 the Manus people witnessed a truly enormous build up of troops, shipping and infrastructure as over one million foreigners passed through or were stationed in the area. All of these events occurred on Los Negros, the North Coast and the North Coast Islands while the South Coast people, apart from inconvenient relocations while the Americans bombed the Japanese, were relatively passive observers.

Following the War the Australians and the Missions who were also based on the North Coast attempted to re-establish pre-war control. However local pressure for change was considerable, especially in the South, where Paliau Maloat, a former policeman, emerged as a leader capable of unifying the widely disparate Inland, Island and Manus groups into a single political entity which then pressured for education, health and other government services and changes in the taxation system. Initially this movement was strongly suppressed. Paliau and several other leaders were gaoled for up to twelve months on quite trivial charges. The Catholic Church was strongly opposed to the movement and was finally rejected by the South Coast which, under the influence of Paliau, created an independent Christian Church which has been an integral part of the movement up to the present. Eventually the movement was recognized and indirectly supported by the government. A council was established on Baluan Island and schools and aid posts were introduced into many villages in the fifties.

Because of the differing war-time experiences of North and South, and because the Administration and Missions were more firmly entrenched on the North Coast, the movement was, with one or two exceptions, restricted to the Southern villages and Islands. This rift was further accentuated by the fact that for many years the North coast was not included in a Local Government Council area. It was not until 1964, despite strong opposition from the North, that a council incorporating all villages of Manus and absorbing the South coast council, was established in Lorengau.

This made Manus unique in PNG in that the entire Province was served by a single elected council of 33 members. This unique political experience has, in spite of the traditional divisions and the North-South division, fostered a sense of unity and identity which had a noticeable effect on the 1977 elections. This sense of Manus Identity is also enhanced by the relative isolation of Manus from the rest of PNG and the extremely high number of educated Manus people working outside their own province.

Although Paliau Maloat is still a respected and influential leader the movement has waned somewhat, especially since his defeat by Michael Pondros in the 1972 National elections. As the Movement has declined, a third area has emerged as being significant, namely the West Coast (including Malai Bay, Kali Bay, the West Coast Islands and the remote Western Islands.) For a long time this area was neglected and of little impact; however with the advent of motorized canoes and the increasing mobility of government extension officers this area is emerging as the third distinct political division in Manus.

Thus for convenience we can identify the following political and geographic

divisions in the Manus Province, which were important in the 1977 elections.

- | | | |
|----|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. | South Coast | a. Islands b. Mainland c. Manus |
| 2. | North Coast | a. Islands b. Mainland |
| 3. | West Coast | a. Islands b. Mainland |
| 4. | Urban Areas | a. Lorengau b. Lombrum |

The 1977 Elections

Manus was well prepared for an election. The voters were well informed about the issues involved and understood the democratic process, and potential candidates had been making preliminary plans for months beforehand.

In 1976 it was rumoured that there would be an early election and in response to that rumour several out-of-Manus residents returned to assess the political climate. The period of waiting between June 1976 and June 1977 was one of intense speculation as the contenders tentatively weighed their chances. However except for a few people, such as the sitting members, a convention of secrecy was maintained which permeated the relationships between public servants, local government officers, councillors and other prominent citizens. The suspicion that one might be a candidate for election was ever present. After the writs had been issued, the issue gradually changed to which electorate a particular candidate would nominate for.

The anomalous and unique situation on Manus is that the open and provincial electorates are identical and consequently intending candidates could choose to contest either seat. When the nominations finally closed there were ten candidates for the Open electorate and six for the Provincial. Although the two electorates were theoretically identical they gave rise to two very different contests.

The Candidates

(a) Origin and Place of Residence

On this criterion we see the most striking difference between the two electorates. In the Open electorate the candidates were drawn from all of the above mentioned politico-geographic areas of Manus, with the exception of the sub-grouping of South Coast — Manus, whereas for the Provincial electorate five out of six candidates could be classed as South Coast and the sixth came from a North Coast peri-urban village which has close affiliations with the South Coast — Inland sub-group.

In the Open electorate there were double nominations from Pak Island, Salien and Derimbat/So-uh. In the Provincial electorate some candidates came from the same language group or village, but, in fact, all except one was a well-established urban resident, and the evidence is that this adversely affected home base support for some of these candidates. In the Open electorate by contrast most of the candidates were village residents, and it is also reasonable to infer that the two urban-based candidates in the Open electorate maintained more effective links with their home village than did the urban-based provincial candidates.

(b) Age, Education and Experience

The difference between the electorates can be seen in the wide range of ages, education and experience of the Open electorate candidates compared with the more uniform qualities of the Provincial candidates. The Open candidates ranged in aged from 25-30 to over 60 years old. The education range was from no formal education to a university degree. Work experience ranged from middle level to executive level public service.

The Provincial candidates were all, with one exception, between 30-40 years old, educated to secondary level, and in paid employment. There were two members of Parliament, two clerks, one building contractor and one subsistence villager among them.

(c) Party Affiliations

The contrast between the electorates continues. Pangu, United and People's Progress parties fielded one candidate each in the Open electorate, but only Pangu and United gave any significant assistance to their candidates. The remaining seven were non-party candidates, and some even opposed the concept of party politics in the elections. The party influence amongst the Provincial candidates was much stronger. Pangu, United and Country parties funded and endorsed one candidate each, while two other candidates campaigned as unofficial Pangu candidates. (The endorsed candidate publicly objected to this.) The remaining independent candidate also had the appearance of a party candidate in that he was anti-government and appeared to be pro-United Party.

(d) Campaigns and Platforms

Provincial candidates campaigned more extensively and vigorously than their Open electorate counterparts. Even Joel Maiyah, the only village-based Provincial candidate and the least vigorous campaigner, was more vigorous than contenders with similar experience, standing and background in the Open electorate. The non-Party Open electorate candidates, especially, tended to concentrate on their own home areas.

The impact of what the candidates said during their campaigns is difficult to assess. The party-endorsed candidates stuck quite rigidly to their national platforms, and on the rare occasions when they digressed into local issues the result was somewhat confusing — for instance the United Party candidates promised to establish a Rural Improvement Programme headquarters in Manus to control the distribution of the R.I.P. funds.

The independent candidates confined their promises to fairly realistic if somewhat mundane objectives such as the straightening out of the finances of the former co-operative movement, the acquisition of a province barge, more high school places, and the up-grading of copra marking facilities. There were few overt attempts by candidates to denigrate their opponents or to gain favour by extravagant promises. Rhetoric was at a minimum and the emphasis was on personality and past achievements rather than promises and party.

In the Provincial contest two sitting members (Pondros and Kasau) were competing, and comparison of their past performances was inevitable. The stronger influence of the parties led to direct confrontation between the endorsed Pangu candidate, Pukah Kasau, and two candidates who claimed Pangu affiliation. Two other candidates had longstanding personal differences which became part of the campaign and eventually led to an unsuccessful court appeal against the legitimacy of Michael Pondros' election. However, compared to other provinces, the atmosphere between candidates was one of

cordiality and lack of animosity. This atmosphere was to a great extent created by the expectations of the general public.

Although there were no official restrictions, most candidates showed a marked reluctance to campaign publicly until they had formally nominated. Once all candidates had nominated, it was generally expected by the public that they should travel, talk and hold meetings. The public acted as if they had an obligation to give each of the sixteen candidates a hearing. These basic ground rules may have emerged as a result of a misconceptions as to what was officially expected, or they may indicate a tolerant attitude and a wish to avoid “impolite” tensions — traditional in Manus politics. Manus enjoyed an institutionalized and civilized “political season” which affected the whole province, aided by Radio Manus, right up to the declaration of the polls. Sixteen travelling politicians could have been very disruptive in a province as small as Manus.

The high level of involvement of the public also tended to deter candidates from personally attacking their opponents. Public declarations of sympathy with any one party or point of view by the general public were rare and there were no vital issues debated which could polarize the voters and so lead to conflict within the community. The atmosphere was one of strict public neutrality, with each candidate being given a fair hearing and assessed on his or her performance.

The atmosphere was enlivened by joking comparison of the candidates with one of the less successful religious sects famed for canvassing on the streets. Occasions when three or four candidates arrived in one village simultaneously, or when one candidate circled an island in his canoe while he waited for other candidates to leave, became the stuff of humorous anecdotes. There were incidents of opposing candidates exchanging T-Shirts and badges, and even travelling on the same transport together, during the campaigning. Conviviality continued without interruption right up to the counting night when seven of the candidates combined resources to put on a muu-muu for close supporters at a location which was only a convenient 200 meters from the tally room!

The Results

Michael Pondros won the Provincial seat with 2343 votes out of 8590 cast. Nahau Rooney won the Open with 2137 out of an identical total.

The results as analysed from data made available by the electoral office tend to obscure certain aspects of the elections. There were several ballot boxes which contained votes from more than one of the politico-geographic divisions identified above, and although the tables have attempted to analyse support from various areas, this has proved difficult. However tables do show some general trends.

- a. The least successful candidates received a greater percentage of their votes from their home areas than the more successful candidates.
- b. In most cases where a village (home area) had an identified candidate, the village enthusiastically supported that candidate. In most cases the degree of support was in excess of 30% of the vote from that village and in some cases in excess of 60% of the possible vote.
- c. The percentage of each candidate's votes that was derived from the home areas was much higher for the Open electorate candidates (range from 21% to 57%) than for the Provincial candidates (3% to 26%). I take this

to be a reflection of the wider geographical dispersal of the Open candidates. It could also mean that parochial issues were more prominent in the Open electorate.

- d. Candidates' education level was clearly important. The Open electorate results show an almost linear relationship between level of education and the degree of success, while the provincial results confirm that the candidate with no formal education did poorly among candidates who had attended school.
- e. Although party politics were much more evident in the selection of candidates and campaigning in the Provincial seat than the Open seat, the results indicate that party candidates in the Open electorate scored better than non-party candidates, while in the provincial electorate the candidates of the two major parties polled poorly. This was more a reflection on who the candidates were and how they campaigned rather than on any positive effect of the various party policies. In the open electorate the party candidates were better educated and campaigned more vigorously than the non-party candidates; but in the provincial electorate there was no such distinction between party and non-party candidates.

Table 1.1 Manus Open — Candidate Characteristics

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------------------|---|----------------------|--|----------------------|---|---|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>Candidate</i> | Loajam Lomoi | Johan Sapak | Propor Harol | James Sisosor | Sapau Simeon | Nahau Rooney | Michael Kakul | Pondala Pohai | Kuluah Silwau | Stephen Meta |
| <i>Village</i> | Pak Island | Salien | Pak Island | Salien | Pityliuh | Lahan | Sou-uh | Sabon | Derimbat | Metaweri |
| <i>Broad Area</i> | South Coast (Island) | West Coast | South Coast (Island) | West Coast | North Coast (Island) | South Coast (Inland) | North Coast | North Coast (Inland) | North Coast | South Coast |
| <i>Effective Home Base</i> | Split (Harol) | Split (Sisosor) | Split (Lomoi) | Split (Sapak) | Not split | Not split | Split (Silwau) | Not split | Split (Kabul) | Not split |
| <i>Education</i> | No Formal | Up to Secondary | No Formal | B. Ac. UOT | No Formal | B.A. UPNG | Unknown | Secondary P.H.D. Educator | No Formal | Secondary |
| <i>Age</i> | 40 | 30-35 | 40 | 30-35 | 40 | 30-35 | 30-35 | 40 | 40 | 30 |
| <i>Residence</i> | Village | Village | Village | Lorengau | Village | Lorengau | Village (Lorengau 1975-76) | Rabaul | Village | Pt. Moresby |
| <i>Experience out of Village</i> | ExCouncillor | Councillor | Councillor | Executive Officer (finance), Councillor & member, Area Authority. Previously Bank of PNG | Councillor | Prov. Govt. Planning, Dist. Officer. Previously Research Officer for Prime Minister | Previously worked as Ass. Manager with Japanese timber mill | Health Education Officer | Councillor, Member Area Auth. | Professional San Miguel Brewery |
| <i>Party</i> | No-Party | No-Party | Paliau Movement | Pangu | No-Party | Independent. Recognised as Pangu (not endorsed) | Not known | P.P.P. | No-Party | U.P. |
| <i>Campaign (i.e. travelling and public speaking)</i> | Negligible | Some campaigning, circumnavigated Manus | South Coast | Very vigorous except S.E. Is | North Coast | At time of elections negligible | North Coast | Effectively covered much of province | North Coast and Inland | Very vigorous over all province |

Table 1.2 Manus Open — Distribution of Votes by Location

| PLACE | Loajam Lomoi | Jonah Sapak | Propar Harol | James Sisosor | Sapan Simeon | Nahau Rooney | Michael Kukul | Pondala Pohai | Kulvah Silwau | Meta Stephen | Informal | Total | Comment |
|--|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------|-------|---|
| LORENGAU/ LOMBROM | 50 | 56 | 36 | 282 | 30 | 343 | 56 | 99 | 94 | 115 | 64 | 1225 | — |
| M'BUKE, BALUAN PANISELO, LOU | 42 | 91 | 116 | 27 | 6 | 187 | 5 | 118 | 3 | 256 | 32 | 883 | |
| MOUKLEN NAEUA LOAMAT, TONG, PAK | 197 | 1 | 276 | 9 | 3 | 88 | 5 | 24 | 1 | 9 | 13 | 636 | Lomoi, Harol — home island, Pak |
| HUS, SOUH, DERIMBAT, LOWA | 12 | 5 | 10 | 103 | 9 | 98 | 112 | 24 | 212 | 9 | 22 | 728 | Kakul, Silwau — Home area |
| MALABANG, PITYLU, NBRILOU | 7 | 4 | 9 | 96 | 108 | 30 | 8 | 118 | 12 | 40 | 18 | 450 | Simeon- home island, Pitylu; Pohai- home adjacent mainland |
| LUGOS, ROSSUN LUNDRET, BOWAH | 4 | 4 | 5 | 11 | 4 | 89 | 19 | 196 | 5 | 15 | 21 | 374 | Pohai- home area |
| LOS NEGROS | 24 | 25 | 10 | 49 | 14 | 173 | 4 | 74 | 31 | 53 | 20 | 477 | |
| NORTHCOAST (WEST) ANDRA, PONAM, BONDRALIS, TULO N'DREHET | 36 | 19 | 31 | 151 | 2 | 22 | 167 | 11 | 67 | 18 | 10 | 587 | Kakul- home area |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|---|
| WEST COAST SORI, NYADA, HORNYAN, LESSAU, BIPI, KALI, SALIEN | 68 | 186 | 14 | 601 | 5 | 30 | 27 | 15 | 1 | 36 | 7 | 990 | Sapak, Sisosor — home village, Salien |
| MALAI BAY, LOI | 3 | 178 | 3 | 20 | — | 200 | 2 | 10 | 9 | 29 | 4 | 459 | |
| TIMOENAI PELIPAHUAI | 4 | 26 | 6 | 10 | — | 85 | 12 | 1 | 63 | 18 | 6 | 231 | |
| PELIPOHUAI METAWAREI | 2 | 6 | — | 26 | 2 | 97 | — | 2 | 8 | 67 | 6 | 216 | Meta- home village, Melawerei |
| PERE, M'BUNAI | 11 | 8 | 24 | 8 | 1 | 229 | 3 | 2 | — | 9 | 7 | 302 | Rooney — home base, M'Bunai |
| M'BUNAI, N'DROIA EAST/SOUTH COAST INLAND | 8 | 6 | 14 | 22 | 1 | 460 | 22 | 36 | 277 | 51 | 12 | 909 | Rooney — inland village |
| WESTERN ISLAND | 29 | 44 | 1 | 38 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 152 | 1 | 280 | |
| POSTAL | | | | 4 | | 2 | | | | 3 | | | |
| <i>TOTALS</i> | 479 | 659 | 555 | 1457 | 188 | 2137 | 446 | 733 | 785 | 908 | 243 | 8590 | |

Table 1.3 Manus Open — Percentage of Votes Derived from Home/Urban Areas

| | % of Total Votes Derived From Home | % of Home Area Votes Cast in Favour Home Candidate | % of Candidates Votes Derived Ex-Urban | % of Urban Votes Cast in Favour of Candidate | Home Area Comment |
|---------------|--|---|--|--|----------------------------------|
| Loajam Lomoi | 39.4% | 28.7% | 10.4% | 4.3% | Pak Island |
| Jonah Sapak | 28.2% | 18.9% | 8.5% | 4.8% | Salien Village West Coast |
| Parpar Harol | 49.7% | 44.3% | 6.5% | 3.1% | Pak Island |
| James Sisosor | 41.4% | 61.1% | 19.5% | 24.3% | Salien Village West Coast |
| Sapan Simeon | 57.4% | 25% | 16.0% | 2.6% | Pitylu Island |
| Nahau Rooney | 21.5% | 51.3% | 16.0% | 29.5% | Lahan Village East Inland |
| Michael Kakul | 25.1% | 15.9% | 12.6% | 4.8% | Souh Village |
| Pondala Pohai | 26.7% | 55.5% | 13.5% | 8.5% | Lugos/Rossou Ex-Slban Village |
| Kuluah Silwan | 27.0% | 30.0% | 12.0% | 8.1% | Derimbat Village |
| Meta Stephen | 7.4% | 31.9% | 12.7% | 9.9% | Metawarei Village |

Table 2.1 Manus Provincial — Candidate Characteristics

| <i>Candidate</i> | Pikah Kasau | Michael Pondros | Polomon Posawan | John Paliau | Joel Maiah | Arnold Masipal |
|----------------------------------|---|--|-------------------------------|----------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| <i>Village</i> | Worei (Pau) | Pelipohuai | Sabon | Baluan | Loniu | Nauna |
| <i>Broad Area</i> | South Coast (Mainland) | South Coast (Mainland) | North Coast (Mainland) | South Coast (Island) | South Coast (Los Negros) | South Coast (Island) |
| <i>Home Base</i> | Not split | Not split | Not split | Not split | Not split | Not split |
| <i>Education</i> | Post Secondary | Secondary | Secondary | Post Secondary | No Formal | Secondary |
| <i>Age</i> | 30 | 30-40 | 30-40 | 30-40 | 40 | 30-40 |
| <i>Residence</i> | Lorengau | Lorengau | Port Moresby | Port Moresby | Village | Lorengau |
| <i>Experience out of Village</i> | M.P. Manus Provincial. Previously Rural Development Officer | M.P. Manus Open. Previously Public Servant | Clerk Ok Tedi Development Co. | Clerk U.P.N.G. | Ex-councillor Ex-council President Manus H.S. P & C president | Building Contractor |
| <i>Party</i> | Pangu | Country | Independent | United | Recognised Pangu | Recognised Pangu |
| <i>Campaign</i> | Extensive | Extensive | Extensive | Extensive | Not very extensive but more than many open candidates | Very vigorous and extensive |

Table 2.2 *Manus Provincial — Distribution of Votes by Location*

| PLACE | Pikah Kusau | Michael Pondros | Polomon Posawan | John Paliau | Joel Maiah | Arnold Masipal | Informal | Total | Comment |
|---|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|------------|----------------|----------|-------|---------------------------------|
| LORENGAU-LOMBRUM | 275 | 463 | 75 | 122 | 35 | 193 | 62 | 1225 | |
| M'BUKE-BALWAN | 16 | 60 | 1 | 303 | 6 | 88 | 3 | 477 | J. Paliau — home island, Palwan |
| LOU-PANISELU | 18 | 66 | 150 | 60 | 44 | 57 | 11 | 406 | |
| MOUKLEN, NAUNG PAK | 12 | 28 | 118 | 33 | 4 | 210 | 6 | 411 | A. Masipal — h/is. Nauna |
| PAK ISLAND | 7 | 27 | 70 | 73 | 5 | 33 | 10 | 225 | |
| LOS NEGROS | 53 | 142 | 25 | 38 | 185 | 17 | 17 | 477 | J. Maiah — h/is., Los Negros |
| NORTH COAST ISLANDS & MAINLAND EXCHANGE NORTH — EAST MAINLAND | 145 | 414 | 224 | 174 | 355 | 256 | 41 | 1600 | |
| LUGOS, ROSSUN LUNDRET, BOWAT ISL. | 29 | 135 | 147 | 14 | 20 | 11 | 24 | 374 | P. Posawan — h/village, Saban |
| WEST COAST | 383 | 217 | 206 | 48 | 17 | 104 | 15 | 990 | |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|------|------|------|------|-----|------|-----|------|--|
| MALAI BAY & LOI | 38 | 254 | 86 | 10 | 3 | 64 | 3 | 358 | |
| TIMOENAI PELIPOHUAI | 5 | 79 | 5 | 22 | 1 | 117 | 3 | 231 | M.Pondros — Pelipohuai; A.Masipal — inlaws ex Pelipohuai |
| PELIPOHUAI METAWAREI | 97 | 12 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 98 | 1 | 216 | P. Kasan— Metawarei; A.Masipal — inlaws ex Pelipohuai |
| PERE, M'BUNAI, M'DROIA | 18 | 117 | 15 | 58 | 17 | 275 | 8 | 503 | |
| EASTERN ISLAND | 103 | 287 | 40 | 31 | 157 | 72 | 18 | 708 | |
| WESTERN ISLANDS | 51 | 47 | 8 | 155 | 10 | 9 | 0 | 280 | |
| POSTAL | 5 | 1 | 1 | 0 | | 2 | | | |
| <i>TOTAL</i> | 1255 | 2343 | 1172 | 1146 | 840 | 1613 | 209 | 8590 | |

Table 2.3 Manus Provincial — Percentage of Votes Derived from Home/Urban Areas

| | % of Candidates' Votes Derived Ex-Home | % of Home Area Votes Cast in Favour of Home | % of Candidates Votes Derived Ex-Urban | % of Urban Votes Cast in Favour of Candidate | Home Areas |
|-----------------|---|---|---|--|---|
| Pikah Kasau | 7.8% | 45% | 22% | 24% | Metawarei |
| Michael Pondros | 3.4% | 34.6% | 19.8% | 39.7% | Pelipohuai |
| Polomon Posawan | 12.6% | 42% | 6.4% | 6.4% | Sabon |
| John Paliau | 26.4% | 63.9% | 10.6% | 10.5% | Baluan |
| Joel Maiah | 22% | 40.2% | 4.2% | 3.0% | Los Negros |
| Arnold Masipal | 13.0% 7.3% | 51.9% 51.3% | 12.0% | 16.6% | Nauna Adopted Base — Inlaws, Pelipohuai |

UNPUBLISHED FIELD REPORTS
ON THE 1977 NATIONAL ELECTIONS

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- Peter Buri "Field Research on the Hagen Open Electorate: Western Highlands Province", June 1977.
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Electoral Politics in Papua New Guinea: Studies on the 1977 Elections surveys the economic and political background to the first post-Independence election in Papua New Guinea, analyses the election result which returned Michael Somare as Pangu Party Prime Minister and discusses the party strengths in the new 1977 Parliament. It offers in-depth case studies of a number of individual electorates in each of the four regions of Papua New Guinea and it is an invaluable source on political development at the grass roots as well as the national level, in a crucial year for Papua New Guineans.

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