A thousand graduates
Conflict in university development in Papua New Guinea, 1961-1976
Ian Howie-Willis
A thousand graduates
A thousand graduates
Conflict in university development in Papua New Guinea, 1961-1976
Ian Howie-Willis

Series editor E.K. Fisk
The Australian National University
Canberra 1980
A thousand graduates.

(Pacific research monograph; no 3 ISSN 0155-9060)
ISBN 0 909150 01 x
1. Universities and colleges- Papua New Guinea -History
I. Australian National University, Canberra.
Development Studies Centre.
II. Title. (Series)

378.94'3

Printed and manufactured in Australia by
The Australian National University


Ian Howie-Willis was educated at Melbourne High School, Toorak Teachers' College, the Universities of Melbourne, Papua New Guinea, and Kent (UK), and the Australian National University. He has worked as a journalist, a labourer, a public servant, and a teacher. He lectured at the Papua New Guinea University of Technology for six years, and since 1977 has been teaching sociology at Dickson College, Canberra. His interests include kayaking (when the Murrumbidgee River is high enough), watching his three children grow up, running among the hills on Canberra's southern fringes, and sharing with his wife the fulfilling task of persuading melaleucas, acacias and eucalypts to grow in the dry, stony soil of their windswept Canberra suburban block. His publications include Lae — Village and City.
To Sir John Gunther
and Dr Eric Duncanson,
the pioneers of
university education
in Papua New Guinea
'The fact that the University has proved difficult for the Government to live with does not ... justify the Government's "cracking down" on the University.'

P. White (et al.)
Summary

University institutions have been a recent innovation in Papua New Guinea, a late product of that country's protracted development towards nationhood. Charged with rapidly augmenting an embryonic national bureaucratic-technical elite, they have been eminently successful in fulfilling their brief: since their foundation in the middle and late 1960s they have undertaken ambitious programmes of teaching and research, and have maintained the flow of graduates which helped make Independence possible in 1975.

There have been costs, however. The proper role of universities in Papua New Guinea has long been a topic for lively — and sometimes disruptive — contention. The universities are autonomous bodies at the apex of a pyramid of government controlled institutions of tertiary education, the very complexity of which has ensured the persistence of numerous tensions. There have been many individuals and groups with interests in the system to defend, and ambitions to promote. At the same time the universities have been so central to the government's task of nation building that in trying to maximize its investment in them it has habitually sought to bring them, against their will, more closely under its control. Relations within and between the universities, and between them and the government, have consequently often been uneasy, especially in the period following Independence as the country trod an uncertain path into nationhood.
Foreword

This monograph derives from a thesis presented in the Department of Pacific and South East Asian History of the Research School of Pacific Studies of the Australian National University. The thesis had its roots in my own employment and educational history, 1969-1973, when I was teaching at the Papua New Guinea Institute (now University) of Technology and studying part-time at the University of Papua New Guinea. I have thus been an interested participant as well as observer, and my story is inevitably coloured by that experience.

To ensure as much objectivity as possible within these constraints I used a wide range of the ample source materials available — the records of the now defunct Australian Department of External Territories, of the University of Papua New Guinea, the University of Technology, and the Papua New Guinea Office of Higher Education. In addition I drew from the great stock of published records, such as government and institutional annual reports, parliamentary debates, reports of committees of inquiry, newspapers, magazines and learned journals. This was supplemented with more than forty interviews with the principal characters, and much conversation with these and lesser actors.

The monograph is intended for two types of reader: those generally interested in the educational history of Papua New Guinea, and those with more specialized or scholarly interests. My footnotes usually contain only brief references to the sources. Readers who may wish for greater detail in relation to the sources should consult the original thesis, which contains complete citations and many more footnotes. Copies of the thesis, which has the same title as this monograph, 'A Thousand Graduates: Conflict in University Development in Papua New Guinea, 1961-1976', are held in the Menzies Library of the Australian National University, the Matheson Library of the Papua New Guinea University of Technology, the New Guinea Collection of the Library of the University of Papua New Guinea, the Library

A list of acknowledgements is included in the original thesis, and contains the names of the many individuals who gave assistance while I was conducting my research. My debt of gratitude to them remains even though I am not including all their names here. Some names must, however, be mentioned again: Ken Inglis, Hank Nelson and John Ballard, formerly of the University of Papua New Guinea and now of Australian National University, provided valuable guidance during rewriting as well as the initial encouragement to proceed with publication. Susan Stratigos, my editor, must also be thanked for her constructive comments, and for the thoroughness of her work on my MS., while May Stinear, Publications Officer of the A.N.U. Development Studies Centre, has my gratitude for her co-operativeness during publication. The generosity of the University of Papua New Guinea (and in particular of Elton Brash and Nancy Lutton), and of the Papua New Guinea University of Technology (in particular of Ian Gass and Simon Kuk) in making available and permitting use of photographs for the plates herein must be acknowledged.

A further debt requires acknowledgement: that to Margaret, my wife, who for years allowed her own career to mark time so mine could march forward.
Contents

Foreword

Abbreviations

Chapter 1 A personal introduction 1

Chapter 2 Questions of lineage 9

Pre-war education 9

Post-war: an educational 'new deal' 18

The 'Hasluck era' 23

Chapter 3 The new goal: a university 31

Mounting pressure for higher education 31

What sort of higher education? 42

Delaying tactics 55

Chapter 4 Infant institutions 62

Teaching troubles 63

Institutional autonomy and government influence 72

Personalities and institutional autonomy 102

UPNG and IHTE as social leaven 106

Chapter 5 Problems of co-ordination 112

The effects of proliferation 112

An abortive attempt to rationalize 120

Chapter 6 A national university system emerges 129
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Co-operation and competition</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Faculty of Agriculture</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The degree course in forestry</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Making the universities more 'responsive'</td>
<td>177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The first Gris Committee</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Oldfield Committee</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Committee of Enquiry into University Development</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Action on the CEUD proposals</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Academic trade unionists, militant students</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Academic trade unionists</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Militant students</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Sundry stresses</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Theological education: questions of co-operation</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women's rights</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reforming academic government</td>
<td>264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Localization</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Vice-Chancellors</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>The erosion of university autonomy</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government direction: setting manpower goals</td>
<td>309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Budgetary reductions</td>
<td>319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The OHE under siege</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Epilogue</td>
<td>337</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix: Persons referred to

Bibliography of documents and works cited

Plates

1. The University of Papua New Guinea, Waigani campus, 1975
   
2. The Papua New Guinea University of Technology, Lae, 1976
   
3. The first UPNG Preliminary Year class, 1966
   
4. The first graduation ceremony at UPNG, 1970
   
5. The founding fathers of UOT and UPNG
   
6. Unveiling of the commemorative plaque at the official opening of the Institute of Technology, Lae, July 1969
   
7. UOT tries to be 'appropriate' to the needs of the nation
   
8. UPNG graduation, 1974
   
9. The 1979 student strike
   
10. Academic localization
   
11. The second UPNG Vice-Chancellor, and the third

12. 'Palm-shaded Oxbridges'

13. Rival sources of information at UOT

14. Renagi Lohia, UPNG's fourth Vice-Chancellor

15. Delocalization at UOT

16. The first UOT Vice-Chancellor, and his successor

## Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>Australian Archives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AEC</td>
<td>Administrator's Executive Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANU</td>
<td>Australian National University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANZAAS</td>
<td>Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APD</td>
<td>Australian Parliamentary Debates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AR</td>
<td>Annual Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASAG</td>
<td>Australian Staffing Assistance Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASOPA</td>
<td>Australian School of Pacific Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUC</td>
<td>Australian Universities Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEUD</td>
<td>Committee of Enquiry into University Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CM</td>
<td>Council Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPC</td>
<td>Constitutional Planning Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUTM</td>
<td>Committee on University Trained Manpower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DTOR</td>
<td>Department of Territories Official Records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPH</td>
<td>Department of Public Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERU</td>
<td>Education Research Unit of UPNG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPNG</td>
<td><em>Encyclopaedia of Papua and New Guinea</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F &amp; M</td>
<td>Finance and Management Committee of UOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GKC</td>
<td>Gunther-Karmel Correspondence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTC</td>
<td>Goroka Teachers College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAD</td>
<td>House of Assembly Debates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEC</td>
<td>Higher Education Commission (also called Tertiary Education Commission)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H of R</td>
<td>House of Representatives (lower house of Australian parliament)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IAB  Interim Academic Board of Goroka Teachers College  
IBRD  International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (the World Bank)  
IHTE  Institute of Higher Technical Education (subsequently Institute of Technology)  
IOT  Institute of Technology (subsequently University of Technology)  
LCD  Legislative Council Debates  
MATS  Melanesian Association of Theological Schools  
MHA  Member of the House of Assembly  
NGAR  New Guinea Annual Report  
n.d.  no date  
OHE  Office of Higher Education  
OHER  Office of Higher Education Records  
P & C  Participation and Communication Committee of UPNG  
PAR  Papuan Annual Report  
PIM  *Pacific Islands Monthly*  
PMC  Papuan Medical College  
PNG  Papua New Guinea  
PNGAR  Papua New Guinea Annual Report  
RIW  Record of Interview with Ian Willis  
S  Senate (upper house of Australian parliament)  
SRC  Students' Representative Council  
TEC  Tertiary Education Commission (subsequently Higher Education Commission)  
TPNG  Territory of Papua and New Guinea  
UFRC  Universities Finance Review Committee  
UK  United Kingdom  
UN  United Nations Organization, or (more simply) the United Nations  
UOT  University of Technology  
UOTR  University of Technology Records  
UPNG  University of Papua New Guinea
UPNGR  University of Papua New Guinea Records
USA    United States of America
USSR   Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
A personal introduction

A quarter of my life — ten years — has been spent in Papua New Guinea. The first three were at a high school outside Wewak, the next six at the Institute (now University) of Technology at Lae; then after a couple of years' study in Britain and at the Australian National University I returned in 1976, the year after Independence, and spent much of the year carrying out the research leading to this monograph. During 'my' decade there enormous changes occurred, one of the most remarkable of which, university development, is the subject of this monograph.

Changes occurred at a personal level, too: Australians like myself found that the country ineradicably became a part of us. Two of my three children were born there, and received most of their primary schooling there. My brother, who arrived three years before me, married a Sepik woman. Two of their three children were also born there, thus (as our father philosophically remarked at the time) enriching the family gene pool.

At least as notable as what happened to our gene pool were the changes that came to our thinking. We came from a country where the legacy of a 'white Australia policy' meant that we had grown up almost oblivious of other races, and generally patronising of those unfortunate enough not to have been born Australian. This background coloured our attitudes more strongly than we realised during our early years in Papua New Guinea, and it seemed to have affected the thinking of most of our compatriots there at the time.

Australian attitudes dominated 'public' opinion in Papua New Guinea in the mid-1960s. When I arrived the first national parliament was in its first year, but you would not have dared mention that dirty word 'independence' unless you wanted a fight: we then spoke guardedly about
'self determination', which included the possibility of union with Australia. As a newcomer you were expected to defer to the opinions of expatriates who had been there longer, and they were vehement that a seditious event like independence would not occur during our lifetimes were there no United Nations Organization, an institution which featured prominently in the demonology of old-timers.

In 1965 a few Papua New Guineans occupied junior positions in the public service; and at Brandi High School our staff of seven even included a man from Hula teaching woodwork. Certainly there was a larger proportion of Papua New Guineans teaching in primary schools, but few of us really thought 'locals' could ever manage their schools, let alone their country, without us. And when we went shopping we did not protest strongly when they stood aside so we could be served first: whites had always enjoyed precedence in Papua New Guinea, and this seemed entirely natural. Australian rule appeared blessed with divinely-ordained permanence.

Life in Papua New Guinea provided continual fascination. Brandi was barely half a mile from the sea, and during the monsoon season the prevailing winds brought not only warm torrential rains each night but sent awesome breakers thundering onto the black sands of Dove Bay, where the Farida Force of the Australian Army had come ashore to capture Wewak in the final campaign against the Japanese twenty years before. We spent most afternoons after school in the surf, though not — as one earlier headmaster was said to have done — with a cordon of schoolboys linking hands in a giant circle to form a human shark-barrier inside which he and his family could enjoy one of the finest beaches in Papua New Guinea. When the surf was not rolling we fished in the Brandi River with the schoolboys, or visited them in their garden houses to chat over a steaming billy of sweet potato, taro or cassava, which they grew for relief from the monotonous school diet of boiled rice and bully beef; or perhaps we explored the jungle behind the school in search of souvenirs for the war museum we ran as a history project. The last of these required caution — there was always the chance of stumbling over a live bomb left behind from the war.

Term vacations were a special treat. The mighty Sepik River, with its waterside villages which could only be reached by canoe, was twenty minutes away by plane, and we
could purchase the famed Sepik carvings from the craftsmen themselves. Our students came from all over the Sepik provinces, and rather enjoyed taking us home to show us off. We usually spent our evenings in villages around a fire with the old men and the children, listening to the elders' *stori bilong ol tumbuna* — village legends and history. Such personal contacts were more valuable than we could then appreciate. Not only did they help us learn *Tok Pisin* (Melanesian Pidgin), the lingua franca, but they gave us insights into a culture different from our own and so began the changes in our attitudes which perhaps were the most positive benefit of having lived in Papua New Guinea.

Another important benefit was to have taken part in nation-building through service at one of the country's two universities in its foundation years; and then to see many of the students go on to an early maturity in senior positions in politics, the public service, industry, commerce and the defence forces.

If life on the Sepik coast had introduced me to Papua New Guinea in all its variety and novelty, association with tertiary education brought a sense of belonging and new bearings. In helping set up a university institution I found there were exciting challenges, even for lowly junior lecturers. We were 'in on the ground floor', helping raise what most people could see would be one of the emerging country's most central and essential national institutions. This was something never before attempted, a project in which the pejorative wisdom of old-timers would be shown to be wrong.

There was great enthusiasm on the new campuses in Port Moresby, Lae and Goroka as 'proper' tertiary education got under way in the late 1960s. New faces, new ideas, new experiences abounded. There were many new arrivals who seemed to be singular individualists with little respect for the cast-iron conventions of colonial society. People of many nationalities came with impressive tales of what university education had been achieving in black Africa. Talk of 'Third World' assertiveness, of 'consciousness-raising' among formerly colonised peoples, was abroad. A refreshing, confident articulateness seemed to have seized many Papua New Guinean students. There was elation in the discovery that the village communities of traditional Papua New Guinea were not the irredeemable 'bush kanakas' the old-timers would have us believe but, through their arts and
Plate 1 The University of Papua New Guinea, Waigani campus, 1975.

Plate 2 The Papua New Guinea University of Technology, Lae, 1976.
crafts, had made a unique contribution to the world of international culture. A yeasty foment of political discussion and discovery continually bubbled as myriad new notions about the country's future surfaced. And above all there was certainty in the belief that we were right, that the institutions of which we were part were generating liberal and progressive views of the country such as had never before been voiced.

The mood of the campuses was infectious. It drew towards the University, the Institute of Technology, the Administrative, Medical and Teachers' Colleges and the theological seminaries those with a vision of a united, stable, prosperous Papua New Guinea in which all tribes and races would co-exist in peace. While the campuses might thus have become a haven for fervent idealists and 'missionaries' of all shades, they also became the foci of much constructive and thorough consideration of the country in all its dimensions, past, present and future. This was perhaps to be expected, given that the institutions of tertiary education had a research as well as a teaching role. They fulfilled their roles so enthusiastically and zealously that the Papua New Guinean people - for long the recipients of colonists' condescension - soon claimed them as their own and were proud to entrust their children to their care. The excitement of campus life in the late '60s perhaps had to be experienced to be fully appreciated.

Having gained a teaching post at the new Institute of Technology in Lae, then discovering that I was expected to carry out Papua New Guinea-oriented research, and intoxicated with an urge to know more about my adopted country, I began part-time postgraduate studies in 1968 as an external student in the History Department of the University of Papua New Guinea. This brought profitable contact with the constellation of dedicated historians the University had been fortunate in recruiting to support its foundation professor, K.S. Inglis. His department taught by example that Papua New Guinean historiography was an exacting craft, but one holding its own rewards. With their help I was able to see that the discovery of history, of even a small corner of the world like Papua New Guinea, in Manning Clark's words, 'threw light on all the things that had puzzled and bewildered me in life.'

---

That discovery ultimately led to this monograph, which attempts to trace the events leading to the establishment of a university in Papua New Guinea in 1965, and to examine the influences shaping the university system in the decade before national independence in 1975. By that time the country had two universities spread over four campuses, and between them they had produced just over a thousand graduates. Though this was barely half the target figure set in 1964 the accomplishment was nevertheless worthwhile: they had trained a corps of nationals in the skills needed to run an independent state and, hopefully, to bind together the many regional communities comprising the new nation.

Of all the institutions Papua New Guinea inherited from Australia the universities were among the most significant. Within five years of their first graduation ceremonies, that is by independence, their graduates were becoming ever more conspicuous at key locations throughout the apparatus of the modern state. This had been the rationale for creating a university system in what to many had then seemed an unlikely country. Decolonization, particularly in Africa, had pointed to the wisdom of training a ruling elite in preparation for independence; and so Papua New Guinea had been bequeathed its universities, and along with them, its bureaucratic-technical elite. Government, the university institutions themselves, and the informed public have always recognized the importance of this function; but opinion has often differed over whether it should be paramount, for there have been many contending groups and individuals with their own vision of how things should be. Perhaps it was to be expected that there would be frequent disagreement, and that disputation would very often temper the process of university development. While this is probably true of all complex organizations, the unique features of Papua New Guinea's university system derive from the conflicts in which they have often been forged.

Papua New Guinea's university system does indeed exist in a state of perpetual structural conflict for, as with publicly funded but autonomous universities elsewhere, there is inherent tension between university and government. The university by tradition is proud of its independence and accordingly guards certain rights jealously: it wishes to decide for itself what, how and to whom it will teach, and whom it will employ and on what terms; it demands freedom to probe, examine and criticize without fear or favour; it
claims the power to be the arbiter in all its own internal affairs, and to decide where the boundaries for these shall lie; and it requires of the public sufficiently generous support to allow it to go about its multifarious business without the obligation incumbent upon other statutory bodies of showing a financial profit as often as possible. In short, the university is a singular institution, unique in unabashedly claiming 'the best of both worlds'.

It is hardly surprising that, in the words of a 1978 government commission of inquiry into university affairs in Papua New Guinea, 'the University has proved difficult for the government to live with'. The reasons are not hard to find. First, the government has always maintained a proprietary view of the universities. This has not only been because they are publicly funded statutory authorities, but because of their fundamental function as the providers of the ruling elite upon whom the very existence of the present Papua New Guinean nation depends. Government therefore has such direct interest in their endeavours that there is constant temptation to intervene in their affairs whenever that essential function seems hazarded. Second, and perhaps ultimately more significant, Papua New Guinea is a new nation. There has been a consequent need for the government and the institutions comprising the new state to work out empirically for themselves principles and conventions of organization, administration and procedure which are best suited to the needs of a modern Melanesian nation. As both government and universities devise and learn the rules for their co-existence and mutual interdependence, it is to be expected that they will have found 'living with' each other 'difficult'.

Conflict continues to shape the system, and will probably continue to modify it while it survives. This brings me to my final prefatory comment: while there are still universities in Papua New Guinea there can be no complete history of their development, for their story unfolds further as new events occur and new tensions emerge to alter them even further. I mention this truism by way of apology, for as a recorder of recent history I have had a problem which I have possibly failed to overcome adequately:

---

2P. White (et al.), Report of Commission of Inquiry into unrest at the University of Papua New Guinea in April and May of 1978 and into other related matters, Lae, 1979, p.68.
the historian of contemporary events deals with a task somewhere between that of the historian and that of the journalist; consequently he or she runs the risk of satisfying neither those who want a chronological account of events over a protracted period nor those who want a thematic analysis of current events. Knowing where to end a monograph telling a tale with no ending has therefore been a problem which I have tackled by giving a chronological account in the earlier chapters, and then by sliding into a thematic approach in later chapters. The temptation has been to bring the work right up to date (mid-1979); and there has also been a temptation to omit earlier events which no longer seem as significant as when I first wrote about them. My response here has been to end my story rather arbitrarily at the close of 1976, except where subsequent events occasionally made reference beyond then seem imperative. This was a transitional time between 'eras' in the development of the university system, so it is perhaps appropriate to leave the tale there for later writers.
Chapter 2

Questions of lineage

Universities began late in Papua New Guinea. When the first university opened in 1966 similar institutions had existed for decades elsewhere in the English-speaking colonial world. Why did Papua New Guinea delay?

It was not for want of educational effort. During the preceding seventy years or so a network of schools had spread across the country. This included institutions of 'further' education providing a necessary base on which universities could be built. The more advanced education, however, had been blighted along the way. Official neglect, religious introversion, popular prejudice and dubious educational philosophy had all left their mark upon it. As we will see, its deficiencies needed time for rectification.

Pre-war education

In late 1942, when war caused the suspension of civilian administration in Papua and New Guinea, formal education was still in its infancy even though born in the 1880s. A complex set of factors had stultified its growth.

Most obvious had been a lack of government sustenance. In Papua the Administration had run no schools for Papuan children, entrusting their education instead to five Christian missions subsidized with revenues from a poll tax on adult Papuan males. The New Guinea Administration conducted only seven schools for New Guineans with a total enrolment of 598 in 1949, allowing eleven Christian missions to run 2556 institutions with a total enrolment of 65,600. The overwhelming majority of pupils were in primary schools, many of which taught in a vernacular language. Ninety-seven per cent of the mission schools in New Guinea in 1940 were elementary schools, the other 3 per cent being described
variously as 'high', 'intermediate', and 'technical' schools or 'training centres'.¹ The numbers of children going on to 'further' education was similarly small. In Papua in 1940 the school inspector examined 3002 children of different grades, but only ninety - 3 per cent – gained the Standard V Certificate, the highest level attainable in primary school.²

Government neglect arose partly from prevailing attitudes. Many Europeans in Papua New Guinea saw little advantage in educating the local peoples. Schooling was hardly necessary for shovelling gravel into sluice boxes, husking coconuts or carrying packs of cargo. It could even be a disadvantage, for as Staniforth Smith(roundly asserted in 1906, 'A native who has obtained a good education is inclined to class himself above the white man, and as the latter never undertakes manual work such as is done by the natives, the tendency is for the educated native to look down on this class of labour.'³ Smith, later Administrator of Papua, was voicing the opinion of several generations of white employers. That similar views were still current a quarter of a century later became clear when the Queensland Director General of Education, B.J. McKenna, visited New Guinea to advise the Administration on education. 'The prevailing belief is that any training makes the native more cunning, generates and develops evil qualities, makes him disinclined to work, and renders him a less pliant instrument in the hands of his master,' he observed.⁴ The lack of progress in developing education for New Guineans, white hostility and the colonists' economic interest formed a strong nexus.

Whites whose enterprises depended on black labour were able to rationalize their views comfortably by alluding to the 'uncivilized state' of the blacks. Manual labour under firm discipline was the best way to bring such backward peoples into the modern world, they argued, and formal classroom education would be wasted on humans so close to savagery.

²PAR 1939-40, p.20.
⁴NGAR 1929-30, p.127.
In 1928, for example, the New Guinea Planters' and Traders' Association inveighed against 'the present policy of providing a book education for a few natives', which they deemed 'a waste of money, the only real education [being] provided on the plantations and trading concerns of the planting community'. A measure of academic support for this view came from a young historian, Stephen Roberts, later Vice-Chancellor of Sydney University from 1947 to 1967. He claimed that 'natives have no economic ideas; agricultural instincts are peculiarly lacking; there is no incentive for them to work constantly.' The 'leading way to native progress' would thus be through compulsory work under the indentured labour system. Civilizing Papua New Guineans thus coincided felicitously with the exploitation of their brute strength, and formal education should not be allowed interfere.

If half the white opposition to formal education of the blacks arose from a conviction that productive work was more appropriate than bookish learning, the other half arose from fear. Many whites thought blacks inherently savage, and thus opposed any move to raise them above the station of menial servants. Occasionally events occurred to confirm the worst white prejudices: attacks by black men on white women or children always set off a vehement clamour among whites, and the local press would shrill against government's molly-coddling native welfare policies, including education, which supposedly induced a lack of discipline. One particular event in 1929 crystallized the fears and prejudices of the whites, and hardened their opposition to further black education. This was the Rabaul Strike, when 3000 workers in Rabaul — almost the entire New Guinean workforce — struck for higher wages. The initiators of the strike, who were singled out for exemplary punishment, seemed to provide salient evidence that too much training and advancement was dangerous for blacks. The Administration, cowed by the hysterical

6 ibid., pp.75-6.
7 ibid.
8 A. Inglis (1974) for attacks on whites in Papua; Australian Archives AG-836/3 for the outcry surrounding the murder of a white woman in New Guinea; Gammage (1975) and Willis (1970) for the Rabaul Strike.
reaction of the white community, shelved what plans it had for educational development.⁹

Not all whites were blinded by fear and prejudice, and the more enlightened believed Australia had an obligation to open up educational opportunities to Papuans and New Guineans. The copious writings of F.E. Williams, government anthropologist of Papua, showed that rationality prevailed in at least some quarters. Williams naively believed the fundamental cause of racial prejudice was linguistic — an inability of blacks and whites to communicate — and so the remedy lay in spreading literacy in English. He therefore tried to promote more advanced scholastic education, particularly teacher training, for Papuans. He laboured on in Papua for nearly twenty years, building a considerable professional reputation. However, his educational writings apparently carried little weight with his employers: the Administration gave little emphasis to teacher or other further training, and subsidized no education above Standard V.¹⁰

The apathetic official attitude to post-primary schooling arose partly from paternalism and partly from an assumption that Papua and New Guinea's colonial era would continue for a century or more. That much time seemed necessary before the blacks learned to govern themselves; and meanwhile the guiding hand of whites would be needed. Even the more illuminated minds were tinged with paternalism. It was Williams, for example, who lamented the intellectual limitations of Papuans:

Whether we decide that the native's thinking is prelogical or simply illogical, we find that he is constantly on the wrong track. His mind is swayed by whatever has emotional or affective appeal.¹¹

The inference was that 'self-development and progress' would be a long time in coming.¹² Even more significant

⁹Gammage (1975); Willis (1970).
¹¹Williams (1928), pp.14-16.
¹²Williams (1935), p.34.
were the views of Papua's long-serving and benevolent governor, Sir Hubert Murray. Early in his 34-year career in the territory he had confided to a correspondent his opinion that Papuans should not receive 'anything in the nature of a higher education' as they were inherently inferior to Europeans and should not therefore be encouraged to look on themselves as equals.\(^\text{13}\) These were hardly exceptional attitudes in 1912, but Murray modified them little in subsequent years. In 1937, when the first Papuan Catholic priest returned from training abroad, he conceded that if a Papuan could become a priest others could become doctors or lawyers; but he remained emphatically opposed to the emergence of a local indigenous intellectual elite, in the current generation at any rate.\(^\text{14}\)

Even when the Administrations attempted to promote further education unforeseen obstacles inevitably appeared. The hostility of the white community was usually an impediment, as in 1929 in the wake of the Rabaul strike when the New Guinea Administration dropped plans for sending students to Australia for technical training. A pre-war visitor, the American anthropologist, Stephen Reed, later observed 'one inevitably receives the impression that the Government's educational policy is shaped on the do-nothing model in response to the attitude of the non-official population.'\(^\text{15}\) In Papua the Administration enjoyed some success in sending trainees to Australia. Three batches of medical orderlies from Papua trained in Sydney during 1933-35; but white objections, which included the risk of contact with 'undesirable elements, especially low-down white women,' led to the scrapping of the scheme. Even before this the third batch had to wear Boy Scout uniforms lest normal Western dress give them ideas above themselves.\(^\text{16}\)

Canberra's disinclination could also cause bold planning in the territories to founder. This became obvious in 1932-33 when the Acting Administrator of New Guinea, General Tom Griffiths, and the Director of Public Health, Dr E.T. Brennan, proposed setting up a 'School for the

\(^{13}\)Dickson (1971), p.30.

\(^{14}\)PAR 1937-38, pp.20-1; Dickson (1971), p.79.

\(^{15}\)S.W. Reed (1943), p.189.

Training of Native Medical Practitioners.' They advised Canberra such an institution was needed, and could recruit the brightest students in the government schools for a four-year training programme; alternatively they could train at the medical school in Fiji. The Department of Territories was unimpressed and advised Griffiths the proposal was premature. It was influenced by supposedly expert opinion which deemed the scheme unworkable because of New Guineans' 'low stage of civilization.' Further expert opinion maintained that the Fiji course would be too difficult for New Guineans. Griffiths, however, persisted in remonstrating with the department, pointing out that a British Solomon Islander had completed the Fiji course and was now practising successfully — which suggested that popular assumptions about the intellectual deficiencies of New Guineans might be false. In answer to his further pleas for two New Guineans to be sent to Fiji as an experiment, he was advised that Cabinet had directed that New Guineans must be trained at home and only as medical orderlies.17

Ironically, another obstacle in the way of further education was the attitude of some Christian missions, who, by government default, had almost a monopoly of pre-war education. Despite the advantage this gave them, their achievement was limited by their strictly functional view of education: what they wanted was 'not an educated community but a Christianized community.'18 They refused government help if they thought this might compromise their independence, preferring no assistance to assistance which would give government a voice in their effort, for example, by requiring them to set minimum standards. Another factor limiting their achievement was the use of vernacular languages in teaching. The Lutherans taught in several tribal languages — Graged, Kâté, Jabêm — rather than in German, and later English. This practice stemmed from Lutheran philosophy: each tribe was seen as *ein Volk* — a discrete, self-contained social and cultural entity whose evangelization and education, must proceed in the *volkische* tongue.19 Wherever missions held similar views their educational systems tended to be inward-looking; and even though they offered secondary and even tertiary as well as

17 Australian Archives A-518 U832/1/3 Part 1.
18 *EPNG* (1972), p.322.
primary schooling, this was little concerned with the wider society of Papua and New Guinea. Not surprisingly they contributed little to the emergence of a national education system.

Blacks' economic value to white business enterprise, white prejudice, government paternalism and acquiescence, and particularistic mission attitudes — all served to inhibit the creation of a comprehensive system of education. Given the combined weight of such pressures it is perhaps surprising that any Papuans and New Guineans should have received post-primary, let alone higher, education. Yet a considerable number did, and with them a new social element had clearly emerged by the end of the 1930s. This had close parallels in African colonies, where such formations have been termed 'incipient', 'local', and 'provincial' elites — people whose training and experience in colonial society gave them advantages to confer on their offspring, thus laying foundations for the later growth of an upper class of educated Africans.20 Perceptive observers noted a similar trend in Papua and New Guinea in the late '30s. Reed, for example, saw New Guinea as a caste society made up of white brahmins and brown untouchables; but within the lower caste certain occupational groups — police, domestic servants, village officials, those 'most intimately associated with the white man' — were becoming 'distinctly upper class within their caste.'21 Education, training, and general acculturation were clearly opening horizontal cleavages within the Papua New Guinean community, and the extent to which this seems to have been happening might have surprised even Reed. No comprehensive statistics are available, but the evidence suggests that many Papua New Guineans were becoming 'upper class' through post-primary training. The very number of mission-run post-primary training institutions gives some indication of the volumes of those receiving further education: in New Guinea the missions were running seventy-nine post-primary establishments.22

There were, moreover, numerous avenues along which those with some education could advance. Teaching for the

20 P.C. Lloyd (1966), p.27.
21 Reed (1943), p.464.
22 NGAR 1939-40, p.127.
missions probably enabled the greatest number to climb higher into colonial society. In 1939 in Papua, ninety-one Standard V students earned certificates. Many of these appear to have become teachers, for the possession of the certificate was now 'a coveted honour' and more students were staying on to complete final year in hope of becoming teachers. Teaching was one of the few activities where Papuans could earn the unstinted esteem of Europeans such as that of a school inspector who examined four Papuan teachers near Hula in 1940. 'The standard of their schools was well above the average,' he wrote, 'and the examination of their pupils was made a pleasure by their alertness and keenness.' In New Guinea, too, teaching allowed ambitious lads to advance. All six government schools in 1940 employed New Guinean teachers, and New Guineans would have run most of the 2477 mission primary schools. Some missions provided relatively advanced training, and had long done so. The Lutherans at Finschhafen, for example, had opened a Jabém teacher training school at Logaueng in 1907 which had trained 100 teachers by 1920; their Kâté training centre at Heldsbach opened in 1914 and had trained 217 teachers by 1930. By the 1920s teaching had become so prestigious an occupation that the number of applicants was embarrassing. The Mission had to introduce a third and intervening level of education, middle schools, between the primary and teacher training schools to cater for those wanting post-primary education.

Pastoral work as a lay preacher (evangelist or catechist) also provided stepping stones for the upwardly mobile. The eleven mission societies in New Guinea were maintaining 3000 mission stations in the charge of New Guineans by 1940. Their training might have been minimal, but as a study of the London Missionary Society's pastorate at Hula has shown, mission work enabled local elites to emerge: preferential access to education, contact with a European way of life, use of English, the marriage of couples who had both received education, and the general social confidence all these bestowed, contributed to the rise of families associated with the Mission, giving them

\[16\]

\[23\] PAR 1939–40, p.20.

\[24\] ibid.


\[26\] NGAR 1939–40, p.127.
pre-eminence over neighbours and a means of entry later on into the national elite.\textsuperscript{27} Other studies of important Papua New Guinean families indicate a similar pattern elsewhere.\textsuperscript{28}

Technical training was another route upwards. Two of the five mission-run technical schools in Papua—Kwato and Yule Island—aimed to create an elite of highly skilled craftsmen whose proficiency rivalled that of white tradesmen, in order to be independent of outside skills. Some missions in New Guinea also gave trade training; and the government school in Rabaul, which was over a decade old and had ninety-seven students by 1940, trained youths for a wide range of occupations—typing and clerical work, printing, blacksmithing, engine maintenance, telegraph line maintenance, carpentry and joinery, plumbing, sail making, painting and cement working. Overall the accomplishment of the technical schools was considerable; and if they did little else, they created a pool of tradesmen who proved valuable in a later period of post-war reconstruction.\textsuperscript{29}

Work for government and some business enterprises also gave further training and experience. Clerks, medical orderlies, police, interpreters, truck drivers, boats' masters, and the 'boss boys' of labour gangs received informal, on-the-job training; yet even this imparted a measure of expertise which enabled some Papua New Guineans to climb the rungs of colonial society. They might return at the end of their contracts, but they went with knowledge of a world wider than the village, and with modern skills which brought them prestige.

The pre-war educational achievement was modest by any measure, but there was an achievement and it cannot be ignored. It is not true, as one observer has boldly claimed, that before World War II 'the educational efforts of the Administration and missions came to nothing.'\textsuperscript{30} Pre-war education remained a stunted tree, but it enabled villagers to scramble to career opportunities in a wider society. And these people, the 'first generation' of formally

\textsuperscript{27}N. Oram (1971), p.131.
\textsuperscript{29}A.R. Austin (1977), p.181; NGAR 1939-40, p.42.
educated Papua New Guineans, became the parents of children who would later comprise a national educated elite.\(^{31}\)

**Post-war: an educational 'new deal'**

Civilian rule returned to Papua and New Guinea in late 1945 after almost four years of war and military administration. The two formerly separate territories were now administratively wed. The first Administrator of the joint territories arrived in Port Moresby on 25 October; and with that began the brief 'Ward-Murray era'. Australia was under Labor rule, and the Minister for External Territories was a left-winger E.J. Ward. Shortly after his appointment in 1944 Ward visited the territories and caused consternation among old hands with a gesture that to them seemed ominous: during a tour of inspection he insisted on wading ashore from a boat instead of accepting the customary ride on the back of a local villager. Later in Parliament, when opposition members accused him of lowering white prestige, he asserted that if whites needed \textit{that} form of prestige they should relinquish their claim to the Territories. Labor, he went on to argue, would 'increase the prestige of the white man by treating the natives as human beings'.\(^{32}\)

Labor's determination to start afresh, to shake off the lethargy of pre-war administrations, became obvious when Ward introduced the Papua-New Guinea Provisional Administration Bill in July 1945. He said his Government was 'not satisfied that sufficient interest had been taken in the Territories prior to the Japanese invasion, or that adequate funds had been provided for their development and the advancement of the native inhabitants'.\(^{33}\) He promised that Labor would uphold the high ideals implicit in the principle of colonial trusteeship recently accepted at the San Francisco Conference, in particular 'by providing facilities for better health, better education and for a greater participation by the natives in the wealth of their country, and eventually in its government'.\(^{34}\)


\(^{32}\)Australian Parliamentary Debates (APD) vol. 184, 1945, p.4361.

\(^{33}\)APD vol. 183, 1945, p.4052.

\(^{34}\)ibid.
of the House shared the infectious altruism of the moment, stressing Australia's debt to the magnificent 'Fuzzy-Wuzzy Angels' who had recently proved such staunch allies in the war against Japan.

To carry its 'new deal' into practice Labor chose J.K. Murray as Administrator of Papua New Guinea. An academic and military man, he was no stranger to the policies he had to implement. He had been a colonel in the Australian Army's Directorate of Research and Civil Affairs, and at the time headed the School of Civil Affairs, which the Directorate ran to train officials being sent to the Territories to administer areas recaptured from the Japanese. The Directorate also had interests in planning post-war educational development, and even set up the Sogeri education centre outside Port Moresby in 1944 to train Papua New Guineans to teach in village schools.35

The Directorate's officer most concerned with education was anthropologist Camilla Wedgwood, who toured the Territories as a lieutenant-colonel in 1944-45 assessing educational needs. Among her subsequent reports was a 30-year development plan for post-war education which envisaged the creation of an hierarchical system of government-run village and regional schools and specialised colleges for technical, teacher and medical training.36 She added little new to ideas on educational planning for Papua New Guinea, as other educationists — Williams and Groves for example — had formulated similar schemes before, but her plan was 'expressed in dispassionate terms that gave a clearer indication of the objectives to be set.'37 The ideas underlying her plans were particularly important. Two themes recurred: first was the danger of 'producing only an educated elite without benefiting the bulk of the population'; second was the danger of giving Papua New Guineans a taste for an 'irrelevant', non-village or European lifestyle, which would arouse unrealistic expectations among them.38

35'Report on the preliminary arrangements for the transfer of control from the military authorities to the provisional administration of the Territory of Papua New Guinea' (1945).
36C. Wedgwood (1944, 1945, 1945a).
38Wedgwood (1944), p.16; (1945), p.3.
Wedgwood's writings were refreshingly free of patern­
alistic value judgments about the intellectual capacity of
Papua New Guineans; but she made several questionable
assumptions. Could it be taken for granted that the people
would remain contented with a 'relevant' rural education
fitting them for life in the villages? Might they not
prefer a 'European' education, and a life away from the
village in urban wage labour? Might ambitious individuals
not fight clear of the ruck in quest of advantages unshared
by the rest? Wedgwood failed to answer such questions.
So, too, did the man chosen to implement the programme in
education, W.C. Groves, Papua New Guinea's first Director of
Education. Unfortunately their views on the integrity of
the village and the danger of an elite were bound by the
conventional wisdom of the day, and that had to accommodate
the economic necessity of maintaining a plantation labour
force. Therein lay part of the reason why the educational
achievement of the first five or six post-war years failed
to live up to Ward's brave vision of a 'Rooseveltian New
Deal for Papua New Guinea'.

Groves took up duty in June 1946. Behind him was a
long career in education in the Pacific, including several
years in New Guinea as Supervisor of Education in the early
'20s, and a period of anthropological research in the early
'30s. The latter resulted in a book, Native Education and
Culture Contact in New Guinea, which was among his chief
qualifications for the task ahead. It set out a fairly
practical scheme for building up a system of local, regional
and national educational institutions. However, it is
remarkable for its enthusiastic espousal of a nebulous
educational philosophy derived from questionable tenets of
functional anthropology. His ideas complemented those of
F.E. Williams and Camilla Wedgwood: like the former, he
wanted education to 'blend cultures', combining the best
of indigenous and Western traditions in a new, national
culture; and like the latter he wished for a distinctively
'native' education, relevant to rural villages rather than
inappropriately European. His ideal was education combining
modern knowledge with the co-operative tradition of the
villages — this would produce a graduate content to use
modern skills in the home village, improving the quality of
the customary rural life.

The major weakness in all this was the idealist's fervent faith that the traditional village could be the basis for modern development, that appropriate education would keep it immune from the harmful by-products of modernization appearing elsewhere in the colonial world. The error was not Groves' alone: other functional anthropologists, whose ideas reached a peak of influence in the 1930s and '40s, also saw the traditional village as a static, eternal verity, and failed to consider the changes that would occur as the country moved away from a plantation economy which was premised on the retention of village society and its reserve labour. That Papua New Guinea might become a modern capitalist state; that this required the creation of an indigenous bureaucratic elite of necessity removed from their villages; and that the educational system must produce such a class, were possibilities which the idealist's model did not consider.

In translating philosophy into practice Groves discovered vexed questions which hampered his performance as Director of Education. To take but one—language—there were no easy answers. If the language of instruction were English, was it relevant to the needs of villagers? If it were the vernacular who would teach it, who would write the textbooks? Even more basically, which language(s) would be chosen? If both English and the vernacular were used, at what level should the former be introduced? Groves pondered such questions at length without reaching firm decisions or devising coherent plans of action. In any case his ideas were not generally welcome. Neither European employers seeking workers literate in English, nor villagers hankering after education as the key to material wealth, wanted village-oriented education. He could not ignore their discontent, and consequently wavered between his ideal and a more vulgar pragmatism without achieving the aims of either.41 Serious administrative weaknesses compounded the philosophical difficulties. On the job Groves proved to be a 'talker' rather than a 'doer'; and his order of priorities was unbalanced. He appointed advisers in esoteric fields of culture (ethnomusicologists, theoreticians of primitive art), for example, while the quota of classroom teachers remained unfilled. He conflicted with important interest groups like European parents and the missions, whose demands did not accord with his ideal model. And his attempts to

become involved in wider questions of social development distracted his department from its main task of planning a comprehensive system of modern education, gaining funds to build it, establishing its physical facilities and pushing through the schools an expanding intake of students at ever-improving standards.\textsuperscript{42}

It was hardly surprising that the educational achievement under Labor fell short of the promise. The inadequate statistics of the time show a superficially impressive growth of education, but the real gains were hardly startling. In the three years 1947-48 to 1949-50 enrolments in government schools rose by 27 per cent. But mission enrolments increased by 37 per cent, and the missions were educating no less than 97 per cent of all students. Although the number of government schools rose from fifteen to thirty-nine, their spread was very uneven: four of Papua's five government schools were clustered around Port Moresby; in New Guinea twenty-one of the thirty-four government schools were in the New Britain district; and eight of the sixteen administrative districts had no government schools at all. At the same time a disproportionate amount of effort was of necessity going into the 'cuckoos in the nest' — the schools for expatriate children. In 1949 there were thirteen schools and twenty-four European teachers for 660 expatriate children, in contrast to the thirty-nine Papua New Guinean schools with 2657 pupils but only nine European teachers.\textsuperscript{43}

In so far as higher education existed, the achievement was very modest. By 1949-50 there were 150 students in four government schools officially designated as 'higher training' institutions, though in effect these were little more than post-primary schools dispensing low-level teacher and 'pre-vocational' training. The missions had 1913 students in fifty 'higher training' schools, though it is likely that many of these were teaching in the vernacular.\textsuperscript{44}

What the statistics hide is the poor quality of the system being created. Nearly all the mission schools, which in 1949 were educating the great majority of school children,

\textsuperscript{42}ibid.


\textsuperscript{44}PAR 1949-50, p.115; NGAR 1949-50, p.155.
were run by poorly trained teachers whose own education had been rudimentary. Most taught in the vernacular, and then little but hymns and scripture by rote. Pupils attended erratically. Standards were so low when Hasluck took over the Territories portfolio in 1951 he concluded that 'scarcely any' Papua New Guineans from any level in any school were ready for the type of education given in Australian secondary schools. Admittedly the system had started from scratch, and it was expanding; but the programme was hardly 'setting an example to the rest of the world' as 'New Dealers' had promised.\(^4^5\) A more energetic programme would not come until a Liberal government installed Hasluck as Minister for Territories.

The 'Hasluck era'

In December 1949 Labor lost office, and for eighteen months the Minister for Territories was P.C. Spender. With his replacement by P.M.C. Hasluck in May 1951 another era began. It was to run for twelve years. Until the 1949 elections Hasluck had been a senior official of the Department of External Affairs. He had helped work out the principles of trusteeship for colonial territories agreed on at the San Francisco Conference, though in later UN involvement he developed 'considerable scepticism about the outcome of the Trusteeship provisions of the UN Charter'.\(^4^6\) This partly explains his 'dismay' at receiving Territories as his first portfolio. He also knew no one else wanted it, and suspected he would be unable to advance far in Cabinet with it. He has said: 'It killed me politically.'\(^4^7\) Yet of all the Ministers who ever filled the position he left his mark on Papua New Guinea, for during his Ministry and at his direction the country was set decisively on the path to independence.

Hasluck inherited an education system in embryo. Twelve years later it was still immature, but it had developed a much more complete form. Thus in 1951 the education vote comprised 3.6 per cent of government expenditure in Papua New Guinea ($0.47 million out of $12.8 million), whereas in


\(^4^6\)Hasluck (1976), pp.5-6.

\(^4^7\)ibid.
1962-63 it was 10.4 per cent ($6.3 million out of $59.9 million). In the same time Education had risen from fourth to first ranking Department in size of vote. The number of Education Department schools and colleges increased from seventy-four in 1952 to 417 in 1963, the number of students from 4834 to 44,959, and post-primary enrolments from 776 to 4769. The spread of schools was still very uneven: in 1960 the best-served district, Manus, had one school for every 1007 people, and one place in school for every 11.5; the least-served district, Western Highlands, had fifteen times the population of Manus but only one school for every 36,587 people and one school place for every 458.\textsuperscript{48} But despite such great differences the education system was spreading steadily across the country, and by the end of Hasluck's ministry none of the fifteen administrative districts had fewer than seven government schools. A fully comprehensive system of education had not yet emerged — there were few high schools, and the Commission investigating the possibility of a university had not yet reported — but a firm foundation for higher education had now been laid.

Hasluck saw educational growth as the keystone to the whole structure of development. Earlier in his ministry, however, it did not receive the desired priority, and for this he blamed Groves. Groves, he has claimed, was incapable of the decisive action necessary to boost education. He had not the heart to sack his Director of Education, but instead tried to 'promote' Groves out of the way, to the UN among other places. Groves insisted on staying on, and Hasluck eventually came to the view that 'not dealing more ruthlessly' with him was one of his notable failures as Minister. Consequently 'the turning point' in education came only in 1958 when Groves retired and was succeeded by his second-in-command, G.T. Roscoe, 'who was aware that the work of an Education Department had something to do with getting more and better teachers ...[and] putting children into schools and teaching them'.\textsuperscript{49}

Hasluck did have early misgivings about the Department of Education, which led him to appoint three officials to investigate its organization and objectives in 1954. Disagreeing with much of their report, he intervened personally


\textsuperscript{49}Hasluck (1976), pp.86, 224-5; cf., Hasluck Record of Interview with Willis (RIW), 11 September 1975.
to give education the bearings he thought necessary. These
came in a long, unpublished memorandum to the Secretary of
the Department of Territories in February 1955. In the
absence of any more definitive a programme devised by Groves' 
Department, this document now became educational policy.
The policy embodied six aims. First was the achievement of
mass literacy in some common language; then the raising of
material standards of living, the adoption of 'the practices
of civilization', the 'blending' of the best aspects of
traditional customs with the best of Western influences, the
replacement of paganism with Christianity, and the strengthen­
ing of bonds between Papua and New Guinea and between them
and Australia. In addition there were certain 'immediate
tasks': ensuring that more children went to school, building
up primary education as a necessary base for higher education,
and spreading literacy in English via the primary schools. 50

Hasluck was a visionary who attracted critics readily. His public pronouncements were eloquent and impassioned, but
he spoke down to the public and held stubbornly to his
professed goals when changing circumstances suggested re­
appraisal was timely. Academics, journalists and politicians
with 'progressive' views consequently saw in him the archetypal colonial paternalist, one remote from political reality
in an era of decolonization. Hasluck-baiting became fashio­nable in intellectual Left circles during the late 1950s, a
fact emphasised by the label one liberal journal pinned on
him — 'Oom Paul'. Perhaps his most persistent and outspoken
critic was Murray Groves, an anthropologist who had done his
major research in Papua and was none other than the son of
the former Director of Education. In a series of articles
in The Observer and Nation during 1960 and '61 and his
Chifley Lecture in 1962 he dissected Hasluck's public state­
ments and poured scorn upon their 'paternalistic fallacy'.
He claimed, inter alia, that universal primary education was
an unrealistic goal, typical of Hasluck's archaic outlook;
what was needed instead was a rapid build-up of secondary
and tertiary education in order to facilitate the swift
emergence of an educated elite who could take the country
into early independence. 51

50 Hasluck (1976), pp.93-7; G. Smith (1975), pp.31-2.
51 M. Groves (1960, 1962).
The Minister stoutly withstood such broadsides from his growing ranks of critics. In holding to the goals of literacy in English through universal primary education he probably knew he was in respectable company. As one scholar has noted, his views were 'in line with those [then] widely held about educational policy in developing countries.... Internationally, the case for universal primary schooling [had] earned political recognition in the Declaration of Human Rights... and the UNESCO sponsored Karachi Plan of 1960 [had] set the goal of eight years' universal schooling in Asia'.

He patiently answered his critics, but they seemed unimpressed and took delight in scoring points off him. A typical exchange occurred in 1957 when an Opposition member of the House of Representatives rhetorically asked if 'The Minister would care to tell the House when it is proposed to build secondary schools in New Guinea?' Hasluck's long, detailed reply reiterated the themes he customarily used to defend universal primary education: (i) primary education was still poorly developed; (ii) an effective system of secondary education depended on a soundly based primary system; (iii) the government would extend post-primary education as more students became available from the primary schools, but ... (iv) the large-scale expansion of secondary, and later tertiary, education must await the emergence of justifiable numbers of primary school graduates; therefore ... (v) major effort must continue to be in the primary schools.

The argument was eminently reasonable but failed to satisfy the critics. He could cite the statistics of growth *ad infinitum* — increases in the numbers of students, new schools opened, the expanding body of teachers in training, the steadily rising education vote — all as evidence of his 'vigorouse action towards the expansion of school services', but to little avail. The critics wanted more concrete evidence of his good faith — high schools, teachers' colleges, a university.

Hasluck did himself a disservice in insisting so firmly on his goal of universal primary education. He created the erroneous impression that the addition of secondary and tertiary tiers to the educational structure would only

---

52 G. Smith (1975), p.32.
53 APD, House of Representatives (H of R) 16, 1957, p.1227.
follow the attainment of that goal. That was clearly not his intention, and his many statements made clear that he had not turned his back on further, post-primary forms of education. However, his dogmatic obstinacy in promoting the goal gave critics good cause for concern. Universal primary education was obviously unattainable: between 1953 and 1959 the education vote rose by 49 per cent and primary school enrolments by 70 per cent — a commendable achievement — but as a percentage of the country's population, primary school enrolments rose only three points, from 7 per cent to 10 per cent. For all its remarkable expansion the primary school system was not keeping up with population growth, which had increased by 19 per cent between 1953 and 1959. The goal could not be reached short of devoting the entire government budget to education. Universal primary education was perhaps a valuable rallying cry for greater effort in extending literacy, but that was all. To insist otherwise was to hand the critics a cudgel.

Similarly, Hasluck's insistence that educational standards in Papua New Guinea must be comparable to those in Australia was unfortunate as it diverted attention from the steady advances taking place in the post-primary sphere. His position on standards was plainest in a 1962 speech in Parliament, answering K.E. Beazley, a Labor spokesman on Papua New Guinean issues who had attacked the Government's failure to introduce university education. Refuting Beazley's argument that the neglect of tertiary education was a culpable hindrance to the country's march towards independence, he said, 'You cannot go into the jungle, pick a child — even the brightest child — and plunge it into a university. Eleven years of training is required...'

The insistence on solid preparation for university entrance was reasonable; but once again his obstinacy, his obtuse refusal to acknowledge the point of Beazley's argument, and the general tenor of his comments gave little confidence in his perspicacity. Rightly or wrongly he succeeded in branding himself as a paternalist, and in the process everyone overlooked the significant developments which had been taking place in post-primary education, albeit at a level lower than the university the critics were calling for.

---

What were these developments? Firstly, despite any contrary impression that Hasluck may have created, there had been a steady growth of secondary education during the 1950s and early '60s. The system of post-primary schooling was not officially designated 'secondary', though that is what it essentially was. For those following it right through there were six years' primary education followed by three post-primary years, 'Standards 7, 8 and 9'. Over the years the post-primary schools went under a number of names as they evolved into formal high schools; but through numerous changes of title the schools remained basically the same—institutions offering up to three years of post-primary schooling. Their increase was, moreover, steady—from thirteen institutions with 776 students in 1952 to fifty-six institutions with 4778 students in 1964. They might not have attained the academic standards of their Australian counterparts, as Hasluck thought they should, but in the context of a developing country they did offer worthwhile secondary education. In addition to the students receiving that education, there were specially selected scholarship students receiving formal secondary education in Australian schools. The scholarship scheme began in 1953-54 as a stop-gap measure to ensure a flow of students of Australian standard from the secondary level. Hasluck personally doubted the value of the scheme, but those in charge thought it successful. By the late 1960s, when the expansion of high schools throughout Papua New Guinea itself made the scheme unnecessary, well over 200 students had benefited from it, including the country's first university graduates.

There were other post-primary developments which showed that further education was not being neglected. From 1947 a steady stream of Papua New Guineans had been training in medicine, dentistry and nursing at the Central Medical School, Fiji. When the Department of Public Health set up the Papuan Medical College in 1957-58 training in Fiji was phased out. The first eighteen students of the new college began formal training in 1958, and the first graduates emerged in 1962. Thereafter the college maintained a steady supply of qualified practitioners.

---

The Public Service Institute, set up in 1953, was another important venue of post-primary education. It existed to upgrade the quality of the public service by helping government employees improve their educational qualifications. At first its students were mainly expatriate officers undertaking part-time external tuition in various Australian diploma and degree courses. From 1957, when the Auxiliary Division was created to enable Papua New Guinean officers to qualify for entry to higher divisions of the public service, increasing numbers of local officers trained through the institute. By 1964 there were 2100 taking either full- or part-time and correspondence courses to lift their qualifications to the Standard 9 level. 60

Teacher training also made an important contribution to further education during the 1950s. The appointment of former teachers as the first Papua New Guinean permanent heads of several government agencies in 1971 and 1973 emphasized this. From the opening of the Sogeri Education Centre in 1944 teacher training had been one of the chief means by which Papua New Guineans could receive a post-primary education. Indeed post-primary schooling often proceeded on the assumption that those receiving it would become teachers, and the normal post-primary curriculum for a number of years included teacher training. In 1954-55 the Department of Education instituted more formal arrangements for prospective teachers — three separate levels of training, 'A', 'B' and 'C' Certificate courses. The lowest level students, the 'A' stream, took a year of training after completing Standard 6; the 'B' stream underwent a year of training after Standard 8; and 'C' stream — the most able — entered training after Standard 9, then took two years of 'secondary' education followed by a year of professional education. The Department of Education hailed the graduation of the first 17 'C' Certificate students as a major milestone in the country's educational development: 'This is the highest scholastic standard yet attained by any student within the Administration school system,' it noted with jubilation in the Annual Report. 61

60 PAR 1957-58, pp.25-7; NGAR 1957-58, pp.32-3; 1960-61, pp.40-1.
As Hasluck himself later observed, 'The real progress in education belongs to a period after this.' However, the educational achievement of the 1950s was tangible enough. Though the ultimate goal of universal primary education remained far distant, even, if not actually receding owing to population growth, the system was expanding steadily at its base in the primary schools. And the unobtrusive gains in post-primary education were providing ever more Papua New Guineans with professional and administrative career opportunities for the future.

---

Chapter 3

The new goal: a university

With Hasluck as Minister for Territories the Australian Government adhered to a firm orthodox position on higher education throughout the 1950s. Official opinion doubtfully maintained that in Papua New Guinea higher education generally, and university education in particular, were not yet feasible because the necessary substructure of primary and secondary schools remained inadequately developed. 'There are no universities and some years must elapse before they can be justified ... [as] the vast majority of the indigenous people have not yet reached the necessary educational standards'\(^1\) — was the formula duly repeated in every *Annual Report* until 1961.

Such statements failed to reflect accurately the actual progress preliminary education was making. By the late 1950s, as Hasluck has observed from the vantage point of twenty years' hindsight, 'the school system was beginning to produce candidates for higher education in sufficient numbers for us to be able to turn more purposefully towards Tertiary education'.\(^2\) As this realization dawned the official position ponderously shifted to one of open espousal of higher education as a priority task. The Department of Territories now initiated a series of inquiries into higher education, the culmination of which was the Currie Report, the first major milestone in university development in Papua New Guinea.

Mounting pressures for higher education

A number of influences combined to persuade the Government to swing its emphasis away from primary towards

---

1NGAR, 1952–53, p.90.
2Hasluck (1976), p.386.
secondary and tertiary education. Some of these were internal, others external; together they prompted vast changes during the 1960s.

Among the strongest influences was internal pressure from progressive departments of the Papua New Guinea Administration which were extending their activities steadily, and generally saw sense in recruiting Papua New Guineans to positions requiring formal skills and responsibilities. Public Health, Posts and Telegraphs and Education led the field in establishing their own training institutions. Education had conducted various training schemes from the outset; Posts and Telegraphs opened a training college in 1957-58, the first of many such sponsored by a department other than Education; while Public Health opened its Papuan Medical College in 1958. Under the Directorship of Dr J.T. Gunther, Health was the most vigorous department in pursuing indigenous staff development: it began by sending local staff to train at the medical school in Fiji, then in 1956 began a 28-year scheme for producing locally-trained personnel to permit the complete localization of the medical service by 1984. Such energetic training programmes demonstrated to the less venturesome departments that Papua New Guineans were capable of becoming more than tea makers for expatriate public servants. By the end of the 1950s the departments of District Administration, Police, Agriculture and Forestry were also devising localization and training schemes and planning their own specialized training colleges.3

An ironic result of these moves was a shortage of Papua New Guineans willing to undertake further education. Until the primary and secondary schools began releasing a tide of school leavers into the employment market in the late 1960s, relatively few students qualified for advanced training. Competition among prospective employers for those with education was brisk, which meant severe wastage from higher levels of the education system as bright students left school early to earn the attractive wages offered by employers rather than continue into further education.4

3 Hasluck (1976), pp.103, 143, 246; Department of Territories Official Records (DTOR) 61/6508; PAR, 1957-58, pp.25-7; Gunther, RIW, p.6.

This was a problem to which Hasluck frequently alluded, sometimes using it to justify the slow development of facilities for higher education. The Administrator, Donald Cleland, thought it could be overcome by awarding cadetships to likely students to encourage them to complete secondary school and proceed to higher education. The competition for students emphasized both the shortage of young people receiving higher education and the absence of facilities for training them. It thus constituted indirect pressure on the government to sponsor higher education more boldly.

There was a general awareness among senior Administration officials in the late 1950s that the time was ripe for special effort at the tertiary level. Their concern became obvious at the 1958 Senior Officers' Course, a scheme which brought together senior personnel for a programme of lectures, seminars and research. The 1958 course produced a 20,000-word 'Report on Education', the latter half of which dwelt on post-primary training. This document called for changed emphases, singling out for explicit criticism a number of crucial aspects of Hasluck's publicly stated beliefs and the orthodox official position on higher education. It attacked the official goal of universal primary education; challenged the anti-elitist rhetoric in which Hasluck's pronouncements were often phrased; criticised the delay in building up post-primary education until an adequate primary school output was achieved; and generally demonstrated that the official orthodoxy was poorly regarded by some of the best and most senior officers of the service. It concluded by recommending the establishment of 'a University or University College in the not too distant future'.

Papua New Guineans themselves were no less sure of what they wanted. At local government council meetings, at gatherings to meet officials and in greeting touring dignitaries they made it plain they wanted not a rural or vernacular education to fit them to life in the villages, but something giving access to the benefits of modern society. The words of a Highlands 'Big-Man' to the Director

---


6Hasluck (1976), p.282; 'Report on Education 1958,' no.3 Senior Officers' Course, ASOPA.
of Education in 1959, 'We want our children to be exactly like you,' expressed the aspirations of many.\textsuperscript{7} Nationally, their opinion was heard most consistently in the Legislative Council, even though it contained only three Papua New Guinean members throughout the 1950s. Education was one of the few topics on which they delivered speeches with assurance, and the recurring themes indicated the sharpness of their dissatisfaction with current effort. They wanted a higher level of technical education so Papua New Guineans could acquire the skills of mechanized society; less religious and more secular training; schooling in English rather than the vernacular; and the establishment of facilities for secondary and higher education so students need not go overseas for training. They took the poor development of education as a slur on their people; and their requests portended a growing popular clamour for education. The increasing insistence and the vocal nature of their demands were very evident by 1961 when John Guise, the future Governor General, was claiming not only the right to a local university, but a scheme of overseas postgraduate training for its graduates.\textsuperscript{8}

Some pressure for higher education came from within the Department of Territories itself, where concern centred on the future of the Australian School of Pacific Administration. ASOPA had been making a notable contribution to education in Papua New Guinea through its teacher training programme: altogether 520 certificated teachers for Papua New Guinea — 242 primary and 278 secondary — graduated from the school between 1954 and 1972.\textsuperscript{9} However, Hasluck and Lambert, the Secretary of his Department, were never entirely happy with it. They were suspicious of the academic ambitions of its staff, whom they wanted to be content with the less exalted role of equipping with specific job skills trainees who would later work in Papua New Guinea (and other territories). Over the years considerable antipathy thus developed between the school and its sponsor, the Department.\textsuperscript{10}

\textsuperscript{7}Smith (1975), p.46.
\textsuperscript{9}V. Parkinson (ASOPA Registrar for 25 years), RIW, p.1; G. Leaver (1972), pp.16-17.
\textsuperscript{10}Parkinson, RIW, pp.1-3; Rowley, RIW, p.1; Hasluck, RIW, p.4.
In November 1960 Lambert, at the prompting of C.D. Rowley, the ASOPA Principal, raised the changing educational needs of Papua New Guinea with Hasluck, and brought the future of ASOPA into the discussion. Hasluck was 'receptive' to the suggestion that an institution combining the functions of university college and public service training centre was needed, and that this could begin with the merger of ASOPA and the Public Service Training Institute.\footnote{Lambert, 'note for file', 17 November 1960, DTOR 61/6508.} Gunther, who had become Assistant Administrator in 1957, was brought into the discussion, and his views exerted strong influence over subsequent government discussion. He believed the first priority was a tertiary level administrative training college which could later become the nucleus of a university. Papua New Guinean nationalism was becoming so strong, he pointed out, that localization would become a major political issue within a decade; and this should be anticipated by the early establishment of his proposed institution.\footnote{Gunther to Cleland, 13 February 1961, DTOR 61/6508.}

Rowley's, Gunther's and Lambert's interest indicate how internal pressures were coming together to ensure greater government commitment to higher education. It was not the case, as one critic of Australian policy — Colebatch — has claimed, that internal influences 'were weak, and usually arose as a result of outside criticism', or that officials were 'reacting belatedly to pressures which began outside the Territory'.\footnote{Colebatch (1967, pp.136-7).} Those applying internal pressure were numerous, vocal, articulate and insistent. They were, moreover, well placed to perceive needs and to influence government decisions. Arguably, their influence in effecting a shift in emphasis — the adoption of higher education as publicly stated policy during 1961-62 — was more decisive than outside influences.

Hasluck himself has specifically rejected the notion of outside influence, claiming a 'steadfastness of objectives' which had always included the building up of higher education. There was a natural progression in educational development, from the primary level up, he has argued, the only constraint to expansion at a higher level being the availability of adequately prepared students. His Department maintained an overview, and reviewed policy as needs changed; thus, when
the shift in emphasis came it was as a result of well-considered assessments of past growth and future need.\textsuperscript{14}

Perhaps Hasluck has under-rated the total force of outside influences, but that does not gainsay the strength of internal influences.

Hasluck's critics have given undue weight to the case for external pressures — understandably so, as the opponents of his educational policy were many, vociferous, and well-publicized. The opponents comprised a formidable throng, eventually including the United Nations Trusteeship Council, the Australian press, the Australian academic community, and the parliamentary Labor Party. Consequently the critics have wrongly assumed that Hasluck only implemented programmes of tertiary education because he was driven, reluctantly and tardily, by his opponents.

Just how hostile the opponents could be is evident in the attacks made by Soviet bloc delegates within the Trusteeship Council, which became a forum for authoritative (if not always well-informed) debate on Australian colonial policy during the 1950s and early '60s. The Council expressed concern over a number of aspects of educational development — the lack of facilities for higher education, the continuing imbalance in the ratio of government to mission schools, the separate and costly education of expatriate children, and the apparently slow growth of the education system — though it was generally sympathetic to Australia's immensely difficult task of building up an entire educational system almost from scratch.\textsuperscript{15} From the outset, however, Soviet delegates dissented from the majority view of the Council. Their vehement denunciations of Australian effort became something of a ritual at each session as they sought to expose what they claimed was 'Australia's typically colonialist policy...' and its unwillingness to carry out its obligations under the UN charter.\textsuperscript{16} Those who have examined Australia's relations with the UN over the New Guinea question disagree with the frequently inaccurate Soviet diatribes, pointing out that

\textsuperscript{14}Hasluck (1964); Hasluck, RIW, p.1; APD vol. H of R 35, 1962, pp.1553-4.

\textsuperscript{15}See for example, UN, \textit{Report of the Trusteeship Council 1953-54}, p.263.

generally Australia made 'a sincere and thorough attempt to meet the obligations it had assumed in the [Trusteeship] agreements'. The non-Soviet UN delegates seemed to recognise this; but, while dissociating themselves from Soviet views, were nevertheless concerned about higher education, and as the 1950s wore on began nagging about its poor development.

Criticism within the Trusteeship Council peaked in 1962 with the tabling of the so-called Foot Report, the report of the Council's 1962 Visiting Mission to New Guinea, led by Sir Hugh Foot. It was the most critical ever made by a Visiting Mission in the thirty years the UN had a direct interest in New Guinea via the Trusteeship agreement. In reference to education it stated that:

The main reason why the present education programme is inadequate is that it pays little ... attention to the need for higher education.... Nor is there any evidence that the Administration intends to encourage ... students to remain at school and university....

The Territory needs more than the promise that such education will be made available. What is required is a positive programme to ensure that hundreds of students do qualify and do demand it....

The kind of programme for secondary and higher education needed in New Guinea must be approached with greater imagination and boldness.... The Administration should be planning now to provide an annual turnout of university graduates of the order of at least a hundred....

The Mission feels that the time has come to complete the structure of earlier effort and to provide the apex of the pyramid by a new policy of selection for and encouragement of higher and university education.

Foot might well have been upstaging Hasluck, whose juniors in Australia and Papua New Guinea had been planning for eighteen months the sort of development the Report called

---

for. In doing so he was following a practice the UN had often adopted in relation to New Guinea — to make a recommendation on an issue immediately after it had been initiated by Australia. the UN, in so endorsing Australian policies, apparently hoped to increase the tempo of national development. 20 Whatever Foot's motivation might have been, however, his personal eminence as an expert on colonial problems meant his views would be influential. Not surprisingly, they were taken up by the liberal press in Australia.

As the press had taken up the cause of more rapid development for Papua New Guinea, several journalists emerged as specialists. Among the most prominent was Peter Hastings, who had been contributing articles on Papua New Guinea to The Observer in the late 1950s. He later became editor of The Bulletin, and later still, in 1964-65, helped found the Council on New Guinea Affairs, a group which produced the New Guinea quarterly, which he edited. A recurring theme in his articles was the need to promote the rapid expansion of a university-trained elite capable of guiding Papua New Guinea into stable independence. He and other journalists accused Hasluck of gradualist approaches — of deliberately going slow. Though gradualism was one of the myths of the Hasluck era — a misinterpretation of government policies, created by the journals of the day — the myth served to focus public attention on the reality, which was that for all the government's effort much more remained to be done, particularly in key areas such as higher education. 21

Academics amplified the journalists' message as they dissected Hasluck's pronouncements and discovered nuances he might not have intended. The anthropologist Murray Groves was perhaps the chief among them. A leading apostle of

21 For journalistic criticism of Hasluck and gradualism see The Observer, 8 March 1958, p.38; 6 September 1958, p.60; 20 September 1958, p.49; 21 March 1959, p.179; 2 April 1960, p.9; 23 July 1960, p.3; 17 September 1960, p.3. For Hasluck's reply see Hasluck (1976), pp.240-1, 284-5, where he speaks of 'unremitting effort' in his role of 'Sisyphus', trying to make others as aware of the urgency of the task in Papua New Guinea as he was. See also Gunther, record of interview with H.N. Nelson, pp.240-8.
elite development, and an outspoken critic of Hasluck, he repeated his message in various forums:

Mr Hasluck probably underestimates the size and strength of the Papuan elite.... In the foreseeable future they will demand self government.... In this situation we must accept the timetable they and international opinion will impose upon us.... Our primary task in the immediate future must be to promote the necessary skills and attributes among the 'advanced' section of the population. We could achieve this goal smoothly in 10 to 15 years if we set our minds to it.22

Hasluck was perhaps more perceptive and flexible than he was given credit for. His later statements, and the files of his Department, indicate that he practised a conscious pragmatism, endeavouring through 'intelligent anticipation' to 'meet new needs before they emerged'.23 Whereas Groves and like-minded critics wanted a timetable for change with set target dates for university development and independence, Hasluck preferred to rely on his sensitivity to the changes occurring in Papua New Guinea.

In the early 1960s, however, many critics doubted that Hasluck could anticipate intelligently. His public statements gave little cause for confidence in his capacity to turn with the winds of change. To cite a notable instance, he set himself resolutely against the notion of elite development. In a much-quoted public statement in 1958 he commented on 'certain discouraging signs' appearing in Papua New Guinea:

Already we face a situation where a small minority of the people may be regarded as advanced while the majority are still living in a primitive state. The situation is one which gives dangerous and unusual opportunities for the native demagogue who claims on behalf of himself or a minority rights and powers which should belong to the whole people.... [We must] call on the advanced native people to accept with patience

and moderation a wider good for the whole of the people rather than the early serving of their own sectional advantage. We sometimes talk of an 'elite' and our special responsibility to it. They need to earn that title by the standards they set themselves.  

He later admitted an 'exasperated dislike' for the word 'elite', and avoided using it whenever possible. Elite formation nevertheless seemed to be an objective fact of social change, and thus had to be accommodated. As the academics pointed out, 'risks attend any policy of rapid development', and one of the risks was that educated leaders would 'exploit their own people, ... become in truth black Neros'. Hasluck's stubborn refusal to recognise this publicly convinced his critics that he had a poor grasp of the social realities his programmes were creating. His exasperated critics came out with intemperate assertions that Papua New Guinea under him seemed bound to become 'another Congo'. It was the socialist review Outlook that warned of impending doom:

The government has reason to be afraid. So have we all.... The conclusion we ought to draw from the Congo is that the training of the native elite and the development of modern social and political organizations in New Guinea are horribly urgent tasks.

As Hasluck's record of achievement showed, he appreciated the questions posed by his critics, but his unwillingness to give unequivocal answers created doubts.

Within Australia the most persistent critics were the politicians. On his own side of the House Hasluck had to combat the conservatives who thought the rate of development in Papua New Guinea was dangerously fast and were prepared to condemn 'idealists and completely ignorant people who think we can... bring these stone age people up to the level of civilized races in a matter of five or ten

---

24Hasluck (1958).
years'. With views like this to overcome among colleagues, he often felt there was more sympathy for his programmes within Labor ranks. Though Laborites may have been sympathetic, they still wished to prod the government into public espousal of elite training and university development. A forceful body of opinion within the front ranks of the parliamentary Labor Party continued to badger Hasluck over education. In the late 1950s and early '60s E.J. Ward, G.M. Bryant, K.E. Beazley, E.G. Whitlam, W.G. Hayden or L.R. Johnson could be relied on to goad him provocatively. Beazley was the most articulate spokesman, and over the years asked numerous questions and made many eloquent and impassioned speeches urging greater effort. In 1960, for example, he said that:

The sort of education that we now have has given a considerable number of native peoples ... primary education and the beginning of post-primary education.... It is now time to consider the establishment of a university.... If they do not have groups of professionally educated men they cannot have a viable self-government.

Most government members greeted such suggestions sceptically, probably sharing the belief of a colleague that 'the children of the present children may have a chance... [but] the children of today will have no chance of achieving effective self government.'

Did the government therefore need coaxing by Beazley and other Laborites, by journalists and academics, by the Trusteeship Council? Hasluck's assertions to the contrary are firm; yet the external pressure for greater emphasis on tertiary education was heavy, and mounting. There was no respite in the Australian Parliament, the press, the universities, or the UN. Hasluck's vaunted five-year education plan of 1961, and the series of reports written at his direction between 1961 and 1964 which led to the establishment of a university, came after five or six years of

---

31 ibid., pp.1664-5, 1672.
increasingly vocal criticism. The critics had created a strong climate of opinion by 1962. The government and the Minister must have sensed it. They would have been obdurate in the extreme not to have been influenced by it.

**What sort of higher education?**

When Hasluck favourably received the suggestion for a tertiary institution 'similar to a university college' in November 1960 he set in motion a train of events which five years later led to the establishment of the University of Papua New Guinea. The first step in this direction was the preparation of a working paper by an officer of the department, F.W. McConaghy, who spent several weeks in Papua New Guinea investigating public service training and general educational needs.  

His conclusions were strongly influenced by his discussions with Gunther and David Chenoweth, the inspector of training in the Public Service Commissioner's Department, an officer whose contribution to the subsequent development of higher education was significant. McConaghy's main proposal was for the creation of a central residential administrative training institution to train the hundreds of Papua New Guineans underemployed in the public service because of lack of professional preparation. The greatest educational need was therefore to improve their capacity so they could assume responsibility from expatriate officials who would then be available for more important work.  

McConaghy's report led to the formation of a committee charged with working out a detailed and comprehensive scheme of training. Lambert proposed a committee comprised of J.E. Willoughby (first assistant secretary in the Department), E.J. Foxcroft (first assistant secretary in the Prime Minister's Department), L. Newby (head of Extension Services in Papua New Guinea) and the ASOPA Principal, Rowley. The Minister gave enthusiastic approval and ordered the committee to start work immediately as an early report would mean that provision could be made in the 1961-62 Budget for the expansion of training facilities. The

---

33 *ibid.*
committee on the Development of Tertiary Education and Higher Training in the Territory of Papua and New Guinea, or, more conveniently the Willoughby Committee (so named after the chairman), began work in May 1961. After four months it submitted a twenty-page report recommending a range of institutions: (i) a central residential administrative staff college, to be set up as soon as possible, giving both general and specialized administrative education full-time to public servants. (ii) A university college, to be established by 1966, affiliated with an Australian university, preferably The Australian National University (ANU). Discussions should begin with ANU to determine its interest in establishing such a college. (iii) A multi-racial teachers' college of Australian standard with ASOPA links, to be established in Papua New Guinea. (iv) A polytechnic, or higher technical and trade training institution. (v) 'Many more' secondary schools, to ensure an adequate supply of students to the various tertiary institutions. (vi) A tertiary education complex, to be sited at Wards Strip, near Port Moresby, with space enough for the administrative college, multi-racial teachers' college, the polytechnic and possibly other specialized training institutions still to be created, such as the police college. 34

Hasluck responded cautiously to the Willoughby recommendations — most 'foreshadow[ed] major decisions of far-reaching importance' — but he warmly greeted the idea of an administrative college. 35 He told Lambert to start planning it immediately. The Department proceeded with due expedition: a site was selected at Wards Strip by the end of October 1961. During November and December Chenoweth worked in Canberra with McConaghy to produce draft papers on the function of the college, the formation of the Interim Council, and a duty statement for its Principal. In January 1962 Hasluck approved the creation of the position of Principal and Chenoweth's promotion to it. An Interim Council was appointed in April 1962 and met for the first time in June. Eventually, after some disagreement between the Department of Territories and the Interim Council, the


35 Hasluck to Lambert, 11 October 1961, DTOR 61/6508.
college took in its first students in early 1964, just
after Hasluck moved on from the Territories portfolio. 36
It was to make a notable contribution to higher education:
by 1971 more than 3500 students had passed through it,
including 'nearly all of the present bureaucratic and
government elite'. 37

In the end the Administrative College was all that
materialized from the Willoughby Report. The other recom-
mendations were either set aside or bypassed by subsequent
events. Those concerning the university college, most
notably, foundered during negotiations with ANU. Hasluck
had reacted cautiously to the proposal that Territories
should open discussions with ANU, wishing to defer the
matter until the Department was sure of its position on
university development. However, events seem to have
outstripped his measured pace, driving him into temporary
alliance with ANU in order to keep up with new developments.

Two events in April 1962 appear to have spurred
Hasluck towards ANU. First, the Foot Mission from the
Trusteeship Council had arrived in Australia at the end of
March, en route to Papua New Guinea. Foot let it be known
he was aware of the criticism Hasluck had been receiving
over higher education and elite development: he discussed
with the press 'the differences in Australian opinion on
the question of whether progress should be brought about by
raising an elite of the "dynamic few" or by a general rais-
ing of standards to a less ambitious level'. 38 Secondly,
Labor parliamentarian Beazley had given notice of raising
the question of establishing a university as a necessary
step towards self government for debate in the House on 11
April. 39 The presence of a UN official with thirty years'
experience in colonial administration and a pronounced
interest in higher education, together with the prospect of
a searching parliamentary examination of educational policy

36Lambert to Hasluck, 11 December 1961; Willoughby, 'Resumé
of action to 7 February 1962; R. Swift, 'Note for file',
10 October 1962; Gunther to Hasluck, 7 November 1962;
Hasluck to Swift, 19 December 1962, DTOR 61/6508; B. Jinks
38Pacific Islands Monthly 32(9), April 1962, pp.15-16.
were events to sway even Hasluck. He issued a long press release setting out 'progress in planning for a university', on 8 April—three days before the introduction of Beazley's question in the House, and on the very day the Foot Mission travelled to Papua New Guinea. Perhaps this timing was coincidental, yet the records of Hasluck's Department suggest that he acted with undue haste under pressure from Beazley and Foot. 40

Hasluck's press release made public the Department of Territories' planning over the preceding year and a half. Despite many questions in parliament, the Minister had previously given no indication of government thinking on university development. The nearest he had previously come to this had been six months before, in October 1961, when he had made a Ministerial Statement to parliament on 'Educational, Social and Economic Advancement in Papua and New Guinea'. This had announced, *inter alia*, a five-year plan for education which included 'a central administrative training college', a target figure of 3500 in tertiary educational institutions by 1967, a 130 per cent increase in school enrolments to 350,000, and increases in post-primary enrolments to bring 10,000 students into secondary training, 2000 into technical schools, and 2000 into teachers' colleges by the end of 1966. Amidst these target figures there had been no mention of university enrolments. 41 But now, the public was suddenly informed, there was a Willoughby Report which the government endorsed. The press release stated that priority was going to the Administrative College but talks with ANU would begin soon and bring a university into being by 1966. This university, the release went on to announce, would develop links with the Papuan Medical College, the proposed multi-racial teachers' college, the

40 The press release was drawn up 'in view of recent developments, particularly the impending urgency motion' (Willoughby to Hasluck, 6 April 1962, DTOR 62/4307). Hasluck had also called for the preparation of a Ministerial Statement in early April 1962 'to suit the changing situation' (Hasluck to Lambert, 12 April 1962, DTOR 62/895). Furthermore, the record of Hasluck's discussion with Foot shows that Foot had put strong pressure on him regarding university development by asking pointed questions about the absence of university facilities in Papua New Guinea (DTOR 62/3488).

polytechnic, and the Administrative College.\footnote{Polios 75-6, DTOR 62/895.}

Thus publicly committed to university development, Hasluck was obliged to enter discussions with ANU. Informal talks began between Willoughby and the Registrar of the ANU. But fate intervened to upset government planning, Willoughby and Foxcroft both died suddenly in June 1962. For the past year they had been the two officials most concerned with the question of the university. Their deaths were a great setback, and government planning went into abeyance until a new official, R.S. Swift, could gather up the threads.\footnote{Hoyle to Lambert, 28 June 1962, DTOR 62/4307.}

In the meantime several interest groups within ANU had enthusiastically taken up the idea of an ANU-sponsored university college in Papua New Guinea. The Director of the ANU New Guinea Research Unit announced in Port Moresby that he had instructions to find a suitable site for the university college. Cleland, on a directive from Lambert, who said the Department was ignorant of such instructions, firmly set the Director 'back on his heels'.\footnote{Willoughby to Lambert, 28 March 1962; Lambert to Cleland, 29 March 1962; Cleland to Lambert, 4 April 1962, DTOR 62/4307.} Then in mid-July a committee from within the ANU Research School of Pacific Studies produced a report making a series of detailed recommendations about the links that should exist between ANU and the proposed university college. This report was subsequently endorsed in early August by a wider ANU committee called together by the Vice-Chancellor.\footnote{Report of the Committee of the Research School of Pacific Studies to consider the proposed university for Papua New Guinea', July 1962, ANU document no.1161 B/1962; 'Report...to advise [the Vice-Chancellor] on...the establishment of a university college for Papua New Guinea', August 1962, ANU document no.S.969/1962.} Both committees were remarkable for the great willingness of some academics to arrogate to themselves the exclusive right to determine how university education in Papua New Guinea should proceed.

Following the hiatus caused by the deaths of Willoughby and Foxcroft a formal meeting between government and ANU representatives in late 1962 led to the setting up of a 'Working Party on the Proposed University in Papua and New
Guinea', which met only twice and with conspicuous lack of success. At the second meeting a serious division of opinion with ANU ranks became obvious. Petty bickering between the delegates from the School of Pacific Studies and the School of General Studies over the opening date for the college, the courses to be offered initially and the composition of the student body made a poor impression on Hasluck, who was now anxious to see the college operational. Hasluck, as one ANU professor commented, was 'A man of commonsense [who] realized that a dialogue was impossible if one of the speakers is a split personality talking with many and rather incoherent tongues.' Having come to the conclusion that some ANU staff saw the proposed college chiefly as a means of carving out comfortable personal niches, and being greatly displeased at this, he consulted the Prime Minister (R.G. Menzies) and Sir John Crawford, director of the ANU School of Pacific Studies, who set the government against further dealings with ANU. Crawford, somewhat enigmatically, advised that the government would be unwise to continue with ANU as the arbiter of university development in Papua New Guinea.  

Hasluck now decided to appoint 'a representative commission with a person of some eminence as chairman...to examine and report on all matters of higher education'. The subject had now been under his Department's constant consideration for two years — no less than five committees had considered it — yet the university college seemed no closer. He therefore chose his three commissioners carefully. Sir George Currie, the chairman, had been Vice-Chancellor of the University of Western Australia and of the University of New Zealand. He had recently chaired a commission on education in New Zealand. Gunther, representing the Administration, was an obvious choice: as foundation chairman of the Administrative College Council and as initiator of the medical training programme he had displayed

47 O.H.K. Spate to F. Kaad, 28 September 1971, Spate papers.
48 Swift to Hasluck, November 1962, DTOR 62/4307; Gunther, RIW, p.7; Hasluck, RIW.
interest, drive and imagination in higher education for Papua New Guineans. O.H.K. Spate, Professor of Geography in the ANU School of Pacific Studies, had been a member of a 1953 committee on economic development in Papua New Guinea, and had been a member (though a sceptical one) of two of the ANU committees discussing the university college. The executive officer of the commission was Fred Kaad, who had been suggested by Gunther as one of the best educated and most able of the District Commissioners. Kaad was assisted by Oala Oala Rarua, also suggested by Gunther, and one of the most promising of Papua New Guinean évolués. Men of this calibre could be expected to provide the Minister with an authoritative statement to back the mandate he now wanted to proceed with university development. He would need it to counter the strong opposition of those who thought university education in Papua New Guinea was still premature.51

The commissioners were to investigate and report on 'the means for further developing tertiary education to meet the present and prospective needs of the Territory to serve the best interests of its people and enable them to take an active part in the social, economic, and political advance­ment of their country.52 The terms of reference were so wide they gave the commissioners a carte blanche — a point Hasluck emphasized at their first formal meeting in March 1963. They approached the task enthusiastically and thoroughly. First they collected and studied published material on Papua New Guinea and relevant publications on other developing nations, then sought opinion and evidence from a wide cross-section of organizations and individuals in Papua New Guinea, Australia and beyond. They undertook

51Currie, RIW, p.2; C.E. Reseigh, RIW, p.1; B.J. Meek, RIW, p.1; R.S. Swift, RIW, p.1.

Kaad, whom many assumed would be the most likely candidate for the UPNG Registrarship, was later badly injured in a plane crash in Papua New Guinea and that eventuality was denied him. Confined to a wheelchair, he gave distinguished service on the lecturing staff of ASOPA instead.

Rarua subsequently filled a number of Public Service positions before his election to the second House of Assembly in 1968. He later served as Papua New Guinea's first High Commissioner to Canberra.

two long tours through Papua New Guinea to look at educational institutions of all types and to speak with local government councils and various business and community groups. Altogether they took evidence or received submissions from almost 400 individuals and organizations. The Papua New Guineans they met particularly impressed them with 'their strong sense of the need for higher education to enable them to develop and run their own country'.

The public took considerable interest in their work. There were some sceptics with what Currie later described as 'the Rotarian mentality' who, like the Pacific Islands Monthly, regarded the notion of a university for Papua New Guineans as 'a damn fool idea' since the university could only be 'an educational hothouse' churning out 'instant graduates' while 'the vast majority of the people are still denied even a basic education'. Winning over the cynics and creating a climate of opinion in which the idea of a university was acceptable thus became one of the commissioners' chief tasks. In this endeavour they had a number of allies. The educationalists of Papua New Guinea, for example, had already made their support for university development clear. In May 1963 they had devoted their annual Camilla Wedgwood Memorial Lecture and seminar to the subject of the proposed university. They assumed there would be a university soon, and went so far as to suggest the curricula it should teach, the type of academic and administrative structure it should adopt, the level of its operating costs and finance and the timetable to be followed in setting it up.

The commissioners compiled their report with great dispatch and presented it to C.E. Barnes, the new Minister for Territories, on 26 March 1964. The report was a magnum opus in every respect. A measure of the widespread interest it attracted was a review in the British journal The Economist:

Notable state papers from Australia are distressingly few, but at last there is one to be proud of....

---

53 Ibid., pp.4-5, 289-304.
The report is written tersely, wittily, and in great detail; it sticks consistently to the point, which is, what is best for a territory with two million people just emerging from extremely backward and isolated conditions? 56

Such praise was well merited: the report was the most thorough and searching to have been made on any aspect of Papua New Guinea's development, and set a high standard for many subsequent reports in other fields. Its 172 major recommendations not only set out clear guidelines for the establishment of a university, but provided a blueprint for upgrading the total education system, including primary, secondary, technical and the more specialized forms of vocational tertiary education.

The report began by considering the lower levels of education. It wished to see each level linked to the one above, with a natural transition from primary through secondary to the tertiary level. Above all it wanted the curricula to be adjusted to local needs: too often in the past Papua New Guinean practice had slavishly followed what was thought best in Australia. The report made a number of practical suggestions for improving the curricula, particularly for upgrading teaching in the key areas of English and mathematics. It hammered home the point that any attempt to establish a university presupposed a wholesale improvement in the quality of primary and secondary schooling. 57

The report then considered vocational and technical education in great detail. If the country were not to be forever dependent on the expensive skills of expatriates, and if it were to avoid the 'Arts-Law fallacy' of, say, India, technical education must proceed at the higher as well as the middle levels. The report therefore made a series of specific recommendations for middle-level technician-type training via apprenticeships and technical colleges. At a higher level, appropriate to the training of engineers, it recommended the establishment of an autonomous institute of higher technical education to operate in close association with the university in teaching

56 The Economist, 8 August 1964, p.548.
57 Currie Report, p.38.
four-year, full-time diploma courses. The latter body was an important priority and should be set up early.\textsuperscript{58}

Turning to other forms of specialized higher vocational education, the report was 'averse to the proliferation of separate "schools" established by government departments',\textsuperscript{59} because unnecessary, wasteful duplication would result. The existing government department training institutions should therefore come beneath the 'umbrella' of the university. Thus, the Administrative College should become an Institute of Administration within the university, and the Papuan Medical College would become its Faculty of Medicine. A slightly different arrangement was recommended for the teachers' college: the university should have a School of Education with a teacher training division which would take over control of the teachers' colleges from the government and thus be responsible for all official teacher education. A looser form of association was proposed between the university and the agricultural and forestry colleges: the university would set the syllabuses, carry out the examinations and award the diplomas, while the government departments concerned would continue to run their colleges and also have representation on the university faculties.\textsuperscript{60}

By thus bringing the pre-existing institutions of tertiary education into a form of association with the university the commissioners were in effect advocating machinery that could have prevented vexed problems which later emerged. Their system promised a degree of co-ordination within higher education which would minimize the duplication and waste of effort implicit in many separate educational institutions. Moreover, affiliation with the university promised a measure of prestige and a guarantee of academic standards to the various institutions already in existence. But, as we will see, the later failure of the education system to develop in strict accordance with Currie recommendations gave rise to problems of co-ordination and institutional prestige which otherwise might have been avoided.

\textsuperscript{58}ibid., pp.57-8, 92-6, 274.

\textsuperscript{59}ibid., p.85.

\textsuperscript{60}ibid., pp.163-5, 240-7, 248-58, 259-73.
The commissioner's major recommendations, of course, dealt with the university. Their primary proposal was for the creation of an autonomous University of Papua New Guinea as opposed to the mere college of an Australian university which previous reports had envisaged. The university should be located in the June Valley (Waigani) area of Port Moresby, and it should begin under the government of an interim council which should include five members of 'academic distinction' appointed from among the staff of Australian universities. This would provide the link with Australian universities, though further ties could be maintained through the appointment of external examiners, and through the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee, which hopefully the UPNG head could join. Among the first duties of the interim council would be the appointment of a Vice-Chancellor, Registrar, Bursar, Staff Architect, Librarian, and the first professorial appointments — in Education, English, Agriculture, Anthropology, Geography, History and Political Science, Economics, Mathematics, Law, Medicine and either Biology, Chemistry or Physics.  

Several recommendations for the new university were novel, at least in terms of Australian experience. First, there would be a Preliminary Year or pre-matriculation course done within the university after completion of the four-year Papua New Guinea secondary school programme to 'offset the predictable deficiencies of the Territory school leaver...arising essentially from his restricted environmental background and the late development of secondary education'.  

It would thus be a bridging year between school and university, providing students with cultural broadening, enhanced linguistic and mathematical skills and greater maturity so they might embark on university studies more confidently. Secondly, the university should be residential, despite the high costs entailed, for obtrusive socio-geographic reasons: it 'should not only be a symbol of approaching nationhood but a place for the fostering of unity in a society where tribal and regional loyalties are still strong'. Thirdly, there must be 'liberal provision of State scholarships', again despite the high costs, because 'very few, if any, indigenous students could pay any

\[61ibid., \text{pp.276, 282.}\]

\[62ibid., \text{pp.121.}\]

\[63ibid., \text{pp.141, 279.}\]
substantial fees or make more than a token contribution to their cost of maintenance in the halls of residence'.

Fourthly, the university must provide a large-scale programme of external studies, because the country needed as many university-trained people as possible, and 'the teacher at Telefomin, the patrol officer at Pomio' might be able and qualified enough to attend university. To cater for such people there should be a comprehensive External Studies Department.

The commissioners wanted the University to open as soon as possible, preferably within the year. If the first students entered Preliminary Year during 1964-65, the first graduates could emerge by the end of 1968. The commissioners subscribed to an 'education as investment' philosophy, seeing higher education as not only ... a means to economic development and self-government, but as the key to them'. By inference, any delay in implementing their proposals would add to the costs, politically as well as economically. This awareness underlay the sense of urgency pervading the report and the recommendations for an almost immediate start.

The commissioners estimated there would be a rapid build-up in student numbers — from 30-35 in Preliminary Year in 1964-65 to a total population of 140 in 1966, 240 in 1967, 375 in 1968, 580 in 1969, and 830 in 1970. Such numbers would necessitate an energetic and extensive building programme, so they recommended a detailed schedule of construction of classrooms, libraries, laboratories, offices, halls of residence, student union, assembly hall and sporting and recreational facilities. The university would become a national monument — 'a symbol of community and national pride' — and must therefore have such features as 'fine buildings', physical surroundings landscaped as botanical gardens, and a 'national museum of archaeology and ethnology' established in association with the Library. They made detailed estimates of costs, and recommendations for sources of revenue to fund these developments. They projected estimates ahead for the ensuing two triennial periods, 1964-67 and 1968-70, suggesting that both the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG) and the Institute of Higher Technical Education would require funds as follows:

---

64 ibid., pp.143, 279.
65 ibid., pp.15, 162.
66 ibid., pp.120, 194-8.
The bulk of these funds must come from Australia, in the form of specially earmarked Commonwealth grants so that the institutions would not have to compete for funds during normal Administration budgeting. In addition the institutions should be able to petition the Minister for Territories for 'special contingencies' if that were necessary. To ensure that funds being sought were 'reasonable and consistent with true university purposes and standards', the Australian Universities Commission should report to the Minister on the institutions' proposed projects and budgets. The financial burden would be heavy, the commissioners warned, for university development 'cannot be carried out on the cheap'. On the other hand Australia had powerful interests in seeing university education advance in Papua New Guinea, and when viewed in this light the cost was not awesome. Indeed, spread over the first two triennia it was no more than the price of 'half a packet of cigarettes per annum for each inhabitant of Australia'. Stated in these terms the cost might have been acceptable; but, in the event the question of finance was to bedevil both UPNG and the Institute in their early years.

The arguments of the Currie Commission were not something the government could easily ignore: the Currie Report was a formidable document in every respect, its proposals meticulously researched, thoroughly documented, deftly and persuasively argued and expressed with literacy \textit{\'{e}lan}. Above all the wisdom and authority of its distinguished authors pervaded the whole work. It was therefore surprising that the Department of Territories greeted it with less than wholehearted appreciation. Yet that is what happened.

---

\textsuperscript{67}Figures derived from expanded table, \textit{ibid.}, p.227.

\textsuperscript{68}\textit{ibid.}, pp.228-9.
Delaying tactics

When the commissioners handed their report to the Minister for Territories in March 1964 a new incumbent occupied that office. After the 1963 elections Hasluck had moved to the Defence portfolio and his place in Territories went to a Country Party politician, C.E. Barnes. As well as a new Minister there was a new Secretary. Lambert had retired in 1963 and Hasluck had been planning to put Gunther in his place. But the new Minister had his own appointee, George Warwick Smith, whom the current Country Party leader, Sir John McEwen, was said to have described as the departmental head most exactly exemplifying 'the spirit and philosophy of the Country Party'. The new management in Territories did not necessarily share Hasluck's enthusiasm for higher education. A Hasluck might have implemented the Currie proposals at once; but Barnes and Smith found the report to be a radical, disturbing document, which would require the most careful consideration before adaptation as government policy. Their approach to university development, like their personal and political views, was conservative. Barnes' party was the more conservative partner in the governing coalition. His parliamentary speeches on Papua New Guinea had evinced an arch-conservatism: during the 1962 deliberations on the Foot Report, for example, he said he saw little merit in the changes proposed by Foot — and which the Department under Hasluck was already working towards. The Foot proposals, he said, 'Will be of great disadvantage to the people of Papua New Guinea.' As a Queensland pastoralist he could be enthusiastic about technical education, but he saw universities as a source of sedition. Smith, a conventional and conservative public servant, was sceptical of such a 'far out' scheme as setting up a university in Papua New Guinea.

Some aspects of the Currie Report particularly perturbed the Minister and the Secretary. The idea of an autonomous university in which staff and students would be unrestrained by ties to a parent institution in Australia troubled them. Both feared that radical student activism, then a rising wave in other parts of the world, would sweep

69Meek, RIW, p.1.
71Reseigh, RIW, p.1; Meek, RIW, p.1; Swift, RIW, p.1.
into Papua New Guinea with the establishment of a university. And they were so staggered by the expected costs of the project that they wondered whether the money would be better spent on other forms of development. In this they relied on the views of the 1963 mission from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (the World Bank). This mission had carried out its investigations at the same time as the Currie Commission was at work. Without knowing what the Currie Report would recommend it was emphatic that it considered secondary education as the area of 'most urgent need'. Publicly the mission agreed 'nothing [was] more central to the future progress of the Territory than leadership of a high calibre, some of which...the university may be expected to provide', but expressed its private view to Territories officials that university education should not be given in Papua New Guinea for a further five years. Beyond these specific views was the general thrust of the World Bank argument — that the government should be seeking economies wherever possible. Barnes and Smith took the lesson to heart. As Smith said, 'The World Bank mission... lays heavy stress on the need for economies....The Territory circumstances certainly require that the [tertiary] institutions be planned as modestly as is consistent with effectiveness.' Proposals for institutions costing perhaps $31.5 million in their first six years, and which might well become the focus of anti-government discontent, therefore affronted Barnes and Smith. And so, instead of promptly endorsing the Currie Report, they temporized, apparently overwhelmed by uncertainty over how they should handle it.

The Department of Territories did little with the report for about six weeks after receiving it. In May 1964 senior officers of the Department finally got round to forming a committee under Swift to plan action. By the end of the month Smith was advising Cleland of 'tentative conclusions' the Department had reached. Cabinet, it was thought, should approve the report's idea of a four-year secondary course followed by university studies after a preliminary year; however, substantive issues such as the

74ibid., p.319; Minutes of interdepartmental committee to consider the Currie Report, 5 August 1964, p.2, DTOR 64/2626.
75Smith to Gunther, 20 January 1965, DTOR 69/5654.
form of the institutions recommended in the report, and their
timing and costs, must be subject to further detailed exami-
nation.\textsuperscript{75} Cleland answered the Secretary brusquely, reminding
him of several pertinent points: (i) the previous Minister
had wanted the earliest possible recommendations for estab-
lishing university-level institutions; (ii) the commissioners
were eminent men specially selected for the authority with
which they could speak; (iii) the commission had carried out
the most searching examination possible. He said he was
surprised at the inference that 'this ground is to be
traversed again, probably by officers of less status and
experience than the members of the commission and in posses-
sion of less information'. He rounded off his comments by
urging both Department and Minister to 'express a positive
view towards the central recommendations of the commission'.\textsuperscript{76}

Not only the Department but also Cabinet was cautious.
It referred the Currie proposals to an interdepartmental
committee comprising representatives of the Prime Minister's,
Treasury, External Affairs, Labour and National Service, and
Territories departments. This committee, charged with making
'further detailed examination especially on timing and costs
for both Institute and University', was chaired by Swift,
now a veteran of the campaign to bring university development
to Papua New Guinea, held only three meetings, between August
and December 1964.\textsuperscript{77} Made up of 'middle run-of-the-mill
Commonwealth public servants', it was hardly an expert body,
and it went about its task in desultory fashion — it was
after all an interdepartmental committee, with representatives
from five departments who were hard to summon together.\textsuperscript{78}
Nor did Barnes or Smith press it to produce a prompt set of
recommendations. Its meagre, thirteen-page report, not
completed till mid-January 1965, quibbled over a number of
points. For example, it revised the Currie estimate of
enrolments in degree courses at the University from 830 in
1970 to 575. It also queried the Currie costings: whereas
the Currie Report had calculated total costs at $31.5 million

\textsuperscript{75}Smith to Cleland, 28 May 1964, DTOR 64/2626.
\textsuperscript{76}Cleland to Smith, 17 June 1964, DTOR 64/2626.
\textsuperscript{77}Notes on discussion of Currie Commission report held in
Department of Territories', 9–10 July 1964, DTOR 64/2626.
\textsuperscript{78}Gunther, address to Australian College of Education, \textit{UPNG
News}, June 1972, pp.7–11.
over the first two triennia, the interdepartmental committee thought $18.9 million a more realistic figure. Otherwise its recommendations were an emasculated version of the central proposals of the Currie Report. It agreed that an autonomous university and an institute of higher technical education should be established as early as possible. And it recommended a timetable for setting up these institutions, allowing for the appointment of the University's interim council in April 1965, the commencement of the Preliminary Year in March 1966, the graduation of the first students in late 1969, a university enrolment of 1500 by March 1973 and an output of 200 graduates a year by 1976. 79

But in one significant area—finance—the interdepartmental committee disagreed with the Currie Report. It did not believe in the special earmarking of Commonwealth grants. The committee argued that 'it would be inconsistent with the movement towards a self-contained structure of government within the Territory to place the University and Institute funds outside the general framework of Territory finance'. 80 The majority of the committee nevertheless thought—with Treasury dissenting—that continuity of funds should be assured over each triennial period, and that this should be through a special committee of the Administration to examine the two institutions' triennial estimates and to advise the House of Assembly in drawing up appropriation bills. In view of the country's eventual rise to independence these were reasonable recommendations. (Indeed similar machinery for processing the institutions' budgetary estimates was eventually set up.) However, they were not recommendations the Barnes-Smith regime chose to follow.

The whole manner in which the Department of Territories conceived and handled the interdepartmental committee was, and remained, a source of conflict between Canberra and Port Moresby. As Gunther later observed, the report of the interdepartmental committee 'was never sent to the Administration of Papua New Guinea, the country the report set out to serve, asking for the Administration's advice'. 81 The most serious discord later arose over the decision relating to

79 Interdepartmental committee on the Currie Report, 'Report', DTOR 69/5654, pp.2-4, 8-9, 12.
80 ibid., pp.10, 13.
university finances — a situation directly attributable to Barnes' and Smith's failure to act even on the interdepartmental recommendations in this area, which placed the institutions in a state of perpetual uncertainty.

While Canberra was ponderously coming to some decision on the Currie Report, members of the public keen to see university education extend to Papua New Guinea grew increasingly restive. Letters to the press began appearing urging prompt action, and Beazley and other interested Laborites began asking pointed questions in the House. In accusing the Minister of 'tight-lipped silence about the training of New Guinea's future rulers', The Bulletin captured the public mood. Many government critics were worried by the colonialist reputation Australia was acquiring among the Third World — mindful, no doubt, of opinion like that of Kenya's vocal Minister for Economic Planning and Development, Tom Mboya, who visited Papua New Guinea in mid-1964 and came away highly critical. 'There can be no proper growth of a people's personality under colonialism...It is more than urgently necessary that a University should be established in the Territory,' he had said.

Popular impatience came to a head in late 1964 at a public seminar to discuss the Currie Report organized by Peter Hastings, journalist and executive director of the Council on New Guinea Affairs. Many eminent citizens from the parliamentary, legal, academic and business fraternities attended. Spate was the first speaker. His theme was that 'a New Guinea education policy, boldly conceived and resolutely carried out, is in all probability the only thing which can prevent a slide into a messy, anarchic, and quite possibly literally bloody waste of political factionalism: a second Congo'. A second keynote speaker was an official of the National Union of Australian University Students, Kevin Martin, who had recently visited the new Tjenderawasih University in West Irian and could report that it had an enrolment of 200 in four faculties. Reports of Spate's and

84 The Age, 16 November 1964, pp.1, 3; The Australian, 16 November 1964, p.3.
Martin's comments were lead stories in most Australian dailies the next morning. Later in the day, Gough Whitlam, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, led Laborites in subjecting Barnes to a barrage of questions on the issue. It was not the Minister's best parliamentary performance: he lamely tried to argue that Spate's was but one opinion; but, pressed to give assurances, he promised that the government 'accepted Currie Commission recommendations for the establishment of a university', though he declined to name target dates. The Minister had further unwelcome press coverage when several dailies ran an account of statements by J.R. Kerr, a former principal of ASOPA, a foundation member of the Council on New Guinea Affairs and a publicist for accelerated development in Papua New Guinea since the late 1950s. Kerr had written an important appendix to the Currie Report on legal education, and as president of the Law Council of Australia had won the support of the profession for the idea of a UPNG Faculty of Law — something it had previously opposed. He accused the government of deliberate procrastination claiming that it had employed 'the classic tactic for delay' by referring the Currie proposals to an interdepartmental committee.

What effect such poor publicity had on Barnes and the government is uncertain. Hastings and Spate believed it finally prompted government to treat university development in Papua New Guinea with greater urgency. The threat of 'a second Congo' was a potent fear at the time, they have pointed out: 'the daily murder of white missionaries in the Congo' was providing exemplary topical evidence of the consequences of mismanagement by a former colonial government. One member of the interdepartmental committee, B.J. Meek (who later became foundation Bursar of UPNG), formed the opinion that the committee's recommendations were timely because they 'got Barnes and Smith off the hook' — by recommending what the government's critics were demanding.

---

86 The Australian Outlook, December 1964; The Canberra Times, 30 December 1964; Gunther, RIW, p.15. Kerr later became Chief Justice of New South Wales, and then served a controversial term as Australian Governor-General.
87 Spate, RIW; Hastings, RIW.
88 Meek, RIW, p.l.
The committee thus allowed them to ride with the force of public opinion without losing face.

Eventually, in February 1965, Cabinet approved a submission from Barnes supporting the establishment of the University and Institute of Higher Technical Education. The submission closely followed the recommendations of the interdepartmental committee.89 A Ministerial press statement announcing Cabinet's decision and giving details of the timetable for the development of the new institutions was released on 19 March 1965. The halting progress of the past decade had at last transformed the prospect of a Papua New Guinean university from wishful thinking to reality. As the Department of Territories now began the comparatively mundane task of selecting chairmen and councils for both University and Institute, it was Spate who once more caught the feelings of many: 'I think my reaction to the announcement by the Minister...will be shared by most people interested in New Guinea affairs - better late than never.'90

---


Chapter 4

Infant institutions

If the Minister and the Secretary for Territories had dallied on receiving the Currie Report, once they made their minds up they pushed their Department and the Administration to get the University set up quickly. They wanted it open and teaching by 1966, Hasluck's target date. The first task was legislation to permit the establishment of both University and Institute of Higher Technical Education (IHTE). Preparation of the necessary bills proceeded with such expedition that within two months the Director of Education, L.W. Johnson, introduced them into the House of Assembly, on 18 May 1965.

Johnson made a determined effort to 'sell' the proposed tertiary institutions to the House, aware 'there was a good deal of quite strong resistance ... and a fair chance that the House ... might turn [the bills] down'.\(^1\) His concern proved needless: no one challenged the principle of immediate university development, and the only disagreement was over whether both UPNG and IHTE should be sited in Port Moresby. Predictably, several New Guinean parliamentarians grumbled about everything being centralized in the capital; and one member from 'the New Guinea side' even tried to amend the bills so the word 'Lae' would replace 'Port Moresby'; however, when the vote came only two members opted for Lae.\(^2\) It was perhaps the last time such unanimity prevailed in public discussion of university education in Papua New Guinea.

Much tempered by controversy even before their establishment, the new tertiary institutions now had numerous difficulties to overcome. There were the prolonged tasks of establishing administrative machinery, determining policy,
attracting staff and students, and beginning the teaching. There was the huge job of constructing physical facilities. There was the task of convincing an uncertain public that the new seats of learning were an integral part of Papua New Guinean life. A *modus vivendi* with government, both at Konedobu and in Canberra, had to be worked out. There was the relationship between the institutions themselves to be considered, particularly the question of co-operation between them. As UPNG and IHTE sought a way through these problems they revealed their potential for conflict, in much of which a common theme was obvious — 'Who controls the university institutions?'. The theme was to keep on recurring.

**Teething troubles**

Even before the House of Assembly approved the ordinances establishing UPNG and IHTE the Department of Territories had been selecting their governing councils and chairmen. Smith, the departmental secretary, wanted politically safe appointees who would tackle their duties vigorously. In P.H. Karmel, the Chairman of the UPNG Interim Council, he got everything he wanted: Professor of Economics at Adelaide University and Vice-Chancellor designate of the new Flinders University of South Australia, Karmel was reputedly one of the most able university administrators in Australia. Smith's critics agreed he made up for his delay in implementing the Currie Report by choosing Karmel. And Karmel quickly vindicated his appointment: he attacked his task with dedication, and when the University opened on time in March 1966 the credit was largely his. IHTE was less fortunate. Its chairman, Sir Herbert Watkin, recently retired Director of Education in Queensland, seems to have owed his appointment as much to the fact that he came from the same state as both Minister and Secretary for Territories as to his knowledge of higher technical education. He lacked Karmel's drive and seemed unable to give IHTE the impetus Barnes desired. In the year he served before his sudden death in 1966 IHTE made little headway.³

³Discussion between Watkin and the Minister, 13 May 1965, folios 34-5; Smith to Watkin, 18 June 1965, DTOR 65/3288.
The initial Council meeting took place at the end of September 1965. Five further meetings were held over the next year. But Watkin was not a dynamic leader and the Institute only gained momentum after the appointment of his successor, J.A.L. Matheson, engineer and Vice-Chancellor of Monash University, whose appointment Johnson had promoted saying that only he could give IHTE the direction it had lacked. But the Institute also had trouble deciding exactly what its role was: Council spent much time defining IHTE's boundaries from those of the Education Department's technical colleges, deciding whether to teach technician (certificate) or sub-professional (diploma) courses, discussing the status of IHTE academic awards vis-à-vis UPNG's, and considering the academic level and status of the teaching staff to be appointed. Early problems arose over the control of the Waigani campus both IHTE and UPNG were to share. Finally, the IHTE Director, W.E. Duncanson, did not arrive until September 1966. Together these factors considerably retarded the Institute's start, and as its first annual report noted with some understatement, the Institute experienced a 'difficult' foundation year.4

Duncanson's appointment was the most notable achievement of that first year. He was an eminent Australian-born physicist who had been an associate of Lord Rutherford at Cambridge during the early 1930s. He subsequently spent twenty years as Reader in Physics at University College, London. More recently he had spent six years as head of the Kumasi College of Technology, Ghana, and six years as Colombo Plan Professor of Physics at the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi. He and Matheson formed a good team: they shared a clear view of the direction they thought IHTE must take, and with determination steered its development accordingly. They believed it should work towards producing graduate-level technologists, eventually becoming a university of technology. Under their guidance planning at last began to proceed expeditiously. The first academic staff were appointed and the first thirty-one students in engineering and surveying were able to begin training in February 1967. By this time the House of Assembly had decided to relocate IHTE at Lae, but as no facilities existed there yet the

students were housed temporarily and with considerable inconvenience at the Education Department's Idubada technical college near Port Moresby. They did most of their work at Idubada, but had to travel seven miles along a winding dirt road to Waigani for some classes taught by UPNG staff.5

In contrast to IHTE, UPNG sprang into action with a burst of energy. Even before the first meeting of the Interim Council in early October 1965, Karmel had done a vast amount of preparatory work with B.J. Meek, a former Department of Territories official who became UPNG's foundation bursar. Within days of his appointment Karmel prepared a comprehensive 'action sheet' of matters for the Interim Council to consider at its first meeting — administrative procedures for Council, relationships with other tertiary training institutions, appointments to administrative and academic staff, finance, the building programme, scholarships, the teaching schedule, and the creation of the library. He and Meek also produced a series of draft statements concerning staff appointments, housing, rentals, and staff conditions for consideration by the Interim Council. When Council met much of the groundwork had thus been laid.6

The UPNG Interim Council shared Karmel's enthusiasm. This became clear in its decision to begin the Preliminary Year in 1966, even though the University had no staff and no facilities. Council members with academic experience thought teaching should not begin until 1967; but the Papua New Guinea residents on Council were reluctant to see the opening delayed another year and pushed for a 1966 commencement. There was also pressure through Claude Reseigh, the Department of Territories representative on Council, whose Minister and Secretary wished to avert further criticism about delaying the University. An offer from Chenoweth, the Administrative College Principal, clinched the decision to start early: he undertook to provide temporary accommodation for staff and students at the college, arrange classrooms,

---


6'Summary of discussions on 13 September 1965, at Canberra... with Professor Karmel', Meek papers.
mount a publicity programme, recruit and select students, and supply any teachers the University might want.  

The first batch of UPNG students comprised six women and forty-two men whom Chenoweth had enrolled after a recruiting campaign through the high schools and teachers colleges. University life was to be hard for them. Meek later described their conditions:

Huts at the Showgrounds were done up with native materials for use as classrooms. The students lived in cramped barracks on the 'Adcoll' site two miles away. Meals were prepared at the Ranaguri Hostel and delivered by truck. There was a wet wet-season and the dirt road to town was often a quagmire; there was a bad mosquito plague. These conditions continued for the whole of 1966, until we temporarily moved into the permanent Administrative College buildings in 1967.

The Australian press deplored such an opening for what it dubbed the 'tin-hut seat of higher learning', but as Karmel pointed out, postponement would have meant better preparation at a cost — 'another year's students would have been denied a university education'.

The key university appointment was that of John Gunther to the Vice-Chancellorship. He was a last-minute, surprise candidate for a job which many thought would go to R.S. Parker, Professor of Political Science in ANU's Research School of Social Sciences. Gunther had not thought of applying for the position until Lepani Watson, a Milne Bay parliamentarian, urged him. During a chance meeting at Port Moresby airport Watson had said, 'We "locals" think you ought to be the Vice-Chancellor. We're worried some outsider might get it.' There were few better qualified: his efforts in medical training, chairmanship of the Administration College Council, work as a Currie Commissioner, and recent membership of the Councils of both UPNG and IHTE had demonstrated his

---

7P.H. Karmel, RIW; B.J. Meek, RIW.
9Inglis, loc. cit.
10Gunther, RIW.
Plate 3 The first UPNG Preliminary Year class, 1966.

Plate 4 The first graduation ceremony at UPNG, 1970.
Plate 5 The founding fathers of UOT and UPNG.
ability in planning higher education. When the appointments committee met in January 1966 some of its members argued that his non-academic background disqualified him, but Currie swung opinion in his favour. 'Gunther,' he said, 'is a natural leader, he has charisma, and the executive ability; and none of the other applicants has his moral courage, his style, or his local knowledge of Papua New Guinea.'

Gunther proved worthy of such confidence: the University in its 'earliest frugal years...turned largely round his forceful personality', while the Waigani campus became 'a monument to his enormous efforts'.

His drive coupled with Karmel's administrative and diplomatic skills made them a formidable team. Their strong and enterprising leadership explains the head-start UPNG gained in its first four or five years.

One of the earliest and most prolonged tasks for UPNG and IHTE was to win public acceptance, to prove themselves worthy of the public funds being invested in them. Their conspicuous costs caused concern in some quarters. Among the most carping and persistent critics on this score was the renegade Tasmanian senator, R.M. ('Spot') Turnbull, who claimed after a visit to the University in April 1967 that UPNG was 'a gross extravagance, ten to fifteen years before its time and poor window dressing for the UN....It would have been much cheaper to have sent all the students to Australia'.

The settler community also kept up a barrage of vocal criticism throughout the late '60s. They grumbled about 'ivory towers' in which 'great numbers of overpaid academics [were] forcing radical ideas into black skulls not ready to receive them'. And warnings came, most notably from the reactionary Highland Farmers and Settlers Association, that the country was riding a roller-coaster towards political chaos unless both staff and students were kept in strict check. There was a yahoo element among such critics, which found a mouthpiece in the larrakin journal *Black and White*. Both UPNG and IHTE were regular targets for this vicious magazine, which at best was offensively

---

11 Currie, RIW.
12 Griffin (1976), pp.112-14; UPNG News 30, 1972; K.R. McKinnon, RIW.
patronising of Papua New Guinean students.\textsuperscript{16} There was even a nub of yahoos among the parliamentarians, one of whom rowdily proclaimed that the government should 'tear down the new university and use the materials to build primary schools in the villages'.\textsuperscript{17}

Perhaps the most common charge levelled against UPNG and IHTE was that their graduates would be 'half-baked' and in possession of qualifications worthless outside Papua New Guinea. Many sceptics assumed the new institutions would be unable to attain acceptable 'white' standards, but would run courses at a 'black', that is inferior, level. Some students worried about this themselves, and wished to be reassured on points such as whether or not the textbooks they were reading were the same as those used by university students elsewhere, or if they were working from special simplified editions instead.\textsuperscript{18} Some early members of the University took pains to give assurances about the academic status they hoped UPNG would achieve. Karmel, for example, promised that 'the University has the foundation of a great institution' which would 'establish itself securely as a powerful weapon for the development of the Territory'.\textsuperscript{19} A history lecturer asserted that if a valid test existed for comparing similar courses from different universities, there would 'probably be little variation between standards in Australia and Papua New Guinea'.\textsuperscript{20} The foundation Professor of Education, Ernest Roe, took a large part in the task of promoting UPNG's academic image. In a series of articles in educational journals he stressed the respectability of the courses the University was devising. Already, he claimed, it was attracting 'large numbers of distinguished academic visitors....The research possibilities here are so enormous that the University's life is likely to be continually enriched by anthropologists, biologists, political scientists, linguists and others coming to work here'.\textsuperscript{21}

Public relations material like this appeared in

\textsuperscript{16}See for example \textit{Black and White} August 1968, pp.18-19.
\textsuperscript{17}\textit{PIM} 38(10) 1967, p.155.
\textsuperscript{19}Karmel (1967).
\textsuperscript{20}Nelson, \textit{loc. cit.}
\textsuperscript{21}E. Roe (1968), pp.58-71.
numerous journals, but perhaps the best advertisement UPNG could receive were the numerous expatriates who had sufficient faith to enrol. In its first seven or eight years UPNG always had a substantial body of white students, mostly part-timers — so many that by 1975 61 per cent of degree-level graduates (324 out of 524) were from outside the country.\footnote{UPNG, Calendar 1976, p.46. In addition to degrees, UPNG awarded 257 diplomas, 116 of them (45 per cent) to non-Papua New Guineans. After about 1973 the proportion of expatriate graduates declined greatly.}

Most of the early problems in developing UPNG and IHTE were logistical, and there were myriad irritating if minor difficulties. Co-ordinating the building programme was a continual headache in the early years. Inevitably there were delays in construction, failures in services such as water-supply and electricity, the late arrival of urgently needed equipment, and staff shortages which often led to senior staff being overloaded with time-consuming trivial tasks. Both institutions started two years before the completion of their first permanent buildings, which aggravated such problems.\footnote{Gunther to Meek, 2 March 1967, Meek papers; Hay to Smith, 25 August 1967, DTOR 66/6426.}

Staffing was another cause of trouble. Most staff were enthusiastic, capable and co-operative, dedicated to building up new institutions in a new country. Serious problems arose, however, from the appointment of one or two staff members who were either so inadequate or disagreeable that they upset the work of their institution. At UPNG, for example, a buildings officer was such a 'complete failure' he had to be dismissed. At IHTE the key administrative officer proved such a scheming, incompetent malcontent that Council was glad to buy him out of his contract.\footnote{Gunther to Meek, 2 March 1967, Meek papers; Hay to Smith, 25 August 1967, DTOR 66/6426.} At both IHTE and UPNG there were also several notable personality clashes. UPNG students, for instance, complained that one senior academic was forcing them to attend the Bible class he ran voluntarily after hours, and Gunther protested that were he as Vice-Chancellor less forbearing there would be
continual 'open clashes' over the man's conduct. Occasion-
ally there was friction between sections of the UPNG and IHTE
staffs. During 1967 IHTE staff lived in housing supplied by
UPNG, and relations in the area were sometimes less than
neighbourly. There was also friction between some UPNG and
Administrative College staff members while they were sharing
office space.

All these problems, however aggravating, were but
teething pains. They hindered the smooth establishment of
the two institutions perhaps, but in the long term were
insignificant. But there were more serious difficulties
ahead.

Institutional autonomy and government influence

By the end of 1967 the country's two major institutions
of tertiary education were operational, but they still faced
a long uphill struggle to secure the facilities they needed
and to ensure adequate funds for growth. As they began
their climb a number of tensions became apparent within the
emerging system of tertiary education. The most serious
source of strain was the relationship between the institu-
tions and the government, particularly over questions of
finance. Tension also grew between the institutions them-
selves, and it became obvious they would not enjoy the
harmonious relationship foreseen by the Currie Commission.
The proper balance between institutional autonomy on the one
hand, and government control of higher education on the
other, was a further question of concern to all parties,
and as they sought a modus vivendi further lines of stress
appeared. These became apparent in several public contro-
versies involving UPNG and IHTE — the transfer of IHTE from
Port Moresby to Lae, the dispute over government funding
of higher education, and the creation of a Faculty of
Medicine at UPNG.

(i) IHTE's transfer to Lae. After only four IHTE
Council meetings, Institute-University relations became
strained. Some Councillors were clearly unhappy with
IHTE's subordinate position in relation to UPNG, particu-
larly in the way this limited its ability to plan its own

25 Gunther to Karmel, 15 and 29 June 1966, Gunther-Karmel
Correspondence (GKC).
26 Gunther, RIW, pp.10, 38; Meek, RIW, pp.2-3.
facilities on the joint campus. After the third meetings of the UPNG and IHTE Councils, both held in February 1966, the UPNG Interim Council advised IHTE that for 'harmonious' development of Waigani, 'the whole area should be vested in the University'. Very dubious of this proposition, the IHTE Council directed two of its members, Don Barrett, a parliamentarian, and Jock Rutter, Chairman of the Papua New Guinea Electricity Commission, to prepare a reply containing alternative proposals.

The personalites of those involved, and their ambitions for their respective institutions, exacerbated relations. Gunther, as Currie Commissioner and Vice-Chancellor, had firm ideas about UPNG as the major and IHTE the subsidiary institution. Watkin seemed happy enough for IHTE to accept a minor role; indeed he thought it would be 'only a matter of time' before IHTE and UPNG merged. But several of his Council members resented what they saw as UPNG's arrogance, and refused to let the Institute take a back seat. Three members in particular thought this way — Barrett, Rutter, and J. Burns, Director of the Public Works Department, who together comprised the IHTE Budgetary and Planning Committee. It was unlikely that Barrett, who 'exuded self-confidence, was never still, always planning, pushing, working, talking', would be satisfied for long to let anything he was associated with remain in the background. Rutter and Burns, both engineers and heads of key government technical agencies, had a vested interest in IHTE, which would supply their indigenous professional staff. They, too, were unlikely meekly to allow UPNG to assume total control of the campus. Personal resentment against Gunther and UPNG grew among this group. This was ironic, for Gunther more than anyone had been responsible for the idea of an institute of higher technical education: as the Currie Commissioner responsible for investigating technical education, he had conceived of IHTE as the answer to the country's higher technical training needs.

27Karmel to Watkin, n.d., University of Papua New Guinea Records (UPNGR) F.2 (part 1).
28Council Minutes (CM), IHTE IV, April 1966.
29Gunther to Karmel, 15 June 1966, GKC; Watkin to Karmel, 11 May 1966, UPNGR F.2 (part 1).
With the two major institutions of tertiary education heading into serious disagreement within six months of their creation, government had to view developments with concern. One possible solution soon presented itself: Watkin's death gave the government a chance to draw IHTE and UPNG together in some structural union, perhaps by appointing the UPNG Council Chairman, or the Vice-Chancellor, as Chairman of IHTE Council. But this idea was firmly quashed in Canberra. The Minister was against any merger as he doubted that the Institute could retain its practical bias if it became part of the University. He thought it 'critical that the individuality and the priority for the Institute be maintained'. And so UPNG and IHTE were left free to drift apart.  

There was little doubt the two institutions had become estranged. The reply which Barrett and Rutter drew up on behalf of IHTE in answer to the UPNG proposal for control of the campus was phrased very provocatively. It made several counter propositions to the effect that the only satisfactory way to run the campus was through a panel of trustees with equal membership from UPNG, IHTE and the Administrative College.  

Gunther's reaction was predictable. In blunt terms he advised Karmel to reject the IHTE suggestions unequivocally, for, if agreed to, they would create independent and possibly unsympathetic bodies with the right to arbitrate University affairs, to the diminution of UPNG's autonomy. Autonomy, in Gunther's view, was UPNG's most important and fundamental right — something to be cherished and defended resolutely. Many of the disputes in which UPNG subsequently became engaged can be explained in terms of his determination to defend that ideal. He rounded off his advice to Karmel with the counsel that, if there were no acceptable compromise, we 'inform the Institute that the University is a degree-giving body, that the Institute is not, and unless the Institute is prepared to accept our conditions, we feel it is an unsuitable body to be within University grounds'.  

Not surprisingly, a joint meeting of UPNG's Finance Committee and IHTE's Budgetary and Planning Committee in June 1966 failed to resolve the deadlock.

---

31 Smith to Barnes, and Barnes to Smith, 29 September 1966, folio 251, DTOR 65/3288.

32 IHTE Council, 'Reply to University Interim Council over the vesting of land at June Valley,' UPNG R F.2 (part 1).

33 Gunther to Karmel, 15 June 1966, GKC.
At this stage the IHTE Council decided to hold off for a time, deferring further action until after the arrival of Duncanson. In the meantime the government, concerned at the cost of developing both institutions, was urging them to achieve every possible economy through 'the closest association...[and] joint planning'. But as far as Barrett was concerned, such admonitions fell on deaf ears. He seems to have come privately to the conclusion that co-operation between IHTE and UPNG was impossible, and that the only chance for the Institute was in finding its own campus well away from Waigani. An important contributing factor here was the Minister's rejection of IHTE's plans for its first academic building, on the grounds that it was too lavish. This necessitated new plans, and a probable delay of six months or more. The attitude of Barrett and the IHTE Budgetary and Planning Committee was that if there were to be a major revision of the Institute's building programme this may as well allow for a site well removed from Waigani. Barrett made inquiries and located an available site of several hundred acres five miles from Lae. He then produced a paper advocating the establishment of Institute facilities in Lae which he tabled at the September 1966 meeting of the IHTE Council. Council members divided spiritedly over the issue: some, led by Rutter, supported Barrett; others agreed with Johnson, who strenuously objected that the Ordinance specified Port Moresby as the IHTE site. Barrett responded by saying he would move to amend the Ordinance at the forthcoming House of Assembly meeting, substituting 'Lae' for 'Port Moresby' — a motion sure to succeed, given the mood of the House.

The Administration, the Department of External Territories, and Duncanson discussed Barrett's proposals at great length. Cleland, the Administrator, spelt out the advantages and disadvantages to Canberra. Advantages included: (i) the fast growth of Lae as the country's

34Cleland to Karmel, August 1966, UPNGR F.2 (part 1); Smith, draft letter to Cleland, folio 256, n.d., DTOR 65/3288.

35'Site planning for Institute', n.d., folios 247-8; Cleland, cable to Department of External Territories, 25 October 1966, DTOR 65/3288.

36In 1965 the Department of Territories became the Department of External Territories when the Northern Territory was removed to the responsibility of another Minister.
industrial centre, and therefore a place appropriate for a technological institution. (ii) Location in Lae, on 'the New Guinea side' would placate anti-Port Moresby opinion. (iii) 'It would be the first major step in limiting the aggregation of student...bodies in Port Moresby'; that is, by dividing the student body the danger of radical student activism — an anathema to Barnes — might be minimized. Disadvantages were: (i) the possible diminution of the Institute's academic standing if it were no longer associated with the University. (ii) The loss to IHTE of facilities it could share with UPNG — library, student union, sports amenities — and their duplication in Lae at considerable extra cost. Duncanson, who had only just arrived in the country, wished to be identified with neither pro- nor anti-Lae factions; however, his short experience in Port Moresby convinced him that Waigani could not house both IHTE and UPNG harmoniously, and he advised the Department accordingly. After much correspondence between Canberra and Port Moresby the Department decided that if the House voted with Barrett a final decision would have to be made by the Administrator-in-Council, with the concurrence of the Minister.

Barrett duly put his amendment to the House on 25 November 1966. There could be no doubt about how New Guinean members would receive it. The first of them to rise, Pita Lus, spoke the minds of most when he said, 'We cannot have all these institutions in one place....I think we should spread them all over the Territory and this one in particular should go to Lae.' Johnson bravely warned of the increased costs — an additional million dollars — in a move to Lae, but was forced to admit wryly, 'I can recognize a lost cause when I hear one.' Shortly after the gag was applied, cutting debate short, and the House went on to approve Barrett's motion.

The Minister now had to decide whether or not to allow the Barrett amendment. He turned the matter over to

---

37 Cleland, cable to Department of External Territories, 4 November 1966, DTOR 65/3288.

38 Duncanson to Reseigh, 15 November 1966; cable, Department of External Territories to Cleland, 21 November 1966, DTOR 66/6426.

39 HAD 1(11) November 1966, pp.1977-80; Johnson, RIW.

40 ibid.
Plate 6 Sir Paul Hasluck (Governor-General of Australia, formerly Minister for Territories) unveils the commemorative plaque at the official opening of the Institute of Technology, Lae, July 1969. Dr J.A.L. Matheson, Chairman of Council, looks on.
the IHTE Council, letting Matheson know he would disallow the legislation only if a substantial section of Council opposed the move. Council met to consider the matter in December 1966. Those in favour agreed with Matheson and Duncanson that 'it is not feasible...to have two sovereign bodies sharing the same grounds'. Those against agreed with John Lavery, the sometime acting Chairman of Council, that if for no other reason than cost, IHTE should remain at Waigani. In the end Council fell in behind the Chairman and Director; the Administrator endorsed the decision; and the Minister, after checking out the costs, gave his assent in February 1967. The Institute now got down to the task of simultaneously teaching its first students and planning the move to Lae.

UPNG viewed IHTE's proposed leap over the Owen Stanley Range with mixed feelings. On the one hand it was relieved to have IHTE out of the way, for it could now proceed with developing its campus unimpeded by troublesome meddlers such as Barrett. On the other hand IHTE's relocation posed certain threats. First, the Institute was obviously ambitious to upgrade its own status. The IHTE Council had already decided to give its academic staff conditions and salaries aligned with those of universities rather than institutes of technology. It intended appointing professors to lead its academic departments. It was bruiting the possibility of becoming a degree-granting body; and its five-year diploma courses in engineering seemed to be degree courses in all but name. Those at UPNG later conceded that the Institute's rise to degree-granting status was logical once the UPNG-IHTE split had occurred; but in early 1967 'Louis Matheson's quite strong ambitions for the Institute' seemed to endanger UPNG's status. The second, and major, cause for UPNG concern was the great cost of the relocation. By early 1967 the extra cost was being estimated at $770,000 over the 1967–69 triennium. Such a sum, Gunther suspected, would come from the total amount allocated to tertiary education, which would

---

41 Matheson to Duncanson, 28 November 1966; Reseigh to Matheson, 30 November 1966, DTOR 66/6426; 'Addenda to Agenda Item 7 – Siting of the Institute', CM, IHTE VII, December 1966.

42 Reseigh to Barnes, 29 July 1966, DTOR 65/3288; Matheson, 'Notes on the location of IHTE', CM, IHTE VII, December 1966; Gunther to Karmel, 15 June 1967, GKC.
For a while Gunther and Karmel contemplated blocking IHTE's move to Lae and degree-giving status. Gunther wanted the relocation of IHTE referred back to the House of Assembly, confident he could persuade the large bloc of Highlands members to vote against Lae if they thought the country's second university would one day be built within their home region. Karmel was ready to take up the matter at a personal level with government because he doubted that the latter appreciated 'just how ambitious the Institute would become'; and he thought it wrong 'to disperse the development of tertiary education...[as] there is no doubt that the separate development of the University and Institute will result in two weaker rather than one stronger institution.' Though Gunther and Karmel believed they would be justified in manipulating the restraint of IHTE ambitions, doing so placed them in a quandary. They had no wish to be seen thwarting the Institute, holding back its development, or behaving pettily in retaining a UPNG monopoly of degree-granting. In the end they pursued the matter only half-heartedly and to no avail, for the government had probably convinced itself that IHTE's relocation was warranted, despite the additional cost.

The IHTE-UPNG dispute over control of Waigani and the IHTE move to Lae suggest a number of conclusions about the nature of early university development in Papua New Guinea. First, once the major institutions of tertiary education came into being they developed corporate personalities which reflected the influence of the dominant figures within each institution. If UPNG was an uncompromising driver of hard bargains, ever jealous of its status as the country's sole degree-granting body, then these attributes derived from Gunther and Karmel. And if IHTE was provocative and ambitious, that in turn represented something of Barrett and Matheson. The corporate personalities were important because they were bound to conflict. Both institutions pleaded their readiness to collaborate in economic joint use of facilities; but when sensitive issues arose, such as the order of precedence between them, and the division and control of resources,


\(^{44}\) Karmel to Gunther, 6 February 1967, GKC.
their conflicting personalities set them on a collision course which negated any hope of co-operation. A meeker, more pliant IHTE Council might well have accepted a minor role in relation to UPNG; but the presence of determined, ambitious and dominant men with vested interests in technical education gave IHTE an aggressive, competitive character which predisposed it towards a clash with UPNG.

The second lesson to be learned from the conflict between UPNG and IHTE was the importance of their autonomy to both. Much of the tension between them can be explained by this. Each institution saw the wish of the other to control Waigani as an incursion on its own autonomy. An IHTE move to Lae offered them both safeguards to their jealously protected right to self-determination, as each could now develop as desired without fear of interference from the other. However, the UPNG leadership recognized the costs involved in the emergence of a rival institution with claims to equal status and a more favourable share of funds. The determination of UPNG and IHTE to preserve their autonomy also created difficulties between them and government. Being autonomous they developed a momentum of their own which became hard for government to contain. This was obvious in the relocation of IHTE. The Currie Commission had originally seen the Institute as a subsidiary, technological arm of UPNG, teaching lower-level, sub-professional courses. Yet being autonomous it could not be held to that role, particularly when its leadership thought it ought to play a more exalted part. Its challenge to UPNG for control of Waigani failed, but it emerged from the dispute with enhanced status as an equal partner with the University of the apex of the educational pyramid; and to confirm that pre-eminence it now began pursuing full university status. The Institute's determination to climb so high, and the University's wish to resist this, made them rivals for both status and financial resources. The question of rivalry was not yet as important as it later became; however, the potential for competition was clear.

Finally, autonomy enabled the institutions to emerge as effective protagonists in the national political arena. The relocation of IHTE was the first occasion of many in which this became evident. Both institutions showed that when their interests were threatened they could become resolute political operators, ready to exploit whatever political resources were available. IHTE under Barrett's influence
was little hindered by its own constitution; it simply used the resources available in the House of Assembly — like the parochial prejudices of the New Guinean members — to achieve its ends. UPNG endeavoured to counter these moves offstage and unofficially; however, the informal political channels were not as effective in this case as the formal processes. Government, too, had sectional interests to serve, and as a result it participated actively in the scenario unfolding between the two institutions. It could have exercised the ultimate sanction of withholding assent from the decision to relocate IHTE; but to protect its own interests — its wish to appease New Guinean parochialism, and its desire to minimize the threat of student radicalism — it declined to take that step. It could well have insisted on the original plan for a major and a minor institution working in close association; however, allowing IHTE to pursue separate ambitions was more attractive.

This complex interplay between institutions and government underlined the fallibility of educational planning. The Currie Commissioners and like planners might devise immaculate models, but there could be no guarantee that drastic restructuring would not occur between planning and execution. Political dealings between the government of the day, its bureaucracy, the institutions themselves, and individuals promoting their own ends, could always cause major revisions.

(ii) The practicality of pruning. While the UPNG-IHTE disagreement over control of Waigani was one between rivals, their second controversy found them allied against the Department of External Territories. This was the 1967-68 dispute over the level of government funding of both institutions.

The government's failure to provide adequate machinery for an assured and continuous flow of finance to UPNG and IHTE was directly responsible for the dispute. The Currie Commissioners had thought specially earmarked funds should be channelled into university development in Papua New Guinea, as deemed necessary by the Australian Universities Commission (AUC). This did not eventuate because the Inter-Departmental Committee on the Currie Report had convinced the Minister that, with independence looming, UPNG-IHTE funds should come more appropriately from general Papua New Guinea finances as part of the country's normal budgetary processes. However, the Inter-Departmental Committee still
wished to guarantee continuity of revenue to UPNG and IHTE, and so suggested that a special committee of the Administration, should examine their triennial estimates. Such a procedure would have given them a similar financial assurance to Australian universities, and would have allowed them special consideration as they undertook their programme of rapid expansion. But the government declined granting them any special favours, and they consequently found themselves in the position of any government department—obliged to compete with numerous other agencies for an annual financial allocation.

This situation strongly reflected the opinions of both Minister and Secretary for External Territories. Barnes' and Smith's commitment to the World Bank strategy of economic development meant 'modest' educational spending, befitting an underdeveloped nation. UPNG and IHTE, they thought, should not receive preferential treatment; nor should they import the expensive costs of Australian tertiary education. With hindsight these seem reasonable views; and they foreshadowed those adopted a decade later by an independent Papua New Guinean government. But in 1966 they could only cause conflict with the University and Institute, which were just embarking on costly obligatory programmes of rapid expansion.

Portents of trouble ahead were evident in the handling of UPNG's first submission of estimates in 1966. A conference between the University and the Department of External Territories in Canberra in April 1966 agreed on a figure of $1.8 million as sufficient for the University to function during the coming financial year, 1966-67. UPNG later submitted revised estimates of $2.4 million. Then in June 1966 the Administrator formally advised that UPNG and IHTE together could spend up to a maximum of $2 million in 1966-67, and that the Institute was to have priority within that figure. Under protest, UPNG resubmitted for $2 million as 'the minimum needed for effective functioning of the University'. Karmel forcefully argued that any sum below this would 'place the future of the University in serious jeopardy'. The Minister

---

45 Meek, RIW, p.3; C.E. Barnes, letter to the Editor, New Guinea 3(3) September-October 1968, pp.8-9.

46 Karmel to Cleland, 27 June 1966; Cleland to Gunther 1 June 1966, GKC.

47 Karmel to Cleland, 27 June 1966, GKC.
advised that he would raise the grant by $25,000, letting UPNG make up the remainder of its needs from fees, rents and readjustments in the building programme. Gunther and Karmel reacted angrily to what they saw as the Department's niggardliness. Gunther protested that the government was treating UPNG with contempt; he complained through Johnson, who privately thought the University's treatment shabby and felt the Prime Minister should be apprised of the fact. 48 Karmel issued veiled threats: he told the Administrator he had accepted the UPNG Chairmanship on the understanding that the University would develop with 'reasonable haste', which implied adequate funds. 49 The Minister stood firm. UPNG had to be content with the amount decreed, but was left feeling resentful, believing its modest and legitimate claims had been arbitrarily rejected by a government too concerned about gaining university facilities 'on the cheap'.

Levels of funding provoked conflict again the following year. Early in 1967 UPNG submitted estimates for $3.3 million for 1967-68. The Department of External Territories then asked what effect a grant of only $2.7 million would have. UPNG replied that less than $2.9 million would mean a curtailment of teaching. The Department then granted this 'rock bottom' sum. On this occasion the University was not greatly perturbed by the reduction in its estimates: it knew some 'fat' clad the bare bones of what it needed to survive and could not object too strongly if some were pared away. Gunther, however, resented the late approval to commit the $2.9 million. He knew only six weeks before the end of the previous financial year the sum he had for the ensuing year; in the meantime UPNG had been living for months in uncertainty about the funds it would have. Development could not be planned confidently. 50

In 1967-68 IHTE, too, battled the Department of External Territories, like UPNG, haggling while the Department reduced its estimates below what it regarded as minimum. The Institute said $1.5 million was essential for it to function while embarking on the development programme the government desired. The Department instructed Duncanson to revise

48 Gunther to Karmel, 15 and 29 June 1966, GKC.
49 Karmel to Cleland, 25 October 1966, GKC.
50 Gunther, RIW, p.36; and report to final meeting of UPNG Interim Council, UPNGR D.2 (part 1).
estimates to $1.2 million. He achieved some reduction, but could not get the figure below $1.3 million, and then received informal advice that government might reduce the grant even further, to $0.9 million. He protested strenuously that that would cause a debilitating curtailment of Institute activities: for example, 'there would be little point in continuing our engineering courses'. By this time the Department had become concerned that IHTE was upgrading its operations above the level needed to train middle-level, practical technologists. It suggested IHTE could save money by granting staff conditions less than those of the University, by teaching three-year rather than four- and five-year courses, and even by enrolling fewer students. Matheson and Duncanson countered these suggestions with the claim that the low-level type of Institute envisaged by the Department was 'not a viable proposition', having insufficient status to attract either staff or students. After much bargaining like this, and after the Administrator had urgently pleaded IHTE's case with the Department, the Institute received $1.1 million.

Further difficulties arose over academic salary increases. When Australian academic salaries rose in mid-1967, UPNG and IHTE assumed they were obliged to pay the increases to their staff. The Department, however, advised that the Minister must first approve the increases. This raised the question of how far UPNG and IHTE could go in any project entailing expense without first having Ministerial approval. The Department, insisting 'there should be no intrusion on the Minister's prerogative by unilateral action by the University or Institute', instructed the Administrator (now D.O. Hay) that all matters 'affecting the revenue or expenditure of the institutions' must have Ministerial clearance. Hay warned the Department against insisting on such close control over UPNG and IHTE: this would cause an embarrassing 'adverse reaction' because they would view such

---

51 Duncanson to the Treasurer (PNG), 23 March 1967, DTOR 66/6426.

52 Minutes of meeting between representatives of IHTE and Department of External Territories, Canberra, 26 September 1967; Hay, cable to Department of External Territories, 15 June 1967, DTOR 67/3555.

53 Department of External Territories, cable to the Administrator, 30 June 1967; Smith to Hay, 14 July 1967, DTOR 67/3555.
overt direction as a direct attack on their autonomy.\textsuperscript{54}

The increasingly frequent disagreements over money showed that government had called UPNG and IHTE into existence without adequate means for assessing their financial needs, or for regulating their dealings with government. In the absence of something resembling a grants commission, as recommended by both Currie Commission and Inter-Departmental Committee, relations between the institutions and the government were fast becoming a morass. The 'ad hocery' whereby UPNG and IHTE made annual submissions to government, which then applied a pruning knife drastically, was clearly unsatisfactory. More adequate machinery was needed if the government and institutions were not to be at perpetual loggerheads.

The need for such machinery became even more obvious in 1968, when the most serious confrontation yet occurred. During 1967 the University had requested $4.5 million for 1968-69, but in November the government said it would grant only $3.5 million, a figure which would apply in 1969-70 as well. In addition to the financial ceiling, student numbers would be limited too — a maximum of 575 by 1970. UPNG then argued for 'absolute minimum' finance of $3.85 million. The Department of External Territories held resolutely to $3.5 million well into 1968, despite representations from Hay and Johnson that $3.65 million was more appropriate. In the end, after concerted lobbying by UPNG, the Department granted $3.85 million.\textsuperscript{55}

The dispute accompanying this bargaining was bitter. It became public in February 1968 when the Acting Vice-Chancellor, K.S. Inglis, addressed a Melbourne meeting on UPNG's progress in its first two years. He said UPNG had based its planning on 825 students by 1970 — approximating the Currie recommendations; however, the recently imposed ceiling of 575 students forced it to cut its intake to a number lower than it was able and willing to teach. He then claimed the $4.5 million originally requested was the minimum needed to build the University up to the level envisaged by the government. He predicted that unless the University

\textsuperscript{54}Hay to Smith, 26 July 1967, DTOR 67/3555.

\textsuperscript{55}Gunther to Karmel, 2 and 7 May, 1 November 1968; Meek to Gunther, 22 March 1968, GKC; Gunther, report to final meeting of UPNG Interim Council, UPNGR D.2 (part 1).
received 'substantially more money than at present foreshadowed' its future programmes would be crippled.\textsuperscript{56} Rightly or wrongly these comments created the impression that the Department had simply been capricious in cutting back UPNG funds. Not all his claims were strictly accurate: the figure of $4.5 million, for example, was well above 'rock bottom' and even Gunther knew it included 'fat'.\textsuperscript{57} Nevertheless, as a public relations venture on behalf of UPNG the Inglis lecture was a hit, drawing editorials and leading articles in the Australian press the next day. The \textit{Sydney Morning Herald}, for instance, said the government was guilty of such 'dangerous parsimony' over UPNG funding that the Prime Minister should 'consider Mr Barnes' position as Minister for Territories'.\textsuperscript{58}

The public rebuke from Inglis visibly hurt the Department. It issued a press statement in Barnes' name stating 'it was unreal to argue that UPNG should be allowed to write its own ticket for money'.\textsuperscript{59} The University, moreover, was receiving more than its fair share of government funds: of the $23.5 million allocated to all education in Papua New Guinea, primary, secondary and tertiary, UPNG alone was receiving at least $3 million, or more than 12.5 per cent. This statement also received wide publicity; but Inglis's complaints had already made their impact, and the public was probably convinced a miserly Department was starving the infant University.

The dispute between the Department and UPNG simmered on publicly as the indignation of the University community bubbled over. Ten UPNG professors wrote to \textit{The Australian}, accusing the Minister of 'jeopardiz[ing] the standards of the University for many years to come.\textsuperscript{60} And the academic staff in general joined their professors in fulminating against the government with a public statement from their staff association claiming UPNG was being so 'stifled' that some of them were even contemplating a move from UPNG to


\textsuperscript{57}Gunther to Karmel, 2 April 1968, GKC.

\textsuperscript{58}\textit{Sydney Morning Herald}, 23 February 1968, pp.2, 3.

\textsuperscript{59}\textit{Ibid}.

\textsuperscript{60}Quoted in \textit{UPNG News} 9, May 1968, pp.7-8.
'institutions where standards are not in jeopardy'. There was an aggressive self-righteousness about much of this invective — a common characteristic of UPNG rhetoric in subsequent controversies with the government. Many at UPNG appear to have made the simple assumption that the University could not be wrong while the Department could never be right. They certainly had good cause to be suspicious of the Department, for it had made a number of ham-fisted attempts to interfere unjustifiably in internal University matters. It had endeavoured, for instance, to have UPNG submit lists of prospective appointees for security checks; and there were incidents where it delayed visas to incoming Asian staff members, presumably because they were not white.

But while the Department of External Territories was not blameless, those at UPNG seemed not to appreciate its obligation to scrutinize University expenditure. Government had a real responsibility to keep the growth of both UPNG and IHTE in perspective in relation to the overall development of the country. It could not simply grant them optimal budgets — all they requested — for it had to ensure their building standards and conditions of employment were not conspicuously superior to those elsewhere in the country. It was bound to ensure economy, and that meant bargaining with UPNG and IHTE whenever they submitted estimates. Many at UPNG were not inclined to see the bargaining process as such, preferring to see it as the persecution of a needy client by a wicked overseer. Nor did they seem to appreciate that by and large the University received fair financial treatment. Much UPNG rhetoric, in this and other disputes, showed a pronounced reluctance to understand the Department's position; and that became a factor in later disagreement between them.

Throughout the dispute Karmel remained more circumspect than most at UPNG, advising that 'publicity often does more harm than good', and deprecating the inaccuracies which peppered the pronouncements of some UPNG protagonists.

---

61 ibid.
63 Karmel, RIW, p.2; Gunther transcript of interview with Nelson, p.201.
64 Karmel to Gunther, 26 March, 5 June 1968, GKC.
Gunther, on the other hand, saw value in allowing the dispute to continue publicly: if the University could not get what it needed through normal channels, he argued, then embarrassing the Department into acceding to its requests by 'going public' was justified. He thought it futile negotiating with Smith: the Secretary, he believed, customarily bullied UPNG in private dealings but generally capitulated if criticized publicly. Gunther also complemented public statement with moves behind the scenes. He bypassed Barnes and Smith by taking up the question of UPNG finance with Hasluck and J.M. Fraser (Minister for Education and Science) in an attempt to have them intercede on the University's behalf in Cabinet. His special contribution to the dispute, however, was an exchange of letters with the Minister in the journal New Guinea. Barnes, stung by Inglis's suggestion that he was giving Papua New Guinea a university 'on the cheap', had written to both New Guinea and Pacific Islands Monthly stating the Department's case. Gunther replied, finding chinks in the Minister's armour, especially in relation to his prevarication over the Currie Report. The Minister again answered, but rather unconvincingly, and few doubted that the Vice-Chancellor had scored most points.

The Department of External Territories could hardly be blamed for excising superfluous 'fat' from UPNG estimates, but it had been both arbitrary and ruthless in wielding the knife. The attempt to fix University funds at a static level could only have caused a running down of UPNG's activities as inflation bit into the budget, and would have prevented any form of growth. Similarly, setting an early ceiling on enrolments was ill-advised, especially as the Department prevaricated here. It took its figure of 575 students by 1970 from the report of the Inter-Departmental Committee, a supposedly confidential document it would not make available to UPNG and IHTE. Rather hypocritically, it had never implemented or made public the special funding arrangements recommended by the committee. Apparently it wished to keep secret those sections of the report which might limit its ability to act unilaterally or prove

---

65 Gunther, RIW, pp.36-7; transcript of interview with Nelson, p.201; Gunther to Karmel, 22 and 30 April, 7 May 1968, GKC.
67 New Guinea 3(3) September-October 1968.
embarrassing. Quite justifiably, the Interim Council of UPNG, in the absence of any other advice from the Department, had assumed that the Currie Report was the basis for planning. Government representatives on the Interim Council — the Assistant Administrator, the Director of Education, and the Department's own representative — had given no indication that UPNG should be working to the figure of 575 rather than the 830 recommended in the Currie Report.

More than anything else, the dispute accentuated the inadequacy of the machinery for assessing needs and channeling funds to UPNG and IHTE. Even before the University 'went public' the Department had been working towards some more satisfactory arrangement. It had discussed with Karmel and Matheson the procedures they would prefer to follow and in late 1967 this led to the production of a 'Relationships Document' setting out procedures for advancing funds. After further discussions, the Department, Karmel and Matheson had hammered out an agreement whereby each institution would prepare estimates for a 'rolling triennium', that is a three-year period with a review at the beginning of each year. An independent assessor experienced in university administration would undertake the review and advise government on the level of grants appropriate to each institution.68

The assessor agreed on was Sir Leslie Melville. He was an economist, former Vice-Chancellor of ANU, and more recently chairman of the Commonwealth Grants Commission. With his appointment, UPNG were assured of a more regular basis for planning. The financial uncertainties which had been troubling them for the past three years were not yet over, but at least there was a more predictable means of assessing their needs.

Like the disagreement over the Waigani site, the dispute over finance suggested a number of conclusions about the developing university system of Papua New Guinea. First it indicated something of the determination with which autonomous institutions would fight to ensure their survival. Having come into being, UPNG and IHTE soon grew into complex organizations in which many people had a variety of interests to defend — professional, economic and emotional. Whenever

these interests were challenged, as in the annual haggling over estimates, the institutions showed their capacity for resolute self defence. It was unlikely that they would accept heavy-handed treatment, and likely that they would use every weapon available to protect their interests.

How UPNG and IHTE safeguarded their interests again reflected their institutional personalities. UPNG under Gunther was a body prepared to engage in public debate and orchestrated denunciations of opponents, despite Karmel's moderating influence. The impasse to which UPNG and the Department of External Territories appeared to be moving was partly one of opposed personalities — Gunther's and Smith's — and their mutual antipathy would seriously impede better relations between University and government. On the other hand, IHTE under Duncanson was a different creature, one ready to work unobtrusively, though no less persistently, through established channels of communication with government, relying on the Administrator and the IHTE Chairman to plead its case in Canberra.

The dispute emphasized once more the institutions' potential as political operators who would wheel-and-deal behind the scenes or plead their cause in public, whichever they thought appropriate under the circumstances. Their disputes with government gave them considerable political experience, and they soon learnt to become effective. Their autonomy was an important asset here, and, as the Department of External Territories discovered, even their financial dependence on government could not prevent their becoming embarrassing critics of the government.

The dispute also indicated something of the complexity of the political network in which they were located, and which they could exploit. The demands of the institutions, and the resistance to these offered by the Department of External Territories revealed tensions within the Australia-Papua New Guinea governmental relationship which UPNG and IHTE could manipulate. Tensions between the Department and the Administration, and between the Minister and his Cabinet colleagues with personal or ministerial interests in Papua New Guinea could be utilized to advantage. These were resources the institutions were prompt in exploring.

Finally, it was becoming clear that higher education was a field for dynamic interaction between many interest groups, an arena where achievement was more a result of
effective bargaining than of pursuing rational and optimal schemes of development. Critics of government at UPNG who thought the Minister should see reason and grant the University whatever it requested, were politically naive. The finance on which the institutions depended was a scarce resource being distributed carefully among many competitors. The best competitors were the best bargainers, a fact which the seasoned political operator, Gunther, recognized; and he, if not his staff, knew that 'going public' was more a part of the bargaining process than a protest against iniquity.

To the public the interaction between the institutions and government probably seemed fraught with recrimination. It was, but it was also generative, because from it came new organizations and procedures which stablized one aspect of their relationship. The machinery which Sir Leslie Melville represented became a permanent part of the university system: the 'one man grants commission', later expanded to a committee of three, provided a mechanism for mitigating potential conflict between government and institutions over finance.

(iii) A faculty of medicine? The most intense of early disputes between government and University erupted in late 1969. It involved the establishment of the UPNG Faculty of Medicine, but raised wider issues of institutional autonomy and government control of higher education, and widened still further to become a watershed in Australian-Papua New Guinean colonial relations.

The dispute had been building up steadily for three years before finally boiling over publicly in November 1969. It began with a Currie recommendation that the Papuan Medical College (PMC) should 'remain under the Department of Public Health (DPH) until 1966, when it should become the Medical School of the University'. The UPNG Interim Council, at only its second meeting, in December 1965, decided to implement this recommendation by establishing a Faculty of Medicine. Karmel accordingly contacted Cleland and the Director of Public Health (Dr R. Scragg), who welcomed the idea. Cleland then sought formal 'approval in principle' from the Department of External Territories for the transfer of medical education from PMC to UPNG, and for permission for

---

69 Currie Report, p.287.
DPH and UPNG to negotiate to effect this.\(^{70}\)

The Department took more than two months to answer Cleland's request — the first of many long delays in answering correspondence on this issue from Port Moresby. When permission finally came, the Department made it clear that it must be satisfied on many points, particularly relating to cost, before the transfer could proceed. A series of discussions between DPH, PMC and a UPNG Interim Council representative (B. S. Hetzel, Professor of Medicine at the University of Adelaide) worked out detailed replies to the Department's queries; and following this, DPH devised a plan for transferring medical training to a UPNG Faculty of Medicine which Interim Council approved in December 1966. In the meantime PMC and UPNG had begun co-operating in science teaching, PMC first year students joining the UPNG Preliminary Year science stream, in anticipation of a closer union soon.\(^{71}\)

The Administrator (Hay) forwarded the DPH plan for Barnes' approval, with a special plea for 'early consideration'.\(^{72}\) A five months' delay ensued before Smith replied on the Minister's behalf. In late November 1967 he answered, questioning most points in the proposal at length. Apart from doubts about costs, Smith suggested that UPNG might raise the standard of medical training so that fewer doctors would be trained, and then in a manner unsuitable to DPH needs. Hay answered all Smith's queries and doubts, and again asked for Ministerial assent. When a further three months went by without a reply Hay again wrote saying the proposal had been under consideration for two-and-a-half years, that the Minister had had before him a detailed submission for almost a year, but that no indication had yet been given that the proposals were acceptable.\(^{73}\)

The long delays in dealing with the Administrators' requests arose partly from Smith's anxiety over costs. He fretted about the proposals much as he did over the Currie

---

\(^{70}\)Swift to Reseigh, 2 May 1966, DTOR 66/975; Acting Director, DPH, to Assistant Administrator, 21 March 1968, DTOR 69/5536.

\(^{71}\)Smith to Cleland, 19 May 1966; W. D. Symes to Johnson, 21 March 1968, DTOR 66/975.

\(^{72}\)Hay to Smith, 11 June 1967, DTOR 66/975.

\(^{73}\)Hay to Smith, 24 January and 18 March 1968, DTOR 66/975.
Report four years previously, concerned with observing World Bank injunctions to restrict spending on public health.\(^7^4\) When he finally replied he again mentioned his apprehensions about possible pressure from UPNG to upgrade medical education to the costly levels general in Australia. Hay took these up in further discussions with the University, but it held the attitude that no outside authority, be that DPH or the Department of External Territories, should impose restrictions on the duration, content or teaching methods of courses it sponsored. Smith now stubbornly began insisting that 'the length and standard of the medical course [must] be a condition of the absorption of the PMC by the University'.\(^7^5\)

Discussions between the Department and a DPH representative, Dr W.D. Symes, now took place to find a way round the problem of the Department's attitude. Symes proposed that the Dean of PMC be seconded to UPNG to work out a detailed curriculum and programme of development over the next three years for the University to submit for government consideration. The Department agreed, and subsequently the Administration announced publicly that the PMC Dean, Dr Ian Maddocks, had been seconded to UPNG and it was expected that the transfer would occur during the 1969-70 financial year. Maddocks duly worked at UPNG, preparing a report 'covering all aspects of current and future medical college administration'.\(^7^6\) The UPNG Interim Council endorsed the report, and Gunther assured the Administrator that UPNG would not 'upgrade the [medical] course beyond the Territory's needs'.\(^7^7\) In view of this undertaking, Hay advised Smith to accept the Maddocks Report as the basis for planning, to grant UPNG finance to start taking over PMC from July 1969, and to allow the completion of the takeover by the end of 1969. He also said he had submitted

\(^7^4\)Department of External Territories, telex to Administrator, 17 May 1968, DTOR 66/975.

\(^7^5\)Administrator, telex to Department of External Territories, 26 September 1968; Department of External Territories, telex to Administrator, 1 October 1968, DTOR 66/975.

\(^7^6\)Record of discussion, 8 October 1968, folios 145-6; PNG Press Release no.272, 3 December 1968; Hay to Smith, 25 April 1969, DTOR 66/975.

\(^7^7\)Hay to Smith, 25 April 1969, DTOR 66/975.
the report to the assessor of UPNG estimates, Sir Leslie Melville.  

Melville's subsequent comments convinced Smith his fears about the merger were justified. Melville said he had discussed the Maddocks Report with medical educators in Australia who suggested that 'the kind of medical training proposed... is not what the Territory needs'. Smith checked out Melville's comments with four medical professors at the University of Sydney. They had 'no criticism of the proposed curriculum', but thought the DPH-UPNG relationship needed further definition. This was further grist to the doubts of the Secretary, who apparently was coming round to the view that anything would be preferable to a UPNG-PMC merger. Smith, who now had some justification for his years of stubborn refusal to heed the best advice available, directed the Department to draw up a 'List of Alternatives to the Transfer of the PMC to the University'. This included affiliation of PMC with an Australian university, the establishment of a 'National Accrediting Body' to award degrees to PMC graduates, and the creation of an hierarchical academic structure at PMC analogous to that of a university.

By this time, November 1969, five months had passed since the merger was supposed to have begun and only a month remained before it was supposed to have been concluded, but so far neither Administration nor UPNG knew if the Minister accepted the Maddocks Report. Once again Hay contacted Smith with his by now customary plea: 'We are most concerned to get an early indication of your views on the proposal put forward by the Administration.' A fortnight later he was advised by telex that 'the Minister has directed that [PMC] should not be transferred to the University but should be developed by [DPH]'.
The Minister's decision to block the PMC-UPNG merger was announced in a press release on 2 December 1969. It said he acted from a concern for 'the best interests of the Territory'. UPNG would only take over PMC if allowed 'complete independence in determining the content and length of the medical course', and this was unsatisfactory: medical services in Papua New Guinea were chiefly a government concern, so government must therefore set the standard of training. Furthermore, the decision would ease UPNG's burden since 'medical faculties tend to absorb a disproportionate amount of funds available at the expense of other university activities'.

Reactions to this announcement were immediate and hostile. Among the first to respond was the Papua New Guinea Medical Students Society, which accused 'the faceless men of Canberra' of making, 'after months of indecision', a ruling which 'sets back progress in this country'. The medical students were particularly angered by one effect of the Minister's decision — the paradox whereby Arts students could receive a degree after four years' study while they would receive only a diploma after five. Their defiant stand was but a presage of the storm to come once the Minister confirmed his decision.

To Gunther the decision was a personal affront. Eleven years as foundation Director of Public Health, his prolonged efforts in medical training leading up to the establishment of PMC, and his authorship of the section of the Currie Report dealing with medical education, all gave him a personal stake in the medical faculty now snatched from him. He was probably right in thinking Barnes and Smith had taken malicious pleasure in preventing the merger: it was no secret that they disliked his forceful, brusque style and his blunt public statements which made them look foolish. Barnes' personal antipathy was evident in his refusal to visit UPNG officially: unlike his predecessor and two successors in office he declined to attend the University for official functions — which the UPNG community saw as a calculated insult. The chance of depriving Gunther of something he wanted undoubtedly added relish to a Ministerial

---

84Press Release no.68/69, 2 December 1969, DTOR 68/3121.
85ibid.
86'Statement and Declaration', 28 November 1969, DTOR 69/5536.
decision taken primarily for economic reasons.\textsuperscript{87}

Gunther's public and private reactions differed. He issued a dignified, restrained press statement saying that government fears about the cost and direction of medical training under UPNG auspices were misplaced since government itself held ultimate control of the University's funds. Privately he reacted with bitterness, letting friends know that he and the University were being persecuted. He also circulated a minute among Council members denouncing the decision. The latter was probably not necessary to convince those at UPNG that the Department of External Territories had once again acted 'wickedly': they were sure the Minister had behaved in an underhand manner by announcing his decision at a time when the University was on vacation and both the House of Assembly and Australian Parliament were in recess.\textsuperscript{88}

Led by the medical profession, the public promptly entered the fray on the side of UPNG. The president of the Papua New Guinea Medical Society said the Minister had 'dealt a great blow to Medicine in the Territory'.\textsuperscript{89} PMC staff shared this opinion: Maddocks said it was 'difficult to find words which adequately express the bitter disappointment' of his PMC colleagues, and he predicted 'mass resignations' as a result.\textsuperscript{90} Soon afterwards a letter from Hetzel appeared in \textit{The Australian} castigating Barnes for his 'narrow and small-minded approach'.\textsuperscript{91} Then two PMC students, Morris Wainetti and Vaeloto Meleisea, flew to Canberra well briefed by PMC staff to petition Barnes on behalf of the PMC student body. They appeared on television, spoke on radio and were interviewed by the press. They claimed the Minister had made his decision on the basis of 'personal prejudices' and against the considered opinion of the Administrator, the Director of Public Health, the PMC staff,

\textsuperscript{87}Meek, RIW, pp.3-4; Reseigh, RIW, p.2; Griffin (1976), p.103.
\textsuperscript{88}Griffin, \textit{loc. cit.}; Hay, telex to Department of External Territories, n.d., folio 10, DTOR 69/3556.
\textsuperscript{89}\textit{Post-Courier}, 4 December 1969, p.5.
\textsuperscript{90}Maddocks to Scragg, 3 December 1969, DTOR 69/3556.
\textsuperscript{91}\textit{The Australian}, 5 December 1969, p.2.
the Medical Society, the House of Assembly and general public opinion. It had, they said, led to increasing Papua New Guinean distrust of the Australian government and would probably lead to 'campus strife in Port Moresby'.

Once again the Minister and his Department had become targets of a media enfilade, which agreed that they had bungled yet again by 'acting arbitrarily...against the weight of all existing evidence and opinion'. And once more the Minister publicly justified his actions in long letters to the press. But whatever the merits of his case he continued to receive a bad press as more individuals and groups added their comments to the mushrooming controversy.

The hostile reaction simply hardened the Minister's attitude, and he let it be known he was 'firmly against compromise'. However, after representations from the Administrator, he did agree to meet a deputation from UPNG. The deputation, consisting of Karmel, Gunther, Hetzel and Spate, met Barnes and Smith on 27 January 1970. The meeting traversed the now well-trodden ground between them: Barnes and Smith said government must retain control of medical training; the deputation countered by saying substantial DPH representation on the Faculty of Medicine would ensure that. The Minister and Secretary then alluded to the possibility of escalating costs of training under UPNG; the UPNG party replied that DPH accepted the costing in the Maddocks Report as reasonable. The Minister by this stage seemed to have painted himself into a corner, but there was still one way out: he stated that, 'having regard to the fact that there was an elected political system', it was appropriate for him to turn the matter over to the Administrator's Executive Council (AEC) — the embryonic Papua New Guinean Cabinet — for a decision. Gunther quickly countered, 'Will you

---

92 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 December 1969, p.3.
93 *The Australian*, 20 December 1969, p.4.
94 Barnes, to *The Australian and Post-Courier*, folios 91, 94a, DTOR 69/3556; see also Letters to the Editor, *The Australian*, 24 December 1969, p.4.
95 Folios 94a, 151, DTOR 69/3556.
accept its decision?' Barnes answered, 'Yes.' Spate opined that 'such a step could be a wise one in the interests of the development of self-government'. Smith said he thought 'a quick decision could be expected, perhaps within several months'. The meeting then ended, all parties happy with the way it had gone.  

Possibly the Minister thought the AEC would back him up, and in particular that the Ministerial Member for Health, Tore Lokoloko (later to become Governor-General) would persuade his colleagues to uphold the ban on the merger. If so his faith was misplaced. Before the AEC met to consider the question Lokoloko visited Gunther for advice. 'We have to get CEB [Barnes' initials] off the hook,' he said. 'How do we go about it?' In introducing the issue at an AEC meeting in April 1970, Lokoloko simply said UPNG should have a medical faculty; Council then voted to transfer PMC to UPNG subject to provisos that the Treasury Department would advise on medical faculty finances, and that DPH would have representatives on the Faculty. The Minister accepted this. He announced he would allow the merger to proceed since the AEC had imposed conditions on UPNG 'which overcame difficulties that prevented the government agreeing to the transfer last November'. His statement also went to lengths to explain that he had not 'somersaulted' on the issue. His wish to avoid any appearance of 'defeat' or 'reversal' was also evident in a letter to the press and a 'Dorothy Dix' question in parliament he subsequently had drafted: these claimed that 'the government has been entirely consistent throughout the issue'.

By this stage few people would have been worrying whether or not he had taken a beating. In Papua New Guinea, at any rate, the creation of the Faculty of Medicine was now of more urgent concern. UPNG and DPH busied themselves with arrangements for bringing PMC within the University structure  

---

97 Record of discussion, 27 January 1970, folios 53–5, DTOR 70/2008; Gunther, RIW, p.39; Spate, personal communication.
98 Gunther, RIW, p.39.
99 Record of AEC meeting no.10 of 1970, DTOR 70/2008.
by the beginning of the 1971 academic year. Maddocks, appropriately, became foundation Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, and Scragg became foundation Professor of Social and Preventive Medicine. Certain disagreements over medical education continued to cause friction between UPNG and the government, at least until Gunther retired in 1972. These centred round the trend towards higher costs in medical education at UPNG, the government's actions to curb this, and the threat to UPNG autonomy Gunther thought this posed.³ The major battle had been fought, however, and these skirmishes were simply part of the mopping up.

In the first four or five years of university education in Papua New Guinea it was the controversy over the future of PMC more than any other issue which led the government and the University to define the limits of their control over the emergent university system. The controversy showed government it could not expect to exert the far-reaching, direct control it might regard as necessary; while UPNG learnt it could never assume it had carte blanche for new developments, no matter how sorely it might wish to embark on these. Gunther stated the UPNG position unequivocally: 'the University...cannot allow public servants to dictate what it shall do, and in so doing destroy the very fabric of the University — its academic autonomy'.⁴ For its part the government was not only discovering how jealously UPNG guarded its independence; it was also learning that the 'power of the purse' was circumscribed. UPNG's 1968 campaign over finances suggested that the University would tolerate no government attempt to influence its policies by manipulating the purse strings. It would probably cast any such attempt as an erosion of its academic freedom; and if government persisted, there was a good chance UPNG would respond with embarrassing publicity of the fact.

The Minister and the Secretary perhaps realized the difficulties they could get into when questions of University autonomy arose; but their fear of higher costs and lower student output if PMC merged with UPNG persuaded them after much obstinate procrastination, to block the union. The fact that Gunther was their mutual bête noire probably made that decision easier. However, they had not reckoned with

---
⁴Gunther to Hay, 4 February 1970, DTOR 69/3556.
the strength of UPNG ambition, nor with its ability to swing public opinion. If they still needed reminding that the tertiary institutions were political operators who resented being pushed around, then the controversy over PMC was an object lesson.

While government had to learn to cope with UPNG and IHTE autonomy, the institutions in turn were learning to live within their means and under perpetual government surveillance. Part of that lesson was to realize that government did not of necessity share their enthusiasm for new ventures, no matter how worthwhile these might be educationally. The government was more likely to be interested in per capita student costs than in educational values. The disagreements thus helped both groups find a modus vivendi.

Subsequent events have proved that the fears of the Department of External Territories were justified. Medical training costs rose appreciably: whereas the Maddocks Report estimated the annual cost per student would be $9800 by 1973, the actual cost was $13,000, compared with $3400 for non-medical students at UPNG. Moreover, fewer medical students graduated: although PMC produced thirty-four diplomas in medicine between 1965 and 1969, the UPNG Faculty of Medicine graduated only thirteen students with the M.B.B.S. degree by the end of 1975, and five of them were expatriates. So expensive indeed was medical training by 1976, and so small the return from it, that when the University was overtaken by a new financial crisis some at UPNG maintained that the Faculty of Medicine could be closed down and the country's handful of medical students sent abroad for training.

Barnes' and Smith's assessment of the probable direction of medical training under UPNG aegis was thus correct. Nevertheless they badly misjudged the mood of the time. Their attempt to preserve in Papua New Guinea the system of sub-degree level medical training might ultimately have been to

---


6 D. Denoon, minute to Academic Development Committee, 20 August 1975, UPNGR E.32 (part 3).
the benefit of the country, but it was a decision more appropriate to an independent national government than to a colonial overlord. Their decision, handed down magisterially from afar, could be seen as arrogant paternalism because it blocked aspirations of several influential interest groups in Papua New Guinea — not only the University itself, but also the medical students, their teachers, and the medical profession generally. These groups used all the resources open to them to pursue their ambitions and counter the Minister's decision — the news media, their connections with the Australian medical profession, the sympathy of the Administrator and his DPH officials, and informal networks of communication within the public service. They did this to great advantage, greatly assisted by having public opinion on their side. Perhaps a less costly, lower level form of training was in the country's best interests, but in an era of rising nationalism it was futile for the Department to insist on it.

The Department of External Territories' persistent and stubborn refusal to heed the best counsel of its advisers in Papua New Guinea caused it to back itself into a corner, from which in the end it had to retreat humiliated. Its obstinacy had a number of significant effects. As in the budgetary dispute of 1968, one of these was to give UPNG confidence in entering the national political arena. It was subsequently never far from the centre of the national stage. Another effect was to solidify the class interest of a section of the presumptive elite of Papua New Guinea — the medical students, who had a big collective stake in the future of medical training because it affected their anticipated professional status and income. Their vehement reaction on entering the dispute was, perhaps, a measure of the class interest they had to defend.

Another effect of the Department's action was to produce further strain in Canberra-Port Moresby relations. The Administrators and their DPH advisers clearly resented the Minister's consistent refusal to heed their advice. They sympathized with UPNG, and were as persistent as the University in insisting that the PMC-UPNG merger should proceed. It was Port Moresby against the Canberra colonial overlords — something which became obvious when the AEC settled the dispute in UPNG's favour without demur. The Minister's action in passing the issue to the AEC for adjudication was itself a significant step, for this was the first occasion on which a dispute between a statutory
body in Papua New Guinea and the government in Canberra was referred to the embryonic national Cabinet for resolution. Although a start to the effective transfer of power from Canberra to Port Moresby did not occur until later in 1970, the referral of the PMC question to the AEC showed that the time was ripe and that the transfer could safely begin.

Once again the University had been able to influence events in its own favour through energetic and enterprising political action. The government could clearly tamper with the university system only at its own risk. As this realization dawned on the leadership of the Department of External Territories, the ripples on the Papua New Guinea pond were spreading outward.

Personalities and institutional autonomy

The personalities of the leading protagonists were always an important element in the unfolding drama of university development. Without the interplay between a Gunther and a Karmel, a Duncanson and a Matheson, and between all these and C.E. Barnes and G.W. Smith, the emerging university system might well have taken different shape. One of the most significant of these early personal cameos was that of Gunther and K.R. McKinnon, Director of Education from 1966 to 1973. The latter, half Gunther's age, was perhaps the brightest and most capable bureaucrat to have served an apprenticeship in the post-war Administration. He was as assertive and ambitious as Gunther; their views on how tertiary education should develop differed; and they had conflicting interests to protect. Not surprisingly, severe disagreements arose between them, usually over questions of UPNG's autonomy and the rights of the Department of Education to oversee the University's activities.

McKinnon first went to Papua New Guinea in 1954 as a junior primary teacher. His subsequent rise to the Directorship of Education was spectacular. His personal philosophy of education was strongly egalitarian. He was therefore critical of the elitist values he believed UPNG and IHTE were encouraging, for he thought these inappropriate in a formerly classless society such as that of Papua New Guinea. Trends at UPNG were especially disturbing and, he felt, reflected Gunther's influence. He later said that

The sort of institution which developed at UPNG was a monument to Gunther, and the imposing buildings of
UPNG had to be a visible sign of the success of the University and of Gunther's success in creating it. I had many disagreements with UPNG over its 'hidden curriculum' — the things it taught the students about themselves: their superiority, their privileges, their removal and isolation from the concerns of the people. Gunther was blind to issues like this.  

As Director of Education he was concerned with the position of UPNG and IHTE within the total scheme of education. He tried with missionary zeal to prevent their becoming elite institutions at the apex of a pyramid of lesser colleges and schools whose work and output were nevertheless just as important to national development as that of the two premier institutions.  

His position gave him considerable scope for putting personal philosophy into official practice. From Johnson, his predecessor, he had inherited responsibility for co-ordinating tertiary education, and it was through him that liaison between the Administration and the two institutions took place. His personal attitude towards UPNG and his official function thus placed him in a position where friction with Gunther was likely.

Gunther admired McKinnon's administrative flair but resented his executive style and ambition. He disliked dealing with the Administration through the Director of Education, maintaining that as Vice-Chancellor he had right of direct access to the Administrator. For the University to be handled through the Department of Education like any high school or technical college was to Gunther an abrogation of its autonomy. McKinnon, he suspected, was trying to bring the University ever more firmly under the control of the Department of Education, and was exercising undue influence over the Administrator towards that end. This seemed particularly so after July 1970 when Johnson became Administrator, as Gunther thought he abnegated personal responsibility for the University by delegating matters of higher education to McKinnon.

Gunther's experience with McKinnon led him to regret having opposed the participation of the Australian Universities Commission in university development in Papua New

7McKinnon, RIW, pp.5-6.
8ibid., p.4.
Guinea. As a Currie Commissioner he had been against AUC involvement, but as Vice-Chancellor his budgetary disagreements with government made the idea attractive. AUC entry into university affairs would limit McKinnon's direct influence, and his ability to chip away at UPNG's autonomy. Consequently AUC involvement in Papua New Guinea was an idea he put to the Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education which the government called together during 1969-70 to review progress since the days of the Currie Commission. 9

McKinnon, on the other hand, believed Gunther's determined stand on university autonomy was irrational, and the idea of calling in the AUC singularly inappropriate. Australia, he believed, 'was becoming less acceptable as an arbiter of New Guinea affairs because of the growing anti-colonial mood, so that drawing AUC in ... was not a good proposition'. 10 He has since denied Gunther's charge that he was seeking personal control over the University. His chief concern, he has claimed, was to establish the principle of Ministerial responsibility for higher education, in order to produce better co-ordination and rationalization. He believed it unnatural for the Vice-Chancellor to have privileged access to the Administrator; rather, the University should be the responsibility of a Minister, be that the Minister for Education or, later, the Chief Minister himself. 11

Such questions, of course, touched the University's autonomy. Any educational administrator seeking to integrate UPNG more smoothly within the country's educational system was bound to find his way blocked by Gunther, who was likely to interpret any such move as a threat to the University's autonomy. Autonomy was a word which kept recurring during the Gunther Vice-Chancellorship, and also thereafter. Considering the frequency with which it was bandied about it was rather poorly defined — a word meaning different things to different people at different times. To Gunther, whose discussions of the concept with his colleagues on the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee had impressed him deeply,

---

9 Gunther to Sir Allen Brown, 10 June 1971, UPNGR A.34-2 (part I); Gunther to Karmel, 17 and 28 July 1970, GKC; Gunther, RIW, pp.20-1.

10 McKinnon, RIW, p.4.

11 ibid.
it covered a sense of what many academics agreed were a university's most basic rights and functions — the right to decide what, who, how, how much, where and when it would teach, investigate and evaluate, unmolested by any outside agency. Gunther used his first leave from UPNG to tour universities in the new nations of Africa, and what he saw served as a warning: a number of the institutions he visited had, he concluded, surrendered the right to be called 'universities' — they had allowed themselves to become the uncritical pawns and mouthpieces of governments, thus abdicating their role as independent critic and national conscience. This was a fate from which he believed he must save UPNG. In Gunther's perspective influence from the government was acceptable: it could be exercised through a variety of means — through official representation on the University's Council, faculty boards and other governing committees; via financial allocation, when government wishes would be reflected in the funding granted to desired projects; and through government consideration of university estimates. These were all situations in which government and university could negotiate towards mutually acceptable ends. What was not acceptable were situations where the former dictated to the latter. 12

Gunther's was perhaps a maximal view of university autonomy. Certainly to politicians and bureaucrats like Smith and McKinnon, Gunther's stand was for an unjustifiable degree of laissez-faire. They, on the other hand, emphasized the accountability of the University — its obligation to accept official scrutiny of the public funds it so conspicuously consumed, its onus to be in accord with government development strategies, and generally its readiness to be amenable to government policy. Where autonomy ended and accountability began were questions implicit in all the disagreements between government and University during the Gunther Vice-Chancellorship, but they remained questions without answers.

While disagreements generally arose because of the fundamentally opposed positions of government and University in relation to the autonomy of the latter, there were often incidents at a personal level which exacerbated the institutional conflict. A notable example concerned the channeling of UNESCO aid to higher education, an issue which brought the Department of Education and UPNG into direct competition. McKinnon believed the government should

12 Gunther, RIW, pp. 20-21.
Gunther argued UPNG's right to deal directly with international aid agencies in seeking support for specific University projects. On one occasion Gunther wanted UNESCO assistance to build up the Educational Materials Centre created at UPNG by Roe, the Professor of Education. McKinnon, however, arranged for the funds to go to Goroka Teachers' College. This caused personal rancour between Gunther and McKinnon and also between Roe and McKinnon, the UPNG pair accusing the Director of Education of 'dishonesty' in unfairly using his position to divert the funds to a 'pet' project sponsored by his department. 

Personal animosities thus complicated relations between government and University. Yet the conflict between Gunther and McKinnon was more than the clashing of strong personalities whose official positions magnified their disagreements. McKinnon's attempts to establish the principle of Papua New Guinean Ministerial responsibility for higher education, and Gunther's determination that the University's autonomy should not be eroded signified the onset of a continuing struggle within Papua New Guinea to control the direction of university development. The struggle became more intense as Papua New Guinean government assumed the mantle of its colonial predecessor.

UPNG and IHTE as social leaven

While UPNG and IHTE gained considerable public prominence through the controversies that entangled them in the late 1960s, they had more than a simple facility for attracting attention. From the outset they had been promoting subtle but far-reaching changes in the colonial society which Papua New Guinea then was.

The students and staff formed an important reference group for the rest of the community, even though they were a new element. They had a distinctive style of their own: unrestricted by public service discipline or the restraints of village life they dressed more casually, expressed ideas more freely, espoused causes with less reservation, were more prepared to challenge established conventions, to question existing values. Where they went others slowly followed.

\[1^{3}\text{ibid.}\]
The first sacred cow they toppled was the informal racial segregation prevailing in Port Moresby, Lae and elsewhere. When UPNG students began drinking with their teachers in the 'whites only' bar of the Boroko Hotel they raised the eyebrows of black and white alike, but before long other Papua New Guineans followed them in and the bar was soon integrated. In Lae when the first IHTE Australian Rules football team took out the premiership in its first year in the town competition, beating the team of the 'mainly whites' club, they were invited back to the defeated team's clubhouse for drinks. They were probably among the first Papua New Guineans, apart from cleaners and bar attendants, to have crossed the threshold. And there were other ways in which the institutions helped to break the colour bar: before 1966 there had been only one or two cases where Papua New Guinean men had married white women; but with the establishment of the campuses, where attitudes were more tolerant than elsewhere, a number of Papua New Guineans had white partners. The sex-race taboo fast became an anachronism.\textsuperscript{14}

Such changes probably came about unconsciously, without the institutions' deliberately setting themselves up as iconoclasts within colonial society. But in other directions campus residents set out purposefully to challenge the assumptions of colonial society. In particular they had greater sensitivity than the general public to questions of racial discrimination, which still existed in many forms, overt as well as covert. They were ever ready to root it out whenever they saw it. Thus, one of UPNG's student leaders staged a one-man demonstration by chewing betel nut in the departure lounge of the Port Moresby airport, where 'Buai itambu' (betel nut prohibited) signs were prominent. When challenged he loudly drew attention to the fact that whites could smoke, and litter the floor with butts, without fear of prosecution.\textsuperscript{15}

Both UPNG and IHTE also gave the country regular experience of something it had previously only heard about through the overseas news – the large-scale student demonstration. In early 1968, not long after IHTE had moved to Lae, its students marched through the central shopping area

\textsuperscript{14}Meek, RIW, p.3; Inglis (1968), p.72; personal observations of the author, 1968; Gunther, RIW, p.22.

\textsuperscript{15}H.N. Nelson, personal communication.
one Saturday morning behind a wheelbarrow they hoped to fill with donations for victims of the Nigerian civil war. Unused to such spectacles, some townspeople curtly said their place was back on the campus among their books. Others, who possibly appreciated that Lae at long last had entered the 1960s, dropped $90 into the barrow. UPNG students were more politically aware: their early demonstrations were against what they saw as the colonialist attitude of the Australian government, and more than once C.E. Barnes had to arrive or leave the Port Moresby airport furtively to avoid students massed outside. In 1969 they protested against the so-called 'act of free choice' through which the neighbouring people of West Irian were absorbed into Indonesia. Their most notable early demonstration, however, was in 1968 when the South African ambassador to Australia had to run the gauntlet of a placard-waving crowd shouting anti-apartheid slogans. It was clear that those at IHTE and UPNG were intolerant of many of the time-honoured conventions of colonial society; and they also clearly wished to awaken the country to issues wider than local parish-pump concerns.

While some critics protested that 'more was to be expected of the future leaders of the country' than political demonstration, others saw that UPNG and IHTE were performing a valuable function by creating a wider social consciousness among both blacks and whites. The public came to see that the institutions were successfully fulfilling one of the roles intended for them by the Currie Commissioners—that of conscience of the nation. The changing public attitude was reflected in the altered mood of the local press, which became at once less suspicious of the students and their teachers and less preoccupied with the affairs of the European community alone. At first the press had stereotyped the institutions as havens for disaffected whites and easily-led black militants. A journalist who had covered Papua New Guinea events for the Pacific Islands Monthly for many years indicated something of a new and tolerant view when interviewing Gunther. He said he had formerly doubted the value of a university in Papua New Guinea and so had reported UPNG adversely; but now it was plainly giving the community more

---

16 Personal observations of the author, 1968.
18 PIM 39(9) September 1968, p.27.
than formal training he was convinced of its usefulness, and would henceforth report it sympathetically. 19

The institutions were indeed concerned with education in its broadest sense, and by no means confined themselves to classroom teaching. UPNG in particular provoked serious and well-informed public discussion of the country's problems of development and the tasks it must face during the transition to independence. The monthly seminars of some UPNG academic departments and the inaugural lectures of the professors were public events - a forum in which staff, students and members of the public could participate. As UPNG and IHTE staff members began conducting research into many aspects of the history, sociology, economics, politics, geography, linguistics, law and education system of Papua New Guinea, a steady stream of published work became available to stimulate further discussion and research. The intellectual impact of UPNG became most obvious at the annual Waigani Seminar, which it began in 1967 in collaboration with the New Guinea Research Unit of ANU. Each seminar was organized in turn by one of the UPNG academic departments, and followed a theme consonant with its specialization. The Seminars attracted widespread attention from scholars interested in development studies generally and Melanesia in particular. In 1972, for example, when the Economics Department ran the seminar on the theme 'Priorities in Melanesian Development', more than sixty scholars and experts in various aspects of development presented papers. Among the keynote speakers from overseas were the radical educationalist, Ivan Illich, and the scholar of Africa and developmental agriculture, René Dumont. IHTE also contributed to public ideas with an annual seminar, organized primarily for tertiary students. The first of these, in 1970, drew students from all the major institutions of tertiary education in Papua New Guinea to discuss the role of tertiary students in national politics.

The two institutions helped sustain the atmosphere of intellectual ferment they had created through the notable scholarship of some academic departments. UPNG attracted some first-rate academics to its staff, and their presence generated a body of distinguished research. The History Department under its first professor, K.S. Inglis, Government under C.D. Rowley, Geography under R.G. Ward, Anthropology

19Gunther to Karmel, 1 November 1968, GKC.
under R.N.H. Bulmer, and Economics under A. Clunies-Ross established traditions of fine scholarship and relevant research. The Institute also attracted some notable scholars, and its schools of Engineering, Architecture and Business Administration began exploring problems of small-scale development, devising schemes of small-scale technology appropriate to rural villages and urban migrant settlements.

Another organization with research interests in Papua New Guinea was the ANU New Guinea Research Unit. Established in 1961, the Unit had been conducting a number of research projects which over the years resulted in more than sixty authoritative monographs on aspects of socio-economic development. There was considerable cross-fertilization between UPNG and the Unit, facilitated by their occupation of adjacent Waigani sites, and most notably revealed in their joint sponsorship of the Waigani Seminars. The Unit implanted a tradition of rigorous scholarship and critical inquiry which the country had not known before and which the two tertiary institutions were able to build upon. As Michael Somare, the Prime Minister of an independent Papua New Guinea, later pointed out, ANU had thus 'played an essential role in the creation of a Western intellectual tradition' in his country. 'The wealth of knowledge about the nature of both traditional and modern Papua New Guinea,' he said, 'is due in no small measure to the influence and activities of this great institution.'

As well as stimulating the intellectual life of the country UPNG and IHTE made a strong impact on its cultural life. Generally they aroused public awareness of the value of the rich and unique traditional art forms. UPNG made a specific contribution by helping develop distinctive new art forms inspired by traditional models. This happened because of its appointment of Ulli Beier, a specialist in the literature of developing countries, to teach creative writing. Under his guidance a spectacular flowering of Papua New Guinean literature began in the late 1960s. His students produced a substantial body of poetry and drama, which was published in a UPNG-sponsored Journal, <i>Kovave</i>, and the first books to be published by Papua New Guineans. What he did for literature his wife did for the plastic arts, and under her tuition a number of talented copper

---

beaters, painters, sculptors and potters developed their artistic skills. Gunther believed the Beiers together 'did more for the creative arts in Papua New Guinea in three years than the Administration and Missions had in eighty'. Shrewdly he had the University sponsor their work, which was not only good public relations for the University in its early years, but led directly to the later establishment of the government-funded Creative Arts Centre at Waigani.

The institutions of tertiary education were thus producing changes in Papua New Guinea from their inception. In challenging the norms of the colonial society they helped Papua New Guineans prepare themselves for independence. More than any other body, they were a source of informed, critical and articulate comment on all aspects of the society of Papua New Guinea. By fulfilling that function they became the national conscience and, in the absence of a strong local press, a 'fourth estate'. And finally, by promoting the values of traditional culture, they helped foster a national consciousness. In short they supplied social leavening to help Papua New Guinea rise rapidly towards independence.

\[\text{21} \text{ Gunther, RIW, p.28.}\]
Chapter 5

Problems of co-ordination

Although the Papua New Guinean education system had been notably underdeveloped at the top in 1960, this was hardly true a decade later, when at least fifty institutions of post-secondary education were operating.¹ Training colleges had proliferated as government departments, statutory agencies, Christian missions and business firms began foreseeing the need to localize. The result was a confusing expansion of training facilities, with many organizations setting up schemes catering to their own special requirements. Educational planners were now challenged with finding means to contain development within a more rational system of tertiary education.

The effects of proliferation

The new institutions varied greatly in scope, entry level, and length of training. Several Christian seminaries offered up to six years of rigorous, academic education comparable to that of the University. Some, like the Customs Officers School, offered only short courses of between one and six months. Many offered two- and three-year programmes of combined general and specialized vocational education — for example, the nine church and three government teachers' colleges, the agricultural colleges and training centres, and the forestry college. Others offered strictly practical and vocational training — the Electricity Commission Training Centre, the Bureau of Meteorology Training Centre, the Nautical School, and the Posts and Telegraphs Training College. Yet others — the Local Government Staff College, the Welfare Training Centre, the Police College, and the Military Cadet School — offered combined general and vocational courses interspersed with periods of practical experience in the field. Some, like

the teachers college 'A' Course, and the Aid Post Orderlies Centre, required only a low-level post-primary education; others, particularly the Catholic seminary, took entrants from the Form 6 level.\(^2\) In addition to these institutions, commercial and industrial firms such as W.R. Carpenter, Bougainville Copper and New Guinea Containers had training schemes from the technician to executive level.

By the late 1960s the defects of haphazard growth were becoming plain. McKinnon, as Director of Education, bemoaned the results:

None of the institutions ... shares a common governing body; there is no interchange of staff; and there is no co-ordination between them .... The topsy-like growth of tertiary institutions means that liberal arts faculties are duplicated in all of them; each has to have a library; each has science facilities (sometimes used as little as one-tenth of the time); each has separate student facilities; each has an administration. Generally small tertiary institutions are expensive and uneconomical and present policies can only become more expensive as time goes on .... On the academic side most of the institutions are so small that staff crises occur when one key member of staff leaves .... Also there is the problem of standardization of qualifications. There is as yet no clear structure of degrees, diplomas, certificates and subsidiary qualifications .... Faculties and departments, once established, have a way of going on forever irrespective of the decline in need after the first surge of requirements has been met. They may use finance which might be better used on other courses if there were effective co-ordination of enrolment patterns.\(^3\)

Many educationalists joined him in deploiring the costs of fragmented, dispersed higher education.\(^4\)

Offsetting the costs were certain political advantages: 'the spread of these institutions around the country is

\(^2\)ibid.

\(^3\)McKinnon (1971), pp.20-1.

\(^4\)See, for example, Dickson (1969), p.91; Roe (1968), pp.62-7.
politically attractive [as it] avoids the concentration of expenditure in one area'.\(^5\) The frequent demands politicians made for ever more educational institutions in their home districts underlined the wisdom of some dispersal. Constituencies equated the presence of educational institutions with economic development. Highlands spokesmen in particular were vocal in decrying the concentration of facilities in two or three coastal towns, and in demanding that such visible fruits of progress be shared more equitably among districts. In 1968, for example, a Simbu member, Siwi Kurondo, told the parliament that as Australia had ten universities and Papua New Guinea only one, the time had come for the creation of a second university—in his home province.\(^6\) Dispersal therefore made political if not educational and economic sense, though no one was sure how far its value here outweighed its disadvantages.

The Currie Report, originally intended as the master plan, gave little guidance on how to trim the ramshackle growth. The structure it proposed bore little resemblance to what actually grew. Meant to be an 'umbrella' organization eventually containing many institutions—IHTE, the Administrative, Medical, Forestry, Agricultural, and teachers colleges—UPNG had developed differently. By the end of the 1960s none of the specialized vocational institutions were associated with it—IHTE because of the move to Lae; the Administrative, Agricultural and Forestry Colleges because the departments controlling them wished to retain close control of their activities; the teachers colleges because of UPNG's reluctance to take them in; and the Medical College because of obstinacy and procrastination in Canberra.\(^7\) The Currie Commissioners had not foreseen such contingencies, assuming development would be

\(^5\)McKinnon, *loc. cit.*

\(^6\)HAD 2(1) June 1968, p.102; and 2(21) November 1971, p.5454.

\(^7\)The respective attitudes of the Departments of Agriculture and Forests to UPNG involvement in their training programmes is detailed in correspondence between Gunther and the Administration, contained in UPNGR A.18 and F.81. The attitude of the Public Service Commissioner is evident in C.D. Rowley, RIW, and D. Chenoweth, RIW. UPNG's attitude to the teachers colleges is evident in UPNGR F.69 (part 1); Gunther, RIW, pp.16 and 53; and McKinnon, RIW; and also Chapter 6 herein.
wholly rational. Consequently their scheme was now largely irrelevant.

One of the chief obstacles to co-ordination beneath a University umbrella, as originally intended, was the attitude of UPNG itself. UPNG had shown itself extremely reluctant to co-operate with other institutions. The rupture with IHTE, and the University's reluctance thereafter to engage in dialogue with the Institute — UPNG for example rejected suggestions for cross-representation between the University and Institute Councils — ensured that the two institutions remained structurally as well as geographically distant.\(^8\) The University's insistence that, as an autonomous body, it could not accept direction from the government was a further problem, particularly in dealing with institutions run by government departments, most of which feared that if UPNG took charge of their training facilities they would lose control of an activity in which they had substantial investment and an on-going interest.\(^9\) And the University's fear that its academic reputation would be sullied through association with the teachers colleges prevented their closer co-operation. It was, for instance, reluctant to recognize Goroka Teachers College courses as worthy of credit towards UPNG degrees and was loth to recognize Goroka staff as competent to teach credit-carrying courses.\(^10\) The University proved so uncompromising here that McKinnon complained to the 1970 ANZAAS Conference (held at UPNG) about the 'strongly entrenched, conservative element within the University Professorial Board'.\(^11\) Gunther indignantly accused him of making 'an inexcusable attack' on UPNG,\(^12\) but there was little doubt that UPNG's concern to maintain reputable, 'international' standards made it shy of contact with lesser institutions.

\(^8\)&nt;Gunther to Karmel, 25 March 1970, GKC; Gunther, RIW, pp. 16 and 53.

\(^9\)See note 83 above.

\(^10\)See correspondence between GTC and UPNG over recognition of Goroka Teachers College (GTC) staff and courses by UPNG, UPNGR F.69 (part 1).


\(^12\)Gunther to McKinnon, 31 August 1970, UPNGR A.34–2 (part 1).
Views on how best to contain the unkempt profusion of training institutions were contradictory. Roe, the UPNG Professor of Education, deplored the economic costs of dispersal but was vague about solutions. He saw UPNG as 'the key institution', assuming the best students would wish to go there, while less able students would enter the lesser institutions — towards which he was rather condescending, for instance referring disparagingly to the fact that 'the IHTE had "Professors"'.

Because students would tend to sort themselves out by academic ability, he assumed the institutions they attended would similarly adjust to some 'frankly hierarchical arrangement'. Eventually they might form some association with UPNG, but he thought the University would always remain the brightest star in the constellation.

McKinnon, who had strong views on the optimal means for rationalizing higher education, firmly rejected such thinking. He believed that as tertiary education had not developed within the Currie framework, some other organizational structure must come into being to contain and direct the growth. Roe's hierarchical scheme with UPNG at the apex would, he claimed, 'lower the status of technological occupations' for which students were being prepared in other institutions. He had little faith in UPNG's ability to fulfil its umbrella role, even if it willingly accepted this: it was becoming 'a dreary unimaginative imitation of Australian universities', too preoccupied with its own parochial concerns to be much bothered with lesser institutions.

McKinnon had further misgivings. He was concerned by the competition he saw developing between UPNG and IHTE. Almost as soon as the latter moved to Lae it began stirring to upgrade its status. It took its first big step upwards in 1969 when it successfully lobbied the government to change its name from 'Institute of Higher Technical Education' to 'Institute of Technology' (IOT) — something readily agreed to as the new title was at once less

---

14*ibid.*, p.71.
15McKinnon (1968), p.103.
cumbersome, better understood internationally, and gave clearer indication of the courses offered. McKinnon, who belonged to both IOT and UPNG Councils, watched the Institute's ambitions warily. The rivalry which grew as IOT tried to catch up, and UPNG endeavoured to stay ahead, seemed sure to result in unnecessary duplication and cost. UPNG, for example, was planning to teach accountancy as 'a service to Port Moresby residents', and was canvassing the possibility of moving into engineering for the same reason. If IOT made similar inroads on UPNG programmes such as the biological sciences and liberal arts, further waste would occur. The 'gross disparities between "the big two" — UPNG and IOT — and the other, lesser institutions' also troubled McKinnon. He thought they ill-befitted a country like Papua New Guinea whose needs were as great in the sub-graduate, sub-professional manpower categories as in the professional categories supplied by 'the big two': unless the tertiary system were held to strictly defined paths, imbalances in the workforce would inevitably result.

The trend towards a pecking order among tertiary institutions was becoming marked by the end of the 1960s. The demand for Form IV leavers from government departments, private employers and training institutions exceeded the supply to such an extent that in 1969 Goroka Teachers College, the premier teacher training institution, could not reach its target intake of fifty-four new students. There were only thirty-eight new enrolments, compared with forty-nine the year before. IOT experienced a shortfall too, taking in only seventy-five new students for 110 vacancies. UPNG, on the other hand, had 108 berths, all filled. The University, as the prestige institution, was clearly attracting more applicants; and with more students it was able to claim a larger share of the finance available. If this trend continued, UPNG would flourish while lesser

18 Report by Registrar to final meeting of Interim Council, UPNGR D.12 (part 1).
19 McKinnon, RIW, p.1.
20 Ibid.
21 Hay, telex to Department of External Territories, 4 March 1969; Smith to Hay, 21 April 1969, DTOR 68/5647.
institutions languished, again with adverse effects on the manpower categories they were meant to supply.

The Department of External Territories was also concerned about the hierarchy. It believed 'strong measures', such as cutting back UPNG enrolments, were needed to redirect students away from UPNG and into the institutions having trouble attracting students; however, realizing what a furore such a move might cause at UPNG, it dropped the idea.\(^{22}\) Instead it called on the Administration to produce a better distribution of students among the tertiary institutions. From this came a scheme of Public Service Board cadetships offering 'generous emoluments' to students agreeing to undertake particular courses at particular institutions.\(^{23}\) However, the scheme dealt with only one aspect of a larger problem. Some administrative structure was still needed to ensure balanced development in tertiary education. Sir Leslie Melville, who began making annual trips to Papua New Guinea in 1969 to assess UPNG and IOT estimates supported this view: to keep UPNG and IOT needs in perspective with those of lesser institutions some form of planning and co-ordinating machinery similar in function to the Australian Universities Commission should regulate the development of all post-secondary education.\(^{24}\)

Melville's own work, indeed, pointed to the need for an organization to co-ordinate higher education and provide expert advice on funding. Early in his appointment it became obvious that issues like the mounting of new courses and the teaching of new disciplines lay beyond his scope but nevertheless demanded expert opinion. In addition both institutions were discontented about the treatment they received from him. They complained that they put much effort into preparing detailed submissions for funds, but his visits to Papua New Guinea were so brief he could only peruse these briefly, and then did not grant them what they needed.\(^{25}\) Melville himself believed he was being very

\(^{22}\)Draft cable, Department of External Territories to Administrator, December 1969, DTOR 68/5647.


\(^{24}\)McKinnon, RIW, p.1.

\(^{25}\)Karmel to Inglis, citing correspondence from the Assistant Administrator, 21 April 1969, GKC; Meek, RIW, p.4; Gunther, RIW, p.48.
generous. He recognized that UPNG and IOT invariably requested more than they needed. Arriving at the correct amount was therefore a result of bargaining, though generally Melville endeavoured to recommend funding which on a per capita student basis was roughly double current Australian levels. Thus in 1969 he recommended per capita student expenditure of $3600 for UPNG and $5900 for IOT, compared with the $1800 then applying at James Cook University, Townsville, $2080 at the University of New England, Armidale, and $1600 at the University of Newcastle. Yet UPNG was still dissatisfied. It vociferously complained that on some issues in particular he had a 'blind spot'. His adverse comments on the UPNG-Medical College merger were one instance. Another was his substantial reduction of the UPNG library vote on the grounds that the University had received some 50,000 books following an appeal by the librarian. While UPNG argued vigorously that only about a fifth of the books were of any value and that the rest had been disposed of, Melville stuck to his decision. Such differences with Melville threw into relief the inadequacies of a 'one-man grants commission' and demonstrated the need for more comprehensive machinery for advising government on all aspects of tertiary education.

McKinnon, recognizing the inadequacy of the Currie Report as a guide, and the defects of the arrangement with Melville, wanted a new commission of inquiry to investigate higher education, determine future directions of development, and recommend some structure for managing the system. He canvassed the idea with Gunther and Duncanson, who guardedly agreed with it, then took the matter up with the Department of External Territories. The Department welcomed the suggestion, especially as it promised to bring economies through more efficient use of resources. In April 1970 the Department agreed to appoint a 'Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education in Papua New Guinea'. This body duly came into being later in the year, and under the chairmanship of Sir Allen Brown, formerly Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department and Australian Ambassador to Japan, began work in December.

---

26Sir Leslie Melville, RIW.
27Meek, RIW, p.4; Gunther, RIW, p.48.
28McKinnon, notes of discussions with Gunther and Duncanson; McKinnon to Gunther, 25 April 1970, UPNGR A.34-2 (part 1).
An abortive attempt to rationalize

Sir Allen Brown's fellow committee members were Vincent Eri, an official of the Department of Education, S.W. Cohen, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Macquarie University and a member of two similar inquiries into higher education in New South Wales, and A.H. Nash, Dean of the School of Architecture and Engineering at the Western Australian Institute of Technology. Like the Currie Commissioners, the members of Brown Committee travelled widely, and in their nine months on the job received submissions from more than 250 individuals, groups and organizations. Yet their report\(^2^9\) was disappointingly brief — barely eighty octavo pages, whereas the Currie Report filled 288 quarto pages. In other ways, too, it was a 'lightweight': so few of its recommendations came to fruition that barely two years after its submission a new, third, inquiry into higher education was mounted — Gabriel Gris's Committee of Inquiry into University Development (1973-74).

The Brown Committee had wide terms of reference, being charged with making recommendations relating to all post-secondary institutions in order to 'rationalize and co-ordinate development to achieve balanced growth of enrolments ... [and] maximum economies of scarce staff and physical resources'.\(^3^0\) In addition it was to produce recommendations for 'the nature, composition and powers of permanent machinery' to regulate tertiary education.\(^3^1\) It was thus free to plan a comprehensive structure to embrace all higher education — one capable of ensuring the emergence of a rational, well co-ordinated system.

Despite this scope, the Brown Committee worked within limits which had not confined the Currie Commission. By 1971 Papua New Guinea was moving rapidly towards independence, though no target date was yet fixed. The Committee recognized its disadvantage here: it had to devise a scheme the national government would inherit at independence; yet three of their number were strangers to the country and knew insufficient of the local scene to tell whether they, the outside experts, could produce a formula acceptable to


\(^{3^0}\)ibid., p.vii.

\(^{3^1}\)ibid.
Papua New Guineans. They responded by avoiding recommendations they thought might 'reduce the options open to the government [taking] over authority in the near future'.\textsuperscript{32} Instead they sought to devise an organization flexible enough to cope with both the period leading to independence and the time beyond.

Their scheme was not implemented. Even on paper it was complex and cumbersome. It contained three central proposals. The first was for the establishment of a Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) to advise government on higher education and help the tertiary institutions promote co-ordination. TEC membership would comprise an independent government-appointed chairman, the Director of Education, the Chairman of the Public Service Board, the Director of the Central Planning Office, the Vice-Chancellor of UPNG, the Director of IOT, and four government-appointed members. The second proposal was for a Tertiary Education Finance Board of three members, chaired by the TEC chairman, to assess UPNG and IOT budgetary submissions and to advise government generally on finance for higher education. The third proposal was for a series of federations or associations of colleges to link all the tertiary institutions (excluding UPNG and IOT) in clusters according to vocational interest. There would be an Association of Teachers Colleges linking all government and mission colleges, an Association of Technical Colleges for all institutions giving technical and trade training, and similar Associations of Paramedical Colleges, of Senior High Schools, of Administrative Colleges, and of Theological Colleges. The task of these associations would be to advise the TEC on matters referred to them; to serve as a forum for discussing common problems; to avoid duplication of courses between institutions; and to make recommendations to the various institutions on student facilities and terms and conditions for staff. Each association would have a central federal committee of representatives of all the member institutions, which in turn would have their own governing councils.\textsuperscript{33}

In the end only a handful of minor recommendations were implemented. The establishment of an Office of Higher Education as an executive office for the TEC was the most notable outcome. Perhaps the most significant aspect of

\textsuperscript{32}ibid., pp.1-2.

\textsuperscript{33}ibid., pp.1, 3, 61-64, 64-65, 70-73, 97.
the three major Brown recommendations was that none of them survived into actual executive practice. The idea of the TEC was dropped by the Somare government in mid-1973 after the final legislative drafts to bring it into being had been written. The proposal for a Tertiary Education Finance Board was similarly dropped, though an analogous body was later set up to take over from Sir Leslie Melville in assessing UPNG and IOT budgetary submissions. Nor did the Associations of Colleges ever come into being.

Why then was the Brown Report such a thoroughly abortive exercise? The reasons lay partly in the nature of the scheme proposed, and partly in the timing of attempt to implement it. Timing was crucial: in calling for the inquiry McKinnon had hoped for a prompt report, early in 1971, so that its recommendations could be put into practise well before self-government. He wished to hand over to the national government an already rationalized system of tertiary education, much as his department would be handing over a rationalized, integrated system of primary, secondary and technical education. The Committee, however, moved ponderously, equivocating on many issues, with the result that its Report was not ready until late 1971 — too late for the tidy handing over of an established scheme. The Report itself was untidy also, too few of its recommendations having been thought through rigorously. For example, the role of the TEC, the central element in the proposed administrative machinery, was insufficiently defined: the Report did not spell out the extent of TEC power, nor did it define relations between the TEC, Finance Board and Associations of Colleges clearly enough. As Gunther later commented, conceptual vagueness marred the Report, and those it was meant to guide were left puzzled by the nebulous nature of what it proposed.\(^{34}\)

But the main objection to the Brown scheme was the unwieldy nature of the machinery recommended. Not only would there have been a TEC, a Finance Board, and Associations of Colleges, but numerous subsidiary committees as well — a standing committee 'to supervise and co-ordinate work in between meetings of the full Commission'; a scholarships and guidance committee; and education committee 'to consider the staffing of the institutions, and the awards that each institution gives'; as well as various

\(^{34}\text{McKinnon, RIW, p.1; Gunther, RIW, pp.18-19.}\)
task forces and working parties to consider specific issues, such as 'the through-put rates of the various institutions', as they arose.\textsuperscript{35} Gunther and Duncanson, both on the eve of retirement, warned against the creation of this complex machinery. Gunther, who was already critical of the way McKinnon had set up a series of national, provincial and local boards to govern primary and secondary education, thought the Brown scheme 'a typically McKinnon approach' which would produce a cumbersome, unmanageable system.\textsuperscript{36} He informed both Brown and Eri he opposed 'the proliferation of committees in higher education' their report would lead to. His opinion was that 'management by committees is often bad management. I think we have gone committee mad'.\textsuperscript{37} He and Duncanson even exchanged one of their rare letters to each other on this point. They agreed that the TEC and its related committees would chiefly serve to 'slow down the work of the training institutions'.\textsuperscript{38}

The Department of External Territories also queried the Brown proposals. The departmental officer most concerned with higher education at this stage, L.R. Hennessy (later secretary to the Australian Universities Commission) raised issues which cast doubts on the Committee's major recommendations. He drew attention to the Report's failure to state which government department the TEC should answer to — should it be Education or the Administrator's (later Prime Minister's)? There were others: what would be the extent of Ministerial responsibility; would the Minister responsible deal directly with the tertiary institutions; or would he deal with them only through the TEC? His Department wanted Ministerial freedom of action, to retain for the Minister the right to intervene directly in the affairs of the institutions. The Department of Education under McKinnon, however, argued for a buffer between Cabinet and the institutions to prevent undue interference in their affairs. Debate over such issues, which the Brown Report failed to raise, let alone resolve, delayed action

\textsuperscript{35}Brown (\textit{et al.}), pp.63-64.

\textsuperscript{36}Gunther, RIW, pp.18-19.

\textsuperscript{37}Gunther to Brown, September 1971; Gunther to Eri, 30 December 1971, UPNGR A.34-2 (part 2).

\textsuperscript{38}Gunther to Duncanson, 6 January 1972; Duncanson to Gunther, 10 January 1972, UPNGR A.34-2 (part 2).
to implement its proposals. By the time enabling legislation was ready, conditions in Papua New Guinea had changed to such an extent that the whole scheme was postponed indefinitely, then bypassed altogether by later developments. 39

Finally, the Brown proposals foundered because they came at a time of rapid political change in Papua New Guinea. Late 1971 was a period when Cabinet government was fast emerging as the progressive transfer of power from Canberra to Port Moresby occurred. From July 1970 the Australian government had been steadily passing power over to the Administrator's Executive Council; and in April 1971 it accepted the recommendation of the House of Assembly Select Committee on Constitutional Development that full internal self government should come during the life of the next, 1972-76, House. At such a time the colonial Administration was reluctant to force through crucial legislation, such as the Brown scheme required, and there was similar unwillingness in the emergent Papua New Guinea Cabinet to take far-reaching decisions in such sensitive areas. Action on the Brown Report was therefore more hesitant and less decisive than might have been the case even a year earlier. 40

In December 1971 the AEC decided to approve in principle the establishment of the TEC and its associated bodies, and instructed the Public Service Board, Director of Education, and the Deputy Administrator to enter discussions to create a small Office of Higher Education within the Department of the Administrator to take over from an existing 'cell on higher education' already operating within the Department of Education. Much of 1972 was then taken up in such discussions, and in negotiations between McKinnon and Hennessy, working out the precise powers and functions of the TEC. Eventually the Office of Higher Education (OHE) came into being in October 1972. A Department of External Territories official, A.N. Page, was seconded to it for six months to draft the TEC legislation. The final draft came to Cabinet (now using that name instead of 'AEC') in May


40 C.E. Barnes, 'Progress of Papua New Guinea' (1972); McKinnon, RIW, p.1.
1973, under the title 'Higher Education Commission Bill' (the word 'higher' having replaced 'tertiary').

By this time some Cabinet members were worried the Higher Education Commission (HEC) might 'try to force government acceptance of policies opposed to the national interest, or act contrary to the government policies and directions'. The Public Service Board added weight to such fears by arguing in favour of the existing system as the one best suited to government interests: that, it claimed, allowed government to retain 'overall control of the recruitment, promotion, salaries and conditions of service of teaching staff working in the higher education training institutions'. Johnson and McKinnon opposed this view, pointing out that the Bill required the HEC to consult the Public Service Board and to take account of government policy on salaries and staffing. But despite such assurances Cabinet remained dubious, and at a meeting on 30 May 1973 decided to postpone the establishment of the HEC for six months. This left the OHE in an anomalous position, created by Cabinet decision to service an agency, the formation of which had now been shelved. In the meantime, Cabinet decided, the OHE could still act as an executive agency in matters of higher education, and would be responsible to the Minister for Education.

Cabinet, having postponed action on the HEC, let the matter lapse completely. Other events had intruded, in the midst of which the HEC was forgotten. Early in 1973 academic staff in Australia received substantial salary increases. Normally such increases in Australia flowed on to UPNG and IOT staff, but on this occasion the new Labor Minister for External Territories, W. Morrison, ruled that the flow-on would occur only if the Somare government agreed

---


42 Cabinet policy submission, 'Higher Education Commission', 30 March 1973, OHER file 'Cabinet Submissions'.

43 ibid.

44 Cabinet decision no.206/73, 30 May 1973, OHER file 'Cabinet Decisions'; I. Hossack to Inglis, 8 June 1973, UPNGR 75/219.
to fund it. When Somare's Cabinet discussed the issue — the first time the national government had considered academic salaries — the tie between Australia and Papua New Guinean academic salaries was queried. Concerned at the high cost of overseas academics, Cabinet decided to appoint a Committee of Enquiry into Academic Staff Salaries, Allowances and Conditions. Chaired by G.B. Gris, soon to become Deputy Vice-Chancellor of UPNG, this Committee in June 1973 recommended what Cabinet members had wanted — the cutting of the tie with Australian academic salaries. 45

In presenting its report the Gris Committee drew Cabinet attention to other matters relating to UPNG and IOT and the economics of tertiary education — the high per capita cost of educating tertiary students, the snail-pace of academic localization, recruitment policies, and the relevance to the country of some courses being offered. The Committee believed these matters required urgent consideration, and therefore suggested the expansion of its membership to enable it to conduct further investigations, especially in relation to the applicability to Papua New Guinea of models of university development in other developing nations. Cabinet accepted this advice and in July 1973 added seven additional members. The expanded Committee, named the Committee of Enquiry into University Development, was once again chaired by Gris. It began operations in September 1973 and reported a year later.

It was during the work of the first Gris Committee that Cabinet decided to postpone consideration of the HEC Bill. With the formation of the second Gris Committee the Bill was relegated into legislative limbo. The national government, perhaps realizing for the first time the enormous costs, both absolutely and relatively of UPNG and IOT, now focused attention on the two institutions, at the apex of the educational pyramid. And the grand schemes of the former Administration for an organization to control and co-ordinate the entire range of tertiary institutions were easily laid aside.

The Brown Report thus became buried in the files of various government departments, yet it was not entirely forgotten. Years later, when university institutions were again causing the government concern, its scheme for

managing higher education would be taken from the mothballs for another airing. In 1978 a commission of inquiry into affairs at UPNG was to recommend that the Brown proposals be resuscitated in an effort to solve problems then afflicting the university system. But by the end of 1973 they seemed to have been thoroughly superseded. The second Gris Committee, then at work, went on to submit a long report which made scant reference to the Brown recommendations: presumably Gris and his colleagues thought these contained little of relevance to a self governing Papua New Guinea.

In a negative sense, of course, the Brown Committee could be said to have had some immediate influence, for its recommendations threw into relief the alternatives open to a national government. There was clearly a choice between the Brown idea of a Western-type grants commission and direct political control of tertiary institutions. Coming at a time of transfer of power from the colonial to a national government, the Brown Report helped firm the resolve of Somare and his Cabinet colleagues not to follow Australian precedents blindly but to seek a model they thought more appropriate to their country's needs.

Tertiary education was such a valuable prize that its control continued to be as much a source of dispute under the national government as it had been previously. The rules, however, were changing. As the Somare government entered the lists in place of the departing Department of External Territories, UPNG and IOT could no longer turn to European conventions for succour. Talk of academic autonomy and the value of institutional buffers between governments and universities might have been persuasive with an Australian government which accepted the conventional wisdom of the Western-style university system; but the new protagonist would not necessarily be so respectful of tradition. In scuttling the HEC Bill, and in calling together the second Gris committee, the Somare government was clearly moving towards a more mercenary and utilitarian view of the university system than even C.E. Barnes and G.W. Smith had dared express. The national Cabinet believed that university institutions as much as any other government-funded agencies must 'reflect government policies directly and be responsive

---

46 Peter White (et al.) (1979), pp.69-71.
Somare's Cabinet was beginning to see UPNG and IOT as conspicuous consumers of public funds, in consequence of which the maximum benefits should be reaped from them. That this would mean firm and authoritarian political direction was becoming evident. Strident assertions of institutional autonomy were now passé. UPNG and IOT must simply learn the new rules.

Although the dismissal of the Brown Report brought changes to the game, many problems of higher education remained the same. Co-ordination of effort between institutions to prevent duplication and waste; competition and rivalry between the institutions for scarce resources; and institutional ambition and upward mobility were all still issues to concern educational planners.

\(^{47}\text{AEC policy submission, 'Organization of Higher Education', 8 August 1972, OHER 66-1-21.}\)
Chapter 6

A national university system emerges

By the early 1970s something of a national university system was evolving in Papua New Guinea, though along different lines from those envisaged by the Currie Commissioners a decade previously. The Papuan Medical College became the UPNG Faculty of Medicine in January 1971. Other developments followed: the upwardly mobile IOT won the right to grant degrees in 1971, and full university status in 1973; Goroka Teachers College became the second departmental training institution to be joined with UPNG, while retaining some autonomy; and finally, the Office of Higher Education became a de facto grants commission, taking on a policy as well as an executive function. Thus, instead of a single university, the country was acquiring a university system.

IOT's upward march

The Department of External Territories always intended IOT to emphasize practical, utilitarian training, to enrol most students in certificate courses and to allow only a minority into higher, diploma, levels. The handful proceeding to full professional training could be most economically sent overseas.\(^1\) The Institute, however, had other views. Neither Matheson nor Duncanson doubted that IOT should grant its best students degrees and aspire to university status. They told the Department that building up a low-level institution was unrealistic — against world trends towards degree-level studies in technological education, and unlikely to attract good staff and good students. That IOT and the Department held pronounced but irreconcilable views became clear in early 1968 with the move to Lae. Matheson and

\(^1\)Reseigh to Smith, 5 November 1966, DTOR 65/3288; notes of meetings between IHTE and Department of External Territories representatives, 26 September 1967, DTOR 67/3555, and 5 February 1968, DTOR 66/6426.
Duncanson visited Canberra to outline the IOT training programme. The certificate courses favoured by the Department were properly the province of the Education Department technical colleges, they argued — the Institute should concentrate on more advanced studies. The Department remained stubborn: its officials kept returning to the question 'What are you doing about training carpenters and mechanics?' So frustrating was the Department's refusal to try to understand that Matheson pointedly told Smith 'it looked as if the Department had in mind a different type of institution from what he and Dr Duncanson were used to operating. and if this were so thought should be given to replacing him as chairman'. Smith hastily retreated, but the Department and IOT remained fundamentally opposed over the role of the latter. This led to further disagreement as IOT sought to enhance, and the Department to confine, its functions.

Several months after the Matheson-Smith exchange, staff of the School of Engineering raised the question of the Institute's status with the IOT Council. Council deputed McKinnon and the IOT Professor of Civil Engineering to discuss with UPNG the possibility of the University's issuing degrees to students completing IOT five-year courses. However, IOT-UPNG dialogue lapsed when the Institute Council postponed the matter pending the outcome of the F.M. Wiltshire inquiry into academic awards in Australian institutes of technology. Council was confident Australian institutes would soon be awarding degrees, and consequently thought IOT would then have a stronger case for granting its own degrees.

More than a year went by with no further progress, until the Institute's Academic Board — its policy making body — lobbied Council with these arguments in favour of degrees for IOT graduates: (i) IOT five-year courses were comparable in length and standard to UPNG degree courses. (ii) Employers recognized the parity between IOT and UPNG graduates by placing them all on the same pay scale.

---

2Duncanson, personal communication; notes of meetings between IHTE and Department of External Territories representatives, 5 February 1968, DTOR 66/6426.

(iii) Engineering required high quality students, but IOT could not attract them while awarding only diplomas. There was prejudice against the term 'diploma' in the secondary schools; consequently schools were sending their best students to UPNG, where qualifications were enhanced by the title 'degree'. (iv) Papua New Guineans could obtain professional qualifications in technology only through IOT. To deny IOT degree-granting powers would thus deny them the chance of obtaining full qualifications. (v) Degree-level studies in engineering should be taken within Papua New Guinea rather than abroad because overseas courses might not be relevant to Papua New Guinea's special problems. (vi) Professional studies such as those undertaken at IOT were normally acknowledged elsewhere with degrees. (vii) Students wishing to undertake postgraduate studies abroad would have difficulty in being accepted if their first qualification were only a diploma. (viii) Better staff would be attracted if the qualification were called a degree. (ix) A cadre of degree-level graduates would be needed for localization to proceed, and employers would not replace expatriates with Papua New Guineans unless the latter had the same formal qualifications as the former. (x) Membership of professional associations would come more readily to IOT graduates if they had degrees. IOT students were well aware of these arguments, too. They added their support to staff ambitions for higher IOT status by 'raising persistent questions concerning the qualifications awarded by the Institute'.

With IOT staff and students solidly in favour of degrees, Council sought the right to award them, though a cautious group of Councillors led by McKinnon remained wary. The 'McKinnonites' suspected staff of wishing primarily to 'upgrade their own positions and enhance their chances of finding university work elsewhere'; and they therefore feared IOT might become so preoccupied with questions of status it might neglect its obligation to train sub-degree level students. At McKinnon's insistence Council agreed to petition government over degrees only on the condition

4ibid.
5Duncanson to Hay, 8 August 1969, DTOR 69/4293.
6McKinnon, RIW, p.2.
that IOT adhered strictly to a policy of offering both sub-professional and professional courses.  

Acting on Council's authority, Duncanson proposed to the Administrator in August 1969 that IOT should offer both diploma and degree courses, organized according to a 'Y-shaped' streaming process. Thus, all engineering students would take a common two-year course, after which the better students would be channelled into a three-year degree programme and the rest into diploma studies. The main advantage of this arrangement would be to reduce IOT's high (25 per cent) and wasteful student attrition rates: 'Y-shaped' streaming would save the less able students, who would previously have quit studies, as it offered them a less demanding study programme. Another advantage was that no extra staff or finance were required.

The Department of External Territories received Duncanson's proposals coolly. Smith saw dangers of escalating costs as IOT endeavoured 'to obtain international acceptance of its degree'. Perhaps this was why the Department now followed the procedure which, during the Barnes-Smith regime, was standard when it had difficult decisions to make on educational policy — it simply did not answer IOT correspondence. Nearly six months passed without official response, and so Matheson contacted the Minister. A further month went by, then Matheson was told 'an important question of policy is involved' and that he would be advised in due course. Eventually he and Duncanson requested permission to place the IOT case before the Minister personally. When they met Barnes, in April 1970, they assured him IOT degrees would entail no departure from practically-oriented training: indeed Council 'was seized with the importance of sub-degree people'. The Wiltshire Report, moreover, had proposed degrees for Australian institutes of technology, so IOT was simply trying to come into line with Australian practice.

---

8 Ibid.; and Duncanson to Hay, 8 August 1969, DTOR 69/4293.
10 Matheson to Barnes, 30 January 1970; Barnes to Matheson, 2 March 1970; notes of meeting between Barnes, Matheson and Duncanson, April 1970, DTOR 69/4293.
Barnes now 'agreed in principle' with the proposals, on the condition that IOT 'would continue to devote its major efforts towards granting diplomas for courses with substantive vocational and technical bias'. The Department formally advised IOT of this agreement in June 1970, and three months later issued a press release saying IOT could henceforth award degrees. In the meantime the House of Assembly duly amended the Institute of Technology Ordinance. The Institute assumed it could introduce 'Y-shaped' streaming and rename its awards accordingly. It proceeded to advise present and prospective staff and students it was a degree-granting body, and made plans to teach both degree and diploma streams in the coming year, 1971.

The government, however, interpreted the Minister's 'agreement in principle' rather differently. Under McKinnon's strong influence the Administrator advised Canberra that he believed a final decision on IOT degrees should await the outcome of the Brown Committee, which inter alia, would examine academic awards. The Department of External Territories hardly needed this cautioning: it had remained sceptical of IOT proposals for degrees, assuming that any Papua New Guinean with an engineering degree would be too concerned with abstruse theory to be of practical value to the country. It now decided that final approval for IOT degrees would only be granted after the Institute had made a specific submission stating the numbers of students expected to follow the degree and diploma streams and detailed costs of both courses. Officially, and without justification, the Department claimed the provision of such detail by IOT was part of the agreement reached with the Minister by Matheson and Duncanson the previous April. The insistence on a detailed submission had been McKinnon's idea originally; and now, late November 1970, he informed Duncanson on behalf of the Administrator that IOT must present its submission to the Brown Committee, due to visit the Institute the following March. He later told the Department

---

11ibid.

his instructions had 'placed a bomb under Duncanson'.

IOT remained shell-shocked only briefly. Duncanson wrote to McKinnon saying his staff, who had spent much time devising the most appropriate courses, found 'the misunderstanding of their aims most frustrating'. McKinnon's directive would, he said, earn both Institute and Administration great ill-will: current students expected to enter degree studies and new students had been recruited understanding they could eventually gain IOT degrees. Matheson then entered the dispute with utmost indignation. He first instructed Duncanson not to alter plans for degree courses in 1971 as 'the understanding with the Minister and the change of the [IOT] Ordinance give full authority'. He then informed the Department 'in quite irate fashion' of his opinion that the government had gone back on a firm agreement with the Minister. He pointed to the Department's long delays in answering IOT correspondence. He said it should have 'put the brakes' on IOT plans earlier in the year, instead of waiting till the onset of the next. He stated, correctly, that the requirement to present details of costs and student numbers was not part of the original agreement; and he pointed out, again correctly, that the required details had already been provided in the IOT's current submission for funds. He concluded by threatening, 'irrationally and intemperately' in the opinion of Departmental officials, to 'go public', drawing attention to the Minister's broken promises and to the Department's role as 'the hatchet man'.

Matheson's outburst shocked the Department into giving way. The new Secretary, Hay, who as Administrator had personally experienced Smith's aggravating discourtesy in not answering correspondence, was conciliatory in subsequent


14 Duncanson to McKinnon, 4 December 1970, DTOR 69/4293.


16 ibid.
discussions with Matheson. He told his Department it had been at fault in delaying action on IOT degrees for months at a time, and warned his officers it must 'live up to the agreement' with IOT. They in turn spoke of 'the need to re-establish good relations with Dr Matheson' and conceded that IOT had been justified in thinking its triennial budgetary submission constituted an adequate statement of intentions. Sir Allen Brown, whose committee was about to begin work, provided further reason for backing down: he felt 'very much disinclined to become involved in any argument between the government and the Institute'.

The Minister now reaffirmed the Institute's right to award degrees — not only in civil engineering, but in electrical and mechanical engineering and architecture as well. Ruefully the Department admitted it had bungled negotiations with IOT. It believed it had been right, but thought 'events [had] proceeded too far to draw back ... and we will reluctantly have to agree to allow the Institute to go forward with its plans'. It was now even more determined to 'ensure that the Institute does not drift inexorably towards a university'. Yet the drift towards university status did proceed relentlessly: scarcely two years after IOT gained approval to award degrees it underwent its second change of titles in four years to become the Papua New Guinea University of Technology.

The Institute owed its final ascent to university status to a boost from its new Director, J.A. Sandover, who succeeded Duncanson early in 1972. The idea of changing the name was not Sandover's: twice, in 1966 and 1971, IOT Council had stated that the arguments for the change were compelling. A number of outsiders, such as Gunther, had also said IOT should and would become a university. And IOT staff and students had also unsuccessfully petitioned the Brown

17 Hay to Hennessy, and Hennessy to Hay, 8 January 1971, DTOR 69/4293.
18 ibid.
19 Territories, telex to Administrator, 8 January 1971; Administrator, telexes to Territories, 3 and 18 February 1971, DTOR 69/4293.
20 ibid.
Committee to that purpose. It was Sandover's determination, however, which clinched the deal. Sandover had swept into IOT, a very new broom bristling with confidence, ambition, enthusiasm and youthful energy. In contrast to his sedate, unobtrusive predecessor he was a dynamic extrovert who unashamedly promoted the IOT public image. These were qualities Council members thought an advantage: after the sound but unspectacular start under Duncanson they thought IOT needed a more flamboyant Director who would 'sell' it to schools, employers and government. As the Institute was rarely far from the headlines thereafter they probably got what they wanted.

Sandover found most of the preliminary work in selling the idea of IOT's university status already done. Following the Brown Committee's rejection of the staff-student petition in 1971, Council had called on the Academic Board to prepare a detailed case for the title 'University'. The Board produced a seven-page document more or less restating the 1969 case for degrees. Its penultimate claim was that despite the oft-expressed fears of the critics — the Department of External Territories, the Brown Committee or McKinnon — the Institute had never departed from its practical bias yet had always maintained high intellectual standards. IOT, moreover, had successfully conducted both professional and sub-professional courses in a de facto university environment, thus innovating, adapting university education to Papua New Guinean needs rather than heedlessly imposing Western models. IOT was proud of these accomplishments, and believed they 'warranted the dignity of the word "University"'.

Using these arguments Sandover began promoting the name change, concentrating the most persistent effort on Cabinet Ministers of the recently elected Somare government. He 'beat a track from Lae to Port Moresby' to discuss with influential government figures various questions affecting IOT, chief of which was university status. Those he lobbied were generally polite if non-committal. Somare, for example,

---

21 Academic Board submission to 27 meeting of IOT Council, 1971, UOT papers relating to change in the Institute's title.
22 Matheson, personal communication.
23 IOT Academic Board submission to 27th meeting of IOT Council, loc. cit.
said he appreciated Sandover's concern for IOT but wanted 'independent assurance' that the change would not cause additional expenses. He therefore intended referring the matter to the proposed Higher Education Commission, expected to become operational early the next year, 1973. As well as winning over Cabinet members, Sandover had to convince the IOT Council, which still contained a McKinnon-led group opposed to IOT's drifting into university status for 'wrong' reasons like staff and student ambition. Council wanted assurances that IOT as a university would retain its practical bias and would not become just another 'typical university of technology'. Following a formal submission from the Academic Board in answer to such questions, Council set its seal of approval on the proposal in August 1972.24

Sandover now began searching for an appropriate name, in anticipation of an early christening. He received many suggestions from his staff and students — 'University of Melanesia', 'West Pacific', 'Kundu' (hand drum in Pidgin), 'Ahi' (a local tribal group), 'Butibam' (a local village), 'Paradisia', 'Pagini', and even 'Duncanson' and 'Somare' University. In the end the search for an apt name became a joke at his expense: when he himself proposed 'Lae University' one staff wit facetiously endorsed the suggestion on the grounds that students could give their girlfriends T-shirts emblazoned with an 'I am going to Lae U' motif. Government took the issue rather more seriously. Somare's advisers pointed out that if IOT broadcast its intentions of becoming, say, 'The University of Melanesia', the country's Melanesian neighbours in Fiji, the Solomon Islands and the New Hebrides might take offence. Moreover, if government gave IOT university status, the word 'technology' should be retained in the title to indicate that function.25

Troubled waters still lay ahead for Sandover. Innuendoes against him and IOT generally were circulating among Somare's inner group of expatriate advisers, who were suggesting that Sandover's motives and those of his staff

24Sandover, RIW; Somare to Sandover, 31 July 1972, UOT papers on the change in IOT's title; Matheson, RIW, pp.3-4; McKinnon, RIW, pp.2, 6.

25Sandover, RIW; K. Alexander to Sandover, 12 September 1972, UOT papers on change in IOT's title; personal observations, 1972.
arose more from concern with their own prestige than from any desire to help the country. Such detractors became objects of Sandover's special ire, as did senior expatriate public servants generally. He was mightily displeased when the Administrator, Johnson, would express no opinion on IOT's ascent until he had tested the reaction of Inglis, who had replaced Gunther as Vice-Chancellor in early 1972. Inglis cited opinion against the name change and suggested referring the matter to the Higher Education Commission when that body was formed. Sandover's response to such obstacles was to renew his efforts with even more zeal. He lobbied the Administrator and the Minister (now A.S. Peacock) and the Secretary for External Territories and the OHE. Again he concentrated most effort on Cabinet Ministers, suggesting that his white opponents had personal axes to grind, and appealing to black pride by saying the matter could only be settled by nationals. It was the latter approach which probably tipped the balance his way when Cabinet considered and finally approved the change of name in January 1973. 26

The Cabinet meeting which approved the name change was guided by a document prepared by Ian Hossack, the first executive officer of the OHE. This set out cases for and against university status for IOT. It was the first submission to Cabinet in which the OHE had adopted a strong policy position, and it was sympathetic to IOT aspirations. It answered the fears of some Cabinet members that Sandover was 'empire building', that IOT would raise its entry levels and thus train fewer students, that it would introduce unnecessary, costly courses, and that it would duplicate UPNG programmes. It argued that IOT was a de facto university institution, and pointed out that developing countries such as Papua New Guinea often called their foremost technological training institutions 'universities'. 27 Thus persuaded, Cabinet accepted the proposal; the House of Assembly proceeded to amend the IOT Ordinance yet again; and the change was gazetted in September 1973. The Papua

26 Sandover, RIW, and personal communication; Inglis to Johnson, 27 December 1972; Sandover to Johnson, 2 January 1973, UPNGR F.2 (part 7); Sandover to Hay, 20 December 1972; to A.C. Voutas, 2 January 1973; and to Somare, 30 October 1972 and 2 January 1973, UOT papers on change in IOT's title.

27 Hossack, RIW, p.5.
New Guinea University of Technology (UOT), with Matheson redesignated Chancellor and Sandover as Vice-Chancellor, was now the country's second university.

The upward climb by IOT was perhaps inexorable, yet personalities and circumstances had greatly eased its way. With ambitious leadership, ambitious staff and students, and autonomy, the institution was able to gain momentum. As it did, it so grew in confidence and determination that it became hard to restrain. The mood of the time also helped. 1972-73 was the period of Australian colonial disengagement, and heavy-handed attempts in Canberra to direct the course of higher education in Papua New Guinea — so characteristic of the Barnes-Smith regime — were decidedly passé. As the new national government began flexing its muscles appeals to national interest and pride were timely. A campaign directed by a determined promoter like Sandover stood more chance of success than earlier, or later. Opinion subsequently differed on whether the Institute's assumption of the name 'university' was necessary or beneficial;\(^{28}\) yet the fact is that IOT did progressively raise its status far above that originally intended, despite many obstacles. Which suggests that a certain relentless logic governed the development of the autonomous educational institutions.

A prolonged courtship: UPNG and Goroka Teachers College

In 1964 the Currie Report recommended that UPNG should assume control of government teachers colleges. Eleven years later only Goroka Teachers College (GTC), the premier teacher training institution, had joined the University. For much of the intervening period UPNG, GTC and the government were negotiating to this end. Their dealings reveal much of how the University viewed itself and other tertiary institutions, and of how government viewed the University.

The Department of Education and UPNG first began exploring how they might implement Currie recommendations

\(^{28}\) Some — McKinnon, Gunther, Matheson — believed university status was both desirable and necessary for the Institute once it had opted out of the close bond with UPNG in 1966. Within UOT, however, there remained a body of opinion that the Institute should have been confined to its earlier, less-exalted role (M. Woodward, D. Dale, personal communications).
in 1967. Negotiations began with a meeting between McKinnon and Roe, at which McKinnon proposed that UPNG should absorb GTC as a college of the University. In response Roe set out a UPNG viewpoint which greatly frustrated attempts to bring the two institutions together — for GTC to become a UPNG college the University must be satisfied its staff and courses were worthy of university status.29

The UPNG Interim Council appointed a committee to consider the further development of UPNG-GTC bonds. The committee devised a scheme it hoped would lead eventually to a merger, but this amounted to little: UPNG-Department of Education consultations would continue, with the aim of setting up GTC courses UPNG could credit towards a degree; and secondment of UPNG staff to GTC could also be investigated; however, before UPNG would agree to either of these it wanted assurances about GTC staff and facilities. Not surprisingly little eventuated: seven UPNG staff later visited GTC to give occasional lectures, and the University sponsored a one-semester language course at the College, but that was about all. The Department of Education nevertheless thought 'a co-operative relationship' was emerging, and proposed that during 1969 UPNG should send staff to GTC to teach a further six units of language, education and anthropology. The request was fruitless. First, few UPNG staff were available; secondly, the UPNG Professorial Board, concerned about standards, decreed that any GTC unit receiving University credit must initially be taught and examined by UPNG staff. Then the Board withdrew recognition from a GTC English course being taught by a GTC lecturer who held the UPNG postgraduate Diploma in Teaching English as a Second Language, on the grounds that 'no person suitably qualified' was available to teach it.30 This greatly angered the UPNG Professor of English, Frank Johnson, who accused his colleagues of 'a conservative and narrow minded view of ... relations with GTC'.31 Further difficulties arose the

29Roe to UPNG Professorial Board, n.d. (1967), UPNGR F.69 (part 1).

30Minutes of committee appointed by Interim Council, 6 October and 14 November 1967; V. McNamara to Gunther, 26 September 1968; Roe, F. Johnson and R. Bulmer to Gunther, 14, 18, 28 October 1968; minutes of sub-committee of Professorial Board, 10 March 1969, UPNGR F.69 (part 1).

31Johnson to Gunther, 27 March 1969, UPNGR F.69 (part 1).
following year, 1970, when the Faculty of Education stationed a lecturer full time at GTC to run a Diploma of Education course for the College staff. Four staff members wishing to take the course were at first refused admission by the University, which declared they were not formally matriculated. Such cases provoked McKinnon in particular as he thought UPNG was being unnecessarily rigid. However a limited UPNG-GTC relationship did develop over the next year or two, the main link being the presence in Goroka of an English Department staff member and one from the Education Faculty who taught courses to College students for which UPNG credits were later given if the students went on to study at Waigani.  

McKinnon wanted closer links than this. He was perturbed by the 'downward spiral' in educational standards—the situation where 'ill-prepared teachers teach secondary school students badly who in turn become even worse teachers of ill-prepared pupils'. He feared that without strong University affiliations GTC would not attract good students, would subsequently 'degenerate into a second rate institution', and speed the 'downward spiral'. In June 1972 he wrote to Inglis expressing his concern. The GTC-UPNG relationship was 'not what we believe it can and ought to be', he said, reminding the Vice-Chancellor that 'the University Ordinance actually specifies that [UPNG] should take over [GTC] at a suitable time .... That time might now have arrived'. Inglis referred the matter to Roe, who suspected that McKinnon did not intend a full UPNG takeover but was merely angling to have GTC courses recognized with minimal UPNG controls. He guessed McKinnon was simultaneously dealing with Sandover and IOT, attempting to 'sell to the highest bidder'. (In this he was right, for McKinnon had indeed been treating with Sandover, who was most interested and hoped 'any future relationship with

32 O'Neill to Thodey, 12 March 1969, UPNGR F.69 (part 1); McKinnon (1971), p.21; Roe, circular to Arts and Science Faculties, 12 October 1972, UPNGR F.69 (part 2).
33 McKinnon to Sandover, 5 July 1972, UPNGR F.69 (part 2).
34 McKinnon to Inglis, 14 June 1972, UPNGR F.69 (part 2).
35 ibid.
36 Roe to Inglis, 22 June 1972, UPNGR F.69 (part 2).
Goroka would be mainly with us'.) Although sceptical, Roe and Inglis entered discussions with McKinnon. They agreed that if GTC and UPNG merged, students completing the three-year GTC diploma could teach for a couple of years then enter UPNG to finish a degree in education. McKinnon subsequently submitted a formal proposal to the University along these lines, suggesting that UPNG should immediately assume control and supervision of College courses and staff selection and appointment. The UPNG Council agreed to further negotiations and were represented by Roe in the discussions which followed. The Department of Education wanted UPNG to take professional responsibility for GTC by the beginning of 1973, and then progressively assume full administrative control. Before this could happen, however, the UPNG Professorial Board and faculties had to be consulted.38

The proposed merger was now discussed generally within the University. Various views emerged, with those of the Faculty of Education being the most enthusiastic. The Faculty proposed a nine-step merger plan whereby the College would become a Faculty of Education responsibility. Other faculties were not as eager: Arts, for example, with strong departments of History, Economics, Government, English and Anthropology-Sociology, had as much interest in the pre-service training of teachers as Education—prospective teachers, after all, took general academic coursework as well as professional studies. They were therefore wary of Education's attempt to assume a monopoly of the College. The Professorial Board managed to steer around such snags and approved the UPNG-GTC union 'in principle', saying this should begin in 1973 and recommending the formation of a committee of all interested parties to consider all aspects of the takeover. Council endorsed this decision in November 1972.39

37Sandover to McKinnon, 12 July, UPNGR F.69 (part 2).
38Inglis, note for file, 28 June 1972; McKinnon, 'Professional responsibility for GTC', 10 July 1972; Roe to Inglis, 21 September 1972; Roe to Arts and Science Faculties, 12 October 1972, UPNGR F.69 (part 2).
39Roe, circular to all faculties, 11 October 1972; Academic Planning Committee, 'Relationship with GTC', 31 October 1972; Professorial Board Minutes, 8 November 1972, UPNGR F.69 (part 2); A. O'Neill, RIW.
In the meantime the Department of Education had been working to secure government support for its proposals. The Department of External Territories, now in its final phase of existence, responded with accustomed caution, warning of raised standards and increased costs, of higher student wastage rates in a UPNG-controlled College, and of a slower rate of localization.\textsuperscript{40} The Papua New Guinean Cabinet was not, however, deterred. It decided that a 'Committee on the Goroka Transfer' should be set up. Subsequently a five-man committee, headed by the recently appointed UPNG Deputy Vice-Chancellor, F. Oldfield, was formed, and at the end of May 1973 it produced a detailed, thirty-six page report. This proposed the terms under which the transfer should proceed, and supplied estimates of recurrent and capital expenditure for the next triennium. The transfer, it said, should be gradual, taking place over the next two and a half years. Cabinet endorsed this report in October 1973, with a rider stating that 'the output of qualified teachers from the College should be maintained both in percentage and absolute terms'.\textsuperscript{41} To supervise the transfer a Working Party was now set up with representation from UPNG, GTC, the Department of Education and the Department of Finance.\textsuperscript{42}

The Working Party on the GTC Transfer had hardly been formed when sections of the University community began questioning the basis of the transfer, particularly Cabinet's directive on maintaining the output of graduates. The Working Party chairman himself, D. Stannard, a member of the UPNG Faculty of Education doubted that 'this guarantee [could] honourably be given' since the University was still ignorant of the standard of GTC students and courses.\textsuperscript{43} Inglis also voiced misgivings, pointing out to government that the directive touched a very sensitive nerve of the University - its autonomy. He said some academics had always been

\textsuperscript{40}'Transfer of responsibility for GTC: Department of Territories views', 10 January 1973, UPNGR F.69 (part 2).

\textsuperscript{41}Committee on the Goroka Transfer, Minutes, 11 April, 9 May, 28 May 1973, UPNGR F.69 (part 3); W. Rees to K. Long, 23 November 1973, UPNGR F.69 (part 4).

\textsuperscript{42}Oldfield to Tololo, 9 November 1973; Trevaskis to Inglis, 21 November 1973, UPNGR F.69 (part 4).

\textsuperscript{43}Stannard to O'Neill, 13 December 1973, UPNGR F.69 (part 4).
worried that UPNG would control GTC 'in name only', with the Department of Education inevitably interfering; consequently there could be 'pressure within the University to have the College revert to Department of Education control'.

Despite such anxiety, the Working Party began work in January 1974 and made a series of recommendations for transferring responsibility for various administrative, financial and academic matters from the Department to UPNG. Its most important proposals were in the last of these areas. It recommended the phasing out of the GTC Governing Council by mid-1974, by which time the UPNG-GTC relationship would have been formalized; an 'Interim Academic Board of Studies' should be established at Goroka, comprising representatives of GTC staff and students, the UPNG faculties of Arts, Science and Education, and the Department of Education. The formation of the Interim Academic Board (IAB), formally approved by the UPNG Professorial Board in February 1974, was of particular importance: the issues that arose from it became a source of tension between all the parties involved as well as various interest groups within GTC itself.

Most of these conflicts stemmed from the dissatisfaction of the new Director of Education, Alkan Tololo (who replaced McKinnon in mid-1973) with numerous aspects of the negotiations. The earliest strains occurred over the IAB's composition. Tololo thought his department was under-represented on the Board which was dealing with matters of vital and continuing interest to the Department. He also thought the College over-represented: he wished to curtail GTC ambition. Inglis solved these problems by agreeing to increased Departmental representation. Then Tololo became apprehensive that the GTC-UPNG relationship might serve to decrease the supply of secondary teachers. He wanted 'greater numbers of teachers more quickly', and enthusiastically supported a scheme the Faculty of Education devised in April 1974 which seemed to promise this: the B.Ed. would become an in-service (rather than a pre-service) degree, with all B.Ed. students first doing a two-year GTC diploma then teaching for two years before entering UPNG for a full

---

44Inglis to Tololo, 7 December 1973; Inglis to Rees, 31 December 1973, UPNGR F.69 (part 4).
time two-year programme to complete the degree. This scheme drew both Tololo and the Faculty into dispute with the faculties of Arts and Science. The latter wished to 'keep a pathway to teaching open through the four-year degree programme started at Waigani', believing it wrong to segregate all teacher trainees from the rest of the University population at an early stage', thus giving them what might be 'an inferior or even a different qualification'. Arts and Science generally felt that 'people in education are long on professionalism but short on academic expertise in subject areas'; consequently they felt they, too, should have a significant position in teacher education, and so resisted moves — such as the removal of numerous students to Goroka — to reduce their input. Tololo brushed aside arguments that did not accord with his view. Ideally, he claimed, the College and the Faculty of Education should amalgamate to produce 'a more unified approach and programme', as 'it did not make sense to have two expensive institutions doing the same thing'. But, he told John Ballard, the Professor of Administrative Studies in the Faculty of Arts, Arts—Science defensiveness was hindering such a rationalization of resources in secondary teacher training — which meant that faculty members were, ipso facto, obstructing national goals.

In mid-1974, with the IAB failing to recommend an Education Faculty-GTC amalgamation and following an independent approach to the UPNG-GTC merger instead, Tololo wrote a series of long letters to Inglis voicing his dissatisfaction with the trend of developments. He had a number of specific objections against the IAB: it was acting more like 'a governing body than a group to consider curriculum matters'; it was referring matters directly to the UPNG Academic Board rather than to the Faculty of Education; Waigani representation on the IAB was composed too

45 Working Party on the Goroka Transfer, Minutes, 11 January and 1 March 1974, UPNGR F.69 (part 2); Tololo to Inglis, 8 March 1974; Tololo to E.B. Thomas, 10 April 1974; Faculty of Education Planning Committee, 'Co-operation in secondary teacher training', April 1974, UPNGR F.69 (part 5).
46 A. Clunies-Ross, 'Education Faculty's Goroka Plan', April 1974, UPNGR F.69 (part 5).
47 Tololo to J. Ballard, 25 April 1974, UPNGR F.69 (part 5).
48 ibid.
largely of people not of the Education Faculty; as a result of which GTC was becoming infected with an unwelcome independence, and was losing sight of the need to adhere to Department and Faculty of Education thinking. Inglis patiently replied that UPNG had no wish to 'drive a wedge between Goroka and the Faculty', but wanted to strengthen GTC's position through associating it with the University. But Tololo was not reassured, and continued to be provoked by the IAB's failure to weld the Faculty and College together.

Another source of disagreement was staffing. Inglis wanted GTC staff to stay on after the merger, seconded to UPNG by the Department of Education to provide continuity and stability during the transition. GTC staff, too, favoured secondment since this would guarantee various lucrative perquisites they enjoyed as Departmental employees. Tololo, however, adamantly refused secondments: he wanted UPNG to find its own staff, chiefly because he wished to deploy current GTC staff to other government teachers colleges. Inglis objected that UPNG had always understood the transfer would be 'a gradual affair' with no sudden, disruptive removal of all Departmental staff. Tololo sympathized, but claimed he needed present GTC staff more than UPNG did. In the end he had his way, and any GTC staff member staying on had to apply for advertised positions at UPNG and resign from the Department if successful.

Tololo had other important reasons for wanting extensive changeover in staff. First, he had little sympathy with academic freedom in government-run institutions, and he disapproved of dissent among his staff. As a traditionalist, he had been disconcerted by the unwelcome critical faculty evident in the IAB ranks, and his instinct was to curb this promptly. Several GTC members of the IAB who intended quitting the country soon had used Board meetings to air grievances against the Department, UPNG, and the Faculty of Education: they had not wished the College to lose its distinctive character through absorption by the Faculty, as Tololo wanted. This irritated Tololo greatly, and he believed that removing the 'stirrers' from the scene would allow both UPNG and GTC to concentrate better on their shared task of producing more secondary teachers. Yet a

49Tololo to Inglis, 12 June 1974, UPNG F.69 (part 6).

50Inglis to Tololo, 3 July 1974, UPNG F.69 (part 6).
further reason for a complete break between the old GTC staff and the new was the 'flow-on effect' — the tendency for any development at GTC to provoke demands for parity at other teachers colleges. If GTC staff seconded to UPNG enjoyed conspicuous university-type advantages — lighter teaching loads, study leave, for example — there would probably be demands for similar concessions in other teachers colleges; and UPNG, the Department believed, was too self-preoccupied to appreciate the flow-on effects it might encourage. Better, then, for no staff to be seconded to the University.\textsuperscript{51}

Despite the numerous disagreements between Tololo and UPNG over its work, the IAB made steady progress. It set up a series of subject panels which thoroughly revised the curriculum; it produced a scheme of academic government for running the College under a Board of Studies analogous to a UPNG faculty; it recommended that the eight previous GTC teaching departments be drawn together and replaced by four Schools of Studies, each having the function of a UPNG academic department; it advocated the appointment of a GTC Principal with the status of a Dean of Faculty on the UPNG Academic Board; it set a staffing establishment of thirty-six to handle teaching; it reviewed administrative services and library facilities; and it drafted by-laws for the award of a Diploma of Secondary Teaching. In addition it recommended the setting up of a 'Joint Committee on Teacher Education', with representation from the Department of Education, the UPNG faculties of Education, Arts, and Science, and the GTC Board of Studies. The function of this body would be to 'consider matters of common interest to the College, the Faculty of Education, and to the Ministry of Education as they arise'.\textsuperscript{52}

Throughout the prolonged correspondence and disagreement with Tololo, UPNG had steadily moved on with its plans

\textsuperscript{51}F. Geelen to GTC Principal, 4 April 1974; M. McArthur, statement of GTC staff attitudes to GTC-UPNG merger, 28 February 1974, UPNGR F.69 (part 4); T.S.F. Woods to D. Sloper, 25 April 1974, UPNGR F.69 (part 5); Tololo to Inglis, 16 April 1974; Inglis to Tololo, 29 April 1974; Tololo to Inglis, 8 May 1974, UPNGR F.69 (part 6); O'Neill, RIW.

\textsuperscript{52}D. Sloper, 'Report on GTC', 2 September 1974; GTC LAB, Minutes, 1 October 1974, UPNGR F.69 (part 6).
for the merger, using the IAB as its medium. By October 1974 all that was needed for the merger to come into effect at the beginning of 1975 was Tololo's blessing. The Joint Committee on Teacher Education was what finally won this. The proposal for the Joint Committee was a shrewd move by UPNG's Planning Officer, A. O'Neill, to whom Inglis had delegated much of the liaison work with the Department of Education. O'Neill appreciated just what sort of concession from UPNG would clinch Tololo's approval. Inglis endorsed O'Neill's suggestion for the Joint Committee, sensing that Tololo would welcome it. He wrote to Tololo saying, 'I believe we are getting near to constructing the machinery we need to serve our complementary purposes .... I look forward to an exchange with you about the final construction. Let's crack a bottle of champagne when at last we launch it!'\textsuperscript{53} Tololo did seem finally satisfied: 'At last it looks as if we might be getting somewhere,' he wrote back to Inglis in October 1974 just after the IAB had endorsed O'Neill's proposal for a Joint Committee.\textsuperscript{54} For UPNG that was enough: it regarded the merger as concluded and did not bother requesting a bill of contract. Inglis and Tololo celebrated the marriage with a lunch at the Davara Motel, their relief that almost nine years' negotiations were over toasted not with champagne but soft drinks.\textsuperscript{55}

The union duly followed, but the problems Tololo had hoped it would solve continued. The rationalization of secondary teacher training did not occur because both College and Faculty of Education maintained their separate ways. The College still offered its three-year pre-service diploma and ran various in-service programmes for the Department of Education. The Faculty went on offering both pre- and in-service B.Ed. programmes, undergraduate courses within B.Sc., B.A. and B.Ec. degrees, and numerous sub- and postgraduate diplomas in education. Nor did the marriage prove easy: during the next two years at least there were persistent recriminations from GTC, which felt intellectually and professionally, as well as physically, remote from Waigani.

Difficulties between GTC — now virtually a faculty of UPNG — and Waigani did not take long to surface. At first

\textsuperscript{53} Inglis to Tololo, 11 September 1974, UPNGR F.69 (part 6).

\textsuperscript{54} Tololo to Inglis, 10 October 1974, UPNGR F.69 (part 6).

\textsuperscript{55} Inglis, personal communication.
GTC was pleased with the change in sponsorship from Department of Education to UPNG. The new Principal, H.J. Tinsley, advised the UPNG Council, 'Our consensual view is that the change was imaginative, bold, and is clearly working.'

Nevertheless there were immediate problems: 'the students, uncertain of their place in the new scheme of things, have been suspicious of the University'; 'the Waigani system of faculties and departments has not happily transferred to the Goroka context'; and GTC was uncertain where it stood in relation to Faculty of Education courses, unsure of 'what type of professional it must produce' vis-à-vis the Faculty's. Further problems emerged as 1975 wore on. First, some at Waigani still suspected that neither GTC staff nor students measured up to UPNG standards. Shortly before the merger, for instance, the UPNG Professor of Mathematics saw fit to emphasise the disparity in qualifications between the Waigani and Goroka Mathematics staff, those of the latter, he argued, being much the inferior. And afterwards, when GTC insisted in appointing lecturers whom he thought should only be tutors, he advised the Vice-Chancellor to be 'vindictive' by requiring GTC to 'live with the results of their own choice'. Another example was a dispute over the standing of the first post-merger intake of GTC students. One view at Waigani was that the students were not matriculated because they fell below UPNG entry requirements. Another view was that if GTC students were granted matriculation they might 'drift down to Waigani rather than complete the Goroka course'.

GTC, however, maintained that its students must be regarded as matriculated otherwise their enrolment would be illegal. After considerable discussion within the Faculty of Law, Waigani eventually decided that, legally, admission to GTC implied matriculation. But though Waigani assured GTC that 'students at Goroka have become students of the University in the fullest sense of the word',

56 H.J. Tinsley, 'Progress report on Goroka campus development since its incorporation into the University', 21 April 1975, UPNGR F.69 (part 8).

57 ibid.

58 McKay to Inglis, 20 August 1974; to Gris, 9 May 1975, UPNGR F.69 (part 8).

59 O'Neill to Gris, 9 April 1975, UPNGR F.69 (part 8).
some people at Goroka wondered how many at Waigani really accepted that.\textsuperscript{60}

A second matter concerning GTC was the 'structural inertia' which those at Goroka felt had beset the union. They began thinking GTC was destined to play a perpetual Cinderella to an older Waigani sister. They were 'irked by what they [saw] as Waigani ignorance, indifference or suspicion of College plans and aspirations'; dissatisfied that their resources were 'poor by comparison with those available in other parts of the University'; disgruntled in their conviction that more was being demanded of them than of others at UPNG, and that their distance from Waigani gave the rest of the University little appreciation of their difficulties.\textsuperscript{61} GTC had anticipated joining Waigani as a co-partner not a poor relation, and as the reality fell short of expectation disenchantment grew. Added to this were certain semantic difficulties. Tinsley was unhappy with the titles 'College' and 'Principal', which he thought 'irrelevant and indeed obstructive anachronisms to genuine progress'. He proposed changing the one to 'Goroka Faculty of Education' and the other to 'Deputy Vice-Chancellor at Goroka'. He seemed to be hankering after higher status, displeased that GTC was just 'a University campus [where] no degree courses are offered'. Instead of teaching merely a pre-service diploma he wanted it to offer a B.Ed. course in order to create 'academic incentive', provide 'intellectual stimulation', and give the campus 'a genuine University atmosphere'.\textsuperscript{62}

GTC upward mobility soon brought it into conflict with Tololo, who let Tinsley know he was displeased GTC was 'pushing the idea that it should be another faculty duplicating a range of courses already being conducted elsewhere, or perhaps even another University'!\textsuperscript{63} He emphasized the point he had often made to Inglis: there was little justification for a division between GTC and the Waigani Faculty of Education, which he had always said should not be allowed to exist.

\textsuperscript{60}\textit{ibid.}
\textsuperscript{61}Tinsley to Gris, 29 July 1975; O'Neill to Gris, 15 October 1975, UPNGR 75/234.
\textsuperscript{62}Tinsley to Gris, \textit{loc. cit.}
\textsuperscript{63}Tololo to Tinsley, 25 October 1975, UPNGR F.69 (part 8).
He threatened that the government might feel obliged to resume control of GTC if Gorokan ambition became too grand. Tinsley perhaps recognized that Tololo the Director of Education was also Tololo the Tolai traditionalist who distrusted rapid or disruptive change. He saw the threat in Tololo's warning and hastened to give assurances that he was just not another 'obdurate expatriate ... hell-bent on foisting his own irrelevant ideas on an unwilling Papua New Guinea'. Tololo accepted the reassurance, but stressed his wish of seeing GTC 'settled into its role within UPNG as a pre-service institution before even considering such a move' as upgrading itself to degree-granting status.

Some at Waigani were more sympathetic to Gorokan aspirations than Tololo, appreciating perhaps that heavy-handed threats were no way to contain institutional ambitions. O'Neill, for example, believed that it was preferable to accommodate rather than proscribe GTC's hopes. He therefore suggested that UPNG upgrade GTC by relocating the Waigani-based Faculty of Education there, together with the Educational Research Unit and the Educational Materials Centre. The entire UPNG effort in Education would thus be at Goroka, and this could remove several problems at one blow — GTC's Cinderella complex, its status aspirations, the GTC-Faculty of Education rivalry, the Department of Education's anxiety over poor collaboration between Faculty and College, and Tololo's propensity to meddle in UPNG's internal affairs. Whether such an arrangement, however attractive, could ever eventuate was doubtful, however. Any serious move in that direction would certainly meet powerful opposition from the Faculties of Arts and Science, who wished to contribute to the B.Ed. programme, while the Faculty of Education would be unlikely to forego the advantage of main campus and capital city location willingly.

By the end of 1976 GTC had been part of UPNG for two years, yet the difficulties within the relationship were still not fully resolved. But despite the remaining problems, the union of the two institutions seemed secure, at

---

64Tinsley to Tololo, 27 October 1975, UPNGR F.69 (part 8).
65Tololo to Tinsley, 31 October 1975, UPNGR F.69 (part 8).
66O'Neill to Gris, 15 October 1975, UPNGR 75/234; O'Neill, RIW.
least for the time being. An important stage in the development of the country's university system had been reached: the family of university institutions had grown considerably, and now included four of the seven major institutions of tertiary education. Within the family were the former Papuan Medical College, UPNG, GTC and UOT, while the Administrative, Vudal Agricultural, and Bulolo Forestry Colleges still remained outside. (Also within the university system, in its 'non-official sector', were the three leading Christian seminaries, which awarded degrees — Martin Luther (Lutheran) at Lae, Holy Spirit (Catholic) at Bomana, and Rarongo (United Church) near Rabaul.)

The protracted negotiations bringing about the latest increase to the family illustrated much about the changing nature of the university system. As the system emerged it grew in complexity, and its capacity for conflict also increased. Many potential stress lines became apparent. The first tensions to appear were those between UPNG and the colonial Administration, which wished to see a rationalized, cohesive scheme of tertiary education firmly established before the transfer of power to a national government. UPNG, as usual, wished to safeguard its autonomy, and that meant delaying negotiations until it was satisfied it would not be saddled with an onerous burden that might give government an excuse to interfere. After negotiations for the final takeover got under way after 1972, a national government was in control, but that did not alter UPNG's determination for the merger to proceed on its own terms. This attitude brought it into conflict with the national bureaucracy in the person of Tololo. During the disagreements between him and UPNG new questions arose — national government's view of university claims to autonomy, government's wish to control the universities directly, and the view which the new elite of national bureaucrats, like Tololo, had of the universities as specialized government agencies. These questions were not explicitly phrased, but that the national government and its bureaucratic power-brokers were little committed to Western notions of university autonomy was becoming evident. Having inherited an expensive university system, they were determined to gain maximum economic benefits from their legacy — the optimal flow of trained manpower in the minimum of time. This need to guarantee the quality and supply of manpower had prompted McKinnon to push GTC into the UPNG fold; and the manpower imperative also drove his successor: Tololo supported and defended the Faculty of Education because its plans seemed likely to ensure the best supply.
Tololo's impatience with the detractors of the Faculty of Education scheme for merging with GTC indicated a mounting suspicion within the national political and bureaucratic elite of university claims to traditional rights — autonomy, academic freedom, the right to dissent. There was a feeling that these were not rights but privileges, and as such should be secondary to the universities' obligation to justify their high costs by accepting government direction. Such impatience lay behind Tololo's attacks on the IAB of GTC. His wish to direct its activities and curtail its ability to dissent arose from a conviction that universities existed primarily to serve government. To bureaucrats like Tololo appeals to the traditional rights were humbug. This was an attitude educational planners of the past — Currie Commission and Brown Committee — had sought to minimize, and against which they had endeavoured to erect defenses. Western planners could see value in guaranteeing university autonomy to assure free inquiry and independent criticism; however, it was an ideal which national government was coming to see as sophistry — an obfuscation of the universities' fundamental role.

The difference in attitude between the colonial and the national bureaucrats became apparent during UPNG-Department of Education negotiations. McKinnon, who hoped his great contribution to higher education would be its rationalization, tried to produce this in a framework which guaranteed university autonomy by placing a buffer, the Higher Education Commission, between universities and government. Tololo, however, made plain that UPNG must serve national needs as decreed, and if necessary, by political direction. Cabinet shared his thinking: the Cabinet which aborted the Higher Education Commission was the Cabinet which directed UPNG to undertake commitments to maintain the output of secondary teachers. Expatriate officials like McKinnon, raised in traditions of liberal humanism and university independence, might conflict with the universities, but would concede the universities' view of their rights. Their Papua New Guinean successors were not as ready for conciliation, and where concessions must be made it would have to be the universities which gave way, or at least appeared to do so. It was a measure of UPNG's sophistication and sensitivity under Inglis that compromises were reached over GTC which satisfied both University and government.
The negotiations over GTC revealed other lines of stress. Some were internal to UPNG, for example the division between Education and Arts-Science. The attempt of the former to incorporate GTC within itself produced a dispute common among universities elsewhere — that between education and specialist faculties. As a result the arrangement made for GTC contrasted with that made for the Papuan Medical College four years previously: the former became a College of the University whereas the latter had become a faculty. Another strain affecting the final outcome was GTC's unwillingness simply to be swallowed by UPNG. This also contributed to the post-marital tensions between the two. The continuing friction between Waigani and Goroka eventually called forth proposals for the removal of the entire Faculty of Education to Goroka and its amalgamation with GTC to reduce the conflict. The arrangement hammered out between University and Department of Education had thus left room for further change, and possibly conflict.

The OHE: an interloper appears

As we have seen, a series of government decisions over the years had deprived the growing university system of formal policy-making and executive machinery. In 1964-65 the Department of Territories under the Barnes-Smith regime was unwilling to allow the Australian Universities Commission to participate in university development in Papua New Guinea. This left a vacuum which Sir Leslie Melville filled when conflict between the Department and UPNG and IOT over finance required the appointment of an assessor of the institutions' financial needs. Melville's reports between 1969 and 1972 provided some basis for coordination; yet the defects of a 'one-man grants commission' were keenly felt: his annual visits were too brief; the two institutions believed he gave them only cursory appraisal; they regarded him more as government agent than independent adviser; and eventually they became too complicated for one part-time assessor. The Brown Committee believed a Higher Education Commission would provide what was lacking, but the demise of that body during planning — a victim of nationalist determination to resist Western innovation — once more left the university system without effective machinery for coordination. With IOT clamouring for university status, and UPNG and GTC about to embrace in their courtship dance, the university system in late 1973 was rapidly becoming more complex and ever more in need of co-ordination. Once again a vacuum existed, and this time the Office of Higher Education (OHE) filled it.
The work of OHE began in the Special Projects Branch of the Department of Education, a unit to which McKinnon consigned higher education tasks like forwarding UPNG and IOT estimates to Melville. In late 1972 OHE came into formal existence within the Chief Minister's Department as the executive arm of the Higher Education Commission, the formation of which Cabinet had 'approved in principle'. Its executive officer was Ian Hossack, head of the Department of Education's Planning Division. It first took over the administrative arrangements for the final Melville assessment, and spent much of its early months mediating between the Department of Finance and UPNG and IOT over levels of funding. Its second task was to prepare and shepherd draft legislation for the HEC through various Cabinet meetings, until Cabinet let the Bill lapse in mid-1973. Meanwhile OHE became involved in the formation of the Committee of Enquiry into Academic Salaries, Awards and Conditions (the first Gris Committee). This body recommended the cutting of the tie with Australian academic salaries, and during the subsequent angry outcry from the UPNG and IOT staff associations OHE became the go-between.

The first Gris Committee led to the second Gris Committee of Enquiry on University Development (CEUD). OHE provided executive and secretarial assistance to both Gris committees. It also did much executive work for the working parties planning two new faculties, Agriculture at UPNG and Forestry at UOT. In its first year OHE performed a useful administrative function, and was seen to be filling a need. With an expanding university system, and government taking a more critical interest in university education, it was receiving a large volume of work — too much for any other agency to handle. Consequently, even though its parent body, the HEC, had been banished to semi-permanent cool storage, OHE lived on, spared because it was useful.

At this stage OHE remained primarily an administrative body, but the potential for an additional, more influential policy-making role was becoming obvious. Cabinet began calling on it for advice in minor matters such as the composition of the first and second Gris Committees, and nomination of panel members to replace Melville. Cabinet also required it to write position papers assessing the advantages and disadvantages of various proposals, thus giving it a policy function. Some of the submissions it was called on to prepare were significant — those recommending the change in name from Institute to University of Technology, and the placement of the Faculty of Forestry at UOT rather than at UPNG.
(see Chapter 7 below). The latter case became a source of acrimonious dispute between the universities, and more than the simple location of a new faculty was at stake: tangled issues of environmental conservation, technologies appropriate to developing nations, foreign investment, and nationalism loomed large. In such matters OHE advice to Cabinet could tip the balance one way or the other. Consequently it began assuming, unobtrusively, a larger role than originally intended.67

In late 1973 W.C. Rees, an economist from the Manpower Planning Unit of the Central Planning Office, succeeded Hossack. Rees was an ambitious bureaucrat with a full appreciation of the power of public servants, and under him OHE rapidly developed its policy-forming potential. His style and ambition for OHE soon became apparent in the re-designation of his position: whereas Hossack had been the 'Executive Officer', Rees became the 'Director'. Later, when asked how influential OHE would have become without him, he answered:

Clearly, as the universities got bigger and the whole system more complicated it wasn't adequate for the universities to be handled through a sub-section of a branch of the Department of Education. Any reasonably competent administrator with initiative and understanding about what the system was all about would have developed OHE as I have, without legislative backing, purely with an administrative approach.68

The key to his success was his understanding of 'the system': even though OHE lacked a statutory base he lifted it to pre-eminence, increasing the range of its activities and the strength of its position until it had assumed most of the functions intended for the HEC and had virtually become a de facto universities commission.

Rees welded together an apparatus composed of various committees related to OHE in order to provide the co-ordinating machinery his university system had previously lacked. The major component was the Universities Finance Review Committee (UFRC), a panel of three formed in late 1973 to

---

67I. Hossack, RIW, pp.2-5.
68Rees, RIW, pp.28-30.
take over Melville's functions. Its chairman was V.M.N. Tigilai, a young UPNG Economics graduate in the Department of Finance; and its original members were Karmel (by now Chairman of the AUC), and C. Ianamu, a local government administrator. The UFRC, after briefing by OHE, which had already received and analysed the universities' submissions for funds, visited the campuses much as Melville had done, then produced a report to the Minister for Education recommending whatever finances it thought appropriate. OHE also provided the UFRC with secretarial and executive services, contributed substantially to the writing of its report, and wrote the submission to Cabinet from the Minister requesting that funds be granted. And so, although the UFRC was theoretically independent, as Melville had been, in fact it relied heavily on the advice and assistance of OHE. Under Rees, OHE thus became the effective arbiter of university finances, and therefore of university development. This function enabled OHE to achieve a degree of control over trends in development which had been absent before. In allocating funds between universities, for example, it could ensure a much larger share for UOT. Previously there had been a rough rule of thumb by which the ratio of allocation had worked 2:1 in favour of UPNG; but believing technological education needed greater emphasis Rees exerted his influence in the UFRC to scrap this rule. Consequently UOT's share of recurrent expenditure rose from 63 per cent of the Waigani campus in 1971-72 to 74 per cent in 1975-76.69

The second committee within the apparatus was the Committee on University Trained Manpower (CUTM). This body began as the Planning Committee on Professional Manpower, set up by OHE in mid-1974 to provide data so that university enrolments might better reflect the manpower needs of the country. When the CEUD recommended the formation of a similar committee — CUTM — OHE renamed its committee and passed it over to the Central Planning Office, though Rees remained a member. His opponents at UPNG thought that he had deliberately manoeuvred himself into a position of control over manpower planning in the universities in order to impose the disputed formulas he had devised several years previously, when he had been in charge of the government's Manpower Planning Unit.70 Whatever Rees's motives,

69ibid., p.38.
membership of CUTM gave ORE a voice in a subject sensitive to both universities and government — the structuring of university enrolments. With a national government insisting that the universities accede to its will, particularly in economic matters such as meeting manpower targets, CUTM was a potentially powerful body able to make strong impact on university programmes. CUTM activities, not surprisingly, provoked disagreement with UPNG, which felt that government-imposed student quotas threatened its academic autonomy. But eventually, after some dispute, it fell in with CUTM demands, voluntarily reshaping enrolments to include, for example, greater emphasis on Education and Science courses and less on Arts and Economics.

The third part of the apparatus was the Academic Salaries Review Committee set up by Cabinet in late 1974 and chaired by W. Edoni, head of the Industrial Relations Service. Its formation followed a long, determined and unsuccessful campaign by the combined UPNG and UOT staff associations to upset the decision recommended by the first Gris Committee — the breaking of the link with Australian academic salaries. The staff associations had become increasingly militant because of the decision, believing the national government had singled out expatriate academics for an exemplary and discriminatory downgrading of conditions. Eventually, in September-October 1974, they took their case to arbitration. Government counsel, engaged and briefed by Rees, appeared against them and succeeded in having their claim summarily dismissed. The Edoni tribunal was devised by OHE in the wake of the arbitration case to overcome the hiatus in academic salary fixing induced by the implementation of first Gris Committee recommendations. OHE also calculated that its existence might restore academic staff morale, which had been dented during the salaries issue. As with the UFRC, OHE had strong influence on the Edoni tribunal: it supplied its executive and clerical services, submitted its reports to the Minister, and advised him whether or not Cabinet should accept its recommendations. In this way OHE assumed considerable power in fixing salaries, and area previously the preserve of the university Councils.

In other areas, too, OHE interposed itself at points in the university system where it could exert influence. It became the channel through which the universities' requests for foreign aid must pass for assessment by the Aid Co-ordinating Committee of the Central Planning Office.
Several new courses — journalism at UPNG, fisheries at UOT — attracted donor interest. As the co-ordinator of higher education, OHE was consulted by the Central Planning Office on such aid projects, and OHE recommendations became the basis for decisions in each case. Here Rees used his personal network of friends and colleagues within the bureaucracy to advantage. 'Old boy' connections across the various official planning agencies were strong. Indeed it was his boast that self-government and independence made little difference to his enterprises because the key decision makers were still expatriates; they constituted — and remained — a cohesive group; and he had privileged access to them. 71

OHE also became involved, once more as the co-ordinator of higher education, in various working parties on new university courses. From 1973 there was a series of such bodies, producing proposals for courses in hydraulics, secretarial studies, electrical communications, mining engineering, rural technology, forestry, fisheries, agricultural education, land administration and dentistry, until eventually (1975) OHE sponsored a joint committee of the universities to deal with such new course proposals. OHE exerted important influence in deciding at which institutions courses should be placed, at what level they would be taught, and what levels of funding, staffing and enrolments should apply.

Finally, OHE became a significant part of the university system through its overview of the whole field of higher education, which allowed it to see where co-ordination could be improved, and — perhaps more important — where it might act with optimal effect to strengthen its own position. A number of innovations followed, among the more notable of which were the setting up of the National School Leavers Scheme, and the introduction of the National Tertiary Scholarships Scheme. The former endeavoured to place school leavers in tertiary educational institutions via a central selection unit, rationalizing the previous untidy system where various employers and educational institutions competed for school leavers. 72 The latter sought to rationalize the 'massively diverse, inefficient, and inequitable' means of supporting tertiary students financially, whereby some

71 Rees, RIW, pp.2-4.

72 Office of Higher Education Records (OHER) 66-1-43.
institutions and sponsors paid $20 pocket money a week to their students while the standard university scholarship allowed but a fraction of that.\textsuperscript{73}

Through its success in interceding in a number of activities involving the universities, and its sponsorship of schemes to bring better co-ordination to the university system, OHE gained power within the system. A need had always existed for some organ to co-ordinate an increasingly complex set of institutions, but this had been only partially satisfied in the past. Now, under the guidance of Rees, who saw its potential, had the requisite ambition and drive, and acted promptly to promote it, OHE changed functions. The organization set up as an appendage of the Higher Education Commission virtually took on the function of the Commission itself. And while this certainly made for better co-ordination, it also added to the tensions within what was now a national university system.

\textsuperscript{73}Rees, RIW, p.4.
Chapter 7

Co-operation and competition

One era ended and another began for UPNG and IOT in 1972. Gunther retired and handed over UPNG to Inglis in May, while Duncanson had been succeeded by Sandover at IOT in January. Gunther and Duncanson had had only occasional contact, but their successors' paths crossed frequently: they corresponded, they consulted, they were seen on each other's campuses more often, and for the first time since IOT had quit Port Moresby there were serious attempts at co-operation. At the same time the two institutions became serious rivals as Sandover sought to raise IOT's status from junior to equal partner. The scope for rivalry was indeed greater than for co-operation: they were competing for the same resources — able students, government patronage, funds for expansion, and general public interest. Differences of institutional character added to the potential for rivalry. UPNG was self-assured, even smug, as the University, the country's intellectual and cultural capital. IOT by contrast was conscious of having much leeway to make up, and aware of being only an Institute, remote from the centre of political power, looked down on by Waigani as an upstart assortment of philistines and technocrats.

The growing competitiveness of UPNG and IOT became apparent in several directions — in the arguments of each institution justifying its requests for finance, in public relations ventures into the news media, in their correspondence, and in their dealings with national politicians and civil servants. It was present in its most concentrated form in the planning of new courses: inevitably when a new course was being proposed the question 'At which institution?' would arise. And the rival interests of UPNG and IOT would crystallize, as the notable cases of agriculture, forestry, and land administration demonstrate.
The Faculty of Agriculture

A long chain of events led up to the course in agriculture becoming an issue between UPNG and IOT. The Currie Commissioners had recommended that agriculture should be one of the first activities at UPNG, because that was the course Papua New Guineans wanted most. However, because of opposition from the Department of Agriculture, UPNG had no professor, no faculty, nor any teaching of agriculture. The opposition stemmed mainly from F.C. Henderson, the Director of Agriculture of the day. Henderson later became Assistant Administrator, and died in 1969, but he was such a forceful individual that his ideas continued to influence the Department even after his death. He unshakeably believed that Papua New Guinea needed chiefly middle-level, practically-oriented technicians, as trained by Vudal Agricultural College — people whose interests and skills lay in physical production and extension work among rural communities. He was sure that if UPNG taught agriculture the training programme of his department would suffer. There would, he feared, be a stress on academic standards which would eliminate many potential trainees; there would be an over-emphasis on the background sciences, and insufficient stress on practical processes and extension; and for the small number of graduate agriculturalists required, it would be more economic to train them overseas or import expatriate experts. He thus believed a UPNG Faculty of Agriculture was premature. At the same time he wished Vudal to remain firmly under his department's control, untainted by UPNG connections.1

Gunther could never accept Henderson's views. Throughout his time at UPNG he argued that Papua New Guineans wanted agriculture taught at university level, that delaying its introduction at UPNG would increase its cost, and that, ludicrously, agriculture was alone among the professions in not being taught to degree level. He campaigned widely to have UPNG's right to teach it accepted. He first attempted to introduce it to UPNG 'through the back door', offering options like soil science and applied botany which might eventually lead to an agricultural science degree. One of the science professors discussed this possibility with the

1Gunther to Lamb, 19 June 1968; to Cottrell-Dormer, 9 September 1968; draft letter to Allen Brown, 17 May 1971, UPNGR A.18 (part 1); to Hay, 5 November 1968; Henderson to Gunther, 7 January 1969, UPNGR F.81 (part 1).
Director of Agriculture (W. Conroy) in 1968, and found him co-operative though committed to Henderson's view that a faculty of agriculture was premature. During 1969 the UPNG Council considered the matter and subsequently advised the Administrator that 'a Faculty of Agriculture was a desirable development'. The Department of External Territories now provided a further stumbling block, and in its accustomed manner remained deaf to suggestions originating from Gunther. He therefore decided that, as 'the only way of bringing the Minister to his senses is to argue with him in public', a public seminar might win official endorsement for UPNG ambitions. Accordingly, he arranged a seminar at which several eminent academic agriculturalists gave papers arguing that UPNG could, and should, teach agriculture.

Gunther was chafing at the Department's attitude. Under Smith's influence it had decided that some Papua New Guineans must train in Australian universities in specialized fields of applied natural sciences such as forestry, agriculture and veterinary science, because such specialists were needed but in numbers insufficient to warrant the establishment of training facilities in Papua New Guinea. Against the advice of the Department of Education and the hostility of UPNG it insisted on recruiting nineteen UPNG science students in 1969 for a six weeks' summer school at ASOPA. Here they received intensive coaching to bring them up to Australian matriculation levels. The scheme was, according to both UPNG and ASOPA, an 'abject failure': it cost $10,000; only one or two students were accepted by Australian universities; and they soon dropped out. UPNG was irate at the Department's refusal to heed advice that the alien cultural and educational background of Papua New Guineans would limit their success at Australian universities; that Australian courses were not geared to Papua New Guinean needs; that graduate agriculturalists could be more economically trained at UPNG. And the University was incensed by the 'discourtesy' and 'arrogance' of the

2Gunther to Hay, 22 December 1969, UPNGR A.18 (part 1).
3Gunther to McClymont, 8 December 1970, UPNGR A.18 (part 1).
Faced with the intransigence of both the Department of External Territories and the Department of Agriculture, UPNG now turned to the Brown Committee. It requested permission to begin teaching agriculture within the Faculty of Science, leading eventually to the establishment of a degree course in the subject. The Committee endorsed the UPNG case with the comment that 'professional level training in agriculture ... should not be delayed any longer. Most Papua New Guineans are involved in agricultural pursuits and a high proportion will continue to be for a long time'.

Armed with this opinion UPNG approached the Administrator again. He suggested the formation of a joint committee with UPNG and Department of Agriculture membership to sort out precise details such as the nature and scope of the proposed course, its relationship to the Vudal diploma, the staff and finance required, and the arrangements to be made for practical farm training.

The joint committee met on three occasions in early 1972, and was steadily working towards a 'convivial' arrangement whereby UPNG would offer a degree course, the practical aspects of which would be taught during a year at Vudal. Then, in Gunther's last fortnight as Vice-Chancellor, with one of his final ambitions for UPNG almost within grasp, the whole scheme went awry. The joint committee had recently visited Vudal, whose Principal evinced open contempt for UPNG and in scathing terms had counselled the Director of Agriculture against what he deemed the 'impracticality' of UPNG's academics. His views influenced his superiors, for they now (early May 1972) told Gunther the proposed scheme was 'undesirable'; furthermore, if there must be a Vudal-UPNG link the Principal must have complete control over UPNG students, staff and facilities at the College. This was entirely unacceptable to Gunther, who now advised the Administrator it was pointless to proceed further.

---

6 Gunther to Johnson, 3 November 1971, UPNGR A.18 (part 1).
7 B. Boniwell to Conroy, 18 April 1972, UPNGR A.18 (part 1).
8 Gunther to Johnson, 1 May 1972, UPNGR A.18 (part 2).
With Gunther retired and Inglis in his chair, the joint committee began looking for an alternative to Vudal. Lae seemed to offer attractions: IOT had land available and would share facilities with UPNG; access to the agriculturally rich Highlands was easy; and Department of Agriculture experimental stations in the nearby Markham Valley could help with practical training. Sandover was invited to join the committee, which he did with alacrity, anxious to involve IOT in a wider range of courses. In his brief time in Lae he had made it plain he wished to lead something more than an obscure technical training college in the remote tropics. He wished IOT to become a renowned educational centre for the Pacific Islands region, and had begun campaigning accordingly. A keystone of the university edifice he wished to build was the expansion of IOT's teaching capacity, and he was soon contemplating the possibility of new courses in rural technology, rural engineering, horticulture, soil conservation, forestry, fisheries, development studies, even South East Asian studies. The UPNG-Department of Agriculture joint committee was interested in what IOT might offer in the first two or three of these. Clearly IOT's excellent library and workshop facilities, spare land, proximity to a variety of land-use types, and access to the crop collections of the Markham Valley were credit points. And so, with Sandover's ready concurrence, the committee recommended the establishment of an agricultural degree with Waigani running the first three years and IOT providing the facilities for the fourth year of practical training.9

Sandover, however, was not content merely with playing host to UPNG final year students. He wanted IOT to share in the teaching and, hopefully, extend its competence into the biological sciences. He also felt there should be a fair division of new courses in applied biology between UPNG and IOT. His aspirations soon became obvious on joining the joint committee. He told Inglis he thought it unfair for UPNG to 'expect to take all aspects of applied biology'.10 He said his Council and Academic Board would expect a quid pro quo for providing UPNG with fifty acres for its farm. Where new university-level courses were introduced — forestry,
fisheries — IOT wished not only to participate but to sponsor some of them, and to award the degrees. Inglis and his advisers recognized IOT ambition, but had no wish to enter prolonged debate over who would get which course: they simply wanted to conclude arrangements for their agricultural course, and were happy enough to placate Sandover in relation to other issues. They managed to satisfy him that UPNG was not trying to monopolize the practical biological sciences but were keen to collaborate with him here as well. Though mollified he made it clear that he expected the degree course in forestry, which was also coming into discussion now, to be an Institute programme, its first two years of basic biological sciences taught at UPNG and its later, specialized years taught at IOT.11

UPNG and IOT worked out their final agreement for the Lae farm after UPNG had appointed its Professor of Agriculture in early 1973. IOT made available fifty acres of land for ten years; it also released to UPNG a building for $27,000 for sole use by the Faculty of Agriculture; it provided the Faculty staff with residences, and housed the students in the IOT halls of residence. Administratively the agriculture staff and students belonged to UPNG and dealt with IOT through the Lae-based head of the Faculty, though in disciplinary matters they were subject to IOT rules. Eventually the first agriculture students moved to Lae in early 1975, thus demonstrating that the two universities could work together if they chose to.

The degree course in forestry

Events leading up to the introduction of a university forestry course paralleled those resulting in the agriculture course. Gunther wanted UPNG to teach forestry, and his Professor of Biology, Ken Lamb, held discussions with the Department of Forests during 1967-68 to explore the possibility. The Department was anxious for its training institution, the Bulolo Forestry College, to be linked with UPNG to help upgrade its course. But once again the Assistant Administrator, Henderson, was an obstacle. He obdurately maintained that a Bulolo-UPNG link was inappropriate because the College programme was sub-professional; and since the

---

11R. Smart to Inglis, 5 July 1972; Sandover to Inglis, 12 July 1972, UPNGR A.18 (part 3); C.N. Williams to Inglis, 30 June 1972; Inglis to Sandover, 6 July 1972, UPNGR F.81 (part 1).
chief manpower need was for middle-level personnel, a university programme was premature. Again, too, the Department of External Territories insisted that so few forestry graduates were needed they should be trained in Australia; and the debate over the ASOPA summer school for promising UPNG science students involved forestry as well as agricultural science. And then, too, the Brown Committee recommended that a degree course in forestry was timely and that UPNG and the Department of Forests should resume negotiations.\(^{12}\)

Subsequently, in early 1972, UPNG and the Department met informally to see what courses UPNG might run. The Department had many needs — for botanists, ecologists, and forest managers with training in both physical and social sciences. By this stage Sandover was becoming interested in offering courses with an applied biology component, and he suggested to Inglis that IOT and UPNG should form a joint committee to discuss collaboration. Guessing that Sandover's chief interest was forestry, Inglis responded cautiously, pointing out that UPNG and the Department had 'gone a long way over a long period'.\(^{13}\) UPNG was clearly unwilling to vacate the field simply because Sandover wished IOT to enter it; but recognizing that IOT was interested, UPNG invited Sandover to join the UPNG-Department of Forests joint committee on forestry training. Sandover thought this 'eminently fair', but he made it clear he expected IOT to have a large share of the course and wished it to award the degree as UPNG would be awarding the agriculture degree.\(^{14}\) UPNG concurred, and the first meeting of the joint committee, in July 1972, decided on a four-year degree course with the first two years spent at UPNG, the last two in Lae, the practical work at Bulolo, and the degree awarded by IOT.\(^{15}\)

Sandover's aspirations for IOT received a further boost soon after, when the Bulolo Principal, who thought the

\(^{12}\)Suttie to Kedgley, 20 December 1967; Gunther to McNamara, 31 October 1968; Lamb to Gunther 4 June 1968; Henderson to Gunther, 7 January 1969; Johnson to Gunther, 2 October 1969, Gunther to Johnson, 31 December 1971, UPNGR F.81 (part 1).

\(^{13}\)Inglis to Sandover, 6 July 1972, UPNGR F.81 (part 1).

\(^{14}\)Sandover to Inglis, 12 July 1972, UPNGR F.81 (part 1).

\(^{15}\)Joint Committee on Forestry Education, Minutes, 28 July 1972, UPNGR f.81 (part 1).
College was not involved enough under the present proposals, suggested that IOT and the College should share the degree course without UPNG participation. Sandover informed Inglis of his discussions with the Bulolo Principal, but said he would pursue the matter no further if UPNG still wished to be involved.\textsuperscript{16} Inglis guessed Sandover was scheming to extend IOT's ambit to include first applied biology and then the full range of science subjects, which would mean the duplication of UPNG courses at IOT.\textsuperscript{17}

Despite such misgivings, UPNG persevered with the joint committee, which in late 1972 produced a proposal for a degree course to be shared between Waigani, Lae and Bulolo as decided earlier. While the proposal noted the importance to the country of its forest resources in soil conservation, water resources, protection of flora and fauna, and their integral part in village life, the emphasis was on utilization and merchandizing rather than the conservational and sociological aspects of forestry.\textsuperscript{18} This bias subsequently produced severe dissension between UPNG and IOT; and so the dispute which subsequently arose was not only between competing institutions but between conflicting ecological philosophies.

The proposed course was next circulated within UPNG and UOT (as many people already called it, though the change was not gazetted till September) for comment, in early 1973. Some of the UPNG faculties expressed reservations about it: it would, they argued, be a misdirection of public funds because too few students would be trained to degree level to warrant anything more than the existing Bulolo course. (Ironically, these arguments were the very ones Henderson had put forward four years previously against UPNG participation in forestry education.) The Professorial Board supported it despite that; the UPNG and UOT Councils then endorsed it; and it passed on to the OHE for presentation to Cabinet.\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{16}Sandover to Inglis, 21 September 1972, UPNGR F.81 (part 1).
\textsuperscript{17}Inglis to Lamb, 20 November 1972, UPNGR F.81 (part 1).
\textsuperscript{18}Submission for degree training in forestry, Appendix 2, n.d. (1972), UPNGR F.81 (part 1).
\textsuperscript{19}D. Stace, 'Degree training in forestry', 28 March 1973, UPNGR F.81 (part 1).
In the meantime the Department of Forests and UOT had been exploring the possibility of a merger between the Bulolo College and UOT, so that the latter might take responsibility for the sub-professional training schemes of the Department. The Director of Forests, anticipating the UOT would soon be teaching the degree-level professional course, thought it 'advisable for a single authority to undertake training in forestry'.\(^{20}\) He won his Minister's support for this suggestion and prepared a Cabinet submission to give it effect. Not surprisingly Sandover gave the idea his 'warmest support';\(^{21}\) however, UOT was not to make plain sailing into forestry education, for the whole scheme now ran into very troubled waters.

UOT's problems began when Sandover, confident there would soon be a new degree course in Lae, asked UPNG for details of those students taking science who expected to go on to UOT for forestry. (UPNG had taken in the first students for forestry in early 1973.) The Dean of Science could find only twenty-three positively interested. Oldfield, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, now chairman of the joint committee on forestry education, first forwarded the information to the OHE, which was preparing the final proposal on the course for Cabinet. As a matter of routine the OHE referred both proposal and renewed estimates of student numbers to the Department of Finance, which queried the small numbers and therefore the financial viability of the course. Consequently OHE called in an expert on forestry education, Professor D. Richardson, an adviser to FAO, to comment on these issues. When Sandover heard that UPNG had fewer students than expected, and that this was causing Finance to question the course, he wrote hastily and angrily to the Minister for Education, N.E. Olewale. He asserted that UPNG's 'considerable revision' of forestry enrolments meant that Waigani had undergone a 'change of attitude' towards the course; and he implied that UPNG had been guilty of subterfuge in referring the matter to OHE (and thus to Finance) without advising him. He then proposed that, as UPNG doubted it would have viable numbers, UOT and Bulolo should run the course without UPNG's

\(^{20}\)McIntosh to Sandover, 1 May 1973, UPNGR F.81 (part 2).

\(^{21}\)Sandover to McIntosh, 6 April 1973, UPNGR F.81 (part 1).
assistance. Oldfield, greatly aggrieved, answered Sandover on behalf of UPNG. He suggested that Sandover had misrepresented UPNG's intentions to Oliewale; he said UPNG still wished to participate; and he claimed UPNG had only been trying to assess student numbers honestly. He also said UPNG would not oppose a joint UOT-Bulolo course if it were 'the best and most economical means' of producing graduate foresters, but pointed out that that would involve costly duplication of UPNG facilities. He doubted, moreover, whether Sandover and the joint committee had duly considered 'long-term implications of timber extraction especially with regard to future productivity and resource replenishment'.

A meeting of the joint committee was due three days after Sandover had sent his angry letter to Oliewale, in order to hear the preliminary views of the FAO expert, Richardson. Richardson, an admirer of Chinese forestry training (which emphasized community involvement), had reservations about the course proposed by the joint committee nearly a year before. He doubted the need for many graduates because he thought sub-professional training more appropriate; and he believed the proposed course stressed resource extraction at the expense of conservation. With Sandover resolutely refuting all such claims, the meeting, on 6 September 1973, was stormy. A further meeting took place on 14 September to hear a preview of Richardson's report. UPNG representatives later described it as 'climactic' and 'violent'. Richardson said the most appropriate arrangement would be a three-year diploma shared between UPNG and Bulolo alone, with the most able students selected for a fourth year at UPNG to complete the degree. A large staff to teach the degree course, as required by the original proposal, was therefore 'excessive', 'overly expensive' and 'unjustified'. Sandover hotly contested these views, making the accusation that Richardson 'had his mind made up

22 Smart to Oldfield, 11 July 1973; Oldfield to Hosack, 13 July 1973; Sandover to Oliewale, 3 September 1973, UPNGR F.81 (part 1).
23 Oldfield to Sandover, 5 September 1973, UPNGR F.81 (part 1).
24 O'Neill to Inglis, 8 May 1974, UPNGR F.81 (part 2).
before he came here'.\(^{26}\) With some justification, he surmized there had been collusion between Richardson and Oldfield to exclude UOT: at Richardson's request Oldfield had already produced a programme whereby students would do a year at Waigani followed by two years at Bulolo to complete the diploma, and a fourth year back at UPNG for those doing the degree. Such a scheme fitted in with Oldfield's professional interest in ecology (he was an environmental geographer) as it was oriented towards environmental issues rather than having the management bias of the original course.\(^{27}\)

The second meeting, and the imputations against him, distressed Oldfield. He seemed disconcerted that an issue dear to him—environmental and resource conservation—had become a cockpit for feuding between the universities. He nevertheless announced that he would put his scheme to the UPNG Academic Planning Committee, offering Waigani the alternatives of acting on Richardson's recommendations or having nothing further to do with forestry education.\(^{28}\) Sandover seemed less worried by the feuding than Oldfield: he told Oldfield it was no 'major tragedy' for them to disagree since they were defending the interests of their respective institutions. He protested that his main concern was to help the country by getting the forestry course going without further delay, and to that end wanted yet a further meeting of the joint committee. However, to ensure objectivity, he wanted not Oldfield but someone 'neutral' to chair it.\(^{29}\) This meeting duly took place, in early November 1973, with a Department of Forests representative in the chair. As one UPNG delegate noted, it ended in 'victory for the technocrats'—probably because the Department, which was as keen as Sandover to see the course operational, supported the ideas of the original proposal. The Department, too, appears to have favoured a relationship with UOT for Bulolo rather than with UPNG, as it was still thinking in terms of a Bulolo-Lae merger. The joint committee tacitly

\(^{26}\)Sandover, 'Notes of meeting, 14 September 1973', UPNGR F.81 (part 2).

\(^{27}\)Oldfield, 'Training of forestry graduates in Papua New Guinea', 12 September 1973, UPNGR F.81 (part 2).

\(^{28}\)Oldfield to Rees, to Richardson, to Sandover, 19 September 1973, UPNGR F.81 (part 2).

\(^{29}\)Sandover to Oldfield, 27 September 1973, UPNGR F.81 (part 2).
laid aside the Richardson report, which was deemed to have underestimated the need for graduates, then went on to make decisions which enabled OHE to prepare a submission for Cabinet recommending virtually what was in the original proposal - a four-year degree course, the first two years at UPNG, the final two at UOT in collaboration with Bulolo, and the degree to be awarded by UOT, where the professor would reside. 30

UOT and Department of Forests 'tree engineers' might have won the fight, but UPNG environmentalists refused to capitulate. Several of those who had been deeply involved in the dispute now resorted to guerrilla tactics. They had a former UPNG staff member now working as an adviser to government on community development prepare and circulate a provocative paper, 'The alternatives to forest exploitation in Papua New Guinea'. This suggested links between the philosophy of the forestry course now to be taught and the large-scale logging operations by foreign companies then causing disquiet among some Papua New Guineans. 31 They also took up the question with the Gris Committee of Enquiry into University Development, suggesting that the recent dispute gave the Committee a good excuse for recommending the merger of the two universities — an eventuality Sandover might be relied on to fear. The CEUD did go on to make such recommendations; and they were influenced by his behaviour during the dispute. They thought he had been too childishly petulant, too concerned for the good of UOT and too little with what might have been best for the country. They suggested to him that his abrasiveness over the forestry course and several other issues had hindered co-operation between the universities; but he guessed they had been talking to his opponents at UPNG (where Gris had been formally named to succeed Oldfield, who had resigned, as Deputy Vice-Chancellor), and was easily able to dismiss such opinions as gossip among 'influences ... not favourable to UOT'. 32

30 D. Frodin, 'Submission to Faculty of Science', March 1974; Rees, 'Summary of meeting on degree course in forestry', 20 November 1973; Submission for degree course in forestry, n.d., UPNGR F.81 (part 2).


Having finally won forestry for UOT Sandover was not prepared to have it wrested from him by the UPNG guerrillas. As soon as government approval was obtained, in early 1974, UOT went ahead with the formal establishment of its Department of Forestry and the appointment of its professor. In the end UPNG had to concede that, whether or not the shared Waigani-Lae course was ideal, 'we are stuck with it', and its best hope lay in the appointment of sympathetic staff who might 'humanize the curriculum'. The first batch of students duly passed on to Lae from Waigani in early 1975, and with that forestry had become the sparkling new jewel of the UOT crown.

An unfortunate legacy of the wrangling over forestry was the residue of distrust it left between Waigani and Lae. Both universities continued, indeed were obliged by government pressure, to co-operate; but a sour taste was left with those involved. 'Dr Standover' soon became the butt of the UPNG underground newspaper; and some at Waigani fondly anticipated the day when they might even the score with UOT. UOT staff who were sincerely interested in co-operation found Oldfield reserved and unco-operative in his dealings with them. This in turn convinced them that the CEUD proposal for a single national university was unworkable, which explains why some of them supported their Vice-Chancellor in opposing the idea. The dispute had not been without its personal and educational costs.

Several issues had crystallized during the dispute. The importance of personalities in the development of the university system is once again obvious. Personalities were a factor no educational planner could predict, yet they as much as policies, helped shape development. A sensitive soul like Oldfield, who strove to implement schemes embodying personal commitments, was bound to be bruised if he tangled with tough pragmatists of Sandover's calibre. Some of his colleagues believed his battering in the disagreement over forestry precipitated his departure from the country after

---

33 Inglis to O'Neil, 15 May 1974, UPNGR F.81 (part 2).
34 'The Muffington Smee Reporter and Plain Dealer' (UPNG underground newspaper), February 1974; personal observations by I. Willis, UPNG, March–April 1976.
35 D. Mansell, personal communication.
less than a year, as a result of which personal antipathies became a factor in subsequent UPNG dealings with UOT.\footnote{36}

To personal differences were added ideological difficulties. The year of the dispute followed the unfurling of the Somare government's vaunted 'Eight Point Plan for National Development' of 1972. This was a rhetorical statement of national aims affirming the putatively co-operative, egalitarian basis of Papua New Guinean traditional societies and endeavouring to translate that ethos into modern terms.\footnote{37}

Late 1973 also saw the arrival of self-government, and excitement bubbled at the prospect of the changes to come. Most people gave at least lip service to the 'Eight Points'; but some, and Oldfield was among them, took to heart the idealism of the national aims and attempted to give it practical expression. The Oldfield-Richardson scheme for forestry education was one such attempt; yet in the face of determined UOT power play which was backed by a government department concerned to develop as well as conserve resources, the attempt failed. What counted was not idealism and ideology but political toughness and adroitness—qualities the UOT Vice-Chancellor possessed abundantly. To survive against UOT-style politicking was perhaps the best test of 'Eight Points' ideology; in the case of forestry education it proved insubstantial.

The most obvious element in the dispute had, of course, been the rivalry between the universities. UOT was more keenly aware of the competition than UPNG, which had begun by attempting to accommodate UOT ambitions by welcoming its delegates into the UPNG-Department of Forests joint committee. Before long what had started out as a Waigani course was taken over by Lae, and the joint committee became a UOT-Department of Forests partnership. This impressed itself upon the political operators of UPNG, who came to resent the fact that UOT, the upstart institution, had so effectively elevated itself. Even if Sandover's other public relations ventures on behalf of UOT (his quest for university status; his public appeal for funds to build Duncanson Hall, the UOT auditorium) had not driven home the lesson, UOT's usurpation of the forestry course did:

\footnote{36} Personal communications from various informants who did not wish to be named.

was no longer *the* university; it now had a restless contender.

The rivalry over new courses continued, most notably in a dispute over a sub-graduate Diploma in Land Administration the UOT Department of Surveying had planned as a service for the government's Department of Lands. Members of the Surveying staff had promptly followed the cue of a government commission of inquiry into land matters, which recommended the creation of a new post within the Department of Lands — that of 'land administrators', people equipped with sociological and legal as well as surveying and valuation skills. With OHE assistance they set up a UOT-Department of Lands joint committee, which proceeded to produce a proposal for a two-year course to be shared between the universities. The proposal then came up against objections from the UPNG Faculty of Law, which argued that the course was too preoccupied with surveying and valuation aspects of land tenure and too little with its sociology. These opinions eventually swayed the Department of Lands, causing it to devise a new scheme of training that totally excluded UOT and left the course in the hands of UPNG.38 The UPNG representatives on the committee were influential in producing the Department's change of heart, and they relished the opportunity to even the score with Sandover and UOT in the matter of the Oldfield account. Sandover effected a nonchalant mien, but his Surveying staff, who had put almost two years' effort into preparing the proposed course, were left with a bitter resentment of both UPNG and the Department.39

But though the rivalry between the universities in issues such as this was intense, there had also been a measure of co-operation. That it was occurring was significant, for it was a new element in their relationship. In Gunther-Duncanson days it would have been unlikely, as they then dwelt in almost separate worlds. Yet now they were demonstrating that of their own volition they could produce the co-ordination of effort and rationalization of resources which McKinnon and others had sought unsuccessfully. In arriving at this point they had received considerable coaching from OHE, which in the process had been illustrating

38UPNGR A.40-14; OHER 66-1-29.
39A. O'Neill, M. Ecclestone, personal communications.
something of its own potential. OHE was emerging as the co-ordinator of university effort, the mediator in UPNG-UOT disputes, and the broker of University training programmes in which government departments had interests. In this way the emerging university system was exhibiting positive qualities which were encouraging to education planners such as the CEUD. What might be expected of the system in future was becoming clear.

A combination of factors was drawing the universities closer together during the Inglis-Sandover years. The universities had each become more complex and each now had something to offer the other. The upward mobility of UOT under Sandover meant that its demands for a more equal share of resources would bring it into closer contact with UPNG. Pressures from the national government for rationalization and co-ordination, once Cabinet began realizing the high cost of the universities, was focused through the OHE, which was playing an increasingly effective role orchestrating their endeavours. And finally the spirit of the time, embodied in the 'Eight Point Plan', was one of co-operation in nation building - an ethos that made for combined effort by the universities. As they drew closer it was perhaps inevitable that severe strains would develop, but co-operation was also emerging; and national ideology demanded that this be explored further.
Chapter 8

Making the universities more 'responsive'

By early 1973 self-government was just around the corner. The Somare government, gaining in confidence, was ever more determined not to follow blindly the precedents set by the departing colonial Administration but to explore alternative and more appropriately 'Papua New Guinean ways'. The new mood was most obviously embodied in the Eight Point Plan for National Improvement. With such nationalist ideology emerged a rhetoric which stressed ideals such as 'equality and participation', 'national sovereignty and self-reliance', and 'the Melanesian way'.

The plan contained more than mere rhetoric, for it included practical strategies, a number of which directly affected the universities. That the universities could not remain exempt became obvious in Cabinet statements to the effect that 'higher education must serve primarily the government's needs for skilled manpower', that 'particular care must be taken not to overproduce generalist graduates in Arts', and that 'there will need to be a reallocation of resources out of higher education and into base level education for the mass of the population'.¹ The national government clearly saw the universities as part of an educational machine it could adjust to regulate the supply of graduates according to changing needs. Such expectations might have been unrealistic, but the universities could do little but attempt to accommodate them.

During 1973-74 no less than three separate committees examined aspects of the future of university education. They produced reports which attempted to come to terms with what the government wanted. These were the government-appointed first and second Gris Committees, and UPNG's

Oldfield Committee. The sum total of their effort was a model for future university development which might serve as the basis for planning throughout the early years of national independence. Constructing the model was an onerous task, for the committees had to encompass three probably contradictory aims: first they had to make the universities more sensitive to government manpower demands; secondly, they had to attune them to the nationalist ideology of egalitarian self-reliance; and thirdly, they had to ensure the preservation of educational values so that the system would not degenerate into a mechanical device for filling assigned manpower categories.

The first Gris Committee

Early in 1973 Australian academic staff received salary increases of between $1200 and $3700. Previously such increases had flowed on automatically to UPNG and UOT, but on this occasion Australia's new Labor government advised the Papua New Guinean Cabinet that if it granted the flow-on it must find the funds from within its own budget. This instruction, coming as Cabinet was considering UOT and UPNG estimates for 1973-74, focused attention on the large investment the two institutions constituted. Cabinet was loath to grant the flow-on (which gave many academics a salary double that of Somare himself), thinking the academics were privileged enough even without the increase. After some uncertainty, Cabinet appointed a committee of three to investigate. Somare ordered that it should include Professor R.G. Crocombe.

The choice of Crocombe, from the University of the South Pacific (Fiji), was significant for he had a reputation as an outraged critic of Australian colonialism who could vocalize the resentments supposedly felt by Pacific Islanders. He had previously found fault with the 'inappropriate' and 'Western' bias of Papua New Guinea's university institutions; and early in UPNG's life he had urged Gunther to employ black rather than white academics because he thought the former would be more sympathetic to Papua New Guineans. His critics in Papua New Guinea were generally sceptical of his views: they regarded him as an opportunist who gained credence among Papua New Guineans by appealing to their prejudices, in particular by preaching that their country's underdevelopment stemmed from the wickedness of
Australian oppressors. Papua New Guinean Cabinet members trusted him, however; and so in an exercise which would involve the pruning of expatriate privilege and the severing of Australian ties it was not surprising that they thought of him first.

The Committee, formally styled the Committee of Enquiry into Academic Staff Salaries, Conditions and Standards, was chaired by G.B. Gris and was more usually known by his name. Gris had qualified in dentistry at the Suva Medical College, had a postgraduate degree in health education from the USA, and had been head of dental training in the Department of Public Health. He had also served on the Weeden Committee, whose 1969 report had led to the restructuring of primary, secondary and technical education within a national system; he had served on the Public Service Board; and he had chaired the Senior Executive Programme. This experience put him in the forefront of the 'older' national bureaucrats — those who had received their higher education circuitously in the days before UPNG and UOT were founded — and he was among the best educated of this group. The third committee member after Gris and Crocombe was V. Harvey, a former UPNG Economics lecturer now working for the Department of Finance. The Committee had to 'devise for academic staff, salary levels and conditions which, in comparison with those of tertiary institutions in other countries, will prove competitive and yet sustainable by the public revenue and the country's economy in the long term'. During four weeks in May and June 1973 it took evidence from seventy-five representatives of the academic community, trade unions, employers' organizations, education officials and politicians, and went on to recommend that the tie between academic salaries in Australia and Papua New Guinea be broken, and that the recent Australian increases should not flow on. However, because there seemed to be a moral — rather than a legal — obligation to honour existing contracts, it also recommended that staff on current contracts should receive an ex gratia payment equivalent to the amount of the Australian increase for the remaining period of their contracts or for three years,

\footnotesize

2J. Griffin (1975).
3McKinnon, RIW, p.4; Randell, RIW, p.2.
4Committee of Enquiry into Academic Staff Salaries, Allowances and Conditions (1973) (first Gris Report), pp.1, 5-6.
whichever was shorter. The government subsequently accepted this advice, and staff members who had been employed before 1 July 1973 were granted a 22½ per cent increase as an 'ex gratia' award.

In making these recommendations, which were plainly appropriate to a developing country on the verge of independence, the Committee presented a forceful argument along the following lines: (i) Australian academic salary levels were inappropriate in a developing country because they were very high, even compared with those of other developed nations. (ii) Papua New Guinea's limited funds could not be channelled into 'indigenous projects', where priority should lie, if more money were given to foreign staff. (iii) To continue the tie with Australian salaries would widen the gap between the privileges of foreign and local staff, which could only deepen harmful divisions already in existence. (iv) Academic salaries in Papua New Guinea should be based on the country's resources rather than those of a foreign country, viz., Australia. (v) Existing salaries were sufficiently attractive to draw good quality staff to the country; and there was no necessary connection between high salaries and good quality staff as salaries were only one factor in motivating academics.

The Committee had been influenced by a number of recurring themes in the opinions it had heard. It had not been able to confine itself to the salaries issue, for many informants kept referring to matters such as the function of the universities in Papua New Guinea, academic standards, government-university relations, staff composition and structures, staff recruitment, localization, and research. Many of the views expressed were contradictory, but that a wide cross-section of the community held them indicated that there was a fundamental questioning of the role of universities in the country. The Committee guessed the universities presented problems deeper than simply salaries, and suggested that 'a major rethink' was necessary. It therefore recommended that this become the task of a larger committee with wider terms of reference to allow a probing of the issues emerging from its discussions. Such an enlarged committee should travel widely among developing countries to see how

5ibid.
6ibid., pp.4-5, 7-9.
problems of university development were being handled elsewhere, and to discover what alternatives there were to the Western university model.\(^7\) The government acted promptly on this advice, and within several weeks the original Gris Committee had been expanded to include seven additional members charged with undertaking a thorough reappraisal of the university system.

In recommending the setting up of a larger committee, the Gris Committee pointed to what it thought inappropriate in the present university system. First, it thought the high Australian staff content at UPNG and UOT was undesirable because this might induce 'wholesale cultural and intellectual subservience to an important set of socio-cultural values'. Secondly, the universities had unavoidably developed on the Australian pattern, and so there was need to 'seriously question the extent to which this should continue in future'. Government had a vested interest in the universities, the Committee pointed out, and must 'lay down guidelines for the kind of university it considers to be of the most value to the country'. Thirdly, and above all, the Committee disliked what seemed to be a trend towards elitism in the universities. Indeed its report was as much a pronunciamento against elitism as a set of recommendations about academic salaries. It argued that UPNG and UOT were 'in serious jeopardy' because they were producing an 'out-of-touch elite' whose ideas and attitudes ill-befitted a country as poor as Papua New Guinea. It marshalled arguments previously employed by McKinnon against 'the hidden curriculum' — the students lived in relative luxury in isolation from the rest of the population; inevitably they viewed the prestige, pay and privileges of their teachers as the norm to which they, too, should aspire; university lecturers were an inappropriate reference group for students because their lifestyle was 'in conflict with the Eight Point Plan'; the per-student costs of the universities were very high, and consequently students were learning to operate in unrealistically extravagant conditions.\(^8\)

The Committee's comments on elitism were undoubtedly timely. Many staff members had become uneasy about the direction the universities were taking. The isolation of

\(^7\)ibid., pp.10-25.

\(^8\)ibid., pp.7-9.
the students from the daily life of the citizenry, and the false sense of reality which that fostered, caused concern and led to a number of attempts to involve the students more directly in the wider community. At UOT, for example, a Community Development Group had been formed in 1972 to encourage student participation in grass-roots projects, and most academic departments had some such commitment. At about the same time UPNG began sending teams of students to outlying provinces to meet rural people and engage in political education. A Melanesian Action Group had been formed, and had issued a strident anti-elitist manifesto. These efforts within the universities were evidence of their own awareness of the dangers of 'the hidden curriculum'.

The Committee's views on the salary issue were similarly sensible: it could not seriously be contested that a country on the verge of independence should continue to keep its wages and income policies in lock-step with those of the metropolitan power. Yet many academics, particularly the trade union- and industrially-oriented staff of UOT, came to see the principle of flow-ons from Australia as an issue on which the government must be challenged. The reason for this was that they saw the first Gris Committee's recommendation as a blatantly political act, an attempt to pin back their conditions exemplarily when the salaries of other expatriate public sector employees remained in line with those in Australia. There was, of course, justification for academics to feel they had been singled out for a discriminatory downgrading of conditions. The Committee had been conceived of initially as an exercise in the cutting back of expatriate privilege; and, as they were the unfortunate group to have thus become the first victims of Papua New Guinean nationalism over conditions of employment, they viewed the Committee as a punitive device. Their knowledge that the government had no overall policy for expatriate salaries, and that its approach to the question was consequently piecemeal and erratic, further aggravated their sense of grievance. And so although the Committee's report made good economic and educational sense, the

---


academics were hostile to it. The bitterness which arose over the report hindered the work of the second Gris Committee, and caused a subsequent deterioration in the relationship between the government and the universities.

The presence of Crocombe on the Committee also nurtured the hostility of some academics. His provocatively ideological stance in meetings with them indicated that he was approaching the issue with unshakeable preconceived views, if not patent prejudice. For example, when suggestions were made to the Committee that a means for honouring promises made about conditions of employment would be the payment by the Australian government of some form of salary supplementation, he peremptorily rejected the notion on the grounds that it constituted neo-colonialism. He further asserted that salary inducements should not be the crucial factor in attracting first-rate academic staff, constantly referring to his own university in Fiji as an example of a wise salary policy for a university in an underdeveloped nation.\(^{11}\) Subsequent inquiries by the UPNG and UOT staff associations suggested that he had misrepresented the situation at his own university: its registrar reported that its salary policy had been generally unsuccessful in attracting good overseas staff, and that it had as a result recently adopted a scheme for 'topping up' the salaries of its Australian, United Kingdom and New Zealand staff members to the levels applicable in their home countries.\(^{12}\) Not surprisingly, many academics questioned the Committee's \textit{bona fides}.\(^{13}\)

Much of the subsequent conflict between the academics and the government and second Gris Committee arose from their conviction that government had punished them and had employed Crocombe as its 'hatchet man'.

For all the hostility the Committee generated, however, it had performed a necessary function in recommending the adoption of an independent academic salary structure. And perhaps more importantly, it had drawn attention to the significance for university development of Eight Point Plan ideology. If the government seriously intended putting its

\(^{11}\) First Gris Committee, Minutes, 6, 7 and 8 June 1973, OHER 66-1-23.

\(^{12}\) Inglis to W. Morrison, 27 July 1973; S.F. Perrott to Stephenson, 23 October 1973, UPNGR F.105-17 (part 1).

\(^{13}\) W. Manser and D. Dale to Hossack, 11 July 1973, OHER 66-1-23.
Eight Points into practice, the universities would clearly have to bend more readily to its will; and above all, they would not be allowed to become the ivory towers of elitist privilege.

The Oldfield Committee

In early 1973, Oldfield, recognizing that the Eight Point Plan held important implications for the University, suggested that UPNG should be considering how it wished to develop in the next three or four years. As a result a Working Party on the Future of the University (the Oldfield Committee) formed in May 1973, only a couple of weeks ahead of the first Gris Committee. This body, with Oldfield as chairman, met six times over the next two months and in October submitted a forty-six page report to Inglis.\[14\] Membership of the committee comprised both UPNG and government representatives. Gris and Harvey, members of the first and second Gris Committees, were on it; and so was Alexis Sarei, who became a member of the second Gris Committee. There were thus strong bonds and considerable continuity between the three committees examining university development in 1973, and so it was hardly surprising that a number of themes recurred in the reports.

For the Oldfield Committee the central issue was government-university relations. The Committee thought there should be close dialogue between either side, and to promote this it made its first task the compilation of a set of UPNG aims which accorded with the Eight Points. These spoke, for example, of 'establishing lines of communication with the general population, especially village communities, and facilitating the effective interaction of all levels of society to avoid unnecessary elitist stratification within it'.\[15\] Being thus concerned with making the University responsive to government will, the committee went on to compile a report embodying five major sets of recommendations. In brief these were:

(i) Meeting government manpower needs. The committee rejected the view that the University effort should be tied


\[15\]The Oldfield Report, p.1.
to filling government manpower quotas, because any estimate of manpower needs involved subjectivity and guesswork. Nevertheless, UPNG must be sensitive to the danger of under- and oversupply in particular categories. Government and University should therefore co-operate in establishing machinery for determining manpower needs, and in orienting teaching programmes towards them.16

(ii) The emphasis of the major subject disciplines. The Committee called for relevance to national needs from all the major disciplines — medicine, dentistry, law, social sciences and humanities, the sciences, education. Thus, the Mathematics Department should be producing graduates qualified for work in computing, systems analysis, statistical aspects of planning, and mathematical education; while in the physical and biological sciences there should be emphasis on matters of immediate relevance such as resource depletion, ecological decline, the environment.17

(iii) Teaching and learning problems. Here the Committee called for greater effort in helping mature-age students complement work experience with up-to-date training. UPNG, it believed, should be offering more workshop-type and in-service programmes, and external courses. There was also a need to 'break out of the traditional, authoritarian teacher-pupil model', to adopt a 'problem-oriented approach to learning' with more time spent in interdisciplinary, practical projects. Another major need was to build community service into the curriculum, for too often the high altruism of incoming students evaporated as they became more concerned with personal status and advancement. Student motivation was another issue, and perhaps this and other problems might be solved if a 'work-study' system were adopted: if students entered University after a period of work rather than straight from secondary school, and were able to alternate sessions of tertiary study with periods in the workforce, their enthusiasm for study might be better maintained.18

(iv) Staff development and localization. The committee accepted the probability that academic localization

---

16 ibid., pp.6, 11.
17 ibid., p.12.
18 ibid., pp.22-24.
would be prolonged, but nevertheless believed there must be 'rapid development of a body of Papua New Guinean academics large enough to have a forceful impact in policy-making, teaching and staff-student relationships within the University'. In view of the competition for graduates from the Public Service, and the value of work experience outside the University, there should be reciprocal exchange of staff between UPNG and the government agencies.\textsuperscript{19}

(v) Student affairs. The Committee made various specific proposals for improving the effectiveness of student government. It also expressed concern over several endemic problems - ethnic divisions between students, and the treatment of women. In relation to the former it suggested that 'tribal' affiliations might be employed constructively, for example by using the \textit{wantok}\textsuperscript{20} system to maintain discipline, rather than allowing it to continue as a source of dissension. The latter problem was perhaps the most vexed tackled by the committee: the numerical weakness of the female student body (only a tenth of the full-time student population) meant that it was subject to severe pressures. The Committee hoped there might be 'codes of behaviour designed to improve the present often unsatisfactory interaction between the sexes' - a euphemistic way of saying that a vulnerable minority should be relieved from the sexual aggression of male colleagues. The Committee hoped the proportion of female students might be increased to a third by 1980. To achieve this, special provisions must be made for women - the provision of a residential college (as against a simple dormitory); the creation of recreation areas for exclusive female use; the establishment of courses specially designed for women, for example special two-year sub-graduate diplomas in child health, nutrition, and social work to overcome the deterrent effect of lengthy degree courses.\textsuperscript{21}

While these recommendations hoped to attune UPNG to national needs and Eight Points ideology, the Oldfield Report still drew much criticism. Some critics thought it 'anti-intellectual' as little mention was made of scholarship:

\textsuperscript{19}\textit{ibid.}, pp.31-32.

\textsuperscript{20}\textit{wantok}: Pidgin = 'one talk', that is a member of one's ethnic group, someone speaking one's 'tribal' language.

\textsuperscript{21}\textit{ibid.}, p.37.
they felt it failed to endorse the valued tradition that the University was a 'community of scholars'. Others thought it made too much of 'relevant' research, of localizing academic staff: to warrant the title 'university' UPNG must tolerate research not directly related to national needs, and accept cosmopolitan diversity among staff. Others said the committee had ignored its own objectives by showing little concern for co-ordination with other tertiary institutions, particularly UOT, which the Report scarcely mentioned.22

The major criticisms, however, related to aspects where the Report endeavoured to cleave to the Eight Points ideology — anti-elitism and responsiveness to government requirements. Gunther, now in retirement, derided the anti-elitist thrust of the Report. He pointed out that universities were of necessity expensive, so that any significant reduction in their costs would degrade their achievements. He warned against 'interlopers' who would 'create a "bare-foot" university in Papua New Guinea' — a clear reference to Crocombe, whose University of the South Pacific enjoyed much less generous funding than UPNG. It was 'a pious hope', Gunther said, to expect there could be either university or national society without an elite forming.23 This was a point which Eight Points ideology overlooked. Crocombe, Oldfield and other proponents of the ideology appeared to ignore the possibility that elitism was a manifestation of structural phenomena, and that mere proscription might not eliminate it. Making the University's facilities less lavish, requiring students to be intimately involved in community projects, was to treat the symptoms and not the causes of elitism.

Even more basic to the function of the University was the criticism of the Report's call for UPNG to be 'responsive'. Some critics saw in this an abnegation of UPNG's independence. As one academic noted, much of the Report seemed

Designed almost entirely with a view to pleasing-appeasing potential critics of an open and academic

22J. Winslow to Oldfield, 13 August 1973; Gunther to Oldfield, 16 September 1973; Sandover to Oldfield, 30 August 1973, UPNGR E.61.
23Gunther to Oldfield, loc. cit.
university. If so, we have brought in the sails because we sense there may be a storm somewhere in the distance. This is a hell of a way to begin a voyage.  

Gunther made a similar point by referring to the University of Dar-es-Salaam and Makerere University, which he had visited several years previously. These, he said, could not be called 'universities in the generally accepted meaning of the word' as they 'taught exactly what the state wanted', including political indoctrination as well as professional skills. In surrendering the right to decide what they would and would not teach they had lost what had made them universities — their right to independent, critical comment. For UPNG, too, there were similar pitfalls. An uncritical espousal of Eight Points ideology, too much responsiveness — for example, the surrender of autonomy in deciding how manpower needs would be met — would be to tread the path taken by the East African universities.

The Eight Point Plan thus presented a dilemma. Should the University insist on its right to autonomy and independent criticism, as Gunther believed it must? Or should it forestall attempts to have government will imposed on it by espousing the national ideology voluntarily, by becoming more responsive? The latter was the choice of Oldfield and his committee. As events turned out the initiative was taken from the University, and much of the effort of the committee was superseded by the second Gris Committee. However, the Oldfield and second Gris Committees contained significant cross membership, and not surprisingly a number of recommendations of the one reappeared in the report of the other — the idea of university 'outreach', the principle of 'work-study', the establishment of a joint government-universities manpower planning committee. Each committee endeavoured to apply the national ideology to university effort. Just how practical such attempts were became apparent in the work of the second Gris Committee.

---

24 Winslow to Oldfield, loc. cit.

25 Gunther to Oldfield, loc. cit.
The Committee of Enquiry into University Development

The second Gris Committee, formally the Committee of Enquiry into University Development (CEUD), was intended to be to university development in the post-independence era what the Currie Commission had been in the mid-1960s. It was set up by Cabinet in June 1973 to make recommendations for future university development in order to achieve 'balanced growth of academic programmes and courses and of enrolments in keeping with manpower needs; and maximum economy of scarce staff and physical resources'. The CEUD consisted of the three original members of the first Gris Committee (Gris, Crocombe and Harvey), as well as D.A. Low (UPNG Council member, Director of ANU Research School of Pacific Studies, later ANU Vice-Chancellor), I. Kilage (Catholic priest, member of the National Education Board, future national Ombudsman), N. Rooney (UPNG graduate, Administrative College lecturer, future Minister for Justice, and the only female member of the committee), M. Avei (University of Queensland graduate, member of Somare's personal staff), K. Pochapon (UOT graduate, Acting Surveyor General), A. Sarei (former Catholic priest, Doctor of Canon Law from Pontificia Universitas, Rome; former student counsellor at UPNG; most recently a member of Somare's staff; later Provincial Commissioner for Bougainville; and viewed by many at the time as a likely future Vice-Chancellor), and J. Waiko (UPNG graduate, then completing M.A. studies at the University of London).

The CEUD membership was significant for several reasons. Because of the furore caused by the first Gris Committee, university development was now a sensitive issue, and government wanted the CEUD to contain 'the best possible people'. The chairman, Gris, now a veteran of three committees of inquiry into education and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of UPNG, had demonstrated intellectual and administrative skills as well as a commitment to the national ideology. Crocombe fervently subscribed to Eight Points ideals, and again the government thought his presence would 'stimulate a more thorough inquiry'; however, because of his capacity for antagonizing expatriate academics, Low was added as a counterpoise to his possible radical excesses.

27 Hossack to Olewale, 10 and 31 July 1973, OHER 66-1-23.
28 ibid.
Harvey, once a UPNG lecturer, was included for what he might contribute as an economist who understood the apprehensions of university staff. But the greatest significance attached to the choice of the seven Papua New Guineans. All were graduates, and three had postgraduate degrees. This was perhaps the most impressive array of national talent yet assembled to examine any aspect of the country's development, and if it did nothing else it demonstrated the efficacy of the effort in tertiary education during the preceding decade. With such articulate membership heavily weighted in favour of nationals, the eventual CEUD Report might be expected to be Papua New Guinean to an extent that neither Currie nor Brown reports could have been.

The CEUD tackled its task systematically, covering even more ground in miles travelled, places visited, and submissions obtained than the Currie Commissioners. It began work in mid-September 1973, and met on fifty occasions over the next eleven months. At its disposal were 300 background reports obtained from various local and overseas agencies, 200 submissions from individuals and groups, and the records of 100 interviews with various informants. Nine of the ten CEUD members undertook overseas trips to visit university institutions thought relevant to Papua New Guinea, and altogether seventeen countries as widespread as China, Sri Lanka, Botswana and Guyana were visited. In the writing of the report Crocombe's influence was strong: he assumed the role of 'the European who could put on to paper the feelings of the indigenous group'.\(^{29}\) Up to nine drafts were written for some chapters, and in a number it was Crocombe who produced the first four or five, which were then worked over by Low, Gris, Randell (the executive officer), and perhaps some of the others. Not all the Papua New Guineans were able to contribute as much as had been hoped. Except for Gris none of them worked full-time on the Committee, and most had outside commitments which often distracted them from CEUD tasks.\(^{30}\) As a result, the influence of Crocombe, Low and Gris was unduly strong, and some sceptics even suggested the CEUD Report would more appropriately have been called the 'Crocombe Report'.

The Report began with a statement of guiding principles, an ideological preface reminding the universities of

\(^{29}\) Randell, RIW, p.2.

\(^{30}\) ibid., and pp.10-11, 13-15.
certain salient points. Thus, the universities were producing an elite whereas 'national policy favours a more egalitarian society'; therefore 'both staff and students ... must do everything within their power to minimize stratification and privilege'. Then, too, the universities must help promote self reliance, and in doing so must guard their soft belly: staff and students were working and living in affluence and comfort the general populace did not share, which was hardly 'conducive to creativity and improvisation ... the hallmarks of self reliance'. The universities, moreover, were part of a foreign-imposed superstructure, and were not necessarily appropriate to local circumstances. This required them to be innovative in attempting new approaches to university education to make it more responsive to local conditions. They must also preserve their intellectual independence against strong attacks which would certainly be made against them. They should be the very 'conscience of the nation', though they must have 'empathy for national aspirations'. Finally, they must avoid creating problems which universities elsewhere had caused — graduate unemployment, high training costs, waste of resources, demands by their graduates for abundant privileges when most people were living in poverty. Many of these injunctions were, of course, inconsistent and contradictory; yet that underlined an important point: to be 'responsive' would not be simple.

The CEUD Report made a total of 136 recommendations, though there were but three central issues — the integration of work and study, the extension of university service into a range of extramural activities, and the amalgamation of all university institutions into a single national university. It was around these that the whole report turned.

The first of the central issues, integration of work and study, was an idea first canvassed in the Oldfield Report. The spacing of sessions of study with periods of practical work was attractive for a number of reasons: it would allow students to approach advanced levels of study with greater maturity; it would give them an appreciation of the practical applications of the theoretical aspects of their courses;

31CEUD Report, p.3.
32ibid., p.4.
33ibid., p.7.
students reaching their academic ceiling early could be phased out with an 'honourable discharge' instead of suffering the humiliation of failure; national service could be readily built into all study programmes; greater community involvement was possible, with students becoming 'sensitized to the needs of ordinary men'. To help integrate work and study the CEUD recommended a 'modular approach' to course organization, that is progress through all university courses should be by a succession of one-, two- and three-year self-contained 'modules', each with its own appropriate qualification. Thus, students completing the UPNG preliminary (matriculation) year would receive a 'certificate'; after two years of post-certificate study a 'diploma' would be awarded; two years of post-diploma study would lead to a 'bachelor's degree'; a year's post-degree study would lead to a 'postgraduate diploma'; 'master's degrees' would come after two years' full time study beyond the bachelor's degree; and 'doctorates' after three years' full time study beyond the master's degree. Ideally a period of work experience would precede each such module, and in the selection of students for further study preference would go not only to those with academic potential but to those with work experience. As CEUD saw it, the diploma-level module would be an area for special effort, with high priority going to courses at that level.34 The idea of work-spaced modules, while offering solutions to problems of student motivation and immaturity, did however entail perhaps unforeseen disadvantages: what was at present a four or five year degree could well become an eight or ten year degree when done by modules. And the requirement to work savoured of what one UPNG wit termed 'educational Calvinism' — the removal of pleasure from learning through the threat of an imminent sentence of work.

The second of the CEUD's main proposals related to university 'outreach', that is 'a major expansion of all forms of university extension activities [including] both external off-campus ... [and] part time on-campus study ... [and] extramural activities such as public lectures, workshops, seminars and community involvement programmes'.35 The CEUD saw outreach as basic to Eight Points ideology: it would produce graduates 'likely to be less elitist in outlook'; it would assist decentralization; it fostered an

35ibid., p.47.
'attitude of self-reliance'; it helped further women's education and it would encourage 'late developers' who had not proceeded to university straight from high school. Major outreach effort should go into external studies, which, despite having been one of the original Currie recommendations, had never become an area for serious university effort — the problems of communications had seemed too daunting; and there had been staff shortages, sceptism about the effectiveness of external studies, and queries about high drop-out and failure rates. The CEUD recognized such problems, but still thought external studies should be a 'mainstream activity' rather than an unwanted extra burden. Indeed by 1978 there should be 1200 external enrolments. The Report therefore made a series of recommendations to allow for a massive diversion of effort into external studies. These included the creation of a Board of Extension Activities as a planning and policy making body; the appointment of a Principal of Extension Activities with rank equivalent to that of the present Vice-Chancellors of the Waigani and Lae campuses; the creation of a series of regional and sub-regional centres through which external studies and other extension activities could be mounted; the appointment of a large staff of administrators, secretaries and teachers to an Office of Extension Activities, which would be responsible for external teaching.36

The third central issue, which related to university government and the creation of a single national university, was by far the most contentious. In recommending the amalgamation of UPNG, UOT and Goroka Teachers College in a 'National University of Papua New Guinea', the CEUD was prompted primarily by concern over the wastefulness, duplication and lack of co-ordination in a system where each institution had its own separate and costly governing and administrative structures. In addition there were the destructive effects of institutional rivalry, as evidenced in the wrangling over who should host the forestry degree. A national university, the CEUD argued, would prevent the university system from being 'simply an arena [for] institutional competition' between UPNG and UOT (though the possibility that a national university might similarly become a cockpit of internal intrigue apparently escaped the Committee). To govern the national university the Report recommended a Council, a Chancellor (ceremonial head),

36ibid., pp.48, 63-68.
a Pro-Chancellor (Council chairman), Vice-Chancellor, Secretary, and Bursar. The heads of the Waigani and Lae campuses would be called 'Campus Principals', of equal status with the Principal of Extension Activities. To ensure co-ordination between campuses there should be a Planning and Co-ordinating Committee. Each campus would have its own 'Board', analogous to the existing Academic Boards, and its own Registrar, Student Affairs Officer, Accountant, Staff Officer, Maintenance Officer and Administrative Officer. Communication with the government would be through the OHE in most instances. Such a system would require the Council, Vice-Chancellor, and the Planning and Co-ordinating Committee to be peripatetic, 'oscillating as frequently as possible between the campuses ... as personally familiar with the work of one campus as with another'. For ease of access to government, however, they should have their permanent base in Port Moresby, though physically removed from Waigani — to discount the possibility that the Waigani campus would dominate the others.  

These proposals had all the force of rationality; but they did not allow for factors like institutional pride and personal interest, which were not rational in the same way.

In addition to the three central recommendations for work-study, outreach, and a national university, the CEUD made a series of important proposals in other areas — manpower planning, student affairs, staff matters, finance, and physical facilities — always stressing the need for university responsiveness to Eight Points imperatives. Briefly, the Report recommended as follows:

(i) Meeting manpower needs. The CEUD was primarily concerned to gear subjects taught and length of courses to government manpower objectives. They should not, for example, 'require a degree where a diploma will do'. They should train more diplomates than degree holders, observing a 3:1 ratio in favour of the former. To achieve the right balances between diplomates and degree holders, and between enrolments in different courses, there should be a system of quotas. To the universities, of course, quotas were an anathema, an assault on their autonomy; nevertheless the CEUD deemed them necessary as 'the present practice ... of not knowing class sizes until after enrolment [was] a

[37]ibid., pp.122-24, 133.
hindrance to good planning'. There should also be a ceiling on enrolments to ensure that the university system grew only to a required size. UOT enrolments could expand for some time yet to cater for unfilled technological manpower needs, but UPNG's full time enrolments should be held at the 1974 level. To ensure that all these aims were met, a Committee on University Trained Manpower (CUTM) should be established, with representation from the Central Planning Office, OHE, Public Service Board, and the university campuses. This body would annually determine and report to government on manpower needs, and make recommendations on the number of enrolments in any discipline.

(ii) Student affairs. Like the Oldfield Report, the CEUD called for programmes to improve motivation, develop attitudes of professional and vocational service, and of altruism, and promote self-reliance. To further these aims students should participate in decision making, and accept the consequences of decision making. They should contribute to the physical running of the campuses, working in the gardens, in the kitchens, and on maintenance and cleaning jobs. They should continue receiving a living allowance, but should also be required to contribute to the cost of their own education, either through national service, bonding or by paying higher taxes on graduation. Student selection needed revision since too few students whose parents were subsistence farmers (the bulk of the population) were receiving university education, while the children of the 'colonial elite' (teachers, public servants, pastors et al.) made up a disproportionately high part of the enrolments. Similarly, female students and students from the less developed regions were proportionately under-represented. Such imbalances could be offset by flexible selection procedures which took account of disadvantaged groups. Finally, the CEUD believed student amenities were too lavish — messing costs were excessive compared with those of other tertiary institutions, and needless luxuries such as washing machines were all part of the 'hidden curriculum'.

(iii) Staff matters. The CEUD Report amplified issues first raised in the first Gris Report. Thus, there should

38 *ibid.*, pp.13-14.
40 *ibid.*, pp.79-89, 83-85.
be active encouragement of Papua New Guinean academic staff; the country needed its own academic salary policy and pay scales because 'paying rich country rates in poor countries creates problems' (the Report then recommended appropriate rates); the existing high proportion of Australian staff was inappropriate, and the recruiting net should be cast wider; a fixed proportion of staff should come from international voluntary services; finding 'the right staff'—those who 'feel empathy for the aspirations of Papua New Guineans'—was important; there should be 'staff orientation programmes' (classes, residence in villages) for new staff and their families; and there should be significantly more staff at the junior (tutor-lecturer) levels than at senior (senior lecturer-reader-professor) levels, with a ratio of 3:1 applying.\(^{41}\)

(iv) Financial matters and physical facilities. The CEUD believed 'finance in the past [had] been generous', and this had 'unfortunately led to expectations from staff and students that [their] relatively superior position ... will be maintained. This period is now drawing to a close'.\(^{42}\) Economies were due as 'the universities are more expensive than any other tertiary and non-tertiary institutions'\(^{43}\) The universities, moreover, should not receive preferential treatment over other post-secondary institutions in the allocation of funds. To ensure fair treatment the existing machinery of the Universities Finance Review Committee (UFRC) should be formalized. Concerning physical facilities, future buildings should be 'carefully assessed with a view to both keeping costs as low as possible and creating an environment much more in harmony with that of the other tertiary institutions'.\(^{44}\) The attractive grounds and gardens of both universities presented something of a dilemma: on the one hand they were a national asset; on the other the pleasant surroundings contrasted with the squalor in which many ordinary citizens lived. 'To what extent is elitism fostered as a result?' asked the CEUD, convinced that a nexus must exist between high cost, poor economy, and elitism.\(^{45}\)

\(^{41}\)ibid., pp.114-15.

\(^{42}\)ibid., p.139.

\(^{43}\)ibid., pp.145-46.

\(^{44}\)ibid.

\(^{45}\)ibid., p.149.
Plate 7 UOT tries to be 'appropriate' to the needs of the nation (above) the *haus kofi* (coffee house), modelled on the traditional *haus tambaran* (spirit house) of the Sepik provinces, 1979; (below) a micro-hydro-electric generator suitable for installation in villages being tested at UOT, 1979.
In terms of existing practice in Papua New Guinea the CEUD Report was thus a radical document. Its three central recommendations, for modular courses, outreach and a national university, called for a far-reaching restructuring of the university system, a redirection of the major effort in university education, and a thorough revision of the curriculum. At the same time its anti-elitist thrust, its determination to seek economy, and its insistence on the universities' being responsive to government and attuned to the official ideology demanded that they examine their conscience. Such a document was sure to be challenged by those with a stake in the status quo. Whether or not its recommendations could be implemented without modification depended on the strength of the interests which might combine against it, and on how far they might go to upset it.

Action on the CEUD proposals

Most people sensed that the CEUD Report would be a turning point for the universities, for as Inglis noted, it clearly seemed to be 'a major contribution to the educational history of Papua New Guinea'. But that was not to say its proposals would be welcomed by all. Cabinet recognized that these would prove contentious, and accordingly decreed that they be widely discussed by the public before action to implement them was taken. Copies of the Report duly went to government departments, educational institutions, politicians and the general public; and OHE subsequently received fifty-five detailed sets of comments from various parties. Most expressed admiration for the work done by the CEUD, but also vented 'more or less strong doubts about the ways and means proposed by the Report to achieve its ideals'. Implementation would clearly be a protracted process, with defenders and detractors debating each point along the way.

The Report provoked intense debate on each campus in the months following its publication; indeed, such was the ferment of discussion during late 1974 and early '75 as the universities went about framing their official responses that they were concerned with little else. Their reactions

---

46 Inglis to Rees, 9 October 1974, UPNG R E.61-1 (part 2).
were at first mild — generally approving though cautious. Each university suggested that before implementation there should be 'a thorough inquiry into ramifications of the Report'.

It was not long, however, before attitudes hardened, particularly over the national university. Sandover emerged as the most vehement opponent here. He made his views plain to Inglis:

I believe the proposals have been reached through fallacious arguments, and ... that many of the proposals are a result of the prejudices of the Committee rather than a clear appraisal of the situation. I thoroughly agree that there is a great need for much more co-operation and collaboration between the two universities.... However, the thought of the cumbersome structure they propose to establish on top of the existing university system fills me with horror and I am quite certain that such proposals would mean the end of this university as a viable institution .... The peripheral institutions, such as our own ... would become very similar in status to the high schools and this would in turn ensure that we would neither retain nor attract adequately trained academic staff ....

This was Sandover speaking extempore and in haste, something he was wont to do when his own or UOT's interests were threatened, but it did indicate that he would doggedly resist CEUD recommendations, particularly those relating to the national university.

There was good reason for Sandover to be paranoid. There had always been tension between him and the CEUD: early in the CEUD's proceedings he and some Committee members had antagonized each other, and they had come to regard the national university as a way to contain him. He was therefore justified in thinking the CEUD had not been entirely objective over the national university, and to feel that in taking away his hard-won title of Vice-Chancellor it had

---

49 UOT Academic Board Minutes, 9 October 1974, University of Technology Records (UOTR); cf. Inglis, paper on CEUD Report for 38th meeting of UPNG Council, 13 February 1975, UPNGR E.61-1 (part 1).

50 Sandover to Inglis, 12 November 1974, UPNGR 76/13.

51 Personal observations, 1972-76.
acted not only out of concern for the national interest but also out of spite. He was also convinced that the CEUD had arrived at UOT with preconceived ideas about the form of university organization it would recommend. Again there were grounds for thinking so: less than a month after the CEUD had begun operations Harvey was bruiting his 'inside' knowledge that the national university was imminent. 52 Sandover also knew that on his own campus he had determined opponents — a group he referred to as the 'dedicated destroyers' — whom he thought were bent upon undermining all his efforts in raising UOT to university status. Some of this group had, in fact, presented well-argued submissions to the CEUD suggesting that under Sandover UOT was 'an unhappy place' for which a UPNG-UOT amalgamation would be the best cure. 53 Indeed his UOT opponents had gone so far as to persuade OHE to send in the UN's Pacific consultant on administrative matters, N.C. Angus, who made a report highly critical of Sandover's administration and favouring the idea of a single university. 54

Sandover campaigned strongly against the national university proposals. He argued to OHE that the national university would create an unnecessary, unwieldy and costly bureaucratic superstructure which would only make university administration more complicated than at present. The existing administrative machinery on each campus would have to remain, he pointed out, so what was being proposed would be an additional and unwarranted burden. Better to leave the universities separate as they were, and if greater co-ordination were required this should be through the creation of a common Council for UPNG and UOT, which would thus be closely linked while remaining individually autonomous. 55 Inglis seemed to favour a similar viewpoint, for he had already advised Gris that separate but co-ordinated universities would be more economic than a 'single university with constituent campuses (like the University of California and the

52 Harvey to Oldfield, October 1973, UPNG R E.61.
53 Sandover to I. Willis, July 1975, personal papers; Sandover to CEUD, 29 October 1973, OHER S-31; Submissions to CEUD, S-57 and S-58, OHER.
54 N.C. Angus to Gris, 26 June 1974, OHER S-207.
State University of New York)'. Such views subsequently received further endorsement from a number of groups within UOT — the Students Representative Council, the various Faculty Boards, the Academic Board, and the Council — who feared for their institution and its special technological emphasis. Their dealings with Oldfield and others had shown them that marriage to UPNG would be difficult, that the special needs of technological education could be overlooked in an institution in which the interests of social science and liberal arts disciplines predominated.

The recommendation for the national university soon entered the domain of public debate, which was carried on most notably in the columns of the Post-Courier. UOT students were particularly outspoken about their reluctance to be submerged in a Waigani-dominated super-university, which they claimed would inevitably mean they would be reduced in status to that of inmates of some peripheral college remote from the main campus. Then the Minister for Commerce, Boyamo Sali, who was also the parliamentary representative for the region in which UOT was located, entered the lists with the claim that the CEUD Report was 'an insult' to his constituents, who regarded UOT as 'their university' and did not want it subsumed in some national organization centralized on Port Moresby. Sali's comments drew a sharp rejoinder from Gris, who asserted that a single national university would not 'necessarily' entail UOT's loss of individuality or its downgrading: indeed, 'its status as a campus of a national university might in fact be elevated'. The debate later became rather more confused when the UOT academic staff association voted in favour of the national university. A clique of Sandover's most persistent critics were influential in this body, which decided to endorse the proposal for a single university if there were guarantees that UOT would not be 'downgraded by the

---

56 Inglis to Gris, 14 January 1974, UPNGR E.61-1 (part 1).

57 D. Mansell, RIW; A. Pritchard, 'Summary of comments made by members of UOT on CEUD Report', paper for 37th Council Meeting, 21 March 1975, UOTR.

58 Post-Courier, 19 March 1975, p.15.


60 Post-Courier, 1 April 1975, p.2.
establishment of a centralized administration in Port Moresby'.\textsuperscript{61} This provoked the Students' Representative Council (SRC) executive at UOT to accuse their teachers of manoeuvring to oust the Vice-Chancellor, and of 'considering only their own selfish interests in the matter and not the long-term welfare of the students and the University'.\textsuperscript{62} The official UOT view remained that expressed in its public relations material, which argued that the idea of a centralized university bureaucracy in Port Moresby was 'not only contrary to ... the Eight Point Improvement Plan but also a very expensive proposition .... It has been tried in Malaysia and Sri Lanka without success, mainly because of serious shortcomings ... affecting the efficiency, morale and initiative of campus personnel'.\textsuperscript{63}

There was indeed some sympathy for the UOT position at UPNG. Some at Waigani were reluctant to see their university wed with its termagant Lae cousin. Others were fearful of the threat to UPNG's autonomy implicit in the CEUD arguments. The findings of the UPNG Secretary, Long, who in 1975 visited the University of Sri Lanka, probably confirmed suspicions they had long entertained about the disadvantages of multi-campus organization. This university, which had come into being through the amalgamation of five autonomous universities in 1971, had favourably impressed the CEUD. Long, however, reported that there was great dissatisfaction in Sri Lanka over the new arrangement, mainly because:

It is a very centralized system, bureaucratic with the individual campuses having little or no authority .... The headquarters tended to be out of touch with what was going on because of their isolation.... [Moreover] government control is much more easily exercised through a single organization.\textsuperscript{64}

Amenability to government direction seemed a benefit to those who wished the universities to be 'responsive'; but

\textsuperscript{61}Post-Courier, 7 April 1975, p.3.
\textsuperscript{62}Post-Courier, 9 April 1975, p.3.
\textsuperscript{63}Post-Courier, 14 April 1975, p.2.
to the doughtier defenders of autonomy, whether in Lae or Waigani, it was something requiring prudence rather than enthusiastic espousal. Those with any doubts about the benefits of a multi-campus single university therefore came to agree with Sandover, Long and others that such an institution was not really workable in an underdeveloped nation.

By mid-1975 the OHE reckoned public consideration of the CEUD Report had gone on long enough for implementation of the major recommendations to proceed. Several of the minor proposals had already been acted upon: CUTM had been set up, the UFRC was established on a permanent basis, machinery for reviewing academic salaries had been set up, and the universities of their own volition had begun giving effect to routine recommendations in matters such as teaching, student affairs, localization, and the maintenance of buildings and grounds. But modular studies, outreach and the national university were more contentious issues, and for that reason the Minister for Education, on the advice of the OHE asked a sub-committee of the CEUD — Gris, Apei, Kilage — to prepare a Cabinet submission in association with the OHE. In the preparation of this submission the national university once again provoked dissension. Gris, by now UPNG Vice-Chancellor, still favoured the idea but he had been hurt personally by the reaction against it. Furthermore, he and other CEUD members felt Cabinet had 'gone soft' on its publicly proclaimed ideology and no longer remained fervently committed to the spirit of the Eight Points. Indeed some CEUD members believed Cabinet had 'sold out': government, they thought, had compromised on so many issues — foreign investment, expatriate salaries, exploitation of natural resources by 'big' technology — it would never take the firm stand necessary to implement controversial CEUD proposals. Instead it would probably cave in under public criticism and pressure from various interest groups. And so Gris did not push his proposals with great determination, with the result that the submission to Cabinet not only failed to assert his views but effectively disabled them.

In the end it was the views of the OHE and Department of Finance which prevailed, and they both adopted the

66 Randell, RIW, pp.16, 24; Rees, RIW, p.45.
arguments proposed earlier by Sandover. This became obvious 
in the submission which the Minister for Education finally 
took to Cabinet in October 1975, and which the OHE had 
prepared. In brief, this document argued and recommended 
as follows:

(i) Modular studies. The submission claimed that 
some disciplines were less amenable to modular restructuring 
than others. In mathematics-based courses, for example, 
long periods of work away from the universities could cause 
the students to forget basic knowledge, necessitating time-
consuming, costly remedial programmes on their return to 
studies. Another problem was that lengthy sessions of out-
side work would prolong the period of study needed to take 
out a degree, with bad effects on manpower supply and local-
ization. The submission therefore recommended that Cabinet 
support modular reorganization 'wherever feasible'. In 
practice this meant that implementation was largely left to 
the universities themselves, and more significantly to 
individual faculties to decide whether they would 'go 
modular'. Consequently, only two 'progressive' faculties — 
Arts and Law — took the matter seriously enough to plan 
modular courses; all the other, more traditional, faculties 
more or less ignored the recommendations and carried on as 
before.

(ii) University outreach. The submission noted that 
both universities were already heavily committed to various 
extension activities. It agreed with CEUD that this was 
proper, but disagreed with the proposed structure of organ-
ization for extending 'outreach'. This it thought 'unneccess-
arily complex and bureaucratic'. Furthermore, extension was 
more properly a long-term goal because there was a short-term 
 imperative to fill manpower needs quickly — something best 
achieved via full-time enrolments. The submission therefore 
recommended that only small pilot external studies depart-
ments be set up at UOT and UPNG (which had already taken 
this step on its own initiative). In this way CEUD propos-
als were virtually eviscerated, and the organization estab-
lished was but a shadow of what CEUD had envisaged.

67 Submission to Cabinet, 'Implementation of the major recom-
mendations of the CEUD', October 1975, pp.1-3,10, OHER  
66-1-25.

68 ibid., pp.3-5, 10.
(iii) The national university. Here the submission effectively killed the CEUD proposals. It argued that CEUD had rightly focused attention on problems existing at the time of the inquiry, two years before — lack of co-ordination between UPNG and UOT, and poor communication between universities and government. CEUD thought a single university structure would eliminate these problems; but, the submission argued, conditions had since changed, partly eliminating the problems: initiatives by OHE and the universities had successfully developed mechanisms for co-ordination and communication. Thus, the following had been achieved since CEUD's formation: financial programming of the universities in phase with government budgeting via the UFRC; academic salary determination via the Edoni tribunal, manpower planning via CUTM, greater UPNG-UOT co-operation via cross-membership on the two university Councils, and the appointment of Tololo as Chancellor of each; working groups on new courses with joint UPNG-UOT membership; and the development of OHE to provide government with advice on all matters of higher education, interpret government policy to the universities, and serve as the channel of communication between government and universities. To create the national university now would mean dismantling this 'tried and tested' system and replacing it with something that had 'severe disadvantages' — an additional bureaucratic structure above those already in existence, the centralization of university administration in Port Moresby 'completely against government policy', and the addition of an unnecessary link in the chain of communication between government and campuses. Such were these disadvantages that Cabinet should 'retain the separate autonomy of the universities and not proceed with the concept of a national university at this stage'.

The submission duly passed through Cabinet and became policy. The universities remained separately autonomous, though with a significant degree of shared membership on their Councils, each of which Tololo headed. Sandover and other defenders of UOT integrity could relax for a while; Gris and his supporters had to resign themselves to at least temporary eclipse. There could be no certainty, however, that the two universities would remain forever separate. Somare and the Central Planning Office were clearly determined to have a single university Council, and kept pressing

69 Ibid., pp.5-7, 10-11.
the OHE in that direction. With the setting up of a single Council there would only be a small final step to full amalgamation. The battle to keep UOT separate may therefore have been but the first encounter in a long campaign.

Perhaps the government did not appreciate what an extraordinarily complex creature it had on a leash when it demanded that the university system come to heel to the tune of the national ideology. Perhaps, too, those who tried to take the beast in hand failed to appreciate the temper of the animal they were dealing with, naively imagining that they could tame it. The first Gris Committee, the Oldfield Committee, and the CEUD had all done their best to make it 'sit' at the command of the ideology, but with only limited success. Perhaps the only way to tame it was to starve it into submission, and that was something government eventually tried when it cut the universities' financial rations. The various committees of inquiry undoubtedly caused considerable soul-searching, as they had set out to do; but they also provoked reactions they might not have intended (but perhaps should have foreseen). It was one thing to recommend the simple amalgamation of two universities; it was another to implement this when institutional self-interest barred the way. Similarly, recommendations to government in a document like the CEUD Report were only part of the task of inducing change; to get the document implemented without emasculation was the other, more difficult, and more important part. There could be many a slip between recommendation and implementation, for along the way many obstacles — departments and faculties within universities, the universities themselves, government agencies, and, by no means the least, individuals with various interests to protect. To take but one of these — the OHE — by mid-1975 this body had acquired considerable influence because of shrewd manoeuvring by its ambitious leadership. It stood to lose power and influence through the creation of a national university. It was not therefore surprising that the submission the OHE helped to prepare for Cabinet came down heavily against a UPNG-UOT merger.

70 OHER 66-1-23. This file details the pressures on OHE to introduce a single council for UPNG and UOT, an issue which is further discussed in Chapter 10.
All of this pointed to the difficulties of educational planning. What planners like the Gris and Oldfield Committees had done was produce ideal models; but what was best was not necessarily what came to be. Political pressures from various interested groupings could always upset the most immaculate of models, and that is what happened, most notably with the CEUD Report. The scheme of reform it proposed was in keeping with the fervently proclaimed national ideology of 1973; but by 1975 the bloom was wearing off the Eight Points. The government which had once called for Crocombe to whip the universities into line was now less interested in the radical reforms a Crocombe might propose, and was only too ready to be persuaded by the countervailing arguments of those with vested interests. And so, while the idealism of the reformers might remain intact, their schemes foundered on institutional self-interest and government apathy.

A further difficulty was the nature of the reform programmes themselves. Fired with the zeal of the times, they tended to be long on idealism and rhetoric but short on practicality. The demands they made were sometimes inconsistent and unrealistic. It was, for example, naive to expect the universities to shed their elitism—by forcing upon them lower academic salaries, more Spartan conditions, and students' voluntary work—if only the universities were to make such sacrifices. Such a requirement could only be effective and meaningful if carried right across the entire public sector, through the Public Service, among parliamentarians. If elitism were to be rooted out only in the universities, the university community would have good reason to cry discrimination. Nor did the self-righteous zeal of the reformers help. If anything, it convinced their opponents that they were out of touch with reality and that their schemes should be set aside without remorse.

The major fault of the reform programmes, however, was their simplistic conception of the university system, and of the national society it catered to. The reformers seemed to view the system as a simple tool for social engineering which could be adjusted to produce the ideal society, but the assumptions the reformers made were often dubious. Was elitism indeed an evil? Could it be eliminated? And could fiddling with the universities really change the society? The reformers generally answered in
the affirmative, ignoring the possibility that for Papua New Guinea elitism was a functional necessity. It could have been argued that the very existence of a Papua New Guinean state depended on the presence of an educated elite who would hold together an otherwise segmentary agglomeration of disparate ethnic and regional groupings. If that argument had any force it would also have been possible to argue that the proper function of the universities was to produce an elite as expeditiously as possible.

Debate over the reform programmes, particularly that of the CEUD, revealed complex tensions within the university system. First, there was considerable conflict within each university. At UOT there were pro- and anti-Sandover factions, each with sectional interests to protect; and at UPNG there were 'progressive' and 'conservative' faculties and departments in contention with each other over the direction the University should take. In some respects such internal divisions were as deep as those between the universities, which were more obvious to the outsider but certainly no more real. The tension between them was, of course, considerable for it was not only Sandover who felt that the proposal for a national university was a disguised UPNG takeover bid for UOT — by and large his Council, Academic Board and student body shared his determination to stay clear of the tentacles of the Waigani octopus. Finally, tensions were developing around the OHE, which had clearly aligned itself with the Sandover view of the CEUD proposals. OHE could retain its integrity while it was seen to be impartial, but if seen to be politicking to serve its own ends it could not remain unchallenged. That there were so many lines of stress was a result of the growing complexity and maturity of the university system. It had begun amidst doubt, frustration and improvisation in 1965; but a decade later, in the year of national independence, it was an integral part of the national society. The tensions with which it was riven were a measure of that. Under the circumstances it was perhaps too much to expect that it was capable of the wholesale restructuring favoured by the reformers.
Chapter 9

Academic trade unionists, militant students

Until the formation of the first Somare government in early 1972, the general public had regarded the universities, particularly UPNG, as politically radical enclaves. Their staff and students had certainly been outspoken in questioning official dogmas: many had strong views on the need for a national government to reform its colonial inheritance. Yet neither staff nor students emerged as a forceful, coherent pressure group until 1974-75. During this period they each became more politicized, more militant — the staff over industrial issues, the students in pursuit of different aims which varied from campus to campus. Though the staff and student causes were apparently little related, a common sense of discontent and disillusionment with the universities, the government and trends in national development ran through their grievances.

Academic trade unionists

Cabinet's decision in 1973 to cut the tie between academic salaries in Australia and Papua New Guinea, in accordance with the first Gris Report recommendations, aroused militancy in the universities as had no other issue in the past. The decision created two classes of salary — the 'ex gratia' (for staff on existing contracts, comprising old salary plus an allowance to bring it up to the new Australian awards for a limited period), and the 'non-ex gratia' (for staff on new contracts, comprising the old salary with no extra allowance). ¹ Academics soon came to resent this arrangement, for it led to internal dissension between 'privileged' (ex gratia) and 'under-privileged (non-ex gratia) factions. Moreover it was, in the opinion of many, both

¹Policy submission to (PNG) Cabinet, 'Salary policy for overseas academic staff at PNG universities', 20 November 1974, OHER 66-1-49.
'anomalous and inequitable' for it meant a cut in real wages for all staff as it effectively pegged salaries at the old (1970) level in a time of rapid inflation.²

The second Gris Committee recognized the mistake of its predecessor. Clearly, one expatriate group — the academics — out of many could not be isolated for a salary reduction. And obviously salaries could not be pegged: there must be an adjustable, competitive 'market' rate instead. The CEUD Report therefore tried to repair the damage done by the first Gris Committee, recommending adjustments to academic salaries to remove the ex gratia/non-ex gratia differential and to allow for regular reviews to meet inflation.³ However, as the salary proposals of the CEUD were not implemented until early 1975, there was a period of a year-and-a-half when the first Gris Committee recommendations were in force to fuel the discontent of academics.⁴

The effects of the first Gris Report salaries policy were marked. Both OHE and the university administrations noted 'the severe loss of morale among academics, who see themselves subject to inequitable treatment when compared to ... other expatriate employees who have continued to receive flow-ons from Australia'.⁵ The academics' real income was eroding rapidly, and some lecturers were now receiving less than primary school teachers; they had no assurance that salary review machinery would be established; rates of personal taxation were climbing towards Australian

²M. Brown and P. Greenwood to Sandover, 4 June 1974, OHER 66-1-49.

³Policy submission to Cabinet, loc. cit. The CEUD Report recommended a $1333 per annum rise for all non-ex gratia staff, with six-monthly reviews. Under the formula adopted the ex gratia/non-ex gratia differential would eventually disappear and uniform salaries would apply, still subject to half-yearly reviews. Government adopted this scheme as from the beginning of 1975.

⁴First Gris Report salary recommendations were in force from July 1973. The CEUD Report was released in August 1974; its salary recommendations were approved by Cabinet in October 1974; the salary review machinery it recommended — the Edoni tribunal — came into being in late January 1975.

⁵Policy submission to Cabinet, loc. cit.
levels, thus removing a strong financial inducement to keep working in Papua New Guinea; and *ex gratia* staff faced a 20 per cent salary cut ($2000 to $3000) when their contracts expired if they remained on under new contracts. As they realized these disadvantages they emerged as the country's most disgruntled and militant trade unionists, their 'unions' being the academic sections of the UPNG and UOT Staff Associations. These two bodies were natural allies, and were soon collaborating closely. Over their salaries, if not on other matters, UPNG and UOT academic staff quickly developed a high level of co-operation.

Generally UOT academics were more vocal and intransigent on industrial issues than their Waigani colleagues, for a variety of reasons. First, they believed the CEUD had given them scant attention. CEUD visited UOT on only four occasions, then only fleetingly, and never as a full committee. As technologists they felt that the CEUD was overwhelmingly composed of Arts graduates who evinced little appreciation of, or interest in, technical education. Indeed to them the CEUD seemed most interested in propounding its own ideological opinions and in ferreting out UOT elitism. Largely as a result of the antagonism which developed between the CEUD and UOT, the OHE subsequently engaged two consultants in technological education — G.D. Sims and J. Mahanty — to advise the CEUD, and both reported favourably on UOT. Nevertheless, some UOT academics saw this as a token gesture and continued to feel the CEUD had discounted their efforts. To them the CEUD was further evidence on top of the first Gris Report that government was intent on bullying them.

---

6 Academic section of UOT Staff Association, Submission to CEUD, 22 April 1974, UOT Staff Association Correspondence, 1975-76.

7 Each staff association comprised several sections catering for different interest groups such as academics, administrative personnel, technical officers and national employees.

8 Academic section of UOT Staff Association, *loc. cit.*; and UOT Staff Association (Academic Section), letter to the editor *Post Courier*, 21 May 1974, p.2.

9 P. Greenwood, RIW.
A second source of grievance was the salary disadvantage UOT academics felt they were suffering vis-à-vis other occupational groups. Many were engineers, architects, surveyors and accountants, with professional colleagues in industry and the Public Service who retained salary parity with counterparts in Australia: why should academics alone among the professionals take a salary cut? Then there was a problem with 'relativities' at UOT, where non-academic salaries had risen steeply. Tied as they were to Public Service pay scales, which remained linked with Australian rates, some classes of non-academic salaries had risen 45 per cent since 1970. Academic salaries had risen only 11 per cent, and so the academics felt left behind by all.10

The UOT Council and administration gave them further cause for resentment. They became convinced that the UOT leadership had 'sold out' its interest in them. Council had ceded control over academic salaries to government and so had little choice but to accept whatever salary policy was ordained. Matheson and Sandover both made sympathetic personal representations, but this was not enough for the academics. They grimly watched Council surrender its salary-fixing powers, claiming its 'passivity' and 'neutral position' were helping downgrade their working conditions.11 Council caused further displeasure over study leave. During 1974 its Finance and Management Committee (the sub-committee responsible for policy-making in Financial matters) approved a new set of study leave rules favourable to academics; but the full Council refused to endorse them. The academics indignantly blamed Sandover for what they saw as a breach of faith: he had, they said, been manoeuvring behind the scenes to delay the new rules so as to conserve funds, and Council had meekly acquiesced. Eventually they threatened to register an industrial dispute over the issue. Council then gave way and ratified the new rules, but by this time

10H. Clark, letter to the editor, Post-Courier, 7 November 1974, p.2; Clark to Stephenson, 6 March 1974, Greenwood papers.

11Matheson to Greenwood, 2 June 1975; to L.G. Matthews, 22 October 1974; Brown to Sandover, 17 February 1975; UOT Staff Association, President's report for 1974, Greenwood papers; Sandover to Matthews, 2 September 1974, UOT Staff Association Correspondence; Sandover to Greenwood, 6 June 1974, OTHER 66-1-49.
the academics were well politicized and determined to yield no further ground.12

Further incidents hardened their resolve, the most notable being UOT's attempt to secure the secondment of staff from Australian universities. By late 1973 UOT was having difficulty in attracting professional technologists. The academics had to teach fuller timetables and larger classes because of the staff shortages, and that compounded their sense of injustice over the salaries issue. Sandover enthusiastically espoused secondment as the solution. The Australian government was prepared to meet the costs as special aid, but the Somare government opposed this because it entailed sectoral rather than general aid, and smacked of 'neo-colonialism' on that count. The Somare government's position here was inconsistent and confused. It saw that it could not continue its previous laissez-faire approach to salaries and that Australian salary levels were inappropriate in a developing country; but it resented Australia's authoritarian methods of negotiating aid and it opposed the project aid Australia wished to give. Its hands were partly tied by the ASAG13 agreement on salaries for certain categories of public servants; but, swinging more and more towards strategies deemed 'appropriate for developing nations' it tried to cut down on the privileges of those expatriate groups within its reach - non-ASAG public servants, academics and others. Despite the government's rejection of project aid, including secondments, Sandover proclaimed his readiness to 'welcome with open arms any secondment'. UOT academics bitterly opposed his campaign to get seconded staff 'on the cheap'. They suspected that if he succeeded in attracting large squads of 'two-year tourists' their own interests would be

12 Greenwood, RIW; Clark, RIW; Smaridge, RIW.

13 ASAG (Australian Staffing Assistance Group) was a mechanism for advancing the salaries of certain classes of expatriate public servants. It was negotiated between the Australian and Papua New Guinean governments to guarantee continuity of the administrative services during the transitional period of colonial disengagement. Under the agreement, which lasted from 1972 to 1975-76, the Australian government paid the salaries of the expatriate public servants it had recruited for the Papua New Guinean service in the period preceding self-government. Their conditions were kept in line with 'high' Australian standards.
conveniently overlooked, even if he did not actually use secondment as a weapon to deflect their industrial demands.\textsuperscript{14}

Sandover's pervasive influence in UOT administration in itself vitiated relations between the University and its academic staff. Council, for example, seemed to allow him free rein: it appeared pliable whenever he made requests or suggestions; it seemed to assert its independence chiefly when dealing with the academics. Successive academic representatives on Council found they were overruled when raising matters on behalf of their colleagues; but the Vice-Chancellor was heard out when pleading his special causes. As a result the academics came to view the Council, especially its Papua New Guinean members, as Sandover's ciphers. Despite the radical utterances some national members made outside Council, they generally gave way before strong pressure from Sandover or Matheson in meetings, 'siding with the strength' on contentious issues. As localization proceeded, and nationals became the majority group on Council, academics lost faith in it as an independent body they could rely on for objective decisions. In the opinion of many it had become simply a device for legitimating the will of the Vice-Chancellor.\textsuperscript{15}

The dissatisfaction of UOT academics built up steadily in the year following the first Gris Report, until some sort of militant protest became inevitable. It took the form of an appeal to arbitration, in which the UOT and UPNG academic staff associations combined. They registered an industrial dispute under the Industrial Relations Act 1962-71, and then placed a joint case before an arbitration tribunal for a review of the government's academic salaries policy. The case duly came before a tribunal headed by L.G. Matthews in September 1974. Counsel for the academics was J. Griffin, a UPNG lecturer in Law, while the government advocate was J. Macken, a Sydney barrister retained and briefed by the OHE. Both universities declined to appear for, as the UOT Registrar noted, 'it would be somewhat

\textsuperscript{14}Sandover to R. Bray, 24 January 1974, UPNGR F.105-17 (part 1); Matheson to Rees, 31 January 1974; A. O'Neill, notes of discussion with A. Martin (PNG Department of Finance), 16 August 1974, UPNGR F.105-17 (part 2); \textit{National Times}, 12 October 1974, p.38; Greenwood, RIW.

\textsuperscript{15}Smaridge, RIW; Clark, RIW; Greenwood, RIW.
ludicrous [for the University to appear] in that [it] does not in fact wish to refuse the claims of the Staff Association and is only prevented from complying with them by the actions and requirements of the Government'. UPNG and UOT therefore delegated their cases to the OHE. After only two days' sitting Matthews adjourned the tribunal so that government could reconsider its position in the light of the recently released CEUD Report.

During the adjournment the OHE quickly prepared a Cabinet submission to implement the CEUD salary recommendations and thus remove the major sources of dissatisfaction among academics — the ex gratia/non-ex gratia differential and the lack of salary review machinery. Cabinet subsequently approved this submission in early October 1974. However, the academics, particularly those at UOT, were still not satisfied. They announced that they would refuse to accept any proffered increase, and would continue with their case before the Matthews tribunal. The tribunal did not reconvene until mid-November 1974. In the meantime the academics had been waging a relentless publicity campaign in the local and Australian press. Styling themselves as 'academic pawns' in a 'game' between the universities and the governments of Papua New Guinea and Australia, they maintained a flow of provocative publicity material.

Eventually a reaction set in against militant academic trade unionism. As Sandover observed to the UOT Staff Association, 'there is somewhat of a slight prejudice against academics in the minds of government Ministers, who no doubt think we are very well paid compared with themselves'. Government was indeed unsympathetic: believing that high priced expatriates expecting Australian conditions were a bane, it had instructed the Public Service Board to seek future recruits in the Philippines and elsewhere. Some

---

18Sandover to UOT Staff Association, 5 September 1974, Greenwood papers.
academics were also disgusted by what they regarded as the
greed of their colleagues. A former UPNG history lecturer
felt moved to write to the Matthews tribunal supporting
'the action of the [first] Gris Committee to stop the
materialist and careerist character of the universities'.
The academics, he roundly asserted, enjoyed 'scandalous'
affluence:

[They] live in lavishly equipped houses, drive new
cars, own boats, hold properties and investments in
Australia, enjoy low taxation and ... holidays in
Asia or Europe and have their wives (who would have
been lucky in most cases to obtain a place in an
Australian university) take degree courses ... It
is particularly offensive that the ardent staff
association leaders who pursue the claim are former
school teachers ... who could themselves not have
gained even a Junior Lectureship under competitive
Australian conditions.20

Gratuitous such generalizations may have been in their
broad sweep, yet they did indicate that among the academics
were some prepared to work for less than Australian salaries.

The university trade unionists generally derided as
'academic missionaries' those colleagues who were prepared
to take a reduction in conditions, yet the existence of
such a group was significant. It showed that the univers-
ities were inherently factional, and that unified and
sustained staff action was probably impossible on any issue.
How deep such divisions were became clear when seven UPNG
academics caused a stir among their militant colleagues by
publicly dissociating themselves from the staff associations'
wage claim. In a provocative letter to the Post-Courier
they urged the government to 'call the bluff' of the trade
unionists:

There is no question in our minds that academics ...
are among the most privileged sections of the country —
by almost any criteria .... We find the recommend-
ations of the first Gris Committee ... quite accept-
able, even generous .... We feel that foreign acad-
emics may be better received and perceived by Papua
New Guineans if the prime efforts of the former were

to improve the conditions of employment for Papua New Guinean academics so that more of them would be attracted into academic professions. As it is the present demands of the staff associations portray nothing other than naked self interest.21

There were prompt and indignant rejoinders to this, accusing the seven of cheap, 'pseudo-altruistic' posturing to gain effect before a Papua New Guinean audience,22 a charge which perhaps gained credence later when, of the seven, only one declined the salary increase granted. The flesh in this case may have been weak, but the fact remained that a number of academics regarded the service role of their jobs as more important than the salaries attaching to them, and for that reason eschewed industrial agitation. Indeed at UPNG there was a group which declined to accept the salary increases personally. Instead they set up a joint fund to receive their extra pay, which was then diverted to aid various student ventures. (This well intended scheme lasted a comparatively short time, lapsing as its members either left the campus or decided to take the increases for themselves.)23

When the Matthews tribunal resumed, government counsel argued virtually as first and second Gris Committees had, viz., 'that salary fixations [should] be made on the basis of Papua New Guinea work value considerations and not those of Australia or any other country'.24 The staff associations came to the hearing with a revised case. At the first hearing they had simply argued that, while it was right for the link with Australian salaries to be broken, they should be paid an 'attraction allowance' above their Papua New Guinean salaries to bring them up to Australian levels. At the second hearing, however, they produced a new log of claims:

---

21A. Amarshi (et al.), letter to the editor, Post-Courier, 31 October 1974, p.2.
22Letters to the editor, Post-Courier, 'Quarter Pint Pom', 5 November 1974; H. McI. Clark, 7 November 1974.
23Personal communications, G. Young, W. Rees, L. Hill, J. Ballard.
24Industrial dispute between staff associations of UOT and UPNG, transcript of evidence, 3 and 4 November 1974, p.28, OHER 66-1-49.
using 1970 as a base (a year when academic and Public Service salaries had been 'in step'), they claimed a 64 per cent increase in salaries, this being the percentage increase to July 1973 of the pay of clerical and administrative officers; in addition they wanted an extra 18 per cent to cover cost of living increases. The tribunal decided that this new claim was neither 'justified nor reasonable'.

To seek parity with Australia was one thing, but to claim much higher rates 'based on an arithmetical exercise starting from January 1970 cannot reasonably be supported'.\(^{25}\)

The tribunal then dismissed the claim abruptly. The academic unionists protested their 'astonishment and bewilderment', arguing that their claim had been soundly based on 'long-established principles of wage determination for professional employees' which, they said, Matthews had 'disregarded'.\(^{26}\) His decision, they assumed, had been 'strongly influenced by political factors'.\(^{27}\)

UOT academics, having been the more militant, took the dismissal of the claim much more as an affront than their Waigani colleagues. They had been the more industrially active, and had done most of the work in preparing the case for the Matthews tribunal. There were other reasons, too, for their greater disappointment. As technologists they were possibly more materialistic, more preoccupied with their financial security than UPNG staff. Many were English and some observers thought that significant, for they seemed afflicted with 'the British shop-steward syndrome'.\(^{28}\)

Then, as we have seen, they had learnt to distrust the UOT Council and administration; and a number of notable personality clashes were further aggravating that situation, with members of both sides accusing each other of various instances of impropriety, gross discourtesy and even chicanery.\(^{29}\) For these reasons UOT academics generally took the


\(^{26}\) Post-Courier, 21 November 1974, p.3.

\(^{27}\) Post-Courier, 28 November 1974, p.3.

\(^{28}\) Rees, RIW; Sandover, RIW.

\(^{29}\) See for example, Stephenson to Clark, 30 July 1974; Sandover to Clark, 20 August 1974; Clark to Stephenson, 1 August 1974, Greenwood papers; and Sandover to Clark, 23 August 1974, UOT Staff Association Correspondence.
Matthews decision as a huge rebuff, and staff morale visibly slumped. Telling evidence of this was the appearance shortly thereafter of _The Retorter_ (a parody on the official UOT news-sheet, _The Reporter_)—UOT's first underground newspaper—which flailed the UOT administration mercilessly. Audacious, entertaining, cruel, libellous, _The Retorter_ was perhaps the last resort of a group which saw itself defeated on all sides.

Rees, the OHE Director, had foreseen the damage the Matthews decision would cause. OHE had therefore acted promptly to establish the salary review machinery recommended in the CEUD Report. As a result, the Academic Salary Review Committee, chaired by William Edoni, came into being in January 1975. Rees' action was timely. It helped alleviate the academics' sense of grievance by guaranteeing them regular salary reviews and indexation to match cost of living increases. But although they were now assured of what they saw as wage justice, they remained militant, particularly at UOT, where administration-academic relations continued to worsen. Having learnt to be industrially forceful, they remained that way, and were subsequently prompt to register industrial disputes. Matheson and Sandover warned that continued militant unionism would antagonize Council, but the academic staff association took the view that Council was beyond redemption, and that stern and vigorous industrial action was the best means of impressing their grievances on both government and university.  

So the militancy continued, and trade unionism became a feature of the university system.

More and more, however, the national government was coming to see it as the institutionalized greed of a very privileged group. Indeed, the rise of academic trade unionism posed several pertinent questions for national ideology. Could industrial protest among an already privileged group be squared with the Eight Point Plan? If any sectional group was successful in demanding what it thought was its economic due, and in thus confirming its privileged position in the upper social strata, could other groups be denied matching indulgences? The answer was probably 'no' on both counts. The moral incentives of the national ideology had...

---

30 Matheson to Greenwood, 28 April 1975; Greenwood to Matheson, 14 May 1975, Greenwood papers; Rees, RIW, p.13ff.
proved incapable of inducing wage restraint among the most privileged sectors of the workforce. The privileged remained privileged, even though their greed and determination to maintain their position in society had been briefly exposed to public scrutiny. Despite its strong egalitarian thrust the ideology had really done little to minimize stratification and was sounding more hollow as a result.

Militant students

University students had emerged as activists much earlier than the staff. They had been motivated mainly by political considerations, though often their protests, too, were tinged with 'industrial' interest. At all times they were more radical than their teachers and were seldom loth to take direct action. Indeed, as a government commission of inquiry into campus unrest in 1978 later argued, it seemed that there had been 'a constant theme of unrest and disturbance which has been manifested in the different causes adopted by the student body'.

The Commission of Inquiry had formed a mistaken impression, for student militancy had not always been as ubiquitous as the Commissioners inferred. Rather, it was a phenomenon that developed progressively over the years through successive demonstrations. In earlier years — the late 1960s — its absence had actually worried some university teachers who, at a time when student protest was reaching its crescendo elsewhere, seemed disconcerted to discover that Papua New Guinean university students were unaffected by radical student politics. Papua New Guinean students seemed depressingly conservative and almost totally lacking in the zeal of their overseas counterparts to turn the world on its head. Observers of the early scene attributed this to the country's colonial background: most students, who were usually the products of authoritarian boarding schools, shared with their countrymen 'the widespread lack of confidence ... in the capacity of [Papua New Guinean] people to cope with contact with the outside world without Australian supervision'. At a time when the paternalistic Australian influence was as pervasive in

---

31 White Report, p.41.
the university institutions as elsewhere, contributing to classroom discussion, let alone voicing political views, was a mark of considerable self-assurance.

The progressive politicization of the student body was a phenomenon pondered by several UPNG academics over the years. Consequently a number of learned papers on the topic have appeared, the most comprehensive to date being that by John Ballard, the Professor Administrative Studies 1974-76, from which the following account borrows both detail and theoretical perspectives. To recount the many incidents in which an increasingly strident student voice was heard would be to traverse well-trodden ground; yet to understand the endemic and often violent student activism of later years one should appreciate how that voice developed timbre, and so this account dwells upon several of the many student demonstrations.

During the university institutions' early period — roughly their first six or seven years — a fitful succession of student demonstrations occurred. In 1968 IOT students demonstrated against the Nigerian civil war, and UPNG students against the visit to Papua New Guinea of the South African ambassador to Australia; in 1969 there were further protests against Indonesia's absorption of West Irian, and against C.E. Barnes, the Australian Minister for External Territories. Subsequently there were other picketings over diverse causes. In September 1969 UPNG students boycotted classes over the quality of food in their mess. In 1970 conservative students at Goroka Teachers College protested before the Australian Prime Minister, John Gorton, against the possibility of early independence, while IOT students massed at the Lae airport to protest his government's reluctance to set fixed target dates for the same event. In 1971 almost the entire IOT student body marched to the Institute's central administrative office holding aloft a washing machine, protesting the administration's failure to honour promises to equip their laundries with extra washing machines. In July 1972 UPNG students demonstrated in support of the grievances of Australian Aborigines, and presented a petition on the subject to the Chief Minister and the Administrator. IOT students held a similar demonstration on the same issue, marching through Lae to present their petition at the District Commissioner's office. In 1972 IOT students demonstrated outside the Lae Technical College to protest the dismissal of one of its staff, whom they alleged had been victimized, from an international voluntary agency.
In Ballard's opinion, the students' political role in these early years was 'ambivalent'. On the one hand 'they were widely expected and exorted to play roles of political leadership', much energy being expended, mainly by expatriates — teachers, the leadership of the various educational institutions, and expatriate students — in developing such roles. On the other hand the great majority of students lacked the self-confidence to assert political views because of their conditioning into the posture of the 'colonial cringe': only a tiny handful of students had sufficient self-assurance, sense of nationality and critical awareness of the ramifications of colonial rule to articulate political views and to organize political events. In the period 1966-71, such students — perhaps ten or a dozen of them — organized the UPNG Politics Club, a Pangu Pati branch on campus, the student newspaper Nilaidat and the Black Power Movement, and they dominated the SRC. At IOT the handful was even smaller, but their influence was similarly obvious in the SRC, in the student journal Mirah, in the Public Questions Club, and in the campus branch of Pangu. Such students could rally general support over immediate events on a few specific occasions, but by and large they elicited only a 'limited response': most of their colleagues tended to view their explicitly political stance as 'far out' and them personally as 'big heads' and 'stirrers'. As a result student political commitment and involvement remained generally at a low level.

The public were fairly tolerant of the earlier student demonstrations and few, except perhaps the more intransigent elements of the settler community, saw them as anything more than a milder version of the student protest movement elsewhere. Most people were probably gratified that Papua New Guinean students comported themselves with such restraint. Indeed there was one notable occasion when a student demonstration was positively welcomed. This was in 1973 when, after several days of rioting between Papuans and New Guineans following an inter-territory football match, UPNG students set off on a 'march for peace' to demonstrate unity to the rest of the population. The police riot squad halted the march in fear that it might inflame bystanders, then called Somare himself to parley with the students. He thought their demonstration might help restore peace, and

34 *ibid.*, p.3.
35 *ibid.*
so gave the order for them to proceed. As he had rightly
guessed, the march had the desired effect. Subsequent
student demonstrations were not, however, as well received;
and in succeeding years, as student militancy and the fre-
quency and duration of the protests increased, the government
began losing patience with the students. A strong anti-
student reaction now seeped in, even among that section of
the community which had always championed the student cause —
the academic staff.

Despite the political ambivalence of many students in
the earlier years, much had been happening to awaken them to
the world of politics and to their place within it. In brief,
the following influences were at work:

(i) Apart from the activities of the handful of politically
articulate students, there were numerous expatriates
who keenly took part in 'consciousness raising' among
the Papua New Guinean students. The university leadership,
the staff, the large body of expatriate students
and overseas visitors like student leaders and guest
lecturers all did their bit in preaching political
commitment to the students.

(ii) Certain regional developments greatly increased politi-
cal awareness among some groups: (a) The 1968-71
events on the Gazelle Peninsula, where the imbroglio
which developed between the Mataungan Association (the
nationalist organization of a section of the Tolai
people) and the Local Government Council backed by the
colonial administration, raised crucial issues of land
alienation and cash crop extension, and divided Tolai
students, forcing them into partisan positions. (b)
At the same time the intensive development of the
massive Bougainville copper mine was giving Bougain-
villean students a rapid induction into political
activity. The Bougainvillean students, with a strong
sense of their geographic, ethnic and cultural 'isola-
tion' from other Papua New Guineans, took a leading
role in articulating the grievances and secessionist
inclinations of their kinsfolk. Significantly, the
Tolai and Bougainvillean students were the first of
any of the regional groups to form separate student
associations at the university institutions. (c) There

were comparatively few students from the four most populous but educationally most under-developed provinces, Chimbu, and the Eastern, Western and Southern Highlands, in the early years, but their presence was significant. At the tertiary institutions the educational and political disadvantages of the Highlands were borne home to them, it was not surprising that among them the 'Four Forgotten Brothers' movement began in the late 1960s, eventually leading to the formation of the Compass (later United) Party in 1970.

(iii) Then there were a series of notable conferences which invited student participation. The Waigani Seminar of 1970 focused on the politics of Melanesia and included contributions by the UPNG 'political elite' — students like Leo Hannett, John Waiko, Leo Morgan, John Kasaipwalova, Robbie Namaliu, Martin Buluna and several others, whose names became household words in the press of the day. Shortly after this the IOT Conference on Tertiary Students and Politics in Lae attracted student speakers from the country's eight foremost educational institutions. Several months later the 1970 ANZAAS (Australia and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science) Conference took place at Waigani, and became notable for the contribution students made to discussions relating to the politics and development of their country.

(iv) The campaign preceding the House of Assembly elections in February 1972 gave many students the opportunity of actively engaging in political affairs. Many adopted a 'mobilizing' role in their home provinces, becoming political spokespersons for the various candidates and their parties. The election of the Somare coalition as the first national government further heightened political awareness among students for, as Ballard has pointed out, 'it offered exciting possibilities for radical change'.

(v) Then, only a fortnight after the formation of the Somare government, the sixth Waigani Seminar took place with Priorities in Melanesian Development as its theme. The three international guest speakers, 37Ballard (1977), p.5.
(v) René Dumont, Ivan Illich and Lloyd Best, preached a gospel of 'return to the village'. They called into question the Western models of development which the colonial administration had been implementing, and seemed to imply that students should be the disciples proclaiming the new order by returning home to devise alternative, village-based models for development. As Ballard has observed, it was a time of 'nationalist euphoria', on the campuses if not elsewhere: that students should be the prime movers in schemes of local development seemed entirely proper, as later became obvious in the Oldfield and CEUD reports, which enshrined the doctrine of student involvement in community affairs.  

In summing up the political activity of students in the earlier period of university development, Ballard has argued that the tertiary students had emerged as one of the few groups in Papua New Guinea who could uphold an independent ideological stance, by comprising a national forum which was outside the Administration- and expatriate-dominated House of Assembly. At the same time, led by their handful of activists, they had 'raised the level of political consciousness' among their countrymen, which 'weakened the pattern of cultural and political dependence' of the latter. And finally they had established 'networks of friendship and shared interests' which in later years was to provide the basis for 'much of the radical critique of the Somare government'.

If this earlier phase of student activism had been marked by spasmodic and small-scale, but increasingly assertive, expressions of student opinion, the latter phase — from 1974 onwards — was notable for its sustained and full-throated voicing of student discontent, and for the mounting displeasure and concern with which the government heard the clamour. During the earlier phase many members of the Somare Cabinet and of the national bureaucracy had either recently been student activists themselves or maintained close personal contacts with students. Indeed Somare and other sires of the Pangu Pati had organized and led demonstrations themselves while students of the Administratve College in 1964-66; and many were frequent visitors to

---

38 ibid., p.7.
39 ibid., p.5.
the campuses. They thus had considerable sympathy for the nationalist sentiments and motivation of the earlier student protesters. But as they matured in office, and as student protest came to be directed against the policy and practice for which they were responsible, they became less patient. When large-scale and almost annual strikes succeeded the fitful demonstrations of earlier years, the bond between the government and the students steadily weakened until a 'relationship of antagonism' replaced the earlier cordial ties.40

The first signs of student disenchchantment with the government came about eighteen months after its election, following radical stirrings against the government from within its own Constitutional Planning Committee (the CPC). The most articulate CPC members were Fr John Momis and John Kaputin, who took the view that the government's manoeuvrings and equivocations over constitutional planning represented a 'selling out' of its proclaimed Eight Points ideology. Momis and Kaputin were also the most outspokenly committed to the Eight Points and had accordingly attracted a large following among students, particularly on the Waigani campus where they were often seen. The first open attack on the government's failure to live up to the ideals of the Eight Points came at a UPNG forum in August 1973, when the former student leader, Leo Hannett, who had been working as an adviser to the government, supported the stand being taken within the CPC by Momis and Kaputin. Taking Hannett's cue, students joined in the radical critique of the government in subsequent forum meetings and in the correspondence columns of the Post-Courier.

Midway through the next year, student dissatisfaction with the government's performance became even more obvious when the students of both the Waigani and Lae campuses went out on strike for a week. The strike began as a result of a SRC decision to protest against conditions in their mess and the effects of inflation on their living allowances — solid 'industrial' issues. They boycotted classes to hear SRC complaints in the UPNG forum. What had begun as a protest over 'trade union' matters rapidly developed political overtones, for to their complaints about living conditions they added grievances against the government's use of public funds, and Ministerial privileges. For example,

40 Ibid., p.13.
among the demands they subsequently presented to the government was an injunction that the government should divest itself of the recently acquired Ministerial 'rest and recuperation' chalet in the hills behind Port Moresby, which the students claimed was an elitist extravagance out of all keeping with the Eight Point Plan. A delegation to Somare to present him with the demands on 5 June 1974 fared badly. Somare was not interested in hearing the political demands, and would only agree to a $3 a fortnight raise in student allowances whereas the students wanted $7. Consequently both students and Chief Minister felt 'outraged' at each other's behaviour. A hardening in government attitudes became clear next day when Somare issued an ultimatum: the students could accept the offer of $3 or have their scholarships revoked, and if they chose the latter they could walk or swim home to their villages because government would not pay the fares.

Somare's tough line radicalized the students, bringing their political demands to the fore. As Inglis later observed, 'what had begun as an encounter between students and the University ... was transformed into an encounter between students and government'. The effect was immediately obvious on campus. Students no longer boycotted classes; they forcefully prevented them, their placards threatening violence to any lecturer daring to break the ban. Little violence actually occurred. One class was broken up when a lecturer who was unaware of the ban inadvertently began teaching; and the office of a professor who declared he would defy the ban was invaded. Yet the possibility of violence persuaded the Acting Vice-Chancellor, Anthony Clunies-Ross, to cancel all classes for the strike's duration. The strike now spread as UOT students came out in sympathy with Waigani. This was an experience new to the country: it now had a national strike of its university students. The political significance of such a development was later spelt out by the UPNG Professor of Political Studies, R.A. Mortimer who noted that 'in developing countries ... students form part of a relatively small, educated urban political public, and their confrontation

---

41 R.A. Mortimer, 'Student strike of June 1974', UPNGR 75/327.
42 ibid.
43 K.S. Inglis, 'The student strike: Report by the Vice-Chancellor', 8 July 1974, UPNGR 75/327.
with fragile political institutions can, at times of general political dissatisfaction, produce major political repercussions ... [as] in Indonesia and Thailand'. The importance of this possibility was not lost on Somare, who flew to Lae especially to meet UOT students. They were in a truculent mood and would not let him on to the campus. He had to speak with them at the entrance, but made little impression and returned to Port Moresby angry and humiliated.

Eventually both government and students compromised. On 10 June, Somare addressed an open letter to the students indicating a willingness to negotiate. The next day a conference took place between him, his Ministers for Finance (Julius Chan) and Foreign Affairs (Maori Kiki), senior UPNG staff and SRC leaders. All parties showed their readiness to make concessions. The students accepted the $3 raise. The University undertook to investigate conditions in the mess (subsequently found more than adequate by the Department of Health), and decided not to hold the formal mid-year examinations, due in several days. The government reaffirmed its commitment to the Eight Points and anti-elitism. The strike now ended. Classes resumed the next day, 12 June. Something of the mutual relief of all concerned was obvious in Somare's summation of events: 'with a bit of wisdom and willingness to act positively on both the students' and government's sides, important steps can be taken against elitism and towards building an egalitarian society'.

Once the strike was over it became the subject of various post-mortems. Clunies-Ross's analysis mainly indicated relief that the crisis which had landed on him had passed. He thanked the SRC president for his 'frankness and sense of responsibility', Somare for his 'patience and magnanimity', and the government officials for their 'imaginative responses'. Inglis, who returned to the campus from overseas just after the strike, thought it would have benefits in the form of an 'enhanced ... sense of common purpose' between students, University and

---

44Mortimer, op. cit.
45Inglis, op. cit.
46A. Clunies-Ross, Report to UPNG Council, 12 June 1974, UPNGR 75/327.
government. Mortimer, who had studied student strikes elsewhere and boasted of being a veteran of no less than ten, believed both University and government had received a salutary lesson:

What we have experienced is not some isolated and exceptional episode, but one of the numerous indicators which inform us that Papua New Guinea is entering a political threshold well worn by many feet in other places. The student strike is by now an accepted occurrence in all parts of the world, and there is every reason to anticipate that it will remain part of the social and political scene for the foreseeable future .... Student activism has to be taken seriously and incorporated into the political thinking and management mechanisms of governments in new and emerging states. If this is recognized and appropriate policies formulated, then a great deal can be gained from the recent events on our own front terrace.

Not all staff could be as objective as the Professor of Political Studies. Even though some remarked on 'how peacefully the week of the strike passed with no actual violence or damage to property', others felt 'acutely vulnerable' because of the threats of violence, and thought the absence of violence was hardly grounds for UPNG to congratulate itself. Some staff were cynical about the way students coupled a wage claim with demands for lessened Ministerial privilege — a feeling shared by government and the general public. UOT staff were angered by the arrogance of their students in barring the Chief Minister from the campus. Some UPNG academics were highly critical of the University, saying it had tacitly condoned the strike by cancelling classes and not proceeding with formal mid-year examinations. Others believed it had acted with good sense in averting violence and minimizing student discontent. Clearly, staff opinion was divided, and often the divisions ran along faculty lines, Science and Education believing the University had been too lenient, Arts thinking it had wisely defused a crisis and recreated goodwill.

---

47 Inglis, op. cit.
48 Mortimer, op. cit.
49 ibid.
50 Various communications to Inglis, June–July 1974, UPNGR 75/327.
The strike possibly troubled the government as much as it did the universities. During its course the government had shifted ground. Before Somare and his Ministers realized how determined the students were, they had taken a hard line. Only when they recognized the solidarity of the student body, and the possible social and political costs of breaking this did they compromise. Goodwill was restored through compromise, but there could be no guarantee government would be as patient again. Mortimer warned the students of this at a later meeting between them and government officials:

I propose to the students that they consider the full social implications of their actions ... and recognize that, if strike action is to work in their favour on future occasions, it has to be used sparingly, as a last resort, and with every effort to avoid violence or the threat of it. I would remind them that the physical casualties of student strikes, by a ratio of something like 1000:1, are students themselves. I would go as far as to say ... that the only occasions when student-initiated violence can unambiguously be stated to have paid off have been those when the objective was the overthrow of the government AND the students enjoyed the backing of strategic interests outside the university.\(^{51}\)

It was advice the students seemed unwilling to heed, for over the next five years five major strikes and a number of lesser demonstrations took place.

The next strike showed that the government was growing impatient. It occurred in March-April 1975 at Goroka Teachers College, newly united with UPNG. Again student dissatisfaction crystallized around conditions in the mess and living allowances; again students boycotted classes and presented government with a list of demands. This time the government stood firm. Somare and the Minister for Education, Reuben Taureka, told the striking students their demands would not be met, and if they did not return to work they could walk home sans scholarships. The students held out for several days, but government refused to yield. In the end they returned to class chastened by their loss of face. Only a hard core of six students, including the SRC

\(^{51}\)Mortimer, op. cit.
president, made 'the final form of protest' by quitting the college. 'From the government's standpoint the collapse of the boycott can be seen as a complete vindication of their hard line' the Principal advised Inglis. \(^{52}\)

A further Waigani strike, even more serious than the one the year before, followed within weeks. It was purely political, sparked off by the government's decision to invite the Queen to become Head of State. At a forum meeting on Friday 22 May the students decided to march on Somare's office in the new Waigani government complex to let their displeasure be known. To their objection against the Queen they added complaints about nepotism in making appointments to the diplomatic service and alleged financial corruption within the Ministry. They duly paraded in front of the government offices for two hours, but the protest fizzled out in a stalemate: Somare refused to speak to them \textit{en masse}, and they declined to send him the deputation he requested. The only Cabinet member they saw was the roughish Minister for Police, Pita Lus, who appeared at a window to raise two extended fingers at them in a vulgar gesture of contempt. Back at the campus the Vice-Chancellor (now Gris) cancelled classes for the day but said they would resume as normal the following Monday. On Monday, however, students again boycotted classes and called for cancellation of classes and the closure of the library. Various minor incidents followed, as rumours spread that police spies and hostile journalists were infiltrating the student body. This led to the setting up of road blocks. The major incident of the day came soon after, when a University employee drove through a road block on his way to work. The students bounced his car and jostled him and his wife, who later laid a complaint of assault with the police. \(^{53}\)

During the afternoon a student delegation met Somare, who promised to send two of his senior personal staff to the campus to explain the decision on the Queen. Next day this pair, one of them the former student activist Rabbie Namaliu, met the students in a UPNG lecture theatre. There was a half-hearted and probably jocular attempt to hold them hostage until the students were satisfied with the Chief Minister's explanation. At the same time the Police

\(^{52}\)H.J. Tinsley to Inglis, 1 April 1975, UPNGR 75/327.

Commissioner advised Gris that the complaint of assault must be investigated. Gris was worried lest 'precipitate police action ... revive the flagging strike and generate a student reaction that would endanger the position of the University ... including the safety of staff and property'.

Next morning, at another forum, the medical students announced that they no longer supported the strike. A resolution to call the strike off was, however, defeated. Gris now called an emergency meeting of Council to review the situation. Council endorsed his policy of 'making every effort to maintain dialogue and avoid confrontation'. Impetus was now running out of the strike, and a forum on Thursday 29 May voted to return to classes the following Monday. The only problem now was the continued threat of police action on the alleged assault. Gris therefore arranged a meeting between the UPNG administration, the police and the SRC. At this the students said they 'had neither sought the violence nor condoned its occurrence' but would view the arrival of police on campus as a hostile act aimed at all of them. The police said they were bound to investigate the assault and would continue making inquiries. They still had not appeared on campus and failed to subsequently. The strike thus ended inconclusively, with no party sure of what it had achieved.

The only body to see something positive emerging from the week's events was the UPNG administration, which was primarily relieved that 'despite a number of untoward incidents the University succeeded in emerging unscathed from a protest which did not arise out of University policies or conditions and by considerable restraint was prevented from doing harm to the institution or its members'. But while the University felt some satisfaction on that score, the tolerance of the government had once again been strained. This was obvious in Tololo's comments when, as Chancellor, he read the University's report on the strike. He curtly informed Gris he was 'not impressed' with the '1975

54 ibid.
55 ibid.
56 ibid.
57 ibid.
version ... of the whitewash of the annual student strike.'

He reminded Gris that the students

are a very privileged elite and perhaps it is time we had a demonstration against their abuse of their privilege; ... Government will have to be stricter in its control of scholarships, for example, it may be necessary to inform students that they will be required to attend lectures as one of the conditions of the grant and continuation of a scholarship allowance. ... They must then accept responsibility for the results of their own behaviour (something they do not as a collective group seem to have realized yet). 59

The trend in government thinking was clear: the universities were expected to restrain their students; the students were expected to restrain themselves; and if neither the universities nor the students did then government would impose restraints of its own. Tololo's threats were endorsed by the Minister for Education. He issued a Ministerial statement bluntly telling students their demonstrations would be tolerated only if peaceful and confined to the forum. He emphasized that government regarded UPNG as an 'expensive public institution' whose students were 'extraordinarily privileged', as evidenced by the fact that to keep one of them at university for a year cost about three times the minimum wage needed to support a family of four in the urban area. Students, he said, were future national leaders and must 'accept the obligations of this role and work hard accordingly'. 60

Such admonitions apparently went unheeded. Mortimer's forecast that student strikes had become a permanent part of the country's political milieu was verified as one demonstration after another occurred in the first year of independence. In February 1976 there was a vociferous protest against the presence of the Governor-General, Sir John Guise, at the UPNG graduation ceremony. Once again the Queen was the focus of student hostility. As Guise rose to

58 Tololo to Gris, 7 July 1975, UPNGR 75/327.
59 ibid.
deliver the main address they began chanting slogans like 'No Queen's bois for Papua New Guinea'. They kept up a deafening clamour throughout his speech, which he concluded with the tendentious words, 'May I congratulate the protesting students for exercising their right to free expression; may I also remind them of their responsibilities?' Somare reputedly flew into a rage when he heard of the incident. Shortly before this UPNG students had incurred official displeasure over another demonstration. In protest over the Indonesian conquest of East Timor, they trampled the Indonesian flag into the dust, which led the Indonesian ambassador to accuse the government of having allowed his nation to be insulted. The public apology of the SRC president, who had been photographed by the Post-Courier in the act of stomping on the flag, probably did little to assuage the anger of the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Several weeks later students were news again when those at UOT went on strike against their University's localization policies. They demanded that Council adopt a vigorous programme of localization in UOT's upper administrative echelon. Their foremost claim was for the immediate appointment of a national Deputy Vice-Chancellor to take over as soon as possible from Sandover, whose privilege and affluence offended many among them. Council agreed to this, and subsequently V.M.N. Tigilai (chairman of the UFRC, who had succeeded Rees as OHE Director) was appointed. However, despite this apparent justification of their protest some eight months later, they rather marred their reputation at the time by staying out on strike for over a week. Even though they used this time to clean the streets of Lae, this non-elitist gesture did little to redeem them in the eyes of the public, who still saw them as an irresponsible group abusing considerable privilege.

---

61 Bois: Pidgin for 'servants' or 'menials' — a derogatory term.
62 Personal observations, 27 February 1976.
63 Post-Courier 24 February 1976, p.3.
64 Post-Courier 29 March 1976, p.3; 24 April 1976, p.2.
65 H. Clark and S. Smaridge, personal communication.
In August it was the turn of UPNG again, this time with a march in which students were joined by trade unionists and senior secondary school students to protest against the government's Public Order Bill. This, significantly, had 'teeth' that could have been made to clamp down on students' ability to stage future public demonstrations. Perhaps judiciously, the government withdrew the bill, probably because of the furore it promised to stir up, not the least among students. Though this action defused yet another situation that threatened to become critical, it was clear that the relationship between students and government had become one of mutual antagonism.

Possibly the Australian ideals of freedom of speech and assembly, which, as Ballard notes 'are still strongly upheld by educated Papua New Guineans and are fortified by a strong Melanesian preference for negotiation rather than arbitrary action', prevented the government from sternly banning these various expressions of student dissatisfaction. The concern of the government to grant students the right to dissent was certainly evident in the various pronouncements on the subject by Ministers and officials. It was said 'the whole community would be the poorer if they did not exercise their right ... to voice their opinions openly'. Yet there was also a corresponding insistence that students must comport themselves with restraint, and be held accountable for their actions, because of their conspicuous privilege and the huge public investment which made that possible. How long government would continue to hold its tolerant view was uncertain, for there were signs that the balance might eventually tip against the students. That a public reaction was setting in against them became evident in the letters to the Post-Courier, and more significantly, in deliberations within the House of Assembly. The view of the ordinary Papua New Guinean was perhaps apparent in a motion brought before Parliament in early 1976 by a back-bencher who proposed that 'in view of the frequent student strikes and demonstrations, in particular ... at the universities, this parliament requests the government to consider restricting student demonstrations ....' Government in fact had

67 Taureka, op. cit.
already thought of this: it had compiled a list of strategies to be used on occasions when the curtailment of students' rights was deemed necessary.\(^6^9\)

The increasingly tough attitude of the public, the parliamentarians and bureaucrats made little difference, for even bigger, more disruptive and more violent demonstrations lay ahead. Though these are properly outside the time span of this monograph, some reference to them is germane as the themes of the earlier demonstrations are amplified through them.

The next notable demonstration took place in October 1977, when 500 UPNG students marched on the Australian High Commission at Waigani and made violent protest against the alleged spying at UPNG of an Australian diplomat. As the report of the 1978 Commission of Inquiry later remarked,

> The students became violent when the Australian High Commissioner, Mr Critchley, did not address them. They tore branches from trees, wrote on the walls of the High Commission, damaged cars and smeared mud on closed circuit television monitors. . . . At least two High Commission employees were assaulted by students.\(^7^0\)

Violence was now becoming a constant feature of UPNG student demonstrations.

The pattern of violent protest was repeated less than six months later. In April 1978 a final year politics student at UPNG, Vincent Toliman, a past president of the SRC and a leading student activist, physically attacked one of his teachers when the latter raised the question of his poor class attendance; he also pushed out a second teacher who entered as he was scuffling with the first. The teachers reported the incident to the Vice-Chancellor (now Renagi Lohia). Lohia, hearing from other staff members further adverse allegations about Toliman's 'personally violent and anti-social behaviour on campus', promptly suspended him for the remainder of the year and all of the following year.\(^7^1\)

\(^6^9\) 'Background and proposed approach to notice of motion no.101', OHER 1-52.

\(^7^0\) White Report, p.42.

\(^7^1\) ibid., p.4.
The next day UPNG student leaders called a forum to discuss the matter. Lohia addressed the forum on his reasons, but the forum was of the opinion that the punishment had been too swift and severe. It demanded that a special tribunal be convened to hear an appeal by Toliman. The tribunal duly upheld the Vice-Chancellor's decision, and Toliman was instructed to quit the campus by the end of the month. This he failed to do. In early May a further forum, in which his supporters (principally his fellow politics students, who had recently founded a 'Student Political Arm') were vocal, decided to boycott all classes and to keep staff from their offices. The boycott began on 8 May, when barricades were thrown across the entrances to the campus. Further forums took place; a strike steering committee emerged with Student Political Arm members prominent in it; the students became more confident, and 'something of a festival atmosphere prevailed'. A deputation visited the Vice-Chancellor and told him that, in the view of the students, he had contravened the University's Discipline Statute by summarily suspending Toliman. Lohia responded by calling a special Council meeting for Wednesday 10 May.72

When the special Council meeting convened, at 1.30 p.m., it received a student delegation, which presented a list of demands, including the lifting of Toliman's suspension and the removal of Lohia from the position of Vice-Chancellor. Council rejected these. When the delegation conveyed the news to the large crowd of students waiting outside, the latter, in the words of the subsequent Commission of Inquiry, 'turned into a howling mob' which 'threw rocks on the corrugated iron roof, yelled out slogans, charged the security officers defending the doors, using a filing cabinet as a battering ram and sprayed the area with a fire hose'.73 At about 6.45 p.m. the Councillors ventured a retreat from the Council chambers in the semi-dark and under the escort of the University's security guards. The crowd, later estimated at about 300, angrily pursued, hurling stones at them as they struggled the 400 metres or so uphill to the Vice-Chancellor's residence. Considerably dishevelled, they took refuge there while the guards drove back the crowd with a baton charge. In the meantime a mobile squad of police was called in, and when it arrived the officer in

72 ibid., p.7.
73 ibid., p.12.
charge ordered his men to fire tear gas and to make arrests. The students responded with taunts and insults, a hail of stones, and threats to burn down the University. A fire actually was lit in the Vice-Chancellor's office, causing considerable damage before the UPNG Catholic Chaplain, Fr Ian Dillon, put it out. Eventually, about 10.30 p.m. the crowd dispersed, but the police remained on the campus.\footnote{ibid., 13-17.}

Next day, Thursday 11th, further clashes between students and police occurred as students taunted police with slighting references to their lack of education, and police went 'student hunting', making apparently random arrests. Somare, who was away in New Ireland, ordered all available police to be moved on to the campus. (Eventually more than 100 were deployed there.) He also issued an ultimatum through his staff: unless the students were back at work by 6.00 p.m. that day the University would be closed indefinitely; furthermore all national scholarships (on which most students were dependent) would be cancelled and the students sent back to their villages. Lohia conveyed only the first part of the ultimatum to the students, guessing that the second part would only inflame the situation further if it became widely known. The students called a forum to consider the ultimatum, then decided to continue the strike despite it. That evening Lohia spoke by phone with Somare, who extended the deadline for a return to work until 6.00 p.m. on Monday 15th. In the meantime UOT and Goroka students had come out on strike in sympathy with their Waigani cousins, though they went back to classes several days later.\footnote{ibid., 18-25.}

Over the next day, Friday 12th, and during the weekend, Lohia maintained a dialogue with the strike leaders. He arranged for a second Council meeting on the Monday morning to reconsider Toliman's case. Council duly met and reaffirmed its earlier decisions. Later that day a further student forum voted to continue the strike. Somare returned to Port Moresby during the afternoon, obviously determined on tough action if the students disobeyed his extended ultimatum. He argued with his officials, who were urging a more conciliatory approach, that 'the students had displayed disrespect with the University authority, had
exercized unacceptable violence and firm government action had to be taken'.\textsuperscript{76} He met Council members at his residence that evening and warned that unless students were back at work within twenty-four hours the government would cancel the scholarships of all those not in class. 'I would like to remind students that their parents have sacrificed much in order to bring them into the University and the nation has poured much of its limited resources into educating them,' he said, reverting to a frequent theme.\textsuperscript{77}

The government's position now became rather confused. Somare's education officials and in particular the Acting Minister for Education, Barry Holloway, kept promoting a softer line than Somare. Holloway issued a conciliatory press statement the next day, and when Somare heard a garbled press report of this he issued his own hard-line press statement affirming his threat of the cancellation of scholarships and the indefinite closure of the University unless the strike ended within forty-eight hours. Realizing the damaging effects of such divided opinion, the education officials held further discussions with the student leaders. These resulted in a conciliatory joint press statement, and a further forum, which decided on a referendum of students to be conducted by the Electoral Commission to ascertain their reaction to a range of propositions relating to Toliman's suspension, the action of the Vice-Chancellor, the scholarships issue, alleged police brutality on campus, and the discontinuance (or otherwise) of the strike.\textsuperscript{78}

The referendum was set for Wednesday 17th. Voting duly began that morning but was abandoned shortly afterwards when a group from the Student Political Arm who opposed the referendum entered the polling area and began menacing the electoral officials and voting students. Somewhat exasperated, Holloway now endeavoured to meet with the dissident political science students, using as a go-between Dr Ralph Premdas, the Acting Head of the Department of Political Science, who seemed to exercise some influence over them. The agreement subsequently arrived at, at a meeting attended by Holloway, the student leaders, Lohia and Namaliu (now Chairman of the Public Service Commission), provided inter

\textsuperscript{76}ibid., p.26.
\textsuperscript{77}ibid., p.27.
\textsuperscript{78}ibid., pp.26-28.
alia for (i) the departure from the campus of Toliman, pending any further appeal; (ii) a return to classes the following Monday, 22 May; (iii) an Ombudsman Commission inquiry into all aspects of the disturbances; and (iv) government assurances, in respect of scholarships, that students should be allowed to participate in political activities without fear of victimization. 79

In the end, classes resumed ten days later, on 29 May, after a 'cooling off' period intended to allow staff and students to 'meet with each other ... to recreate understanding'. On the same day Toliman finally quit the campus, some eight weeks after his act of violence had sparked off the disturbances. Shortly thereafter he took up a position on the staff of the Leader of the Opposition in the national parliament. 80

Once the strike was over Somare called for an official investigation. A Commission of Inquiry of three, chaired by a magistrate, Peter White, began work in August, charged not only with investigating the strike but with reporting more widely on 'the basic causes of difficulties' on the Waigani campus and on 'the measures, legislative and otherwise' which might 'effectively deal with these problems'. 81 Over the next five months the White Commission laboured painstakingly to produce a large (120-page) report. This explored all facets of the strike, then went on to review the whole field of University development much as had the Gris, Brown and Currie Reports before it. The recommendations for university reform it subsequently proposed are beyond the scope of this work; suffice to say they covered the whole range of university activities — the University calendar and timetable, admissions policy, course quotas, student amenities, problems caused by the imbalance between the sexes within the student body, University government, the structure of Council, faculty and departmental organization, staffing policy, the funding of the University, and the co-ordination of post-secondary training institutions via a Higher Education Commission similar to that recommended by the Brown Report seven years previously.

79 ibid., pp.28-9.
80 ibid., pp.29, 72.
81 ibid., p. (i).
As well as the official inquiry there were numerous informal post-mortems. Some of these propounded novel views on the causes of the disturbances. For example, some people thought it significant that the most militant strikers were in the Student Political Arm, prominent within which were dissident Highlands and Tolai students with close connections to the Leader of the Opposition, Iambakey Okuk. It was said to be significant that these were political science students personally close to the Acting Head of the Department of Political Science, Premdas, who also had connections with the Leader of the Opposition and who was later (June 1979) ordered to leave the country by the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the grounds that he had become 'involved ... in activities ... considered to be disruptive and detrimental to good government'.\(^{82}\) The White Commission specifically rejected such suggestions and stated in its Report that such inferences were untenable for want of concrete evidence.\(^{83}\) Some observers nevertheless felt that national politics had intruded on to the campus during the strike, and that the University had become an arena in which an essentially national political struggle was being fought. The strike coincided with the rise of Okuk as a dominant political figure who was posing an increasing challenge to the continued existence of the Somare government. The most radical of the student militants — Highlanders — were also those students whose access to power has been most restricted by the formation of provincial governments during the late 1970s. With limited opportunities for seeking power in their home provinces they became more interested in national politics and the possibilities for power there, and accordingly threw their support behind Okuk, whose adventurist style seemed to offer them the most.\(^{84}\) To some observers the idea that elements within the Opposition had encouraged their connections within the Student Political Arm to prolong the strike at any cost in the hope of severely embarrassing or even destabilizing the government was tempting. If such analyses were tenable then it boded little good for the universities: if the universities could be manipulated to serve the factional interests of national politics, their independence, and all that stood for, must suffer.

\(^{82}\) *Post-Courier* 29 June 1979, p.1.

\(^{83}\) White Report, p.34.

\(^{84}\) J. Ballard, personal communication, 20 June 1979.
The 1978 strike was not the last, or even the worst. Almost exactly a year later, in April 1979, an even more prolonged strike erupted on both the Lae and Waigani campuses as a result of the government's refusal to give in to demands of the National Union of Students to raise pocket and book allowances by 50 per cent, and to withdraw the White Report (which had recently been released). This time the university students were supported by students of the Balob (Lutheran) and Port Moresby teachers colleges, and the Bulolo Forestry, Laloki Co-operatives and Kavieng Fisheries Colleges, who all struck in a gesture of solidarity. Once again the now familiar routine unwound — boycotted classes; barricaded campuses; student thuggery; confrontations with the police; strenuous attempts by the administration of each university to consult with the students and to be conciliatory; Cabinet threats of indefinite university closure, cancelled scholarships and one-way tickets home; an eventual compromise and return to classes after weeks of frantic negotiation; and post-mortems alleging Opposition mischief making. Though most interested parties probably hoped otherwise, there was no certainty that a similar episode would not unfold again the next year, or the next. In contemplating the possibility some observers had begun regretting that Cabinet had not actually carried out its hard-line threats.

An annual season of violent disruption of tertiary education by now seemed de rigueur in Papua New Guinea, a situation greatly in contrast to that of a decade before, when some university staff had lamented the political conservatism and diffidence of their students. What had wrought such a change? A failure to inculcate in the students the traditional university values of tolerance, liberalism and freedom of the mind? Excessive pandering to the students, and a vexatious failure by the universities to make students accountable for their actions? Were the elusive birds of elitism finally flying home to roost? Did the politicization of the student body simply reflect the newness of the Papua New Guinean state, its absence of established conventions, and the consequent wide range of political options available to the students?

There was possibly some truth in all these suppositions, yet the most satisfactory explanation would seem to be that

85 'Students on Strike', Post-Courier 21 May 1979; and 12 June 1979.
Plate 9 The 1979 student strike: above, UOT and Balob Teachers College students march through Lae; centre, demonstrate outside the Provincial offices; below, . . . where Pama Anio, Provincial Premier, heard their demands for increased allowances.
of Ballard, who has stressed the structural causes of student dissent, particularly the 'contradictions inherent in the roles of students in all new states'. The students, according to this view were a potential elite, in training for the most responsible positions but kept in a position of 'dependent irresponsibility' and enjoined by national ideology to eschew the elitism patently enjoyed by politicians and bureaucrats. Then there were conflicts between the ideals of community service promoted by both national ideology and the universities, and the 'bureaucratic-oriented reality' to which many students eventually succumbed— the promotional ladder, the perquisites of office, the occupational and material security of a permanent bureaucratic position in a large town, and the possibility of using a bureaucratic position to launch into political or entrepreneurial careers. At the same time, localization had proceeded rapidly, which meant that the earlier graduates held a firm grip on the better positions, leaving a restricted range of career opportunities open to the undergraduates. The latter found increasingly irksome the manpower directives which government felt constrained to impose on the universities to ensure a flow of graduates into the less prestigious avenues of employment. The sum total of such influences was a student body under much greater pressure than that of yesteryear, and therefore more likely to seek relief through politics.

In the years following self-government and independence, militance on the university campuses, of staff and more especially of students, had come to be a major preoccupation of the government. To its consternation it was finding the universities increasingly 'difficult to live with'. That the chief return for its conspicuous investment seemed to be a harvest of campus troubles was good reason to scrutinize them more closely. This, of course, meant further erosions of the autonomy early Vice-Chancellors had fought to safeguard, even if the government did not actually embark on a programme of 'cracking down' on the universities—which many exasperated members of the public thought was long overdue. The danger to the universities was that they might decline into mere government agencies analogous to, say, the Electricity Commission. And, as we will see, government was nudging them in that direction.

87ibid., p.15.
Chapter 10

Sundry stresses

To understand what Papua New Guinea's university system was like at the end of the period that concerns us, in the year following independence, it is helpful to visualize an arena — one crowded with teams, all playing their own games after their own style and at the same time as all the others. We have seen how staff and students played their particular games; yet on-campus trade union and political activism were but two of the many pressures to which the system was subject. Its complexity was now such that it contained numerous interest groups, all seeking their own sectional advantage. A number of issues revealed both the complexity and the tendency towards conflict as they strove to influence the system in accordance with their own ideas. We will look at five of these — problems in co-ordinating heterogeneous institutions, women's rights, academic reform, localization, and the role of the Vice-Chancellors.

Theological education: questions of co-ordination

The lack of co-ordination between institutions of post-secondary education was a problem which existed from the outset. Educational planners from the Currie Commissioners onwards had tried to tackle it, with indifferent success. As the CEUD had most recently pointed out, much depended on the personalities of those in charge of each institution: 'The limited amount of co-ordination achieved to date has depended very much on the goodwill and commonsense shown by the various parties involved.'\(^1\) Where, however, as was often the case, institutional and personal interest rather than goodwill or commonsense prevailed, co-ordination was more an ideal than a reality.

\(^{1}\)CEUD Report, p.122.
Papua New Guinea's system of tertiary education was not unique in attracting criticism over its poor co-ordination. Indeed in the 'mother country' Australia's own tertiary training institutions, which had proliferated during the preceding decade, were now the target for accusations such as those made by *The Bulletin* in early 1977 under the banner 'The Scandal of our Universities':

Modern mass universities are rather like the CIA .... [They] are quite out of control .... They are large and growing, despite efforts by the people's elected representatives to curb their drain on the public purse .... The tertiary education industry has grown so fat so fast that without us realizing, academia has become an enormous island of privilege, populated in considerable measure by drones and parasites .... The greatest rip-offs of the taxpayer by academics seem to occur in the proliferation of new colleges .... The Commission of Advanced Education in Canberra constantly reprimands its 82 colleges for unjustified extension of courses, for the excessive development of vague courses of a non-vocational kind and for what it describes as status building and expensive plans. Yet it seems powerless to stop them .... The colleges can always invoke academic freedom and State autonomy, and can organize local politicians, businessmen and professional associations as its advocates and threaten the central co-ordinating institution with political denunciation ....

To those who had watched the development of tertiary education in Papua New Guinea all this sounded familiar, for economy through co-ordination had long been the catch-cry of that country's educational planners.

Proposals for controlling what to the planners was a hydra-like growth of training institutions had varied. There was, for example, the Brown Committee's plan for a Higher Education Commission, which had been buried by Cabinet in 1973 only to be exhumed by the White Committee five years later. There was the scheme for a single university co-ordinating the effort of the lesser colleges, as suggested by the Currie Commission — an idea similar to the CEUD's notion of one National University. And there was the

---

existing reality of a range of institutions run by diverse agencies, or (in the case of the universities) autonomously, and theoretically co-ordinated by the Office of Higher Education, which was concerned with promoting itself as the effective instrument of management. Whether this existing practice could be improved on was in the end perhaps a matter of opinion. What could be agreed on was that tertiary education in Papua New Guinea had 'come of age' in that it had advanced into the same state of complexity and heterogeneity as that of other, more developed countries.

Heterogeneity for the student meant a wide range of professional career options. Gone forever was the educationally remote era of about two decades before when the educated Papua New Guinean could choose a career in teaching, paramedical work or as a pastor. Some indication of the effects on the student's opportunities through the country's educational diversity was the training available in the religious seminaries. Theological education was the earliest form of 'further' education open to Papuan New Guineans. It subsequently underwent a development parallel to that of secular education until by the late 1960s the seminaries were also offering university education, albeit 'non-official'—outside the framework constituted by UPNG and UOT and therefore not supported by the government.

Theology was not a discipline taught on the 'official' campuses. The churches had made strong representations to the Currie Commission for its inclusion in the UPNG curriculum, and for the establishment of on-campus denominational colleges. However, the Commission had no wish to become embroiled in what might become sectarian issues; and it found the evidence of the church lobbies to be inconsistent. It therefore refrained from making firm recommendations about the place of religion in the University. Two Ministers for Territories, Hasluck and Barnes, nevertheless strongly favoured the idea of denominational colleges, and during 1968-69 Barnes tried to pressure both UPNG and IOT into setting up such colleges. Both institutions firmly rejected his attempts. The churches still succeeded in gaining a presence on the campuses by providing full-time chaplains, who, in some cases, became virtual staff members by taking part in teaching as well as counselling. In addition a small Religious Studies Unit was eventually set up within

3DTOR 62/4733 and 71/4403.
the UPNG Faculty of Arts with church support. The churches also endeavoured to exert influence by acting as the conscience of the campuses, speaking out on questions of ethics and morality; and they could be relied on to form a strong lobby during the deliberations of committees of inquiry such as those run by Brown, Oldfield and Gris. So although the churches' ability to promote religion on-campus was limited, they did manage to contribute to university life.

Off-campus the churches maintained their own training institutions, as they had always done. Of the country's twelve teachers colleges, nine were run by churches — Balob (Lutheran-Anglican) at Lae; Dauli (Evangelical Alliance) at Tari; Gaulim (United Church), Kabaleo (Catholic), Vunakanau (Catholic) and Sonoma (Adventist) near Rabaul; Holy Trinity (Catholic) at Mt Hagen; Sacred Heart (Catholic) on Yule Island and St Benedict's (Catholic) at Wewak. Except for Sonoma these institutions had been integrated into the national education system of primary, secondary and technical schools and teacher training institutions since 1969. The seminaries, however, remained more ambiguous, being outside the official sector but offering in some cases high quality, university-type training to degree level. In three cases these courses predated the courses at UPNG and UOT: the Methodist (later United) Church opened its Rarongo Theological College in 1962, the Catholic Church its Kap Theological Centre near Madang and its de Boismenu College at Bomana in 1963, and the Lutherans their Martin Luther Seminary at Lae in 1966.4

The number trained to diploma and degree level by the three major degree-granting seminaries, Rarongo, Martin Luther and Holy Spirit (formed in 1969 by the union of Kap and de Boismenu) was small by comparison with the output of the two official universities. By the end of 1975 only 109 had graduated at these levels:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduates from the major seminaries to 1975</th>
<th>Degrees</th>
<th>Diplomas</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rarongo</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Luther</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Spirit</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>41</strong></td>
<td><strong>68</strong></td>
<td><strong>109</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4The information in this and following paragraphs is from Frs Pat Murphy and Arnold Steffan of Holy Spirit Seminary, Dr W. Burce of Martin Luther Seminary, and Rev Ronald Williams of Rarongo Technological College.
Yet the numbers were out of proportion to the strong impact of seminary graduates on Papua New Guinean society. Having undergone a six-year programme of post-Form IV study, the seminary graduates were generally of high standard and were probably among the best graduates the country had produced. Their influence was felt more widely than in the narrow confines of church affairs: while most took up pastoral duties, some went into education, broadcasting, postgraduate study and politics. It was in the last of these, perhaps, that their influence was most obvious — especially that of the graduates from Holy Spirit.

Former seminarians who rose to senior positions within their churches were inevitably destined for both national and regional political roles, whether they or their churches liked it or not. This became clear during the 1975-76 debates over the Bougainville secession movement, when the statements of the Bishop of Bougainville, Gregory Singkai, were unequivocally partisan. Singkai, a Holy Spirit graduate, spoke as a private Bougainvillean, yet his controversial comments could not be dissociated from his position as a Catholic prelate. Nor could a Tolai or Motu bishop of the United Church speak publicly as a member of a regional group alone, for his ideas would always be construed, rightly or wrongly, as those of his Church as well. Similarly, their comments as churchmen would inevitably be taken as those of their own regional groups, of which they were, *ipso facto*, leaders.

In formal, institutional politics, too, the impact of former seminarians was strong. Some entered national and regional politics or the bureaucracy and became notable public figures. Frs John Momis, Ignatius Kilage and Cherubim Dambui and Dr Alexis Sarei were perhaps better known for their political than their theological activities. Momis was a member of the national parliament and chairman of its Constitutional Planning Committee; Kilage, after working for the National Education Board and the CEUD, became the national Ombudsman; Dambui became head of the East Sepik provincial government; and Sarei, after service with UPNG, Somare's personal staff and the CEUD, went on to head the Bougainville provincial government. No less significant than such graduates were the notable 'drop-outs' from the seminaries. Some of the country's leading politicians and public servants received their secondary and tertiary education in Catholic seminaries, among others Mathias Toliman, Joseph Langro, Tony Ila, Oscar Tammur and Leo Hannett.
The Catholic seminarians also played an important part in articulating the discontent felt amongst many educated Papua New Guineans in the period preceding self-government. The Kap seminarians, for example, achieved some notoriety during 1965-66 when their student newspaper, *Dialogue*, edited by Leo Hannett, began conducting a vigorous anti-colonial rhetoric. Widely condemned by the settler community as seditious, *Dialogue* was perhaps a portent of the student activism to come. With the genesis at about that time of Somare's Pangu Pati, it was also evidence of a rising tide of nationalism, which its clear voice helped swell.

Despite their accomplishments, the seminaries posed a problem for official planners: could and should they be co-ordinated with 'public sector' institutions? On the one hand they were obviously contributing to the higher education of Papua New Guineans; there was a transfer of students between them and the educational public sector; and so it seemed that some official status ought to be accorded them. On the other hand they represented particularistic interests which were not amenable to national planning. In 1971 the Brown Committee looked into this question desultorily, and suggested that they be invited to form one of its proposed groupings of tertiary colleges. This was hardly a novel suggestion, for it was a step they had already taken without official prompting, by forming the Melanesian Association of Theological Colleges (MATS) in 1969. MATS, which incorporated the fourteen seminaries and theological colleges of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, was intended to systematize theological training by standardizing qualifications. It operated as an accrediting agency, assessing and approving the qualifications awarded by member seminaries, which awarded a wide range of qualifications from lower level catechetical certificates through middle level diplomas to degrees in theology. It achieved a level of academic respectability when UPNG decided to accept the MATS-approved B. Theol. degree as a fully accredited first degree entitling those holding it to proceed to the UPNG Master's degree programme — all of which indicated that educational institutions could produce a modicum of co-ordinated effort when it suited them.

Although there were successes in the matter of self-imposed co-ordination, it seemed unlikely that bureaucrats and members of governments would ever be satisfied that the educational institutions were making sufficient effort to
eliminate the duplication and waste of resources which the lack of co-ordination was said to breed. This was suggested by Cabinet pressure on the universities to work towards shared membership on their Councils and ultimately to a single Council. It was also apparent in the later recommendation of the White Committee in 1978 that life should be breathed into the stillborn child of the Brown Committee, the Higher Education Commission, because 'the need for co-ordination of higher education has not been reduced with the passing of time .... The need now is as great as it ever was'.

Whether that need could be met to the satisfaction of the critics was doubtful. Higher education in Papua New Guinea was now as diverse as almost anywhere else. Did a system serving so many well-established sectional interests really lend itself to rationalization? Sceptics would have answered that streamlining could be achieved only when the sectional interests were convinced they would thus be better served. That, however, would probably not deter the dedicated seekers of greater co-ordination.

Women's rights

Papua New Guinea did not remain forever immune from the ferment of student activism of the late 1960s and early '70s; nor could it be unaffected by that other great social movement of the day, for women's rights. Women comprised only a small minority of university personnel, yet they too were emerging as one of the determined interest groups. The way in which the feminist cause came to the Papua New Guinean campuses could be seen in two issues, the treatment of female staff at UOT and the problems of women students at UPNG.

The situation of female staff at UPNG was rather better than that at UOT. Women occupied positions at most levels of the academic hierarchy (though there was never a female full professor). They were usually appointed on their merits without consideration of marital status, rather than being assigned to inferior status as appendages of their husbands. They also enjoyed the full benefits due to their positions — recreation leave, study leave and superannuation. Yet some female staff at UPNG — until 1975 an almost exclusively

---

5White Report, p.69.
expatriate group — were dissatisfied with their ostensibly liberal treatment, and could enumerate various grievances:

(i) There were few senior female academics, and no women in the upper echelons of the administrative staff. (ii) In relation to their actual numbers women were under-represented on UPNG's numerous policy-making committees. (iii) Some academic departments habitually employed short-term temporary tutors whom the University had no obligation to provide with sick leave, recreation leave, housing, continuity of employment and other forms of security enjoyed by permanent staff. Most often these positions were filled by women, many of whom came to feel UPNG was getting them 'on the cheap'. (iv) Female academic staff, unlike their male colleagues, often found obscene graffiti with offensive personal references on the doors of their offices, which seemed to indicate hostility against their very presence on campus. A generalized sense of resentment existed, which stimulated the formation of a series of on-campus feminist groups from about 1970, with membership at first drawn mainly from the female staff and militant expatriate students.  

If, in the absence of overt formal discrimination, feminists still felt the need to band together at UPNG, the unabashedly inequitable treatment of female staff at UOT should have provided fertile ground for feminist protest. Yet this took longer to develop in Lae than Waigani. During the Duncanson regime there had been few female staff members, and they were without spouses on campus, Duncanson having disallowed the appointment of staff spouses. Under Sandover IOT experienced a conspicuous 'spring cleaning', however, and this included a new policy on employing spouses. Consequently husband-wife teams began joining the staff. Problems did not emerge until 1973, when married couples joined the full time academic staff for the first time. This presented IOT with new contingencies: if both partners received financial benefits such as study leave and superannuation it would have to pay double benefits to a single family unit whereas it had paid only singly in the past. Even though it made corresponding savings in the provision of housing, leave fares, recruitment and removal expenses, it was loth to provide double benefits to any family. Having been an overwhelmingly male institution, UOT thought chiefly in terms of male employment; and so it responded to the arrival of married female academics with a series of questionable ad hoc

---

decisions. Over the next three years considerable bitterness arose as experienced female academics found themselves subject to heavy-handed official discrimination. Feminist rhetoric was now heard in Lae as well as Port Moresby.

The first cause célèbre at UOT was the case of the wife of the newly appointed head of the Department of Chemical Technology. She was a physicist–mathematician, with a doctorate, teaching qualifications and several years' teaching experience in Australian universities. Before arriving at UOT she had applied for a vacant lectureship and had been offered a temporary tutorship, which she had rejected as insufficient in view of her past record. She later applied for a second lectureship, but her application was not acknowledged. She found this position still unfilled on arriving in Lae and duly applied for it again. Once more she received an offer of a one-year tutorship, which she tentatively accepted. When she inquired from the Vice-Chancellor why she was being allowed only low-status, short-term employment, the reply was, 'Because you are a wife.' Later in the year, after two further applications, she was at last appointed lecturer, but with a one- rather than the normal three-year contract and no rights to study leave or superannuation. She refused these conditions and, feeling insulted, left UOT's employ for a job off-campus. As she pointed out to the University, she had been appointed three times as the most suitable applicant under open competition and had performed her duties adequately, but had been subject to rulings never applied to male appointees. Her husband, too, resented her treatment, and that led him into his own running battle with the UOT administration.

A similar case occurred the following year, 1974, with the wife of the incoming head of the Language Department. She had strong postgraduate qualifications and experience in teaching to advanced levels in four universities. Before leaving her last job for Lae she had applied for a position in her husband's department; UOT advised that her appointment could be discussed when she reached Lae. She reaffirmed her application twice after her arrival, but received no acknowledgement; meanwhile she had begun working temporarily and part-time in her husband's department, which was short

7M. Dale, 'Personal statement of employment history at UOT', n.d., Dale papers.
8Personal observations, 1973, 1975-76.
staffed. The Registrar said he disliked married couples working in the same department, but the couple pointed out that a precedent existed in the wife of the former acting head of the department, who had worked in it with her husband for eighteen months. When the name of the new head's wife appeared on a list of fifty applicants for the job she was seeking, the appointments committee recommended her appointment unhesitatingly, ignoring an instruction from Sandover that 'under no circumstances' should she be appointed. Sandover said he had made a ruling ten months before debarring wives from working in departments led by their husbands; she was therefore disqualified, though it would be all right for her to work on a short-term, temporary basis. The University now rejected the recommendation of the appointments committee, and advised it to consider applications again. Again it recommended her, saying her qualifications and experience were outstanding; however, by this time Council had ratified the ruling Sandover said he had made earlier, and she was accordingly deemed ineligible. The husband was infuriated, believing UOT had misled him when he had made his own application by allowing him to think his wife could work in his department; he further believed it had been dishonest in not advising him of Sandover's ruling (which seemed not to have existed in writing until ten months after it was made). He complained to Matheson, and subsequently Sandover made him an informal offer of alternative employment for his wife at UOT. He rejected this, saying she 'had applied for a professional appointment — not for a grace and favour job under the Vice-Chancellor's patronage'.

He resigned and left soon afterwards, feeling cheated, vowing to spread news of his wife's treatment via the Inter-University Council and the Association of Commonwealth Universities.

There were other such cases at UOT, which together showed that the University's administration operated on patriarchal assumptions. They also demonstrated the propensity of UOT under Sandover to embark enthusiastically on new policies but then to draw back as disadvantages became apparent. The nett result was an unfortunate blighting of relations between UOT administration and the academics, particularly some whose spouses' career interests were also involved.

---

9R. White to D. Dale, 18 February 1975, Dale papers.
By mid-1973 UOT had sufficient female academics to make their collective presence felt. They began campaigning through the Staff Association for an improvement in their conditions, which, they argued, 'should in no way be determined by sex or marital status'.\(^{10}\) The Staff Association checked with its Waigani counterpart to compare conditions for women in each university; it was advised that the UPNG Staff Association could find no discrimination among staff on the basis of sex and furthermore regarded the UOT situation as 'shocking'.\(^{11}\) The Association now began pressing the case of female academics at meetings of Council and of the Finance and Management Committee, accusing the University of 'blatant' discrimination against them. It claimed that all academics 'should be accorded employment opportunities consistent with their professional status, irrespective of sex', which meant continuity of employment via long-term contracts, study leave, and superannuation for married female academics.\(^{12}\)

Despite the determined representations of the Staff Association, UOT went ahead in late 1973 to establish rules for employment so that 'no double benefits are payable where a member of staff is married to another member of staff'.\(^{13}\) Some rules turned out to be discriminatory in practice. Thus, some staff who had been recruited in Papua New Guinea but whose spouses had been recruited overseas were classified as 'locally recruited', and as such their maximum length of contract was a year, and they were ineligible for study leave. And where one member of staff married another mid-contract, one of the two must henceforth be regarded as 'locally recruited'. Ambiguities in the rules soon became apparent, and it was obvious they could not cover all cases. For example, they could not be applied to a husband-wife team recruited overseas; so it became necessary to add a further rule that 'where both members of the married team are employed, the senior partner only would be allowed a

\(^{10}\) 'Conditions of employment of female academics', statement by female academics of UOT, 6 June 1973, Dale papers.

\(^{11}\) J.R.E. Waddell to Dale, 21 November 1973, Dale papers.

\(^{12}\) H. Clark, 'Employment of female academic staff', 31 October 1973, UOT Staff Association Records.

\(^{13}\) UOT, CM 32nd meeting, December 1973, UOTR.
In practice it was almost inevitably the wives who were the 'locally recruited' or 'junior' partners, which tended to affirm the patriarchal ethos of UOT. To the ambiguities was also added a series of ad hoc and arbitrary decisions by the UOT administration promulgated as 'Council rulings' even though Council had not discussed them. One instance was a clause which began appearing in the contracts of all single women and widows appointed to the UOT staff — 'Your marriage ... will make the conditions [herein] to be null and void', a clause not included in the contracts of single or widowed male employees. Another instance, causing greater offence, stated, 'All selection committees considering wives or senior female employees must be chaired by the Vice-Chancellor.' Such 'rulings' angered male as well as female academics: they were seen as an unconstitutional abuse of authority by UOT's senior administrators, and helped widen the breach between academics and administrators which had opened over other issues.

UOT's female academics eventually found a champion in Jack Woodward, the much-respected Professor of Electrical Engineering. In 1975 — International Women's Year — he brought to Council's attention the irony of the unauthorized and discriminatory 'rulings' being made by the UOT administration at a time when worldwide attention was focusing on means of improving women's lot. He urged Council to re-examine all existing contracts to ensure they were in accordance with Council policy; where they were not, they should be amended; and Council should affirm its commitment to a policy of 'no discrimination on the grounds of sex in the terms and conditions of employment'. The women, too, complained to Council, in a petition which protested that 'administrative action ... [is] at variance with the terms of Council resolutions and is discriminatory to women employees'. The Council concurred. It affirmed its support for equality between the sexes in employment; it

14UOT, CM 34th meeting, May 1974, UOTR.
15J. Woodward, 'Conditions of employment for married persons', paper presented to UOT Council 36th meeting, May 1975, UOTR.
16ibid.
17ibid.
18Statement by ten UOT female members of staff, n.d., presented to UOT Council 38th meeting, May 1975, UOTR.
directed that the administration's offending 'rulings' be withdrawn; and it caused a review of contracts to ensure they were consistent with its policy. UOT had at last begun falling into line with the seventh of the Eight Points, which had now been the national ideology for three years — that there should be 'a rapid increase in the active and equal participation of women in all forms of economic and social activity'.

At UPNG, in contrast, it was disadvantages of female students rather than those of staff which were the more urgent source of feminist concern. From the outset, UPNG had been criticised over the treatment of its female students. In Parliament members occasionally complained about girls from their constituencies becoming pregnant while at UPNG, and on one occasion a Minister had pursued such a case with the Administrator, the Secretary and the Minister for External Territories to seek justice for the girl concerned. There were also complaints from the secondary schools, particularly those run by churches, when girls they sent on to UPNG became pregnant and discontinued studies — a particularly disturbing fact since it was their best and brightest girls whom they sent on to UPNG. The frequency with which this happened persuaded some schools to direct their better students into primary teachers colleges, which seemed safer places for girls than the University. The upper echelon of the Department of Education was also critical of what it saw as the *laissez-faire* attitude of UPNG to the sexual behaviour of the students, whom the University regarded as adult and therefore properly immune from any restrictive official morality. McKinnon in particular argued that, because female students generally came from village backgrounds where their personal conduct was closely supervised, the University must protect them *in loco parentis*: the villages had entrusted their most accomplished young women to the University's care, and so each girl returning home pregnant represented a betrayal of their confidence. He later claimed he had struggled unsuccessfully to make UPNG aware of its duties here.  

---


Some within UPNG were as concerned as McKinnon. Christian groups on campus regularly made representations about the need to improve the moral climate of the campus to better protect female students. Unfortunately their petitions, to bodies such as the Oldfield Committee and the CEUD, accomplished little. Committees of inquiry generally stepped warily around the unsatisfactory situation of female students, as if to avoid offending the University's sensibilities.21

One uncharacteristically forthright critic from within the University was J.P. Powell of the Faculty of Education. In 1974 he propounded 'the Eight Point Plan for Downfall' — a catalogue of UPNG's eight major failings. One was a moral failure: UPNG had always adopted a 'neutral attitude' to its students' behaviour, the result of which was a 'moral vacuum'. The University, he claimed, had

Never made any publicly expressed criticism of student attitudes, values or activities, and one never senses that the University feels it has any responsibility in this sensitive but vitally important area. Vandalism, theft, misappropriation of funds and, more recently, intimidation and threats of violence have gone unpunished and even unreprimanded.22

To this list of uncensured sins the feminists of Waigani would have added sexual aggression against the female students by male colleagues who were restrained by very few sanctions. And as this problem increased the feminists became the most persistent agitators for a more concerned and compassionate attitude on the part of the University.

To be fair to UPNG, the feminists' demands in the past had been inconsistent, possibly owing to the fact that their more articulate members had generally been expatriates who had exerted undue influence. Successive Vice-Chancellors had found, for example, that when issues of security arose and were referred to the female students for an opinion, the

---

21See for example comments of Bishop D. Hand et al. to the Oldfield Committee, UPNGR E.61 (part 1); and submissions to the CEUD, for instance OHER S-56. The manner in which the Oldfield Report (p.37) and the CEUD Report (pp.85-9) deal euphemistically with sexual issues aggravated some observers.

dominant voice within the majority would be that of outspoken expatriate feminists, who would insist on decisions that were not necessarily in the best interests of the less vociferous Papua New Guinean female students. On one occasion at least, when female students voted to have Luavi House, the female hall of residence, fully open to men, this had been the case—which left the University in the unwelcome position of accepting a majority decision it thought wrong, imposing its own rules in disregard of majority views, or creating separate and discriminatory rules for expatriate and national students. As a liberal institution it took the first option.\textsuperscript{23}

By 1975-76, however, expatriate feminists were more successfully seeking common purpose with the Papua New Guinean female students. By this time a new cohort of expatriate female staff and students had joined the campus. To them the disadvantages of female students on a campus where they were outnumbered 10:1 epitomized the penalty they believed all women suffered in male-dominated societies. A renewed interest in the treatment of women became obvious in a number of directions. Several formal women's organizations and informal discussion groups came into being; a feminist journal, \textit{Yumi Wankain} (Pidgin: 'we are the same')—an attempt to render the idea of sisterhood between black and white women), began appearing; various seminars considered women's issues; courses in women's studies began for the first time, though the enrolments were mainly of expatriates; and a number of female staff pursued research on a range of topics relating to women in society.

One of the more influential research projects carried out by a member of this group was that of Kathy Still, who in 1976 produced a report of the UPNG Educational Research Unit on the difficulties of female students at UPNG. The title of her monograph, \textit{Something has got to be done so we can survive in this place}, indicated something of the plight in which her informants perceived themselves to exist. Still tried to identify what the 140 full time national female students at UPNG in 1975 saw as their chief problems. A depressing pattern emerged of male students' aggression against female colleagues. During class discussions, for example, female students were generally reluctant to contribute because that meant running the gauntlet of

\textsuperscript{23}J. Ballard, personal communication.
wolf-whistles, coarse remarks and gestures, and suggestive or hostile looks. Fear of male aggression also prevented them from utilizing available study facilities: they were generally afraid to leave their rooms after dark to use the Library only 200 metres away because those who did had 'frequent unpleasant experiences'. Accommodation posed a number of problems. Luavi House had been condemned in the Oldfield Report as 'demonstrably unsuitable' — for security reasons it was surrounded by a high brick wall topped with barbed wire; it was patrolled by uniformed male security guards; it had no place for social gathering or entertaining friends; and not surprisingly its occupants regarded it as a prison. Despite the security precautions, however, visits by drunken males at all hours were commonplace; and bashings of women, often within Luavi itself, for purposes of sexual coercion were also said to be commonplace. Pregnancy was yet another problem: as an earlier study by the Department of Education had shown, '40 per cent of UPNG women became pregnant while at the University' — a significantly higher proportion than in other tertiary training institutions. Male possessiveness and notions of masculinity were partly responsible, for when a male student had a girlfriend he believed making her pregnant was a good way to 'stop others from having her'. Still concluded that a 'high correlation between drink, safety and pregnancy' existed: 'One might almost propose the following formula to express "Life in Luavi" — Drink + Hostility towards females = Pregnancy', she wrote.

The response of the UPNG administration to this situation was typically to increase security measures around Luavi, making it even more prison-like. But as one feminist critic pointed out, 'the idea of putting bars in front of the louvre windows is just one more example of protecting women students from the men by making life more unpleasant for the women'. The White Report later asserted that the prison-like isolation of the women in Luavi seemed even to

26Ibid.
encourage the attitude among the men 'that females are essentially inferior and are only useful as objects of sexual gratification'.

Increasing Luavi's impregnability was, according to such critics, at best an ineffective form of tokenism.

A series of incidents in late 1976 and early 1977 demonstrated to Waigani feminists that they could expect little support from the University even if they goaded it into reluctant action. The first of these incidents was the attempted rape of an expatriate female staff member early one afternoon outside the UPNG creche. She reported the matter to both University and police, but 'nothing was done'. This angered a number of campus women, both expatriate and national, and led to a meeting of the recently formed Women's Staff-Student Association to protest this and other recent attacks on women in and around the campus. The meeting was indignant that, whereas the University had promised to publicize the threat to women posed by the attacks, all it had done was insert a bland notice in the weekly staff news-sheet reminding campus residents 'of a few basic security precautions ... in the urban area', but making no specific mention of the danger to women.

Thirty of the women at the meeting subsequently addressed a petition to the UPNG Secretary, K.R. Long, accusing the University of culpable reluctance to warn women of the hazards they faced on campus. In several subsequent meetings with senior members of the administration, the women's representatives were angered to find that the UPNG leadership was anxious to minimize the problem, apparently being more concerned about the effect bad publicity might have on the University's overseas staff recruitment programme.

Not long after this a young expatriate tutor was raped at Waigani after her flat had been broken into one night. Subsequently three national men, two of them UPNG students, were charged in connection with these events and two of them were later gaol ed. Apart from guaranteeing the

---

28White Report, p.45.
30The University This Week 22 October 1976, p.2.
31L. Bala (et al.) to Long, 29 October, UPNG Women's Staff-Student Association records; Sunderland, op. cit., p.67.
students' bail the University officially ignored the incident. Then over Easter 1977 a female student was gang-raped by a gang of about fifteen youths while returning to her dormitory from an on-campus dance at Waigani. After this incident a group of ten female UPNG students, 'most of whom [had] been assaulted or robbed at some time during their university careers', publicly protested to the Post-Courier, claiming that women at UPNG 'lived in fear of violence, rape, theft and drunken male students'. Their protest stirred up a hornet's nest: they, and the two female journalists who reported their complaints, were threatened with 'rape or worse' in graffiti around the campus, and their pictures were pinned up and defaced. A delegation of the Women's Staff-Student Association, this time consisting mostly of national women and organized by one of their own leaders, attended a special emergency Council meeting. They accused the University leadership of caring more for their own status and the reputation of the University than about the welfare of its women. Gris later announced tighter security and disciplinary measures including the closure of the University Club (the on-campus drinking facility), but endeavoured to play down the matter by 'denying that the problem [was] any worse on campus than in other parts of Port Moresby'. Renagi Lohia, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, soon to succeed Gris in the Vice-Chancellorship, showed a similar reluctance to face the issue squarely. He told the delegation from the Women's Staff-Student Association that attacks on campus women were largely their own fault for dressing too provocatively. This was a response common among Papua New Guinean men judging from subsequent correspondence in the Post-Courier.

The lengthening list of acts of aggression against women at Waigani could not be discounted in such facile fashion. The press both locally and in Australia deplored what it deemed to be the 'growing University crime wave' and the University's response in 'suppressing reports, dissuading students from speaking to the press or police, and refusing to take action against the offenders, some of

33 Waugh, loc. cit.
34 Sunderland, loc. cit.
them the sons of powerful men'.\textsuperscript{35} To the storm of criticism Somare added his voice, publicly stating that UPNG must ensure that its women could 'go about their everyday activities without being threatened or harassed'.\textsuperscript{36}

Whether this furore would actually serve to improve the lot of women at UPNG was doubtful. The repressive measures against male students which seemed necessary would probably not foster relaxed and harmonious relations between the sexes. If anything they promised to institutionalize in a modern and national context the antagonism between the sexes which some ethnologists thought characteristic of a number of the country's traditional communities. Traditional patriarchal beliefs about masculinity and femininity and the properness of dominant male and submissive female roles seemed deeply ingrained in the minds of the Papua New Guinean men now in control of modern institutions like the University. The persistence of these seemed likely, all feminist agitation notwithstanding. And so the prospects for UPNG women, students and staff alike, remained daunting. As Still had observed, 'realistically ... a ratio of 10:1 [male to female students] makes a breaking down of existing [male] prejudices and stereotypes ... quite unlikely'.\textsuperscript{37} Yet, having become convinced of their grievances, the women in Papua New Guinea's universities were unlikely to give up the struggle.

Reforming academic government

John Powell, who had attacked UPNG for what he saw as its 'Eight Point Downfall Programme', believed that despite its sins of omission the University had made a number of creditable achievements. It had, he claimed, 'succeeded in democratizing its own internal government to an extent unmatched in any university in Australia'.\textsuperscript{38} This accomplishment, the hallmark of the Inglis Vice-Chancellorship, was confined to UPNG. UOT's one attempt to produce greater staff participation in decision-making foundered. Thus, by 1976 UPNG's diffuse system of committees contrasted strongly with the centralized organization revolving round the person of the UOT Vice-Chancellor; yet

\textsuperscript{35}Waugh, \textit{loc. cit.}

\textsuperscript{36}\textit{ibid.}; Sunderland, \textit{loc. cit.}

\textsuperscript{37}Still and Shea, \textit{op. cit.}

\textsuperscript{38}Powell (1976), p.5.
neither system was perfect, and each had detractors and defenders.

(i) Democratizing UPNG. Among staff who worked under UPNG's first two Vice-Chancellors an adage ran: whereas Gunther had 'built' the University, Inglis had 'humanized' it. It was a fair comment on their respective achievements.

Gunther was primarily an administrator. He made and implemented decisions expeditiously, and dominated the administrative hierarchy he presided over. Under him UPNG was structured along traditional lines: teaching departments were headed by professors and grouped into faculties by discipline; departmental heads belonged to a Professorial Board, an academic policy-making body chaired by the Vice-Chancellor; and above all this was the supreme legislative body, the Council. At all levels his influence was strong and pervasive. This was perhaps the optimal system in the earlier phase of development, but, as UPNG became larger and more complex, some within it felt excluded, and came to resent what they thought was an 'autocratic mode of government'.

Towards the end of Gunther's Vice-Chancellorship several developments had drawn staff attention to flaws in the regime. During 1970-71 a general tightening of the University budget caused restrictions in some areas of concern to academics - mainly travel on duty, and recruitment. At the same time some staff viewed Gunther's latest capital construction projects as unnecessary - for example, $200,000 spent in laying down roads and sewers for 100 new houses which in the end were never built. All this led them to query the decision-making process controlled by the Vice-Chancellor.

Staff discontent over their lack of involvement came to a head in late 1971, several months before Gunther's retirement. The issue which finally sparked their voluble protest was Gunther's idea of a Deputy Vice-Chancellor to assist Inglis, now Vice-Chancellor designate. Inglis wished to continue with his research and teaching, and Gunther suggested a Deputy Vice-Chancellor would enable him to do so while also lightening the increasingly heavy administrative

39V. Harvey (et al.), 'Submission to the Faculty of Arts concerning the office of Dean and other matters', n.d. (1971), Faculty of Arts minutes, 3 November 1971, UPNGR E.12-2-13.
burden. The Professorial Board, thinking there was a need to discuss the proposal further, appointed a sub-committee under R.G. Ward, the Professor of Geography, to consider and report on the possible functions of a Deputy Vice-Chancellor. The sub-committee had a week for this task, and had to report to a joint meeting of the Professorial Board and the Faculties of Arts, Education and Science on 25 November. Such a joint meeting was an unusual administrative device, primarily called together to consider end-of-year examination results. The report of Ward's sub-committee appeared last on the agenda. This irritated some academics, who thought the matter was being tacked on as an after-thought—something they were expected to endorse automatically. Gunther was absent at the time, and so some of the dissatisfied staff took the opportunity of venting pent-up grievances.

The most disgruntled staff were a few 'young Turks' of relatively low status within the academic hierarchy. They resented the lack of consultation between upper and lower level staff in making decisions, which they saw as being dominated by a select circle of senior administrators and professors without due consideration of those further down. To them the handling of the Deputy Vice-Chancellorship was indicative of a general lack of communication, for as one junior lecturer said, 'the whole question smacks of the autocratic adhocacy that has characterized the running of this University since its inception'.

When the joint meeting of the Professorial Board and the faculties took place the majority present agreed with 'the angry young men', whose chief spokesman was Vern Harvey (later a member of the Oldfield and first and second Gris Committees). Harvey spoke of his 'anger at the indecent haste with which the whole matter is being carried out' and warned Council of the hostility that would arise if it created the Deputy Vice-Chancellorship at its next meeting as Gunther wished. The joint meeting voted to postpone the final decision, though the consensus was that most academics would support the proposal if given more time to consider it. Eventually the position was created, and Oldfield appointed to it. But while Gunther had thus finally had his way, a significant change had occurred:

---

democratic will at the grass-roots level had won its first victory over administrative expediency.

While UPNG was debating the proposal for the Deputy Vice-Chancellorship, another important development had also occurred. This was the creation of a committee by the Faculties of Arts and Science 'to investigate the means by which greater involvement by academic staff in the University government can be achieved'. 42 Harvey was its chairman and it became known as the Participation and Communication (P & C) Committee. Its formation stemmed from a submission to the Faculty of Arts by Harvey and two colleagues, who suggested it as a means of producing 'a substantial increase in participation in the government of the University by sub-professorial academic staff'. 43 At its roots was the same sense of dissatisfaction which had delayed the creation of the Deputy Vice-Chancellorship. With Harvey and like-minded colleagues comprising its membership it performed its task energetically, and over the ten months from November 1971 produced a series of recommendations which led to the democratization of UPNG which occurred under Inglis.

The P & C Committee's terms of reference required it to review the existing governmental structure of the University, to recommend changes 'to facilitate increased [staff] participation' and thus 'to utilize the collective wisdom of the University to produce an institution which gives maximum value for the funds allocated to it'. 44 The spirit of the times greatly facilitated the Committee's operations: when it got down to serious business in early 1972 Somare's government had just come to power, and Inglis had recently taken over from Gunther. Impatience with the past and eager anticipation of a better world ahead were the keynotes of the time in University and country alike, and reformers everywhere were in the ascendance.

The P & C Committee's main recommendations were in three directions. First, it wanted a reconstitution of Council to include significantly higher proportions of staff

42 Participation and Communication Committee, Minutes, 19 November 1971, UPNGR E.53.
43 Harvey (et al.), loc. cit.
44 D. Elder, 'Participation and communication', 25 April 1972; and Participation and Communication Committee, Minutes, 19 November 1971, UPNGR E.53.
and students. Secondly, it thought the Professorial Board should represent not only the various disciplines but the different levels of the academic hierarchy. It therefore proposed that an Academic Board 'relying on election rather than on automatic right' should replace the Professorial Board. An electoral system, it argued, would enable the University to dip more deeply into its reservoir of talent; fewer people would be excluded from taking part in university government; departmental heads would be forced to communicate more regularly with members of the departments. Thirdly, it proposed that departments should function as committees, electing heads (who need not necessarily be the professors), distributing departmental funds, allocating and organizing teaching duties, and making decisions on the direction of research and teaching programmes.\textsuperscript{45}

Not all these proposals were welcome. It was some fifteen months before they could be implemented, at the beginning of 1974. Staff apathy was one reason for the delay: less than a quarter of the staff supported the proposals with any degree of enthusiasm.\textsuperscript{46} The other reason was the objection of several conservative professors who favoured the retention of the Academic Board. They argued vigorously that professors were 'the most experienced of academics', who had been appointed in 'recognition of academic merit above the ordinary'; they should not therefore be replaced by elected representatives.\textsuperscript{47} These claims led to lengthy debate about the role of professors and departmental heads. On the one hand conservatives claimed that if professors were replaced as departmental heads by inexperienced elected heads their talents would be underemployed, and departments would become 'rife with political manoeuvre'. On the other hand reformers argued that the professor's most useful role was as 'a scholar and teacher of superior talents whose advice will be sought and leadership exercised by

\textsuperscript{45}Harvey, memorandum to academic staff, n.d.; Participation and Communication Committee, Minutes, 16 March, 12 April, 15 August, 14 September 1972, UPNGR E.53.

\textsuperscript{46}Participation and Communication Committee, Minutes, 13 June 1973, UPNGR E.53.

\textsuperscript{47}M. McKay to Harvey, 8 May 1972; R. Bulmer to Harvey, 18 June 1972, UPNGR E.53.
virtue of these talents'. Moreover, if freed from administrative duties the professors would be released for more creative work; and, having elected heads would encourage localization by enabling relatively junior nationals to gain experience in running academic departments. Eventually the conservatives were won round when it was agreed that professors on existing contracts would have the right to continue on as departmental heads without election if they chose to. (In the end most preferred to face election.) The Professorial Board finally adopted the reforms in July 1973 as from the following January. Council endorsed this decision; and so what some academics regarded as having been a Vice-Chancellor's fiefdom was now poised to become a modern democratic academic state.

Democracy came with a vengeance. The most notable effect of the reforms was to transform UPNG into a labyrinthine network of interlocking committees in which many veteran staff members felt lost. The UPNG organizational chart eventually showed a maze of over seventy permanent bodies. At the grass-roots level were about twenty-eight departments teaching courses and conducting research. They were organized into seven faculties which administered and co-ordinated the degree and diploma programmes. Above faculties and departments was the Academic Board, the supreme policy-making body, with representation from faculties, departments and the student body. It controlled some nine sub-committees, for example, a Standing Committee, Academic Developments, Postgraduate Awards, Preliminary Year. And above everything else was Council, the legislative body supreme, which noted and considered Academic Board policy, administered finance, and appointed and promoted staff. It, too, worked with the aid of sub-committees, eight in all, including Finance and Building, Appointments, Study Leave, Research. In addition to all these there were several Vice-Chancellor's advisory committees - Budgets, Deans of Faculties, Non-Academic Staffing. And some faculties had subsidiary committees and boards, for example the Standing, Steering, and Planning Committees, and the Boards of Studies in

---

Social Work, Police Studies, Journalism, and Commerce, of the Faculty of Arts.\textsuperscript{49}

This intricate structure certainly produced more participation. All academic staff, from the lowliest tutor to the most venerable professor, were theoretically drawn into the decision-making process to greater or lesser extent. The new system also had other advantages claimed by its supporters. Briefly: (i) It allowed those with particular talents to be better utilized. Professors little interested in administration were free to devote their creative energies to teaching, research and innovation, while more junior staff with administrative skills were able to contribute these. (ii) It helped academic localization, giving national academics a range of experience and the chance to develop administrative skills. (iii) It raised the quality of discourse within departments, and gave their members greater sense of direction and purpose. (iv) It helped pull together the more inherently schismatic departments where fundamental ideological cleavages existed — most notably Political Studies, and Economics. (v) It mitigated internal intrigue by providing acceptable and productive channels for the efforts of would-be academic politicians.\textsuperscript{50}

Offsetting these benefits were disadvantages which even the staunchest advocates of democracy conceded: (i) It retarded decision-making, and led to numerous complaints that UPNG was 'losing momentum'. (ii) It relied heavily on personalities. While it was a system that might have functioned smoothly under an Inglis, it failed to do so under a Gris. The committees operating best were those run by dynamic and ambitious chairpersons, while other committees tended towards dormancy because those in charge were ineffective. (iii) It failed to solve the problem of departmental competition. Weak departments still lost out in the competition for funds for research, favourable staffing allocations and representation on new courses — much as weak professors had done in the past. (iv) It was sometimes hard to find people willing to work on committees, or to work on them with dedication. Many viewed committee work as

\textsuperscript{49}Stace, 'UPNG: Establishment and membership of academic committees', December 1975, records of UPNG Academic Registrar.

\textsuperscript{50}O'Neill, 'UPNG structure and organization', 6 July 1976, UPNGR G.47.
an onerous chore; and some departments were generally unwilling to contribute to the committee system. (v) Not all faculties and departments democratized, and some continued to be mini-autocracies. Possibly only 'committee-ridden' Arts carried the spirit of democracy to its logical conclusions. (vi) The communication problem was not adequately solved, for while there might have been more discussion within departments, the flow of information between the various boards and committees was greatly slowed down by the very complexity of the system. (vii) It intensified academic politicking. This suited the style of some academic political 'operators', but whether that was an advantage was debatable, and it did not of necessity bring benefits to staff and students generally. (viii) It placed greater power in the hands of a few select senior members of the administration who serviced the various boards and committees. They were the only ones with an effective overview of the total system, and as a result were in a position to control the flow of information and to influence the decisions being made. (ix) It generated a vast amount of paperwork, which in turn pushed up administrative and secretarial costs. The reformers of 1971–72 had thus exerted a profound influence, but whether or not it was for the ultimate good of the University was an issue of lively contention.51

(ii) Centralizing UOT. While UPNG was busy transforming itself, UOT was being reconfirmed as a Vice-Chancellor's demesne. Despite some effort towards reform, what UOT achieved fell considerably short of tokenism. Those in Lae who had hoped for a UPNG-style transfiguration had cause for cynicism, for if anything power at UOT became more centralized. The UOT structure was, and remained, parallel to that of UPNG under Gunther: there were 'schools' functioning much as UPNG faculties—Engineering, Basic Studies, Business Administration, Architecture, and later Natural Resources. Each comprised academic departments headed by a non-elected professor or associate professor. Schools and departments were represented on the major academic policy making body, the Academic Board; above this was the legislative body, the Council; and in the latter two bodies the Vice-Chancellor's influence was strong.

There were occasional grumblings about Sandover's dominance during his first two years, particularly over

51ibid.
matters like the employment of married female academics and his intervention in staff appointments. But until university status was attained there was no concerted attempt to reduce his influence. Staff generally agreed that the director of an institute of technology might function differently from a university Vice-Chancellor, that the former properly was a 'director'. No attempt to reassess the function of the UOT head came until late 1973, when the Professor of Civil Engineering, Don Mansell, suggested that, in view of the recent rise to university status, an overhaul of the administrative machinery might be opportune. He successfully brought a motion to that effect before the Academic Board, as a result of which a Working Party on University Government, consisting of the Vice-Chancellor, Registrar, six professors and two associate professors, came into being and began work in November 1973. 52

It took the Working Party six months to get down to its real business, as it spent all its time till then preparing a submission to the CEUD. It first looked at the structure of the schools, each of which was governed by a board of school members of the status of lecturer or above. It recommended that they be renamed faculties; that heads of schools be called deans, and be appointed by Council (as school heads had been in the past) rather than being elected; candidates for deanships should be senior lecturers or better and could be nominated by faculties for consideration by Council; there should also be deputy deans appointed the same way as deans, but without restriction on the rank of candidates. Next the Working Party examined departmental structure. The only discussion here was on the correct status of heads: should they all have professorial status, or would associate professors suffice in some cases? (That members of departments might elect their heads was apparently a notion the Working Party did not feel was worth consideration.) Thirdly, it made token gestures towards democratic reform in relation to the Academic Board: it thought that in addition to deans and professors, each faculty should be represented by three elected members, one a student. A further attempt at democratization failed. This concerned the Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee, an informal meeting of departmental heads to discuss academic policy with the

52 Academic Board, Minutes of 58th meeting, 26 September and 3 October 1973; Working Party on University Government, Minutes, 6 November 1973, UOTR.
Vice-Chancellor. A suggestion that elected departmental representatives should also attend the meeting got nowhere: the Working Party vetoed the idea as it 'would tend to slow down the execution of decisions'.

The Working Party spent most time discussing faculty composition. Some faculties (Business Administration, Forestry) contained only one department, which, it was said, gave them a disproportionate weighting (vis-à-vis multi-department faculties) in University affairs. Mansell proposed a rearrangement of departments between faculties so that every faculty might contain approximately equal numbers of departments, thus preventing any one of them from having undue influence. Little came of these proposals, however, for the departmental heads most affected—the Professors of Business Administration and Architecture—resolutely opposed them, apparently fearing some diminution of their authority under the suggested rearrangement. In the end only two departments combined—Chemical Technology (which did not have a professorial head) and Forestry (whose professor had only recently been appointed and had not yet arrived on campus). The one subsequent attempt to create an additional department in a single-department faculty failed. This was in Business Administration, where the professor, Keith Cleland, with Sandover's support, tenaciously held on to what he claimed was a contractual right to lead both Accountancy and Business Management (which would have become separate departments). He did so against the popular vote of his faculty and the Academic Board. Great rancour attended his continued refusal to see the faculty split into separate departments, with disaffected faculty members making various allegations about the misuse of professorial power.

In the end the addition of students and more elected staff members to Academic Board was the Working Party's main achievement. It had produced at least token democratization here, but elsewhere the advances were few. Most of its deliberations were marked by a stultifying conservatism and a severely limited conception of how decision-making

53 Working Party on University Government, Minutes, 22 May, 10 June, 31 July 1974, UOTR.

54 On Campus 1(2) June 1976, p.7; R. Adams, paper presented at Faculty of Business Administration, 12 November 1975, Adams papers.
might be democratically shared within universities. Compared with UPNG, UOT had displayed a remarkable lack of democratic imagination. The very composition of the Working Party had reflected this: whereas the corresponding body at UPNG had consisted of the 'young Turks', not one a departmental head, all members of the UOT party were either professors or associate professors. And while UPNG had opted for elected deans and departmental heads, UOT chose to retain appointed officials. And so most UOT reforms were ultimately semantic—little more than a cosmetic redesignation of existing structures and positions.

The UOT Working Party nevertheless had the potential to achieve more, and might have, had Sandover not halted its activities abruptly. This happened in October 1974, a year after it had begun work, when several members drew attention to 'ways and means of improving efficiency within the University administration'. They suggested that 'administrative effectiveness might be increased by decentralizing certain aspects of the administration, [and] that an investigation be made into the overall administrative structure in the University'.\(^5\) By raising such issues the Working Party had dealt itself a death blow, for that was its final act. Sandover, the chairman, simply allowed it to lapse by calling no further meetings. Presumably he saw its wish to probe the administration as a threat to his command of the administrative structure.\(^6\) Sixteen months went by without further meetings, though in the meantime the University claimed the Working Party was extant and working towards reform.\(^7\) Eventually Mansell, its progenitor, became impatient with the hypocrisy of this situation, and at the March 1976 Academic Board meeting moved to have the body formally interred. Sandover was 'only too pleased to comply'; and the Academic Board, cynical about the chances of democratizing under such a Vice-Chancellor, voted for final burial.\(^8\)

---

\(^5\) Working Party on University Government, Minutes, 29 October 1974, UOTR.

\(^6\) D. Mansell, RIW.


\(^8\) Mansell, RIW; Academic Board, 84th meeting, 17 March 1976, UOTR.
Because of actions by the Vice-Chancellor like those in relation to the Working Party, many staff believed that not only had UOT failed to democratize, but power under Sandover had become even more centralized. Sandover for his part rejected the view of the University which saw him as a spider looming at the centre of its web. He claimed that UOT had democratized, vaunting the open forum he said existed there. He said that staff had ample scope to express views and influence policy via established channels of communication. They could do this, he maintained, through their departments, or the Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee and Academic Board (these two bodies included a third of academic staff), or through the Staff Association journal, On Campus. His critics, on the other hand, maintained that as he either chaired the significant policy-making meetings himself, or had them chaired by loyal supporters, his personal control was complete. As one of his most persistent critics pointed out, 'committees by the dozen must not be confused with democracy, nor dissent with disloyalty'.

UOT's failure to reform arose from a combination of factors. First there was uncertainty about how far reform should extend. Possibly this was because UOT had begun as an Institute directed by a Director, and consequently had no university tradition with an attendant ideal view of the institution as a community of scholars all enjoying the status of Vice-Chancellor's colleagues. Sandover came as the Director, his staff came as Institute employees; he continued to 'direct' and they generally accepted that he should. University status required more of the democratic spirit, however. It took several years and prolonged conflict for UOT to learn this. Secondly, there was Sandover's personal style. He did not hide his contempt for 'participatory democracy' of the UPNG type, and he justified his role at UOT by asserting that the Vice-Chancellor was above all UOT's most senior executive officer, whose prime function

was decision-making. Allowing the Working Party to lapse when it threatened to intrude on to his territory was a measure of his determination to play such a role according to his own interpretation. Thirdly, UOT was inherently conservative, a fact which revealed itself in the narrow scope of the reforms the Working Party proposed. UOT's dominant figures were the professors and associate professors, who – as Cleland demonstrated – could claim pre-eminence by right of appointment. Some were more progressive than others, but generally they were hard-core traditionalists, defenders of professorial 'divine right', who were unsympathetic to the type of reforms undertaken at UPNG. Consequently it was hardly surprising that a Working Party consisting of such men could envisage only severely circumscribed democracy for UOT. Finally, there was the nature of the UOT academic disciplines. All departments except Language and Social Science were preoccupied with technology, with practical projects and conditions of employment rather than with principles of university governance. The contrast with UPNG was strong: at Waigani there was excitement at the prospect of structural reform, emanating most notably from departments with socio-political interests. Lacking such a radical element, UOT was less enthusiastic about departing from tradition. And so, while Waigani moved far and fast towards democracy, Lae marked time. But, as we shall see, even conservatives could learn to resent too much autocracy.

Localization

The Somare government tackled localization enthusiastically. Extensive indigenization in all sectors of the workforce clearly had to precede independence, and so from its inception the government vigorously extended the occupational categories reserved for nationals. As it did so the universities found themselves exposed as enclaves of expatriate privilege – conspicuous targets for politicians seeking either a cause célèbre or an audience. That localization was a sensitive issue for nationals, and one in which the universities must be seen to be making strenuous effort, was obvious from at least mid-1972 when Josephine Abaijah, the

62 Sandover, personal communication, 23 April 1976; On Campus 1(2) June 1976, pp.6-7; Sandover, 'Problems of management', address to Papua New Guinea Institute of Management, Lae, 24 February 1976, Adams papers.
only woman in Parliament, publicly attacked UPNG's localization programme shortly after joining its Council.\(^{63}\)

Nationals' resentment of tardy progress towards localization placed the universities in a quandary. Expert opinion suggested that academia could remain unlocalized at least until the 1980s. The demand for graduates elsewhere seemed more pressing; chances for promotion outside the universities made the arduous climb into senior academic ranks unattractive to young graduates; and university perquisites compared unfavourably with the easy pickings outside. Yet academic localization was politically volatile, for failure to localize at any level would antagonize nationals within and without. That academic localization required ten-year apprenticeships and could not therefore happen overnight was insufficient excuse for making only sedate progress. Nationals everywhere, but particularly the students and national staff of the universities, wanted to gallop.

(1) UPNG. In early 1976 Renagi Lohia, then the first national dean of a faculty (Education), accused the University of hypocrisy in speaking earnestly about localization while allowing it to remain 'virtually non-existent'.\(^{64}\) While most of his countrymen at UPNG undoubtedly shared this belief, it was an odd complaint about an institution which, perhaps more than any other, had been punctilious in advancing its national staff. It indicated further how strongly Papua New Guineans felt about the matter.

UPNG had showed early concern about localization. In early 1968 when the Department of External Territories was seeking information about localization training, Gunther regretfully had to admit that, while his records and transport officers were both nationals, 'the only university in the world without a national on its academic staff' was UPNG.\(^{65}\) In its administrative branches, the University had always endeavoured to recruit and train nationals, though only systematically from 1970, when it had engaged a firm of management consultants to advise on manpower planning.

\(^{63}\)Motion no.39 for House of Assembly, 22 June 1972, UPNGR T.2.

\(^{64}\)P. Mortimer, 'A look at localization and training at UPNG and UOT', n.d., OHER.

\(^{65}\)Gunther to Newby, 8 April 1968, UPNGR T.2.
This had led to a report on non-academic localization which recommended the appointment of a 'non-European' Vice-Chancellor by 1975; localization of the Registrar's job by 1978; progressive replacement of expatriate female secretarial staff from 1971; localization of the stores, transport, catering, accounts and architectural sections by 1980; scholarships for recruits to undertake professional and technical courses; the appointment of an expatriate training officer to superintend the localization programme 'as a matter of urgency'; and the planning of career paths for all national staff members. UPNG followed all but the second of these recommendations, and consequently it had over 100 nationals in training for non-academic positions within two years. By late 1973 the UPNG Secretary was able to report on the good progress made: 82 per cent of all non-academic positions (293 out of 356) had been localized; nationals filled all lower level clerical and technical positions; and only a few middle-level and the most senior administrative posts (Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Secretary, Academic Registrar, Accountant, Architect) remained unlocalized.

Academic localization proceeded with much greater caution. In early 1976 only 8 per cent of teaching staff (10 out of 126) were nationals, all employed as lecturers or lower, the first appointment having been made in late 1972. Though UPNG had always been keen for academic localization, its insistence on 'proper' standards, the small number of graduates, and the relative attraction of rapid promotion in the public service and private sector were obstacles. As Inglis noted soon after succeeding Gunther, higher education had begun so recently in Papua New Guinea that 'it will be many years before the University will be able to look to its own graduates as the principal source of academic staff'. Both University and government manpower planners had customarily used this argument against accelerated academic localization, as for example in 1970 when the student representative on the UPNG Council, Leo Hannett, had queried Council's attitude on the subject. Localization was the aim, he was told, and UPNG graduates

---

68 Inglis to Olewale, loc. cit.
would receive preference 'provided they were suitably qualified', which meant having 'a good postgraduate qualification'. The figure customarily quoted on such occasions was that about 5 per cent of UPNG graduates could be attracted into university teaching, which implied there must be 1000 graduates before there could be fifty national academics, so that significant academic localization could not begin until the late 1970s.

Demands by national staff and students from the early 1970s for 'a more concrete programme' indicated that nationals were impatient with such expatriate-ordained criteria; but it was Abaijah's attack on UPNG's localization programme which provided the main boost for more vigorous action. In June 1972 she placed on the notice paper in Parliament a question relating to the extent of localization at the University, and moved that the Vice-Chancellor inform the House which faculties might be more easily localized. She was probably only playing her accustomed role of parliamentary gadfly — as a UPNG Council member she could have obtained the information she wanted without raising the matter in the House — but her questioning of the University's sincerity stung it into renewed action. The Professorial Board now set up a committee to examine and report on academic localization, and as a result of the work of this body UPNG introduced a scheme for taking national graduates in as 'teaching fellows' to assist in tutorial work while studying for higher degrees, on the understanding that they might become full-time academics on completing their studies. The Departments of Politics and History gave the lead here, from 1974 using promising final year students as part-time tutors in the hope of persuading them to pursue postgraduate studies. Other departments followed and by early 1976 UPNG had twenty nationals working in this capacity.

Further strong impetus for academic localization came from UPNG's financial difficulties in 1975-76. The threat

70 Bulmer to Inglis, 7 July 1972, UPNGR T.2.
72 Motion no.39 for House of Assembly, 22 June 1972, UPNGR T.2.
of severely restricted budgets in future, and the high cost of expatriate academics, forced UPNG to view the matter more urgently. The small body of national academics in particular advocated rapid academic localization as a means of coping with increasing financial stringency. The first national Dean of Law, Tony Deklin, probably spoke for all his national colleagues when he claimed that

>The financial viability of the University ... requires that the present highly paid expatriate academic staff be-paced *(sic)* out as soon as practicable .... Every faculty and department should be directed to strive to persuade Papua New Guinean graduates to take up academic careers .... Any Dean or Sub-Dean who does not toe the line should be seriously considered as unco-operative and as such cannot be regarded as serving the national interest.*73*

That the first national Deans, Lohia and Deklin, were not alone in their dissatisfaction became clear when the OHE conducted a survey of opinion among national staff at both UPNG and UOT. A high degree of congruence was obvious in the opinions expressed. Most of the graduate staff interviewed said that 'not enough is being done'; they blamed the high turnover in national staff on the lack of promotional opportunities for nationals within the universities; they believed senior expatriate staff were keeping them 'in the dark' about localization planning; and they thought there should be a forceful programme of localization in all departments, academic and non-academic.*74* In addition to these opinions were those of Gris himself. He held the view that expatriates' reluctance to allow their own positions to be localized until they had secured satisfactory positions elsewhere was the chief obstacle to more rapid localization.*75* The inference, once again, was that expatriate obstructionists should be forcibly removed.

*73*Tony Deklin, 'Some observations on matters pertinent to the current financial crisis', in UPNG Educational Research Unit, 'Discussion paper on issues facing the University in Papua New Guinea', March 1976.

*74*P. Mortimer, *loc. cit.*

*75*Gris, 'Staff development programme — further guidelines: a discussion paper', 20 April 1976, circular distributed among UPNG staff.
Rabbie Namaliu, B.A., M.A., first national appointed to UPNG academic staff (1972).

Tony Deklin, LL.B., LL.M., first national Dean of Faculty of Law, UPNG (1976).

Sam Andrew, B.C.E., M.Sc., first national lecturer in Engineering, UOT (1976).

Plate 10 Academic localization
Papua New Guinean impatience for sweeping localization was obviously mounting. It was perhaps futile for anyone, particularly expatriates, to argue that a university staff should be cosmopolitan, or that the universities still needed the wise sympathetic guiding hands of senior expatriate staff. Though Papua New Guinean academic nationalism was yet a sapling, it promised vigorous growth. There were, of course, dangers in too rank a growth, and the UPNG Secretary, Long, warned of this after returning from a tour of Asian and African universities in 1975. In the universities he visited he found

It is widely accepted with localization that the national who is available at the time of localization is not always in the longer term the most satisfactory appointment. Others more able, better qualified and more widely experienced often emerge. It is therefore important that for some time to come universities such as UPNG should only make appointments on a short-term basis.\(^{76}\)

However, on such a sensitive issue Papua New Guineans seemed unready to accept this expatriate wisdom — as events at UOT were soon to demonstrate.

(ii) UOT. UOT lagged behind Waigani in localization, as in other progressive developments. It had always employed nationals in clerical and technical positions, but only began serious localization planning in 1974, previous attempts at giving greater responsibilities to national staff having been desultory. As late as 1971, for example, it had advertised for a localization officer. But the chosen applicant rejected the offer of employment on the advice of the Registrar, who had opined that the job would hold little challenge because not much would actually be done about localization for the time being; and so the position was allowed to lapse.\(^{77}\) Until the mid-1970s, then, the main UOT achievement had been to train a few apprentices for the technical staff, and to recruit undergraduate cadets-in-training for the administrative and accounts branches. Even here the achievement was limited, however: because


\(^{77}\)Tony Johnstone, personal communication, August 1971.
there was no overall plan for the advancement of recruits, many were unsure of their prospects at UOT, and left for more assured careers elsewhere.

As localization began looming as a national issue, UOT formed a Localization Committee in 1974. Even then it seemed unaware of urgency, for those nominated to the committee were low level personnel with little influence. The committee realized its own limitations, and so requested the appointment of an expert 'Staff Development and Training Officer' who might guide it in its task. Without such an officer, it pointed out, its existence would be 'no more than a token gesture'. By this time various groups within UOT were becoming increasingly critical of the poor progress being made. Concerned academics were trying to focus attention on the issue, and some had begun lobbying Council members, the Lae City Council and local parliamentarians to press the University into greater commitment. Students, too, were beginning to grumble. Their resentment was evident in a complaint they made to the Localization Committee about the departure for an outside job of a popular national tutor who had left because of UOT's failure to promote him.

UOT responded lethargically to such pressure. It did not get round to appointing a staff development officer until 1975, but even the presence of a 'localization officer' achieved little. The Finance and Management Committee (F & M) was generally unwilling to advance him large sums for training; the University was reluctant to provide accommodation for trainees, and that restricted its ability to attract recruits; and finally his effectiveness was limited because the University administration frequently used him to fill in for absent staff members — apparently on the assumption that his position was the most easily dispensed with. Eventually such shilly-shallying became too much for the Localization Committee, whose chairman declared that the University's sluggishness was evidence of a culpable failure to consider the issue seriously. His forthrightness earned him a rebuke from Sandover for making

---

78 Localization Committee, Minutes, 8 May 1974, UOTR.
79 ibid.
'uninformed comments'. UOT was spared the dogfight which might have ensued if the Committee had engaged the Vice-Chancellor in public debate, for the Committee now suddenly lost all momentum. This occurred because F & M withdrew its funds in a cost-cutting exercise mounted in response to the government's reduction in the level of university funding in 1975-76. F & M believed the best means of handling financial stringency was to reduce activity to a minimum in areas not essential to UOT's 'prime function of tertiary teaching'; it accordingly took money from 'secondary' functions such as research, staff travel and localization training. The result was that whereas the Localization Committee had $186,000 in 1975, it got nothing in 1976. It saw little point in carrying on, and therefore voted in September 1975 to go into self-abeyance until F & M should grant the funds it required.

The failure of the Localization Committee became a major source of discontent among UOT's national community, as the OHE discovered in early 1976 when it surveyed their opinion. All those interviewed expressed bitterness in their conviction that UOT had done 'virtually nothing' about localization. They all blamed what they claimed was the 'colonial mentality' of UOT's senior administrative staff, a number of whom were former British colonial officials. And they all seemed cynical about the sincerity of a University which could cut localization training with one hand because of a purported lack of funds, while with the other granting generous salary increases to senior expatriate administrative staff.

---


81 Form 10, UOT, Submission for funds, 1975-76 (submission to UFRC); Finance and Management Committee, Minutes, 7 January 1976, UOTR.

82 Localization Committee, Minutes, 11 September 1975, UOTR.

83 P. Mortimer, loc. cit.

84 ibid.; and On Campus 1(3) July 1976, p.5, and 1(4) August 1976, p.7; Sandover, Statement regarding Bursar's salary in Finance and Management Committee, agenda for 69 meeting, 30 April 1976, UOTR.
UOT finally did adopt more urgent approaches to localization in 1976, driven in the end by student and national staff revolt. The student strike in March (see Chapter 9) was significant here, for important developments followed in its wake. The students struck on a day Council was meeting. Under pressure from the mass of students demonstrating outside, Council agreed to appoint national deputies to the Vice-Chancellor and Registrar. A further decision was to appoint to the academic staff any national graduate who requested a position. OHE added its voice to the students', pointing out that UOT's localization programme was 'in a sad state' compared to UPNG's. For good measure it further declared that the 'manipulative' and 'suppressive' behaviour of entrenched senior expatriate staff must cease.85 Under the force of such pressure UOT at last adopted an overall plan for localization whereby each administrative and academic department set out a timetable for the achievement of total localization.86

UOT's dawning realization that it really must take localization more seriously was evident in the revival of the Localization Committee, which had not met in over seven months. Sandover now began attending its meetings to remind it of 'the urgent need for effective localization'.87 He also informed Council that he hoped the administration would be 'completely localized, except for a few specialist positions, by the end of 1978'.88 F & M, too, had a change of heart, for it accepted the logic that because 'each localized position saved $12-15,000', rapid localization meant both short- and long-term economy.89 Then in June 1976 the University staged a public seminar on localization, mainly as a public exercise to satisfy critics that nationals were indeed advancing at UOT. Impressive figures were produced to indicate how fast localization was proceeding, though campus cynics said the statistics disguised the fact that few nationals, if any, had really advanced into the key decision-making positions.

85 P. Mortimer, loc. cit.
86 C. Ratcliffe, RIW, 13 May 1976.
87 Localization Committee, Minutes, 27 April 1976, UOTR.
88 On Campus 1(3) July 1976, p.5.
89 Report of F & M Ad-hoc Committee, 26 March 1976, agenda for 69th meeting of F & M, 30 April 1976, UOTR.
Sandover subsequently engaged the dissidents and critics in further debate over localization in the Staff Association's newsletter.\textsuperscript{90} This, however, did little to quell the clamour for he simply succeeded in exposing UOT's shortcomings further.\textsuperscript{91} Indeed, localization was soon to be Sandover's undoing. UOT's consistent failure to take it seriously and to give it priority had alienated too many nationals, and they blamed him. Within a few months their accumulated grievances were finally to erupt, and he would be driven from the country prematurely — a victim, perhaps, of his own failure to appreciate the depth of feeling among Papua New Guineans on the issue.

The Vice-Chancellors

Individual personalities provided the spice that gave the universities their piquancy. The flavour changed over the years as dominant figures came and went. A Gunther, for example, added one sort of relish, an Inglis another. The forceful tactics of the former, as we have seen, gained many concessions for UPNG, though sometimes at the expense of good relations with government, whereas the latter — a classic liberal humanitarian — was even-tempered and tolerant, possessed of an urbane manner which charmed opponents and won them over to the University's cause. At UOT were similar contrasts: while Duncanson had toiled unobtrusively but persistently through established channels, his flamboyant successor wheeled-and-dealed zestfully. The personal style of the university heads had always been a significant factor in shaping development on their respective campuses; but during 1975-76 it became more important than before as university personnel divided over the qualities of their respective Vice-Chancellors, thus calling into question the proper nature of the role of university leadership.

(i) G.B. Gris. Gris took over from Inglis in April 1975 after a year as Deputy Vice-Chancellor. He had impressive qualifications for a Papua New Guinean of the 'older' generation — those educated before the setting up of the universities. He had worked on three major committees of inquiry; he had a facility with English enjoyed by few of

\textsuperscript{90}On Campus 1(5) September 1976, pp.4-5; 1(7) November 1976, pp.3-4; 1(8) November 1976, pp.3-4.

\textsuperscript{91}ibid.
his countrymen, even those with educational advantages he lacked; his range of administrative and academic experience was almost unique among Papua New Guineans; and his chairmanship of the CEUD had impressed his influential supporters, like Oldfield and Low (ANU Vice-Chancellor, who had been a CEUD member). Once on the job at UPNG, however, he revealed weaknesses which aroused concern. He tended not to work well under pressure, but by 1975 the tensions of the university system were such that the Vice-Chancellor was continually under stress. Unfortunately he often interpreted the forceful representations from staff, students, Council, OHE, UOT and government officials as a lack of faith in him personally, and he reacted by withdrawing. His chairmanship of the first and second Gris Committees proved a disadvantage here, many academics having attacked the reports which had appeared under his name. He was perhaps oversensitive that staff might be watching his performance critically, especially because he lacked a strong university background. This may explain why he failed to act decisively in implementing CEUD proposals. His reaction, once again, was to withdraw, to dissociate himself as Vice-Chancellor from his work as CEUD chairman. This was disconcerting to those who supported the CEUD recommendations, for they expected him to give them a strong lead.92

Shortly after he took over from Inglis the student strike over the Queen erupted. Some at UPNG thought he had handled a delicate situation deftly; others thought he should have been firmer. (Cabinet in particular felt he should have taken a tougher line with the students.) During the strike and thereafter he became ill and periodically had to retire to his residence. Some critics later observed that his illnesses seemed to coincide with moments of crisis at UPNG, such as student demonstrations.

92Gris's performance as UPNG Vice-Chancellor is little documented, critics generally having been reluctant to commit themselves to paper in the interests of giving him a 'fair go'. This section on Gris derives from the author's discussions with sixteen educational administrators and academics who knew him well and worked with him. The following section, on Sandover, derives both from documents, which are cited, and from the author's personal observations as a staff member and research worker at UOT in the periods 1972-73 and 1975-76, as well as from discussions with Sandover and many of the principal protagonists in events on the UOT campus during 1976.
Plate 11 The second UPNG Vice-Chancellor, and the third
Another stumbling block for Gris was the complex committee structure erected at UPNG during the Inglis era. This perhaps functioned well with Inglis present as master co-ordinator; however, a newcomer like Gris needed time to become familiar with it, and as he did so problems arose. First, he attempted to delegate much of his power, but critics said he delegated too much. They thought he should have retained greater personal control, for example by attending more meetings of key committees where his personal opinion was needed. Secondly, he had difficulty in handling the on-campus political 'operators', each in pursuit of various sectional interests and ambitions. Guessing they were more devious than they would have him believe, he lacked Gunther's bluntness and Inglis's assuredness in mediating their schemes. Once again, he delegated or withdrew. Consequently intrigue mounted, decision-making slowed down, and critics began complaining that UPNG was losing momentum under him.

Gris's withdrawal and delegation of authority created what some critics termed 'the vacuum at the top'. As evidence mounted that he would be a 'weak' rather than 'strong' Vice-Chancellor, UPNG Council informally began looking for ways and means to bolster him. There had originally been disagreements in Council over his appointment: whereas Oldfield had first promoted his appointment as Inglis's deputy and Low his elevation to the Vice-Chancellorship, some on Council had thought he should not be entrusted with a burden as heavy as UPNG because he had never really proved himself in running a large organization. As his weaknesses revealed themselves they seemed to vindicate the misgivings of the latter group. Several prominent figures — Low and Long in particular — began promoting the idea of a Deputy Vice-Chancellor to buttress him. Gris himself welcomed the suggestion, possibly seeing it as an honourable way out: after, say, a six-month period for 'running-in' the Deputy he could hand over and retire from the scene gracefully. He therefore convened a committee to make an appointment. Rab Namaliu, a UPNG graduate and former lecturer now on Somare's staff, was proposed but rejected the offer. Various other names were then tossed about, but in the end no appointment was made and Gris himself scrapped the idea as an economy measure. Low, however, who perhaps felt responsible for Gris's appointment, still believed the Vice-Chancellor needed a 'back-stop'. At a Council meeting in early 1976 he made an impassioned plea for support for Gris, as a result of which an informal group consisting of Long, O'Neill,
McKay, Lohia and D. Sarwabo (a UPNG graduate now Academic Registrar) began meeting regularly with the Vice-Chancellor to help ease his administrative burden. In this way 'the vacuum' was more or less filled.

The five who began meeting with Gris comprised an inner circle of the senior administrators and academics he trusted the most. The Vice-Chancellor working in concert with his confidants might have been a useful functional arrangement, but it too aroused criticism. Some staff believed a couple of advisers were exerting undue personal influence over Gris, that a handful of officials with no constitutional authority were making the important decisions. For example, some said that a controversial decision in early 1976 to save money by cutting staff back by 10 per cent had been foisted on Gris by advisers who would certainly not be among those facing the loss of their jobs. Such action seemed contrary to UPNG's democratic ethos, which many thought the most valuable legacy of the Inglis era. Some also thought the inner circle was making Gris increasingly inaccessible. He had maintained an unsatisfactorily low profile previously, they said; but now, sheltered behind his quintet of advisers, he became even further removed from ordinary staff and students. UPNG veterans, who agreed that the personal visibility and approachability of Gunther and Inglis were among their strongest points, inevitably made unfavourable comparisons between Gris and his predecessors in these and other matters.

Gris apparently recognized the problem he presented at UPNG, for after less than two years as Vice-Chancellor he announced that he would not seek a further term but would return to the Public Service instead. Several months later, in April 1977, he was duly succeeded by Lohia, who had formally become his Deputy. Lohia, having grown to maturity and having spent most of his working life in and around universities, was better prepared than Gris for the job of presiding over the academic mini-state built up under Gunther and Inglis. Gris, perhaps, had been a victim of his time. Like many of his generation he had been propelled upwards into power and responsibility without benefit of the prolonged apprenticeship enjoyed by counterparts in more developed nations. His difficulties revealed the difficulties of localizing the upper levels of the university system, though given the political climate of the mid-1970s they were probably both necessary and unavoidable. And while he might have suffered personally and professionally by daring
to follow a Gunther and an Inglis, Gris could reflect with satisfaction that, like other contemporaries, he had been a pioneer, paving the way for a younger, better-prepared countryman to follow.

(ii) J.A. Sandover. Preceding chapters have referred to Sandover frequently. Something of his style, and the hostility he could arouse, have been evident in sections dealing with IOT's rise to university status, the dispute over forestry education, the defeat of the proposals for a national university, academic trade unionism, the demise of the UOT Working Party on University Government, discrimination against female academics and localization. So many controversies centred on him, indeed, that his very presence in the country was a contentious issue.

Sandover had many positive qualities. He was first and foremost a tireless worker for UOT, and possibly no one made more prodigious effort on behalf of an educational institution in Papua New Guinea than he. His labours paid off. First, he achieved a high degree of public recognition for UOT. Whereas the public had customarily confused the institution with the Lae Technical College in its early years in Lae, few could have made that mistake in 1975-76. In 1968, some three years after the Institute's formal foundation, Duncanson had experienced difficulty in explaining its role even to the Department of External Territories, which seemed to regard it as a school for training apprentices. Eight years later UOT's task was probably understood even in the remotest corners of the country, thanks to Sandover's public relations work. Secondly, high schools were no longer reluctant to send their best students to Lae as in IOT's early days. Enrolments reflected this: from about 100 in 1968 they rose to almost 1000 in 1976. UOT had gained academic status and respectability in the public mind, and its technological degrees were now as attractive as generalist UPNG degrees had been earlier on. The manpower and localization benefits deriving from this were obvious. While Sandover's detractors argued that the growth would have occurred without him, it must be allowed to his credit that his persistent lobbying of Cabinet Ministers, bureaucrats and the OHE was influential in bringing about a reallocation of financial resources between the two universities which enabled greater emphasis on technological education.
Plate 12 'Palm-shaded Oxbridges': (above) the main lecture theatre, UPNG, viewed from the University entrance, 1976; (below) Duncanson Hall, UOT, with a view of the columns carved by craftsmen from the Sepik provinces, which surround the hall on all four sides.
In other areas, too, Sandover made contributions. He was builder as well as salesman, and the campus he left in 1976 was barely recognizable as the one he had come to five years earlier, so extensive were its new physical facilities. The most notable of these was Duncanson Hall, the UOT centre-piece, for which he was almost solely responsible. During Duncanson's time government had set itself against a lecture theatre, a luxury UPNG was allowed. Sandover therefore launched a public appeal to raise the funds, and promoted it so tirelessly that the necessary $500,000 was raised and the theatre built within two and a half years. Once again there were detractors who argued that fine buildings and university status distracted UOT from its primary task of training some professional and many sub-professional technologists, or who insisted that much of the building programme had been planned in the Duncanson years. Yet it could be argued that, without the various university appurtenances added by Sandover, adequate staff and able students would not have come in sufficient numbers, leaving priority manpower categories unfilled; moreover, without his drive and determination the programme could easily have been shelved by a government seeking economy and anxious to cut back on 'elitist tendencies' such as well-appointed university buildings.

Sandover was also anxious to co-operate with UPNG, as required by government for better co-ordination of university effort. It was generally he who made the overtures — as many letters in UPNG files attest. This amused some at UPNG: for a time the UPNG underground newspaper entertained readers with descriptions of an importunate Sandover being kept at arm's length by a wary Inglis. It also caused concern to others at UPNG. Thus, Powell included Waigani's aloofness to UOT approaches among his 'Eight Points of Downfall', claiming that 'UPNG [had] completely failed to develop any functional relationship with UOT'. The reason was not lack of trying on Sandover's part. Senior staff at Waigani possibly had a jaundiced view of his veracity and motives, seeing in his advances the sheepskin hiding the wolf from

93 Johnson to Hay, 25 March 1971; Besley to Johnson, 16 April 1971, DTOR 71/1697.

94 Muffington E. Smee Reporter and Plain Dealer, copies in the New Guinea collection of UPNG Library.

Lae. Yet he was frank about his intention of gaining a more equitable share of university resources for UOT, which he had some justification in thinking was financially disadvantaged vis-à-vis UPNG. On his arrival in Lae a rule of thumb had applied whereby funds were divided roughly 2:1 between UPNG and UOT; later the division shifted in favour of UOT and funds were then split 1.3:1. Even allowing for this improvement in UOT's share of the allocation, OHE as late as 1976 still believed that Lae was suffering 'significant' financial disadvantage by comparison with Waigani.96 His ambition for UOT was thus excusable; and it did not preclude co-operation with UPNG, as the shared courses in agriculture and forestry demonstrated.

Sandover's major troubles stemmed from internal disension which arose as a result of his views, policies, methods, personality and lifestyle. His administrative philosophy was bound to provoke resentment. He often likened UOT to a business company and himself as its managing director — its chief executive and decision-maker. Committees, boards, departments and faculties, he said, were valuable devices for allowing staff and students to contribute ideas and air grievances; but the final and crucial decisions must be made by the Vice-Chancellor.97 UOT academics who were veterans of university elsewhere did not share these views. Sandover's managerial rhetoric seemed inimical to their ideal of the university as a 'community of scholars'. When he actually practised the philosophy, for example by using his influence to overthrow decisions made by UOT boards and committees, he could only antagonize them. Unfortunately, too, his personality intruded. He took opposition personally, bore grudges, and struck out at those who seemed to be thwarting him or acting disloyally. Consequently the ranks of disaffected staff lengthened over the years, and staff gained the impression that those who consistently opposed him would be singled out for exemplary punishment.98 The Registrar, G.N. Stephenson, was a salutary reminder of what might befall

opponents of the Vice-Chancellor. He and Sandover fell out in the early part of 1975, after which they engaged in an unseemly exchange of charges and counter-charges over various alleged malpractices. Eventually Council intervened, and after it had conducted an inquiry into their disagreements Stephenson was encouraged to quit UOT prematurely.99

There were numerous objections to Sandover's methods. One notable critic was N.C. Angus, a consultant to the CEUD whom the OHE called in to investigate administrative procedures at UOT at the request of the Staff Association. Angus later said he had gained the impression of a tightly controlled, highly personalized administration by a Vice-Chancellor reluctant to delegate authority and responsibility in a systematic fashion and who finds it difficult to adapt to the consultancy role common in most universities. He runs what is often called in administrative jargon 'a tight ship'. This phrase is usually in contradistinction to the phrase 'a happy ship'.1

Sandover's domestic opponents had many complaints about the way his 'highly personalized administration' worked in practice. Some alleged it was based on a system of rewards and punishments: those proving compliant received promotions, salary increases, generous research funds, overseas trips, extra study leave benefits; those who were 'difficult' found themselves denigrated, isolated, left behind in the pursuit of promotion, branded as misfits, confronted with non-operation from the administration.2 This, the opponents maintained, led to moral corruption and the emergence of a clique of loyal retainers and sycophants whose pre-eminence at UOT owed much to the Vice-Chancellor's patronage.

There were complaints, too, about the UOT records system. First, UOT had no central repository of records like UPNG's, despite the recommendations by two consultants from ANU that one should be established. Many records were

---

99 Matheson, RIW, p.6.
1 N.C. Angus, 'Organization and administration of the PNG UOT', June 1974, UOT Library.
2 On Campus 1(8) November 1976, pp.1-2; 'The Power and the Glory ...', loc. cit.
therefore inaccessible to ordinary staff, and the administration justified the situation by pleading confidentiality. Even documents such as Council, Academic Board, and Finance and Management Committee minutes, which were usually duplicated for circulation around government departments and to UPNG, were deemed confidential by the administration. This attitude antagonized academics, who generally regarded such documents as public property. As one dissident noted, 'the only people to gain from this cloak of silence disguised as confidentiality are those who have something to hide and are not prepared to defend their decisions'.

Some academics also complained of difficulty in finding out what had taken place at important meetings because minutes were incomplete, or glossed over controversial debates. Some suspected that the minutes had sometimes been selectively edited, that the record was slanted in favour of the Vice-Chancellor and his supporters and against his opponents. Still further complaints arose over UOT public relations resources. It was said that the various official publications projected a highly favourable image for the Vice-Chancellor and his supporters, creating a misleading impression about the true state of UOT affairs. Critics also alleged that the UOT news-sheet, The Reporter, was subject to careful editing which ensured adequate space for 'Sandoverites' while denying right-to-reply to those with opposed views. They pointed to the case of Tony Ila, the member of parliament for Lae (and later Minister for Labour), who had criticized the UOT administration in the House. The Reporter subsequently attacked him. He wrote a reply to this but The Reporter chose not to publish it.

Sandover's educational views also caused concern among some of his staff. He gave the impression that he favoured 'Big Technology', which implied that UOT should be training students for work in large-scale, capital-intensive projects funded by foreign investment. The title of a paper he delivered to a UOT seminar, 'There is no half-way house in technology', seemed to epitomize his philosophy. It was not a welcome message to those UOT academics of the 'appropriate technology' persuasion. They thought UOT should be emphasizing training in small-scale technology applicable in village-level projects, where minimum capital and maximum

self-reliance were the criteria. Other critics complained that under Sandover UOT had no guiding philosophy, either about the type of institution it should be or about the sort of graduate it should produce. A CEUD consultant on engineering education, J. Mahanty, added weight to this point of view when he reported that UOT was 'totally geared to meet only the short-term objective of meeting immediate technical manpower needs'. A broader educational vision than that was necessary, the critics maintained.

The Vice-Chancellor's personal lifestyle provided further ammunition for his critics. His luxury motor cruiser, sunken swimming pool, de luxe official car and other perquisites of office, and his numerous parties and entertainments attracted much attention. While some members of the general public and the University community praised him for his generosity and readiness to share his wealth, others doubted the propriety of conspicuous expatriate affluence in a poor nation with an anti-elitist ideology. That Cabinet Ministers and senior officials were regularly seen at the Sandover residence only strengthened the criticism and laid him open to the charge that his largesse was corruptive. And that low-ranking University staff worked as the waiters and attendants at functions at the residence caused further concern among those who valued the egalitarian ethos of 'Eight Points' ideology.

In the end his downfall came over UOT's recruitment and localization policies. As we have seen, national staff were not convinced by the statistics UOT produced from time to time to show the national-expatriate staff ratio; and because nationals did not occupy the key decision-making positions they believed only token localization was occurring. A further cause for nationals' discontent was the presence among senior UOT administrators of British 'ex-colonials', whom nationals accused of harbouring a 'colonial mentality'. Ambitious national staff were angered to think that the Vice-Chancellor's compatriots not only had the 'wrong' attitudes but were obstructing their own professional

---

6 Randell, RIW, pp. 8, 11; Post-Courier, May 1976, p. 2.
8 On Campus 1(8) November 1976, pp. 3-4.
advancement. Another element of the UOT staff for whom Sandover was held responsible were the Asians — a diverse group including Pakistanis, Indians, Sri Lankans, Bangladeshis and Filipinos, most of whom had been recruited during the Sandover years. Students complained about their teaching, and European staff thought them clannish and too preoccupied with personal status and advancement. Some Asians drew disparaging comments from European colleagues who said they were ingratiating themselves with the UOT 'establishment' in a scramble to get ahead.

The first hints of concerted opposition to Sandover became evident during 1973 when the salaries issue and the employment of married female academics became a cause célèbre for the Academic Staff Association. As these issues rose to prominence Association officials more or less inevitably came into conflict with the Vice-Chancellor. The next year, with a new Staff Association executive, events repeated themselves as academics once more confronted the UOT administration over salaries, secondment and study leave. Executive members who experienced Sandover's ire in return became his most outspoken critics. Consequently it became a UOT aphorism that joining the executive meant becoming a militant anti-Sandoverite. The strength of feeling against him was obvious in a number of directions. First, a series of rancorous personal feuds ensued between him and various members of staff such as had rarely, if ever, occurred under Duncanson. Secondly, a polarization between academic and administrative staff occurred, the former seeing the latter as the Vice-Chancellor's personal henchmen — a development which impressed itself on outsiders such as Angus. Thirdly, it was obvious in UOT submissions to the CEUD, some of which attacked the Sandover regime and promoted the idea of a national university, possibly out of a wish to strike the Vice-Chancellor on a sensitive nerve. Fourthly, it was obvious in correspondence between the Vice-Chancellor and the Staff Association, the files of which are replete with numerous instances of the festering relationship between Sandover and successive cohorts of Association officials.

But above all hostility to the Vice-Chancellor revealed itself in the underground newspaper, The Retorter, which began appearing in early 1975. The Retorter, which began as a mild parody of The Reporter, became more scathing in its criticism of the Sandover regime with each successive issue. Eventually, after a particularly outrageous edition, the
staff member thought to have been responsible was physically attacked by a professor who was a Sandoverite, and the same night windows in his house were smashed by stones. The Retorter could no longer be ignored. Council threatened that if further issues appeared it would ferret out and punish those responsible. Council perhaps missed the point, for, as Woodward pointed out, while the appearance of such an underground newspaper was to be condemned, it was evidence of the distrust and animosity existing on the campus. After the demise of The Retorter the Staff Association began producing its own officially sanctioned journal, On Campus, as a legitimate vehicle for the expression of staff opinion and grievances. It was not long before this journal, too, came into disfavour as articles attacking the regime began appearing. An editorial complained there was 'a desire on the part of certain persons to stifle all comment that is not completely innocuous', and the editor was said to have been warned and threatened by senior University officials about the tone of the articles. In answer to the various attacks upon his rule Sandover customarily asserted that the disaffection emanated from a small and disgruntled minority among white staff who had various personal axes to grind — jealousy of himself and his wife, failure to gain promotion, lack of academic qualifications, disappointment over the salaries issue. Staff were generally happy, he claimed, and were it not for the small band of 'dedicated destroyers' all would be well at UOT. His critics, however, believed that the UOT malaise was more deep than that. 'There are many grievances felt on this campus,' one critic pointed out, 'and ... it does no good to pretend they do not exist. The unrest and dissension are a symptom of something gone wrong.'

Several events in 1976 brought together the strands of opposition against Sandover, and finally led to his downfall. We have seen (Chapter 9) how the UOT student strike in March 1976 was directed partly against him. The students claimed his perquisites of office and lifestyle were inappropriate in a developing country; they blamed him for the

---

9UOT Council, Minutes, 40th meeting, 14 November 1975.
11Post-Courier 18 November 1976, p.3.
CHRISTMAS MESSAGE TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSITY FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

To all members of the University, I wish to extend my greetings for Christmas and my good wishes for an extremely happy and successful New Year.

I wish to thank all those members of the University who have done so much this year in so many ways to support the activities of the University. I realise very clearly that much of this help has been given at the sacrifice of a great deal of personal time, and I wish to assure you that your help has been very much appreciated indeed. I would also particularly like to thank those who have worked so hard behind the scenes to make so many of our functions a great success.

To all those members of staff and to all those students who are leaving us this year, I extend my warmest greetings and my wishes for your success and prosperity wherever you go. I hope that you will give a thought occasionally to the University of Technology in Lae and will write to let us know of your achievements as time passes by.

To everyone returning next year, I look forward to seeing you in the New Year and also look forward to a very successful and, probably, eventful session in 1976.

Once again, my wishes to everyone for all their efforts, assistance and hard work.

J.A. SANKOER

A VOTE OF THANKS

The Information Office wishes to acknowledge the help and support it has received this year from staff for 'The Reporter'. It especially acknowledges the support of its many contributors and of the people who have assisted most willingly with typing, collating, and other aspects of production.

KIDDIES XMAS PARTY

Santa is arriving this coming Sunday afternoon at the Staff Club at approx. 2.30 pm. In lieu of reindeer (because of the heat) he will arrive in a bright red fire truck. One hundred and fifty kids of all shapes and sizes between the ages of 6 months and 10 years will give him a rousing welcome. Mums & Dads assistance is required on the day. Please offer your services to Roy Lee. ext. 136.

ORIENTATION CONCERT 1976 - It is proposed that a variety concert be held during Orientation Week next year. Participants for the concert will be hopefully drawn from the University community (staff members and family, school children, students and etc.). Items to be included are: Comedy sketches, singings, cultural dances, musical pieces, jokes, short plays, and 'whatever you are not shy to perform'. The emphasis is on 'taking part'. If you can contribute an item(s) or know someone who can, please contact Pak Young ex. 162.

ARTICLE

We believe that this edition of the REPORTER is important because it continues to present an avenue for the free expression of non-establishment opinion in the University. Council, in its final meeting of 1975, considered the question of the REPORTER, and among others produced the following minutes:

*292. It was RESOLVED unanimously that, without wishing to limit the freedom of members of this University to express their opinion on any topic concerning the University, Council believes that opportunity exists through committees and personal consultations for expressions of these opinions. Further Council deplores the anonymous publication of opinion within the University which makes personal attacks on members of the University.*

*293. It was further RESOLVED unanimously that, if there is another issue of 'The REPORTER' or any similar anonymous publication, Council shall appoint a legal officer to inquire into the production of 'The REPORTER' especially the edition which appeared on 31 October 1975, or any similar publication, and to investigate means by which apparent grievances could be aired.*

Consider Minute 292. Its centre says: 'Council believes that opportunity exists through committees and personal consultations for the expression of these opinions.' Council may believe this - though the idea clearly emanates from the Vice-Chancellor - but it is a pity that so few of the staff of the University believe it.

Perhaps Council would like to tell us in which committees, or with whom personal discussions can be held on the following issues:

1) The distortion of committee minutes to suit the interests of the Vice-Chancellor (Finance and Management).
2) The nature of the University management that sees its job in terms of the exercise of power, and 'them and us' (REPORTER 1/75).
3) The arbitrary interpretation of Council decisions and the neglect of the University Act (REPORTER 1/75).
4) The use (and abuse) of University vehicles for non-University purposes by those in favour with the Vice-Chancellor (REPORTER 1/75, 1/76).

---

Plate 15 Rival sources of information at UOT: (left) the official newsletter, (right) its underground counterpart.
pace of localization; and they called for a public inquiry into his administration. Soon after this he again came under attack in Parliament when Ila, as we have noted, raised grievances, particularly over localization, which UOT staff had taken to him. The Retorter reply to Ila, suggesting he had been misinformed by a small group of malicious expatriate academics, and its refusal to publish his reply, ensured that Sandover could thereafter rely on hostility from at least one corner of Parliament.

Then in mid-1976 a chain of events at UOT again brought the academics and administration into confrontation. Five members of the Promotions and Appointments Committee who were Sandover apologists refused to serve on the committee with Stan Smaridge, a member elected by staff, on the grounds of his alleged Retorter connections. At the same time threats were also made against Smaridge and other prominent critics of the administration. It had been suggested to them that their contracts would not be renewed, and there was said to be an informal 'short list' of academics for whom this punishment was reserved. It was also alleged that Smaridge and others on the 'short list' would not be having their entry permits to Papua New Guinea endorsed by the University, which meant they would be unable to return to the country if they took overseas leave (as most expatriate staff did annually). These incidents and allegations were seen as a threat to all staff, and their effect was to bring into the anti-Sandover faction many who had previously tried to remain neutral. At one of the several mass staff meetings to discuss the issues, for example, a previously 'apolitical' engineering lecturer volubly likened what was happening on the campus to what had occurred in his native Czechoslovakia under the Nazi and Stalinist regimes. Following this general agitation, a petition on behalf of Smaridge, signed by three-quarters of the academic staff, was sent to Council through the Chancellor, Tololo. It protested Smaridge's 'victimization and intimidation' and asked that he 'be not subject to discriminatory and punitive treatment'. For some reason the petition never came before Council, a fact which angered academics generally and added to the rising tide of staff hostility against the Sandover regime.

---

13. Executive Committee of UOT Staff Association (Non-National), press release, 14 November 1976, UOT Staff Association records.
What finally led to Sandover's downfall was a chain of events triggered off by a stop-work meeting of UOT national staff on 12 November 1976. The meeting was called by the National Staff Association, which had come into being in early 1976 and was led by enterprising and articulate young graduates from both academic and administrative staffs. Over the year they, too, had become increasingly critical of the Vice-Chancellor, especially over localization. The stop-work meeting revealed the general and deep dissatisfaction of national staff, which was plain in their demands for 'an immediate public inquiry into evidence of malpractice, maladministration and victimization', at UOT. In the fortnight before the stop-work meeting the National Staff Association had also joined its non-national counterpart in requesting the Department of Labour to appoint a tribunal 'to hear evidence relating to a series of cases of alleged intimidation, victimization, defamation, unfair dismissal and malpractice affecting employment of staff association members both national and non-national'. In addition the staff associations had laid similar complaints with the Ombudsman Commission.

The day after the stop-work meeting, Tigilai, who had only been on the job as Deputy Vice-Chancellor for several weeks, flew to Port Moresby for consultations with Tololo, Edoni (Secretary for Labour), Kilage (the Ombudsman) and Oostermeyer (Director of OHE) to consider solutions to the antagonism between the Vice-Chancellor and the majority of his staff. The meeting between the five officials had before it a set of conditions formulated by the joint UOT staff associations. These included the immediate resignation of two officers of the University, reputedly Sandover and Cleland (Professor of Business Administration); reconstruction of Council and the Finance and Management Committee; an investigation of UOT finances in relation to allegations about financial malpractice; establishment of a committee with Staff Association representation to consider the numerous grievances and complaints of staff; and a re-examination of recent decisions regarding contract renewals, appointments and promotions. The five officials decided that the situation required 'urgent attention' and therefore

14 ibid.
15 ibid.
16 ibid.
proposed that the UOT Council conduct an inquiry. Perhaps they hoped that, by referring the matter to Council, an embarrassing situation could be smoothed over and the voices of disidence hushed. But the two UOT staff associations were unwilling to let thematter be swept under a Council carpet. They vehemently rejected the notion of a Council-conducted inquiry: Council, they said, had 'failed to exercise the necessary checks and balances against alleged malpractice and abuse of power', so that any findings it might reach would be 'the subject of some suspicion'.

The staff associations' stand was endorsed several days later when about 350 staff members - 75 per cent of the entire UOT staff — attended a meeting which voted in favour of advising the Prime Minister that there should be a public inquiry into UOT affairs. Sandover replied next day by saying he wanted a public inquiry too, but into the activities of 'the small group of expatriates' who were bringing the University 'into disrepute'. The controversy continued over the next fortnight. At a stormy meeting of the Non-National Staff Association a group of Sandover supporters fought a rearguard action, unsuccessfully moving 'no confidence' in the Association executive. And in Parliament Ila demanded that Sandover, who was due to leave the country in two months to take up an appointment in Adelaide, be kept in the country pending a public inquiry.

The climax came on 26 November 1976, a day scheduled for both the annual graduation and a Council meeting. Strategically, the National Staff Association held another stop-work meeting that day. Almost the entire national workforce of UOT - academics, administrators, clerks, drivers, catering, cleaning, grounds and technical staff — picketed the Council meeting in demand of a public inquiry. Council attempted to filibuster by prolonging its meeting in the hope that they would go away; but they sat the Council out, doggedly waiting all morning and afternoon in the sun as Council deliberated in air-conditioned discomfort.

---

17 *ibid.*


19 *Post-Courier* 18 November 1976, p.3.

20 *Post-Courier* 22 November 1976, p.3.

21 *Post-Courier* 29 November 1976, p.3.
Plate 14 Renagi Lohia, UPNG's fourth (and second national) Vice-Chancellor.

Plate 15 Delocalization at UOT: Mathias Tigilai hands over to the new Vice-Chancellor, Alan Mead, as John Richardson (left), Pro-Vicechancellor, looks on, 17 October 1979.
Plate 16 The first UOT Vice-Chancellor, and his successor.
could not ignore such solid national opposition to the Vice-Chancellor, and in the end agreed to call on the Ombudsman to make an investigation. It also had before it a letter from Somare, which had been drafted by the OHE, which said the University's best interests lay in the immediate localization of the Vice-Chancellorship.\(^\text{22}\) Thus pressured, Council asked Sandover 'if he would be prepared to vacate the position earlier than intended to allow localization to take place'.\(^\text{23}\) He had little option but to accede, for to have refused might have meant the disgrace of dismissal. He left Papua New Guinea five days later, insisting he had not been sacked.\(^\text{24}\) However, the suddenness of his departure, coming on top of comments he had recently been making to the effect that he had Council's full confidence, created the impression that he had indeed been encouraged, if not told, to go.

After Sandover's departure the Ombudsman announced his intention of proceeding with an investigation, and both OHE and interested parties at UPNG were urging Tololo to call in two 'independent' consultants — Oldfield, Sandover's former UPNG sparring partner, and Sims, previously consultant to the CEUD — to examine the UOT administration and make recommendations for reform.\(^\text{25}\) In addition several aggrieved staff members were contemplating legal actions against prominent Sandoverites. No matter how much Council might have wished to sweep it all under the carpet, UOT linen seemed assured of a public washing.

The Ombudsman Commission duly pursued the matter, examining the events which led to Sandover's departure, in addition to 'a spate' of related personal complaints and counter-complaints. However, its vigour wilted in the face of what it found was 'a huge and daunting task'.\(^\text{26}\) Not surprisingly its findings were bland and non-committal. With a sense of defeat it concluded that:

\(^{22}\text{ibid.}\)
\(^{23}\text{Post-Courier 30 November 1976, p.3.}\)
\(^{24}\text{ibid.}\)
\(^{25}\text{Post-Courier 3 December 1976, p.16; O'Neill, personal communication, 16 December 1976.}\)
\(^{26}\text{Ombudsman Commission of Papua New Guinea, Second Report, 30th June 1977, p.46.}\)
the health of the University had suffered considerably as a result of the troubles on campus, but apportioning the causes among individuals is not going to change the feelings of those who were involved in the problems .... Giving a balanced view of the arguments of both sides is going to be a job of such proportions that it is doubtful if we have the capacity.27

There the matter rested. Tigelai in the meantime had taken over as Acting Vice-Chancellor; the various protagonists gradually drifted away from the campus. Tigelai continued on in an 'acting' capacity for the next three years, until replaced by a permanent Vice-Chancellor, Dr Alan Mead, somewhat ironically a white man, of British origin, and formerly a colleague of Sandover at the Ahmadu Bello University, Nigeria. Under Tigelai the University returned to its former passive state, which thereafter was disturbed in the main only by the annual student strikes.

The troubles of the two 'independence' Vice-Chancellors, Gris and Sandover, illustrated the complexity of pressures on and within the university system. There were confused issues of educational philosophy, administrative procedure, academic government, expatriate staff influence, national staff ambition and academic nationalism, student dissent, women's rights, and the personal propriety and suitability of the universities' leadership. These were perhaps an index of how complex the system had grown. By their position the Vice-Chancellors were most often the focus of the tensions, and to survive under the pressure to which they were increasingly subject called for exceptional qualities. Gris and Sandover in their own way were each found wanting. The system demanded that the Vice-Chancellors be Olympians; it was their misfortune that they were not.

Chapter 11

The erosion of university autonomy

In the year following independence Papua New Guinea's university system seemed to have arrived at a cross-road, and appeared uncertain of the direction it wished to take. There were, however, certain signs pointing down a path it might regret taking but along which it might be driven.

Cabinet Ministers and senior bureaucrats were dissatisfied with the performance of the universities. Student strikes, staff trade unionism, free-wheeling criticisms of government leaders, and periodic on-campus ructions which gained media notoriety for the universities, all helped foster a 'relationship of antagonism' between them and the government. It was clearly the government's wish that they should adopt a less controversial public stance and concentrate on their training role instead. Concerned at the huge sums they were expending and determined to make the most from the investment, government began demanding that they adhere more strictly to that function alone. At the same time government was insisting that they cut costs significantly. These were ominous portents for the universities: increasing government surveillance of their educational effort plus a hard financial policy added up to a loss of the independence their founders had sought to guarantee and which their successive heads had struggled to retain.

The uncertainty afflicting the universities was evident in a number of key issues - manpower planning, budgetary problems, and the decline of the OHE. In fact, tertiary education appeared to be undergoing extensive change by the end of 1976. The universities seemed fated to lose their long cherished independent status, to decline from the role academics traditionally claimed for them into being public agencies under direct government control. Perhaps this was their most appropriate function in a country feeling its way through the first difficult years of nationhood.
Yet the erosion of their autonomy seemed unfortunate. In the short space of a decade they had built up a tradition of scholarship, intellectual inquiry, informed social comment, and the seeking out and serving of what national leaders proclaimed were 'Melanesian values'. They had frequently been in conflict with the government, with each other, and within themselves as they sought to function as they believed universities should; but they had always been a highly active yeast within the wider society. Whether they would be able to continue providing such vigorous leavening seemed doubtful.

**Government direction: setting manpower goals**

In the period following self-government in 1973, government planning agencies showed increasing interest in bending the university system to their will. This became most evident in manpower planning, where government became more and more impatient to direct the universities. Their view of the universities was nowhere more plain than in the public utterances of Tololo, who, significantly, by 1976 was not only Director of Education but had nominal responsibility for OHE and was Chancellor of both UPNG and UOT as well. In August 1976 he told a UPNG seminar on government-university relations that ideally the link should be 'co-operative'. He defined this as a relationship

in which the government asks the University to accept the role and responsibility of educating the highest level manpower .... The government ... having given the University [this] responsibility ... and supported it to do this, the responsibility of the University is to get on with the job, not to become sidetracked with other issues .... If a university cannot carry out its part of the co-operative relationship ..., if it becomes actively involved in other issues of the day — social, political, economic — than that of educating the nation's highest level manpower, then it is not fulfilling a useful function and ought to be closed.\(^1\)

The instrumental and utilitarian view he expressed was pronounced. It had been implicit in the Eight Point Plan,

\(^1\)Tololo, 'The relationship between Government and University: what should it be?' in *Yagl-Ambu* 3(3) August 1976.
and the CEUD Report had clearly articulated it; but Tololo stated it baldly, without concessions to educational philosophy. The universities could be in no doubt that they were expected to be government-directed producers of skilled personnel.

During the Gunther-Duncanson era there had generally been a *laissez-faire* approach to manpower planning by the tertiary training institutions. So few Papua New Guineans had tertiary qualifications that any national with a degree had almost unlimited job options. However, as more graduates emerged the danger of over-supply in some areas became apparent. That Papua New Guinea might replicate the Indian experience of a surfeit of Arts and Law graduates had, since the days of the Currie Commissioners, been a prospect to trouble the educational planners of the colonial and national governments alike. The corresponding difficulty of an under-supply of graduates in highly technical areas such as agriculture and engineering had similarly caused concern. The government's keenness to ensure the balanced development of the tertiary trained workforce had become apparent in the establishment of the Manpower Planning Unit in 1968. In 1970 this body produced projections for the decade ahead, setting out the expected demand for the various categories of professional skills. Especially as self-government approached and the national government began taking a more critical interest in its investment in university education there was a wish to tie university programmes to such projections.²

There is some difficulty in determining what 'government' opinion actually was, as that was never monolithic. Some Cabinet Ministers and departmental heads certainly had a generalized feeling that the country should be husbanding its investments more carefully. They could be relied on to give a sympathetic hearing to the opinions in this direction of forceful individuals within the bureaucracy. Thus, ambitious bureaucratic promoters could readily 'sell' their ideas to influential Ministers and departmental heads, and these would then become 'government opinion'. A case in

²R.F. Salisbury to Inglis, 3 December 1973; Rees to Inglis, 14 March 1975, UPNGR E.32 (part 2); Inglis to Gunther 25 January 1968; Manpower Planning Unit, 'Demand for professional manpower in Papua New Guinea, 1970-1980', UPNGR T.2.
point was government thinking on manpower planning, which emanated from Rees and others connected with the Manpower Planning Unit.

Government interest, however that be defined, focused chiefly on UPNG as this was the institution educating the feared Arts-Law generalists, while under-supply in the technological categories trained by UOT was chronic. For this reason most disagreements over manpower planning centred on Waigani. UPNG had always been suspicious of government manpower planners. In 1968, for example, when the head of the recently formed Manpower Planning Unit, Charles Beltz, suggested to Gunther and Inglis that the country needed more students in science and fewer in the liberal arts they could not agree: his assumptions, they said, were 'restrictionist', and could only be regarded by the University as 'ominous'. But the continued work of the Unit and its forecasting of needs showed the University that the government had an abiding interest in the subject. To accept the guidelines set out in the Unit's projections was the best protection against the imposition of directives, so UPNG endeavoured to pre-empt government interference by voluntarily working to fit in with government's goals. To facilitate this, and to show it was unwilling to 'maintain a passive role in the discussion of its future', the University set up its own Sub-Committee on Manpower Planning in late 1973.

UPNG's first major statement on manpower planning was the first report of the Sub-Committee, in early 1974. This made a number of recommendations: (i) The University should set target figures for enrolments in the various disciplines, and should impose quotas to achieve these. Thus, the B.A. in Politics and the B.Ec., which had been oversubscribed, would have restricted enrolments and the surplus students would be syphoned off into under-subscribed programmes such as the B.Ed. (ii) The imposition of quotas and streaming of students between courses should be done by a committee of academic staff rather than, by implication, some government agency. (iii) To assist with streaming, students wishing to

---

3Inglis to Gunther, 25 January 1968; Gunther to Karmel, 26 June 1968; J. Conroy to Gunther, 22 October 1970, UPNGR T2.

take Arts, Law and Education should study a common core of subjects in their first year of degree studies. This core would be analogous to the existing common core for first year Science, Agriculture, Medicine and Dentistry students, which should also be retained. (iv) Government should assist in the streaming process by adopting an 'incentives' salary policy in association with the University's quotas so as to attract students into those under-subscribed disciplines deemed priority areas.  

At the same time as UPNG was demonstrating this willingness to come to terms voluntarily with government priorities, the OHE was becoming more interested in manpower planning. The OHE Director, Rees, was a manpower economist by background and inclination, and as we have seen, the OHE under his influence had set up the Planning Committee on Professional Manpower (later called the Committee on University Trained Manpower — CUTM) in 1974. Rees believed OHE had a responsibility to ensure there was 'a reasonable balance between manpower categories in progressing towards full localization ... so that all areas of professional expertise are served by PNG nationals'.  

He thought secondary teaching was the area of greatest need, and therefore wanted 'a substantial increase' in B.Ed. enrolments. He informed the University that, in the government's opinion, 'the supply of PNG graduate teachers to date has been practically negligible and if the long-term viability of the high schools and teachers colleges is to be ensured, a shift of emphasis of considerable magnitude is required in favour of B.Ed. enrolments, largely at the expense of B.A. and B.Ec. courses'. He told UPNG to readjust enrolments accordingly, it also asked UOT to stream more students into its telecommunications course.

Rees was here acting on his own initiative and was expressing personal views rather than those of Cabinet or any government agency other than his own, the OHE. Both universities resented his self-ordained mission of guiding them. Sandover expressed the feeling of Waigani as well as of Lae.

---

5UPNG Sub-Committee on Manpower Planning, 'Report', February 1974, UPNGR E.32 (part 1).
7Rees to Inglis, 18 October 1974, UPNGR E.32 (part 1).
when he said that UOT was in sympathy with the government's wish to see enrolments reflect manpower targets, but could only 'take advice ... not direction'. The universities strongly felt that if the government wished to effect a reallocation of students between courses this 'must be through the carrot not the stick — through the manipulation of government-controlled incentives such as increased rates of pay, bonuses and improved conditions of service'.

Coercion, as Ballard, UPNG Professor of Administrative Studies, pointed out, could be counter-productive:

Dragooning students into a B.Ed. course and preventing their taking any but teaching posts on graduation are likely to prove singularly uneconomic. Not only will they further degrade the teaching profession, but they would force unwilling students into a field where creativity and innovation are essential and are inevitably based on genuine interest.

At UPNG there was strong opinion that there should be no quotas at all, and no ceiling on enrolments as proposed in the Oldfield and CEUD Reports. This view, articulated most eloquently by the anthropologist R.F. Salisbury, whom Inglis had consulted, maintained that UPNG should simply continue to accept all qualified students for whatever course they chose, because localization was still so poorly advanced the country would need all the graduates it could produce in every field until the 1980s.

UPNG opposition to OHE attempts to issue directives led to a gentleman's agreement between them: quotas and streaming would not apply in the coming year, 1975; and they would explore together means of streaming in order to find a mutually acceptable policy for 1976. How much value the OHE placed on this arrangement is uncertain, for

---

8 Sandover to Rees, 24 October 1974, UPNGR E.32 (part 1).
9 J. Ballard, 'Manpower planning for the universities: the need for rethinking in the light of government priorities', n.d., UPNGR E.32 (part 1).
10 ibid.
11 Salisbury to Inglis, 25 January 1974, UPNGR E.32 (part 1).
12 Inglis to Tololo, and to Rees, 28 October 1974, UPNGR E.32 (part 1).
it seemed determined to have its own way, and UPNG was soon protesting that it was breaking promises. The alleged breach of faith occurred at the beginning of 1975 when Rees advised that students unable to matriculate to the faculty of their choice be directed into Education or Science, and further that ex-Preliminary Year students who had elected in 1974 to study in a particular faculty but had since changed their minds be refused a scholarship for the course of their choice. UPNG greatly resented this instruction, which it saw as an attempt to impose quotas in contravention of the gentleman's agreement. 13

Rees rejected UPNG's angry protestations and denied he was breaking an agreement. He claimed that without his firm direction 'the laissez faire policy of enrolments favoured by the University would have resulted in no shift [in enrolments] whatsoever'. 14 This, he argued, would have been intolerable since the 'trend of enrolments towards "generalist" courses in Arts and Economics which has been the bane of high level manpower development in other Less Developed Countries in the post colonial era has clearly emerged at UPNG'. 15 He further forcefully asserted that

a great deal of effort has been expended by the University in trying to ensure that government does not dictate its own quota requirements but very little seems to have been achieved to provide an alternative .... All this adds up to a process of masterly inactivity. 16

He accused UPNG of selfishly adhering to its own 'micro-view' of the manpower problem and of refusing to appreciate the government's 'macro-view'. 17 And summarizing the whole issue from the point of view of a government manpower planner, he declared,

13 *ibid.*, and D. Stace, 'note for file', 21 February 1975, UPNGR E.32 (part 1).
14 Rees to Inglis, 14 March 1975, UPNGR E.32 (part 1).
15 *ibid*.
16 *ibid*.
17 Rees to Inglis, 17 March 1975, UPNGR E.32 (part 3).
The situation reduces to this. The University agrees with the need to have enrolments reflect national manpower priorities but is prepared to do little that is practical to achieve this end. The solutions proposed by the University are theoretically sound but are really the stuff of which academic theses are made.... They raise so many policy problems that their introduction is probably not feasible and certainly only in the long term. For example salary scales for particular professions can be adjusted to make a profession more attractive but as is well known, salary relativities are all-important, particularly in the Public Service, and to raise one professional scale or to start a particular group further up the scale will bring pressure from other professional groups for similar treatment.\textsuperscript{18}

Not since the days of G. Warwick Smith, the former Secretary for External Territories, had UPNG received such unvarnished opinion as this. Perhaps his surprise at being addressed so frankly prompted the usually equable Inglis to reply in frosty tones that he hoped Rees's 'gratuitously anti-academic' comments would not unduly provoke UPNG staff.\textsuperscript{19}

UPNG was not prepared to yield passively to OHE, Central Planning Office, or any other agency or individual purporting to represent government opinion. It mustered a range of arguments against greater government direction in manpower production. Briefly, these ran as follows: (i) It was not only educationally unsound to use coercion but also wrong to insist on early specialization. Rather, students should follow generalist studies in the earlier part of their courses. (ii) There could be no guarantee that the student who had studied in a particular field would enter that field on graduation. The B.Ed. graduate, for example, might well embark on a commercial career. (iii) The imposition of quotas would be ineffective unless accompanied by a government-enforced system of bonding students to their allotted professions. At the same time bonding would discourage students from entering university, and would also result in a high drop-out rate among those assigned to courses in which they had little interest. (iv) The

\textsuperscript{18}Rees to Inglis, 14 March 1975, UPNGR E.32 (part 1).

\textsuperscript{19}Inglis to Rees, 19 March 1975, UPNGR E.32 (part 3).
'residual' procedure by which manpower planners determined the need for the various categories of graduates was methodologically unsound. This process first defined the need in the more readily assessable specialized professions — medicine, dentistry, engineering — and left the generalist professions normally supplied by the Faculty of Arts till last. Consequently Arts had a low priority with manpower planners which was out of keeping with the importance of the administrative employment many Arts graduates would obtain. (v) Projections of manpower need were at best speculative, and past experience in Papua New Guinea had shown what inaccurate and conflicting forecasts government manpower planners could make. In many cases, moreover, as for example with the priority B.Ed., government was unsure of the numbers it wanted.²⁰

Raising points of educational philosophy and casting doubt against the assumptions and motives of the planners in this way perhaps confirmed the convictions of those at UPNG that manpower planning was so methodologically dubious the University should resist direction. Yet the bureaucrats and planners remained unswayed by University logic. The Central Planning Office, for example, bluntly stated that

| the problem of resource allocation cannot be avoided. When the cost of a university degree in Papua New Guinea is eighty times the Gross National Produce per capita, how much of its resources should the country devote to a form of education that is frankly non-vocational in its objective?²¹ |

And when Inglis complained to Tololo that OHE was attempting to tie scholarships to particular courses, and was thus imposing controls in breach of their gentleman's agreement, the latter flatly replied that

The situation simply stated is that the University is a service institution, which could provide a most important and essential service .... I would have

²⁰O'Neill and E. Waters, 'Foundation Year Studies', 26 March 1975; O'Neill and Conroy, 'University enrolments and manpower planning', 3 April 1975, UPNGR E.32 (part 1).

²¹R. Castley, 'A retort to Part II, University Enrolments and Manpower Planning', 25 April 1975, UPNGR E.32 (part 3).
hoped that the University would have adopted its own internal quota system already to meet what are obvious and clear needs and priorities. If the University does not do this then the alternative avenue of directing government tertiary scholarships will need to be used.\textsuperscript{22}

The UPNG response to such threatening rhetoric, which became more ominous as OHE, Department of Education and Central Planning Office began acting in concert, was to promote the 'foundation year' for Arts, Law and Education students. This aimed to 'equip as large a proportion of students as possible to fulfil as many different functions as possible' by leaving the manpower categories 'as broad as possible'.\textsuperscript{23} Its introduction also bought UPNG some time, for it would not be taught until 1976, which meant that streaming and quotas could be delayed until the beginning of 1977. However, ultimately there could be no avoiding the setting of imperative goals by government; and Gris, having recently taken over as Vice-Chancellor, assured Tololo that UPNG would proceed to channel students according to government priorities once students were emerging from foundation year. Tololo accepted these undertakings, saying how pleased he was that

the University is finally getting round to considering relating course structures and student enrolments to national manpower needs. I do hope this will be more than words and will result in some action that means, for example, more skilled manpower in areas where it is needed, for example secondary teaching.\textsuperscript{24}

Government pressure on UPNG became stronger after the Committee on University Trained Manpower began operations in mid-1975. The OHE and Central Planning Office representatives on CUTM made plain to UPNG how impatient they were for the University to structure its enrolments in line with government manpower goals, especially those for secondary teachers. The Department of Education supplied figures

\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{22}] Tololo to Inglis, 25 March 1975, UPNGR E.32 (part 1).
\item[\textsuperscript{23}] D. Denoon to Faculty of Arts Planning Committee, 20 August 1975, UPNGR E.32 (part 3).
\item[\textsuperscript{24}] Gris to Tololo, 4 June 1975, UPNGR E.32 (part 1); Tololo to Gris, 7 July 1975, UPNGR E.32 (part 3).
\end{itemize}
to bolster their demands: it estimated that, because of the continued opening of new high schools and the low level of localization on high school staffs, there was an insatiable need for graduate teachers, 530 B. Eds. being required in the period 1975-80. Under force of such demands UPNG had to give way sooner than it had hoped. In late 1975 it adopted a new policy on streaming to apply from the beginning of 1976. It decided that all new undergraduate students would enrol in one of three streams — Arts, Science or Law; on completion of first year they could opt to specialize in Arts, Social Work, Economics, Education, Law, Science, Agriculture, Medicine or Dentistry; but only some students would get the faculty of their first choice because of quotas restricting entry to over-subscribed faculties. The first such streaming was to occur in 1977 after the first foundation year, but the 1976 pattern of enrolments led to an earlier introduction. In February 1976 registrations for new courses revealed such a great imbalance between Arts-Law and Science that if UPNG gave students their choice government would certainly intervene to impose its own quotas. The target for Science was 180 but only 110 students registered; in Arts-Law it was 190 but 287 registered. Faced with such embarrassing under- and over-subscriptions the UPNG Sub-Committee on Manpower Planning decided, under pressure from Department of Education and Central Planning Office, to 'identify Arts students qualified to transfer to the Science stream in order to get nearer the target quota'. Subsequently thirty-four Arts-Law students were compulsorily transferred to Science. Howls of protest from staff and students greeted this arbitrary exercise, but in the face of government determination to curb Arts-Law enrolments and boost Science and Education, the University had little choice.

By taking decisive action voluntarily UPNG had, for a time, forestalled direct government intervention. But there would probably be only temporary respite. Tololo continued making tendentious statements to the effect that UPNG's chief duty was to accept the fulfilment of government

27 Sub-Committee on Manpower Planning, Minutes, 11 March 1976, UPNGR E.32 (part 3).
manpower goals as its main task. And Tigilai, as OHE Director, said that government, spending '3 per cent of the total budget on only 0.1 per cent of the population, [had] high expectations of the universities in return for the high investment it [had] made in them'. He did not need to add that UPNG's acceptance of government advice on quotas was part of those expectations. The universities had sought to preserve their independence in deciding how their enrolments should be structured, but in surrendering over quotas they had made at least a token gesture of submission to the government; and having retreated on that front their ability to withstand concerted government pressure in other issues was uncertain. As in some other developing countries, the utilitarian and instrumentalist philosophy finally seemed to be prevailing over the educational. Papua New Guinea's universities consequently faced the prospect of deteriorating into mere government agencies, factories for filling requisite manpower quotas on demand.

**Budgetary reductions**

Until independence the universities had always been the envy of lesser educational institutions, by comparison with which they seemed to be towers of affluence and privilege. The extent of UPNG-UOT financial advantage *vis-à-vis* the primary and secondary schools, for instance, can be gauged from relative expenditures in 1972-73, the last year of 'fat' university budgets. In that year total expenditure on all education was $25.234 million, of which the amount going to primary and secondary schools and the Department of Education-sponsored tertiary training institutions was $15.397 million, or 61 per cent, or an outlay of $62 a head on the 246,516 students in that sector. The universities' share of the education vote was 39 per cent, or $9.837 million, that is $523.2 a head for their 1880 students. The universities were also privileged by comparison with other tertiary educational institutions. In 1975 a total of $15.061 million of recurrent expenditure went to twenty-four non-university training colleges with a total enrolment of 7392, a per capita cost of $2035. At the same time there was an outlay of $10.56 million

---


Plate 17 Growth at UOT: (above) first graduation, 1970 (left to right, Alan Bale, Kisokau Pochapon, Pomaleu Salaiau, Mathew Papai, M.D. Kellok, head of Department of Surveying); (below) tenth graduation ceremony, 1978, part of the academic procession of 164 graduands.
recurrent expenditure on the two universities, or $3756 per capita for 2811 students. UOT and UPNG between them consumed 41 per cent of recurrent funds available to tertiary education while twenty-four other institutions shared the remaining 59 per cent.\footnote{Figures and percentages derived from OHE, 'Comparison of recurrent per capita costs for 1975 academic years', OHER.}

The universities, moreover, had generally been able to assume an almost unlimited growth potential. Both the Oldfield and the CEUD Reports had proposed enrolment ceilings but UPNG and UOT continued to expand despite that. Their budgets, which increased steadily into the 1970s, reflected this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UPNG*</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>5.24</td>
<td>5.68</td>
<td>6.94</td>
<td>8.03</td>
<td>8.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UOT</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>6.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6.29</td>
<td>8.06</td>
<td>9.83</td>
<td>11.76</td>
<td>12.82</td>
<td>14.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*excluding Goroka Teachers College

Rapid inflation perhaps exaggerated the face value of the increase, but the expansion had been real enough – they were teaching more students, employing more staff, adding new courses, moving into outreach activities, and extending their physical facilities. But by late 1975 the lusty growth was nearing its maximum. Trends in the national economy indicated that even if the vine was still not fully grown it was ready for pruning. The nation by this time was experiencing severe financial difficulties owing to the lower profitability of the Bougainville copper mining operations, loss of substantial tax revenues as more expatriates quit the country, and lower levels of foreign aid.\footnote{Department of Finance circular memorandum no.9 of 1975: Estimates, 1976-77, 5 December 1975, OHER.} That UPNG and UOT would feel the Treasurer's shears along with all other government agencies became obvious.
In December 1975 the Secretary for Finance informed all government-funded agencies of the cuts they should expect the National Planning and Budget Priorities Committees to make to their estimates. He said government was aiming at an overall reduction of 20 per cent in expenditure, and the budgets of all instrumentalities must be adjusted accordingly. In the case of the universities the maximum permissible expenditure for the coming financial year would be $7.92 million for UPNG (including Goroka) and $6.5 million for UOT, a total of $14.42 million. This meant that their budgets were to be pegged at approximately the same level as the previous year's. To be thus tied to a fixed income at a time of high inflation was to suffer a loss: as UOT pointed out, 'it is not just a question of "no growth" in 1976-77, but there is in fact a reduction in the financial assistance given to the universities'.

Despite the warnings of the Department of Finance, the proposed pruning came as a shock to both the universities' financial submissions for the coming year and had recommended to government levels of expenditure only slightly lower than they had requested — 6.3 per cent less for UPNG and 1.3 per cent less for UOT. Had government granted these recommended amounts, as in the past, the universities would have continued their former steady upward growth curves. But the government's insistence on a 20 per cent reduction made nonsense of all the assumptions they, the UFRC and the OHE used in arriving at what was deemed reasonable estimates of their needs. As Gris advised the OHE,

the University's submission as modified by the UFRC can in no sense be followed as a plan for the University's operations. The level of grant the Committee recommended ... is some $2.078 million in excess of the revenue likely to be available to the University.

Rubbing salt on the universities' wounds was the knowledge that, unlike other government agencies, they had to submit

---

33 Finance and Management Committee, Minutes, 7 January 1976, UOTR.
34 Figures derived from UFRC Report, December 1975, OHER.
35 Gris to Tigilai, 10 March 1976, agenda papers for meeting of Academic Developments Committee, 12 March 1976, UPNGR.
to double pruning: not only the Budget Priorities Committee but the UFRC had required them to make reductions.

The OHE, embarrassed at the apparently arbitrary manner in which government had rejected UFRC advice, made urgent representations to have the universities' financial difficulties reconsidered, but to little avail. Tololo succinctly summed up the government attitude as follows:

We just do not have the resources to continue to fund the universities at the level they have become used to. This is one of the facts of life and a very realistic one. Nor is it desirable that so much should be spent on so few .... It is most unlikely that there will be any additional finance for the universities.\(^{36}\)

Distressing though the pegging of their funds might be, UPNG and UOT must simply learn to live on less.

Government left the universities to make cuts wherever they could. There was great breast-beating on each campus as they realized their changed circumstances. 'Monetary crisis' and 'financial stringency' were soon part of the university lexicon as they sweated over the least painful means of tightening their belts. If not before, they now realized how very dependent all their activities were on repeated injections of government money.

Each university quickly formulated schemes for coping with the reduction in funds, and each produced both long- and short-term plans for getting by. Among the many suggestions the UPNG management received from staff and students were ideas that fell into the following categories:

(i) Academic staff: non-replacement as they resigned or their contracts expired; a halt to recruiting people from 'far away places like Europe, Africa, America'; rent increases; savings on cleaning costs by having staff clean their own offices; elimination of salary increments; reduction of staff in the less vocationally oriented faculties, particularly Arts; abolition of study leave; waiving

\(^{36}\)Tololo to Tigelai, 29 March 1976; cf. R. Wiggins to Tigelai, 11 February 1976, OHER 66-2-2 (part 2).
of requirements for six months' notice of resignation to enable staff to resign early; greater priority to localization.\(^{37}\)

(ii) **Students**: a requirement that students work in gardens, grounds, Union and dining hall to save employing unskilled labour; an obligation on students to contribute towards tuition fees and catering costs; diversion of profits from the SRC-operated canteen to the dining hall to lighten the catering subsidy.\(^{38}\)

(iii) **Academic structure and course offerings**: elimination of the less popular courses, a reversion to the 'basic disciplines', and the offering of fewer 'fancy' options; a reduction in size, or cancellation, of Preliminary Year; a tougher approach towards student selection, and elimination of 'borderliners'; immediate introduction of the modular organization of courses, which would remove all third year students from the campus in 1977; amalgamation of academic departments into 'schools' and the adoption of interdisciplinary teaching and courses.\(^{39}\)

(iv) **General**: reduction in the number and frequency of university publications; severe restrictions on consumables and telephone calls; replacement of departmental secretarial staff by typing pools; replacement of air conditioning by other, cheaper forms of ventilation; reduction of funds for gardens and grounds; immediate localization of expatriate secretaries; severe curtailment of research, library acquisitions, staff travel, and student excursions.\(^{40}\)

UPNG reckoned it could produce 'substantial savings' through a combination of such measures, but even so would still have a budget deficit of $340,000 by the end of 1976.

\(^{37}\)UPNG, 'Synthesis of responses on financial stringency', 26 March 1976; McKay to Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee, 6 April 1976; Educational Research Unit, 'Discussion paper on issues facing the University in Papua New Guinea', March 1976; UPNG Academic Board, agenda papers for 25th meeting, 9 April 1976, UPNGR.

\(^{38}\)ibid.

\(^{39}\)ibid.

\(^{40}\)ibid.
And that was not the worst for, as McKay claimed in a letter to Tololo,

within the last two months it has become increasingly clear that our position is potentially much worse than we had at first realized. This has been emphasized by a series of salary increases, including the minimum urban wage, the $60 rise for national staff and prospective rises for expatriate non-academic staff ... as well as the academic salary increases .... These are likely to increase our deficit to something like $1 million by the middle of 1977 even with the economies we have planned ....

He was perhaps employing hyperbole, but the threat of a large deficit was real, and UPNG could only hope to lessen it through drastic cuts on many fronts. There were, however, severe disadvantages to whatever set of economies were adopted. UPNG could not simply reduce the size of its permanent staff because of contractual obligations; it could not allow all vacancies to remain unfilled without producing imbalances between departments and in the teaching programme; nor could it restrict enrolments without having a serious effect on manpower production. The leading question, therefore, was how far economies could go without disrupting the work of the University.

The UPNG community pondered this question at great length. The sheer volume of discussion that ensued was some indication that this was perhaps the most significant single issue in the ten-year history of the university system. It seemed clear to many that the very existence of the universities was threatened, and this triggered a re-examination of the assumptions on which they had always functioned. Academics generally agreed that 'a university in Papua New Guinea [had] essential functions' which included teaching, research, outreach, service as 'a repository and cultivator of Papua New Guinean culture through the study of local values, history, social life, religions and literature', provision of 'independent and informed comment on national affairs', and the supply of 'a high level of professional training with a significant emphasis on encouraging the growth of the "whole man"'. The struggle to seek economies

41 McKay to Tololo, 15 March 1976, OHER 66-1-27 (part 5).
focused attention, perhaps for the first time, on 'the relative importance [that] should be given to these and other functions'.

The whole issue, in the opinion of many at UPNG, reduced to the question, 'What type of institution does government want the University to be?' Did it want the type of body they themselves understood by the word 'university'? Or did it want some form of lower-level, more circumscribed training college? If the former were the case then government policy was misplaced for it would 'destroy the University as a reputable institution'. But if the latter were so, then government must provide clear guidelines to enable the University to scale down its activities accordingly. As one academic observed, 'we have surely reached the stage where we need to sit down with the government, make clear the effects of cuts already made, point out the alternative consequences of further cuts, and ask government what reductions in university services it is prepared to accept'. Unless the government gave the University guidance it would continue drifting uncertainly; this would greatly lower morale and lead to 'a mass exodus ..., with drastic effects on the operation of the University'; and that, it was claimed with some degree of justifiable exaggeration, meant UPNG was in danger of declining into 'a third rate institution with no acceptance outside of Papua New Guinea'.

At UOT there was considerably less discussion of the budgetary cuts than at Waigani, a function probably of the less democratic nature of the Lae campus. This was unfortunate, for there was no escaping the fact that UOT was the more severely crippled of the two. Lae suffered more than Waigani-Goroka because a significantly higher proportion of its funds went into salaries and staff benefits: 82.6 per cent of UOT recurrent expenditure was going into salaries and superannuation by 1975, compared with 72.3 per cent at UPNG. This was because Lae staff seem to have

42J. Silvey, in Educational Research Unit, op. cit.
43UPNG, 'Synthesis of responses on financial stringency'.
44M. Wilson, in Educational Research Unit, op. cit.
45UPNG, 'Synthesis of responses on financial stringency'.
46Percentages calculated from UOT and UPNG submissions for funds for 1976-77.
been appointed at generally higher levels, and UOT trade unionism had been most effective in winning cash benefits for staff. The latter fact caused Ian Gass, the UOT Registrar to comment sarcastically on Staff Association skirmishes with the administration in question of salaries and conditions:

The payment of increased salaries and other incentives now takes up more than 85 per cent of the University's income. With luck the Utopian situation may soon arrive when this figure is 100 per cent then ... [we can all] go home .... In view of the financial situation when the University's income is pegged at the expense of some other development. The staff are now in danger of pricing themselves out of the market. The position is such that in the foreseeable future the number of staff employed by the University will need to be reduced annually and perhaps it is time to maintain the status quo rather than to press for increased staff benefits.\(^47\)

The danger he pointed to was real. With contract commitments to pay most of its income on salaries, and the likelihood of even higher proportions in future as new salary awards pushed up the bill for wages by 5 per cent annually, UOT had little option but to freeze expenditure on 'secondary' budget items — localization training, research, outreach activities, travel, capital purchases, consumables, and all services except for urgent maintenance. And like UPNG it had to contemplate the termination of some courses, non-replacement of staff as vacancies occurred, and non-renewal of contracts deemed inessential.\(^48\)

For UOT the most obvious solution lay in localization because the larger part of its huge salaries bill was that of the expatriates. However, here it faced a dilemma: it had virtually eliminated spending on localization training to conserve funds, and this could only delay the replacement of high priced expatriates. Moreover, only long-term benefits would be felt in an area where the biggest savings could be made — academic positions — for an internal study

\(^{47}\)The Reporter 26 March 1976, p.3.

\(^{48}\)Finance and Management Committee, Minutes, 7 January 18 March 1976, UOTR.
showed that effective academic localization would cost an additional $132,000 during 1976-77, and that savings would not come until 1978 when existing expatriate contracts would run out in sufficient numbers to allow for large-scale national replacements. Only after 1979 would the savings be substantial.\(^{49}\)

The crisis drove Sandover to resort to a programme of lobbying similar to that he had followed when campaigning for UOT's university status. He canvassed far and wide, pressing UOT's case with anyone who might conceivably help — OHE, Tololo, the local politicians, Somare. But all was in vain. Government politely expressed its sympathy but remained adamant it was 'unable to recommend any increase in appropriation due to the most stringent financial situation'.\(^{50}\) His response to the firm refusals was to reach out for any straw that might keep UOT afloat. One he grasped at caused considerable consternation at UPNG — in effect the transfer of UPNG funds to UOT. He informed both OHE and Somare that to keep its head above water UOT might have to cut some courses, and went on to propose that 'if any courses are to be cut they should be the non-professional [Arts-Humanities] courses at UPNG'.\(^{51}\) This, presumably, would allow funds to be diverted to keeping open all UOT courses, thus enduring the continued out-flow of 'desperately needed' graduates in technology. He did Gris the courtesy of advising him of the measures he was suggesting to government to alleviate 'the almost disastrous position at UOT, excusing his actions by saying, 'if you think you are hungry then we are starving'.\(^{52}\) He was justified in thinking the latter, for the OHE had produced evidence to show that UOT had been 'unfairly treated' by comparison with UPNG: UOT was carrying a proportionately bigger deficit, its building programme was incomplete whereas UPNG's was almost finished, and it was generally 'worse off financially'.\(^{53}\)

\(^{49}\) J. Chinappa, 'Notes on academic localization', n.d., paper prepared for Finance and Management Committee, 1976, UOTR.

\(^{50}\) R. Wiggins to Tigelai, 11 February 1976, OHER 66-2-2 (part 1).

\(^{51}\) Sandover to Gris, 5 March 1976, OHER 66-2-2 (part 1).

\(^{52}\) ibid.

\(^{53}\) W. Oostermeyer, 'Comments on UOT V-C's letter to Mr Tololo re budget situation', 5 March 1976, OHER 66-2-2 (part 1).
But Gris and his advisers could not see things this way. With little disguised disdain he wrote back to Sandover saying,

I note that you are still convinced that UPNG is more preferentially treated than UOT .... There seems to be an assumption that UPNG has no financial problems, yet you must know from discussions in Council [of which Sandover was a member] that the suggested budget ceiling for UPNG this year severely limits our activities and will cause us to cut back in those areas you mentioned and in addition a probable pruning of student numbers and staff.\(^{54}\)

This disagreement between Vice-Chancellors revived something of the competition for funds between the two universities which had surfaced in 1973 when Matheson, complaining to Inglis that UPNG was receiving a more favourable allocation of funds than UOT, had accused Waigani of 'prodigality' in appointing professors, in contrast to Lae's abstemiousness. Inglis had angrily rejected Matheson's charges; but the UOT leadership remained convinced that 'we are expected to work in a much less favourable situation than our sister institution', and must consequently strive to outbid a rival.\(^{55}\) In hinting at a diversion of funds from Waigani to Lae Sandover might only have been 'flying kites', as he was wont to do; but for all that the two universities clearly remained competitors for the most essential of their resources — an abundant flow of government money.

As 1976 wore on it seemed obvious that UOT and UPNG would probably remain in competition, for there was little doubt the years of fat-layered university budgets were gone forever. More than ever before government was viewing the universities primarily as training institutions 'neither more nor less important than many other state-supported activities', and was insisting that during the distribution of funds they take their place in the queue with other government agencies. They wanted privileged status and special consideration, but government was plainly not

\(^{54}\)Gris to Sandover, 23 March 1976, OHER 66-2-2 (part 1).

\(^{55}\)Matheson to Inglis, 12 December 1973; Inglis to Matheson, draft letter, n.d., and 20 February 1974; Sandover to Inglis, 4 March 1974, UPNGR K.32-2.
inclined to give them 'priority above everything else', especially when 'a quite disproportionate amount [was] spent on university education compared with the sums available for other forms of education, social services, and rural development'. As government stripped them of their fat and distributed it elsewhere they faced uncertain lean years ahead. The future promised to be a time when they might look back longingly on the years of plenty and seemingly limitless growth — in retrospect a blissful era when their funds had been assured, and their right to do their job as they saw fit had been taken for granted.

The OHE under siege

As we have seen, the OHE, through vigorous self-promotion under Rees, but without any legislative backing, had managed to interpose itself into a central position within the university system. Rees's personal ambition and his readiness to arrogate to the OHE a range of policy functions provided it with the requisite self-confidence. And his executive flair persuaded more senior bureaucrats, Cabinet, and even the universities themselves that the OHE was an indispensable part of the university network, providing co-ordination it otherwise lacked. His departure for employment elsewhere in late 1975 caused difficulties, however. His successors lacked his administrative dash; they were unable to 'deliver' to the satisfaction of the universities; they became embroiled in a series of feuds with the universities and several government departments; and with government seeking more direct control over the universities there seemed less need for an intermediary body such as the OHE. All this caused the universities and some government agencies to question its role, to challenge its self-appointed right to act as the arbiter of the university system.

There were arguments both for and against an OHE with a policy role. Those in favour were: (i) Because UOT and UPNG were apt to bicker when their interests were opposed there was 'a clear need for a referee who has authority and power to make the final decision'. The OHE was the obvious referee. (ii) The large sums spent on the universities — roughly 3 per cent of the national budget — demanded the presence of a monitor, most appropriately OHE, 'to ensure

56O'Neill (1975).
that this money is spent to the best advantage'. (iii) The OHE was a specialized body with a detailed knowledge of the universities. It was uniquely placed to give government expert and objective advice in matters of higher education. Other government agencies — Central Planning Office, Department of Finance — had neither the expertise nor the interest in such affairs. (iv) There was considerable potential for conflict and misunderstanding between government and the universities. This could be counterproductive if there were no intermediary such as the OHE for resolving disputes between them. (v) The OHE had justified its existence by saving government money through requiring the universities to prepare detailed estimates, vetting their proposals, and causing them to reassess their priorities continually.57

The OHE promoted these advantages in its continued existence to government and universities, but there were also arguments to offset them: (i) The OHE added an unnecessary link to the chain of communication between government and universities. (ii) The OHE's role as a buffer between government and universities was inappropriate in a developing nation where there was an imperative for the universities to be 'responsive' to government. (iii) The OHE had interests of its own to serve, chiefly its ability to interpret government policy to the universities. In jealously guarding these interests it could resort to intrigue, which meant it was not always the rational, objective body its directors customarily alluded to, and could be a hindrance to government and universities alike. (iv) The OHE was proving ineffective, most notably in matters of giving financial advice. For example, the UFRC Report, due in February 1975 had not been released until the end of that year, which had resulted in confusion in the universities, and had led to the loss of some excellent staff when contract renewals were consequently placed in doubt. Cabinet was ignoring its advice on levels of university funding, and so it was becoming redundant in one of its chief functions. (v) There were cases where headstrong government departments which ran training institutions of their own resisted OHE attempts to synchronize their activities with the effort of the universities. OHE had no power to restrain them if they duplicated university programmes. It therefore seemed more practical for the departments and universities to deal directly with each

other in reaching some acceptable division of labour.\textsuperscript{58}

A series of incidents in 1975-76 demonstrated the weakness of the OHE and its related committees. The foremost was the government's 20 per cent reduction of university expenditure in late 1975. At considerable expense — about $50,000 — UOT and UPNG had prepared their submissions for funds and lodged them with the OHE by August 1975. The UFRC examined these during November, and presented its report in February 1976, recommending a level of funds the government had already decided not to grant. The UFRC Report, and the OHE's busyness in processing it, had thus proved to be an elaborate waste of time, effort and resources. The resultant chaos that descended on the universities' budgetary arrangements persuaded them that, rather than endure the futile pain of preparing submissions for the OHE-UFRC, they would be better off dealing directly with the Department of Finance or the Budget Priorities Committee. They came to see that, in a small country with tight finances, a budgetary process modelled on the Australian Tertiary Education Commission's was inappropriately cumbersome; and it would be more practical for the Department of Finance to set them a figure within which they could operate, then let them prepare and submit estimates in the manner of government departments.\textsuperscript{59}

While the budgetary difficulties merely illustrated that much of the OHE effort was needless, there were other cases where the OHE came into conflict with either government departments or the universities, and these raised the question of whether such a body was indeed necessary. The first involved a survey being carried out by the Department of Labour and Industry. The OHE set itself against this, claiming that UOT had already completed a similar project. It lobbied the Department of Finance to call off the survey on the grounds of the duplication and waste being caused, but the Department of Labour and Industry insisted on going ahead with the project. It simply told Finance that the OHE was 'not a significant policy making body', and therefore

\textsuperscript{58}ibid

\textsuperscript{59}ibid.; and O'Neil, RIW, 15 June 1976; Gris, Report to UPNG Council on government-university relations, 12 July 1976, Council papers, UPNGR.
had no right to interfere. The OHE resented this slight, but could do little to effect the rationalization of effort it believed necessary. A similar case occurred soon after when the Department of Primary Industry set up a Diploma in Fisheries similar to the one at UOT, against OHE counsel to the contrary. The Department was clearly powerful enough to ignore OHE censure, and obviously the OHE's ability to co-ordinate and rationalize higher education depended primarily on the good will of the parties it dealt with.

Even the universities could ignore the OHE. UPNG demonstrated this in two notable instances. First, it set up a Diploma in Mass Communications against OHE opposition, which maintained that the new course duplicated the existing Diploma in Journalism. Secondly, it awarded 'C-type' contracts (related to Australian salaries, and made available to certain categories of employees previously in receipt of generous salaries subsidized by the Australian Government) to some administrative staff — once again despite determined last-ditch OHE resistance. The OHE decided these contracts were unwise because they created salary differentials which might open up disruptive cleavages among staff. In an effort to forestall the UPNG decision, Tigilai as OHE Director persuaded the Chairman of the Public Service Commission, the Secretary of Finance, and the Director of the Central Planning Office to join him in threatening UPNG that if it persisted in granting the contracts the government would refuse to 'allocate additional resources'. When this ruse failed he endeavoured to have Cabinet overrule UPNG's decision. This action caused great hostility among some UPNG Administrative staff, and led the Staff Officer to accuse the OHE of conducting a campaign 'full of half-truths, misleading statements and statistics, and outright falsehoods'. The OHE complained to Gris about the 'immoderate and ill-considered language' directed against

60 Secretary of Labour and Industry to Secretary of Finance, 18 November 1975, running file of correspondence, OHER.

61 Oostermeyer, loc. cit.; and file no. 66-1-31, OHER.

62 S. Pitoi, M. Morauta, C. Lepani and Tigilai to Gris, 3 May 1976, OHER 66-1-3; Tigilai to Secretary of Public Service Commission, 25 May 1976, OHER 66-3-20.

63 G. Young to Long, 4 March 1976, OHER 66-3-20.
it from UPNG, but it obviously lacked the power to upset the University's decision. The 'C-type' contract issue was perhaps a self-interested manoeuvre by a few senior expatriate administrative staff who were atypical of others at UPNG; indeed one professor later called it 'a nice example of expatriate sabotage of the University's best interests'. Yet it was still a case whereby the OHE had been revealed as a paper tiger. And unfortunately for OHE its covert manoeuvres against its Waigani opponents had hardly served to inspire trust in it or in its vaunted objectivity.

Partly because of such disputes, partly because of the OHE's failure over finances, by early 1976 UPNG was placing little value on OHE efforts. It did not feel that such a body should be the broker of university activity. Not surprisingly, influential figures at UPNG began working actively to undermine the OHE position. They questioned the constitutionality of the OHE role, pointing out informally to bureaucrats and Cabinet Ministers that the OHE had assumed powers never intended for it. They argued that it had become largely redundant, and suggested that government's requirements in relation to strict economy and meeting manpower goals would be best fulfilled through direct dealing with agencies such as the Department of Finance, the Public Service Commission and the Central Planning Office. They promoted the idea that co-ordination of university effort would be achieved more readily through the creation of a single joint UPNG-UOT Council rather than through the OHE. They privately hinted to key government figures that it should be disbanded. And they tried to bypass it at every opportunity.

The OHE reacted to these strategies by mounting a rearguard action to convince all parties it was fulfilling an essential task. When, for example, Tigilai caught UPNG out in an attempt to deal directly with the Public Service Commission he sternly reminded McKay, the Acting Vice-Chancellor, that the OHE was 'the accepted channel of communication between the University and the government' and must not therefore be side-stepped. He also chided

---

64 J. Ballard, personal communication.

UPNG for its ingratitude in forgetting that OHE in the past had 'taken up the cudgels on the University's behalf ... with no mean rate of success'. The OHE also sought to promote its role as a necessary mediator between government and universities. But here again it had to politick against Central Planning Office arguments that a single UPNG-UOT Council would effect greater co-ordination while, ironically, being required to write the submission to Cabinet recommending the union of the two existing Councils. It suggested that having a single Council would mean creating the national university, an idea Cabinet had already dismissed as 'unnecessary bureaucracy'. It clearly recognized that the Central Planning Office proposal would give government more direct control over the universities, thus further obviating the need for an OHE. And, finally, the OHE proposed the formation of a 'Task Force on University Development'. This body, with representation from the universities, the OHE, Central Planning Office, and Department of Finance, would have the job of producing a five-year plan to assist the government to allocate resources in accordance with national priorities. Its full-time staff and servicing would come from the OHE. UPNG greeted these suggestions unenthusiastically, possibly seeing in them an OHE attempt to give itself a reason for staying in business a while longer. And since the University had more or less decided that the OHE was an unnecessary obstruction there seemed little purpose in prolonging its life.

By the end of 1976 the OHE was under siege. It had lost the clout it had wielded under Rees and was jealously holding on to whatever power it could restrain. Like the universities, its future was uncertain and it was unsure whether it would be allowed to continue as an independent body, be absorbed into some other government agency, or simply be disbanded.

---

66 Tigilai to McKay, 29 January 1976, OHER 66-3-20.
68 Policy submission to Cabinet, 'Task force to prepare a 5-year plan for the universities', 20 April 1976, OHER 66-1-25.
69 Gris to Tigilai, 3 June 1976, OHER 66-1-25.
As events turned out, the OHE did survive, and with enhanced status. In 1978 the government appointed a Minister for Higher Education, Kare Maor. In a bureaucratic reshuffle which saw Tololo elevated to chairmanship of the Public Service Commission (significantly, he continued on as Chancellor of both universities), the OHE became a specialized bureau of the Ministry (formerly Department) of Education, answerable to the newly appointed Minister. Bill Oostermeyer, the Acting Director of the OHE since Tigelai's departure two years previously to the Lae Deputy Vice-Chancellorship, was confirmed as its Director. As part of the largest government department, and with its own Minister, the OHE achieved the measure of legitimacy it had previously lacked. It owed its improved fortunes to incidents like the large-scale student strike of 1978, which gave it the opportunity to demonstrate that there was indeed some use for a third party to mediate between Cabinet and the universities. The specialized knowledge of the universities it had acquired over the years enabled it to provide advice to the Ministers and to serve as a go-between in their dealings with each campus. The universities, as things eventuated, were becoming so 'difficult to live with' that the government found it expedient to retain the OHE and even to increase its powers. But until events fortuitously allowed for this, the OHE had to struggle on, fighting for its very right to exist.

Uncertainty was thus the keynote of the times for the university system in Papua New Guinea. Perhaps the only sure thing was that the whole system, and the assumptions it rested upon, were in a state of flux.
Epilogue

Although Papua New Guinea's university system was a recent growth, a creature of the late colonial era, it had undergone an involved development. The Australian government had initiated moves to establish it in the early 1960s, in recognition of the need to develop an indigenous bureaucracy as a precursor to independence. Beginning with the Willoughby Report in 1961, several schemes had been proposed before the modified Currie plan was finally adopted in 1965. Controversy had attended these various proposals as parties with differing interests in them debated over what model was most suitable. One of the most important considerations was cost, as an economy-conscious government was determined to build a system Papua New Guinea could pay for, rather than one which imported the remarkable costs of Australian universities.

When the country's university institutions were finally established in the mid-1960s there were many difficulties, most notably in the sphere of government-university relations and especially over the boundary between institutional autonomy and government control. A series of signal disputes, over budgeting and the control of medical education, had occurred, and these helped demarcate that boundary for a time. There were also memorable differences of opinion between the institutions, which led one of them, the Institute of Higher Technical Education, to decamp to the other side of the country. Yet there were positive aspects to these disputes as well, for they enabled the institutions to work out a *modus vivendi* with the government and with each other.

The foundation of university institutions in Papua New Guinea was part of the general expansion of post-primary education which occurred during the late 1960s as the Australian government made ready for eventual independence. Because this had been haphazard, a wasteful proliferation
of tertiary training institutions resulted. Various means for rationalizing the training effort were bandied about, but the major scheme for reorganization — that resulting from the Brown Report — ran aground on nationalist shoals during the transfer of power from the Australian to the national government. In the meantime the university institutions, for various reasons, most notably their own ambitions and pressure from the government, had been drifting into a more or less coherent association with each other. The emergence of a more cohesive university system during the early 1970s out of the plethora of training institutions of the '60s had been accompanied by considerable conflict. Once again, the ambition and status mobility, the rivalry, and the determination of the university institutions to preserve their autonomy, together with the wish of government to direct the development, had generated disputes.

As independence approached the impact of national government on the universities became marked. Appalled to discover what a huge financial burden they represented, the national government wished to gain the maximum from its investment. The universities were instructed to make themselves more 'responsive' — a euphemism perhaps for submitting to increased government control. A series of committees of inquiry did the universities over, seeking means towards more 'responsiveness', but their radical proposals challenged the interests of many with a stake in the system. The tensions which mounted as various individuals and groups defended their inch or two of turf ensured that only modified, even emasculated, reforms ensued. Not surprisingly, many disputes arose in this period — over staff conditions, the political aims of the students, the treatment of women, optimal forms of academic government, and the personalities and roles of the universities' leaders. The approach of independence indeed lifted the lid off a cauldron of simmering dissension.

Important changes seemed likely to spill over from this ferment, once again most notably in the relationship between the universities and the government. Government was clearly losing patience with the universities, for their heavy cost burden was made more irksome by their privilege, by the determination of some expatriate staff to skim the best cream from the pail, and by the fractious ingratitude of their strike-prone students. Parliamentarians and bureaucrats clearly believed the time had come to exert direct control, both to ensure that the expected benefits
flowed from them and to curb their unwelcome waywardness. They prized their autonomy and had always defended it resolutely, but, with government becoming less tolerant, its healthy continuance was doubtful. And because of that, the biggest changes within the university system were possibly still ahead.

The tensions, conflicts and controversies unfortunately tended to obscure the universities' concrete achievements. They and the government had much to be satisfied with in their accomplishments to date. In barely a decade of existence they had trained a large and growing corpus of graduates now located at strategic points in the professions, in the councils and bureaucracies of national and regional government, in the defence forces, industry, agriculture and commerce. Their efforts had made possible the rapid localization of the more senior levels of the Public Service which occurred from 1971-72. They had undermined many of the racist and paternalistic conventions of colonial society, and had stimulated the sense of nationhood which had to precede the attainment of national sovereignty. And as the nation underwent continued modernization they were at the forefront, interpreting the changes to the people, helping adapt the old and new ways to each other, serving as a filter through which villagers learnt about the world beyond Papua New Guinea. In short, they had achieved the goals originally intended for them.

Not the least of the universities' attainments were those made internally, in their own leadership. By early 1977 both universities had local graduates filling the position of Vice-Chancellor: Renagi Lohia and Matt Tigilai were both early graduates of UPNG. With their appointments a full circle had been turned, for in less than eleven years the university system had become self-regenerative, so that henceforth it could increasingly look to its own output to sustain its further development. This in itself was a worthy accomplishment, for it meant that the universities were ready to enter the next and perhaps more important stage of their evolution, when they might become 'Melanesian' to their roots rather than continuing as expatriate dominated relics from the colonial past.

There were numerous lessons which educationalists could learn from the development of the universities in Papua New Guinea. First was the sheer difficulty of planning changes in such complex organizations. Rowley has commented
on the paradox facing educational planners: their schemes for improvement will be the 'object of pressures, and their implementation subject to the conflicts, of all the individuals and groups affected'. Consequently what is implemented may not be the same as what was planned; planners must therefore strike a balance between what is possible and what is desirable. Many planners, from the Willoughby Committee of 1961 to the second Gris Committee of 1974, had attempted to chart the course of university development in Papua New Guinea. In every case the attendant conflict determined how much of the desirable was possible.

A second lesson concerned the nature of autonomous educational institutions and their relationship to government. Papua New Guinea's experience showed that there was a certain relentless logic to university growth. Autonomous institutions became jealous of their privileges, concerned with enhancing their status, and prone to self-aggrandisement. Being independent, their ambition was hard to contain. They developed a momentum of their own as they became political operators in their own right. They were quick to manipulate internal divisions within government, to call on the support of the professions, and to appeal to the public through the news media to ensure their growth. Often government seemed powerless to stop them. Perhaps the only way they could be restrained was through outright starvation, a means to which the government eventually resorted. Such drastic action was probably possible only in a developing country, where government could plead economic necessity in moving against sacred Western traditions to curtail university freedoms.

That the government would starve and bleed the universities like that was perhaps predictable, if the experience of other developing countries were any guide. As Austin has noted in relation to the Ghanaian universities,

In times of nationalist assertion and financial restraint, the desire of a newly established government for financial control has often been matched not only by its determination to rule the roost but also by its suspicion of an institution of privilege in charge of the potentially powerful. Meanwhile, the counter-claim of autonomy has usually gone hand in

hand with a well-founded suspicion that governments which have to pay for virtually every note the piper plays are likely at any time to call a disagreeable tune.\(^2\)

That being the case, it was perhaps of little avail to try to mute the discordant notes. Learning to live with a difficult government would simply be an adjustment the universities must make.

A third lesson, more especially for those who valued the tradition of the university, followed on from this: the educational philosophy universities customarily use to justify their independent activities might be seen as mere casuistry in a developing nation. As Papua New Guinea's university system depended almost entirely on government funding, it was to be expected that the government would see the universities as instruments to be deployed in the national interest. As Rowley has observed, educational institutions do not exist 'in a vacuum' — they are regarded as a means to an end by the governments which support them.\(^3\) Educational and philosophical arguments favouring the universities' rights to academic autonomy, free expression, dissent, and critical comment might have force in the seminar room, but would probably carry little weight with a government which saw its aims being obstructed. The government of a nation without long university traditions could, once again, plead economic necessity in curtailing the university's traditional rights. Those within the Papua New Guinean universities therefore had to accept that while the government had not yet muzzled them, it wished to keep them on a short leash.

Reference to African experience is pertinent here as well. The utilitarian arguments of Tololo and other Papua New Guinean bureaucrats about the obligation of the universities to justify their appetite for public funds with more obvious demonstrations of 'responsiveness', would have been a familiar sound to African ears. If the refrain seemed inimical to the Papua New Guinean universities, they could perhaps have been heartened by a lesson some African universities had learnt to their advantage. The relationship


between them and the government was not necessarily weighted in favour of the latter: because, as Austin observes, 'the dependence of the universities on the state was balanced by the dependence of the state on the universities, the two sides had to act in consultation' — government could lean too heavily on the universities only to its own cost. 4 Rather than being cowed by the Tololos within government ranks, Papua New Guinea's universities could vigorously plead, then, that because the government needed them to supply its professional manpower it must concede the strength of their educational and philosophical claims.

Finally, planners could learn that the costs of university development were social as well as economic. The nationalist ideology of 1972-73 vaunted the purported egalitarian nature of traditional Papua New Guinean society, and the educational reformers of the day rushed to enshrine its values in their schemes. Yet the very fact of university development was premised on the further transmutation of village society. The country's universities were created and sustained primarily to produce a bureaucratic-managerial elite capable of integrating hundreds of schismatic regional groupings within some reasonably cohesive whole, and of guiding them into national independence. The price to pay for having such a 'new class' with such functions was possibly the flowering of elitism, and even some subsequent development of what in Africa has been aptly called a 'kleptocracy'. 5 Periodic anti-elitist campaigns might temporarily eliminate the worst flaunting of class privilege; however, if a university-trained elite were necessary for the survival of the Papua New Guinean state, it was doubtful whether elitism and class privilege could be effectively proscribed. Papua New Guinea's universities were indeed little different in this respect from those in, say, Nigeria, where, as van den Berghe has observed, 'elitism suffuses their entire conception'. 6 Rather than righteously deploring that fact of life, as had Gris's Committee of Enquiry into University Development in its spate of ideological fervour, it would perhaps have been more realistic (and more honest) to accept the fact. The universities, in Austin's words, 'might do much more than simply survive if

5P. van den Berghe (1973), p.60.
6ibid., p.184.
they began to address themselves firmly to their proper task, which is to train the ruling class for the job it has to do'.

A further social cost relating to the 'new class' being produced by the universities was that their products would be more 'Western' than 'Melanesian' in outlook, and thus out of sympathy with most of their countrymen, who remained back in the villages. The national ideology lauded the values of the village, and enjoined educated Papua New Guineans to conserve traditions, to be innovative and self-reliant, to adapt new ways to old traditions. The rhetoric was noble in intent, but it did perhaps require the impossible of graduates, whose education had generally led them progressively further from the village. Van den Berghe's observations of a similar situation in Nigeria led him to conclude that the universities and their products did not adapt to traditional society: rather the country adapted to the kind of social system universities helped create and reproduce. It was not a modern or innovative society but a colonial society, for the historic role of the universities was to produce a 'mandarinate', a successor to the British colonial bureaucracy. Steeped, of necessity, in the Western educational tradition, 'the neo-colonial mandarinate is a creditable intellectual replica of its mentors'.

There was no certainty that Papua New Guinea was entirely analogous, yet the relationship of mutual dependence which existed between government and universities in Nigeria, and which guaranteed the universities their continued privilege, also existed in Papua New Guinea. It could not therefore be certain that the universities could be prevented from remaining privileged enclaves, reference points and agents in the process of class formation.

The final cost was conflict, which was endemic in Papua New Guinea's university system and which was always capable of spilling out of the campus into the wider community. A university, as van den Berghe suggests, is more 'a basketful of crabs' than a sedately happy community of scholars. Even the longest established and outwardly most serene of universities are often 'internally ... torn

---

8van den Berghe (1973), p.268.
9ibid., p.262.
by dissent', as Baldridge remarks.\textsuperscript{10} The community of scholars is thus more an ideal than a reality. Papua New Guinea's two universities and three campuses have provided illustrative evidence for these dicta: their diversity has ensured the perpetuation of multiple personal and group interests, and with that a vast potential for intrigue and contention. Positive achievements could spring from dissension. Yet there were destructive effects too, in terms of wasted effort, wasted resources, wasted talent and the wasting of much of the idealism that had attended the original concept of university education for Papua New Guinea.

Conflict would probably continue to be a part of the university system in Papua New Guinea. Indeed government action to reduce funds and exert greater control would probably heighten it. The shortage of funds available for distribution between the campuses promised to aggravate the rivalry between them; and a more authoritarian approach by government was unlikely to produce meek or instant submission. In all probability the universities in Papua New Guinea seemed certain to remain, like those in Africa, 'a hotbed of conflicts wrapped in the deceptively serene-looking shell of a palm-shaded Oxbridge'.\textsuperscript{11} And so, short of closing them down, government would probably never find them much less difficult to live with.


\textsuperscript{11}van den Berghe (1973), p.268.
Appendix

Persons referred to

Many different persons' names appear in the monograph, which could be confusing because in a number of cases the one person occupied a number of positions over a period of time. The guide to names appearing in the text or in footnotes provides brief biographical details only, but sufficient information to enable the reader unfamiliar with the topic of the monograph to see where individual characters fit in.

Abaijah, Josephine. Member of the Papua New Guinea parliament, 1972ff.; member of the Council of the University of Papua New Guinea, 1972; leader of the Papua Besena (Papuan provincial nationalist) group within parliament.

Angus, N.C. Consultant to CEUD 1974 and adviser to UN on administrative matters in Pacific Islands region.

Avei, Moi. Member of CEUD 1973-74; officer in charge of UPNG external studies section 1976 ff.

Ballard, Dr John. UPNG Professor of Administrative Studies, 1973-76.

Barnes, C.E. Minister for Territories 1964-72.


Beazley, K.E. Labor politician and commentator on PNG affairs c.1957 ff.

Beier, Ulli. UPNG senior lecturer in creative writing and promoter of PNG arts 1967 ff.

Beltz, Charles. First head of the PNG government Manpower Planning Unit, 1968.

Bengo, Paul. Graduate of UPNG; later an administrative assistant at UPNG, and then a member of the Prime Minister's personal staff.


Bulmer, Professor Ralph. UPNG Professor of Anthropology 1966-73.

Buluna, Martin. Early (1971) graduate of UPNG; later an administrative assistant at both UPNG and the Papua New Guinea University of Technology (UOT).

Burce, Rev Walter. Principal of Martin Luther Seminary, Lae, 1974 ff.

Chan, Julius. Parliamentary leader of the People's Progress Party; Minister for Finance and Deputy Prime Minister, 1972-78.

Chenoweth, David. Chief Training Officer and head of Public Service Institute 1953-61; Principal of Administrative College 1962-72.

Clark, Dr Hector. Reader in Mechanical Engineering, UOT, 1971-76.

Cleland, Professor Keith. Professor of Business Administration, and sometime Acting Registrar and Acting Vice-Chancellor, UOT, 1973-76.

Clunies, Ross, Professor Anthony. UPNG Professor of Economics and sometime Acting Vice-Chancellor 1968-74.

Cohen, Dr S.W. Member of the Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education (the Brown Committee), 1970-71.

Conroy, Dr John. UPNG lecturer in Economics, 1970-76, then Director of the PNG Institute of Applied Social and Economic Research.

Crawford, Sir John. Director of ANU Research School of Pacific Studies 1960-67; ANU Vice-Chancellor 1968-73; Chancellor of UPNG 1972-75.

Crombie, Professor R.G. Director of ANU New Guinea Research Unit 1961-68; member of Committee of Enquiry into Academic Staff Salaries 1973; member of CEUD 1973-74.

Currie, Sir George. Chairman of Commission of Inquiry into Higher Education in Papua and New Guinea (Currie Commission) 1963-64.

Dale, Dr David. Head of the Department of Chemical Technology, UOT, 1973-78.

Dale, Dr Mary. Tutor in Physics, UOT, 1973.

Dambui, Fr Cherubim. Catholic priest and graduate of Holy Spirit Seminary, Bomana (near Port Moresby); later head of the East Sepik Province provincial government.

Deklin, Tony. UPNG graduate; first national Dean of Faculty of Law of UPNG, 1976.


Dickson, Merare. Member of PNG Legislative Council.


Duncanson, Dr W.E. Director of IHTE and IOT 1966-72.


Foxcroft, E.J. First Assistant Secretary, Prime Minister's Department till 1962.

Fraser, J.M. Australian Minister for Education and Science, 1968-69; Prime Minister, 1975 ff.

Gass, Ian. Administrative officer at UOT, 1972-75; then Registrar, 1975-80.

Greenwood, Peter. Senior Lecturer, then Professor of Electrical Engineering, UOT, 1972 ff; Secretary of UOT Academic Staff Association, 1974-75.

Griffin, John. Senior Lecturer in Law, UPNG, 1967-75; counsel appearing for PNG universities' staff associations, 1974.

Griffin, James. Senior Lecturer in History, UPNG, 1968-75.
Gris, G.B. Member of Advisory Committee on Education in PNG 1969; chairman of Committee of Enquiry into Academic Staff Salaries 1973; member of Working Party on the Future of the University (Oldfield Committee) 1973; chairman of CEUD 1973-74; Deputy Vice-Chancellor of UPNG 1974-75; Vice-Chancellor of UPNG 1975-77.

Groves, Professor Murray. Anthropologist; commentator on PNG affairs, c.1958 ff.

Groves, W.C. Director of Education for PNG 1946-58.

Guise, Sir John. PNG nationalist and politician; Governor General of PNG 1975-77.

Gunther, Sir John. Director of Public Health for PNG 1946-57; Assistant Administrator 1957-66; Currie Commissioner 1963-64; Vice-Chancellor of UPNG 1966-72.

Hannett, Leo. Former seminarian and UPNG graduate, from Nissan Island; UPNG student leader 1968-71; government adviser on Bougainville affairs, 1972-74; thereafter political spokesman and organizer, and businessman, in the North Solomons (formerly Bougainville) Province.

Harvey, Dr Vern. Chairman of UPNG Participation and Communication Committee 1971-72; member of Working Party on the Future of the University (Oldfield Committee) 1973; member of Committee of Enquiry into Academic Staff Salaries 1973; member of CEUD 1973-74.

Hasluck, Sir Paul. Australian Minister for Territories, 1951-63; then Minister for Defence (briefly) and Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1963-69; Governor General of Australia, 1969-74; then, in retirement, author and commentator on public affairs.


Hay, Sir David. Australian diplomat and senior public servant; Administrator of Papua New Guinea, 1967-70, then Secretary of Department of External Territories, 1970-72; later Defence Forces Ombudsman, then Secretary of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

Henderson, F.C. Director of Agriculture for PNG till 1966; Assistant Administrator 1966-69.


Hetzel, Professor B.S. Professor of Medicine, Adelaide and Monash Universities; member of UPNG Interim Council 1965-72.

Holloway, Barry. Member of PNG parliament; Speaker, 1972-77; Minister for Finance, 1977 ff.


Inglis, Professor K.S. Australian historian; UPNG Professor of History, 1966-72; Vice-Chancellor of UPNG, 1972-75; Professorial Fellow, Australian National University, 1975 ff.

Kaad, Fred. District Commissioner of the Australian Administration of PNG; executive officer for the Currie Commission into higher education, 1963-64; later lecturer in Administration, International Training Institute, Sydney (formerly Australian School of Pacific Administration).


Kerr, Sir John. Principal of Australian School of Pacific Administration, 1946-48; commentator on PNG affairs, c.1958 ff.; consultant on legal education to the Currie Commission into higher education, 1963-64; later Chief Justice of New South Wales, 1972-74; Governor General of Australia, 1974-77.

Kiki, Sir Maori. Trade union leader and nationalist; member of PNG parliament, 1968-71; Minister (inter alia) for Foreign Affairs.

Kilage, Fr Ignatius. Catholic priest and graduate of Holy Spirit Seminary, Bomana (near Port Moresby); member of Committee of Enquiry into University Development, 1973-74; chairman of PNG Ombudsman Commission, 1976 ff.

Kurondo, Siwi. Leader among people of Simbu Province, and parliamentarian for that province, 1964-72.

Lamb, Professor Ken. UPNG Professor of Biology 1961-77.

Lambert, C.R. Secretary of Department of Territories 1951-63.

Lavery, Professor John. Professor of Civil Engineering at University of Queensland; member and sometime Acting Chairman of IHTE Council 1965-69.

Lohia, Renagi. UPNG graduate; first national to be appointed a Dean of a faculty of UPNG; Dean of Education 1976; Deputy Vice-Chancellor, UPNG, 1976-77, then Vice-Chancellor, 1977 ff.

Lokoloko, Sir Tore. MHA 1964-77; Governor General 1977 ff.

Long, K.R. Secretary of UPNG 1972-78.

Low, Professor D.A. Director of ANU Research School of Pacific Studies 1973-75; ANU Vice-Chancellor 1975 ff.; member of CEUD 1973-74; member of UPNG Council 1973 ff.

Lus, Pita. PNG parliamentarian representing an East Sepik province constituency, 1964 ff.; several Ministerial positions, 1972 ff., including Police portfolio.

McConaghy, F.W. Official of Australian Department of Territories; author of internal departmental report on the future of the Australian School of Pacific Administration, 1961, which ultimately led to the setting up of the Currie Commission.
McKay, Max. UPNG Professor of Mathematics 1967-76; sometime Acting Vice-Chancellor of UPNG.

Macken, J. Counsel appearing for government in 1974 PNG universities academic salaries hearing.

McKenna, B.J. Adviser on Education to Administration of New Guinea 1929-30.


Maddock, Ian. Dean of Papuan Medical College till 1970; Dean of UPNG Faculty of Medicine 1970-74.


Mansell, Don. UOT Professor of Civil Engineering 1973-76.


Matthews, L.G. Chairman of arbitration tribunal considering academic salaries dispute 1974.

Mead, Dr Alan. Second permanent Vice-Chancellor of UOT, appointed 1979.

Meek, B.J. Official of Department of Territories till 1965; Bursar of UPNG 1966-72.

Melville, Sir Leslie. Adviser to Department of Territories on financing of UPNG and IHTE-IOT 1969-72.


Morgan, Leo. UPNG graduate; student leader, 1966-70; entered PNG diplomatic service 1971.


Mortimer, Professor Rex. UPNG Professor of Political Studies 1973-77.

Murphy, Fr Pat. Principal of the Kap Theological Seminary of the Catholic Church, 1966-67.

Murray, Sir J. Hubert P. Administrator and Governor of Papua 1906-40.

Murray, J.K. Administrator of PNG 1945-52.

Namaliu, Rabbie. First PNG national to be awarded a postgraduate degree; first PNG national on UPNG academic staff; sometime principal private secretary to Somare and Provincial Commissioner; member of UOT and UPNG Councils 1973 ff.; chairman of Public Service Commission 1976-78.

Nash, Dr A.H. Member of the Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education (the Brown Committee), 1970-71.

Newby, Lyall. Director of Extension Services for PNG till 1972.


Olewale, N.E. PNG parliamentarian representing a Western Province constituency; Minister for Education, 1972-74; Minister for Health, 1974-77; Minister for Foreign Affairs, 1977 ff.


Oostermeyer, W. (Bill). Senior Projects Officer, then Acting Director of PNG Office of Higher Education, 1974-78; Director, 1978 ff.


Parkinson, Victor. Lecturer, then Registrar of the Australian School of Pacific Administration (later International Training Institute), 1946-75.


Pochapon, Kisokau. One of UOT's first graduates (1970); member of Committee of Enquiry into University Development, 1973-74; Surveyor General, 1974 ff.


Randell, A.E. Executive officer to CEUD 1973-74.

Rarua, Oala Oala. Assistant executive officer to Currie Commission, 1963-64; parliamentarian for a Central Province constituency, 1968-72; High Commissioner to Australia, 1975-77; businessman thereafter.

Ratcliffe, Chuck. Staff development and training officer, UOT, 1975 ff.


Reseigh, Claude. Official of Department of Territories and departmental representative on UPNG Interim Council 1965-68.

Richardson, Dr D. Consultant on forestry education to CEUD 1973-74.


Roe, Professor Ernest. UPNG Professor of Education 1967-72.

Rooney, Nahau. UPNG graduate; member of Committee of Enquiry into University Development, 1973-74; lecturer at the Administrative College; parliamentarian representing a Manus Province constituency, 1977 ff.; Minister for Justice, 1977-79.

Rowley, Professor C.D. Principal of ASOPA 1950-64; Professor of Political Studies at UPNG 1967-74; Director of the Australian Academy of the Social Sciences, 1974-79; Fellow of the Australian National University, 1979 ff.

Sandover, Dr J.A. Director of IOT then Vice-Chancellor of UOT 1972-76; Chairman of the Board of the Colleges of Advanced Education of South Australia, 1977-78.

Sarei, Dr Alexis. First PNG national to be awarded doctoral degree; member of Working Party on the Future of the University (Oldfield Committee) 1973; member of CEUD 1973-74.

Sarwabe, Damien, UPNG graduate; administrative assistant at UPNG, 1971-75, then Academic Registrar, 1976 ff.

Scragg, Professor Ron. Director of Public Health for PNG 1957-70; UPNG Professor of Social and Preventive Medicine 1970-74.

Sims, Professor G.D. Consultant to CEUD on technological education 1974.

Singkai, Fr Gregory. Catholic priest and Holy Spirit Seminary graduate; Bishop of Bougainville, 1975 ff.

Smaridge, Stanley. Senior Lecturer in Electrical Engineering, UOT, 1972-77; leading figure in UOT Academic Staff Association, 1974-76.

Smith, G. Warwick. Secretary of Australian Department of External Territories 1964-70.

Smith, Miles Cater Staniforth. Senator for Western Australia, 1901-06; Director of Agriculture, and then Administrator of Papua, 1906-15; Administrator of Papua again, 1921-30.

Somare, Michael T. Former teacher and journalist; parliamentarian representing East Sepik Province, 1968 ff.; Chief Minister/Prime Minister of PNG 1972 ff.

Spate, Professor O.H.K. Professor of Geography, ANU, 1951-67; Director of the ANU Research School of Pacific Studies, 1961-72; Currie Commissioner, 1963-64; member of UPNG Interim Council and Council, 1967-72; Professorial Fellow in Department of Pacific and South East Asian History, ANU, 1972 ff.


Stace, D.A. Academic Registrar of UPNG, 1973-75.


Steffan, Fr Arnold. Principal of the Holy Spirit (Catholic) Seminary, Bomana (near Port Moresby), 1968 ff.

Stephenson, G.N. Registrar of UOT 1973-75.

Still, Kathy. UPNG research assistant and tutor, and spokeswoman on feminist issues 1975 ff.

Swift, R.S. First Assistant Secretary then Deputy Secretary in Australian Department of Territories, 1962-68.

Taureka, Reuben. PNG parliamentarian representing a Central Province constituency, 1968 ff.; Minister for Education 1974-75.

Tigilai, V.M.N. Chairman of Universities Finance Review Committee 1973-76; Director of Office of Higher Education 1975-76; Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Acting Vice-Chancellor of UOT 1976-79.


Toliman, Mathias. Parliamentarian representing an East New Britain constituency, 1974-73; Leader of the Opposition, 1972-73.


Ward, Professor R.G. UPNG Professor of Geography 1967-71.


Watson, Lepani. PNG parliamentarian representing a Milne Bay Province constituency, 1964-71; member of UPNG Interim Council.

Wedgwood, Camilla. Anthropologist and educationalist attached to Army Directorate of Research and Civil Affairs 1944-45.

White, Peter. Magistrate; chairman of Commission of Inquiry into unrest at UPNG in 1978, and author of the commission's report.

Williams, Dr F.E. Government Anthropologist of Papua, 1924-41.

Willoughby, J.E. First Assistant Secretary in Department of Territories till 1961.

Woodward, Professor Jack. Professor of Electrical Engineering at UOT 1971-77.
A Notes of interviews conducted by the author (referred to in footnotes as RIW — 'record of interview by I.J. Willis')

Burce, Rev. W., Lae, 1976
Chenoweth, D., Port Moresby, 1976
Clark, Dr H., Lae, 1975 and 1976
Currie, Sir George, Canberra, 1975
Greenwood, P., Lae, 1976
Gunther, Sir John, Buderim, 1975
Hasluck, Sir Paul, Melbourne, 1975
Hastings, P., Canberra, 1975
Hossack, I., Canberra, 1975
Johnson, L.W., Canberra, 1975
Karmel, P.H., Canberra, 1975
Mansell, D., Lae, 1976
Matheson, Sir J.A. Louis, Melbourne, 1975
McKinnon, Dr K., Canberra, 1975
Meek, B., Wollongong, 1975

Melville, Sir Leslie, Canberra, 1975
Murphy, Fr P., Port Moresby, 1976
O'Neill, A., Port Moresby, 1976
Parkinson, V., Sydney, 1975
Randell, A., Canberra, 1975
Ratcliffe, C., Lae, 1976
Rees, W., Port Moresby, 1975
Reseigh, C., Canberra, 1975
Rowley, C.D., Canberra, 1975
Sandover, Dr J.A., Lae, 1975 and 1976
Smaridge, S., Lae, 1976
Spate, Prof. O.H.K., Canberra, 1975
Steffan, Fr A., Port Moresby, 1976
Swift, R.S., Canberra, 1975

B Archival records

I Records in Australian Archives, Canberra

A518 AGB36/3 'Murder of Miss Jean Wilson'
A518 B818/1/5 'Papua: education and special training of natives outside the Territory'
A518 U832/1/3 'Training of medical practitioners 1932-49' (part 1)

II Department of Territories Official Records, Canberra

File 61/6508 'Report of the committee on development of tertiary education and higher training in Papua and New Guinea'
File 62/895 'Report of the committee on development of tertiary education and higher training in Papua and New Guinea'
File 62/1462 'Establishment of a university in Papua and New Guinea'

353
File 62/3488 'Discussions with the 1962 UN Visiting Mission on education in Papua and New Guinea'
File 62/4306 'Transfer of the Medical School of the Papuan Medical College within the UPNG'
File 62/4307 'Establishment of a university college in Papua and New Guinea'
File 65/3288 'Establishment of higher technical institute in Papua and New Guinea'
File 66/975 'Proposed incorporation of the medical school of Papuan Medical College within University of Papua and New Guinea'
File 66/6426 'Establishment of higher technical institute in Papua and New Guinea'
File 67/3555 'Policy — finances for UPNG and IHTE'
File 68/5647 'Tertiary education in Papua and New Guinea — Policy'
File 69/3121 'Proposed incorporation of the Medical School of the Papuan Medical College within the UPNG'
File 69/4293 'Institute of Technology — award of degrees'
File 69/5536 'Proposed incorporation of the Medical School of the Papuan Medical College within the UPNG'
File 69/5654 'Report of Commission on Higher Education in Papua and New Guinea'
File 70/2008 (62/4306) 'Transfer of the Medical School of the Papuan Medical College within the UPNG'
File 71/3335 'Tertiary education scholarships in Australia for Papua New Guinea indigenes'

III Office of Higher Education Records, Port Moresby

File 66-1-21 'Higher Education Commission'
File 66-1-29 'Land Administration'
File 66-1-32 'Tertiary education: new courses — forestry'
File 66-1-43 'School leaver programme — central selection unit'

Papers on the future of the Office of Higher Education

Background papers and submissions to the Committee of Enquiry into University Development (CEUD), 1973–74: S-31, S-56, S-57, S-58, S-69, S-207.

Department of Finance, circular memorandum no.9 of 1975, 'Estimates, 1976-77'

Cabinet Submissions: progressive file
Policy Submissions: progressive file
Running file of correspondence
P. Mortimer, 'A look at localization and training at UPNG and UOT', OHE survey of views on university localization

IV  Papua New Guinea University of Technology Records, Lae
Academic Board, Minutes of meetings up to 85th meeting, 17 March, 1976

Papua New Guinea University of Technology, Annual Report 1966-67, and subsequent annual reports to 1975

J. Chinappa, 'Notes on academic localization', n.d., records of UOT Finance and Management Committee

Council, Minutes of meetings up to 41st meeting, 26 March 1976

Finance and Management Committee, Minutes of meetings up to 68th meeting, 18th March 1976

File of papers relating to change in title from 'Institute' to 'University' of Technology supplied to Ian Willis by the Registrar

Files relating to Committee of Enquiry into University Development, F105-17, VC/1.22:5.8, VC/1.5:23.1

Localization Committee records: agenda, minutes, correspondence to May 1976

Staff Association: correspondence files 1973-76

Staff Association (Academic Section): agenda and minutes 1973-76

Working Party on University Government: agenda and minutes 1973-76

V  University of Papua New Guinea Records, Port Moresby

File A.18 'Agriculture'
File A.34-2 'Commission on education, 1970-71'
File D.12-1 'Annual reports'
File E.32 'Manpower planning'
File F.2 'University of Technology'
File F.69 'Goroka Teachers' College'
File F.81 'Training of Forestry Officers'
Files T.1, T.2 'Manpower and localization planning'
File 75/219 'Organization of higher education'
File 75/234 'Goroka Teachers College'
File 75/327 'Student strike'
File 76/13 'Manpower planning'

Academic Board, Agenda papers for 25th meeting, 9 April 1976

Academic Developments Committee, Agenda papers for meeting of 12 March 1976

Academic Registrar's office, miscellaneous records

Council papers on University-Government relations, 1976
VI Personal Papers, in the possession of the individuals concerned

Dale, David and Mary, Perth
Meek, B.J., Wollongong
Spate, O.H.K., Canberra

C Publications, theses, addresses, seminar papers, etc.

The Age, 16 November 1964, p.1; 20 December 1969, p.4.

Angus, N.C., June 1974. Organization and Administration of the Papua New Guinea University of Technology, in Matheson Library, UOT.


Austin, Dennis, 1975. 'Et in Arcadia Ego: Politics and Learning in Ghana', Minerva XIII(2) Summer.


Australian National University, July 1962. Report of the Committee of the Research School of Pacific Studies to consider the proposed University for Papua and New Guinea, ANU document no.1161 B/1962.


The Australian Outlook, December 1964.


Australian School of Pacific Administration (ASOPA), 1958. Report on Education 1958, report produced by no.3 Senior Officers' Course, ASOPA.


Ballard, John, 1977. Students and Politics at the University of Papua New Guinea, work-in-progress paper, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University (March).
The Economist, 8 August 1964, p.548.
Griffin, James, 1975. 'Ethnonationalism and Integration', Meanjin, no.3.
Groves, Murray, 26 November 1960. 'Educating New Guinea', The Observer.
———, 5 May 1962. 'The Reign of Mr Hasluck', Nation.


Hasluck, P.M.C., 1958. Present Tasks and Policies, in Australian Institute of Political Science, New Guinea and Australia, (Sydney, Angus and Robertson).


Inglis, K.S., 1967. 'University in a Hurry', Overland no.36, May.


Lae Nius 3(15), 17 November 1976.


The Muffington-Smee Reporter and Plain Dealer, 1973-74. UPNG underground newspaper appearing through several issues.


New Guinea Annual Reports (properly styled Commonwealth of Australia, Report to the General Assembly of the United Nations on the Administration of the Territory of New Guinea from 1st July 19___ to 30th June 19___), 1929-30; 1939-40; 1946-47 to 1970-71. (From 1971-72 ff. the reports were combined with those of Papua as Papua New Guinea, Annual Report(s).)

The Observer, 8 March 1958, p.38; 6 September 1958, p.60; 20 September 1958, p.49; 21 March 1959, p.179; 2 April 1960; 9 July 1960, p.3; 23 July 1960, p.3; 17 September 1960, p.3; 26 November 1960, pp.5-6.


Outlook, 1960. 4(5).


Papua Annual Reports (properly styled, Commonwealth of Australia, Report on the Administration of the Territory of Papua from 1st July 19___ to 30 June 19___), 19___ to 1970-71, thereafter combined with New Guinea Annual Reports.

PNG Institute of Technology Community Development Group, 1972. Prospectus.


Report of Commission of Inquiry into Unrest at the University of Papua New Guinea in April and May of 1978 and into Other Related Matters (see White, P. (et al.).)

Report on the Preliminary Arrangements for the Transfer of Control from the Military Authorities to the Provisional Administration of the Territory of Papua New Guinea, (mimeo), Port Moresby, 20 August 1945 (copy in library of Australian Development Assistance Bureau, Canberra).

The Reporter, underground newspaper of the PNG University of Technology, 5 issues, March 1975-April 1976.


Still, Kathy and Shea, John, 1976. Something Has Got to be Done So We Can Survive in This Place: The Problems of Women Students at UPNG, UPNG Educational Research Unit Report, no.20, November.


University of Papua New Guinea 1976 Calendar.


UPNG Educational Research Unit, 1976 and 1977. Reports:

No.20: K. Still and J. Shea, Something Has Got to be Done So We Can Survive in This Place: The Problems of Women Students at UPNG, November 1976.


The University This Week. Weekly News-sheet of UPNG, issues for 1976.


Wedgwood, Camilla, 1944. Some Problems of Native Education in the Mandated Territory of New Guinea and Papua, paper prepared under the auspices of Australian Army's Directorate of Research and Civil Affairs, August. (Copy in the New Guinea Collection, UPNG Library).


Williams, Maslyn, 1970. In One Lifetime, Melbourne, Cheshire.


Pacific Research Monographs

No.1  

No.2  

No.3  

Publications are available from the ANU Press, P.O. Box 4, Canberra, ACT, Australia. Please enclose money including postage with order. Postage rates are: Aust.: NSW $1.15, ACT 90c, SA, Vic., Tas. and Q'land $2.25, WA and NT $2.60, Overseas A$2.00.