INSTITUTE OF CURRENT WORLD AFFAIRS

EPW-30
Self-Government in Papua New Guinea:
Coming, Ready Or Not

P.O. Box 628,
Port Moresby,
Papua,
Papua New Guinea

July 11, 1971

Mr. Richard H. Nolte,
Executive Director,
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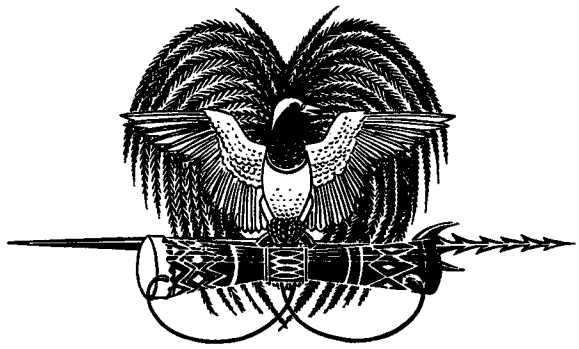
535 Fifth Avenue,
New York, New York 10017,
United States of America

Dear Mr. Nolte,

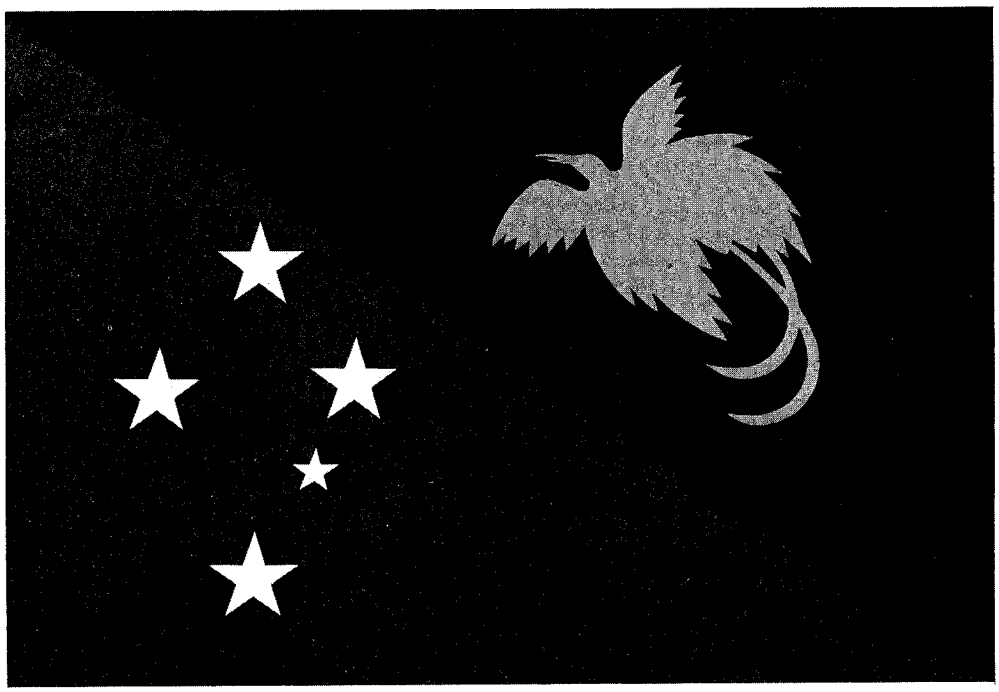
Both the Australian government and the members of the Papua New Guinea House of Assembly — with the subsequent blessing of the United Nations Trusteeship Council — have recently agreed to the proposal that the development of Papua New Guinea should "be geared to preparing the country for internal self government during the life of the next House of Assembly", that is between 1972 and 1976. As part of this process of preparation, and with unconscious and appropriate irony for a country which is still so heavily upon external economic assistance for its continued development, "the Territory of Papua and New Guinea" was renamed "Papua New Guinea" on the first day of the new financial year. "The Territory of" was deleted from the country's official name to remove one of the outward symbols of dependence, and the "and" was dropped to promote national unity. A new flag and emblem (which are reproduced on page 2 of this "Newsletter") were also brought into official use, and a national day, the second Monday in September, was declared. July 1st, 1971, therefore marked, as the Administrator said, "a significant step in the development of a Papua New Guinea nation" — and his message was printed in a Government Gazette Extraordinary on that day, with translations into Pidgin and Police Motu replete with paraphrases in each language to explain what "a nation" is. After a brief outline of the historical circumstances in which these changes have taken place, this "Newsletter" then goes on to consider the nature and implications of the other preparations required.

From Dependence to Conservatism

Looking back across the watershed of 1970, Australia's policies for the political development of Papua New Guinea during the previous decade seem like a broad tide — whipped up from time to time by foreign winds of change — in which the people of the Territory found neither a footing nor a successful stroke. At the crest of the surge, the Australian government proudly — and accurately — proclaimed that the House of Assembly and many local government councils had been set up, and the emerging parliamentary executive reformed, ahead of popular demand, while it simultaneously assured Papua New Guineans that the future form, international status, and timing of



The Papua New Guinea National Emblem is officially described as "a partially-stylized representation of the widespread Bird of Paradise Gerrus paradisaea in display, head turned to the left, seated on the upturned grip of a horizontal Kundu drum with the drum-head to the right side of the bird, from behind which a horizontal ceremonial spear projects with the head to the left of the bird."



To the right of the diagonal, the flag is coloured red; to the left, black. The Bird of Paradise is coloured yellow, and the Southern Cross is white.

their self-government was theirs to determine. However, beneath the surge of general policy, there was the undertow of practice, in which the ten official members seemed to some observers to be more concerned with "managing" the passage of government business, than with encouraging deliberation, in the House of Assembly; the Administration's field officers appeared to the 1968 United Nations Visiting Mission to exercise too much influence over local government councils, despite the renaming of council "supervisors" as "advisers" in 1965; and the seven Ministerial Members who were appointed in 1968 were expected to "represent the Administration in relation to those functions assigned to them, for example, regarding questions and motions in the House" rather than make policies for the Administration to implement. In short, the institutions through which Papua New Guinea's political development was to be fostered were established, and then their formal powers and composition altered, sufficiently far ahead of popular demand, or even widespread understanding, to keep the initiative for further change in Australia's hands, where effective power within these institutions still remained. The net effect of this particular combination of policy and practice was to foster dependence upon Australian leadership and skills among Papua New Guinea's aspiring politicians, rather than the encouragement of a will to power and that "exclusive sense of personal responsibility" for his own decisions which Max Weber felt to be the mark of the true politician.

There were, of course, some Papua New Guineans who pulled on their colonial moorings. At the local level, their attempts at organisation were frequently offhandedly dismissed or actively suppressed by officialdom as manifestations of seemingly irrational cargo cult activity, rather than regarded as — perhaps ill-conceived and ill-informed — responses to frustration which could be channelled into more constructive activities. When relatively well-educated townsmen tried to push for constitutional changes on their own, they were accused by some high officials of being unrepresentative of the people as a whole, ungrateful, and impertinent. When indigenous public servants became involved in politics, their superiors often took what can only be regarded as an unnecessarily restrictive view of their political rights and public duties for a country in which the public service tended to absorb the bulk of the educational elite.

But, when the Minister for External Territories, the Honourable C.E. Barnes, went to Papua New Guinea — most often to the Highlands — the people spoke to him, he said, about "the need for roads and bridges, not self-government", and he seemed not to see the political implications of their requests. He wished to help the people of Papua New Guinea to develop their country economically. He simply failed (or was temperamentally disinclined) to perceive that the allocation of money and manpower for building roads and bridges, as between districts, and as against, say, hospitals or schools, can be channelled into a desire for a direct say in their allocation, and, therefore, in the policy-making process. Thus, his benevolent paternalism rendered the transition to an acceptance of the concrete meaning of self-government more difficult than it need have been.

If, then, there was some conflict between official paternalism and the aspirations of some Papua New Guineans, the latter rarely emerged

from private grumbling and ambition into public action, and even when they did it was still noticeable that many of the so-called radicals appeared to want leadership from the government in the most general policy-matters. Instead, they had hitherto received a seemingly open-ended commitment to continued paternalistic rule, which masqueraded as flexibility, at the policy-level, coupled with quite firm control of political activity within, and the attempted restriction and discouragement of activity outside, the political institutions that were set up to foster Papua New Guinea's political development. As some ten of the progenitors of the PANGU Pati pointed out with mingled suspicion and anxiety in 1966:

> "There may be good reason why Federal Government has not announced what it plans to do. Or it may be it has no plan at all because it is often easier to say nothing and wait and see what mistakes the other side will make. But we think this wait-and-see policy is not good. It has led some of our people to say that Federal Government wants to keep us in this half-way stage for a long time."

The Select Committee on Constitutional Development, led by Dr. John Guise, the group noted, were of one mind "and have pressed ... to meet Federal Government out of their silence and force them to say what they intend to do and how they plan to introduce responsible government."

None of the preceding movements or complainants ever pierced the superficial fabric of unity, democracy (that is, acquiescence to the institutions that were set up, then voting), and order, which the Administration had imposed upon Papua New Guinea. The Australian government continued to believe that cooperation in development and decolonization (which, in effect, meant leadership by Australia in Papua New Guinea's putative interest) was possible, and that both countries had a vested interest in protracted Australian rule, whatever some members of the United Nations might think. Throughout most of the 1960s, but for sporadic local difficulties with the Hahalis Welfare Society on Buka in 1962 and with the Johnson cult on New Hanover in 1964, the Australian government had no real political problems to contend with in accepting responsibility for the government of Papua New Guinea. It was not, indeed, until 1969, when the seeming harmony that had prevailed was openly and dramatically challenged through a massed confrontation between village people and the police in the Kieta area of Bougainville, and large-scale demonstrations and some violence on the Gazelle Peninsula of New Britain, that the Australian government was given cause to ponder the implications of its paternalistic gradualism.

Until 1969, politics beyond the village or the clan had been largely a matter of pressing the central government, through the local kiap or member of the House of Assembly, for particular benefits for an area. Very few Papua New Guinean politicians had yet seen, or been forced to see, that government entailed the allocation of priorities both as between different areas of the country and various aspects of development, and they had certainly not sought to control the allocation process. Most of the indigenous members of the House of Assembly, for example, tended to see themselves as patient spokesmen for their people against the government, and/or cheerleaders for the Administration in encouraging local self-help

schemes and cash-cropping. Thus, when Mr. E.G. Whitlam, the Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Opposition in Australia, toured Papua New Guinea in December 1969 - January 1970, his advocacy of the inevitability of independence and the imminence of internal self-government (in 1972) was seen by many of Papua New Guinea's politicians as no more than the tactic of a wilful disrupter of the status quo, and by some members of the PANGU Pati and the Mataungan Association as support for their causes against the government and its adherents. In fact, Mr. Whitlam was implying a great deal more than either his admirers or detractors then saw. He was saying that the Australian parliament had responsibilities beyond Papua New Guinea, and that its primary responsibility was to the people of Australia. In his view, it was in Australia's interest that Papua New Guineans should be saddled with increasing responsibility for their own government. As he put it quite explicitly at the end of another territory-wide tour in January 1971, the fabric of government that had been imposed over Papua New Guinea by Australia was in danger of being broken, and the only way in which Australia could hope to avoid embarrassment for herself, and to provide for the maintenance of orderly national government in Papua New Guinea, was to reverse the notion that unity is a prerequisite for self-government. Perhaps the immediate saddling of Papua New Guineans with greater responsibility for their own government would awaken in them an urgency and sense of commitment which had not hitherto been apparent:

> "Australia's obligation in the United Nations is to hand over Papua-New Guinea as a single entity as soon as possible. Papua-New Guinea has a chance of remaining united only if self-government comes quickly. Self-government in itself will be the real unifying force in this country. To delay self-government is to promote separatism. Self-government must be given quickly to the people as a whole; otherwise section after section will seize with anger and bitterness towards us what we should grant wholly and wholeheartedly."

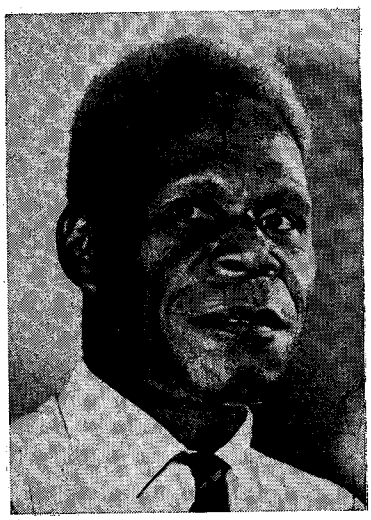
In the short-term, Mr. Whitlam's tour tended to be dismissed by many Papua New Guinean politicians as but a disturbing intervention in the internal politics of Papua New Guinea, and the Select Committee on Constitutional Development found in its tour of April-May 1970 that the majority of the people were still unwilling to consider when internal self-government should come about. However, after the Right Honourable J.G. Gorton's visit in July, when the Australian Prime Minister himself spelt out the urgent need for Papua New Guineans to undertake increased responsibility for their own government, dependence was forced to become the mother of an increasingly autonomous conservatism. Those politicians who feared a change in their relations with the government more than the difficulties that would follow without such a change had their hands forced. They protested against the introduction of constitutional reforms without prior consultation with the House of Assembly, and then reluctantly accepted the inevitable. By early 1971, then, the majority of the people of Papua New Guinea had come to see that self-government was ineluctably drawing nigh, though they recognised this fact in somewhat negative form by reportedly saying that it "should come about no sooner than during the life of the 1976-1980 House of Assembly." Thus, the Select Committee on

Constitutional Development, recognising the inevitability of self-government, generally fearing the victory of the Labor Party in Australia in 1972, and seeing too that the very prevalence of a willingness to consider the timing of self-government could have a political momentum of its own, made the recommendation cited in the opening sentence of this "Newsletter".

The Development of a Parliamentary Executive

In some respects, Papua New Guinea appears to be almost better prepared for self-government than the Select Committee's report implies. Since 1964, the House of Assembly has been empowered to legislate for "the peace, order and good government of the Territory", subject to the Administrator's assent and/or the Governor-General's approval, and the elective and indigenous components in the executive branch have gradually been increased. By 1968, there were seven elected parliamentarians who had been selected to become Ministerial Members and to share the responsibility for the day-to-day running of their departments with their departmental heads. A further nine members were appointed as Assistant Ministerial Members whom their departmental heads were instructed to consult wherever possible. Together with three official members, and an additional elected member, of the House of Assembly, the seven Ministerial Members met as the Administrator's Executive Council under the chairmanship of the Administrator. Formally, then, the business of preparing Papua New Guinea has been well under way for some time. What was lacking at the start of 1970 was the legal authority or the will to power to make the system really work.

It is, of course, difficult to arrive at any firm conclusions about the operation of an institution like the Ministerial Member system. The relations that have pertained among the Ministerial Members themselves, and between them and their departmental heads, have been not only confidential but varied. However, some guesses, based partly on negative evidence, can be made.



Mr. Matthias Toliman

The Ministerial Member for Education, Mr. Matthias Toliman C.B.E., for example, himself a former schoolteacher, has always seemed to take an active and informed interest in his department's work, and has appeared to receive some encouragement to do so. By way of contrast, the problems that beset a functionally illiterate, non-English-speaking Ministerial Member must be immense, and a real challenge to his assiduity in those cases in which the department is concerned with matters that have little direct impact at village level. In parliament, the principal public arena in which their performances can be judged, few of the Ministerial Members, even now, can answer questions "off the cuff", and still fewer manage to score politically through the answers and speeches prepared for them by their departments. Some of them have trouble just reading the

Pidgin or English texts which are their departmental briefs. Judging, too, from the very obvious reluctance with which several of the Ministerial Members leave their constituencies for the capital, and the public complaint of the Ministerial Members for Labour, Mr. Toua Kapena C.B.E., who lives in Port Moresby, that he has been called upon too often to make up a quorum on the Administrator's Executive Council, very few of the Ministerial Members seem to have been highly motivated towards participating in the affairs of the embryonic cabinet.

It is true that the Ministerial Members were given very little formal authority until 1970, and that the Administration sometimes seemed to use them to endorse, rather than encouraged them to deliberate upon, certain policies. Indeed, until then, they appear not to have had access to such essential resources as a regular document despatch service to their electorates, assured secretarial assistance, or funds to pay political agents to attend to their interests while they were away from their constituencies. Only during 1970 was each department entitled to employ an officer (up to the level of a Clerk Class 7) to brief the ministerial head of his department, to prepare and to translate submissions for him, and to see that his orders are actually executed. However, the Administration's failure to provide the emerging parliamentary executive with many essential resources, and its reluctance to hand over more authority, were not the only problems that inhibited the development of a fullblown ministerial system. At the heart of the system's shortcomings lay the Ministerial Members' own continued acceptance of their status of dependence vis-à-vis the Administration. Only a handful of them tried to rise above dependence to carve out a line of their own within the broad framework of government policy, and much of the authority and many of the facilities that they lacked would surely have been given to them had they only exerted enough pressure upon the Administration. Some of the Ministerial Members seem, in retrospect, to have accepted office only for prestige, to ensure representation for their region of the Territory at the top of the political system, and perhaps just to keep more radical or potentially active men out.

Against this background, it is perhaps a little less surprising than might at first appear that the following promises by the Minister for External Territories in March 1970 should be regarded as enhancing the authority of the Administrator's Executive Council:

> "Firstly it will be comsulted on all significant policy issues; secondly it will advise on the more significant departmental questions referred to it by a Ministerial Member; thirdly it will have a greater voice in the procedures for the framing of the Territory budget [in negotiations with Canberra]."

In light of this change, one can only speculate as to the nature of the preparation for cabinet government undertaken to that time, although the aspirations of, and the possibilities perceived by, some of the Ministerial Members appear not to have been very great. As Mr. Tore Lokoloko, the Ministerial Member for Public Health and one of the best-educated among their number, observed in May 1970, soon after the Ministerial Members had been given final authority over the day-to-day administration of their departments:

Mr. Tore Lokoloko

"... through spending five days a month in A.E.C. meetings, Ministerial Members have become well and truly involved in the government of Papua-New Guinea. Our collective views are being constantly sought on all important matters and we are making decisions. Increasingly, we are the ones making the political decisions. When matters come before us, we consider not only the reasons why something should be done, but also how politically acceptable the policy would be. This may then result in alterations to the proposal or deferment until the political climate is better."

A more highly motivated or autonomous group of individuals would, it seems arguable, either have demanded more power for themselves, or made the existing system unworkable until they got it.

Only in July 1970, and in some cases with open reluctance, were Papua New Guinea's Ministerial Members saddled with a substantial amount of authority. Their formal dependence upon Australian leadership was abruptly terminated, and they were simply informed that they would henceforth be responsible for certain policy-fields. Above all, the old politics of each member pushing against the Administration for more money for his own constituency — a tendency which some Assistant Ministerial Members extended in relation to their departments during the annual budget debate — were recast, in that Papua New Guineans were, for the first time, to be numbered among the active participants in negotiations with the Australian government as to the size of the annual grant, and then in allocating the money both between and within departments.

The change was, of course, less dramatically presented than the foregoing might imply, for the Australian Prime Minister was adamant in stressing the continuity between what he now proposed and what had gone before. His message was nonetheless clear, despite all of his reassurances, and over the next few months some of the Ministerial Members who had hitherto been most dependent upon the government began with new urgency to try to organise a parliamentary and extraparliamentary political base for themselves.

But, again, probably less real power than at first appeared was actually handed over. In all, the Australian grant still accounts for 52% of the Administration's total expenditures (including allowances for overseas public servants) in 1970-71. And, the grant itself is now divided into four main parts, for which the 1970-71 appropriations from Australia are shown in brackets:

Grant-in-aid for Recurrent Expenses and Minor Works ($33 million)
Development Grant ($37.75 million)
Development Loan ($8 million)
Allowances and other benefits for expatriate officers of the Papua New Guinea Public Service ($29.25 million)

(In addition to the $8 million loan for the development of Arawa township in Bougainville, a further $3.6 million was made available, as a loan, to cover the costs of the Administration's equity in Bougainville Copper Pty.

Ltd. Further Commonwealth expenditures in Papua New Guinea include $270,000 to cover the costs of pensions for retired officers of the two pre-war administrations, and $14.25 million which was provided as economic aid through Commonwealth departments and agencies operating directly in Papua New Guinea — exclusive of Commonwealth defence expenditures within Papua New Guinea. The annual cost of the Pacific Islands Regiment is estimated to be $3.052 million.)

Of the four elements of the old single-unit grant, the money to pay the overseas allowances of non-indigenous public servants is now an item in the Australian budget, the Prime Minister announced, "so that everyone can see that this comes from the Australian taxpayer and from what is provided inside Australia, and not from what is provided in the Territory", and to that end it no longer appears in the Papua New Guinea budget. Both the development grant and the provision of money for special development loans remain the responsibility of the Australian government, although they are the subject of negotiations between Canberra and Konedobu. The only element of the budget that is even technically in Papua New Guinea's hands is the grant-in-aid to supplement locally raised revenues in paying for recurrent expenditure and minor works. Although the grant-in-aid is to be spent at the discretion of the Administrator's Executive Council, its total amount, too, must be negotiated with the Australian government, and if more money is required than the latter will provide, then that in the Prime Minister's eyes was "fine. It can be provided if the House of Assembly up here is prepared to impose the taxes required ...." Indeed, speaking for the Australian government, he expected "that there would be more effort on the part of the local people to raise revenues inside the Territory, as years go by for the purpose of this recurrent expenditure and these minor works."

Although the Prime Minister was cautious to avoid any suggestion that Australian aid for Papua New Guinea will cease, or even fall short of the levels upon which the five-year (1968-9 to 1972-3) economic development plan has been predicated, his seeming toughness on the need for responsibility in economic affairs to be transferred as power is handed over, struck a responsive chord in some Australian circles. As long as Papua New Guinea had remained politically quiescent, the mounting size of the Australian grant had passed virtually unnoticed there, except as an occasional source of pride or a reminder of the gratitude once felt for the "Fuzzy-Wuzzy Angels". However, with the demonstrations and disturbances of 1969 in mind, an increasing number of Australians had begun to speculate in public whether $100 million-plus per year in aid could not be more profitably spent elsewhere, and much of this speculation became quite open criticism and condemnation of the ingratitude of some Papua New Guineans in newspaper editorials, and on the part of some state premiers and even a senior official of the Returned Servicemen's League after the confrontations between the police and some Tolais on the Gazelle Peninsula in July 1970. Papua New Guinea's leaders were, therefore, to be increasingly responsible politically for what was done on their behalf, and — given the tied nature of the development loans and grants, and the lack of room to manoeuvre in spending even the grant-in-aid (which is largely restricted to the continuance of existing services) — an oft-derided belief of the Minister for External Territories was given a new (and perhaps bitter) point:

"Political autonomy is not compatible with extreme economic dependence."

At the departmental level, the Assistant Ministerial Members were given full responsibility for the day-to-day running of their departments in July, and, both in relation to the administration of individual departments and to the Administrator's Executive Council, the Ministerial Members were given final responsibility in what appears to be every field of Administration activity except tertiary education, the judiciary, the enforcement of law and order, internal security, external affairs and trade, and large scale development projects connected with the five-year economic development programme. For the time being, however, certain Commonwealth departments continue to operate directly in the Territory, though their indigenous staffs are being absorbed into the Papua New Guinea Public Service. Not only do the costs of these departments, especially the Department of Civil Aviation and the Army, remain partly hidden within the overall administrative expenses of their Canberra headquarters, but so do the political implications of their activities. From the Canberra perspective, the upgrading of particular airstrips in the Highlands, say, or the ordering of weapons for the Pacific Islands Regiment are fairly low-level, administrative problems. In the context of Papua New Guinea, they would be the stuff of national politics.

Mr. T.J. Leahy

Finally, to sheet home the message to the Ministerial Members and the Papua New Guinea parliament that they were increasingly responsible for their own decisions, within the constricted realities of the territory's economic situation, the Australian government instructed the official members not to vote in the Administrator's Executive Council, the Administrator to heed the Council's advice, and promised not to disallow or withhold assent from legislation, in those fields in which final authority has been handed over. Since that time, the official members of the House of Assembly have tended to abstain from voting on some, especially constitutional, issues. But, when they do vote, as they still do on a variety of issues, it is almost arguable that, at times, they provided up to ten gratuitous votes for the Ministerial Members. And the Ministerial Members, in their turn, voting alone, albeit with some official encouragement, have elected an expatriate farmer-grazier, Mr. T.J. Leahy, to be the Spokesman for the Administrator's Executive Council in the House of Assembly! The deputy to the "proto-Prime Minister", as he is often called, is a Papuan, Mr. Tore Lokoloko.

Organising Opinion

Less than two months after Mr. Gorton's tour of Papua New Guinea, the Select Committee on Constitutional Development issued an

interim report which captured quite nicely the rather curious political situation in which many parliamentarians now found themselves. The Administration, the Committee recommended, should be requested to employ its radio stations, its press facilities, and its political education programme to give

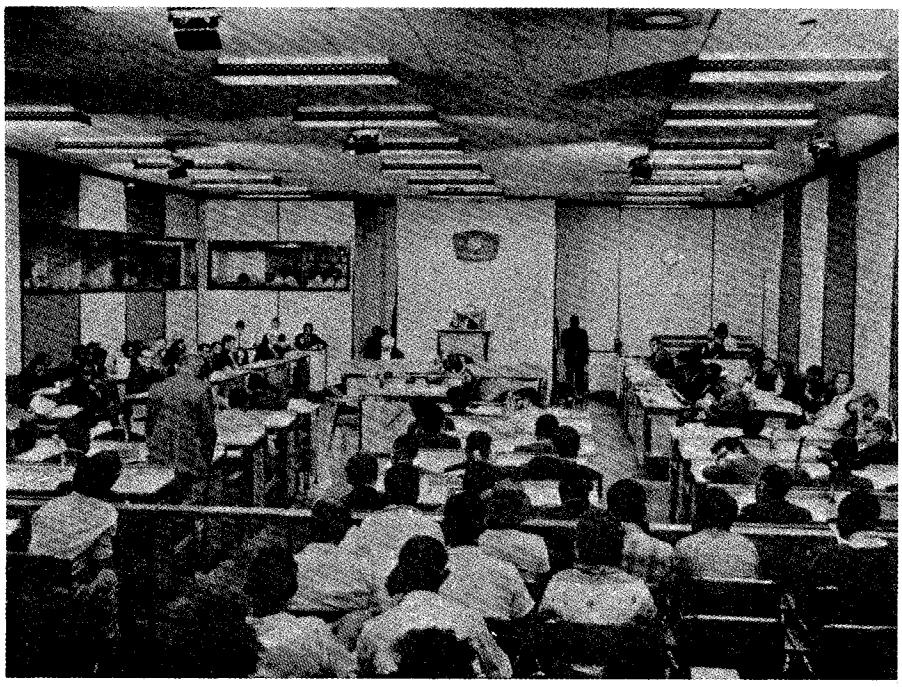
> "the greatest possible coverage ... to the changes recently made and the background to these changes so that the people of the Territory are made aware that the changes flow from discussions held by Committees of the House with the Australian Government and are merely a step in the move towards self-government rather than a new imposed change in direction for the Territory's future."

The ordinary village people of Papua New Guinea had not been prepared by the government so that they might understand and easily accept the recent changes; they had not been mobilised by their leaders to press for or to resist their introduction; and now their parliamentary representatives felt unable, without assistance from the Administration, even to claim retrospective credit for what had transpired. The majority of the members of the House of Assembly were dependent upon the government's political education programme to inform their constituents about the Ministerial Members' new responsibilities, for, despite the Select Committee's elaborate consultative ritual, the members themselves had largely failed to involve their people in the politics of change.

Until quite recently, then, there has been a remarkable absence of any substantial bodies of organised indigenous opinion in Papua New Guinea's emerging national politics, a phenomenon which has been part cause, and part effect, of the Australian government's tendency to introduce constitutional changes into the territory ahead of popular demand and at no real cost to its political power there. Recently, however, and at an accelerating pace, the picture has begun to change.

Between 1968 and late 1970, the majority of the elected members of the House of Assembly were not firm adherents of a particular party, but independently elected members who, individually or in small groups, inclined towards, without finally adhering to, one or other of two nodes: the ten official members, who voted as a bloc; or the slightly less cohesive PANGU Pati, the parliamentary membership of which fluctuated between eight and twelve, and which had declared itself the "loyal opposition" when announcing its boycott of all ministerial offices in 1968. Around the government node were clustered the eight elected members of the Administrator's Executive Council and the Assistant Ministerial Members (who numbered either eight or nine at different times), who were individually responsible for representing the Administration in the House. Although they generally supported the government line by the time that most issues came up in the House of Assembly, a few of them simply absented themselves beforehand, or, on occasion, walked ostentatiously from the chamber when divisions were called on issues over which they differed seriously from the official members.

The ministerial office-holders, unlike their counterparts in Westminster and Canberra, were not responsible to the House of Assembly but to the Administration, though they were nominated for office by a committee of elected members. Their bargaining position vis-à-vis the official



The House of Assembly in session

members in the Administrator's Executive Council was weakened by, among other factors, the lack of a party-organisation to back them up outside the Council, or to bind them together inside. In the House of Assembly, there was, again, no formal tie to the majority of the House to assure them of support. Nonetheless, the majority of the elected members supported not only the principles upon which the embryonic ministry had been established, but also the broad nature of its membership.

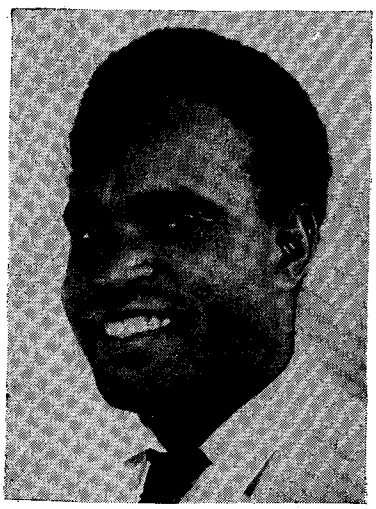
From the first meeting of the second House, in June 1968, most of the elected members who were not members of the PANGU Pati (including ministerial office-holders) began to meet together outside formal sitting hours to discuss forthcoming business in the House. The leadership of what became known as the Independent Members' Group alternated among a group of people, though it was generally held, at least in name, by a Papua New Guinean. In fact, the group had been founded by expatriates, and they had by far the largest say in its affairs. But, then, politics beyond the ordinances outlawing sorcery and playing-cards and their like has always been a predominantly expatriate affair in the House of Assembly, which fact has led to an increasing number of flareups over the years in which Papua New Guinean politicians have blamed expatriates for dominating some debates, and for fomenting dissension (especially dissension on regional lines) amongst themselves.

Twenty of the eighty-four elected members of the second House are expatriates, and among them is concentrated an overwhelming proportion of the elected members' collective financial and educational resources,

overseas experience, familiarity with parliamentary practice, and social and linguistic access to the predominantly English-speaking and expatriate upper echelons of the Public Service in Port Moresby. The most important and best-organised extra-parliamentary interest groups that have access to the House of Assembly, even those which, like the Public Service and Local Government Associations, represent mainly indigenes, are headed by expatriates, or, like the Highland Farmers and Settlers' Association, the various chambers of commerce, planters' and graziers' associations, are organised principally to further expatriate economic interests. Their secretaries and other officials tend to meet, and to politick, with men who speak the same language as themselves in every sense of that expression. The expatriate members of the House (especially, the Regional members) tend, therefore, to act as brokers on behalf of those indigenous members from their Districts who do not openly resent their dominance or are not members of the PANGU Pati. They link the increasingly important politics of and for their Districts (even across party lines) with the issues and interests of national politics. When especially controversial issues are due for debate, or detailed amendments to a measure are proposed, the official members have tended — less now than in the past — to go beyond the ministerial office-holders to deal with some of the expatriate members, while the four District Commissioners among their number have dealt with their own local members.

Within the Independent Members' Group as a whole, issues tended to be raised and explained by the expatriates, with occasional outbursts of indignation and frustration by Papua New Guineans who resented their seeming dominance. Only a few of the Ministerial Members, a handful of obstinate individualists, and the Leader of the Parliamentary Wing of the PANGU Pati, Mr. Michael Somare, ever played a major part in the private discussions and compromises that preceded some debates. The conviviality and close residence of the expatriate members (several of whom stayed in a single hotel) tended to increase both the concentration and at times the intensity of the politicking that took place among them, while most of the indigenous members were dispersed before and after formal sitting hours all over Port Moresby. What politicking took place among them seldom surfaced from the Ministerial Members' houses, the domestic quarters, compounds and hostel where they stayed into the legislature. The ideas and interests of the indigenous members were generally articulated for them by expatriates, or tended otherwise to be overlooked both by officialdom and the press. Few Papua New Guinean members were capable of "that passion for trivialities, that constant assertion of an individual point of view, which", Harold Nicolson once said, "leads to power" in an open parliamentary system. They sat and watched within the House, suppressed their mirth at those expatriates who spoke on behalf of "we Papuans", and entered debates on cues that were generally set by expatriates. Those members who were dissatisfied with the status quo turned their energies to extra-parliamentary politics, in which the weight of the expatriate and official presence was less burdensome, or could be more successfully opposed.

Now, in very few constituencies in Papua New Guinea has the local member been subjected to pressures that could not be dealt with through a question on the notice-paper querying an administrative oversight or abuse, or a request to the appropriate department for a bridge, a hospital, or a school. In many electorates, including almost all of those in the four Highlands Districts (which embrace twenty-six Open electorates in all), the member has been elected precisely because of the rapport he seems to enjoy with officialdom, and because of his obvious access to government officers. In these areas the indigenous people are often still too closely involved in the pursuit of traditional forms of prestige within and between their clans, villages or hamlets to take a sustained interest in central politics, and not sufficiently frustrated with the fruits of development to oppose the government. The central government seems to them to be both remote and benevolent, and, where pacification has been only recently enforced there is often no great faith yet in its permanence.



Mr. Michael Somare

Even in some of the longer-contacted and less well developed areas, there is remarkably little pressure upon the local member to do other than explain what the government is doing, and to inform the government, in turn, of the people's needs and wants. Those elected members who wish to establish their own political machine, or to persuade their constituents that their real interests lie not so much in pressing the government for particular projects for their area but, rather, in seeking power over it, to reallocate resources, must not only mobilise the people themselves, but actively seek out issues over which to do so. As Mr. Michael Somare, the Member for the long-contacted but economically backward East Sepik District, and the Parliamentary Leader of the PANGU Pati has put it:

> "We want political power, but how we can attain this is another question. Unless people are politically sophisticated, and have a common aim, there will never be a sense of oneness in our community. At present we are confronted with a powerful organisation which makes it difficult for the people to organise themselves. This element is an established force, the Administration, which is the giver of all things and people do not care so long as they are at the receiving end. Our people are so accustomed to getting things for nothing that they demand more which, of course, is always given at their request [sic!].
>
> "Therefore, they do not see why they should organise as political groups to express these demands as there is no real reason for them to do so."

And, to make organisation harder, it is extremely difficult for the wouldbe mobiliser to politicise what local organisations do exist, as local government councils, co-operatives, and even workers' associations

are unable to affiliate directly with a political party, and most mission bodies tend to resist the very suggestion. There is, then, no real alternative to beginning the task of organisation from the grassroots.

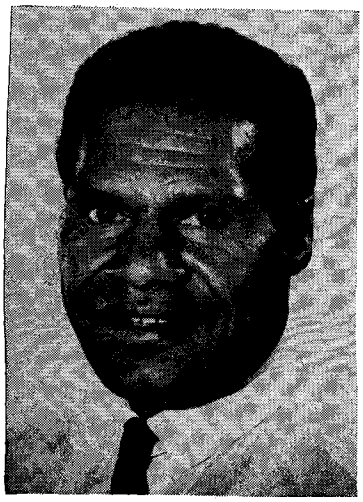
To date, the only party that has operated even intermittently both inside and outside parliament is the PANGU Pati. At time of writing, it consists of ten members of the House of Assembly from all regions of Papua New Guinea other than the Highlands, a fulltime secretary in Port Moresby, and perhaps 15,000 members scattered throughout the territory. Formally organised branches of the party meet regularly in Lae, Madang, Wewak, and in some rural villages in the Morobe, Gulf and Central Districts. In Port Moresby, the party's leaders recruit members for PANGU at the same time as they sign up members for the trade unions they lead, while nine of the twenty-one members of the Town Council are party-members. In Lae the party openly contested the 1971 Town Council elections with a large team of endorsed candidates, and narrowly won control of the council. Otherwise, many educated Papua New Guinean townsmen identify themselves with the party or its leaders, whether they have formally joined it or not, while in the Morobe District and in the Maprik area of the East Sepik, there are several thousand people who have joined PANGU at one time or another and who continue to identify themselves, through Mr. Toni Voutas and Mr. Pita Lus respectively, with the party (though their initial subscriptions have rarely been renewed). Although PANGU has a carefully worked out set of policies, and a detailed constitution (with branches, a national convention, central executive, council and parliamentary wing provided for), most of its supporters tend to identify themselves with the party's name and leaders fairly loosely, as being in support of constitutional changes ahead of what the Australian government has generally had in mind.

The PANGU Pati, then, is the only political party in Papua New Guinea which has so far functioned even intermittently, in Crawford Young's phrase, as "a buckle binding the populace to the polity". However, in November 1970, a second serious attempt to perform the same function was formally commenced, with much greater financial and communications facilities at its disposal.

COMPASS, which has since been renamed the United Party, was formed at a meeting of several hundred Highlands "big men", councillors and members of the House of Assembly at Minj, in the Western Highlands. It became, in time, the parliamentary successor to the Independent Members' Group.

Throughout the Group's existence, various factions within it had been competing for leadership of the Group as such, as well as jockeying for position in case it should formally become a party. However, the major stumbling-block in the way of the Group's formal organisation as a party was the fear of many of the Highlands members especially that parties were associated with rapid political change, and tended to promote division. They preferred the loose cohesion and dependent conservatism of the Group to the solidarity and the need to put forward independent policies which they associated with parties. At the same time, the Group's expatriate members tended to block each other's ambitions for a party, as — barring outright victory in the contest to form a party — each man's interest seemed to be best served through the status quo.

However, the constitutional changes that were announced in July 1970 brought about a fundamental change in the political situation, and such men as Messrs Tei Abal and Sinake Giregire (the Ministerial Members for Agriculture Stock and Fisheries, and Posts and Telegraphs respectively) began to see a need for an independent and conservative power-base to press their point of view against the Australian Labor Party, and other advocates of more rapid change upon the Australian government. Thus, the Minj meeting was called to set up a party which "will be in favour of change, but not quick change... ". Stressing the need for stability, the maintenance of law and order, and continued economic development, the party opposed further transfers of power to the territory without the agreement of the House of Assembly.



Mr. Tei Abal

Originally, COMPASS had been an acronym derived from "Combined Political Associations", a party which had been planned as a roof organisation for the branches which the members of the Independent Group were expected to form each within his own constituency. However, now several members of the Administrator's Executive Council had reached past the Independent Members' Group to individual parliamentarians and their constituents to set up a party. After a great deal of wrangling and recriminations, especially among the expatriate members of the Group, all of whom with the exception of the Spokesman for the Administrator's Executive Council (Mr. T.J. Leahy) had been bypassed at the Minj meeting, COMPASS began to meet formally as from the November 1970 meeting, in the House of Assembly. At time of writing, the party consists of about fifty members of the House of Assembly, who do not vote together in a tight bloc. According to the party's chairman, Mr. Tei Abal, "Too much discipline will kill the party. It is the flexibility that will save it." Indeed, some of its members seem not to be averse to the idea that the party might go back to being no more than the Independent Members' Group, although the party has the organisational resources (a fulltime indigenous secretary, and the services of an organiser who had hitherto been employed by the New South Wales branch of the Australian Country Party, the party to which Mr. Barnes belongs) as well as the finances to organise systematically on a Territory-wide basis. To date, however, the inaugural meetings of some of its branches have been disrupted by arguments over whether the party is expatriate-dominated, and only the Goroka branch seems to have met more than once. The party still lacks a precise platform and constitution.

The only other parliamentary party of any account is the Peoples Progress Party, a ten-man breakaway from the Independent Members' Group, embracing some men of a quite markedly conservative disposition and some whose only differences with PANGU are stylistic; they find PANGU too strident and aggressive in the House. As yet, the Peoples Progress Party lacks an extra-parliamentary wing, and its members claim only to be "practising voting together in the House".

A handful of members of the House of Assembly proclaim themselves to be members of other parties of no legislative or extra-legislative importance, and a few remain quite conscientious independents. They vary from the articulately radical and ambitious to one elderly gentleman from a very backward part of New Britain, who recently opened a speech with the following naive sincerity:

> "I do not support the views of my colleagues. I am not one who tries to influence. We are discussing the Government. We have all come to Port Moresby for training. We cannot hasten this development."

Since the June 1971 meeting, the House of Assembly, has, for the first time, had the appearance of being divided into parties : the United, Peoples Progress, and PANGU parties. The Ministerial and Assistant Ministerial Members sit with the official members on what would be the government benches at Westminster. The Peoples Progress Party and the PANGU Pati (the "loyal opposition") sit on the cross-benches with some independents. And the United Party takes up what would be the Opposition's seats. Although these seating arrangements were arrived at for reasons only of convenience and space, the location of the United Party seems, in the light of recent government policies, to be especially apt: on the government side still, but also in opposition lest change should come too fast.

Ethnicity and Opinion

Despite the appearance of three major party-groupings, and some smaller parties, on the floor of the House of Assembly, and their near-comprehensive coverage of the elected members, it is still premature to write of Papua New Guinea's "national" politics as if it were yet fully party politics. None of the parliamentary parties, with the partial exception of the PANGU Pati, has put down firm organisational roots in any part of the territory, while public opinion on national issues remains both fragmented and largely reactive — summoned sporadically to life by the presence of a United Nations Visiting Mission, the Select Committee on Constitutional Development or an itinerant diplomat from overseas. Only occasionally are demands and complaints of more than parochial interest thrust up from village-level, or even from the towns, to influence the members of the House of Assembly. Most of the members, in turn, lack an organised political machine or party branches to maintain interest and support, and to channel opinion in their own constituencies between elections.

However, to say that the bulk of the indigenous electorate has not been mobilised to take an interest or to feel a sense of vicarious participation in national politics is not to say that most Papua New Guineans are contented with the status quo, or that mobilisation must necessarily lead to the development of an interest in national politics. Indeed, almost exactly the reverse of both propositions may well be true.

In the towns, those Papua New Guineans who tend to become involved in politics are not unskilled, short-term itinerants but men

frustrated, over time, with their lack of status in the territory's social, economic and political systems. They become involved in politics as part of their attempt to remedy the multiple psychological wounds inflicted by these differences in status and overt racial discrimination (which is presently in decline). Only later do they tend to move on to serious contemplation of the national future. At village level, very few people see the connection between their needs and wants and those even of neighbouring areas. From the perspective of Canberra or Konedobu, the Australian grant seems large; at village-level, it often seems both parsimonious and ineffectual. Village people generally desire the benefits of modernity, but development presses very heavily upon them in ways that are scarcely visible from the centre. They work, for example, for very little or no pay in carrying patrol officers' equipment between villages; they labour on "voluntary" self-help schemes in building roads, bridges, schools and medical aid posts to supplement official grants; and, as self-government approaches, they must pay taxes to their local government councils, fees to their children's schools and for medical assistance, to obtain services which they used to get for free. At village-level, then, the wouldbe mobiliser or the malcontent has many locally visible issues against which frustration can be vented — excessive land alienation, rising taxes and other fees, and the multifarious disruptions to the familiar round — from the influx of large numbers of outsiders seeking work to the physical dislocation caused by mining — which are the price of development. In this regard, too, differences in the contact history of an area and the revolution of rising expectations play a part.

In the early stages of development, a man may well be content with a smallholders' block on the edge of a large tea estate. At first his annual income may rise from almost nothing to quite a sizeable amount, but once the potential of his block is exhausted, frustration soon sets in. At the centre, it may seem reasonable to concentrate development expenditures in the most backward areas or those with the greatest economic potential, but to an inhabitant of the other areas what is reasonable may appear to be quite different.

Thus, what often appears to be parochial in the demands of Papua New Guinea politicians may be a potentially quite general frustration with the things as they are, but focussed upon, or given expression through, localised issues. On the other hand, quite a deal of expatriate involvement in the wider issues of self-government, etc., is no more than an attempt to preserve the security of investments against local rather than national difficulties.

It is against such a background, then, that young men leave the villages for plantations, schools and towns, where they begin to see themselves, and to be seen by others, not as men from a particular village but as a "Buka", a "Chimbu", a "Tolai", etc. These identities, in turn, then feed back into their home areas, where pacification, improved internal communications facilities, local government councils and the spread of business activity, all play a part in fostering a greater degree of involvement in one another's affairs among people who are erstwhile enemies or strangers. In 1969, when resentment began to be expressed among the Tolai of East New Britain at the conversion of the Gazelle Peninsula Local Government Council

into a multiracial body, their urban wantoks (Pidgin for "speakers of a common language") not only took notice of what was happening at home, but began to act as go-betweens with the central government in negotiations on the issue. Simultaneously, the educated town-dwellers who had come originally from Bougainville tried to articulate their people's frustrations and demands, consequent upon the disruptions caused by the copper-mining activities in southern Bougainville, in terms that were comprehensible, and places that were accessible, to the press and the central government. And, in a country in which the need for national unity is such an orthodoxy, shared by both the Administration and most of its parliamentary supporters, what more obvious symbol of one's rejection of existing authority is there than the advocacy of secession? In the end, each speech in favour of unity from a Highlander or an official seems only to deepen the gulf between the unity imposed by the government and the yearnings of the discontented.

The Mataungan Association Office near Rabaul

The Mataungan Association was formed to oppose the conversion of the all-Tolai local government council on the Gazelle Peninsula into a multiracial body in 1969. The Napidakoe Navitu emerged in the Kieta area of Bougainville to oppose the compulsory resumption of land for the developing copper-mine there, and its adjacent facilities. Neither of these bodies is a single-issue movement. They are the products of quite long-simmering and wide-ranging discontents at a social order which seems to ignore or work against their supporters. Both have economic, social, and political objectives, interpenetrated by a growing sense of a Tolai (that is, primarily language-based) and a Bougainville identity (based on skin-colour and geographical contiguity) respectively. They mark the emergence of mass movement politics of a non-cargo cult kind in Papua New Guinea, with less successful imitators already in the East Sepik and Milne Bay Districts. They seek the total uplift of the areas concerned, and so both the Mataungan Association and the Napidakoe Navitu have recently begun to undertake business activities on their members' behalf, accompanied in the first case by some public rhetoric concerning the

need to expropriate the Tolais' rivals (and especially to return and redistribute alienated land among the Tolai), and in the second with the need for the central government to protect the people of Bougainville against other Papua New Guineans.

The future of these ethnically-based movements in Papua New Guinea is still unclear. That they (or others like them) will persist and spread through many parts of Papua New Guinea seems very likely. What is uncertain is their precise future: whether they will serve as oppositional building blocks to nationalism, or ethnic stumbling blocks to unity. They are products of the breaking down of some of the traditional barriers between the pre-contact political communities of their areas, and their reintegration into larger bodies.

At time of writing, the Mataungan Association is still competing for control of the Tolai area, while the Napidakoe Navitu seems strongly committed to Bougainville's secession from the rest of Papua New Guinea. But the ambivalence remains. "Mataunganism is nationalism in a raw state," says Mr. John Kaputin, a spokesman for the Mataungan Association, who wears a PANGU (Papua and New Guinea Union) Pati shirt in public. Mr. Leo Hannett, a writer and university student, is a supporter of PANGU as well as being one of the first public advocates of Bougainville's secession, because he believes that "Bougainville is a national problem." Mr. Paul Lapun is the Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Wing of the PANGU Pati and Chairman of the Napidakoe Navitu. And, when some Papuan members of the House of Assembly objected to the recommendation of the Select Committee on Constitutional Development that the territory be renamed "Niugini" to foster a sense of nationalism, PANGU reconciled the tension between its oppositional and nationalistic commitments by voting for "Papua New Guinea" — out of opposition to externally imposed unity.

Contrary to several current myths, the Tolai were not a united "nation" before contact, nor is it true to say that Bougainvilleans did not kill each other in tribal fights like the "redskinned" Papua New Guineans sometimes still do. However, both of these myths are helping to legitimate a future of which they may be true. Whether the leaders of these movements will eventually articulate their followers' demands as a nationalistic opposition to Australian rule, or foster their sense of linguistic, geographical or racial separateness from the rest of the territory in pursuit of more immediate, localised objectives, is unclear. At present, they and some of the leaders of the PANGU Pati seem content to sympathise with one another beneath, and against, the imposed national framework, with very little serious apprehension of the post-independence future. In the circumstances, one is tempted to conclude that independence is extremely likely to precede the development of a widespread sense of Papua New Guinea nationalism, although national unity may be a painfully sought sequel.

Localising the Administration

It seems fair to infer from the foregoing survey that there are no Territory-wide bodies with a political role in Papua New Guinea other than the Administration. And, despite repeated official protestations to the contrary, the Administration does play an intensely political role in the government and development of Papua New Guinea.

From the Canberra perspective, it is true, the entire Papua New Guinea public service has, until recently at least, seemed to be regarded as but an administrative arm of the Australian government, assisting in the formulation and execution of policy like the field service of any government department, and leaving the most important and general decisions to the Minister for External Territories. However, to many Papua New Guineans the Administration is the government. It is not only the largest, most far-flung and most powerful organisation in the territory, but it has, even now, a quite overtly political role. Up to ten official members sit and vote in the House of Assembly, and three of them plus the Administrator sit in the Administrator's Executive Council. All appropriation bills, and even certain amendments to them, require a message from the Administrator, and all ordinances passed by the House of Assembly require the approval of the Administrator and/or the Governor-General (acting on the advice of the Minister for External Territories). Certain areas of government activity are still reserved to the Australian government for final decision-making, and they are publicly dealt with by Administration officers. Indeed, given Papua New Guinea's present status as a dependent territory, the Administration's very structure and presence are political issues, both to those who fear, and to those who advocate, early self-government.

To the wouldbe mobiliser, the Administration's very presence and resources may seem like a stumbling block(as Mr. Michael Somare implied in the quotation on page 14 above), while to the more conservative it represents the frontier between the pre-contact way of life and development. In action, it is the instigator of development and the upholder of law and order; while, at the top, its structure changes as political development proceeds.

As the midwives of local self-help projects and cash-cropping, as advisers to local government councils, cooperatives and businessmen, and as policemen, warders, labour inspectors, tax-gatherers, teachers and doctors, Administration officers perform overtly political and/or change-inducing roles. The Division of District Administration ultimately provides the only ordered web of communication and control across the territory, linking the various administrative outposts together at Subdistrict and District level, and also through the centre. The various departments' field officers, and especially the kiaps are the most readily visible symbols of the political status quo and the embodiments of developmental hope at village level. They are objects of respect, fear, liking or hatred according to local circumstance; it is upon them that feelings of dependence are most frequently projected, and through *their actions that they are terminated. So pervasive* and powerful does the Administration seem, that many a wouldbe nationalist tends to act as if opposition to it were the overriding means of self-assertion and expression. Indeed,

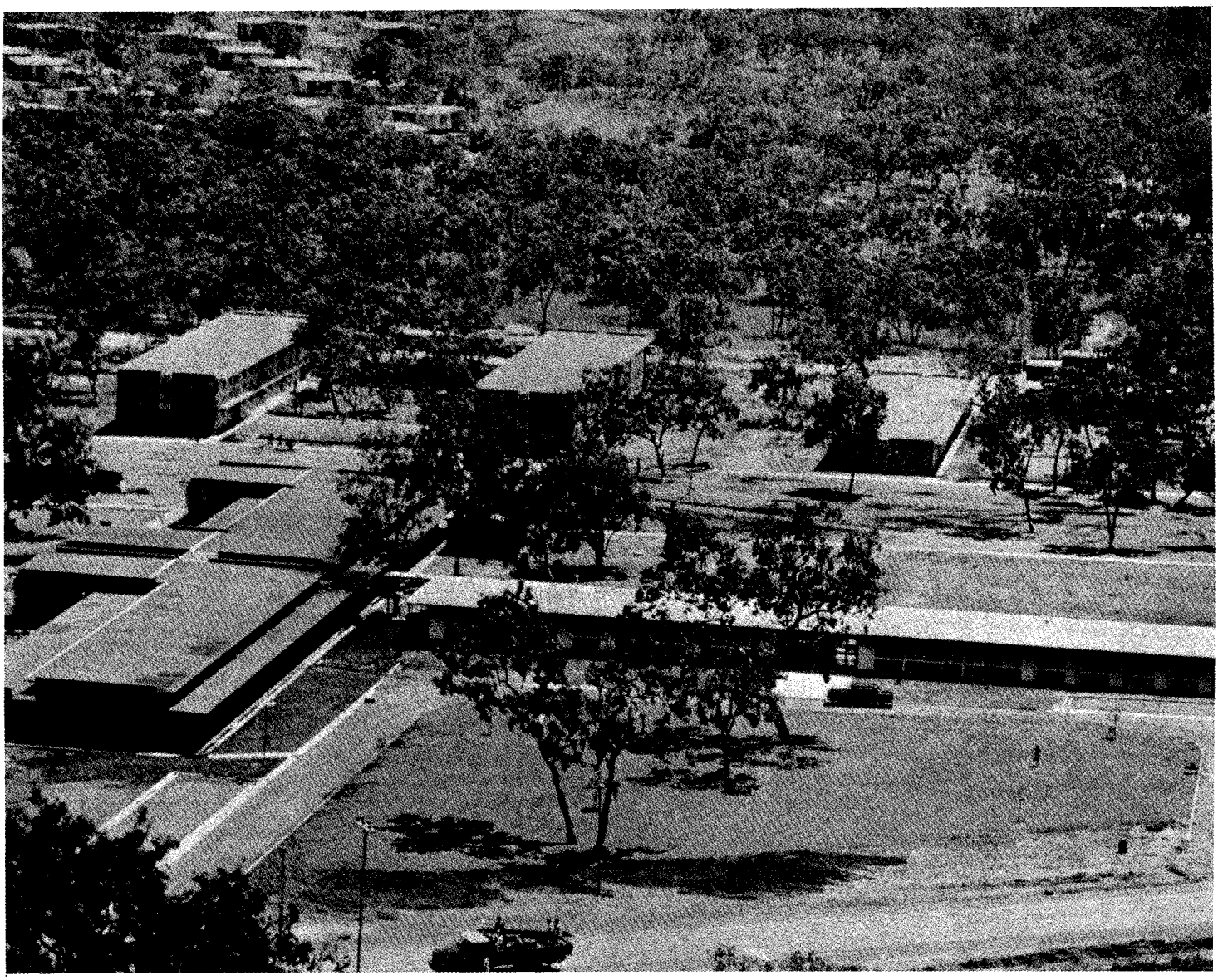
among some semi-educated and quite unschooled people, freedom and independence seem now to mean an almost unbridled emancipation — not just from Australian rule, but from the work, taxes and pressures that government itself imposes.

The localisation of a public service that operates in an environment such as that outlined above is, therefore, likely to raise much more subtle and complex problems than how to train Papua New Guineans to replace expatriates as they are promoted, retire or die. Positions within the Administration hierarchy are obvious sources of money, power and prestige, and consequently, objects of ambition. Educated Papua New Guineans tend to measure the Australian government's sincerity of purpose, and the racial attitudes of Australians, by the manner and speed with which the personnel of the public service is localised.

However, localisation, is not just a process whereby the skin-colour of the public service changes. It is part of a much wider process, for political changes are simultaneously taking place.

As power is transferred from Canberra to Konedobu — and the Canberra-based staff of the Department of External Territories has recently begun to decline — so questions that have hitherto been submerged within the bureaucracy become politicised. The size of the Australian grant, for example, will become an increasingly open issue rather than a muffled question handled through official memos. The siting of bridges and schools, which was once largely decided at the discretion of senior public servants, is now a matter for open competition and debate. The ruling that policemen should be a certain height or have a certain level of education is being opened up so that the senior officers who relaxed the rules to allow Highlanders in may have to recruit a certain number of men from there. In short, many questions that were once settled by discussion or instruction on the telephone between Canberra and Konedobu are now coming to settle in the latter place; and, simultaneously, many hitherto administrative questions — from where to put a road to how to handle a cargo cult — are being opened up by Papua New Guinean politicians and the press alike. The social, political, and economic environment in which Papua New Guinean politicians will operate post-independence will be more complex than that in which even a lone expatriate policeman with only indigenous underlings now finds himself when there is widespread trouble on an outstation.

Clearly, many Australian public servants and their more assiduous indigenous subordinates would not agree with many aspects of the foregoing interpretation. Their entire training tends to foster in them a quite rigid insistence that politics and administration are and should be quite separate. Like the first Chairman of the Public Service Board (Mr. G. Unkles), they are mainly concerned with the maintenance and improvement of standards, and technical questions of efficiency. Their principal fear is what the Chairman saw as "bureaucratic manipulation of the Parliamentary process, with the probable accompaniment of some political interference in purely managerial matters (appointments, promotions, and so on) and an effective disenfranchisement of the people." By way of contrast, the present Administrator (Mr. L.W. Johnson) is aware of the problems that public servants face in coming to terms with the emergence of professional politicians in Papua New Guinea, and the uncertainty of the latter group, too, as to the parameters of their roles. "Both public servants and politicians," the Administrator has said, "are going to find themselves at odds many times in the future because they will each intrude into



The Administrative College of Papua New Guinea

the other's area of responsibility." As the establishment of the Warmaram Group in mid-1970 showed, indigenous public servants might have to play quite intensely political roles in such areas as the Gazelle Peninsula just to keep the peace. Despite the repeated assurances of such men as Mr. Paulias Matane (a member of the Warmaram Group and a former member of the Public Service Board) that "permanent overseas officers will continue to receive promotion according to the established rules of merit and in accordance with the provisions of the Public Service Ordinance", negotiations such as those attempted by the Warmaram Group (between the pro- and anti- Multi-Racial Council factions among the Tolai) simply cannot be successfully undertaken by Australian public servants.

In a sense, the Papua New Guinea Public Service is better prepared legally than it is substantively to be localised. No permanent expatriate public servants have been appointed since 1964, and since November 1970, new or renewed contracts for overseas officers do not provide for a right of appeal against promotions announced by the Public Service Board, although contract officers are still eligible to be considered for promotion; there is a legal provision (which has never been invoked) for certain positions or classes of positions to be classified so that an efficient local officer will be given preference in appointment over an overseas officer; there is an employment security scheme (which has never been used) to compensate permanent overseas officers who are displaced or denied promotional opportunities by localisation or at self-government; and there are a number of government-run institutions, scholarships abroad, and many departmental training officers, to train Papua New Guineans both for specific departments and in general administrative skills.

At the end of February 1971, the broad composition of the Public Service (excluding the police, who do not come under the Public Service Ordinance) was as follows:

Table I: Composition of the Papua New Guinea Public Service as at 28 February 1971*

	First Division[a]	Second Division[b]	Third Division	Total
Overseas Officers				
Permanent	14	1047	167	1228
Temporary		754	1598	2352
Contract	5	1788	622	2415
Local Officers				
Permanent	1[c]	654	6385	7040
Temporary		381	5640	6021

a = Departmental Heads and positions of similar status
b = Administrative, professional and clerical officers
c = The Head of the Department of Business Development, Mr. Paulias Matane

* Formally outside the Public Service proper, but nonetheless Papua New Guinean holders of high office, are the Chairman and one of the members of the Public Service Board, and the Chairman of the Teaching Service Commission. The last two gentlemen and Mr. Paulias Matane are Tolais.

(Of a total strength of 3,500-plus, the Royal Papua and New Guinea Constabulary contained about 90% local policemen as at 30 June 1970, and ceased recruiting overseas officers for other than specialist positions early in 1971. However, there were by then only 45 indigenous commissioned officers, including two

second- and two first-class inspectors.)

The preponderance of Papua New Guineans in the third division of the Public Service is less a cause for congratulation than the continued presence of expatriates is for criticism. But, given the failure to develop high schools for indigenes until 1957, and a university until 1966, the personnel situation is both difficult and intractable unless the requirements for many positions are quite drastically changed. On current projections, for example, expatriate base-grade clerks will still be recruited within Papua New Guinea, although not brought up from Australia, at least until the end of 1972. Thus, even at the bottom of the ladder the recently announced immigration controls are unlikely to have much effect except perhaps in the third division of the Public Service for quite some years. In the professional fields, where the Public Service must also compete against large companies which are not bound to the government's salary scales or promotion plans, the situation is even more difficult. By 1980, it is estimated that only 10.6% of all of Papua New Guinea's architects will be indigenes; 28.3%, 54% and 72.1% of the country's civil, electrical and mechanical engineers respectively; 27% of its professional lawyers; 15.2% of its accountants; 19.6% of its graduate teachers; and perhaps 68% of its administrators. And, to complicate the picture, the Education Department is presently seeking to raise the number of years spent at high school from four to six years (while shortening University by only one — the Preliminary — year), thereby losing many students for a full year of their working lives during the final run-down to self-government!

However, to return to the Public Service alone, a detailed study of the Second Division displays even more disturbing characteristics, given the present timetable for self-government:

Table II: Local Officers Substantively Above Clerk Class 4[a]
Salary Level as at 16 March 1971

Technical and Professional Positions

Department	Number of Local Officers
Administrator	25[b]
Agriculture, Stock and Fisheries	5
Education	118
Information and Extension Services	4
Labour	7
Law	21[c]
Public Health	51
House of Assembly	10
Social Development and Home Affairs	5[d]
Public Works	4
Public Service Board	3

Department (cont.)	Number of Local Officers
Trade and Industry	10
Posts and Telegraphs	1
Clerical and Administrative Positions	
All Departments	14

a = Indigenous university graduates are recruited at about the Clerk Class 4 salary level (that is, in the $1785 - 1955 per annum salary range for a local officer). The highest salary range in the Second Division is Clerk Class 11 at $6,665 for a local officer.

b = Includes an indigenous graduate Senior Projects Officer, and 24 Assistant District Officers (four of whom are presently Acting Deputy District Commissioners).

c = Includes 20 Local Court Magistrates and one Crown Prosecutor.

d = Includes the highest ranking local officer in the Second Division, the Chief Electoral Officer, who holds a Class 10 position.

Up to a point, the figures in the above table are misleading in that a relatively large number of local officers spend long periods of time "acting" in positions well above their substantive positions so as to gain experience to withstand appeals from longer-serving permanent expatriate officers (who still set the standards of efficiency by which Papua New Guineans are judged). They are also misleading in that they do not indicate which officers are in positions carrying heavy administrative responsibilities (say, as Regional Medical Officer) as distinct from those which are more narrowly professional (such as medical specialist, etc.). But, then, careful records of acting positions held, and of the varying responsibilities exercised by men of similar substantive rank (say, a Local Government Council Adviser and an Assistant District Commissioner) are not systematically coordinated as one would expect if localisation were an urgent priority for the Administration. Indeed, in some fields the need for development seems to be recognised as being so much more urgent than the need to localise, that the recruitment of local officers cannot keep pace with the rate of replacement (through death and retirement) and the additional requirements being made for orderly development and administration without localisation.

Localisation involves not only the displacement of expatriates by indigenes, but also problems as to where they should be placed. Expatriate doctors, for example, are less likely to be resented or to be subject to political pressures than are expatriate patrol officers. However, as the above table shows, the most thoroughly localised departments in the Papua

New Guinea Public Service are Health and Education, in both of which expatriates are likely to be acceptable — even as they are often presently preferred, by many Highlanders especially — long after they have been removed from some of the most sensitive policy-formulating areas of other departments. It is not unlikely, then, that these departments will have to be "cannibalised" to localise the supervisory, coordinating and policy posts elsewhere, as has already begun to happen with Education, from which department the four highest-ranking Papua New Guinean officers have all so far been recruited. This phenomenon, in turn, sets up tensions among men with specialist skills in the other departments, who may now see the road ahead as blocked. Thus, some relatively senior indigenous cooperatives officers were quite openly unhappy at Mr. Paulias Matane's elevation from the Education Department via the Public Service Board to the Directorship of the Department of Business Development, while other "outsiders" have been reluctant to move from the departments they know to face the interpersonal tensions and professional difficulties which would have been their lot had they become District Commissioners within the Division of District Administration of the Administrator's Department. And, given the comparative youth and lack of formal education among the men who are available for rapid promotion (none of whom is more than forty years of age, and only a handful of whom have university degrees), it is likely that the men who follow the first cohort of rapidly promoted local officers will also see themselves as blocked for a very long time indeed by men of rather less (formally acquired) capacity than themselves. A few men of some seniority have, however, been given scholarships to university to catch up educationally with their juniors. There is, then, an increasing number of young, well-educated Papua New Guineans who would prefer that the localisation process not become too urgent until they themselves are ready.

From the foregoing, it seems likely that expatriates will be required — at least on contract, and in technical and professional positions — for many years after independence. However, the present public service structure is one designed to implement policies that have been made elsewhere, rather than for internal ministerial government. The Ministerial and Assistant Ministerial Members perch precariously atop their various specialist departments, advised by a predominantly expatriate public service. In similar situations in British colonies, the ministers' positions have often been strengthened by regrouping departments into ministries, concerned with a subject (say, "rural development") rather than with a departmental specialism (like agriculture or forestry). The ministry is staffed with men whose job it is to formulate submissions to their minister, then supervise the implementation of his policies, through the blockages caused by inefficiency and recalcitrance within individual departments. In Papua New Guinea, the various departmental heads seem to be better equipped for day-to-day and specialist administration than for the policy-oriented, generalist approach of a ministry. However, the possibility of reconstructing the present system so as to make the upper echelons more policy-oriented, and to reserve these areas as far as possible to men who are exclusively committed to Papua New Guinea's government, seems not to have been officially considered.

The Future

It is almost impossible to make any firm predictions about the post-independence future of a dependent territory, for, as the responsibilities of government are handed over to its new rulers, so strains in the organisational fabric and strength in the emerging politics of the new state appear. Very rarely are the gloomy predictions of the departing expatriates and visiting experts, or the euphoric hopes of the freedom-seekers, fulfilled. Once the noise of prophecy and high expectation has cleared, the polity not infrequently settles down to its familiar pitch until much older and much deeper problems predating the final decolonizing phase, reappear. It is, indeed, not at all unlikely that independence will be so rapidly thrust upon Papua New Guinea (probably between 1975 and 1978) that a long list of lohgterm and most profoundly disturbing problems will have to be deferred until after the urgency of preparation is over. It is even arguable that such a postponement would be useful, for it would leave the decisions to be made quite squarely in the hands of the new country's own rulers, and perhaps make the transition a little less hectic too. However, to leave too much till later is also to run the risk of inadequate preparation. Thus, one needs to weigh most carefully the advantages of reforming the entire local court and land tenure system, as is presently proposed, against the additional short-term administrative problems and retraining requirements that are thereby created for the less experienced local officers who are likely to inherit the Administration from the present planners. Perhaps, then, "hope and trust, the necessity of decolonization and its inevitability", are all that can be offered (despite Frantz Fanon's hopes for a close analysis of decolonization) both for those who take and those who fear the strain.

After the 1972 elections, a somewhat enlarged House of Assembly (with 107 members in all, including only four officials) will select the ministers who will preside politically over the transition to self-government. The House as a whole will probably include a much lower proportion of expatriate elected members than the present one, and a larger leavening of younger, better-educated men with more experience in Western ways. Even so, the true educational elite — the graduates of the University of Papua and New Guinea and the Institute of Technology — will find it difficult to identify with their national leaders, especially if the Highlands is to be represented at the top (as surely it must). Independence is, therefore, likely to be both more and less exciting for the educated than they presently foresee: it will present exciting opportunities for rapid promotion through the ranks of the bureaucracy, which will be the nominal servant of politicians whose ideas (like those of some of the senior bureaucrats) will be heavily moulded by their previous experiences under Australian rule. Thus, one must ask of Papua New Guinea's future, how stable? and how free?

It is not unlikely that most of the candidates who win in 1971 will subsequently pledge adherence to the United Party or the PANGU Pati. If so, remarkably few of them will have been helped to win by their party associations. Rather, being a member of either party is likely to be an additional attribute of the individual candidate — something that helps to gain votes when language, kinship or geographical proximity are not enough.

Those candidates who seek successfully to mobilise votes beyond the ballot-box will look back to parochial issues to give form to their ambitions, rather than lead their people directly forward to nationalism. It seems likely, then, that a self-governing, and then an independent, Papua New Guinea will be very short of integrative forces.

At the centre, there will be public servants — especially from the longer-contacted areas, where localised discontent and separatist sentiment are likely to be strongest — who may be able to bridge the gap between regionally-based dissidence and national government. For them, however, a politically neutral public service on Australian lines may be entirely the wrong model.

In the districts, the kiap will be the obvious link to the centre, though here again the paternalist tradition has been so strong, and localisation so late, that many radical Papua New Guineans have moved from opposition to the present structure and policies of the Division of District Administration to advocacy of its total abolition, while the more dependent do not seem to perceive the need for change. Again, a more politicised service than is presently foreseen may be needed while the boundaries of opposition are being defined and a national identity is still being formed.

Thus, the preservation of unity and order loom as heavy problems for the new government, ultimately pressing down upon the army and police. Over the last two years, the police have come increasingly to resemble a political fire brigade, rushing riot squads and reinforcements to the usual detachments to Bougainville, then the Gazelle Peninsula to deal with internal difficulties as well as to enforce government policies; then off to quell large-scale inter-tribal fighting over land in the Highlands; and back to the Gazelle .... The alternative, or perhaps the sequel, to this train of events is a very considerable enlargement of the police, or the use of the Pacific Islands Regiment (as was contemplated for Rabaul in July 1970).

Although there has been much anxious public discussion as to the likelihood of an army coup in Papua New Guinea, there has been rather less analysis — despite the events of July 1970 — of how the army may be quite inexorably drawn into performing a unity- and order-maintaining function. To date, many of the Pacific Islands Regiment's 2,600 indigenous other ranks have, at times, shown more loyalty to one another in pressing their own pay-claims than to their officers, but, previous history notwithstanding, it is difficult to see how such a small army with no paratroops, without its own air support, and relatively unskilled in civilian riot and crowd control could be very useful in maintaining unity and order. But, could an Australian government openly prepare the Papua New Guinea army for a political role and still keep face before its own electorate and at the United Nations?

Over the next few years, then, the internal security of Papua New Guinea will be an Australian as well as a Papua New Guinean problem. The Australian government is likely to feel some commitment to Australian lives and property in Papua New Guinea and to be under pressure to protect them. It will also be in the invidious position of having to assist the Papua New Guinea government to keep internal law and order by supplying aerial transport facilities for the army as well as the police, and at least some army officers, for, although the army is localising more rapidly than the Administration, only thirteen of its

73 commissioned officers and 286 of its 320 non-commissioned officers are Papua New Guineans. It is presently uncertain whether the Australian public would be more tempted to help the Papua New Guinean central government maintain its writ throughout the territory, or whether it would prefer to leave confused enough alone. The Indonesian government can, however, only be anxious at the possibility of an administrative or political collapse in a country which must ensure that its own citizens do not interfere with the West Irian border. Indeed, Papua New Guinea's relative affluence creates problems for the Indonesian administration of West Irian insofar as it induces the inhabitants of that province to look east in envy.

Independence will, therefore, mark the beginning of a new era of interdependence when Papua New Guineans will begin to manage their own relations with other countries and to externalise those with Australia. The degree to which Papua New Guinea can shake free of the hold Australia exercises on her economy, and the degree to which Australia will wish to disentangle herself from Papua New Guinea's internal affairs are, however, not only uncertain but scarce thought about in either country.

Within Papua New Guinea, large companies such as Bougainville Copper and Kennecott (in Western Papua) will require at least local security respectively to continue and to commence their operations, and they will be large enough to have quite some say in the economic (and perhaps the political) future of the country. In the field of trade, Papua New Guinea's natural and rising partners are Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Communist China, which manufacture clothing and export food much more cheaply than Australia, and are good potential markets for Papua New Guinea's raw materials. At time of writing, two-thirds of Papua New Guinea's truck imports, for example, are Japanese, and much of the territory's copper and timber will go to Japan too. Australia's share in the benefits of a continued close association with Papua New Guinea is likely to decline, although her financial and defence responsibilities may not, or at least not as rapidly. An independent Papua New Guinea may increasingly be expected, therefore, to look west (past West Irian), and north (past Guam and Micronesia) rather than east (to the South-West Pacific) and south, where Australia has hitherto kept Papua New Guinean eyes quite firmly focussed. And, then, there is the final difficulty that Australian diplomacy at the United Nations has recently been so successful in fostering international acceptance of Australia's sincerity of purpose in developing Papua New Guinea for self-determination that the United Nations seems to an increasing number of Papua New Guineans to be less urgently insistent about Australia's plans to decolonize than the Australian Labor Party. Thus, some Highlands members of the House of Assembly have recently sought (unsuccessfully) to move that the United Nations be requested to transfer the trusteeship agreement for New Guinea to another country should the A.L.P. win the 1972 elections in Australia, and Mr. I.S. Djermakoye, the United Nations Under-Secretary for Trusteeship Affairs, has warned that neither Australia nor the United Nations has the power unilaterally to declare the New Guinea portion of the country independent! The people of the Trust Territory must be consulted too, and the House of Assembly has agreed to an amended version of the foregoing resolution to direct the next House to petition the United Nations "to direct the Australian Government of the day to act 'in accordance with the freely expressed will and desire' of the people of Papua and New Guinea as guaranteed [sic] by the United Nations declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples and by the policy of the present Australian Government ...".

The real mace

The path to self-determination can never, it seems, run smooth, nor is decolonization a single integrated process transacted by only two main parties. It seems reasonable to assume, however, that neither the fact of independence nor the need for unity will be negotiable, although both may be the objects of much bitter politicking — from leaders of such bodies as the Napidakoe Navitu, the dependent, and holders of an almost worthless Australian citizenship (that is, the indigenous people of Papua). Even the timing of self-government and independence may, as the Select Committee on Constitutional Development has cautiously advised, proceed much faster than presently expected or desired.

In a sense, then, as Professor Lucy Mair has said, independence will come to Papua New Guinea both too soon and too late: too soon for the development of the resources in personnel that are needed to solve the problems of a twentieth-century state; and too late for the end of paternal rule to be attained without creating resentment and suspicion among its subjects. However, by and large, the village people will escape the short-term consequences of whatever happens, for their daily lives are not vitally affected at all directly by what transpires in the capital. But, for those readers who desire a symbol for the future, there is a Port Moresby golfing trophy which captures the alternatives quite nicely: the wooden prototype of the Speaker's mace (symbol of parliamentary power, the final version of which was given by the Australian Parliament to the House of Assembly); it is competed for by teams of officers from the Pacific Islands Regiment and the Division of District Administration. What, one may portentously ask, will happen when the teams are localised?

Yours sincerely,

Edward Wolfers.

I wish to thank the officers of the Localisation Section of the Public Service Board and the Manpower Planning Unit in the Labour Department for supplying me with much of the data in the section of this "Newsletter" dealing with localisation. They are not to be held responsible in any way for my interpretations of it.

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