A Short History of
NEW GUINEA

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ANGUS AND ROBERTSON
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Chapter One

The Coming of Man to New Guinea

Arrival of the first man in New Guinea—Culture of the first arrivals—The agricultural revolution—Achievements of the people, their crafts and trading—How we know the prehistory of New Guinea—The work of archaeologists, linguists and anthropologists—Problems the archaeologists have still to solve.

The First Settlers

Man has been in New Guinea for a long time. More than 10,000 years ago and possibly up to 50,000 years ago the first men entered New Guinea. During this period the level of the sea was lower than it is today and mainland New Guinea, Australia and Tasmania were all part of the same land area. However the main islands of Indonesia were already separated and it was from there that early man came. The sea crossing would have been difficult for them. We do not know whether they came intentionally or by accident. We do not know whether they arrived first in New Guinea or Australia. Probably only a handful made the first crossing; but it is possible that others followed. The migrations may have continued for centuries, even for thousands of years. Small groups would have arrived first in one or more coastal areas and the settlements spread gradually inland.

We do not know much about the early inhabitants of New Guinea. Some archaeologists—men who study the past before written records were kept—believe that the first inhabitants were small, dark-skinned people with tightly curled hair. The former inhabitants of Tasmania and some of the tribes in isolated parts of mountainous north Queensland may have descended from the
early waves of migrants. It would have taken thousands of years for the large area from New Guinea to Tasmania to be settled. Some writers have called these early Pacific people Negritos. They were probably not related to the negro people of Africa.

A Hunting People

The first inhabitants of New Guinea were hunters. No crops were grown and no animals were kept for food. Their food was whatever they could catch or gather. When man first arrived in New Guinea the types of animals found were slightly different from what they are today. For example, bones of the Tasmanian wolf have been found at an ancient camp site in the Highlands. Tools were made from wood and chipped from stone. Normally the stone tools were held in the hand. The total population of New Guinea in the days of the hunters must have been much less than it is today: it takes a large area of land to support people who are gatherers and hunters of food.

The Australian Aborigines

Other groups of hunters followed the first migrants into the Pacific. They were tall, slimmer people, varying in colour from light to dark brown, and with dark wavy hair. These people came from the Indonesian islands into Australia. They were related to ancient inhabitants of Ceylon and southern India. Between 6,000 and 8,000 years ago they crossed into Australia. By that time New Guinea and Tasmania were separated from the mainland of Australia. It does not appear that any of these hunters reached New Guinea. The stone pointed spears and boomerangs of the Australian aborigines were not used in New Guinea. From this time onwards Australia and New Guinea had separate histories.

The Introduction of Agriculture into New Guinea

Today all New Guinea peoples are gardeners; none live completely by hunting and gathering. Few of the food plants grown by the people are native to New Guinea. Most belong to the rain forests of South-East Asia and it is there that man first started to use them as garden plants. Their introduction into New Guinea was due to the arrival of new migrants who came probably from Indonesia about 5,000 years ago. They brought with them not only
plants like taro, yam, banana and coconut, but also the three domesticated animals of New Guinea—the pig, dog and chicken. In New Guinea the new migrants found a few wild plants they could cultivate—sago palm, sugar cane and certain kinds of banana and breadfruit. These early gardeners did not have the sweet potato. Sweet potato is a South American plant which was introduced into New Guinea through Europeans trading in the Indonesian islands 300-400 years ago.

Archaeologists call the beginnings of agriculture in any part of the world the *neolithic revolution*. They regard the change in the means of obtaining food from hunting and gathering to gardening and animal husbandry as revolutionary for the people. The new economy, by which food was produced instead of it being collected, enabled the land to support more people, so the population increased. Buildings, too, probably improved because the people were now settled permanently about their gardens. Before, many groups would have shifted to wherever game was most plentiful and a temporary shelter would have suited them.

New arts and crafts came with the migrants who brought the cultivated plants and domesticated animals. Pottery making may have been one of these. It is probable too that the new arrivals possessed efficient wood working tools made from polished stone. The neolithic revolution allowed specialization in the practice of arts and crafts. Thus some villages might come to concentrate on canoe building, pottery making, or stone tool manufacture. These goods would then be exchanged for the products of other areas.

**The New Migrants**

We do not know who the people were who first introduced agriculture to New Guinea. It is possible that agriculture was brought in on a number of occasions by different groups of migrants. Important among such migrants were people speaking what students call *Melanesian* languages. These languages are members of a large language family called the *Austronesian* (or Malayo-Polynesian) language family. Most languages of Malaya, Indonesia and the South Pacific belong to this language group. In New Guinea the Melanesian languages are found scattered along the northern coast and are common in south-east Papua and its islands. Because the Melanesian speakers live along the coast we
Island Groups of the Pacific.
know they arrived in New Guinea after the non-Melanesian (or Papuan) speaking people. The non-Melanesian speaking people still occupy most of New Guinea.

What happened was that in some areas along the coast the new-comers became the most important group; in other areas the first settlers saw little of the new arrivals. There may have been some fighting between the hunting people and the later migrants, but it is unlikely that there was any large-scale attempt by one group to destroy the other. Where the two groups were living side by side inter-marriage occurred. New languages were formed by the coming together of peoples who had previously spoken in different ways. The new arrivals did not spread over all of New Guinea but their ideas did. It must have taken many years for the new methods of agriculture and the new skills to reach the Highlands where the new-comers did not settle. The gradual passing of ideas from one community to another is known as chain-borrowing. We can imagine that many men would have been reluctant to give up the old ways for the new. Perhaps at first they accepted only some of the new ideas. All the hunting communities eventually accepted at least some of the new methods of gardening and craftsmanship. Isolated areas of steep mountains and broad swamps alone remained for those who lived mainly by hunting. New Guinea had become a land of gardeners and villagers.

The new way of life based on domesticated plants and animals did not reach Australia, and the Aborigines remained hunters and gatherers of food up to modern times.

The Settlement of the Pacific Islands

The discovery and settlement of the scattered islands of the Pacific Ocean east and south-east of New Guinea was the work of peoples who had developed skill as deep ocean sailors. They carried with them the cultivated plants which made life possible on islands not very well provided with food for man. Previous inhabitants of New Guinea may have settled no further east than the Bismarck Archipelago.

Among the sea-going peoples were some who became the ancestors of the Polynesians. Archaeologists trace the movements of these groups by a special type of pottery which they made. From the evidence of this pottery we know that the ancestors of the Polynesians were the first to settle the islands of New Caledonia and
A SHORT HISTORY OF NEW GUINEA

Fiji, perhaps as long ago as 1,000 B.C. From this south-west Pacific area they then reached Tonga (by 500 B.C.) and later Samoa (by the birth of Christ). It was possibly from Samoa, that islands in the eastern Pacific, like the Marquesas, were settled; and from eastern Polynesia the rest of the central Pacific, from Hawaii in the north to New Zealand in the south, was settled. The main island groups of Polynesia were inhabited by A.D. 1,000. Most of the settlements must have been made accidentally. Canoes making short voyages were blown off-course and finally made land at some island. They could not return home so they would have been forced to try to build up a new community.

The pottery by which we trace the spread of the Polynesian ancestors into the Pacific has been found in New Guinea near Rabaul. Its makers may have arrived there via the islands of western Micronesia from the Philippines and, before that, from southern China.

When the ancestors of the Polynesians reached New Guinea they must have found many people already living there. By this time the people of New Guinea had a knowledge of agriculture and were developing skills in ocean voyaging. They were a varied people. Different mixings of Melanesian speaking people with old hunting peoples had taken place to produce a number of different communities. Some of these people may already have been moving into the islands nearest to the Bismarck Archipelago. Some of them certainly followed the ancestors of the Polynesians into New Caledonia and Fiji. They reached both island groups just before the birth of Christ. But only the Polynesians moved further east than Fiji. This accounts for the fact that today we can see a difference between the areas east of Fiji, Polynesia, and those to the west, Melanesia.

Little is known of the settlement of the islands known as Micronesia. There seems to have been an early settlement of the western islands, perhaps from the Philippines. Later the north and east were heavily influenced by Polynesians. In appearance the Micronesians look more like the people of Asia than do any of the other island dwellers of the South Pacific.

The settlement of the whole island world of the Pacific was a long and complicated movement. We must not think of all the migrating people going south and east. Some of the accidental voyagers went west and north. Polynesian groups moved into
Melanesia in this way. Some people on the south coast of Papua and the north coast of New Britain may be the descendants of such back migrations.

**Summary**

The people of New Guinea, then, are the result of a number of gradual movements of different groups from East Asia into the islands of the Pacific. The variety of the peoples who live in New Guinea is a result of the meeting of different groups which migrated from South-East Asia. The movement of people eastward has continued until recent times. Had not the national states of Australia and Indonesia developed to control migration in the area, there might possibly have been further influence from Indonesians, or Malays, in New Guinea. Perhaps the Islamic religion would have been introduced. Had this happened, changes as great as those of the agricultural revolution would have occurred.

Many other national groups today have a similar background of the coming together of many different migrating peoples. The
English are one such example. While it is still sometimes convenient to call the people of New Guinea Melanesians, it should be remembered that the word applies more to an area than to a particular type of people.

**Achievements of the People**

Before the coming of the Europeans the people of New Guinea had developed a system of village subsistence farming. That is, each village produced sufficient food for its own needs; there was no growing of crops for sale. Additional food was obtained by hunting and fishing. Metals were not used. Like the peoples of other islands, Australia and parts of America, the people of New Guinea had been too isolated from other areas of the world to learn of the changes which were taking place in methods of industry and agriculture. In addition, the population of New Guinea had not reached a size where it becomes necessary to develop better methods of production in order to feed the people. Some countries have been faced with the problem of either increasing the amount of food available or allowing some people to starve. In these circumstances, as we can imagine, changes are likely to be made. In New Guinea, where the people were numerous (in the Chimbu area densities of 500 people per square mile were reached) efficient methods of drainage and soil conservation were developed. Elsewhere, had the knowledge of other farming methods and the necessary types of plants and animals been available to them, the New Guinea people were not likely to change their ways of farming when there was little need.

**Skills of the People**

Apart from the development of the basic subsistence form of economy the New Guinea people had shown skills and inventiveness in a number of ways. The London Missionary Society teacher, W. G. Lawes wrote in 1878:

No implement, utensil or weapon is to be found made of iron or any metal; but after visiting the canoe making yards of Hood Bay, and seeing the carving from Orangerie Bay, the observer will have a much greater respect for the stone age than ever before. The fine houses testify to the excellence of their tools, as well as to the industry, perseverance, and skill of their builders!
In other areas, too, special skills had been acquired. *Pottery,* reddish brown in colour and carefully moulded, was made in the Chambri Lakes area. *Carving,* which required a knowledge of the characteristics of different types of wood, and long hours of skilled labour from the artisan, was carried on in a number of districts. Tami Islanders carved intricately worked dishes. From the Trobriands, the Sepik and the Papuan Gulf, also, came the work of skilled craftsmen. On Manus finely worked shell ornaments were made. The men's clubhouses of the Sepik, the *haus tamberan,* were sometimes over one hundred feet long and fifty feet high. Their construction required the co-operation of a number of men and the application of many skills. Numerous other examples of skilled craftsmanship could be added to the list.

*Trading,* although involving only a small quantity of goods, was carried on connecting coastal groups with those inland; and island people with those on the mainland. Each year *lakatoi* from the *Motu* villages left on a trading expedition, or *Hiri,* to the Gulf district. They carried with them stone adze blades and pottery, and returned with sago. As they had to wait for the winds to change before making the return journey, the traders might be away for up to three months. Linking the mainland in the south-east to the Trobriands and the Louisiade Archipelago was an extensive system of trading, *the Kula ring.* The Kula involved the ceremonial exchange of necklaces and bracelets, but normal goods of trade—pottery, wooden bowls, sago and stones for tool making—were also included. The Kula, in a slightly changed form, is still carried on by the people of the south-east. The peoples of the coasts and the islands had developed skills as shipbuilders and navigators at a time when most people in the world were not able to travel across broad stretches of ocean. The sea-going canoes were crossing from island to island at the same time as the Europeans were creeping along the Atlantic shoreline, rarely out of sight of land.

**Stories and Legends**

A system of writing had not been developed, but this did not mean the people had no literature. Songs, dances and stories were handed on from one generation to another. Story-telling kept alive many of the legends and beliefs of the people. Only now are
some of the traditional stories of New Guinea being put down in a written form so that they can be preserved when the arts of the story-tellers pass away.

**Government**

Politically, the people did not have systems of government which made and enforced laws over a wide area. They lived in villages of 200 to 300 inhabitants; in smaller groups of houses (hamlets) of perhaps 30 people; or in isolated single houses. In the village communities men obtained power in a number of ways. Some men were powerful because they were great warriors; some because they obtained wealth through gardening or some other means; and others because they had great knowledge of traditional customs or sorcery. Except in one or two places there were no definite committees or hereditary chiefs to rule the community. When a crime was committed the relatives of the person who had suffered were expected to take vengeance, or in some cases the community as a whole would demand that the offender be punished.

The traditional political organization had a number of important effects on later history. Because there was no one strong government in any area, the people were not likely to unite in the face of any foreigners who appeared. Nor did the traditional form of government normally give any one man the right to speak for the group. Difficulties were increased by Europeans who did not understand how the village communities were run. The Europeans sometimes thought that one man was an all-powerful chief. They even gave the chief the title *king*. It was an idea strange to the rest of the villagers, who were not likely to recognize the authority of the king unless he was an exceptional man. Later other Europeans thought that the villages were organized like co-operatives with all property held in common. They therefore thought it would be easy for the villagers to run plantations as co-operatives but often these schemes failed. One of the reasons for failure was that the village gardens had never been managed as co-operatives.

The first Europeans sometimes had false ideas, too, about the type of life led by the New Guinea people. Some saw it as a life of ease in a land of pleasant climate, where there was no need to work hard; they saw a life of carefree days broken only by feasting and dancing. Other Europeans thought the New Guinea villagers
lived in constant fear of cannibal raids; suffered from diseases they could neither understand nor cure; and frequently went in fear of the evil curses of the sorcerers. To these Europeans the New Guinea people lived a life of brutality and ignorance. No doubt the truth lay somewhere in between the two extreme views. There were times of sickness, cruelty and fear: but there were also times when the villagers could laugh, feast and dance.

**How Do We Know the Prehistory?**

*Archaeology*

How do we know the prehistory of a people? The prehistory is the history of the period before the keeping of written records.

Archaeology provides the most important evidence about prehistory. The archaeologist obtains his information from the study of the relics of past times. Stone tools, bones and pottery survive through the ages and can be examined by scholars. The best information comes when this material is dug out of the ground where it was actually used. This may be an old village site of a gardening people or the floor of a cave long used as a camping place by hunters and gatherers. The rubbish on the cave floor may have gradually built up to a depth of several feet. As the archaeologist digs deeper into the deposit, carefully sifting the material as he goes, he is able to build up a picture of how the people lived. The tools found indicate the crafts of the people, bones show the sorts of animals eaten. The deeper down the material is found the older it is. Accurate measures of the age of these old sites can be obtained by *radio carbon dating*. This is a scientific method carried out in laboratories on small pieces of wood, charcoal or bone found by the archaeologists. A radio carbon dating of some ash deep in the earth of a cave at Chuave in the Eastern Highlands showed that it was left there about 8,000 B.C. With the ash were some stone tools made and used at the same time.

Careful examination of the shape of tools and the kinds of pottery and its decoration provides evidence of the relationships between peoples living in different places in the past. The existence of pieces of pottery on New Britain similar to pottery found in Tonga means that related people lived on both islands at some time in the past. Similarly, the same designs cut in rock walls at two distant places may give evidence that both areas were occupied by related groups of people.
**Traditional History**

The traditions which the people themselves possess can sometimes be used by the archaeologist. Most clans have legends to explain the origins of their villages, or how man first obtained the knowledge to use fire, or make weapons or grow crops. For example the Ngaing people of the Rai Coast have a story in which the taro is invented in the land to the west of their territory. The archaeologist might look for evidence to see if in fact the practice of growing taro has spread from the west. The Huli people of the Southern Highlands explain in their legends that the earliest people in the Tagari Valley grew taro and not the sweet potato as is now common. In this case archaeologists would agree that the sweet potato is a more recent crop. Some legends, of course, are imaginary only, and while they may be interesting as stories, are of no help to the historian.

In addition to the information he hears or finds, the archaeologist is provided with evidence from other scientists.

**Anthropology**

Anthropologists in their study of man and his society supply information about the past. The anthropologist Malinowski, lived with the people of south-east New Guinea, learnt their languages and carefully recorded their customs. From his writings we have a picture of the system of chieftainship as it existed in the Trobriand Islands:

>(The chief's) high rank inspires everyone about him with the greatest and most genuine respect and awe. . . . Not only does the chief . . . possess a high degree of authority within his own village, but his sphere of influence extends far beyond it. A number of villages are tributary to him, and in several respects subject to his authority. In case of war they are his allies and have to foregather in his village. When he needs men to perform some task, he can send to his subject villages, and they will supply him with workers.

From other anthropologists who have lived in other areas before the life of the people was much disturbed by the coming of outsiders, the archaeologist is able to gain an idea of how the people in the recent past have gone about their work.
**Linguistics**

Linguists too, in their studies of languages, are able to assist the archaeologists. In some places there is a basic language spoken over a wide area, but groups within that area have often developed separate dialects. Then it can generally be shown that these people came from the one area but have since lived in isolated groups for a long period. An example from the Highlands shows the way languages break into sections over a long time. The East New Guinea original language (or stock) can be broken into seven Families of Languages.

![Diagram](image)

**EAST NEW GUINEA HIGHLANDS STOCK (73,000 SPEAKERS)**

- **7 FAMILIES OF LANGUAGES**

  - **HAGEN-WAHIJIMI-CHIMBU FAMILY**
    - **4 SUB-FAMILIES OF LANGUAGES**
      - **3,000-4,000 YEARS**
      - **The Sub-Families are made up of Languages**

  - **HAGEN SUB-FAMILY**
    - **3 LANGUAGES**
      - **7,000 SPEAKERS**
      - **18,500 SPEAKERS**
      - **439 SPEAKERS**

*The Development of Languages.*
It is thought that it takes between 3,000 and 4,000 years for the languages to develop from the stock.

On the other hand linguists believe that the group of languages found on the eastern and northern coasts of New Guinea, the Melanesian Languages, has grown for a different reason. Differences in languages are a result of one language being brought in by migrating people, then being changed by contact and subsequent mixing with various local languages.

Botany and Zoology

Studies of the distribution of plants and animals also provide evidence for the archaeologists. Certain plants and animals can only have been carried to some areas by man. Pigs are not native animals in the islands of the south-west Pacific nor would they have swum across the oceans to reach, say, New Britain. If there is evidence of there being pigs on an island at a particular time then it is reasonable to assume that it must have been visited by men.

Blood Groups

Recently scientists have used another means of telling whether different peoples are related. This is done by testing the blood types of the population. Tests so far made in New Guinea give some evidence that there have been migrations of two different peoples into New Guinea. No connection has been found between any of the peoples of Africa and those of New Guinea. Previously, because some Africans looked like New Guineans, some scientists thought they might have been related.

Things the Archaeologists do not Know

As yet there has not been a great deal of archaeological research carried out in New Guinea or the South Pacific. In the future more details of the prehistory of the people will become known, and things which are a mystery to us now, will be explained. One problem for archaeologists and other scientists to explain is how the sweet potato came into the Pacific. Botanists are now certain that the plant came from South America, yet it was present in the Polynesian islands before the coming of the Europeans. Did some people from South America sail to Polynesia carrying the sweet potato? Did Polynesian Islanders sail to the west coast of America,
learn to cultivate the plant and then return? Was it introduced to one of the islands by seed-carrying birds? The historian, Andrew Sharp, believed that it was carried by Indians who sailed (or were blown) to one of the Pacific Islands. One of the important pieces of evidence he uses was provided by the linguists. The word used by the South American Indians for the sweet potato closely resembles the Polynesian name. Most scholars now believe that the sweet potato did not come to New Guinea from Polynesia but from Indonesia. It had been taken to Indonesia by Europeans in the 16th century. The sweet potato is a very important plant in the New Guinea Highlands where it enables large populations to live at high altitudes.

Another mystery concerns the stone pestles and mortars which have been found in various parts of New Guinea. Again it is not known who made them, or brought the idea to New Guinea, or what purpose they were used for. Rock carvings, cut by unknown peoples, have also been found in some districts. Further study will find the answers to some of these problems, others may remain mysteries.

Books for Further Reading

Malinowski, B., Argonauts of the Western Pacific.
Sharp, A., Ancient Voyagers in Polynesia.
(Argues that there had only been two different groups of people who migrated to New Guinea.)
Crocombe, R., (ed.) An Introduction to the History of the Pacific, (to be published).
Chapter Two

The Arrival of the Europeans: Explorers and Traders

The Portuguese and the spice trade—The Chinese, Cheng Ho—The naming of Papua—The Spanish—The naming of New Guinea—The Dutch in West New Guinea—The English and French explorers—The scientists of the nineteenth century—Traders, whalers, sealers, pearlers, sandalwood and beche-de-mer traders—Relations between traders and villagers—The labour trade and its results.

The first Europeans who came to New Guinea can be divided into four groups; explorers, traders, missionaries and administrators.

Portuguese Exploration

In the fifteenth century Europe began a gradual extension of her power outside Europe, a movement which continued until the First World War. Since the Second World War, European countries have generally been giving up direct control of other nations.

In the fifteenth century, Portugal sent her ships, merchants and administrators south along the west coast of Africa. It was a very slow movement. In 1415 they captured Ceuta, just across the narrow strip of water which separates Africa from Spain. By 1460 the Portuguese knew the coast of Africa south to Sierra Leone. The Portuguese had come to Africa to gain knowledge; to make converts to Christianity; and to obtain profit from trade. Few converts were made, but a profitable trade was established. Slaves, gold, ivory and pepper were traded from the tribes of the West African coast.

The profit to be made encouraged the Portuguese to break into
the rich trade between Europe and Asia. Till the end of the fifteenth century this trade had to go at least part of the way overland. From their explorations the Portuguese now realized that by sailing south around Africa they might be able to reach Asia by sea. The trade from India and Indonesia to the countries of the Mediterranean was largely in the hands of Islamic traders which made the Portuguese all the more anxious to capture it for their own interests. The Chinese too, knew about the Spice Islands. In the early fifteenth century the commander, Cheng Ho, sailed as far west as Africa and as far south as Timor. He may have even reached the north coast of Australia. Chinese traders did not follow the explorations of Cheng Ho. At the time of the coming of the Portuguese, Chinese ships rarely went south of Malaya.

In 1487 Bartholomew Dias left Portugal on a voyage to the southern tip of Africa, the Cape of Good Hope. Ten years later Vasco da Gama completed the aim of the Portuguese by sailing all the way to India. Malacca, the important trading centre in Malaya, was captured in 1511, and China was reached in 1513. The Portuguese, one hundred years after the capture of Ceuta in North Africa, were trading in both the Pacific and Indian Oceans.

The Spice Trade

The products of trade which the Europeans wanted most of all were spices. Pepper, cinnamon, nutmeg, mace and cloves were needed to preserve and flavour food in the days before canning or refrigeration. The most valuable of the spices, cloves, came from the Molucca Islands—Tidore, Ternate and Amboina. The spice trade led the first Europeans close to New Guinea’s shores.

D’Abreu, a Portuguese sailor, reached the island of Ceram in 1512 and may have sighted the coast of New Guinea. The first definite landing of a European was that of Jorge de Meneses who called at a point in the north west in 1526. He named it Ilhas dos Papuas. The word Papuas, de Meneses obtained from the Malay term orang papuwah which meant fuzzy haired man.

The Spanish

Before da Gama sailed for India, Christopher Columbus had sailed to America. Columbus, working for the King and Queen of Spain, reached the islands of the West Indies in 1492. The Spanish hoped to enter the spice trade by sailing west. Their way was
barred by the continents of North and South America. As the Portuguese had found their way south around the coast of Africa; so the Spanish were able to sail around South America. In 1519 Magellan sailed from Spain around South America and across the Pacific to the Philippines. He was killed in the Philippines, but one of his captains, del Cano, sailed south to the Moluccas before crossing the Indian Ocean on his way home. The New Guinea area had now been approached from the east as well as from the west.

The Spanish did not use the Pacific route to the Spice Islands very often. However, those Spaniards who did go to the Moluccas passed close to New Guinea's shores. From the 1520's a number of Spanish captains sighted the coast. One of them, De Retes, in 1545 sailed along the north coast and gave it the name New Guinea, after the Guinea coast of Africa. Torres, working for Spain, sighted New Guinea in the east and then sailed west between Australia and New Guinea in 1606. Torres annexed the island. But, as was the case with a number of later claims, his claim was not supported by the home power.

The Europeans learn slowly about New Guinea and the Pacific

1497 Vasco da Gama sailed to India.
1512 D'Abreu may have sighted New Guinea.
1519 Magellan left on the first voyage across the Pacific.
1526 de Meneses landed on the north west coast.
1545 De Retes gave the name New Guinea to the island.
1606 Torres sailed between New Guinea and Australia.
And it was more than 250 years before any Europeans had travelled any distance inland.

The Dutch

During the sixteenth century Holland was building her power as a shipping and trading nation. At the end of the century her sailors made their first voyage to the Spice Islands. Soon she was the most important naval power in Europe and had taken control of the spice trade away from the Portuguese. Dutch ships now made occasional sightings of the New Guinea coast. William Jansz visited the south east in 1606. Jacob Le Maire and William Schouten sailed along the northern coast, then across the Bismarck Sea to New Ireland in 1616. Other sailors, among them Carstensz
and Tasman, helped the Dutch to chart parts of the New Guinea coastline.

Through an extension of their activities in the Spice Islands, the Dutch first made an indirect claim to the western half of New Guinea. The Dutch signed a treaty with the Sultan of Tidore which recognized his claim over part of New Guinea. The Dutch therefore, had, through the treaty, an interest in the area from the seventeenth century onwards. In 1828 they made their claim to the west definite, and twenty years later defined their area as that west of 141 degrees east Longitude.

Although early explorers of the area, and the first Europeans to declare their control over part of New Guinea, the Dutch administration did not make a permanent settlement in West New Guinea until the end of the nineteenth century. A disastrous attempt had been made to found a settlement in 1828. Deaths from malaria and other diseases were so great that the pitiful survivors were taken away after seven years. The Dutch missionaries who worked in the Dorei Bay area from the middle of the nineteenth century, faced equally terrible conditions.

The English

From the end of the seventeenth century the English and the French were great rivals in Europe. This rivalry was extended to their colonies in North America, India and the Pacific. Dampier was the first English captain to sail in New Guinea waters. His voyage took him east along the north coast of New Guinea and around New Guinea. The passage between New Britain and Umboi Island is now known as Dampier Strait. Carteret and Cook touched on the coasts of New Guinea and mapped many of the Pacific islands. At the end of the eighteenth century McCluer explored in the west. For a brief period the British attempted to form a settlement in the north west. Disease, hostile natives and lack of any economic success led to the abandonment of the settlement within two years.

Mapping the Coast

In the nineteenth century the English made more detailed surveys of the coastline. The British ships the *Fly* and the *Bramble* explored the southern coasts in the 1840’s. The work was continued by Captain Owen Stanley in 1849, and Captain John
Moresby in 1873. When Moresby made his voyages along the south east and north east coasts he believed it to be “the last extensive unknown coastline in the habitable world”.

The French

Meanwhile the French had made a number of voyages in New Guinea waters. The Comte de Bougainville sailed from the New Hebrides to the Louisiades and then along part of the north coast in 1768. D'Entrecasteaux voyaged through Melanesian waters at the end of the eighteenth century.

Effect of Early Exploration

The early European navigators had very gradually mapped the shoreline of New Guinea. They had left their names on mountains, bays, straits and islands, but they had little effect on the majority of the New Guinea people. Sometimes landings had been made to obtain water and food. Often the strange intruders were attacked by the people. What else could they do to these men who came in strange craft and showed no respect for traditional ways of behaviour? In communities which generally regarded strangers as enemies, it was customary to attack first. The early explorers returned to Europe with reports that the people of New Guinea were warlike and possessed no goods which were valuable for trade. Some of the explorers believed the land might one day provide gold or sites for rich plantations, but generally their reports did not encourage other Europeans to attempt to live in New Guinea. It was well over three hundred years from the arrival of the first European voyagers until the first permanent European settlement.

The Scientists

During the nineteenth century there was an increase in interest and knowledge in the natural sciences concerned with the earth and living things—geology, botany and zoology. New Guinea, with a profusion of plants, birds and insects, excited the interest of a number of scientists and explorers. The British scientist, A. R. Wallace, landed in West New Guinea in 1858 and camped there for several weeks. Later two Italians, Dr. O. Beccari and Luigi D'Albertis, also went to western New Guinea. D'Albertis did his most important work, however, in the Papuan Gulf and Western
District. In the 1870's he made several voyages up the Fly River. On the second voyage he reached a point over 500 miles inland. At the same time Nicolai Mikluho Maclay lived and explored along the north coast (the Maclay or Rai Coast). Towards the end of the nineteenth century German scientists made a number of expeditions. Dr. O. Finsch explored coastal areas and sailed up the Sepik River for a short distance. The land inland from Madang and in the Ramu Valley was investigated by the botanist, Dr. C. Lauterbach.

The Scientists Collect Knowledge of New Guinea

The scientists wrote detailed accounts of their travels. Some were interested in the way of life of the New Guinea people whose villages they visited. They made sketches and collected articles made by the people. From their writings we can get some idea of what village life was like just before the coming of the Europeans. In addition, the scientists collected specimens of the plants, small animals, insects and birds which they saw. People in Europe and Australia now received more accurate information about New Guinea, although this information did not spread widely except among the scholars.

Generally the scientists were careful to see that their penetration of the interior was carried out without bloody clashes. W. MacLeay, who led an Australian expedition to the Gulf of Papua in 1857, instructed his men that he would rather abandon the expedition than have to shoot one Papuan. D'Albertis was probably an exception among the scientists. It is thought that he used displays of either dynamite or guns to frighten the people in the riverside villages. In spite of his actions he had several narrow escapes from villagers who were not as frightened as D'Albertis wanted.

Traders

The first Europeans met by many of the people of New Guinea were traders. The traders came first for the fishing in the nearby waters, then for the timber, plantation crops, and the men of the coasts.

The Whalers

In the second half of the eighteenth century the whalers entered the Pacific. At first they worked in the seas off the South Ameri-
can coast; by the 1780's they had entered Australian and New Zealand waters; and by 1819 they hunted whales as far north as Japan. Whaling remained important in the Pacific until the second half of the nineteenth century. Whaling declined as mineral oil obtained from the earth replaced the oil obtained from the captured whales.

Most of the boats in the whaling trade were owned by Americans, some by the British, and very few by other nations. The crews of the whalers were a very mixed lot. Various nationalities and races sailed in the Pacific whalers; many of them were illiterate and ruthless. Frequent landings were made in some of the islands, Tahiti, Hawaiî and Samoa, where food, water and women were sought. In the Solomons and the Bismarck Archipelago there were occasional landings. The mainland, being away from the main whaling grounds, was rarely visited.

The Sealers

At the same time as the whaling industry was developing, other traders and seamen were catching seals on the southern Australian and nearby island coasts. The most important market for the seal skins was China. Inevitably the sealers on their way from Sydney to China threaded through the islands. Many carried goods to trade with the island peoples.

The irregular visits of the sealers and the whalers had little effect on the people of New Guinea. However, by introducing disease, guns, and other goods the way of life was completely transformed on some of the Polynesian islands before the arrival of missionaries or government officials. The coastal people of New Guinea attacked the early traders whenever they had the opportunity. Their warlike attitude and their reluctance to trade caused many early captains to avoid western and northern Melanesia.

Trade

Beche-de-mer

It was the China trade which in the second half of the nineteenth century encouraged other Europeans to come to New Guinea waters. The Europeans wished to trade with China, but they had few goods which the Chinese wanted to buy. Then it was found that some of the sea-foods and timbers of the Pacific were in demand in China. One of the sea-foods was the beche-de-mer,
sometimes called sea slug or trepang. The traders employed coastal people to collect the beche-de-mer among the off-shore reefs. They filled their canoes with beche-de-mer, then dragged them up the shore. On the sand the beche-de-mer was smoked and placed in bags. Each trader would have several groups working for him. Periodically he visited each station to collect the bagged beche-de-mer and pay the workers in trade goods. Although there were a number of beche-de-mer fishermen along the mainland coast and in the islands by the 1880's, the industry did not earn great amounts. One writer in 1890 thought that the industry had brought in 60,000 dollars.

Timber

Some timber was sold to the Chinese. Sandalwood, ebony and cedar were cut for trade with China and other overseas ports. Again coastal people were employed by the traders, assisting in the felling and handling of the logs. By the end of the nineteenth century most of the easily obtained sandalwood had been cut.

Copra

Copra, another product the coastal people were taught to collect and prepare for the traders, did not decline in importance. The major development of the copra industry, however, came later with the planting of large estates and the extension of village groves.

Pearling

Before the 1870's, pearling was established in the waters to the north-west of Australia. The movement of the pearlers east into Torres Strait and the islands of south-east New Guinea was partly a result of the high fees imposed by the Dutch on divers working in the Timor Sea. By 1875 there were about 70 boats and 700 men operating out of the north Queensland port of Somerset. The pearling fleets did not employ many mainland people, but they did increase the number of boats in New Guinea waters dependent on occasional calls at various points for supplies of fresh food and water.

Traders and Villagers

The Europeans who came to New Guinea as traders were rough, adventurous and sometimes cruel and thoughtless. Some made
large profits. In the mid-1870's in the Bismarck Archipelago one thimbleful of coloured beads bought one pound of copra—at a time when copra was worth between sixteen and thirty-two dollars per ton. Of this the trader received only about four dollars as his share. Labourers employed by the traders were paid a stick of tobacco for a day's work. While the profits for some traders were high, the risks were high for all. Many of them were killed in surprise attacks by hostile villagers. Just who was to blame for the traders' deaths is open to doubt. The missionary Lawes wrote:

Of all those who have been killed in New Guinea in recent years, I don't think there is one case which may not be attributed either to reckless disregard of warning or violation of native rights.

T. F. Bevan, a beche-de-mer fisherman, argued that the traders had generally been killed by treacherous villains who needed to be taught a lesson. Sir Peter Scratchley, who investigated five killings in 1885, thought that the villagers deserved punishment in three of the cases. Of these three, two of the murders were pay back killings for actions by other Europeans and the third European (Webb) who had been known to take advantage of the villagers. In addition Webb had been among the traditional enemies of the murderers and they may have associated him with their enemies. At least in these five cases the murders may have been right according to the villagers, although certainly not by European law.

In the three cases where Scratchley thought the villagers guilty, they were punished by a bombardment from a British navy boat anchored near the villages, and by burning some houses. The damage could be quickly repaired, but no doubt the villagers were temporarily terrorized. Many of the British were aware that the punishment they had given was not appropriate; the difficulty at the time was to find a practical alternative. Other methods of maintaining European law were not possible until patrolling was developed in later years.

**Chinese Traders**

Not only European traders came to New Guinea. Some Chinese junks traded in beche-de-mer, sandalwood and other profitable cargoes. The Chinese, too, risked death and disease. Some people think the Chinese were the first to introduce pidgin English; 'pidgin'
being a corruption of the Chinese traders' *business* English. The majority of linguists think New Guinea pidgin was a separate development, its name only having Chinese origin.

**The Labour Trade**

The Europeans needed labourers to work on their plantations in Fiji, Samoa and Queensland. In none of these places were the local people willing to work on the plantations. To obtain workers the plantation owners sent recruiters to other islands. At first labourers or *kanakas* (kanaka is the Polynesian word for man) were obtained from the New Hebrides, but soon they were transporting men from the Solomons. By the 1880's, when the trade reached its height, labourers were being sought in New Ireland, New Britain, and in the south-east of New Guinea. In 1883 there were over thirty ships recruiting in New Guinea waters. Queensland was at this time the place where labour was in greatest demand. In the years 1881, 1882 and 1883, over 11,000 islanders from the New Hebrides, the Solomons and New Guinea were taken to Queensland.

**Methods of Recruiting**

The recruiter's ship anchored off-shore and the coastal villagers were encouraged to bring their canoes alongside. On the deck the trade goods—coloured cloth, beads, mirrors, axes, knives and trinkets—would be displayed. Either through interpreters, or in pidgin English the able-bodied men were asked to volunteer to work on the plantations. When a man agreed to sail with the recruiter his relatives were permitted to select trade goods to the value of a few dollars. Having obtained sufficient labourers the recruiter pulled away, leaving the villagers with trade goods to reduce their sorrow at the loss of their men.

**Abuses by Recruiters**

Unfortunately agreement between labourers and recruiters was not always reached so easily. Nearly all the recruiters were heavily armed. Crewmen with rifles normally stood watch while the bargaining was carried on. If the villagers refused to volunteer or attempted to seize trade goods the recruiters sometimes used force. In 1884 the captain and a crewman of the *Heath* were convicted
of killing unwilling recruits. But it was unusual for recruiters to be brought to trial; most acts of violence occurred on lonely coasts so that the crimes were unknown to the authorities. In the most infamous cases the recruiters kidnapped men by cruel trickery. Labour traders disguised their boats as mission vessels, persuaded the villagers to come on board, then quickly closed the hatches and sailed away. Even at the best of times it is doubtful if the recruits knew where they were being taken or how long they were going to be away.

Life of the Labourers

On the plantations life must have been strange for the Islanders, many of whom had seen little of the European and his ways. The voyage to the plantations was long and uncomfortable. It has been estimated that eight to ten died on the average voyage to Queensland. On German and British boats going to other colonies, the death-rate was possibly higher. Recruits were generally signed on for a period of three years at a wage of one dollar a month. Their 36 dollars was often not paid to them until the end of the three year contract. Because of this, the recruits were usually well-laden with goods on their return to the villages.

The work on the plantations was often long and hard. In Queensland nearly all the labourers worked on the sugar fields; in other areas they worked on other plantation crops. Food and clothing were provided. In some cases the labourers were told to build their own bush shelters; otherwise they were housed in long dormitories. Sunday was usually a free day. The labourers could walk into nearby towns and look at the shops and other sights strange to them. However to see things which were new must have been small comfort to men forced to eat foreign food; to act according to new customs; and to live away from their women and families. The death-rate of the labourers was always higher than that of other groups in the community. In 1884 the death-rate among the Islanders in Queensland was as high as one in seven, and it was the New Irelanders in particular who suffered.

Yet against this dismal picture must be set the facts that some recruits signed on for a second three year period after having been returned to the islands, and when the last of the labourers was repatriated in 1906 and 1907, over 1,500 preferred to stay in Queensland.
Some Results of the Labour Trade

The labour trade had a number of direct effects on New Guinea history.

1. It meant an increase in the number of Europeans and European goods in the coastal areas.

2. The growth of Melanesian pidgin was encouraged.

3. It embittered relations between the villagers and the Europeans in some communities. Romilly, a British official in New Guinea, thought that those who had been recruited were the most hostile to Europeans. Where recruiters had been working and had used brutal methods, or where some labourers had not been returned, the villagers attempted to obtain vengeance by killing other European visitors.

4. Most important of all, it was principally a result of the labour trade that European authority was first applied in east New Guinea waters. The British Government admitted that it had some responsibility for the actions of British subjects in the islands. As a result, in 1877, Sir Arthur Gordon of Fiji was appointed High Commissioner for the Western Pacific—an area which included eastern New Guinea. Deputy Commissioners could be appointed to particular areas. The Act had little effect. British naval ships with authority to control traders only occasionally sailed New Guinea waters.

Books for Further Reading


Chapter Three

The Missionaries

Early missions, Woodlark and Dorei Bay—Foundation of the London Missionary Society—McFarlane, Lawes and Chalmers—Kwato—The Methodists, Brown and Bromilow—The Roman Catholics, Sacred Heart, Divine Word and Marist Mission Societies—Lutherans at Simbang and Madang—The Anglicans in the Northern District—Who were the missionaries—Effects of mission work.

In the nineteenth century, well before European administration was established, missionaries arrived to make converts. Already we have noted the coming of explorers and traders to New Guinea, so there is some truth in the old explanation that Europeans went to new lands for God, Glory and Gold.

Woodlark Island Mission

The Roman Catholic mission established by the Marists at Woodlark Island in 1847, was the first mission started in eastern New Guinea. The difficulties faced by the Marists at Woodlark and at a second station on Rooke Is. were appalling. Isolation, fever, a lack of buildings and food gardens led to a number of deaths before the Marists left in 1852. For a further three years the mission was kept going by Italian missionaries until they, too, were forced to withdraw. It was many years before missionaries returned to east New Guinea.

The Dutch at Dorei Bay

Mission work was continued by the Dutch Protestants in 1855 at Dorei Bay in north-west New Guinea. They faced great difficulties. G. Souter in his book, New Guinea: The Last Unknown, has pointed out that for the first twenty-five years there were more
missionaries who died of fever than there were converts. By 1900 little progress had been made. The first missions may have had slight effect on the beliefs of the people of New Guinea but they had shown very fully the hardships to be faced. To succeed in New Guinea the missionaries needed to be resistant to the diseases of the coast and without concern for their own comfort. In the late nineteenth century several such men worked in New Guinea.

The London Missionary Society (L.M.S.)

The London Missionary Society was formed in 1795. It was one of the earliest formed of the societies which were to take part in the wide expansion of mission work in the nineteenth century. At first the L.M.S. hoped to belong to no particular church or government. Later it was associated with the Protestant, English Congregational Church. The L.M.S. had been working in the South Sea Islands since the end of the eighteenth century. In 1871, it extended its stations west to New Guinea.

McFarlane at Murray Island

The Rev. S. McFarlane and the Rev. A. W. Murray left teachers from the Loyalty Islands at Darnley, Dauan and Saibai Islands in Torres Strait. In 1872 more teachers were brought from the Loyalty Islands, and six Rarotongans were landed at Redscar Bay. Murray Island became the centre of McFarlane’s mission. His plan was to obtain recruits from the mainland; train them on the island; and then let them return to their own people as teachers. By doing this McFarlane hoped to avoid the high death-rate suffered by previous European missionaries. The plan had little success. McFarlane’s teachers were left at lonely posts and were rarely visited by the mission boat. Sometimes they were without goods to trade for food from the local people. Worst of all, the teachers suffered at least as much from fever as Europeans. Eventually McFarlane’s plan was abandoned. McFarlane himself left in 1885 and four years later the L.M.S. directors decided to close the Murray Island mission.

Lawes at Port Moresby

In the meantime Captain Moresby had discovered the harbour now named after him. Port Moresby was not as fever-ridden as other parts of the coast and it was a good centre for shipping.
Soon Port Moresby became the main L.M.S. centre in New Guinea. With the arrival of the Rev. W. G. Lawes and his wife at Port Moresby in 1874, there was the beginning of a continuous mission on the mainland. Lawes was assisted by a number of teachers from Rarotonga, where the Rev. J. Chalmers was head of the L.M.S. training institute. Soon, either under the direction of McFarlane or Lawes and Chalmers, South Sea Islanders worked along almost the entire south coast of Papua.

**South Sea Island Missionaries**

Speaking of the Island teachers in 1895 to an audience in Scotland, Sir William MacGregor, the first Lieutenant-Governor of British New Guinea, said:

He poor simple soul, leaves, at our call, his own little world and warm-hearted friends in the South Seas to devote his efforts to his fellow men in an unknown country. I believe some eight of the Society's teachers have been murdered by our natives. How many of you have heard of those eight men? Had they belonged to our own race we should all have known much about their career, their suffering, their martyrdom.

What MacGregor wrote at the end of the last century is still probably true today; the European missionary is remembered because the accounts of the missions have been written by Europeans.

The hardships faced by the Islanders working in New Guinea can be seen in a brief description of the life of Pi, a Rarotongan. Pi commenced work at Suau in the south-east. Within a short time his wife, who had accompanied him, died. He married the widow of a fellow teacher; she died. Finally, in 1885, he married the wife of a teacher murdered at Kalo. Pi himself died two years later in 1887. Ruatoka, who worked for twenty years in New Guinea and who was one of the first Pacific Islanders to arrive there, led a life that was similarly marked by the deaths of his companions. Often the Islanders had little education themselves—Ruatoka could only speak pidgin—but inevitably they influenced the local people. Their influence is readily seen in the Polynesian singing and dancing which they introduced. The missionaries thought that some local forms of dancing were immoral or were associated with raiding and cannibalism, and therefore tried to replace them with the Polynesian dances.
The Arrival of James Chalmers

In spite of the early work of Lawes and his helpers, little was achieved during the first three years. Lawes suffered greatly from fever, and from the end of 1877 to 1881 he was away. Before Lawes left, the energetic Rev. James Chalmers came from Rarotonga to Port Moresby.

James Chalmers was a strongly-built, bearded Scotsman. The son of a stonemason, he was born in Argyllshire in 1841. As a youth he was not devout, but at about the age of eighteen he changed his attitude toward religion; became a Sunday School teacher; a local preacher; and finally he entered Chestnut College—the L.M.S. training college. His first post as a missionary was Rarotonga where he was given the name Tamate. Chalmers was ten years on Rarotonga before he was allowed to transfer to the more adventurous and demanding work in New Guinea.

Soon after his arrival in New Guinea in 1877 Chalmers established a station at Suau. At first the people of Suau were worried by the presence of the missionaries. There was a constant chance that they would make a rush attack on Chalmers, his wife and Island assistants. Later, when Chalmers learnt the language, and the missionaries and local people became accustomed to one another, attitudes changed. Because the missionaries were a source of cloths, beads and metal goods, the prestige of the Suau people increased. On the other hand, as the missionaries extended their work to other villages, the Suau were resentful of assistance being given to their enemies. Later Chalmers opened stations along the Gulf coast and at the mouth of the Fly River. In each case the difficult exploratory work was carried out by Chalmers, who normally went unarmed among hostile or indifferent people. When he was killed at Goaribari Island in 1901, Chalmers' great physical strength was beginning to fail. He had tried to protect the New Guinea people from unscrupulous traders, investors in cheap land, and the man-stealers. His death was mourned by many coastal villagers who had become accustomed to his boat landing through the surf in the early morning.

Kwato

One of the best known of the L.M.S. stations was Kwato. Charles Abel, with the assistance of F. Walker, founded the mission on Kwato Island in 1891. Under Abel's direction the mission
developed in a slightly different way from some of the other L.M.S. stations. Abel thought that with the children at home in the villages it would be impossible to break the traditional ways and beliefs. The only answer, he thought, was to establish boarding schools for boys and girls from the surrounding area. By the beginning of the twentieth century there were eighty children at Kwato. Practical training became an important part of the courses. Abel believed that it was necessary to teach the Papuans new skills so that they could succeed in European society. He was strongly opposed to a policy which merely ‘protected’ the people from contact with European society.

**The Methodists and George Brown**

In the Bismarck Archipelago the first permanent mission was established by a Methodist, George Brown. Brown, like the L.M.S., employed South Sea Islanders as his first teachers. The Islanders, mostly Fijians, established posts on the coasts of New Britain and New Ireland around the central station set up in 1875 on the Duke of York Islands. Brown gained more early success than the L.M.S., partly because he gained the support of an important local leader, Topulu. Difficulties, however, were still great. In 1878 four Fijian missionaries were killed on the Gazelle Peninsula. Taleli, the leader who had planned the attack on the missionaries, feared that the new-comers would end his wealth and power. Prior to the coming of the missionaries and traders Taleli had become powerful by trading with the people further inland. Now that the missionaries were going inland Taleli realized that the inland villagers would be able to get goods without trading through him. His attempt to stop the missionaries brought punishment. Because they were fearful of their own safety, the European traders wanted Taleli taught a lesson. Reluctantly Brown joined a punitive expedition against Taleli. The village was surprised by the expedition. About twelve people were shot before they could escape and then the village was burnt. The missionaries had not wanted such a severe punishment. Brown had joined the expedition more to stop excessive bloodshed, rather than to obtain revenge. Later Taleli, who escaped, became a friend of Brown’s.

The Methodists in the Bismarck Archipelago did not always receive the support of the traders. When labourers were being recruited for work on the plantations in Samoa, Queensland and
Fiji, the missionaries opposed the recruiters' methods. They explained to the recruits what the work on the plantations would really be like. The Rev. Benjamin Danks, who had arrived in 1878 to assist Brown, went so far as to defend the Kabaira people when they killed three Europeans. Danks claimed that the Europeans had ill-treated the Kabairas.

The Methodists in Papua

In Papua the Methodists worked in the Louisiade and d'Entrecasteaux Islands, and on a small area on the mainland between East Cape and Cape Ducie, near Milne Bay. They arrived in the area in 1891 when the Rev. W. E. Bromilow set up his headquarters at Dobu. The labour recruiters had visited the islands before the arrival of the missionaries and the Dobuans believed they should kill the missionaries as payback for those Dobuans who had not returned. Eventually suspicion between the local people and the mission declined. The mission was adopted into the Edugaula tribe and Bromilow himself entered the Kula order. For men such as Caganumore, who had been a great warrior, the coming of peace and new ideas was difficult to accept. The system under which he had obtained fame no longer existed. Caganumore was later recognized as a district leader by the Administration; others could only resent the changes they saw about them.

Roman Catholics in New Britain

The Roman Catholics had arrived early when the Marists had worked on Woodlark. In the 1880s Roman Catholic mission work was recommenced. Two French priests accompanied the hopeful colonists of the Marquis de Rays' expedition to form a settlement in New Ireland. The colonists, without equipment, food or the skills to survive in the tropical islands, had to withdraw. Some missionary work was attempted before the priests, too, had to abandon the area. Father Lanuzel stayed on New Britain for some months ministering to the villagers. Europeans hostile to the Catholic missionaries, were blamed for increasing the local opposition to Lanuzel's plans.

The French Missionaries (M.S.C.)

The French Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (M.S.C.) decided to continue the work. In 1882 a group of five, including Father
Navarre, arrived at Matupit. The first house the M.S.C. fathers built stood on stumps made from paw paw; it soon collapsed. When they moved to Kokopo their house was burnt down. But in other ways the mission flourished. The energetic Frenchman, Father Couppe, organized the extension of missionary work. In 1891 he was appointed Bishop, a position he held until 1923. Particularly in the late 1890's numerous conversions were made. The first Sisters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart arrived in 1885 to assist in the mission work. After a dispute over the ownership of land at Kokopo, Vunapope became the main centre of the mission. At the end of the century a school for catechists was started there. Plantations were established and a saw mill was set up; the mission was helping to support its own work. By 1914 the first M.S.C. teachers had reached Manus.

Yule Island

In the meantime, the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart had extended their work to Papua. Like the L.M.S., the Catholics first approached Papua from the Torres Strait Islands. Father Navarre led a group to Thursday Is., where a handful of Filipinos formed the basis for the church. In mid-1885 Father Verjus and two missionary brothers carried the work to Yule Island. Yule Island subsequently became the headquarters of the M.S.C. in New Guinea with Navarre in charge. By the end of the 1880's Verjus had made visits to the Mekeo people of the Gulf and the first mission stations had been established on the mainland north of Yule Island.

Gradually the mission extended its influences inland. Father Pages built the mountain station at Deava in 1900. There had been some ill-feeling between the Roman Catholics and the L.M.S. because both believed they had a right to work along the Papuan coast. The L.M.S. argued that their early exploratory work had established their claim. The mountains inland from Yule Island, however, were opened up by the Catholics alone. Over steep mountain slopes and across ravines, tracks had to be made. Sometimes building materials and stores could be moved by pack animals, but often everything had to be carried by hand. As at other missions, the local languages were learnt by the missionaries before schools were established. Although the early M.S.C. teachers were French, they realized the importance of teaching the
language of government—German in New Guinea and English in Papua. Strangely enough, the Roman Catholics were teaching German in their schools in New Guinea before the Lutherans.

Society of the Divine Word and the Marists

Two other Roman Catholic mission societies, the Society of the Divine Word and the Marists, did much to spread Christianity in New Guinea before 1914. Along the northern coast of the Sepik and Madang Districts the missionaries of the Divine Word established stations. As the M.S.C. had done, they planted many acres of coconuts to supply a constant income to support their work. Around Alexishafen, in particular, they built up a mission centre—plantations and workshops to provide finance and practical training, and schools for religious and secular education. Nearly 1,000 students were in the Society’s schools by 1914. The Marists had a smaller number of stations on Bougainville and Buka. The people opposed the mission at first, and at one stage drove the missionaries out of Buin. But by the time the German officials arrived, the missionaries had established friendly relations with several villages. The Marist missions were staffed by French missionaries. After the early years the Society of the Divine Word and the M.S.C. employed mostly German-speaking missionaries.

The Lutherans

The Rev. Doctor J. Flierl was working in Australia when he heard that Germany had annexed New Guinea. He decided to make New Guinea his field. After obtaining permission from the Neuendettelsau Mission authorities in Germany and the New Guinea Company, he sailed for New Guinea. Flierl arrived in Finschhafen in July 1886, six months after the New Guinea Company had established a post there. Having explored the coast to the north and the south Flierl decided to build his first station at Simbang. Before he was landed by a Company boat at Simbang, Flierl was joined by an assistant from Neuendettelsau, Tremel. At first the people from the small village of Simbang were hostile, and at one stage Flierl had his hand injured in a scuffle. After the brief fight gifts were exchanged and the people of Simbang later assisted in the building of the mission. The low coastal site selected was not a good location, and in 1890 a new site, further inland was chosen.
Flierl at Simbang

During the early years at Simbang Flierl observed the customs of the people and learnt to speak the Kate and Jabim languages. A school was established. The students studied in the morning and worked in the gardens in the afternoon. For many years the students from Simbang carried the learning they had obtained at the Lutheran mission to villages on much of the Huon Peninsula. As the Simbang boys were in demand as workers, their influence was widely spread. At the end of their courses the students took trade goods to the villages well before any Europeans had travelled far inland. The Jabim language too was spread to new areas by the students. In 1907 the Mission decided to build schools to give higher education to those who had passed through the primary schools. One institution for Jabim speaking people and one for Kate speakers were established. In later years new stations, some of greater importance than Simbang, were opened up. By 1906 missions had been built at Simbang, Wareo, Heldsbach, Finschhafen, Jabim, Tami and Deinzerhoche. The missionaries were by then extending their work into the mountains of the interior as well as along the coast. Before the end of the period of German administration, the Lutherans had explored parts of the Markham, Watut and Bulolo Valleys.

To provide an income for the mission and to train students in new farming methods, the Lutherans followed the same plan as the Roman Catholics and developed extensive plantations. The mission's estates were greatly expanded in 1907 when the Lutherans purchased the New Guinea Company's plantations at Finschhafen. Horses, cattle and poultry were kept at all the mission stations. Bullock carts carried people and supplies from the coast to Sattleburg, and on some occasions missionaries rode bullocks over the rough track to Wareo.

The Rhenish Missionary Society

Another Lutheran missionary organization, the Rhenish Society, started work in New Guinea soon after it was annexed by Germany. Agreement between the New Guinea Company and the Society was reached when the Society said it would give industrial as well as religious training in its schools. The Rev. W. Thomas, the first of the Rhenish missionaries, arrived in Finschhafen in 1887. After some exploratory work, the Society selected Madang as its head-
quarters. In the next twenty-five years some forty-one missionaries were sent to Madang. Of these sixteen died and twenty-one were compelled to leave. The Rhenish Society, one of the largest missionary societies in Europe, found that New Guinea was its most difficult field. Appropriately enough, the mission was one of the first to have a qualified doctor living at the station.

The Anglicans

In 1890 the Administrator of Papua, Sir William MacGregor, reviewed the work of the missions. He realized that not many Papuans had been converted to Christianity, but he admired the work being done by Bishops Verjus, Lawes and Chalmers. To see more missionary work carried out, MacGregor invited other churches to establish stations in Papua. Partly as a result of his encouragement, the Methodists and the Anglicans sent missionaries to Papua. The work of the Methodist missionary, Bromilow, has already been noted; the Anglican pioneer was the Reverend Albert Maclaren. Representatives from the L.M.S. and the Methodists met with Maclaren in Port Moresby in 1890. At the meeting it was decided that the Anglicans would work in the area from Cape Ducie to the German frontier.

By 1891 the Anglican Mission party, made up of Maclaren, the Reverend Copeland King and a number of tradesmen, was ready to set out. The first landing was made at Wedau village. Immediately the difficulties experienced by other New Guinea missions had to be faced. Within a few months Maclaren died of malaria and King was so ill he had to leave. For a time it seemed that the mission would be abandoned. Some members of the Anglican Board of Missions in Australia thought that the loss of life on the Papuan coast was too high to allow mission work to be effective. That the mission continued was largely due to the work of Samuel Tomlinson and his wife. Tomlinson had been a carpenter who landed with the first group at Wedau and he remained in Papua till 1937. Some of his early assistants were Islanders who had worked on the plantations in Queensland. It was believed at the time that they were better able to withstand the climate than Europeans. After a while King was able to return. Before the end of the century the mission had grown to such an extent that rather than leave, the Anglicans appointed their first Bishop to the area.
Who Were the Missionaries

What sort of men became missionaries?

Many of the early missionaries who came to New Guinea had already had experience as missionaries in other parts of the world. Lawes, Chalmers, MacFarlane, Brown, Abel and Bromilow had worked in other Pacific Islands: Flierl and Maclaren had been in Australia. Many had been energetic, restless men before they became missionaries. Often they had tried a number of different occupations and travelled widely. Brown, while still a youth, had been a sailor on vessels in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. Lawes was more quiet and scholarly. Normally the missionaries did not come from either the richest or poorest classes but from the middle class. There was a strong connection between the governing power and the home country of the missionaries. German missionaries were predominant in New Guinea, while Australians and Britishers were most important in Papua. There were exceptions. Missions in both areas received men and money from France. Dutch missionaries worked in east New Guinea. The Australian Methodist Conference supported a mission in German New Britain.

Early Missions in Papua and New Guinea.
Summary of Mission Work

By the early years of the twentieth century missionaries were working in nearly all the coastal areas of Papua, New Guinea and the islands. Most of the interior was yet to be visited, and many areas of the coast rarely saw a representative of a mission; but it is still true that the missionaries were by then the most numerous occupational group among the Europeans in New Guinea, and they were often the villagers' only contact with the outside world. The work of the missionaries in peacefully exploring new areas and meeting new peoples is widely known. Of equal importance was the early social work carried out by the missionaries. The missionaries learnt local languages, wrote them down, and used the languages in the schools they established. In this way the first language learnt by the missionaries was sometimes spread into neighbouring villages where it had not previously been used. Kate and Jabim, for example, became more widely spoken as a result of Flierl's work in the Huon Peninsula. The missions were less ready to teach European languages. Little English and German had been taught by 1914. Health services were provided by the missions. Most missionaries were given some medical training before their coming to New Guinea. In addition, some hospitals with qualified doctors and nursing staffs were set up.

It was to the credit of the missionaries that they regarded the people of New Guinea as fellow human beings who were important in the eyes of God. They corrected the opposite view held by the worst of the labour recruiters who looked upon the villagers as just a cheap source of labour. In order to teach the people about God and to protect them from abuses, many of the missionaries were prepared to die, yet at the same time some failed to treat the people with the respect which human beings deserved. Flierl wrote, "The natives are mere children and some of them very naughty children." Of course they were not "mere children". But at the same time, the ideas taught at the missions were frequently not ideas accepted by the majority of Europeans. As a result, when the villagers left the mission, they were unprepared for the types of Europeans they met in shops, on plantations, or in government offices. This was not the missionaries' fault, for they taught the people to live what they believed to be the good life. They should not be blamed for the fact that many of the Europeans did not live in the way approved by the missionaries.
The Missionaries and Traditional Life

The missionaries have been accused of destroying too much of village life. Many of the missionaries believed in a strict code of behaviour which they wished to impose on the people. They did not approve of people working on Sunday, using sorcery, wearing few clothes, or enjoying dances which the missionaries thought obscene. Yet the majority were aware of the need to replace old beliefs and customs rather than just ban them. Chalmers wrote in 1885,

Retain native customs as much as possible—only those which are objectionable should be forbidden—and leave it to the influence of education to raise (the people) to purer and more civilized customs.

Bromilow expressed a similar idea,

After the needful eliminations and negations we aimed at saving Dobu not by reconstruction from without but by regeneration from within; we sought not to abolish but to redeem. Native customs not in themselves essentially debasing were to be points of Christian contact and instruction, and the old order, where possible, the vehicle of the new spirit. . . . Fortunately there are very few . . . dances that need censorship, and we were glad to find that we could leave them as natural expressions of the joy of life and the rudimental artistic sense.

Of course these were the views of mission leaders. Not all the mission workers who lived among the people were as considerate. But in most areas the missionaries did not thoughtlessly change old ways. The changes that occurred were partly the result of direct bans, but even more important were the inevitable effects following the arrival of European society.

Books for Further Reading

Neill, S., *A History of Christian Missions*. (There is no general history of missionary work in New Guinea readily available. However, most missions do have histories written, sometimes in pamphlet form. These can be obtained either through the missions or in some libraries.)
Chapter Four

The Coming of the Administrators

The scramble for colonies—Economic and strategic reasons for the formation of colonies—Influence of the missionaries and traders—Queensland’s desires for the formation of a colony—German trading interests in the South-West Pacific—Comparison of German and British reasons for colonization.

The Scramble for Colonies

The decision by Germany to claim north-eastern New Guinea and by Britain to claim south-eastern New Guinea in 1884 is best understood if regarded against events taking place in the rest of the world at that time. During the second half of the nineteenth century European powers obtained control of more overseas territories. The three powers most concerned were Britain, who extended her rule over four million square miles in the years 1880-1900; France, who gained three and a half million square miles; and Germany who obtained a far smaller area. The new colonies were established in Africa, Asia and the Pacific. In the Pacific Britain obtained Fiji, Rotuma, Papua, the British Solomon Islands, Gilbert and Ellice Islands, Cook Islands, Niue, Ocean Island, Tonga, and shared the administration of the New Hebrides and Samoa. Germany annexed New Guinea and the Bismarck Archipelago, the Marshall Islands, shared control of Samoa, and purchased the Carolines and the Marianas (except Guam) from Spain. France obtained New Caledonia, formally annexed Tahiti and Wallis Island, and shared in the administration of the New Hebrides.

Why Did the Scramble for Colonies Occur?

Because so many areas were colonized in the one period, historians look for general reasons to explain why the expansion of
European power occurred. Some historians think that the Europeans imposed their rule on the new lands for purely economic reasons, and they give three important economic needs the colonies would satisfy:

1. the colonies would be markets for manufactured goods from Europe;
2. the colonies would supply Europe with raw materials—copra, rubber, food and minerals;
3. in the colonies Europeans could invest capital on which they would receive interest payments.

Other historians believe the grab for colonies was the result of political and military considerations. They think colonies were obtained for reasons of power and defence. A study of the annexation of New Guinea supports both general explanations. Britain acted for political and military reasons, while Germany was more concerned with the benefits which would come from trade.

**Influence of the Missionaries**

The British Government appeared to be reluctant to take responsibility for new lands during the 1870's. This can be seen from the fact that Captain Moresby was not supported when he claimed the south-east coast in 1873. What brought about a change of mind by 1884? It was not a result of the demands made by the missionaries. Lawes wrote in a letter of April 7, 1883,

> We would rather not be annexed by anybody, but if there was any probability of a foreign power taking possession of New Guinea, then let us have British rule: but as a Crown Colony, not as an appendage to Queensland. Nowhere in the world have aborigines been so badly and cruelly treated as in Queensland . . . and are the natives of New Guinea to be handed over to the tender mercies of the men who have done these deeds?

Perhaps Lawes had been too harsh in his judgment of the Queenslanders; but he had certainly made it clear that he did not think it necessary for any European government to administer New Guinea. Other missionaries generally agreed with Lawes.

**Traders and Investors and Annexation**

Traders and investors had little influence on the British Government decision. A small trade in sea products, timber, and some
tropical products had developed, but in Papua the traders were few in number; the value of their products were low; and they were divided among themselves. Those traders concerned only with products such as timber or beche-de-mer demanded greater Government action in New Guinea because they wanted protection from hostile villagers. Strong demands for coastal peoples to be punished came from traders who had been attacked. They would have been satisfied with an increase in the number of naval patrol boats in New Guinea waters. The opposite view was held by traders recruiting the labourers. They were afraid that annexation would mean stricter controls over their work, and possibly the banning of recruiting for overseas plantations. There was some pressure on the British Government from the Anti-Slavery Society and from other people concerned about the cruelty of the labour trade. This had led to the setting up of the position of High Commissioner for the Western Pacific (refer Chapter Two). There were no obvious opportunities for large investors in Papua, as there were in India with the building of the railways.

The Influence of the Australian Colonies on Annexation

The two strongest forces which caused the British Government to change its policy were the Australian Colonies and the fears of Germany's actions. The Australian Colonies wanted Britain to annex New Guinea for several reasons:

1. to protect the steamship route through Torres Strait;
2. if there were profits to be made in Papua they wanted them reserved for British or Australian interests;
3. they were concerned about the possibility of a European power other than Britain obtaining control of the area.

In the event of war in Europe, Australia might find herself threatened from an enemy base in the north. Up to this time Australia had been protected by isolation and the strength of the British navy. Now, for the first time she had to think about defence. Some speeches by Australian politicians expressed great anxiety about Australia's security. Two events show that Australia was determined to claim Papua. Firstly, in 1883 the Queensland Government sent a representative, H. Chester, to Port Moresby to annex the area. However the British Government refused to recognize Chester's claim. Secondly, when the British finally de-
declared a Protectorate in the following year, the eastern Colonies agreed to pay some of the costs of administering what then became British New Guinea.

Germany's Actions

The activities of the Germans in the north increased the fears of the Australian colonies and encouraged Britain to act. German firms had been trading in the islands for some time. In 1856 Godeffroy and Son set up their base in Samoa. During the following two decades they extended their activities into the Bismarck Archipelago and other islands. Godeffroy's was replaced in the late 1870's by the Deutsche Handels und Plantagen-Gesellschaft der Sudseeinseln (D.H. & P.G., or more appropriately, the Long Handle Firm), and Hernsheim Brothers. In addition, the New Guinea Company was formed by German bankers in May, 1884, to invest in the development of plantations. Bismarck, the Chancellor of Germany, became convinced by mid-1884 that the Government should protect German trading interests in New Guinea. When England declared her intention to claim a Protectorate over much of eastern New Guinea, Germany protested. England then limited her Protectorate to the south-east and the Protectorate was officially proclaimed on November 6. At about the same time the German Government annexed New Britain, New Ireland and the northern coast of the mainland. After an exchange of views by Government representatives in Europe the border between German and British New Guinea was defined in the following year, 1885.

Two Reasons for Annexation

The different reasons for the formation of the two eastern New Guinea colonies can be seen in the writings of two historians. J. D. Legge in Australian Colonial Policy wrote of Britain's action,

It is obvious that the declaration of a protectorate over part of New Guinea was solely a response to something approaching a national demand on the part of the Australian colonies. . . .

At this stage the Australian interest was primarily a strategical one.

By contrast, D. L. Oliver, in his book The Pacific Islands, writing of Germany's expansion of power said, Her aim was commercial
expansion, and later on political expansion through commerce. Germany came first to protect her trading interests; Britain to remove Australia's defence fears.

Books for Further Reading

Legge, J. D., *Australian Colonial Policy*. Morrell, W. P., *Britain in the Pacific Islands*. (It is interesting to note that G. Blainey in *The Tyranny of Distance*, 1966, wrote, *Perhaps the strongest reason why the colony of Queensland took steps to annex the south-eastern part of New Guinea in 1883 was its proximity to (the) new sealane from Queensland to Suez.*)
Chapter Five

German New Guinea

The German New Guinea Company—Economic difficulties of the Company—German administration—Punitive raids—Labour recruiting and labour regulations—Land sales—Health and education services—Economic development, plantations and village agriculture—Extent of German administration.

The New Guinea Company

The German Government handed the administration of its new colony in New Guinea to the New Guinea Company. It was not unusual for European countries to entrust the government of their colonies to trading companies. The English had governed in India through the East India Company for a number of years; and several companies ruled parts of Africa in the second half of the nineteenth century. The companies were sometimes just and sometimes efficient; but their main concern was with profits.

Early Difficulties

In New Guinea profits were difficult to make. Representatives of the New Guinea Company arrived at Finschhafen in November, 1885. They had decided to build up plantations and trade on the mainland rather than in the islands, where plantations were already developed. One of the largest plantations in the islands was that at Ralun on the Gazelle Peninsula owned by T. Farrell and his part Samoan wife, Queen Emma. Before the arrival of the Company Farrell and Emma had over one hundred acres under cultivation. Yet the New Guinea Company was not able to achieve similar economic success. Fifteen years after the arrival of the first Company officials there were still less than one hundred Europeans on the mainland.
The Company set up its first headquarters at Finschhafen, a lonely and disease-ridden spot. Land was purchased from the local people at the cost of a few trade goods. Company officials obtained knowledge of new areas and new tribes. The most important voyage of exploration was that of von Schleinitz, who travelled up the Sepik to a point beyond Ambunti in 1886. Little else that the Company attempted was successful. The Europeans did not have sufficient knowledge of the new land and its climate to be able to grow any of the crops they tried, except coconuts. The local people had neither the desire nor the knowledge to work on the plantations. Many officials died of malaria and other diseases. By the end of the period of Company administration nearly twenty percent of the Company’s officials had died. The rate at which officials resigned was also high.

The Company Loses Power

The various shifts in the headquarters of the Company show the difficulties faced by its officials. In 1892 the Company shifted the centre of its administration from Finschhafen to Stephansort (Bogadjm). Conditions were no better in Stephansort, and from there they moved to Madang in 1897. Even in Madang officials suffered greatly from malaria. In between their numerous shifts, the Company officials spent much of their time doing great amounts of office work explaining their difficulties to the Company owners, who had no idea of conditions in New Guinea. Finally the attempt to rule through the New Guinea Company was abandoned. For four years after 1889 the Company handed over the administration of the colony to the German Government. At the end of the four years the Company was little better off. In 1899 the administration of the colony was taken over permanently by the German Government. Von Benningsen was appointed the first Governor and one of his first acts was to shift the centre of administration once again, this time to Hebertshohe on New Britain.

The German Administration

The Germans built up a system of administration through village officials. The first luluai was appointed at the end of the 1890’s. Luluai is a word from the Blanche Bay area meaning leader. When the German Government took over the direct control of the colony the practice of appointing luluais was extended.
After a village had come into peaceful contact with Europeans, government officials gave the peaked cap as a sign of authority to a local leader. The ceremony of appointing a luluai was made as grand as possible in order to impress the villagers with the power of the official and of the distant government. It was the duty of the luluai to collect taxes, settle minor disputes, report major disputes, and see that the Government’s orders were carried out. To assist the luluai a *tultul* (messenger) was appointed. The tultul needed to be able to speak pidgin so that he could pass information between government officials and the luluai.

As well as appointing luluais, the German officials attempted to group villages together in order to form larger administrative units. Because the people were unused to any form of wider administration and because old rivalries were strong, the larger units failed. Luluais were generally recognized as the head of small village areas only. The effectiveness of the luluais differed greatly from place to place. In some areas the position was held by men with little influence among their own people, and as a result they had little power. In other areas leaders of strong personality were appointed luluais. Their decisions were accepted by the villagers, so that a stronger form of one-man rule was established alongside the traditional forms of authority. In those villages where there was a mission representative there were now three possible sources of authority; the government, the mission, and the traditional leaders. Of course, a traditional leader might also have been a church or government official.

### Place Names

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>British Name</th>
<th>German Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Guinea Mainland</td>
<td>Kaiser Wilhelmsland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Britain</td>
<td>Neu Pommern</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Ireland</td>
<td>Neu Mecklenberg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duke of York Islands</td>
<td>Neu Lauenberg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Madang</td>
<td>Friedrich Wilhelmshafen</td>
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<td>Kokopo</td>
<td>Herbertshohe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sepik River</td>
<td>Kaiserin Augusta R.</td>
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### Punitive Expeditions

In the first twenty-five years of German rule, more than fifty Europeans were killed by the local people and there were numerous cases of theft. The trade goods of the Europeans were a great
temptation to the villagers, who, in any case, had not been brought up to see any wrong in stealing from foreigners. To prevent further killings, the German authorities used the punitive raid. At first the police groups employed were Malays with German officers. Later Buka and Jabim recruits were used. In some cases the raids were extremely severe. There were instances when up to eighty villagers were killed and their houses and canoes destroyed. Even after 1900 the annual reports of the German administration give a number of accounts of punitive raids. The report for 1909-1910 noted that an Australian recruiter had been killed and, “During a punitive expedition which was immediately sent, five of the murderers were killed and one captured; the others, driven from their island, fled to the bush.” The 1912-1913 Report briefly described the punishment of those thought to have killed two brothers on Umboi Island, “The culprits fell in a fight with the district office police boys.” The punitive raid may have made the villagers afraid to attack foreigners but it was certainly a strange way to stop people from being brutal. For the Germans, as it had been for the British on the Papuan coast, the problem was to find an alternative method of punishment.

Labour Recruiting

It was the general belief during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that Europeans were unable to work in the heat of the tropics. The planters who took up land thought it was necessary to employ labourers accustomed to work in a tropical climate. By 1914 approximately 20,000 men were serving as recruited labourers in New Guinea. Life as a plantation worker was obviously the way many men had their first direct or lengthy contact with Europeans. As we have seen in Chapter Two, recruiters were already obtaining labourers from the Bismarck Archipelago before the Germans claimed the area in 1884. Under an agreement reached in the following year, all those recruits working in non-German territories had to be returned. The Germans considered the men of their new territory one of its most valuable possessions, and they wanted them reserved for work on German lands.

Areas of Recruitment

At first labourers came from New Britain. The islands of New Ireland and New Hanover were also heavily recruited. The German
officials feared at times, that the total population of New Ireland was declining. Knowing that this would reduce the number of labourers available, the Germans limited recruiting there after 1909. Another area to supply many plantation workers was the Gazelle Peninsula, although even in German times it was noticed that the Tolais preferred to gain a cash income by selling their own crops and garden products to Europeans and other residents. By 1910 large numbers of recruits were being obtained from the Sepik. Earlier attempts to obtain labourers from areas which had had little contact with Europeans had failed. The first recruits brought from the Sepik and Manus had to be returned. They were completely bewildered by their strange surroundings and suffered greatly from home-sickness.

**Labour Regulations**

Until 1888 the New Guinea Company made no regulations covering the recruitment of labourers; planters who wanted workers made their own arrangements. The main force to make them provide reasonable conditions, was that their workers would leave if they were treated too harshly. The Company regulation of 1888 was strengthened by an ordinance of 1909. Only those workers who were carried by sea from their home areas to the plantations were covered by the regulations. Labourers living near plantations or inland from coastal plantations were still employed on the “free” agreement system. Under the regulations recruiters were given a licence. Once the licensed recruiter had obtained his labourers, he brought them to an administration official who saw they were in good health and understood the contracts they were signing. On the plantations owners were to provide basic food, accommodation, health services and a wage of fifty cents a month. The contract period was for at least three years, and contracts of seven years were known.

**The Labour Regulations in Practice**

In practice the regulations were sometimes ignored. Even the Government employed forced labour. If the local people refused to work by contract the police were used to capture recruits. Corporal punishment (flogging) was used on the plantations to make sure that the labourers obeyed orders. Punishment could be given by a plantation owner if he held a permit. Normally we would
expect that only a court could order corporal punishment. The use of corporal punishment came to be accepted as necessary if workers were to be kept efficient. Even the missions flogged wayward workers. To understand why the Europeans thought it right to punish plantation workers, it is necessary to know something of European beliefs about peoples of the Pacific. The missionaries often thought of the local people as children, and like children they had to be punished immediately they did something wrong. Other Europeans thought the villagers, before the arrival of the Europeans, lived lives of idleness. Idleness to the Europeans was a sin. To make the villagers lead hard-working lives, force might have to be used. After the people became accustomed to constant work, so the Europeans thought, corporal punishment would no longer be necessary. A more thoughtful opinion was that work was now essential for the young whose energy had previously been used in inter-tribal fighting. Unless the young men worked there was no role for them in a peaceful society. In fact, plantation work did provide an outlet for the energetic village men. The workers sometimes left home in spite of protests from the older men, but on their return with their trade goods and experience of the outside world, their importance in the village was increased.

**Land Sales**

Labour was one valuable resource the Germans obtained when they annexed New Guinea, land was another. Some land had already been taken up by Europeans before the arrival of the New Guinea Company. The early plantation owners believed that where there were no villages or gardens, the land was vacant. Of course, there was practically no unclaimed land along the coast. The land not in immediate use was reserved for hunting, for the gathering of food, or merely held for the future. The early plantation owners had ignored claims to *vacant* land or had given small payments of cloth and trinkets to the owners. Under the charter to govern held by the New Guinea Company, the Company had the sole right to purchase land, and large areas were bought up quickly. By 1914 the New Guinea Company held over 300,000 acres. When making purchases the Company was supposed to see that all those with claims to the area were paid, and that the local people did not suffer hardship because of the loss of the land. Unfortunately, the Company did not always make careful investigations before
the land was bought. Other planters wishing to purchase land had to buy through the Company.

When the administration of the colony was taken away from the Company, new regulations were brought into force. The Government now had the sole right to purchase land. Individuals wishing to obtain land located an area; reached an agreement with the owners; and then requested the Government to make the purchase for them. Before making the purchase Government officials had to see that all the customary rights of the villagers were protected. The price paid by the Europeans for the land was low, yet it was five times the amount handed on by the Government to the owners.

**Village Land-holding and Land Sales**

Even when the Government officials did their best to safeguard the interests of the villagers there was often resentment. The systems of land-holding varied from one area to another. In some villages the land was held by clans and worked by individuals, in others the land was owned by the village and divided by the headmen, in others still different schemes were used. Even when it was clear who owned the land, the idea of selling land was new. The land was seen and used as the resting place of those who had died; the support of the living; and a security to be held for those yet to be born. The idea that such land could be sold was unthinkable. Sometimes land was sold by people who thought they were merely letting foreigners use it for a short period. In other cases it seems that owners agreed to sell land because they believed they had to do what the Government officials wanted, even though they were not sure what was being asked.

In all, just over 700,000 acres had been sold by 1914. Compared with the total land area, it was a very small amount. However, in parts of the Gazelle Peninsula and along the mainland coast, some villages had lost most of their land. Their resentment was high. Around Madang it led to a plot to kill all the foreigners. In other places, too, the loss of land was no doubt one of the causes of attacks on Europeans.

**Land Losses Greater in Other Areas**

New Guinea was fortunate that the colonial powers came late. When the Americas were settled by the Europeans, Indian land rights were generally not recognized. Later, in Australia and New
Zealand the original inhabitants were pushed aside from much good land. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, most European governments agreed that the native peoples, even if they only hunted across land very infrequently, should be accepted as the rightful owners. It was an important principle applied in New Guinea by both the English and, to a lesser extent, the Germans. Previously in history the stronger had normally taken the lands of the weaker. In New Guinea itself, the more numerous and war-like tribes had taken the lands of less powerful tribes.

Health Services

The German administration did a little to add to the work being done by the missions in building health and education services. Medical tultuls were appointed to some villages. It was their duty to see that the village was kept clean, to give first aid, and to report any serious outbreaks of disease. As the training of the medical tultul was slight and he was given little assistance, he had little effect on the health of the villagers. Just before 1914 a group of girls had commenced training as nurses; it was an important change from the life led by women in the traditional society. European knowledge of tropical diseases and their treatment was increased by the research carried out by German scientists. The research had little immediate effect on the lives of plantation workers or villagers.

Education

The German administration wanted to do two things in the schools: build up the supply of skilled and semi-skilled workers; and make the local people more “German”. The colony had great difficulty finding enough men who were trained as carpenters, mechanics, printers and other tradesmen. Chinese, Japanese and Malays were allowed into the colony to fill the many vacant positions. By 1913 there were over 1,000 Chinese in the colony. The Germans hoped to train enough workers in the colony so that eventually it would be unnecessary to bring in outside tradesmen. It was a plan for the future; in fact only a handful had been trained by 1914.

The Teaching of German

Before the coming of the New Guinea Company in 1884 pidgin English was used as a means of communication along the coast.
German recruiters and planters found it necessary to use pidgin to give instructions to their labourers. Even during the years of German rule, then, pidgin continued to spread. Naturally the German administration would have preferred German to have been the common language—the *lingua franca*. The teaching of the German language was a step towards making the colony part of those territories which followed the German way of life or culture. Dr A. Hahl, who had replaced von Benningsen as Governor, instructed the missions:

Great stress should also be laid on the fact that the German should be taught instead of pidgin English, for the latter must be eliminated and German gradually introduced in its place in order to bring the natives round to understand Germans and Germany better, and to look at affairs through German eyes.

Those missions prepared to teach German were paid a subsidy; and in 1907 a government school was started at Namanula near Rabaul. The Annual Report for 1912-1913 said: *In the imparting of instruction predominant emphasis was laid on the acquiring of German.* In addition, the 92 pupils were taught trade skills. During the afternoon the students worked in the school gardens. By 1914 there were plans to build government schools in other areas.

**Economic Development**

The economic development of German New Guinea was slow. The New Guinea Company failed to make rapid progress. Even by 1910 the total European population on the mainland was only just over 200. In the Bismarck Archipelago there was more success. Coconut plantations were long established, although more copra was bought from villagers than was harvested from the plantations. By 1914 by far the majority of the European population of over 1,200 and most of the exports came from the Archipelago. Attempts to grow crops other than coconuts often failed. In 1900-1901 copra was easily the most important export, but there were small quantities of cotton, kapok, cocoa, trepang, tortoise shell and pearl shell sold. Over the next fifteen years experiments with rubber, pepper, cotton, tobacco, cocoa and coffee generally failed, so that the wealth of the colony came to depend more and
more on the one product, copra. In the years when the prices were down or the copra harvest was poor (as in 1906-1907) the value of the colony's exports was greatly reduced.

**Village Agriculture**

Villagers were encouraged to produce copra for sale. By a regulation of 1900, villagers were prevented from selling whole coconuts; the regulation was intended to force them to make copra. The 1900-1901 Annual Report claimed that the regulation acted against *the natural tendency to do nothing* of the villagers, a statement which makes clear the way some Europeans thought of the villagers and village life. Apart from the attempts to increase copra production, the German administration did not try to develop other cash crops in the villages. The few villagers who did begin to sell food to Rabaul and Herbertshohe did so without official help. On the plantations the labourers might eat rice, but in the villages the food and work remained largely as they had been before the coming of the Germans. At most, the villagers had obtained iron tools which made tasks such as clearing garden land much easier and quicker.

**Taxation**

The main way the villagers could enter the cash economy was by earning wages. It was in order to make more people become labourers that all men in certain areas were forced to pay a yearly tax. The men had to work in order to be able to pay the tax. To encourage further the labourers to work for Europeans, men employed by Europeans did not have to pay the tax if they remained at work for ten months of the year. It is difficult to believe fully the 1909-1910 Report, *At no place was compulsion necessary to obtain the taxes; the chiefs brought the amounts they had been able to collect willingly, even gladly.*

**Extent of German Administration**

By 1914 Germany had been in control of New Guinea for thirty years. Most of the coastline was administered from eight centres; Rabaul, the headquarters, with a European population of 233 in 1913, Kavieng, Madang, Namatanai, Kieta, Morobe, Aitape and Lorengau. Minor posts had been established at Angoram and Lae. Plans had been made for the extension of administration into the
explored areas of the Ramu and Markham. The large areas untouched by the German administration were the interiors of the larger islands, Bougainville and southern New Britain, and the highlands of the mainland.

**Books for Further Reading**


Mair, L., *Australia in New Guinea.*

Reed, S. W., *The Making of Modern New Guinea.*

Chapter Six

The British in Papua


Commodore Erskine’s Proclamation

When Commodore Erskine arrived to claim Papua for Britain in November, 1884, he found that Romilly had by mistake already held a ceremony to declare a Protectorate. Another ceremony was held. Men, whom the Europeans thought to be chiefs, were collected from east and west along the coast. Boe Vagi was recognized as the chief of the Motu people. With the assistance of the missionary, Lawes, who acted as interpreter, Erskine told the assembled people:

I desire on behalf of Her Majesty the Queen, to explain to you the meaning of the Ceremonial which you have just witnessed. It is a Proclamation that from this time forth you are placed under the protection of Her Majesty’s Government, that evil disposed men will not be permitted to occupy your Country, to seize your lands, or to take away from your homes. . . . Your lands will be secured to you. Your wives and children will be protected.

Should any injury be done to you, you will immediately inform Her Majesty’s Officers who will reside amongst you, and they will hear your complaints and do justice. . . . You will all keep peace amongst yourselves, and if you have disputes with each other
you will bring them before the Queen's Officers, who will settle them for you without bloodshed.

Should bad men come amongst you, bringing fire-arms and gunpowder and intoxicating liquors, you are not to buy them; and are to give notice at once to the Queen's Officers, so that such men may be punished.

Erskine's speech was a statement of British aims or policy. Some of it was carried out immediately. The selling of guns and intoxicating drink was forbidden (as it was in German New Guinea), and the recruiting of labourers for work overseas was stopped. Those men who had been taken from the islands of the south-east to work on the plantations were returned to their villages. Compensation was paid to the relatives of men who had died. Europeans who wanted to buy land were warned that if they made their own purchases from the local people, their claim to the land might not be supported by the government. After a long negotiation with the villagers concerned, the government itself bought some land. The largest amount was a block of just over 500 acres at Port Moresby.

Other aims expressed by Erskine were not put into practice for many years. He had instructed the people of Papua to live in peace and have all disputes settled by the British officers. But for many years there were very few officials of any sort. During the first four years there were only four or five government officials in the whole of Papua. Some villages close to the government stations were attacked. The government officials could not always protect them, nor did they want them to take their own revenge. Until the government was stronger, such villages were in a difficult position.

**The British Administration**

The first Administration established by the British was an extension of the old system set up under the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific. The head of the new Administration was known as the Special Commissioner. Sir Peter Scratchley was appointed to the position. As he did not arrive in Port Moresby until August 1885, Romilly and Musgrave, as Deputy Commissioners, headed the Administration during the first year. Scratchley was given little power and little money. He did not have the right to make new laws or raise taxes. The Australian Colonies provided
only £15,000 ($30,000) a year to administer the territory. The British government assisted by providing a boat and the money to maintain it.

**Scratchley's Policy**

Knowing that he could not attempt to make any great or rapid changes, Scratchley decided that the best he could do would be to get to know as much of the country as possible, and to try to stop the killings of traders and villagers which had occurred along the coast. In his investigations of the killings he generally agreed with the missionary, Lawes, that the traders were often to blame. He therefore used the punitive raid on few occasions. He voyaged along the coast to the German border and made one journey of fifty miles inland. In 1886 Scratchley died of malaria while on his way to Australia for treatment. It was unfortunate that this energetic officer died so soon after taking up his post. After his death, the position of Special Commissioner was held by Douglas who had previously been stationed at Thursday Island. Douglas remained Special Commissioner until 1888, when an Administration with increased power was formed.

**Extension of Government Influence**

Besides the Administration headquarters at Port Moresby, government stations were set up at Motu Motu (Toaripi), Rigo and Samarai. The stations were usually maintained by one man and he often had other tasks to do as well. For example, the Burns, Philp agent at Motu Motu also acted as the government representative. A system of recognizing certain men in the villages as leaders (as Boe Vagi had been recognized) was commenced. The British had been used to the rule of the powerful chiefs in Fiji and other areas. As a result, they expected the village leaders in New Guinea to have more power over the people than they really did. At this time two or three missionaries were the only Europeans who knew anything about the way village society was made up.

**Economic Development**

There was little economic development. The Special Commissioners saw economic development as something which would take place in the future; but they could not give any assistance. Unlike German New Guinea, there were no plantations developed before
the arrival of the Administration and there was little collection of copra. Beche-de-mer was the most important export. Small amounts of shell and timber were also exported. The only large firm trading in the area was Burns, Philp and Company. The firm had been founded in Townsville in 1875 by two Scotsmen, J. Burns and R. Philp. The firm grew rapidly and by 1887 it had control of most north Australian shipping. Douglas made an agreement with B.P.s to make a regular run connecting Thursday Island, Port Moresby and Samarai. The slowness of the Australians and the British to attempt to develop the area is further evidence that their main reason for claiming Papua was for the defence of the Australian Colonies and not because they wanted to make large profits. In fact, once the Australian Colonies’ fears about defence had been calmed they seemed to forget about New Guinea.

A New System of Government to Replace the Special Commissioners

It was some time before a stronger and more effective system of government was worked out. The new system of government was drawn up by the Premier of Queensland, Sir Samuel Griffith. He suggested that, as the Australian Colonies (Queensland, N.S.W. and Victoria) were paying for the administration of Papua, they should have some control. It would be difficult for all Australian Colonies to have a say, so Queensland, Griffith thought, should supervise the administration for the other two colonies. Control of the new administration was to be shared by Queensland and Britain. Under the new system, the head of the administration was to have greatly increased power. There were to be special regulations protecting the people from losing their lands and stopping them buying fire-arms and strong drink. The new system of government suggested by Griffith, was agreed to by both the Australian Colonies and the British Government. It came into force in 1888. The new head of the government in Papua, the Administrator, was Dr (later Sir) William MacGregor.

William MacGregor

MacGregor was active, learned and experienced, and had already served in a number of British colonies. In Fiji he had been involved in attempts to solve two important problems which faced colonial administrators in many territories; the stopping of inter-tribal
fighting, and the protection of local landowners from foreigners keen to obtain large areas of land. Soon after his arrival in Port Moresby in September, 1888, MacGregor set up the new Administration. Papua was no longer a Protectorate, but a part of the British-ruled lands. An Executive and a Legislative Council of three members was appointed, but almost all power was held by MacGregor. The Governments of Britain and Queensland rarely interfered with MacGregor's work. It was just as well that they did not, because before the days of aircraft and radio it took a long time for instructions to pass to the Administrator. MacGregor made reports to the Queensland Governor, who sent them on to England. It took up to ten months before MacGregor received replies to his reports. Normally he had to act without waiting for detailed instructions from Queensland or Britain. As Scratchley had attempted to do when he arrived in Port Moresby, MacGregor decided that he would have to stop fighting between clans and between villagers and traders. And he wanted to get to know the country. His policy was to explore and pacify.

**Exploration**

During the first few years of his administration MacGregor spent many more months travelling than he spent at Port Moresby. He took the small government steamer, the *Merrie England*, to all parts of the coast and to the islands in the south-east. Rivers deep enough to float the *Merrie England* were explored. The most important of his voyages was up the Fly River. He was able to go further than D'Albertis—almost to the New Guinea border.

*The Climbing of Mount Victoria*

MacGregor also made a number of overland journeys. Twice he crossed the steep mountainous trail between Port Moresby and Mambare on the north coast. In 1889, the year after he arrived in Port Moresby, he led an expedition to climb Mt. Victoria, the highest peak in the Owen Stanley Ranges. Before MacGregor made his journey there had been at least six attempts to climb Mt. Victoria. Twice the missionary Chalmers had been close to its foothills. The peak of Mt. Victoria, seen distinctly from Port Moresby on a clear day, seemed to attract the Europeans living along the coast. MacGregor's party followed the Vanapa River, then climbed Mt. Musgrave and Mt. Knutsford on the way to the
top of the 13,363 feet Mt. Victoria. Only MacGregor, a part Samoan, two Polynesians and six Papuans finally reached the highest point. They had been able to carry little food with them, so they ate some of the birds which had been shot to keep as specimens. MacGregor’s expedition to Mt. Victoria was the only time he made a journey merely to see new country. All his other explorations had taken place while he was travelling for other reasons: to find a site for a new station; to capture a murderer; to stop headhunting; or to rescue miners.

Bringing Peace

MacGregor’s attempts to pacify the territory were only partly successful. During his ten years as Administrator there were over twenty Europeans killed and inter-tribal fighting continued, particularly in the inland areas. When MacGregor heard of a murder in an area he tried to capture the people actually responsible. He hoped to be able to punish the guilty and not just some members of the group as happened in a punitive raid. Often, however, he had to use force to arrest the guilty. Sometimes he seized hostages or occupied a village until the people themselves handed over the ones responsible for the crime. The men arrested were tried. Those found guilty were rarely hung. MacGregor, and other officials, realized that allowances had to be made for customary law.

Some Punitive Raids

The punitive raid was not always avoided. When the villagers at Cloudy Bay refused to hand over the men suspected of killing two gold miners, MacGregor ordered his men to attack. Six villagers were killed. On other occasions MacGregor wanted to impress the people with the power of the British Administration; he demanded respect. It was for this reason that he fired on the Kikori bowmen who on one occasion threatened the government boat. If MacGregor’s only aim had been to avoid bloodshed, he probably could have withdrawn. MacGregor said,

If we do fight, I always insist upon fighting it out, and never leave it in doubt as to who is master. In that way we seldom have to do it again.

Unfortunately, New Guinea is made up of so many different groups, that to impress all by force would have taken hundreds of
battles. The stopping of the Tugeri raiders by force was more justified. The Tugeri people from Dutch New Guinea raided along the coast to the Fly River capturing the heads of many victims. In 1896 a party of several hundred was sighted by MacGregor's police. They killed at least twenty, destroyed their canoes and drove the rest back along the coast.

The Police

The police, the Armed Constabulary, had been formed in 1890. MacGregor had two Fijians and twelve Solomon Islanders sent to New Guinea to form the first unit. Soon Papuans were being recruited. The pay was one dollar a month for the first year and two dollars a month from then on. Some of the most able Papuans were attracted to the force. By the time MacGregor left the colony there were over one hundred in the Armed Constabulary. MacGregor was very proud of his police force and thought its establishment was one of his best achievements in Papua.

Resident Magistrates and Village Constables

For administration purposes, Papua was divided into divisions. At first there were only two divisions; later there were three—Western, Central and Eastern. In charge of each was a Resident Magistrate. The day to day tasks of administration were carried out by the Resident Magistrates. They had to see that Government patrols visited as much of their areas as possible. They had to investigate any disturbances, and, in minor cases, hold trials and order punishment. The salaries and conditions for the Resident Magistrates were poor. In some areas dedicated men carried out their duties; in others men who were inclined to be harsh or neglectful were appointed. At the village level Constables were appointed to see that the Resident Magistrates' instructions were carried out. Attempts were made to see that the most persuasive and active men were selected. In several cases the villagers elected their own Constables. By the end of the nineteenth century over two hundred village Constables had been appointed. The system, while generally satisfactory, raised many of the problems which had occurred in German New Guinea. Villagers sometimes complained that the Constable was using his power to increase his own wealth and not to see that the government regulations were carried out.
Labour Ordinances

MacGregor's first Labour Ordinances were to protect recruits. No labourers were permitted to be recruited for labour outside their own areas. As there had been almost no development of plantations in Papua, there were few complaints from employers. In 1892, the labour laws were made less severe. A labourer could be taken more than twenty-five miles from his home to work for a European for a maximum period of twelve months if a contract was signed in front of a government official. If an indentured labourer did not keep his contract he could be imprisoned. The administration did not apply the labour laws to itself. Labourers (often carriers) could be recruited by the government by force if necessary. Naturally at times there was resentment of the Administration's actions. In Papua far fewer villagers than in German New Guinea made their first long contact with European society as labourers. This was a result of the slow development of plantations as well as the more severe labour regulations.

Land Ordinances

Like the labour regulations, the first Land Ordinances were to protect the local people. Under the Ordinance of 1888 no land could be sold by the villagers except to the Administration. As in German New Guinea after 1899, private buyers had to approach Government officers to make purchases on their behalf. It was the duty of the Government officials to see that no villagers would suffer from the loss of their land. During MacGregor's administration only six and a half thousand acres were sold. In German New Guinea 700,000 acres had been sold by 1914. This small amount of land sold in Papua was partly because of the protective ordinances, but more important again was the little plantation development which took place.

Health and Education

MacGregor, with only $30,000 a year to spend, could do little to begin health and education services. No schools were started by the Administration. All that MacGregor was able to do was encourage the missions. He made land available to them cheaply and he assisted them to open up new areas. Apart from some regulations to keep the villages cleaner, the Administration did
not develop health services. It was unfortunate that MacGregor, with his knowledge and interest in tropical medicine, was unable to do more in Papua.

Economic Development

It has already been made clear that there was little plantation development in Papua. The Royal Commission which met in 1906 found only a dozen plantations in existence and of these only three which could be considered profitable. Copra was exported, but most of it did not come from the plantations. During the mid-1890's the first rubber was exported—fifty-four dollars worth! MacGregor in the last years of his administration tried to encourage European tropical farmers to take up land. When this scheme failed, he wanted large companies to take up wide areas for development. His plans were stopped by the Australian Colonies who would not allow land to be sold to a large company wishing to start plantations in Papua. Beche-de-mer and pearl shell continued to be collected along the coasts. Trade was increasing, although even at the end of the century the total amounts involved were small.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Imports</th>
<th>Exports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1888-89</td>
<td>$22,216</td>
<td>$11,886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897-98</td>
<td>$93,942</td>
<td>$100,718</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Samarai was the most important port. Burns, Philp and Co. had kept their early lead; they were the most important traders.

Gold

The main cause of the increase in exports was gold. In the ten years 1888-1898 gold made up more than half of Papua's exports. The finding of gold in Australia from 1851 onwards had produced a group of men skilled in the search for gold and eager to prospect in new areas. The first rush in New Guinea occurred in the late 1870's, when a little gold was found inland from Port Moresby. Those miners who went with great hopes found much disease and very few supplies. Later rushes were equally hard on the miners, but more gold was found. In 1888 gold was discovered in the Louisiade Archipelago. By the late 1890's there were four hundred miners on Woodlark Island. At the same time prospectors began searching for gold on the mainland. Gold was found
behind Milne Bay, and then in 1896 it was discovered on the Mambari River. The miners made their way inland up the Waria River to the German border and up the Mambari River to the Yodda goldfields. The Yodda goldfields made some men rich but they led to the death of many others. Carriers taken from the coast died in the cooler, wet highlands. And as one writer has noted, "The mountain people made no distinction between brown and white invaders. They attacked, killed and often ate both with equal enthusiasm." The miners took bloody revenge against those attackers they could find. It was many years before the Administration could bring any permanent peace to the northern goldfields.

Village Agriculture

MacGregor hoped to persuade the villagers to grow cash crops. On the Government stations plantation crops were grown. It was hoped that these might be an example to the neighbouring people, but they had little influence. In 1894 an Ordinance was put into force allowing the District Magistrate to compel villagers to plant coconuts. Only a few villages did plant coconut groves. Generally it was because they had to, and not because they wanted to begin commercial agriculture.

Summary of MacGregor's Work

W. P. Morrell, in his book *Britain in the Pacific Islands*, sums up MacGregor's work:

Taking it all in all, his achievements in pacification, institutional development, and education in the broadest sense within the narrow limits set by an allowance of $30,000 a year were little short of miraculous.

After leaving British New Guinea in 1898 MacGregor served as Governor in Lagos, Newfoundland and Queensland.

Papua Passes to Australian Control

When Sir William MacGregor left Port Moresby, Sir George Le Hunte was appointed Lieutenant-Governor. The title of the head of the Administration had been changed during MacGregor's leadership. By 1898 it was known that when the Australian Colonies joined to form a single government, the old system of administering Papua through both Queensland and Britain would
end. By the beginning of 1901, the Australian Colonies had formed a Federal Government, but they were slow to take over responsibility for Papua. Australia was also slow to provide money for Le Hunte's Administration. England and the three eastern colonies no longer wanted to provide revenue, and the young Australian Federal Government wanted to avoid expenses until it was well established. At the end of 1901 the Australian Federal Government accepted responsibility for Papua, but it was several years before the transfer of power to Australia was completed.

Le Hunte's Administration

Short of finance and knowing that the colony was soon to be taken over by a new Government, Le Hunte could not be expected to make any great changes. Until his retirement in 1903 he continued MacGregor's policies. The Resident Magistrates, the Armed Constabulary and the Village Constables remained the means of bringing the law to the new areas and keeping it in order. The Administration's control was extended around the Yodda goldfields. The Yodda was included in a new division, the Northern Division, formed in 1899. Le Hunte, unlike MacGregor, left the patrolling of new areas to his staff. He preferred to stay in Port Moresby and attempt to keep his staff efficient, rather than do the more active work in newly-contacted areas.

Labour and Health Ordinances

New Ordinances were passed to appoint Labour Inspectors, license recruiters, and to set up a government Medical Department. The Labour Inspectors could free a labourer from his contract if he was being ill-treated. The Administration was worried about the conditions of employment, especially in the Northern Division where the death-rate was very high. Medical Officers were appointed to report on health problems. The first hospital was started at Samarai in 1900. Part of the cost of the hospital was paid by the local and European population.

Economic Development

Economic development followed the same pattern as under MacGregor. Gold was the most important export and the attempts to encourage plantation production were still unsuccessful. The compulsory planting of coconuts by villagers was continued. Im-
ports and exports increased steadily, particularly through the port of Samarai. By 1904 and 1905, exports had reached $134,376 and imports $152,870. With the increase in trade the revenue from customs duties also increased. The revenue raised within the colony had reached almost $40,000 in 1904-1905.

Robinson and Barton

On Le Hunte's retirement in 1903, Judge C. S. Robinson acted as Administrator. During Robinson's brief rule he won the friendship of the miners. One of his first journeys as Acting Administrator was to the Yodda goldfields. He and his men suffered greatly on the rough mountainous trails. Probably as a result of this experience, he sent a survey party to plan a new road from Buna to the goldfields. On Robinson's death in 1904 Captain F. R. Barton acted as Administrator. Barton in turn was replaced by J. H. P. Murray who became Acting Administrator in 1907. The years of Robinson's and Barton's administration were marred by the death of the missionary Chalmers and by quarrelling among the officials in Port Moresby.

The Results of Chalmers' Murder

When Le Hunte heard of Chalmers' murder in 1901 he led an expedition to Goaribari Island. The local people fired arrows at the government party, who returned the fire, killing several men. Le Hunte then landed. He decided to punish the Goaribaris by burning down their dabus (men's clubhouses) and destroying their canoes. This done, he left. The following year he returned to try and establish friendly relations with the people, but it is thought he still intended to arrest the murderers and take away the skulls of the missionaries. After Le Hunte retired, Robinson led the third government party to Goaribari in 1904. When an attempt was made to capture some of those supposed to have committed the murder, fighting broke out. Perhaps fifty of the Goaribaris were shot. News of the "massacre" spread quickly. Robinson and the other officials were strongly criticized for their actions. The incident led to the dismissal of Robinson and his later suicide.

Disputes Among Officials

During Barton's administration, quarrelling among officials in Port Moresby became intense. Port Moresby then had a popula-
tion of only sixty Europeans. About twenty iron-roofed buildings stood on the slope above the small wharf. One corrugated iron building was the hotel. It was a three roomed shack—the scene of much drinking and fighting for the men whose ships called at the isolated port. Government officials stationed in Port Moresby had no such lusty outlet. A visitor has described them:

Offices were mere repositories for unsorted papers, where sweating and bewildered men sat in their shirt sleeves and did nothing with apathetic conviction.

Living in a small community without any opportunities for entertainment (except alcohol), officials found it easy to let small disputes grow. Dissatisfied officials wrote reports back to Australia. Finally the Australian Government decided that a Royal Commission was needed to investigate the many complaints being made. Three men who had not previously been to New Guinea were appointed to carry out the inquiry. They arrived in Port Moresby in September, 1906.

**Books for Further Reading**

Grattan, C. H., *The South-West Pacific to 1900*.
Legge, J. D., *Australian Colonial Policy*.
Morrell, W. P., *Britain in the Pacific Islands*.
Chapter Seven

The Murray Era


J. H. P. Murray

One of the witnesses to appear before the 1906 Royal Commission was J. H. P. Murray, the Chief Judicial Officer of New Guinea. John Hubert Plunkett Murray was born in Sydney in 1861, and had been educated at the Sydney Grammar School and at Oxford University. Murray was an unusual character. He stood six feet three inches in height, and in his youth he had been a remarkable athlete. He won the English amateur heavyweight boxing championship, and was expelled from school for striking a master. Before coming to New Guinea he practised law in Australia and later found employment with the New South Wales Government as parliamentary draughtsman and as Crown prosecutor. In 1899 he went to South Africa to fight with the British in the Boer War. In 1904 the Chief Judicial Officer of British New Guinea, Judge Robinson, shot himself when he was blamed for the massacre of villagers on Goaribari Island. Murray applied for the position and was appointed. He was then forty-three years old, and knew nothing about the government of colonies.
1905 Papua Act

Murray came to New Guinea at a time of great uncertainty. One of the reasons for this was the fact that although the British Colonial Office had given up the territory to Australia, the Australian government for four years failed to take it over. It was not until 1905 that the Australian Parliament passed an act which made the territory formally an Australian possession. The Papua Act, as the legislation was called, was to remain the constitution of the territory until 1949. The Act changed the name of the colony from British New Guinea to Papua. It also abolished the system of joint control which had been in force since 1888. The Lieutenant-Governor was now to be appointed by the Governor-General of Australia and was to be responsible to him alone. The membership of the Executive and the Legislative Councils was enlarged. The former now consisted of six members, all government officials. The latter was composed of the members of the Executive Council together with three non-official members, nominated by the Lieutenant-Governor. There were no elected members; they were added only after the Second World War.

1906 Royal Commission

The passing of the Papua Act did not end the period of uncertainty. No permanent replacement was found for the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir George Le Hunte, when he left the colony in 1903. For a year the Chief Judicial Officer, Judge Robinson, acted as Administrator. In 1904 he was replaced by the Commandant of the Armed Constabulary, Captain Barton. The transfer of control to Australia did not end the jealousies and the petty bickering among the officials in Port Moresby: it increased them. In 1906 the question arose of appointing the first Lieutenant-Governor under Australian rule. Barton thought that he had been passed over for the position and asked for a Royal Commission to inquire into the conditions in the colony. The Australian Prime Minister, Alfred Deakin, granted the request, having already decided to institute a general inquiry. The labours of the Royal Commission were spread over a period of three months. During this time they heard evidence in all the principal centres of the territory. The Commission found that much of the discontent in the public service was due to Barton. He divided his subordinates in two
classes, those who were in favour of him and those who were not. Murray, in his evidence before the Commission, described Barton as *naturally a weak man and prone to be influenced by other people*; he also accused him of having no idea of fair play. The Royal Commission agreed with Murray and recommended that Barton should not be confirmed permanently as Administrator. As a result, he was allowed to retire after a year's leave. In April 1907 Murray became Acting Administrator. In the following year he was appointed as Lieutenant-Governor, retaining the position of Chief Judicial Officer.

*The Commission's Recommendations*

The Royal Commission made several other recommendations. The resources of the colony were to be developed with the help of the imported capital and native labour. European enterprise was to be encouraged because in the first stage development of the colony could be undertaken only by Europeans. The progress of the territory depended upon the revenue derived from European enterprise, and besides, the native population needed an example if the colony was to progress. In the past, native societies had been protected too much from the contact with the Europeans. This should change, and natives enjoying government protection should be taxed, preferably in the form of forced labour:

Having taken over New Guinea, the Imperial authorities, through successive administrators, had devoted practically all the powers of Government to giving the coastal tribes security for their lives and lands. This has meant inter-tribal peace, and so the native has had no longer to build war canoes and make weapons with primitive tools, nor to cultivate, not only for food supplies, but also for expeditions and for feasts held prior to and after his forays. All this in the past made work a necessity, and so kept up the national stamina. At present, the coastal native need only work to eat, and his wife does most of the little labour that suffices for his food supply. Government protection has plunged him into a condition of peaceful sloth....

*The Establishment of Law and Order*

Such was the policy which Murray, the first Australian to be appointed as Lieutenant-Governor of Papua, was to put into prac-
tice. He was to retain the position for thirty-two years. During that time he earned the affection of the people and the esteem of many outside observers. Murray saw his job as having two main aspects. In the first place he had to civilize the village people without destroying their traditional way of life. He also wanted to develop the wealth of the country, and for this reason he had to encourage European enterprise. He believed that, in the long run, these two aims did not conflict. But his time was not unlimited, and his staff was inadequate. His first steps were reforms to create a loyal public service to replace the divided one which had existed. He dismissed several officers and brought in new men from Australia. He retained the system of divisional administration, introduced by MacGregor, and also the office of the village constable. Later, he created a new office—that of village councillor. Unlike the village constables who were appointed by the government, the councillors were selected by the villagers themselves. Their main task was to make suggestions to the government for the improvement of their villages. The first village councillors were appointed in 1925 in the north-east division. In Hanuabada the villagers formed a village council and built a council house. The Kiwai also developed a very active council. Elsewhere the system was not so successful. There were frequent arguments between the village councillors and the village constables, and the resident magistrates had to intervene in their quarrels.

*Exploration*

The establishment of law and order outside the area under government control was another important task. In 1907, when Murray took office, about one half of the territory was completely unknown. Of the other half, only a small part had been properly explored. Before law and order could be established, a great deal of exploration remained to be done.

In 1907 Monckton crossed the territory from the Waria River to the Lakekamu, and several expeditions were made to the Kikori basin. By 1913 practically all the coastal areas were under government control. From 1913 onward came the exploration of the western part of the Territory. In 1913 Lake Murray was discovered, between the Strickland and the Fly rivers. After the First World War the police post, or base camp, was adopted as the means of extending government control in new regions. This was a
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A temporary station in charge of a European officer, maintained for several years, and then moved to another area. The camps were used for more intensive patrolling, and also as points of contact with the villagers living near the camps. In 1927 two patrol officers, Karius and Champion, attempted to cross the island from the mouth of the Fly River in Papua to the Sepik in the mandated territory. They had to return to Daru but their second attempt, in 1928, was successful. In 1935 the Great Papuan Plateau and Lake Kutubu were discovered by Hides and O'Malley. The Papuan highlands were declared an uncontrolled area, and Europeans who were not government officials were not allowed to enter it without government permission. By 1939 there were few parts of Papua which remained unexplored, and none where there was any extensive population.

Murray's Opposition to punitive expeditions

Murray himself accompanied some of the earlier expeditions, as MacGregor had done before him. In 1913, he went up the Alice River, a tributary of the Fly. But, unlike MacGregor, Le Hunte and Robinson, he did not believe in punitive expeditions. He was also opposed to mass arrests and the burning of villages. He told his officers that individual suspects must be pursued and arrested, no matter where they came from. While pursuing a suspect the police could use fire-arms only in self-defence. They were not allowed to fire on a pursued person until he had been called on to stand, in a language he understood. It is the policy of this government, said Murray, not to resort to force except in cases of necessity, when all other means have failed. But, as it was necessary that the villagers understood the power of European rifles, he allowed patrols penetrating new areas to shoot a pig. Even so, the pig had to be paid for before it was shot.

Murray and Native Customs

With the establishment of control in new areas, the work of government was only just starting. The real task was to establish law and order. This involved the abandonment of physical violence, raiding, the taking of life and sorcery. To Murray it was clear that the standard of justice enforced must be that of the Europeans. In Papua, taking of human life was not always a crime. Customs varied with different tribes, but with many killing a man was a...
form of virtue. In parts of western Papua new canoes had to be anointed with the blood of a stranger. Elsewhere, to kill a man was a necessary qualification for manhood. In some tribes in eastern Papua a young man courting a girl had first to present her with a finger of a man or woman he had killed. But local custom was always considered by the courts when imposing a sentence, for Murray believed that it was wrong to hang a man for doing what his village did not condemn. But it was not always easy to explain to the accused that he had done something wrong. The trial was held in English, and with so many languages spoken in the territory, it was sometimes difficult to find an interpreter who could speak the prisoner's tongue. Occasionally as many as four interpreters were needed to translate English into his language. Sometimes what the judge said was not properly translated. There was a court case at Port Moresby in which two men were tried for killing a messenger travelling along the road from Port Moresby to Buna. The judge told the accused that it was wrong to kill a man, and that in addition anyone travelling on a government road was under government protection. But the interpreter translated his words as follows: The judge says you must not kill men on the government road. When you want to kill a man, take him into the grass. Don't kill him on the road. The government doesn't like it.

Sorcery

Other practices, such as black magic and sorcery, were also punished by the government, because a sorcerer could easily cause murder or violence. When a person died and the cause of his death was not obvious, his relatives believed that he was the victim of sorcery. They were then likely to use sorcery to gain revenge. But it was not always easy to punish a sorcerer because the villagers were afraid to testify against him in court. And even sentencing a sorcerer to imprisonment often only strengthened the villagers' belief in the sorcerer's powers. Why would the government send him to gaol if he were harmless?

Prisoners serving their sentences were given considerable freedom. They worked with the native police and with the Europeans, and learnt much in this way. Some returned to their villages as men of importance, and for the rest of their lives acted as interpreters for visiting patrols, court interpreters or as recruiting agents for plantation labour. Some even became village constables.
The establishment of law and order was one task facing Murray; economic development of the territory was another. By 1907 gold-mining had declined and was carried on mainly in the Yodda Valley and on Woodlark Island. The number of miners at work was about 200, but only a few were winning enough gold to pay their way. Although much land had been taken up by the Europeans, there were only about a dozen plantations in the whole of Papua. Trade in sandalwood had practically disappeared. Total exports stood at approximately $126,000; more than one half of this was accounted for by gold. Murray believed, as did most people in Australia, that Papua had rich mineral and agricultural resources which only had to be developed. So the main problem was to provide cheap land for the settlers and to make enough local labour available. Under the Land Ordinance passed in 1906 land could be leased for a period up to ninety-nine years, and between 1907 and 1914 over 300,000 acres were leased to Europeans. During the same period the area under cultivation increased from less than 3,000 acres to about 44,000 acres. Most of this development took place along the central and eastern coast. Copra and rubber were the main plantation products, but sisal hemp growing was also tried. In 1910 there was a new goldrush to the Lakekamu River; the field was worked for about six years. Copper had been discovered in the mountains behind Port Moresby, and oil near the Vailala River. Economic prospects were bright, and everyone was optimistic about the future.

First World War

Then came the war of 1914-18. Although there was no fighting in Papua and only a few skirmishes in German New Guinea, the war affected the territory's economy and administration. Many public servants and plantation managers enlisted in the Army for service in France and the Middle East, and never came back. The war also closed the markets for some Papuan produce. Prices had fallen and shipping charges had gone up. To make things worse, the Australian government in 1921 extended the Navigation Act to Papua and New Guinea. The act laid down that only Australian-owned ships could trade with the territories. This increased the already high shipping charges, for it was necessary to ship Papuan produce to Sydney, and then reship it to overseas markets. Imports suf-
ferred in the same way. This would not have mattered much if the bulk of Papuan exports went to Australia and most of her imports came from Australia. But this was not the case. So rice from Asia went past Papua to Sydney and was then sent north again, and exports even to London had to go first to Sydney—nearly 2,000 miles in the opposite direction. Some 150 years earlier a similar act passed by the British Parliament led to the revolt of Britain's North American colonies. In Papua, too, the act caused much ill-feeling, particularly against the shipping firm of Burns, Philp and Co. which had a virtual monopoly of trade in the territory. A Royal Commission finally recommended that the act should not apply to Papua and to New Guinea. This was done in 1925.

**Economic Development Between the Wars**

It took the economy of Papua a long time to recover from the effects of the Navigation Act, because the act scared away businessmen with money to invest in the colony. To help the territory's economy, the Australian government in 1926 admitted to Australia coffee and whole coconuts duty free. It also offered a bounty (a form of subsidy) on cocoa, vanilla and spices. This increased production and exports. But the world-wide depression which started in 1929 once again affected the development of the territory. Prices for tropical produce fell sharply—rubber to about 5 cents per lb. and copra to $10 per ton in Port Moresby. This was not enough to pay even for production costs. In 1931 the rubber industry was given a boost when the Australian government admitted Papuan rubber to Australia duty free. A few years later the Papuan government gave a subsidy to copra producers to keep their plantations going. The two depressions of the early twenties and the thirties changed Murray's belief that European agriculture could remain the basis of Papuan economy. He realized that he had been too optimistic in 1907. There was the problem of shipping freights, and also the lack of roads in the territory itself. The cost of clearing land was too high, and not enough was known about the soil. Murray now saw mining as the only hope for the future of the territory. His hope was only partly fulfilled. In 1924 copper smelting on a large scale was started in the Astrolabe Range behind Port Moresby. Two years later the industry employed about 1000 local labourers and 100 Europeans, and exports
of copper represented about one-third of all exports. Goldmining became important during the thirties, and in 1939 gold again headed the list of exports. Oil prospectors were active in the Papuan Gulf area, and several bores were drilled before the operations were suspended after the outbreak of war with Japan.

Labour

All this time Murray believed that economic development by imported capital was not only in the interest of Europeans but also in the interest of the Papuans themselves. Not only was it impossible to stop the inevitable march of civilization, but the progress of the colony depended on the revenue derived from European enterprise. Today, the remaining colonial powers spend large sums of money on education, health services and welfare in their territories, but this was not so in the past. In Murray's time, a colony had to pay its way. It was therefore the duty of the government to assist European enterprise, by providing not only cheap land but also sufficient local labour. Here, Murray was faced with a difficult problem. He knew that the economy could not function without local labour, but he also felt that it was his duty to control its recruitment. Protection, of course, was also in the interest of the planters because it preserved the supply of labour. If too many men are away for a long time, village life suffers. Few children are born, and not enough food is produced to feed the village. Under MacGregor and Le Hunte the problem was not serious, because there was little need for labour. After 1906 the government wanted more development, and the labour laws had to be changed. In 1907 the Native Labour Ordinance was passed which made it easier to recruit native labour. Recruiting was still restricted to licensed recruiters, but a planter could now sign on labour for himself without licence. The maximum term of service was increased to three years. Desertion from service could be punished by up to three months' imprisonment. A few years later regulations were passed which covered the hours to be worked, and rations and accommodation to be provided by the employer. Also, a special Department of Native Affairs was set up to police labour laws. The 1907 Native Labour Ordinance made it much easier for planters to get labour, but some plantation owners thought that it was still too strict. They accused Murray of being anti-European and opposed to white settlement. They complained to the Austra-
lian government, and one trader sent a telegram to the King asking him to replace Murray by another Lieutenant-Governor. Murray was also attacked by some well-meaning people, in the territory and in Australia, for allowing workers who had left their jobs to be sent to gaol. Working on a plantation, they said, was nothing but slavery. This was not quite fair, but the criticism upset Murray. Still the economy needed labour, so there was nothing he could do. The system of indenturing native workers was retained while Murray was in office, and the imprisoning of workers who ran away from their jobs was not abolished until 1950.

Changes in labour legislation 1888-1907

1888 Ordinance Villagers must not be employed outside their districts. The rule did not apply to the government.

1892 Ordinance Villagers engaged to work more than twenty-five miles away from their districts must be signed on in the presence of a government official. The maximum period of contract (indenture) was twelve months.

1893 Ordinance Penal sanctions introduced. A worker employed under a contract who deserted his job could be punished by up to one month's imprisonment.

1900 Ordinance Recruiting of labour without licence prohibited.

1907 Ordinance Planters allowed to recruit labour without licence. Maximum term of service increased to three years. Desertion from service could be punished by up to three months' imprisonment.

Village Agriculture

As we have seen, the economy of Papua did not really recover from the effects of the war while Murray was in office. When he saw that it was difficult to attract capital to the territory, Murray decided to develop it without capital—by encouraging village agri-
culture beyond subsistence level. MacGregor before him had introduced a regulation which enabled the government to enforce the growing of coconuts by the villagers, but the results were disappointing. Murray, even before the war of 1914-1918 told his officers to go from village to village to see that the planting was done; sometimes they even marked the spots where each tree was to be planted. Prizes of tobacco were offered to those who planted the greatest number of trees. In some places the villagers began to plant on their own initiative, but the interest did not last. When the planting was finished there was no one to do the weeding. Most villagers did not know why they had to plant the trees, and they did not know that the trees belonged to them and not to the government. In the Trobriands, where the chiefs were powerful, they would claim as theirs all the coconuts planted. A new type of compulsory planting was introduced in 1918. In that year two important ordinances were passed. The 1918 Native Taxation Ordinance imposed a small head tax on all men between the ages of sixteen and thirty-six. Policemen, mission teachers and men with large families were exempted from the payment of the tax. The Native Plantations Ordinance (1918) gave the government the power to establish native reserves near villages. The villagers would clear the land, fence it and plant it with coconuts, rubber, coffee or rice. By working on the plantation they might have some or all of their tax remitted. The government supplied the seed and took half the produce. This was later sold and the money, together with the head tax, was used for education, health and mission subsidies.

**Education**

Under Murray education remained in the hands of Christian missions. Murray himself thought that the government should have its own schools. Soon after taking office he proposed the establishment of at least one government school in each division, but could not find the necessary money. During Murray’s time several new missions started working in Papua. In addition to the London Missionary Society, the Sacred Heart Mission, the Anglicans and the Methodists, there was now a Seventh Day Adventist Mission and the Kwato Industrial Mission which broke away from the London Missionary Society. Each mission would get from the government $10 for every pupil who passed a set examination.
(this is also called payment by results). The teaching was mainly in English and was done by local teachers. Most of the teachers had little training, and some let their lessons degenerate into parrot-like repetition. In some schools the pupils spent a whole hour repeating the numbers from one to ten. Most teachers did not speak English very well and could not explain difficulties to their pupils. Several missions also taught in the vernacular, mainly during the first two years of schooling, but the language was not always the mother-tongue of the pupils. The Anglicans, for instance, used Wedau, the language spoken around Dogura.

Some missions paid great attention to technical training. At the Sacred Heart Mission on Yule Island, boys were taught blacksmithing, bootmaking, printing and binding. The London Missionary Society had for a number of years a typewriting class at their training college, and taught cane work and basket making in their village schools. Kwato concentrated from the beginning on producing craftsmen. It operated a sawmill and undertook building contracts for the government and the planters.

Health

Medical services suffered from lack of money. Medical facilities were limited. There were hospitals at Port Moresby, Samarai, Woodlark Island and at Daru. These were used mainly for the treatment of labourers working for the Europeans. After the war travelling doctors and medical assistants were appointed to treat sick villagers. The employment of local medical assistants began in 1922. They were trained by going on patrol with European medical assistants. In the thirties, medical assistants went on patrol by themselves, making house-to-house visits in every village they visited. In 1933 a group of students was sent to Sydney for a special course. They studied physics, chemistry, anatomy and were taught how to give first-aid. After the war the government also subsidized missions for their medical work. It paid half the cost of drugs used for the treatment of the people, and gave the missions some money to help them maintain hospitals.

Proposed Union With New Guinea

Murray never really thought about the political future for Papua, beyond wanting to see it united with the mandated territory of New Guinea. In 1914, after Great Britain had declared war on
Germany, an Australian force occupied German New Guinea. After the war the League of Nations gave Australia the mandate to administer the former German colony. Murray wanted Papua and New Guinea united under one government. In 1919 a Royal Commission was asked to report on the relation of the two territories. Murray was appointed one of the three commissioners, but the other two members of the Commission were against the union of Papua and New Guinea. This view was accepted by the Australian government. Murray was disappointed, for he believed that the government of Papua was more humane than that of New Guinea. He also believed that in Papua he had already put into practice a doctrine about colonies proclaimed by the League of Nations. This was the doctrine that the government of people who were not yet able to stand on their own feet was a sacred trust of civilized nations which administered them, that is, a trust for native peoples and a trust for the world as a whole. This is similar to Murray's belief that the resources of a colony should be developed for the benefit of its inhabitants and also for the benefit of the world as a whole. Murray had already talked about this in his book *Papua or British New Guinea*, published in 1912. So after the war Murray could pride himself that his ideas were now receiving public acclaim. Nevertheless, he was becoming more and more pessimistic about the future of Papua. One of the reasons was the fact that Papua was not the rich country that men had believed. European enterprise would be always on a small scale, and Papua would never attract the necessary capital. This meant that he could not count on much money from taxes and customs duties inside Papua, because without European enterprise there was little internal revenue. So he had to depend on Australian subsidy, but this was small during his time: $40,000 annually when he took office, and $85,000 in 1940. This should be remembered by those who may feel that Murray went too slowly, and that he was not thinking about independence for Papua. Independence for colonies was a very distant goal in his time, even in India or Indonesia which had been under European rule for several centuries. Speedy development, even if desirable, was not possible for Murray because of slender resources. So, in the words of his biographer, Lewis Lett, he substituted "thoroughness" for "rapidity". He built slowly but soundly, attempting to preserve as much as possible of native society.
Changes in Village Life

Yet, even during Murray's rule village life was changing, even in areas not under government control. Patrol officers in villages contacted for the first time had found steel axes which must have come by trade. A man who possessed a steel axe did not have to spend as much time as before clearing new land; if he was a big man, his power increased. In areas under government control life was never the same again. By preventing warfare, the government made some customs pointless. The trade of the warrior was lost. The people could go to enemy country without fear of attack. The patrol brought guns, food in tins, perhaps a radio, and other marvels. Later, labour recruiting upset village life in other ways. Young men came back from plantations with new beliefs and new riches. This undermined the authority of the old men. Some returned workers found village life dull, so they left again, never to return. Christian missions made a deep impression on village societies. Missionaries discouraged village dances and ceremonies as pagan practices; some missions prevented all dancing, while others banned only certain ceremonies. Without these, some of the traditions were lost. Even the introduction of Sunday as the day of rest was a great innovation in village life. The missions made many converts, but there was often a difference between what the missionary taught and what the converts heard. When he promised them wealth in heaven, they took it as a promise of riches in this world. Competition between the various missions only added to the confusion of the villagers.

Murray's Last Years

During the last years of his life Murray was afraid that his works could not survive his death. In Australia, he thought he saw moves to exploit Papuans, helped by public ignorance of the territory. He was afraid that his successor might undo his life's work. His worries were partly the result of poor health, and partly due to the many disappointments during his career. Just before the outbreak of the Second World War the Australian government appointed a committee to report on the possibility of uniting the government of Papua and the mandated territory of New Guinea. In 1919 Murray wanted this union, but now he was against it. He did not think, as did some people in Australia, that it would be easier to defend a united territory. The real reason behind the
idea, he suspected, was the desire of New Guinea employers to get labour from Papua. This would undo all his work. He also thought that he would not be appointed to rule the combined territory, because he was old and sick. So he fought against the proposed union, and in the end the committee condemned the idea.

When the war broke out, in September 1939, Murray was seventy-eight years old. He knew that time was running out for him. In February 1940 he left for a tour of inspection of eastern Papua but became very ill. He died on the 27th in the Samarai hospital. His body was brought by air to Port Moresby for a State funeral. The people of Hanuabada staged their traditional *masi ariana* (death ceremony) in his memory. For forty days and nights the death-fires glowed, and all feasting and dancing was forbidden. A Papuan leader, speaking in Motu, said over his grave:

But who is like him in Papua? There is none. There will never be one like him. He came among us and saw our lives. Sometimes when he was younger, he hunted and fished with us. He knew us in all our ways. Sometimes when his work was done, he met us on the roads. As we came home from our gardens he greeted us. Now we have lost him, for he is dead. We shall not know his friendly ways again. There were Governors here before him, but we knew nothing of them. Our fathers have not told us of them. There has been only one Governor in our time. He was the best of men; our children and their children will talk of him. He promised us all "I will not leave you. I will die in Papua". His words were the words of a true man, for his body lies in our ground.

**Murray—an Assessment**

Murray's governorship was unique, in Papuan as well as in Australian history. Governors are usually appointed for short periods; even MacGregor's ten years in office were unusually long. Murray ruled over Papua for almost thirty-three years. During this time he established law and order over most of Papua, by methods which were as humane as the circumstances permitted. He tried to protect the Papuans in the possession of their land and to preserve many of their customs. Murray was an intelligent and perceptive man. In addition to *Papua or British New Guinea* he wrote several other books, and lectured to learned societies when he was on
leave in Australia. He was also tough and determined. These qualities were necessary in a Lieutenant-Governor at a time when a fortnightly ship was the only link between Papua and Australia. Even during his life Murray was something of a legend. After the war with Japan, when the Australian government introduced many changes in Papua-New Guinea, some people used his name to oppose them. They said that it would be disastrous to change the methods introduced by Murray. Lewis Lett, in a book about Murray published in 1949, said that before Murray nothing had been done, all was to do, in the elevation of the Papuan people and in their protection from one another and from themselves. This is not quite true. MacGregor, before him, had established the system of divisional administration. The first village constables had been appointed by Scratchley, and the protection of native lands had been laid down by Commodore Erskine at the declaration of the Protectorate in 1884. There were others who, after his death, said that Murray was too conservative and that he did little to develop the territory or to educate the Papuans. There is some truth in this, but the criticism is not really fair. He had little money with which to develop the colony, and the Australian government gave him only a small subsidy. Perhaps the fairest judgement of Murray is that of the English anthropologist Lucy Mair:

In the colonial world as it was before the First World War, and particularly in the context of the Pacific, Papua was in many ways an example of an enlightened rule; and had he administered it for only the normal term of a colonial governor, he would have been associated only with the period in which it was so. But during his thirty-odd years in office, standards of colonial rule advanced in other parts of the world till Papua was no longer in the vanguard.

Books for Further Reading

Legge, J. D., Australian Colonial Policy.
Lett, L., Sir Hubert Murray of Papua.
Mair, L., Australia in New Guinea.
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Chapter Eight

New Guinea Under Australian Military Administration


The World in 1914

When Germany occupied north-eastern New Guinea, in 1884, it was still a second-rate European power. It had no navy, its industry was not as developed as that of Great Britain, and it had only just joined the countries of Europe in the scramble for colonies. Thirty years later Germany was the leading industrial and military power in the world. Other important countries were France, Great Britain, Italy, Russia, the United States of America and Austria (this country comprised what is today Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and parts of Yugoslavia and Rumania). In 1905 Japan defeated Russia and joined the ranks of the world powers. Between 1870 and 1914 these powers divided between themselves most of the still uncolonized parts of Africa, Asia and Oceania. In 1914, Europe was divided into two armed camps. On one side there was Great Britain, France and Russia—known as the allied powers. On the other side were the so called central powers—Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy. The United States of America was neutral, and Japan was an ally of Great Britain.
The War of 1914-1918

In July 1914 Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia, a small country in south-eastern Europe. In June the heir to the Austrian throne was killed by Serbian nationalists at Sarajevo, and the Austrians made this an excuse to declare war on Serbia. Before long, the allied powers were involved in war with the central powers (except for Italy). In August Japan joined in the fighting on the side of the allied powers, and Turkey entered the war on the side of Germany in November 1914. In 1915 Italy joined the allies, and in 1917 the United States of America entered the war, also on the side of the allied powers.

Australian Occupation of German New Guinea

The war lasted for four years and ended in the defeat of the central powers. It was fought in Europe, the Middle East, Africa and the Pacific. Here, the German colonies were quickly occupied by Australia, New Zealand and Japan. At the request of the British Government an Australian expeditionary force of 1,500 men landed at Kakabaul Bay near Kokopo on 11th September, 1914. The defending German forces consisted of 240 natives and 61 whites. After a short fight the Australians captured the German wireless station at Bitapaka. On the following day the Coconut Lancers, as the Australian force was called, occupied Rabaul. The people were assembled in a large meadow outside the town, and an Australian officer read a proclamation in Melanesian pidgin:

All boys belonga one place, you savvy big master he come now, he new feller master, he strong feller too much, you look him all ships stop place; he small feller ship belonga him. Plenty more big feller he stop place belonga him; now he come here he take all place. . . . You look him new feller plag; you savvy him? He belonga British; he more better than other feller; suppose you been makem paper before this new feller master come, you finish time belonga him first; finish time belong him, you like makem new feller paper longa man belonga new feller master, he look out good alonga you; he give good feller kai-kai. Suppose you no look out alonga him, he cross too much. English new feller master he like him black feller man too much. . . . You look out place alonga him, he look out place alonga you. You no fight other feller black man other feller
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place, you no kai-kai man. You no steal mary belonga other feller black man. . . . Me been talk alonga you now, now you give three goodfeller cheers belonga new feller master. No more 'um Kaiser. . . . God Save Um King.

Captain Detzner

The battle for the Bitapaka Station was the only real fight of the campaign. On September 17th the German forces in New Britain surrendered, and by the end of 1914 all German New Guinea was in Australian hands. Only one German, Captain Detzner, refused to surrender. When the war broke out he was surveying the border between New Guinea and Papua, near the Lakekamu goldfield. The Australian officer in charge of the station at Nepa demanded Detzner's surrender, but he refused. Detzner found his way back to Morobe, where he was stationed, and tried to organize the defences there. Eventually he fled to the bush where he remained, constantly on the move, until the end of the war in Europe. In November 1918 he surrendered to the District Officer at Finschhafen. After returning to Germany he wrote a book about his adventures.

Australian Military Administration

Having occupied German New Guinea, Australia placed the territory under a military administration. All German laws were retained, and the Germans were allowed to carry on their normal occupations, after taking an oath of neutrality. German planters went back to their plantations; German missionaries remained on their missions; and German officials were asked to help the Australians to run the colony. Their help was necessary because the Australians were all soldiers. There were no civilian administrators among them, and they even lacked German interpreters. Also, for some time before the Australian invasion unrest had been spreading in the villages and labour lines, as German planters and officials were called up to defend the territory. At the same time, there was a drought on the land, and native food was scarce. Because of interruptions to shipping, caused by the war, imported rice and tinned food was also short. As a result, many indentured labourers deserted the labour lines. Some even started to loot European houses and plantations. As the Australians wanted to return quickly to normal conditions, the German planters were
allowed to go back to their plantations and German officials were allowed to return to their jobs. By the end of 1914 life returned to normal. Regular supplies of food and tobacco once more became available, and clearing and planting was resumed.

The end of what the villagers came to call German time meant very little change for most New Guineans. The man belong Sydney, as the Australians became known, took over the German system of government. The luluais and tultuls appointed by the Germans retained their jobs. More importantly, the Australians also retained the head tax introduced by the Germans. The main thing was to keep the colonial economy going. If the plantations were neglected or destroyed, the economic value of the territory would diminish. During the six and a half years of Australian military rule, (it lasted until May 1921) the production of copra and rubber increased. Some plantations were now coming into full bearing, and the Australian government needed important war materials. Even so, the military occupation cost the Australian taxpayer over $1,800,000. Since the money came from the defence budget, this did not mean that the Australian government had abandoned the principle (applied in Papua) that a colony must pay for itself. But it helped to hide the fact that New Guinea was not really a rich country. In Papua, which remained under civilian administration, the war made this fact more evident than ever.

New Labour Laws

The only important changes introduced by the Australian military administration concerned labour. Labour recruiting was increased. In 1914 there were some 20,000 indentured labourers in the colony; by 1921 their numbers had gone up to about 28,000. Most of the labourers were employed in New Britain and New Ireland. In 1915 a new labour ordinance was issued, based on a law which the Germans were about to introduce when the war broke out. Under German rule labourers could be punished by a magistrate for neglecting their work, laziness and desertion, but the government also issued to employers permits to punish their own workers. A plantation owner or manager who had such a permit could flog his workers; put them in chains; or fine them. Flogging was the most common form of punishment; this is why the permits were also called flogging permits. In 1915 the right of an employer to flog his own workers was abolished, and in 1919 the Australian
government *absolutely abolished corporal chastisement*. But this was only on paper, because the new regulations were often ignored. The planters were afraid that without flogging it would be impossible to keep discipline on the plantations. Soon after flogging was prohibited a group of planters wrote to the government:

The natives of these islands are human beings of the very lowest standard of life in the whole world, and their education is therefore like naught. Even the natives around Rabaul, though being in continuous touch with white people for over thirty years, are not yet more than children, and they have to get a licking just as well as every naughty boy in civilized countries also gets from his parents and school-masters. Confinement in a room will have no effect at all on the boys, as they lack all sense of honour in this regard.

Even the missionaries sometimes ignored the new regulations. The Lutherans around Finschhafen, for instance, were arranging for the luluais to inflict floggings. When the captain of the mission ship had trouble with the crew, a missionary told him to send the boys over to the luluais of a village close to, and *he would put them on the box* (a villager was stretched on the box for flogging.) It was only after the war, when the people in Australia heard about the floggings, that the practice was stopped. The military punishment known as Field Punishment No. 1—hanging by the wrists—was not abolished until 1922.

**President Wilson and the Colonial Problem**

One of the reasons why Australia had introduced so few changes during the war was the uncertainty about the future of the territory. In the beginning the Australian government thought that it would be added to the British Empire. In February 1917 Great Britain and Japan agreed secretly to support each other’s claims to German colonies in the Pacific. Japan would annex the German colonies north of the equator, and the British Empire would annex the German colonies south of the equator. But the entry into the war of the United States of America changed the situation. President Wilson, the head of the United States government, was opposed to the annexation of German colonies by European powers. In January 1918 he made a statement of his famous *Fourteen Points* as the basis for peace settlement. The *Fifth Point* called for a solution of
the colonial problem in a way which would give the interests of the native peoples equal weight with the claims of European countries. Some allied powers disagreed with President Wilson. South Africa, New Zealand and Japan wanted to annex the German colonies they had occupied. The Australian Prime Minister urged the annexation of New Guinea for strategic reasons, and a member of the Australian Parliament said:

New Guinea is a country which we should keep as an integral part of Australia. We owe a debt to the Papuan race. . . . We cannot agree to a policy of no annexation. We must keep it for the sake of its people and for our future safety.

The Treaty of Versailles and the Mandate System

The disagreement between the allies was solved at the peace conference held in 1919 in Versailles, near Paris. The allies agreed that the former German colonies would not be annexed by the victors. Instead, they would be administered by them as mandates. The conference also agreed to establish a League of Nations, an international organization for the maintenance of peace. The member-states promised to respect the independence of other member-states, and not to employ force against each other. The former German colonies were transferred to the League of Nations which entrusted their administration to allied powers, as mandates. Australia was given a mandate to administer New Guinea. The covenant of the League of Nations proclaimed the doctrine that the government of peoples not yet able to stand by themselves was a sacred trust of civilized nations. This was another way of saying that there would come the time when these people will be free and independent. But there was no sense of urgency about self-determination in 1919. Independence for colonies, most people thought, was a matter not of years but decades, even centuries.

Expropriation of German Properties

Having acquired the mandate to administer New Guinea, the Australian government decided to expropriate all German properties in the territory. German plantations and businesses were taken over by the Expropriation Board, and German planters and businessmen were deported to Germany. They were paid compensation by the German Government, and the money was credited to Germany as part payment of war reparations. The plantations were
eventually sold to Australians, mostly ex-servicemen. Many of
these had had no experience of tropical agriculture or the manage­
ment of native labour. Some went bankrupt, and the economy of
the territory suffered as a result. By then the government had
realized that the expulsion of German planters was a mistake, but
it was too late. Soon after taking over the territory the Australian
government also considered the expulsion of German missionaries.
Some people thought that they would turn the villagers against the
government and spread unrest among them. In the end German
missionaries were allowed to remain in the territory.

Proposed Union with Papua and the 1920 New Guinea Act

The next step was to decide if the mandated territory should be
united with Papua. The matter was referred to a Royal Commis­
sion consisting of three members. Murray, as we have seen, was
one of the members of the commission. We also know that the
majority recommended that the mandated territory be kept sep­
arate. This upset Murray whose ambition was to become the
Governor of both territories. The reasons against the proposed
union given by the two other members of the Commission—for
instance, the difficulty of administering a large country from one
centre—were not the real reasons. They wanted a separate govern­
ment for New Guinea because they feared that Murray would in­
troduce into the Territory his ideas about colonial government.
This would be bad for businessmen keen to take over German
properties. But their fears were unnecessary. The Australian gov­
ernment adopted the majority recommendation. Under the New
Guinea Act, passed by the Australian Parliament in 1920, the ter­
ritory was organized as a separate unit. The act came into force
in May 1921, and the military administration was replaced by
a civilian government. Before this was done, the only armaments
in the territory (a battery at Rabaul) were dismantled, because the
mandate prohibited any fortifications in the territory. The system
of government introduced by the 1920 New Guinea Act differed
slightly from that introduced in Papua by the 1905 Papua Act.
The legislative power was in the hands of the Governor-General
of Australia who issued ordinances for the government of the territ­
ory. The administration was the responsibility of the Adminis­
trator, stationed at Rabaul. There was no Legislative or Executive
Council, as in Papua; these were not created until 1933.
Relations Between the Mandated Territory and Papua

The establishment of a separate government for New Guinea meant that there was little contact between the mandated territory and Papua. Until the Japanese invasion the two territories might almost have been foreign countries. The public service was recruited separately in each territory. There was no free movement of white residents between the territories, and it was an offence for a native to cross the border between Papua and New Guinea without permission. There was even two lingua francas. Pidgin was the language of the territory, and police Motu that of Papua. There was hostility between the whites of the two territories. Residents of New Guinea disliked the Murray tradition; Papuan residents felt superior to the whites of New Guinea. Travelling on ship to and from Australia, the two groups did not mix. Still, both territories were affected by Australian legislation, such as the Navigation Act. Also, both territories were governed by Australia, and this produced certain similarity in administration on the two sides of the boundary. How this came about is the subject of the next chapter.

Books for Further Reading

Eggleston, F. W., (ed.), *The Australian Mandate for New Guinea*
Chapter Nine

Australian Mandate in New Guinea, 1921-1941


Exploration

When Australia took over the government of New Guinea from Germany, only a small part of the territory was under government control. The Germans had made their authority strong only in areas where plantations had been established: around Rabaul and Kokopo in New Britain, on Manus and some parts of Bougainville, around Kavieng and Namatanai in New Ireland, and around Aitape and Madang on the mainland. The Australian military administration did not explore new territory. This was begun only under the mandate. During the twenties exploration of the inland was often combined with the search for gold. The Germans had allowed private persons to go where they wished, at their own risk; the result was frequent murders of Europeans or villagers. This policy was continued under the mandate. In 1922 prospectors began to search for gold on the Waria and the Bulolo rivers. In 1926 rich gold deposits were discovered at Edie Creek, and soon some 200 white miners had established themselves in the vicinity. The track from the coast was in poor condition, and there were only a few government officials on the goldfields. Sometimes the carrier lines were ambushed by the villagers. In one particularly
bloody raid the people of Kaisenik village fought back; their village was surrounded by ditches and hidden traps, and the miners had to use dynamite bombs to conquer the village. It was burned to the ground, and many villagers were killed in the fight.

Soon after the discovery of gold in the Morobe district the government adopted a new rule as regards exploration. The first men to go into unexplored regions had to be patrol officers, and private persons could enter the so called uncontrolled areas only with government permission. This was very similar to Murray's policy of peaceful penetration. But the task was difficult because the government did not have enough money to appoint all the patrol officers needed. After the end of the military administration, Australia stopped subsidizing the territory's budget, and the cost of government had to be paid from local resources. As in Papua, salaries for European officers in the territory were low. Housing was not free. All medical attention had to be paid for, even if it was required for an arrow wound received on patrol. Thus it was difficult to attract enough good officers from Australia to the territory. Even so, by the early thirties the administration started to explore the central ranges of New Guinea. In 1933 a patrol officer, Jim Taylor, accompanied the Leahy brothers on their westward trip from Bena Bena, near Goroka. One of the Leahy brothers, Mick, had already explored the headwaters of the Purari, in 1930. Accompanied by another prospector, Dwyer, he ascended the Markham, crossed the Bismarck Range, and travelled down the Purari to the Gulf of Papua. In 1933 the Leahy brothers and Jim Taylor left Bena Bena. Using a light plane, they discovered a chain of grassy valleys inhabited by people whose existence had not been suspected. They also established a base camp near Mount Hagen. In the following years, more of the Wahgi River area was explored. In 1938-9 Taylor led a patrol from Mount Hagen to Telefomin, and back to Wabag. The exploration of New Guinea, like that of Papua, was completed just before the Japanese invasion. Many parts of the country had yet to be visited by patrols for the first time, but the geography of New Guinea was already known.

The relations between the highland people and the patrols were mostly peaceful. The first reaction of the villagers was usually one of fear. When they first heard an aeroplane, they would ask: "What could this be? Was it the sound of flood waters, or of an earthquake? Had they heard wrongly—perhaps it was only the
sound of the cassowary?" But the noise continued, and in terror they fell to the ground, until it had passed, not daring to look up again. They discussed it among themselves: "If we look at this thing, we shall surely die." But they soon became accustomed to the new wonders, and patrols on return trips sometimes had to shoot to kill. The missionaries who followed the prospectors and patrol officers went around armed. If a villager stole from a mission the missionaries would shoot one of the village pigs and take it in compensation. In 1934 two Roman Catholic missionaries were killed in the Chimbu Valley in reprisal. About the same time there was fighting between the miners and the villagers on the Youat River. One of the miners was later convicted for murder and hanged—the first time a white man had been hanged in the territory. To stop further fighting, the government closed the highlands to all white people except patrol officers. The ban remained in force up to the time of Japanese invasion. This meant that in the highlands the establishment of law and order was largely for the benefit of the villagers and not, as elsewhere, mainly for the benefit of white settlers. Some people believe that for this reason the highland people are today more pro-government than the villagers in other parts of Papua and New Guinea.

Appointment of Luluais and Tultuls

In the areas brought under control between the First and Second World Wars, the Australians established a system of administration similar to that of the Germans. In every village a luluai and a tultul was appointed by the government. As in German times, a luluai was given a peaked cap with a single red band, and a tultul received a cap with a double red band. The luluais were responsible for keeping good order in their villages; the tultuls were their assistants. As in German times, the government usually appointed the village big man as luluai. Sometimes the villagers put forward as luluai someone who was not the real leader in the village. In some areas paramount luluais were appointed, with authority over several villages. They were given a silver-headed stick and were paid a small salary by the government. The luluais and paramount luluais took their orders from patrol officers who visited the villages from time to time. The territory was divided into districts. On the eve of Japanese invasion, seven districts were in existence. Three were on the mainland, and four in the islands.
Australia and the Mandate

Under the conditions laid down in the mandate, Australia was allowed to administer New Guinea as part of Australian territory. After 1921 German law was abolished, but all customary rights of New Guineans in relation to land, hunting and fishing were retained. Certain laws of the Commonwealth of Australia were applied to the territory, and also some laws of Queensland and of the territory of Papua. But the mandate also required Australia to follow the principle of sacred trust laid down in the Covenant of the League of Nations. How did Australia live up to this obligation? The New Guinea Act, passed by the Australian Parliament in 1920, stated that the government would promote to the utmost the material and moral well-being and social progress of the inhabitants of the territory. But, as we have already seen, after the end of the military administration the Australian government decided that the territory must be financially self-sufficient. The Germans had for many years subsidized the territory's budget, at a rate of over $100,000 annually. During the years of the military occupation, Australia had spent over $1,800,000 in the colony. But after 1921 the territory had to pay its way, and all health services, education and public works had to be paid for from local revenue.

Economic Development

Luckily, New Guinea was comparatively prosperous at the end of the military administration. During the war the production of copra had increased, and in 1920 about 22,000 tons had been exported. The Navigation Act, which applied to Papua as well as to New Guinea, slowed down economic development, but it was abolished in 1925. After that date there was a steady increase in the production of copra, and in 1940 over 70,000 tons were exported. Under the Germans several other crops were grown, such as rubber, cocoa, cotton and tobacco. The Australian ex-servicemen who took over German properties had had no experience of tropical agriculture, and most of the rubber and cocoa plantations were allowed to go out of cultivation. In 1923 the government appointed a Director of Agriculture; his main task was to encourage the cultivation of other produce than copra. A few years later an experimental station was established at Kerevat where crops were grown to test their commercial value. Cotton was introduced in New
Ireland and in the Markham Valley; coffee was tried at Wau; and oil palms were planted in New Britain. In spite of these efforts New Guinea remained a one crop country. Just before the Japanese invasion, the area of European plantations was 243,000 acres; of this, 233,000 acres were planted with coconuts. The following table shows how exports of copra increased between 1921 and 1938:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Tons</th>
<th>Value in $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>23,735</td>
<td>1,288,090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>25,894</td>
<td>948,220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>32,648</td>
<td>1,239,430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>34,974</td>
<td>1,377,038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>39,151</td>
<td>1,631,876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>45,806</td>
<td>2,033,860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>47,613</td>
<td>1,699,764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>62,285</td>
<td>2,352,080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>60,435</td>
<td>1,867,538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>63,832</td>
<td>1,728,716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>62,303</td>
<td>1,433,186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>59,452</td>
<td>1,236,596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>59,040</td>
<td>1,087,812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>56,251</td>
<td>722,826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>66,684</td>
<td>1,522,618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>76,409</td>
<td>2,462,618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>73,716</td>
<td>1,685,468</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Gold**

In 1921 copra made up about 95% of all New Guinea exports; by 1938 its share was only about one-third. During that time gold had replaced copra as the most important industry in the territory. Under the Germans prospecting for gold had been unsuccessful, and just before the war a German writer said that the British had occupied all the gold-bearing country. Under Australian rule, prospecting began in 1922 on the Waria and Bulolo rivers. In 1926 gold was discovered at Edie Creek, a tributary of the Bulolo. The story of the goldrush which followed has been told in many books, articles and films; before the Japanese invasion, this was the only aspect of New Guinea that most people in Australia and elsewhere had heard about. In the beginning the goldfields were
accessible only by foot. All stores and equipment had to be brought by carriers from Salamua. The journey lasted eight days, along a track running up and down steep hills. A prospector had first to build up a depot of stores, and prospecting was very difficult because the country was rugged. In 1927 work was begun on two roads from the coast, and experiments were made with air transport. Soon aircraft became the only source of supply for a European population of approximately 700 and a local labour force of 6,000. All machinery was brought in by air. After a few years most of the small miners were bought out by big companies. Of these, Bulolo Dredging and New Guinea Gold were the most important. Using huge dredges, the companies were able to extract gold from deposits that the miners could not exploit with profit. By 1939 there were eight dredges at work. Gold was also found on the upper Ramu, the Purari, and in 1937 mining was begun in the Sepik district. The following table shows how gold production increased between 1920 and 1938:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ounces</th>
<th>Value in $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>10,568</td>
<td>50,340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>84,760</td>
<td>390,856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>113,874</td>
<td>512,432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>79,748</td>
<td>358,866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>42,819</td>
<td>192,676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>57,874</td>
<td>264,658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>108,674</td>
<td>796,878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>196,823</td>
<td>1,867,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>257,511</td>
<td>2,735,232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>299,757</td>
<td>3,797,488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>302,619</td>
<td>3,408,996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>373,197</td>
<td>4,041,334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>410,058</td>
<td>4,057,960</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After 1932 gold made up more than one half of all New Guinea exports. Because the mining companies had to pay the government a royalty of 5% on all gold produced, the internal revenue of the mandated territory was much greater than Papua’s. In 1939, when the revenue of New Guinea was $1 million, Papua’s was about $290,000. In financial terms, therefore, Australian rule in New Guinea was successful. After 1926 the territory was financially self-sufficient, and the government had more money to build roads,
schools and hospitals. But not all the money was spent to promote the material and moral well-being of the people of New Guinea. No doubt the villagers profited from the economic development, but the main beneficiaries were the Europeans and the Chinese traders. For instance, much of the money spent by the government was paid to Europeans as salaries. Colonel Ainsworth, a colonial official from Kenya, said so in 1924 in his review of Australian administration. Lower clerical jobs, said Colonel Ainsworth, should be filled by people from India or other Asian countries. It would cost less to employ them, and the government would save money in this way. Similarly the employment of Asian tradesmen for lower wages would benefit the territory. The Administration did not follow his advice. It was only recently that the Australian government decided to allow Japanese technicians to work in Papua and New Guinea.

Land

Under the mandate, Australian administration followed the German principle that only the government could buy land from the villagers. In 1922 a land ordinance was passed which retained most of the German land legislation. Only the government could buy native land, and the villagers were not allowed to sell land which they were likely to need for themselves in the future. The administration also stopped freehold grants to Europeans; new land was now taken up in the same way as in Papua, that is, leased for a period of up to ninety-nine years. But the European settlers had already acquired some of the best land in the country. By 1939 over 900,000 acres of land were held by Europeans, compared with about 250,000 acres in Papua. Although this was only 1.5% of the total area of the territory, some villagers were suffering from a serious shortage of land, particularly in the Gazelle Peninsula and in parts of New Ireland. As a result, the government started to resume land for native use in areas where the villagers had lost most of their land. The largest piece of land resumed was near Lae, and the government also bought back some land from the European settlers on the Gazelle Peninsula. But this was not enough to solve the problem. Just before the Japanese invasion, the villagers around Kokopo formed the dog movement—apparently they chose the name because they felt that the Europeans treated them like dogs. They started to col-
lect money to buy back their land and to run their own schools. Unfortunately, some of the villagers advocated violence; so the leaders were imprisoned, and the movement collapsed.

**Labour**

Because there was more economic development in the mandated territory than in Papua, there was more demand for native labour. As a result, the labour problem was also greater. German labour legislation had been stricter than that of Papua. All labour contracts were for three years; punishment for a breach of contract was heavy; and the employers themselves were allowed to punish their workers for laziness or for neglect of work. The Australian military administration abolished the right of the employer to flog his workers, and later prohibited all corporal punishment of indentured labourers. Under the mandate a new labour ordinance similar to the Papuan one was passed. But there were some differences. The normal length of contract in New Guinea was three years (one year in Papua); the minimum wage was one dollar a month (there was no minimum wage in Papua); and the length of the working week was fifty-five hours (fifty in Papua). The administration could also prohibit recruiting in villages where too many men had been signed on. Recruiting from places more than 3,000 feet above sea level for work along the coast was prohibited. This was done because of the high death-rate from malaria among workers from districts which had no malaria. After the discovery of gold in the Morobe district special regulations were introduced for workers employed in carrying and mining. The period of contract for carriers was to be two years; a minimum wage of one dollar a month was introduced; and the maximum load for carriers was fixed at 50 lbs. Shifts in the mining industry were limited to eight hours.

**Labour Conditions in Practice**

This was the situation on paper. In practice, employers did not always follow the conditions laid down by law. Some recruiters used force or fraud to induce villagers to *mekim pepa*—the pidgin expression for signing a labour contract. During the Morobe gold-rush recruiters were paid as much as $40-50 a man. The labour required for the goldfields was sought along the coast and further north beyond Finschhafen. Recruiting was often accompanied by...
abuses. In the Atzera district, for instance, 400 men had been requisitioned by patrol officers after recruiters had failed to secure them by persuasion. A commission of inquiry, appointed to investigate the incident, found that it was common practice to recruit villagers against their will. It also found that government officials frequently assisted recruiters with recruiting. Another common practice was the coaching of interpreters to give the right answers when the villagers were asked by District Officers if they were willing to sign on.

Working conditions on the goldfields, particularly during the early years, were often poor. Many workers died from dysentery and pneumonia—death was sometimes caused by the failure of employers to supply the workers with blankets. Later, conditions were improved but the demand for native labour was still higher than the supply. About 20,000 villagers were working for Europeans when the Australians occupied New Guinea; in 1921 some 28,000 natives were in European employment; in 1940 the figure reached 41,000. In the twenties most indentured workers came from New Britain, but in the thirties there was recruiting in the Madang, Morobe and Sepik districts. Continued need for native labour put the government into a difficult position. It knew that village life would suffer if too many men were signed on, but it also wanted to encourage economic development. In the end the government decided that economic development came first, and little was done to prevent over-recruiting. In some colonies, such as the Belgian Congo, the figure of 15% of adult men was regarded as the maximum which could be recruited without damage to village life. In New Guinea the figure was about 20%. In some areas it was much higher. In certain villages on the Sepik, for instance, almost three-fourths of adult men were away just before the Second World War.

The Rabaul Strike

Not all the indentured villagers were employed on plantations or in the mining industry; many worked as boats' crew boys and as waterside workers, truck-drivers and tradesmen in towns. Rabaul, the largest town in the territory, had a native work force of about 3,500. It was here that the first strike in the history of Papua and New Guinea occurred. One night in January 1929 all native workers of Rabaul, including the police, assembled at the
missions outside the town and did not go to work next day. The strike was inspired by the talk of West Indian and Australian seamen who laughed at the local workers for working for such low pay. It was led by Samasuma, the master of a schooner, and a sergeant major in the native police force by the name of Rami. The whole thing had been organized so efficiently that the European and Chinese residents of Rabaul were taken completely by surprise. The leaders planned to have every worker gather at the Roman Catholic and Methodist missions outside Rabaul. Here, under the protection of the churches, they intended to ask the employers to increase the wages of native workers. They believed that the plan could not fail. They thought that the masters would come to them, talk things over with them, and give the workers more wages. But the strikers had no food, and had to return to work next day. The 200 police (out of the 217 stationed in Rabaul) who took part in the strike were sentenced to imprisonment, and so were the strike leaders. During the trial Samasuma and Rami said that they only wanted to better the lot of their people, but they were sentenced to three years in gaol. They were imprisoned in a coal hulk in Rabaul harbour—the local gaol was too small to accommodate all the sentenced strikers. When the action of the government was criticized by the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations, the Australian delegate replied:

The European population in Rabaul was very small and consisted of men, women and children, whereas there was a native labour force of about 3,000, who could very easily be worked into a frenzy by agitators. Strictness was therefore essential. If native agitators were to be allowed to create an inflamed public opinion against Europeans, a very serious situation might arise. The strikers in the case in point had had no reason at all for striking. They had merely been prevailed upon by a few agitators. A severe sentence therefore upon the agitators would probably prevent future riots.

Village Agriculture

Because of the demand for native labour, little was done by the government to encourage the production of cash crops by the villagers. If too many natives worked in the village (and earned enough money to pay the head tax), this would reduce the number
of men willing to go out to work. This had been the policy under the Germans, and it was continued by the Australians. The only exception was the cultivation of coconuts. Under the Germans the villagers had been compelled to plant and maintain a certain number of coconut trees, but the Australians allowed these plantations to go out of cultivation. In parts of New Britain and New Ireland, however, the villagers themselves started to produce copra for sale. At first it was dried in the sun, and the quality was poor. Later the administration tried to improve the quality by designing a cheap hot-air drier which the villagers could afford. Over seventy were in use in 1937, mainly in the Gazelle Peninsula, and almost 900 tons of copra were sold by the natives of the district in that year.

Health

Because the revenue of the mandated territory was larger than Papua’s, the government had more money to spend on native health. In Papua, health services suffered from lack of money; in New Guinea, expenditure on native health reached $180,000 annually just before the Japanese invasion. Two methods were used by the government to care for the health of the people: hospitals and medical patrols. Each district had at least one hospital. The hospitals were in the charge of European doctors who were assisted by local orderlies. The hospitals cared for in and out-patients from nearby villages and also looked after plantation workers who were seriously ill. There were no hospitals on the goldfields during the early goldrushes, and epidemics of dysentery and pneumonia were frequent. The earliest epidemic was dealt with by the wife of one of the first miners in the goldfield, Mrs Doris Booth, a trained nurse. She looked after her native patients in an empty building on her husband’s claim, and became known as the Angel of Bulolo.

Medical patrols

The medical patrol method was used in areas too far from a hospital. The patrols were led by a European doctor or medical assistant who went slowly from village to village, checking on health conditions and sanitation. The administration also continued the German practice of appointing medical tultuls or dokta bois; just before the Japanese invasion, there were some 4,000 dokta
bois in the territory. The men selected for the job were sent to a hospital for training, and returned with a cap which had a red cross on it and with a supply of drugs and bandages. The system did not work very well. The dokta bois were interested in their work for a short time, but after a while it became too much trouble. Sometimes they would distribute the bandages and cotton wool to their friends who wore them as dancing ornaments. The government also established several infant welfare centres in the territory. These were later handed over to the missions who were subsidized for this work by the administration. Missions were also issued with free drugs and dressings. Private businesses (mainly mining companies) were paid by the government for medical treatment given to natives who were not employed by them.

Education

Education in the mandated territory was left almost entirely to the missions. The Germans had established a government primary school near Rabaul, and in 1914 were planning to open similar schools at Madang, Aitape, Kavieng and Kieta. They also subsidized missions for the teaching of German. When the Australians occupied New Guinea, there were six missionary societies established in the territory. In the islands there were the Methodists, the Roman Catholic Society of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Roman Catholic Society of Mary. On the mainland were the stations of the two Lutheran missionary societies and of the Roman Catholic Society of the Divine Word. After the opening of the highlands, Catholics and Seventh Day Adventists established missions there. Under the Germans each mission taught in one or several native languages; the Lutherans, for instance, used Iabim and Kate. This was continued under the mandate. Some missions also taught in pidgin and a few in English. Technical training was given by the Sacred Heart Mission at Vunapope and also by the Methodists.

Government Schools

The Australian administration did not subsidize missions, as the government planned to open its own schools. A start was made in 1922 when a technical school was opened at Rabaul to train local drivers, engineers, carpenters and so on. A primary school was opened at Kokopo in the same year, with students drawn from
every district in the mandated territory. Both schools were transferred to Malaguna two years later, and a school was opened near Kavieng soon after. The schools were staffed by teachers from Australia. In 1927 it was announced that a government primary school would be established in every district, but nothing was done. Just before the war only 385 pupils were enrolled in government schools, compared with about 65,000 pupils in mission schools.

*Education: an evaluation*

Education has been described as *the most sterile of all the Australian Government's undertakings* during the mandate. The government did not subsidize missions, and spent little on education itself. Why was this so? Lack of money was one reason; but Papua, with smaller resources, did subsidize missions. Another reason was that there was little need for educated New Guineans, and there were no clerical positions open to them, either in the administration or in private enterprise. One more reason has been given by the anthropologist S. W. Reed in the book *The Making of New Guinea*. He said that there was in the territory a definite hostility of Europeans towards the native being given any education at all. . . . *The exploiting class had a very real fear that intellectual training will make the native less amenable to labour.* There is some truth in his statement. In 1929, for instance, when the government was about to send a group of students to Australia, the residents of Rabaul protested, and the students did not go. Said the *Rabaul Times*:

> We learn with pleasure that the seven natives who were to be sent to Australia did not go owing to the representations made by the Citizens' Association. This should go a long way towards satisfying those who expressed their indignation, and their number is legion.

*Australia and the Mandate: an Assessment*

The Australian administration of the mandated territory had been subjected to much criticism from visitors to the territory, many people in Australia, and the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations. S. W. Reed, whose book we have already mentioned, said that the Australian government, because of the attitude of European settlers in the territory, did nothing for the New Guinea people. It *gave with one hand what it took*...
away with the other. Many observers were critical of the harsh labour conditions. In 1939, a member of the Permanent Mandates Commission said that she knew of no territory under the mandate in which education progressed so slowly. Much of this is true. But it must be remembered that New Guinea was a difficult country to administer. Its mountains were rugged and its people were divided into hundreds of tribal groups. Also, Australia itself was still, in a sense an underdeveloped country; it had little industry and depended on foreign capital for its development. The main criticism which can be made of the Australian administration is that it placed rapid economic development above the needs of the New Guinea people. This led it into action which did not always compare favourably with the more benevolent attitude of Murray in Papua. But, as we have seen, protection of native society in Papua was possible only because there was little European development. If Papua had had more to attract the European planter and businessman, its history up to the Second World War would not have been much different from that of New Guinea.

Books for Further Reading


Mair, L., *Australia in New Guinea*.

Reed, S. W., *The Making of Modern New Guinea*.


White, O., *Parliament of a Thousand Tribes*. 
The Japanese attack Rabaul, January 1942.

The Japanese attack Port Moresby across the Kokoda trail — finally pushed back.

Australian counter-attack

Japanese attack Milne Bay — Defeated

The Japanese Attacks on New Guinea, 1942.
Chapter Ten

The War and Reconstruction


Reasons for Japanese Expansion

After the middle of the nineteenth century, Japan, learning from European methods and ideas, had become a powerful nation in Asia. By 1930 she had obtained control of Formosa and Korea and her influence was spreading in North China. With the coming of the World Depression in 1930, the Japanese found they could not sell the goods they produced. Some Japanese thought that if they controlled more land they would also have large markets open to them. At the same time in Japan the army leaders took over the government of the country. In 1931 the Japanese attacked in Manchuria. By the late 1930's they were fighting in southern China.

War in New Guinea

The Second World War spread to the Pacific area in December, 1941 when the Japanese attacked the American naval base at Pearl Harbour in Hawaii. Within a few weeks the Japanese had captured most of the area, including the Pacific colonies, which had been controlled by Great Britain, Holland, France and the United States. The Japanese attack surprised everyone.

The Australians in New Guinea had made very few preparations for war, and only a small number of soldiers had been sent from
Australia. A few hundred troops guarded Rabaul; just twelve men and one officer were sent to protect Manus Island. These soldiers met the full force of the invasion by well-equipped and highly-trained Japanese troops. At Rabaul, for example, the Japanese landed more than 5,000 soldiers, covering the invasion with heavy ships and many aeroplanes launched from aircraft carriers. The Japanese forces soon took control of the New Guinea islands and much of the mainland. They then sent a strong force to land at Buna, in the Northern District of Papua. These troops attacked across the Kokoda Trail in an attempt to capture Port Moresby, while more soldiers were landed at Milne Bay. After much bitter fighting these attacks were defeated, so the Japanese did not occupy the rest of Papua or the Highlands. From late 1942 until the end of the war in August, 1945, American and Australian soldiers slowly won back the areas which had been occupied by the Japanese. In some places the village people lived under Japanese control for three and a half years. Similar struggles occurred throughout South-East Asia and the Pacific.

The Effect of the War on the People

People living in the remote areas of New Guinea saw almost nothing of the war, but those in the battle areas were seriously affected. Some villagers were killed by bombs and bullets and others died while working for the army. The war disturbed village life in other ways. The soldiers built camps, airstrips, and roads through the gardens and plantations, which were often destroyed. The people hid in the forests when the fighting came near; their villages were sometimes burned and their pigs and fowls were lost or killed. The armies also needed labourers and porters to carry the food, and wounded soldiers, to help build new roads and to work on the plantations which had not been destroyed or captured. About 5,000 Papuans and New Guineans also fought alongside the Australians and Americans and a number, including Mr. Ehava Karava, M.M. and Mr. Pita Simogon, B.E.M. were awarded medals for their bravery.

Because so many men were needed for the war, very few were left in the coastal villages. In these places proper gardens were not planted, the houses began falling down and the people sometimes became unhappy and quarrelled among themselves. The Australian government knew what was happening, but could do
little until the war was over. The government realized that the people would have to be recompensed for the damage done by the war.

**Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit**

While the fighting was in progress, both Papua and New Guinea were governed by the Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit, (A.N.G.A.U.) which was a branch of the Army. From this time some of the differences in the administrative policies for the two Territories began to disappear. There were three branches of A.N.G.A.U., one to look after the remaining plantations, one to control the supply of labour, and the third, District Services, to carry out patrols and general field work. At first A.N.G.A.U’s main role was helping the soldiers, so little could be done for the village people and labourers. As the Allied forces began winning the war, the military administration had more time to think about the needs of Papua and New Guinea. New patrol camps were built; the government’s first school in Papua was opened at Sogeri; and Army doctors gave more medical treatment to the people.

By 1945 many more Australians were working for A.N.G.A.U. than had been employed by the separate administrations in Papua and New Guinea before the war. These men had been sent to A.N.G.A.U. by the Army, and many of them returned to Australia as soon as the war ended. Others remained in the Territory and joined the new peacetime administration. Some of them later rose to senior positions. The war thus brought new men to govern Papua and New Guinea. At the same time, most of the senior A.N.G.A.U. officers had been Resident Magistrates and District Officers in the pre-war administration. These men were able to pass on their knowledge, and many of their opinions about the people, to the newcomers. In this way experience was combined with new ideas in the civil administration which replaced A.N.G.A.U. in October, 1945.

**After the Japanese Occupation**

New ideas were needed in New Guinea, for conditions had changed between 1941 and 1945. The war had not only upset life in the villages, but had disturbed the Europeans in the Territory too. The Europeans, so strong and stern in the times of peace, had been thoroughly beaten by the Japanese. In some parts of
Asia where this happened the local people took this opportunity and decided that they did not want the Europeans to return. Once the Japanese were defeated in Burma and Indonesia the people there demanded immediate independence. In New Guinea the Japanese occupation had fewer effects on the villagers. The Japanese were complete foreigners. They had little to do with the village people, and they made no attempt to set up anti-European groups, as they did in the conquered countries of South-East Asia. Towards the end of the war they were very harsh with New Guinea people. A number of village leaders, including Golpak of Jacquinot Bay, gave valuable assistance to Allied troops and airmen. Some people gave help to the Japanese, but often because they were forced to.

**The Allied Occupation**

The occupation of New Guinea by American and Australian troops had more obvious and permanent effects. Men often had to work hard for the armed forces, but many of them believed that they were treated more kindly by the soldiers than they had been on plantations before the war. Many of the soldiers were very friendly, and often gave generous payment in food and money to villagers who helped them. Some of the American troops were Negroes, able to do the same work as white men and with the same knowledge and the same possessions. New Guinea people had seen nothing like this before, and stories about the soldiers soon spread throughout the Territory. The people were impressed by the new goods and machines which the armies brought with them. Several large camps and towns were built as bases and to these came great numbers of ships and aircraft, bringing food, building materials, weapons, machinery, drugs and clothing for the soldiers. Few of the villagers had any idea where these things came from. There were many more goods than had ever been seen in New Guinea during peacetime, and it appeared that the troops had no trouble in obtaining them. Some villagers reasoned that the soldiers should remain in New Guinea and teach the people how to gain such great amounts of goods and wealth.

**Increasing Australian Interest**

The war also brought changes for Australia. In 1941 Australians knew almost nothing about New Guinea. By 1945, after more
than three years of fighting there, the country was known throughout the world. Very few Australians or Americans had kind things to say about the geography of New Guinea. To many, it was the island where husbands and sons had been killed. Those soldiers who survived the New Guinea campaign remembered mainly the heat, the swamps and the mosquitoes. Even the popular notion of the Territory's people was a very limited one. There had been many wartime stories in Australian newspapers about the bravery of New Guinea's police and soldiers. Villagers, too, had risked their lives to shelter airmen and coast-watchers, and carriers had saved many wounded soldiers by carrying them many miles to hospitals. At times these carriers were called Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels. Yet most Australians knew nothing about the wartime labourers who had not seen their families for years, or the shortage of schools and hospitals in the Territory. Australians were still ignorant of the pre-war policy which had forced New Guinea and Papua to exist on their own resources, with almost no help from outside. The people of Australia did not demand that their government should find a new policy for New Guinea, but they were more interested in the country and could accept the idea that New Guinea should be developed faster. Most of them were willing to allow more of their taxes to be spent there.

**Australia and Asia**

Events after the war forced Australia to pay greater attention to the countries to her north. Burma, Indo-China and Indonesia had gained their independence by the late 1940's, but they did not remain at peace. Communism was a powerful force throughout the world by this time, and there were strong Communist leaders and groups seeking power in newer and undeveloped countries of South-East Asia.

**Wartime Administration of New Guinea**

It was generally agreed that more help should be given to New Guinea, but it was not so clear just how this could be done. Members of the Australian Cabinet had discussed Australia's obligation and the Territory's future while the war was still being fought; but there was little that could be done at the time. A separate Department of External Territories was set up in 1941 and the
Directorate of Research was established to advise the Army on its wartime administration of New Guinea. These two institutions were concerned with New Guinea’s problems.

Directorate of Research

The Directorate of Research was headed by Mr. Alfred Conlon, who was an adviser to both the Prime Minister and the General commanding Australia’s army. Mr. Conlon was assisted by several experts with knowledge of New Guinea. One of these men was Colonel J. K. Murray, a future Administrator of Papua-New Guinea. Together these advisers suggested ways in which the Territory could be developed after the war. They enquired into the problems of labour, education, agriculture, and the effects of the war on the villages. They talked about the work which could be done by co-operative societies and local government councils. This was the first time many of these matters had been discussed in such depth about New Guinea.

The Labor Party and Mr Ward

Australia had a Labor government during the Second World War. The Australian Labor Party drew most of its support from working men, and as such was concerned with conditions for workers and the welfare of labourers and villagers in New Guinea. Many people in the Labor Party felt that too little had been done for the villagers before the war. They thought that planters and traders had had too much power in the Territory. The Labor Party was ready to accept the new plans suggested by the Directorate of Research. Mr. E. J. Ward, the Labor Party’s Minister for External Territories, said:

This Government is not satisfied that sufficient interest has 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. . . . Advancement can be achieved only 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.

This marked the end of the policy that Papua and New Guinea had to support itself. Mr. Ward’s speech also began the post-war debate on the question of self-government for the Territory.
The Reintroduction of Civilian Administration

Mr. Ward made these remarks to the Australian Parliament while introducing a law to bring back civilian administration to New Guinea and Papua. The law combined the two areas under the one administration, with its headquarters in Port Moresby. From 1945 until 1949 the country was called the Territory of Papua-New Guinea. Officers who had previously served only in New Guinea were posted to stations in Papua. Colonel J. K. Murray was appointed as the Administrator to control the whole area. The main plans for post-war development were applied to both Papua and New Guinea. The civil administration had two main tasks: firstly, it had to restore order to the Territory after the war; secondly, it had to put into practice the plans for New Guinea, which had been made during the war by the Labor government and the Directorate of Research.

Colonel J. K. Murray

Colonel Murray as Administrator, was well qualified to carry out the new plans for the Territory. He had for two years been a member of the Directorate of Research and Chief Instructor of
the school which had trained new men for work in the Territory. He had fought in World War I, commanded a battalion of troops, and was experienced in administration. He was also an expert on agriculture. For 22 years he had been Principal of Gatton Agricultural College in Queensland, as well as Professor of Agriculture in the University of Queensland. Although not a strong supporter of the Labor Party, he agreed with its policies for the Territory. He was very concerned with welfare, holding strong opinions about what should be done for the people of New Guinea. He did not like anyone to interfere with his work.

Finance

Colonel Murray worked with little supervision from the Minister for External Territories; for Mr. Ward was also Minister for Transport in Australia at this time; he visited New Guinea only once. Mr. Ward supported Colonel Murray and his efforts, and their administration became known as the Ward-Murray regime. The Prime Minister, Mr. Chifley, believed that the new civil administration in the Territory should have the funds to maintain its work. The grant of money from the Australian government was important, being very much larger than in pre-war days. By 1948 it had increased 100 times the pre-war contribution. This was because of Australia’s growing awareness of her obligations in New Guinea.

United Nations Influence on Australian Policy

Australia, as a member of the United Nations, supported the charter of the United Nations. One of these conditions was that all colonies and undeveloped nations should receive more economic aid after the war. So Australia was responsible to finance New Guinea in this post-war development. In August, 1946 Mr. Chifley stated that:

We recognize and gladly accept the general duty laid down in the Charter [of the United Nations], to promote the welfare and advancement of the inhabitants of New Guinea.

Once Australia accepted these plans, the U.N. Trusteeship Council kept watch to see that they were carried out.

Summary of the Changes

There were several reasons why new policies were followed after the war:
2. The ideas of the Directorate of Research.
4. Australian fears of another attack from Asia, defence and security requirements and the need for a friendly New Guinea.
5. The plans and suggestions of the Charter of the United Nations.

How Great Were These Changes?

It must be remembered that in Papua, in particular, the government had before the war tried to look after the welfare of the people. The post-war developments were not a complete change from the past. All of the old problems remained and there were new ones brought by the war. Australia had always intended to develop both New Guinea and Papua, but had been held back by a lack of interest and finance. After 1946 interest in the Territory grew and increasing amounts of money were sent there by the Australian government.

Summary of Policies, 1945-1951

The main things the civil administration had to do were:
1. Take over from the military government, find staff and continue work in the Districts.
2. Rebuild the towns and stations which had been damaged or destroyed (mainly in the Territory of New Guinea).
3. Give the villagers reparations for the damage caused during the war.
4. Make plans for the future of workers on plantations.
5. Plan the economic development of the Territory.
6. Provide more schools and hospitals for the people.
7. Make policies for the political development of New Guinea.

Reconstruction

Civilian officers took over the Administration of New Guinea from the military on 30th October, 1945. They had a difficult task before them. The civil administration was not only under-staffed, but many stations had to be rebuilt, and there was a shortage of
materials and skilled workers. The administration bought some of
the army’s materials, but did not always have the skilled workmen
who knew how to use them properly. Some houses and offices were
rebuilt from scrap material, often of poor quality. These buildings
were supposed to be temporary, but some of them were used for
many years. Most of the stations in New Guinea looked untidy and
only half finished for a long time. The Administrator tried to bring
more men and materials to the Territory, but there was little to
spare in Australia at the time. W. E. H. Stanner, in *The South
Seas in Transition*, has suggested that if the military administration
had kept control of New Guinea for longer, more of the rebuilding
would have been done. However, the Labor government wanted
to begin its new policies and these could not be carried out properly
by the Army. The civil administration was soon doing good work,
even though it faced many problems.

*The Public Service*

Some public servants remained from the pre-war services of
New Guinea and Papua, but many more were needed for the
new work which had to be done. The officers recruited from
A.N.G.A.U. often lacked experience. Other men were recruited
in 1946 and 1947. Even so, there were too few officers for the
many jobs to be done. Arguments developed between officers who
had worked in New Guinea and those from Papua; and between
the new recruits and experienced men. All officers were organized
into Departments, as in the pre-war services. Field administration
came under the Department of District Services and Native Affairs.
Two important changes from the pre-war organization were that
separate Departments of Education and Labour were set up. The
Department of Public Health also became very much bigger within
a few years. This showed that much more would be done for the
villagers under the Australian Government’s new sense of purpose.

*Administration before the Legislative Council*

From 1945 until 1949 the civilian authorities were known
as the Provisional Administration; their organization was only
temporary until the final plans were made. It was not until 1949
that a law was passed to set up a *Legislative Council and Executive
Council*. Similar Councils had existed in both New Guinea and
Papua before the war, but in 1945 other things had to be done and
the Legislative Council was not re-established until 1951. During the rebuilding the Administration wanted to have its orders carried out at once, without debate. However some people, particularly planters and traders, disagreed with the way things were being done, and there were many arguments over the details of the Administration's policies. These policies are described in the following paragraphs, and the reasons for the disagreements will become clear.

**War Damage Compensation**

The Australian government decided that all villagers who had been harmed by the war should receive some payment or compensation for this. Compensation was paid to anyone who was injured by the war and to the relatives of people who had been killed. Payment was also made for damage to land, timber, houses, pigs and fowls, household goods and personal possessions, and a number of other things. A man who had been so badly injured in the war that he could not work again would be paid a pension of $3.00 per month. About 50c. was paid for each coconut tree destroyed and up to $10.00 for pigs which had been killed. By 1950 two million dollars in compensation had been paid to villagers.

**Problems of War Damage Compensation**

Paying war damage compensation took up much of the field staff's time for several years. It was very hard to find out the exact damage caused in villages, and some wrong claims were made. There was an idea that compensation money should be put into banks, but this was not followed through—and the villagers spent the money as they wished. There was very little to buy in the trade stores at this time, and people paid very high prices for the things they could get. As men were able to live for a time on the payments they received for compensation a few did not make new gardens, nor want to go back to work on the plantations. Europeans, seeing the villagers putting in wrong claims for compensation and wasting their payments, felt that the Administration was squandering taxpayers' money.

**Good Effects of War Damage Compensation**

The payment of compensation pleased most villagers. Men rebuilt their houses and gardens, and life in the village returned to
normal. Compensation stopped trouble from men who went home and found their houses damaged. Those villagers who put their money in the bank were able to use it later when co-operative societies were set up.

**Labour Policy**

Many villagers were made to work for the army for longer than they wished. As soon as peace came, the government wanted this coercion to end. On 15th October, 1945, all labour contracts were cancelled and the men were told they might go home. This caused serious problems as many workers were unable to find boats to take them home and very few were left on the plantations to work. At the same time the Europeans were having trouble in getting their plantations back into production. Much of their land and possessions had been destroyed by the war too, and they were short of money. Because of this, they thought it was unwise of the government to allow all the workers to return to their homes at the one time.

*Native Labour Ordinance 1946*

The old indenture system, under which labourers could be imprisoned if they ran away from plantations, remained in force. But the Administration said that this system would end within five years. Many employers objected; fearing that once the indenture system ended, they would be unable to keep their workers on the plantations. A new Native Labour Ordinance was passed for Papua and New Guinea in 1946. The length of the labourer's contract was reduced from three years to one year; hours of work lowered from 55 per week to 44; and wages increased from the pre-war level of 50c. per month in New Guinea ($1.00 in Papua) to $1.50. The Ordinance also set down a certain amount of food which employers had to give to their workers, and stated that compensation must be paid when a labourer was injured or killed. The law caused some conflict between the Administration and employers. The employers were worried because the details of the new law meant they would pay out more money for the wages, food and accommodation of their workers. Planters were unwilling to pay the increased labour costs while they were still trying to rebuild their plantations after the war.
Shortage of Labour

Planters would perhaps not have been so worried by the new laws had they been able to find enough workers. Copra and rubber production had fallen very much during the war. To produce as much as they had before the war, more labour was needed. Labour was also needed to unload ships, to rebuild government stations, and work in offices. But because all contracts had been cancelled, and many men received war damage payments, it became hard to get people to leave their villages. By 1949 there were as many men working for wages as there had been before the war. But, because there was so much more work to do after 1945, there was still a serious shortage of labour. The employers, European planters and traders, grew more and more critical of the Administration. They believed that their copra and rubber exports earned almost all the Territory's income—and therefore the Administration should help them by finding more workers.

Plans for Economic Development

Before World War II, economic development in New Guinea and Papua meant mainly European enterprise. The village schemes in Papua had not been a success. After the war the Administration decided that more attention should be given to development in the villages. This meant that many of the men who had worked on plantations before would now stay home to work in their own plots of coffee or coconuts or cocoa. Labour for plantations would become even harder to obtain.

Agricultural Extension

The Administration believed that New Guinea would develop through its rural economy and through primary industries, or agriculture. The new Department of Agriculture, Stock and Fisheries, was given the job of helping villagers by teaching them more about cash cropping. Agricultural extension became very important. By 1950 the Department planned on spending $170,000 on the salaries of officers teaching the villagers about agriculture. (This was twice as much as the total Australian grant to Papua before the war.) As many of the village schemes were not at first successful, there were some who argued that the money would be better invested in the European plantations. There were problems with develop-
ment projects in the Mekeo area, at Sangara, in the Gogol Valley and at Amele. The village people learnt from these projects, and their agriculture continued to expand.

Co-operative Societies

Once the villages began to produce more, they wanted to sell their extra crops at good prices. The copra was sold to planters or traders, who then re-sold it through the Copra Marketing Board. Villagers could receive more money for their produce if they sold it directly to the Marketing Board. To sell in this way they had to collect their copra together, in one place, and this was achieved by forming co-operative societies. The villager paid a small amount of money to join these societies, which bought produce and sold food and trade goods in their stores. The main difference from other businesses was that the profits went to the people who sold and bought most at the societies' stores. The main problem that the societies faced was when its members lost interest; did not produce enough copra; or did not understand how to look after their stores and there were no profits to be given out. This meant that the societies needed a great deal of help and encouragement from Administration officers. Once again, some of the European settlers thought that this money could have been used in ways that would give more profitable returns. Planters and traders became upset because they no longer did as much direct business with the village people because of the work of these co-operative societies. By 1952 there were 153 co-operative societies in Papua and New Guinea with a total income of almost $800,000.

Land Tenure and Economic Development

The Administration continued to control the alienation of land very strictly after the war. The people were to have plenty of land for their own use. But land rights belonged to the clan groups in the Territory; it was very hard for an individual man to obtain a piece of land which he could think of just as his own. This did not matter when the people planted only sweet potato and yams and moved to new gardens each year. But a man who wanted to plant coffee trees needed complete control of a plot of land for many years. Permanent land rights were needed for permanent cash crops. If a villager could not keep a piece of land for his own, other people might move in and sell his crops. The task of giving
individual land rights or tenure to village men is a difficult one—still requiring much work. This work was begun just after the war, as one of the plans to help village development. But village development once again reduced the supply of plantation labourers.

**European Economic Development**

European enterprises continued after the war, despite the damage and the shortages of money, materials and labour. Copra and rubber production grew slowly, prices remained steady, and by 1950 production was about the same as it had been in 1939. It took five years for plantations to recover from the effects of war. During that time living conditions were often poor and the planters had to work very hard: some could not find the money to rebuild and were forced to sell their properties to the big companies.

Gold mining continued, but production gradually fell off as mines were worked out. There was little interest in cattle production for some years. Some timber was milled (about two million super feet in 1949); even so timber still had to be imported. A large company tried to mill a lot of timber in 1948, but soon found itself in trouble. The Minister for Territories, Mr Ward, was accused of being involved in the trouble; but he was freed of these charges. It seemed in 1950, that only a little help had been given to Europeans, and many people complained bitterly about this.

**Financing Health and Education**

After 1945 considerable amounts of money were spent on social welfare policies, health and education. The increases were very large indeed when compared with the pre-war period. In the Territory of New Guinea during 1939, $180,000 was spent on health services. In 1950, more than $1,600,000 was spent there on public health and $1,000,000 was spent in Papua. Expenditure on education was also increased. In the Territory of New Guinea before the war the greatest amount ever spent in a single year on schooling was $38,000; by 1950 this amount had risen to $700,000 in New Guinea and $400,000 in Papua. These were the greatest changes to take place just after the war. The administration in New Guinea and Papua had previously talked about helping the people. The post-war government provided the finance to do things which had once only been hoped for.
Health Services

One of New Guinea’s greatest problems was the poor health of the people. Food was sometimes poor and there were many diseases in the country; more diseases were introduced by the Europeans. The Territory could never develop properly until the people could be made healthy enough to work harder and live longer. The first big programme in New Guinea was the expansion of medical services. This aimed at many things: to employ more skilled staff; to build new hospitals and enlarge old ones; to have medical patrols visit more villages; to teach people the rules of good health; to care for mothers and children; and provide injections and drugs to prevent disease as well as cure it. Money and medical supplies were given to the missions, which treated many villagers. In 1947 there were 88 government hospitals and aid posts, where 178,000 people received treatment. By 1950 77 hospitals and 613 aid posts provided treatment for 850,000 people. Many others received medicine at mission stations.

Health Problems

Other difficulties remained for the Department of Health. Skilled staff were very hard to find and the aid post orderlies could be taught only a few basic things about medicine. In some areas people remained suspicious of treatment; many could not understand why they should wash their hands before cooking or should give special foods to their children. Not all the villages in the Territory could be visited regularly. Even more money and many more people were needed for this. It was to be twenty years before the main results of all this work could be seen clearly. Public Health officers continued to work hard under the strong leadership of their Director, Dr J. T. Gunther. The United Nations frequently praised the work of these people. Once again there were those people who felt that the money being spent on health services was disproportionate, especially when there were so many other important things—buildings, roads, new patrol posts, and schools. This was another example of the arguments which arose over the policies and priorities of the Administration.

Education

Education had been badly neglected before the war, again because money was so scarce. Most schools had been run by the
missions. Teaching was nearly always in the local languages. From 1945 the Administration continued giving money to the missions to assist their teaching, and at the same time opened a number of government schools. Teaching in government schools was to be in English, since it was necessary to learn English to become doctors and public servants. Most villagers found English a hard language to learn; this meant that the job of educating the people would take a long time, requiring many skilled teachers, large numbers of class-rooms, books and houses for students to live in. The missions continued to give the government a great deal of help; they provided most of these things at their own schools, and taught a great many more pupils than the government schools, particularly in the lower classes. The Administration realized how important this work was and held regular conferences with the mission teachers about education policy.

*Plans for Universal Education*

The aim of the government was eventually to provide education for everyone. It was also decided that children should receive as high a standard of education as possible. The Administration knew that it would take many years to carry out these plans. The government did not want to educate a small number of people—an elite—to a high standard of education, leaving the mass of people with no schooling at all. For the first fifteen years after the war most of the money for education was spent on primary schools, from which a few students were sent to secondary schools in Australia. Very few pupils completed this schooling, and it was a long time before the Administration could find young people, educated enough to train for skilled work. There were arguments for the government to keep a few students at school and later University, but little attention was paid to them at that time. It was generally thought that the Territory of Papua and New Guinea was not in the position to employ local people with high qualifications.

There were special problems in educating girls. The Department of Education tried hard to bring girls into the schools; but very often their parents would not let them leave home, and their numbers remained low for about ten years. Technical schools were expanded to teach young men to become carpenters and motor mechanics. Schools taught about hygiene, current affairs and, in some cases, agriculture. Some students joined such organizations
as the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides. The policy was to show children how to become good citizens as well as to teach them how to read and write. By 30th June, 1950 there were 4,223 students in Administration schools and 128,665 students in mission schools. Most children still remained in their villages, and many pupils left school after Standard One or Two. There was a long way to go before all children could receive a good education. Much more money was required, but the Administration was still criticized for spending so much on schooling.

**Plans for Political Development**

Little had been done about political development up to 1950. In 1949 the Australian Parliament passed a law—*The Papua and New Guinea Act*—which set up a permanent civil administration. The law stated that a Legislative Council could be established, but nothing was done about this for two years. One of the most important new plans for post-war development was for local government councils. The first of these were established in 1950 at Hanuabada and Baluan. Some of the people found it hard to understand the working of these councils and a few villagers were opposed to them. The councils had to collect tax from the villagers and use the money to build such things as aid posts and schools. Critics said that the people could not do these things properly, since they had not yet learnt enough about government and democracy. They feared that the Administration was trying to make the people progress too quickly. The Administration reply was that if Papuans and New Guineans were to learn to govern themselves, they had to begin as soon as possible.

**Patrolling Into New Areas and Opening the Highlands**

The coastal areas of Papua were patrolled during the war by A.N.G.A.U. officers, but many parts of New Guinea did not see Australian patrols for four years. These villages had to be visited. The people were told that the war had ended and Australia was going to give them more help. War damage compensation was paid and a census was taken. As out-stations were rebuilt and more patrol officers came to the Territory all the coastal villages were visited. The Administration was anxious that the Highlands should be opened up. Small bases were set up near Goroka and Mount Hagen during the war, but there was no time to visit the distant
villages. The United Nations stated that the new areas should be brought under control very soon; in these places the people still fought among themselves. They needed patrol posts, hospitals, schools and advice about gardening. Officers knew that the Highlands were a rich and heavily populated area, suitable for European settlement.

In the years just after the war, stations were built at Kainantu and Kundiawa, at Minj and Wabag and by 1950 permanent posts were being set up in the Southern Highlands at Lake Kutubu and Mendi. Many more people became friendly towards government officers. Mission stations were soon established once fighting stopped. However, large areas were still not controlled, and in such places a policeman could not be sent on his own to arrest a man who had broken the law. In 1950 there were still 65,146 square miles of the Territory not under full Administration control. Members of the field staff were working very hard to bring peace to these areas; many of them spent months visiting villages, settling disputes, building roads and airstrips and giving medical treatment. Officers had to make peaceful contact; they followed Sir Hubert Murray's policy. There were some attacks on patrols, but very few people were killed or injured. Once these areas were pacified, development could begin. The Administration therefore spent as much money as it could on opening new stations. As in the cases of education and health, more of the budget was spent on patrolling after the war. By 1950 there were 359 officers in the Department of District Services and Native Affairs; in that year the Department spent more than $1,600,000 on its work.

Cargo Cults

Cargo cults developed in some areas after the war. These were similar to the cults in such places as Madang, Vailala and Aitape in earlier years; the people added to them some of the ideas which they had formed when the armies were in New Guinea. Some villagers thought that the goods, which were again coming into New Guinea, really belonged to them; they believed that the goods were sent by spirits—spirits that gave things to the Europeans instead of the village people, because the Europeans knew special magic. Some villagers tried to learn this magic by reading the Bible or trying to speak English. Sometimes the people left their gardens and houses and went to wait for ships and aeroplanes which never
appeared. The Administration was worried that the people would starve. It also feared that they might begin fights or attack outstations. The leaders of these cults were arrested; some were put in prison. Many of these leaders, such as Yali of Saidor, had meant well. They began by trying to get their people to work harder, as the government wished them to. When they found this difficult, they thought about the things they had seen during the war and in the towns. The leaders tried to obtain goods as easily as the Europeans seemed to. Most of the cults ended once the leaders were taken away. The leaders later returned to their homes and most of them now work and earn money in the normal, acceptable way. New cults sometimes arise, however; this is because there are still people puzzled by the changes and new things which they see around them.

**Criticism of the Administration**

During the first few years after the war the Australian government and the New Guinea Administration helped the Territory very much. There were some new policies, but the main difference from pre-war was that much more money was spent in developing Papua and New Guinea. Supporters of the Labor government sometimes stated they were achieving things which had not been attempted before; that New Guinea was being given a *new deal*. This was not completely true but more finance after the war made many more things possible. The new deal made some European planters and traders angry. They had been in the Territory a long time, and felt the government should do more for them. The people, they said, were not ready for many of the new things the Administration was trying to do.

When the Labor Party was criticized for its policies in New Guinea, it accused its critics of being exploiters of the people. The European planters and traders countered that the government was socialist—that it wanted to take over all the plantations and businesses in New Guinea. These arguments continued for four years, and affected work in New Guinea. The business people and the Administration, with different interests, did not always work together; neither group wished to admit that the other might be right. The main problem was that the European community, which had been in the Territory before the war, could not get used to the changes brought by the new Administration.
Some even came to detest the Ward-Murray regime. The Pacific Islands Monthly, which supported the Europeans, said in October, 1949 that Mr Ward's policy had been to:

kick the Big Firms in the teeth, discourage European enterprise in any shape or form, and subvert all considerations to that of native welfare. Knowing nothing whatever about tropical administration in a country of most primitive people, he sought advice; but, instead of going to the experienced administration officials and the pioneer Europeans, he shut himself away behind an extraordinary group of scientists, academicians and New Planners—well-meaning and honest, but thoroughly impractical people, who were thrilled to the marrow at this unique chance of shaping, for the eager and unchecked Leftist Minister, a new paradise on earth for natives.

This attack showed that the spokesmen for the Europeans had as much trouble facing up to the post-war changes as the people in the villages.

Books for Further Reading

Legge, J. D., Australian Colonial Policy, (last two chapters).
Mair, L. P., Australia in New Guinea, (last chapters).
Murray, J. K., The Provisional Administration of the Territory of Papua-New Guinea.

Advanced Reading

Feldt, E., The Coast Watchers.
Ryan, P., Fear Drive My Feet.
Chapter Eleven

Mr Hasluck and Consolidation


The Liberal-Country Party Government and its Policies

On the 10th December, 1949 the Labor government in Australia was defeated in the general election. The new Cabinet was formed by a coalition of the Liberal and Country Parties under the leadership of Mr (later Sir) Robert Menzies. Mr P. C. Spender was given the portfolios of Minister for Territories and Minister in charge of the Department of External Affairs; as such he had much work to do, and New Guinea affairs took only a small part of this time. Colonel Murray, who had been appointed Administrator by the Labor government in 1945, stayed on for a time. The new government suggested that he should retire; they were not sure he would agree with their policies.

The Liberal and Country Parties in Australia were mainly interested in the affairs of employers, businessmen, farmers and similar people. They did not receive as many votes from the working man as did the Labor Party. In New Guinea it was felt that the new government would give more help to planters and traders—to private enterprise—than the Labor government had done. Europeans did not want the government to forget about village
development; they thought that the financial assistance should be more evenly distributed; Mr Spender made a tour of New Guinea in April, 1950, not long after his appointment as Minister. Several comments he made during his tour suggested that fairly big changes in policy would follow. He stated that money would still be spent on health, education and development for villagers; but at the same time, more European settlers would be encouraged to come to New Guinea, the idea being that settlers would make the Territory more secure.

The new government made several decisions early in 1950 to assist European enterprise: private shipping firms were allowed to operate without competition from the government's ships; areas of forest were opened up for milling timber; labourers could be engaged for eighteen months or two years (compared with one year under the previous government); and the special Department of Labour was closed down. The Pacific Islands Monthly stated that these changes to help private enterprise were good policies. They felt that Mr Spender was making wise reforms and developing a clear-cut policy. The editors clearly thought that quite a few of the Ward-Murray policies would be changed.

But many of the policies of the former government for New Guinea were continued. Spending on health and education stayed high; patrolling in new areas and the building of new stations was carried on. Official control of the copra industry, which many planters had criticized, was continued. The Labor government had also announced that it would abolish the indenture system by 1950. Although the Labor Party lost the election in 1949, the new government kept to this plan; after 1950 all indentures were replaced by contracts. For the labourer this meant basically that he could no longer be put in prison for running away from plantations. Planters feared that the change in law would encourage many workers to leave—increasing the problem of labour shortage. The employers had hoped to get more help from the new government. This was the first of several signs that policies for New Guinea would not change as much as many people had thought. The welfare and development of the people would still be most important.

**Closer Control of New Guinea from Canberra**

The Liberal-Country Party Government controlled affairs in New Guinea more closely than Labor had. While Mr Ward was Minister,
he visited the Territory only once, and very few officers from the Department of External Territories went there. From 1949, however, visits were made more often. Canberra checked all of the decisions made by the Administrator—not allowing him to act so much on his own. This was mainly because Australia was giving millions of dollars to New Guinea each year; and officials wanted to make sure that the money was spent wisely. Some supervision had always been given to the Administrator and the Territory Public Service, but supervision became much closer from 1950. Europeans in New Guinea who opposed the policy, stated that the people actually living in the country knew what was best for it—but this was often just to express their opposition to village welfare and development schemes. Others argued that the officials in Canberra had good policies, but the public servants in New Guinea should be left to carry out government plans without interference from Australia.

Mount Lamington Disaster

On 21st January, 1951, Mount Lamington, a volcano near the headquarters of the Northern District, in Papua, blew up. More than 3,000 people were killed by the explosion. All airline companies helped to fly in patrol officers, doctors, food, drugs and even water. Relief camps were established, where many people were given food and medical treatment. Other villages took in people whose houses had been burnt down. A new Administration headquarters for the District was set up at Popondetta. The disaster was a sorrowful occasion, but it showed how well the Administration had recovered from the war's upsets. It also showed that the government and the people could work well to help each other.

A New Minister for Territories

In the 1951 election in Australia the Liberal and Country Party government was returned to power. Mr Menzies, the Prime Minister, made some changes in his Cabinet. The Department of External Territories was replaced by the Department of Territories, and took over responsibility for the Northern Territory of Australia. This gave the Minister for Territories more work to do, but from 1951 onwards he no longer had to look after another Department as well (as both Mr Ward and Mr Spender had done). Thus the Minister had time to pay more attention to New Guinea. The new
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Minister was Mr P. M. C. Hasluck. Mr Hasluck had studied at University and worked both as a journalist and a public servant. He was elected to Parliament in 1949 and had shown that he was a skilled and hard-working politician. Having taken a close interest in New Guinea affairs, he soon learned a great deal about the country and its problems. Mr Hasluck realized that Australia would now have to make detailed plans for the future development of New Guinea. Most of the war's effects had been overcome, and it was time to look ahead. Mr Hasluck and his advisers in the Department of Territories had many ideas of their own about what should be done; they were prepared to ask people in the Territory for opinions, but control of policy remained in Canberra. This meant that the officials and European residents in New Guinea were given fewer opportunities to make decisions for themselves. The argument about influence over planning became more heated as time passed.

Mr Hasluck's Policies

Although Mr Hasluck held closer control of New Guinea affairs than had existed under the Labor government, he followed most of Labor's policies. Plans already made, were developed and extended further by the new Minister. Mr Hasluck agreed that medical services and education should be expanded, that patrolling be increased, and that the economy be developed. At the same time, he knew that progress would only come slowly—it was not possible to do everything at once. He was anxious that the finance available should be spent on the most necessary and useful things, in the right priority. It would be of no use to educate people to a high level if they were unable to find jobs; this could happen if economic development were neglected. On the other hand, economic development could not occur if there were no educated people to run the businesses. Mr Hasluck was concerned mainly with even development; with balanced progress in the Territory.

The Task Set Australia by the United Nations

Under the Trusteeship Agreement which Australia had made with the United Nations it had agreed to:
1. Take care of the people's customs and make sure that the people were not cheated out of their rights or possessions.
2. Educate the people.
3. Give the people a greater share in the government of New Guinea.
4. Safeguard the freedom of the people.

The post-war administration had followed these rulings, but by 1951 it was time to give more details of just how Australia would complete the task it had accepted from the United Nations. Mr Hasluck said that the government from now on would:

1. Educate all children in the Territory, at least to the point where they could read and write English.
2. Help the people and give them the means to earn more money so that they could buy goods and improve their way of life.
3. Teach the villagers how to do more things for themselves—take part in politics; plant cash crops and form co-operatives, and so on.
4. Help the people to keep the best parts of their own way of life and to mix these with the new things brought by the Europeans and the Administration.
5. Bring the people together so that they would think of themselves as belonging to a single country.
6. Assist the spread of Christian religion.
7. Build up strong ties of respect, interest and loyalty between Australia and New Guinea.

All of these things required major changes in the way of life of the New Guinea people. Because of this, Mr Hasluck felt the government should work carefully and fairly slowly towards the new goals.

**Progress to be Slow**

In August 1952 with a year's experience as Minister for Territories, Mr Hasluck stated his aims more fully.

We have to progress step by step, he said, watching for facts as well as cherishing our hopes. . . . The Government is well aware that we have no easy task in Papua and New Guinea and that our short-term decisions can create long-term difficulties. The Government is also aware that underneath all that is done in the Territory is a problem of working out our own relationship with the . . . people. As I said to a gathering of Administration officials last year, “The basic problem of all
our work in New Guinea is a problem of race relations. It is a problem of finding a way in which two people at different . . . standards of living and cultural habit can live in harmony with each other and with respect for each other's rights and each other's dignity.” Insofar as we succeed in that task the history of Australia and New Guinea will be a common history in the centuries to come.

Australia should work carefully in New Guinea so that the Territory’s people would one day wish to become politically a part of Australia. At the same time the people of Australia would come to know more about New Guinea and want the Territory to join them. Mr Hasluck later stated that he looked forward to a free, close and permanent association between the two countries; perhaps New Guinea would even become a State of Australia, like New South Wales or Queensland. For Australia to carry out the plans for political and economic development in New Guinea, peace and order would be necessary. The Australian policy was development from below, not just educating an elite to a high standard. It was seen that when the change to self government came, its benefits to the people in New Guinea would be greater if the change came without social disorganization or abrupt changes in planning, as had occurred in some parts of Africa where government had been transferred to an educated elite. The Australian government wished to bring progress to the mass of the people more or less equally, so that all would be able to contribute to self-government, and accept the responsibilities of citizenship. In some ways this was a new phase of Sir Hubert Murray’s policy to “hasten slowly”.

A New Administrator

It was felt by the government that it was time for a new Administrator to be appointed for the Territory. Colonel Murray agreed with most of the Liberal-Country Party government’s policies, but he had been appointed by the Labor government. Mr Hasluck wanted to be sure that the Administrator would carry out government decisions: he felt that Colonel Murray was too independent in his attitude. During 1951 Brigadier D. M. Cleland was appointed Assistant Administrator and it was clear that he would soon replace Colonel Murray as Administrator. Brigadier Cleland
had held a senior position in the war-time administration in New Guinea and later he had become secretary of the Liberal Party in Australia. This meant that he was familiar with New Guinea's problems, and also in full agreement with the Liberal government and its policies. In 1952 Colonel Murray was dismissed from his position as Administrator while on leave, and Brigadier Cleland was appointed in his place. The explanation given was that Colonel Murray was too old for the job of Administrator now, a job which would be a great strain on any man. From 1952 onwards the Minister had almost complete control of the work being done in New Guinea.

Increases in Staff and Finance

More money and staff were needed to keep up the rate of development in New Guinea. One of Mr Hasluck's greatest successes during his twelve years as Minister for Territories, was that every year he was able to persuade the Australian government to grant more money to the Territory. In 1952 the Commonwealth Grant totalled $10,570,000. By 1962 it had risen to $34,586,000; that is, it had risen by more than 300% in ten years. In 1952 there were about 1,200 Australian public servants in the Territory; this
number had increased to 3,623 Australian and 334 local officers in the public service by 1960. Approximately 8,000 Administration Servants were also employed by the Government during this period. As more skilled men came to the Territory, health, education, agriculture and district administration services were increased. The main work in these fields was still being done by overseas officers, and it was expensive to bring them to New Guinea. During this time the main foundations for the Territory's future were laid. The apathy of the early years and the confusion of World War II were left behind.

Health Services

In the post-war years more money had been spent on health services than in any other field. Disease and sickness were still problems, however, and the temporary hospitals built straight after the war were falling down. The main work for health was thus in building new hospitals and in setting up clinics and aid posts. As in previous years, some of this work was done by the missions, which received financial aid from the Administration. The Administration built large base hospitals in Port Moresby, Rabaul, Lae and Goroka, and each District in the Territory was provided with other
hospitals. Smaller hospitals, which were often staffed by medical assistants rather than doctors, were built at sub-district stations. Others were constructed or expanded at the main mission centres. By 1960 there were 105 Administration and 92 mission hospitals, together with 1,200 aid posts run by the Administration and 420 by the missions. The main hospitals were staffed by 119 doctors, 347 trained nurses and 236 medical assistants. Health services continued to expand from 1960 onwards, although not as rapidly as they had done in earlier years.

Education

During the 1950's schools were built even more quickly than were hospitals. The first Administration school was opened in Papua in 1948; in that same year there were less than 2,000 pupils in Administration schools in New Guinea. By 1962 there were almost 40,000 pupils in Administration schools. Education was essential to the development of the Territory, and policy was that schooling be spread as quickly as possible. The amount spent on education was increased from $876,000 in 1952 to $3,092,000 in 1960 and to $4,946,000 in 1962. During most of this time, between 20% and 25% of this money was given to the missions to help them pay for teachers and construct classrooms. School books, pens and so forth were also supplied to the missions by the Administration. The missions had many more schools than the Administration and many more pupils, but the standard of teaching was varied, and often very low. From 1952 the Administration paid grants to mission schools only if their teachers were fully qualified, in this way the standard of mission schools soon improved, and many more were registered to receive grants-in-aid. In 1958, 27,000 pupils attended the registered mission schools; by 1962 this number had jumped to 95,000.

In both the mission and Administration schools, the greatest numbers of students were in the lower level classes. It was some years before the majority of students were ready to be educated beyond the primary level. In the 1950's most of the money for education was spent on basic education and literacy for all parts of the Territory. Very little was left to build secondary schools. A few students attended multi-racial high schools in the bigger towns, while others were sent to boarding schools in Australia, and it was not until 1957 that secondary education was extended within
the Territory. By this time the numbers of children wanting to proceed from the many primary schools to the secondary schools had greatly increased. By 1962 the first two students from the Territory were attending university in Australia.

**Other Kinds of Education**

Colleges had to be set up to give people specialized training. Teachers' colleges were established in Port Moresby, Rabaul and some smaller centres during the 1950's. The standard of entry to these colleges was raised from Standard VII to Standard IX, and higher again after 1960. In the same way colleges were started for training medical practitioners, agricultural officers, nurses and patrol officers, and technical schools were set up to train carpenters, mechanics and other tradesmen. The missions established teacher training colleges and technical schools as well. They expanded the colleges and seminaries where mission workers, pastors and priests were trained. It was clear that New Guinea’s requirements were increasing all the time, and even more money and skilled staff would be needed at every step.
Economic Development

At the same time economic development was taking place which, in the future, would help New Guinea to pay for health and education services. By 1952 European plantations had recovered from the damage of the war. The price of copra generally stayed high, and a number of planters began to diversify, growing more cocoa and coffee. When the Highlands’ valleys were brought under control a number of Europeans leased land there and established coffee plantations on previously undeveloped land.

Copra

The most important change in agriculture was that after 1950 more of the villagers began planting and harvesting cash crops. The village smallholders could plant coconuts with very little trouble and easily learned to make copra. The produce was then sold through the co-operative societies. By 1962 there were about ten million coconut trees in small village plots, compared with about nine and a half million on the large plantations. But many of the village trees were young and not yet producing much copra: also, the villagers often failed to gather their coconuts. So their trees still produced only about one quarter of the Territory’s copra.

![Bar chart showing comparison of coconut trees and copra produced between plantations and villages in 1962.](chart.png)
However, the villagers have since become more interested in making copra and earning money, and once the trees were planted, there was potential for higher production.

**Timber**

The forests of Papua and New Guinea are rich in timber. Between 1950 and 1962 timber production in New Guinea increased from about 18 million super feet to almost 70 million super feet. In 1962 plans were made for a big expansion of this industry, already the second most important export industry in the Territory, after copra. The Administration and the timber companies were also re-planting the forest areas, where trees had been cut, so that the supplies of timber would not run out.

**Cocoa**

Cocoa production rose very rapidly during Mr Hasluck's term as Minister. In 1951 there were only 7,000 acres of cocoa trees in Papua and New Guinea. This increased to 120,000 acres by 1962. Here again, village smallholders joined in this development—in 1962, when 14,000 tons of cocoa were exported, 3,400 tons were exported. 

![Cocoa, Coffee and Gold Production, 1962.](image)
produced by villagers. This cocoa earned about $1,400,000 for the village producers. Cocoa soon became the second most important crop in New Guinea.

Coffee

Coffee production also rose sharply. In 1950 there was almost no coffee in the Territory. By 1962 New Guinea was exporting almost 5,000 tons of coffee a year. Almost half of this amount, worth $2 million, was produced by smallholders. This was the most dramatic example of increased interest by villagers in economic development. Much of this interest arose in the Highlands, where the people learnt a great deal from the European planters.

Other crops

Villagers began selling food (previously grown for subsistence), such as yams, sweet potato and sago, to government stations, missions and hospitals.

Others began producing new crops such as peanuts and passionfruit, which helped earn a little money for those people who did not have cocoa or coffee plots. At the same time the Administration began to experiment with new crops, such as tea and pyrethrum, and one or two cattle stations were set up by Europeans; some village people bought a few cattle and began to raise their own small herds. Villagers also began looking for gold in the Highlands and Morobe district. In 1950 $4,868 worth was found; by 1962 this had increased to $177,000. So in several fields there was steady progress in the Territory throughout the 1950's and villagers had opportunities to earn much more money than ever before. Nevertheless, few earned more than $40 or $50 a year. There was still a long way to go before they reached a standard of living that would provide the comfortable homes and clothes the Europeans in the Territory expected.

Exports and Imports

Although New Guinea was producing much more than it ever had before, the Territory was still not self sufficient (able to support itself). By 1962 the goods which Papua and New Guinea exported were worth $30 million. Most of this money went to the people who produced the goods; a small part of it was paid to the
Administration as taxes. From these taxes and from import duty (taxes) on goods brought into New Guinea the Administration raised about $10 million in 1962. This was not nearly enough to pay the bills for salaries, and for the health, education and other schemes. The Australian government still had to give the Territory over $34 million in that year. Even then, the Administration could not build as many roads, schools and hospitals as were needed. Another problem was that most of the manufactured goods which were required for New Guinea had to be imported. The Territory did not produce, during the 1950’s, any galvanized iron or nails or paint, any medicines or cloth or tinned meat or paper or refrigerators. In 1962 New Guinea had to import goods such as these to the value of $50 million; with exports of only $30 million this left a gap, or deficit, of $20 million. Many of the imported goods were for the Europeans living in the Territory, who, being from such different backgrounds, had different needs from most New Guineans. They wanted the type of food, clothing, furniture and liquor that they were accustomed to having. Their imports into the Territory made up a large part of the gap between imports and exports. However, these were the people with the knowledge and
special skills which were needed in New Guinea, and until New Guineans could be trained to take their places, Europeans would have an important role in the country.

Problems of Export Crops

One possible way of closing the gap between imports and exports was to export more produce from plantations and small farms. Copra, coffee and cocoa were produced by many other countries in Asia, Africa and the Pacific besides New Guinea, so the market was already full. New Guinea could not hope to increase greatly its exports of these goods, and for this reason the experts were searching for new crops for the Territory—pyrethrum and tea for example.

Secondary Industry

Another way in which the gap between imports and exports could be closed was to establish factories in the Territory to manufacture building materials, clothing and so on; thus fewer imports would be needed. However, establishing such factories cost a great deal of money, which could not be found in New Guinea and companies in Australia preferred to keep their capital (money)
in their own country. There was also a shortage of skilled people in the Territory to run factories. Because of these difficulties the goods produced by the factories would have been costly. Many people thought it was much cheaper to buy these goods elsewhere. By 1962 there were few factories in Papua and New Guinea. The plywood mills at Bulolo produced between 20,000 and 30,000 tons of plywood each year. A paint factory was established in Port Moresby and there were two breweries. Small factories also made such things as twist tobacco, bread, biscuits, pipes and bricks, while others repaired motor cars, radio sets and so forth. By 1962 about 9,000 workers were employed in factories—a small part of the total labour force. There were many, many things which still had to be imported. Economic experts said that New Guinea would have to concentrate on its crops and plantations—its primary industries. Secondary industry—manufacturing—would have to wait. New Guinea’s exports of primary produce would increase gradually. In the meantime, the Territory would have to rely on the Australian government’s grant to make up its deficit in trade and finance.

**Taxation**

The Australian grant rose from about $10.6 million in 1952 to over $34 million in 1962, but at the same time, the Australian Government believed that it was time for the Territory’s people to do more to help themselves. In 1957 a personal tax (*poll tax*) of $4 per year was sought from all men over the age of 18 years. In some Districts this amount was reduced because the people earned little money. In 1960 the Administration received $350,000 in personal tax payments. This was still less than 1% of the Territory’s total budget. It was thought that Europeans, in particular, should pay more tax than this, and in 1959 income tax was introduced. This was a graduated income tax—that is, the more money a person earned, the more tax he had to pay. Few Papuans and New Guineans earned enough to have to pay this income tax. The trading firms and other companies also had to pay a company tax on their profits. By 1962 these taxes were bringing in about $4.6 million per year, and the amount was increasing steadily. Even so, this was still less than the amount spent by the Department of Education in 1962, and almost one and one half million dollars less than the cost of health services in that year. Clearly, New Guinea still had a long way to go before it became self sufficient.
Loans for Development

It was thought by some people that New Guinea should borrow money from countries such as the United States, or from the United Nations. The money could be used for capital development—to build the big roads and electric power stations which the Territory needed. Yet loans could be obtained only if the lenders were sure that their money was safe and would be paid back to them, and that New Guinea was stable and secure in both its economic and political life. The Australian government was responsible for the Territory's future, and did not want other nations interfering with the plans for economic development of New Guinea. The Administration was allowed to borrow money only from people in the Territory; by 1962 these loans totalled almost $2,000,000. In 1962 the Department of Trade and Industry was established to assist development, exports, marketing and investment in the Territory.

Investment by Companies

Private companies invested money in New Guinea; trading firms built stores and small factories and ran plantations and other companies spent a great deal of money searching for oil in Papua and New Guinea. Between 1950 and 1962 this search cost almost $60 million—no oil was found, however. There was some interest by 1962 in prospecting for minerals such as copper. Successful companies helped with the Territory's exports, but there were still no really big industries necessary to bring about rapid development. The plantation and trading companies usually made a good profit and spent some of this money on further investment in the Territory. The rest of the profit was paid to the owners in Australia and other countries. Although it would be better if the profits of New Guinea firms stayed in the country, this would require more companies to be owned by Papuans and New Guineans. However, this was difficult as few people in the Territory had enough money to invest in companies.

New Labour Legislation

Another problem, that of finding and training sufficient labour for Territory industries, received close attention while Mr Hasluck was Minister for Territories. A new law, the *Native Employment Ordinance*, came into force in 1960. This Ordinance increased the
wages of workers, who were also given better rations, clothing and houses. In 1961 a separate Department of Labour was again set up. Other laws were passed which allowed workers to join together in workers' associations, or trade unions; the role of these associations was to ask employers for changes in wages and conditions. Few people in the Territory knew how such matters were discussed; they were given help by the Department of Labour. Workers in the towns asked for a minimum cash wage of £3 ($6.00) per week, instead of 35/- ($3.50) per month and free rations, clothing and accommodation. This request was agreed to in 1961, when Urban Cash Wage Agreements were made between the employees' and employers' organizations. This was a completely new way of deciding labour matters. It was an important step in allowing the people a bigger voice in their affairs. There was opposition from those who felt that this step was premature—that New Guinea workers were being pushed into doing things they neither wanted nor understood. But the town workers seemed happy with the cash wage.

_Apprentice Scheme_

Many workers were needed in Papua and New Guinea to do skilled work as carpenters, mechanics and metal workers. Young men were trained as apprentices in these trades from 1955. By 1962, 106 had as tradesmen and another 300 were being trained. The Administration and private firms both helped in this scheme.

_Land Tenure_

In 1962 plans were made to give more villagers individual rights to small areas of land. These people would still have the use of the clan's land for subsistence gardening, and the smaller blocks would be used for cash crops. These blocks were bought by the Administration and then leased to villagers. The villagers could then borrow money from the bank to help develop their blocks and their crops. Under this system, some were able to make a comfortable living from cash crops on their own land.

_Transport_

During the period from 1951 to 1962 the transport system in Papua and New Guinea developed considerably. Many of the roads
and airstrips built during the war were kept in good repair. This allowed trucks and planes to reach places which had never before had regular communication systems. As more cash crops were planted villagers began to build and repair some roads themselves; they needed roads to take their crops to market centres. Constructing roads often proved difficult but the demand for money to improve transport facilities came from all parts of the Territory.

**Opening up the Highlands**

The greatest expansion of road and air transport was in the Highlands. Parts of the Highlands had been explored before the war, and one or two airstrips were built there by the Allied troops, but it was not until about 1948 that the opening up of the Highlands began in earnest. New out-stations were established, and large patrols set out once again to explore the last parts of the country which were still unknown. This work had to be supported by air transport, so that each out-station had its own small airstrip. As more villages were brought under control the people began to build rough roads; these helped the government officers move around more quickly. Soon small networks of roads developed around each out-station, then one station became linked to the next, and later the roads were improved. By 1962 it was possible to drive from Lae hundreds of miles to the very end of the Wahgi Valley. With government control there came missionaries, who established many small schools, medical clinics and churches; these too, expanded very quickly. After the missions came the planters, who were attracted by the rich soil, heavy population and pleasant climate in the mountain valleys. Land was scarce in the Highlands, but small amounts were leased to the planters, who soon taught many villagers how to grow and care for coffee and peanuts and passion-fruit. Economic development spread out from these plantations, and with the aid of agricultural officers the people were able to farm for profit. The Highlands developed far more quickly than had any other area of Papua and New Guinea, and the money which the Administration spent there during the 1950's brought many rewards.

**Communications Help to Unify the Territory**

Better communications helped to draw the people of Papua and New Guinea together. Many people came to know a little more
about their neighbours; no longer was the Territory a collection of isolated clans and out-stations. Radio had been improved during the war, and soon almost every mission and government station in the Territory was in touch with the towns and headquarters every day. The Australian Broadcasting Commission broadcast from a radio station in Port Moresby, at first for only a few hours each day; after a few years these broadcasts lasted from early in the morning until late at night. Items of interest to the village people were included in these broadcasts and Papuans and New Guineans were trained as radio announcers. The Administration and local government councils sent radios to the villages where many people listened to the news, thus learning more about each other and the world.

Progress and Problems

During the whole of Mr Hasluck’s term as Minister for Territories, New Guinea made much progress. In the fields of education, health and economic development his policies were very similar to those of the Labor Government. Members of the European community who had opposed Labor also criticized Mr Hasluck very strongly. They had hoped for greater help for private enterprise, but there had been few changes. Much money was still being spent on social services and other help for the villagers. Mr Hasluck also kept in very close touch with the work in New Guinea; he wanted to know all the facts on the main projects being carried out in the Territory. He knew that there was still very much to be done: the problems of exports and imports; of finding more money from taxes; of training more Papuans and New Guineans; and of finding more skilled workers in Australia. Mr Hasluck felt that very few people understood how great and how numerous such problems were. From 1952 to about 1962 he ensured that his policies of development from below and balanced progress were carried out. Many people disliked him for his strict attitude towards the public service and the residents of New Guinea, but despite this, all were agreed that Mr Hasluck knew a great deal about the Territory and worked hard and long for its benefit.

Political Change—the Legislative Council

Opposition to the Minister for Territories and his advisers was expressed mainly in the Legislative Council. The Council was set
up in November 1951. It had a majority of official appointed members, three elected European members, and two New Guineans and a Papuan, who were appointed to the Council to represent the villagers of the Territory. The Legislative Council passed all of the laws for New Guinea after 1951. The Administration always had more votes than the other members combined—sixteen to twelve—and after discussion, the Administration’s plans were always passed. A number of the Council’s members, particularly the elected Europeans, opposed this; they felt that the Council would do only what Mr Hasluck and the Department of Territories allowed it to. They asked that the unofficial members be allowed to make changes in the policies they disagreed with. The Minister and the Administration believed that this would disturb development and upset their plans for progress; New Guinea would not make such decisions about policy until it could pay for these plans itself. The Australian government would not allow political development in the Legislative Council to proceed at a faster pace than economic development and education within the Territory. This was one aspect of the policy for steady change, or development from below.

*The 1959 Income Tax Dispute*

The disagreement between the government and the unofficial members about the role of the Legislative Council came to a head in 1959. The Administration wanted to introduce a law requiring people earning good wages to pay income tax. The unofficial European members in the Legislative Council opposed this on the grounds that Europeans had helped New Guinea to develop; they believed that it would be unfair for Europeans to pay tax on the money earned from this development. Papuan and New Guinean members in the Council were uneasy about introducing income tax, fearing that some Europeans would return to Australia rather than pay tax. The Minister for Territories listened to all the arguments but did not change his mind. When the income tax law was introduced in the Council, the three European elected members resigned. They took their case to the High Court in Australia, stating that the Legislative Council could not pass the tax law because some members had resigned. The High Court rejected their argument, the law was passed, and people in New Guinea had to pay tax. Few Europeans left New Guinea, and development con-
the Government and Mr Hasluck were proven right in this instance. However, because the reasons for introducing income tax had not been carefully explained to the people in the beginning, many had opposed the government's policy.

The New Legislative Council

Plans were being made from 1959 onwards to bring more unofficial members into the Legislative Council. The new Council met in 1961, and for the first time in Papua and New Guinea, it contained a majority of non-official members. Six Papuan or New Guinean members and six European members were elected by the people. Ten members (including five Papuans and New Guineans) were appointed to the Council. Some members of the new Legislative Council were also appointed to the Administrator's Council to give advice to the Administrator on policies which should be followed. Previously there had been a group of public servants who had given such advice to the Administrator; among this group there had not been any members representing the villagers or Europeans in private enterprise. Once Legislative Councillors were appointed to the Administrator's Council, the people's representatives had a little more influence on the work of the Administration.

Local Government Councils

The Legislative Council passed laws for the whole Territory, but few people could go to Port Moresby and see the Council at work. If people in the Territory were to understand the work of the government, they had to be given more responsibility. In 1956 the government began to set up local government councils. Villagers could stand for election to the councils and all adult people had a vote. The councillors who were elected then met to discuss ways of developing their area. The councils raised taxes among the villagers and used the tax money to repair roads, build aid posts and school rooms, and to buy trucks which could take produce to market. The local government councils represented many people—often 15,000 or more. Such a council could raise perhaps £5,000 ($10,000) in tax in a year. The people were given a way to develop their villages. Not all the councils were successful; some councillors did not understand their jobs, so they relied on patrol officers to do much of the work. At times the villagers were not interested in the
councils unless most of the tax money was spent in their villages. The councils often had trouble in obtaining building materials, and skilled workers to do bookkeeping, drive trucks and construct aid posts. Some did not understand the difference between their own local government and the Administration; they thought that the local government councils had to do exactly as the Administration told them. This was not so. The Administration wanted the people to take the initiative and do things of their own accord. The councils were given many powers by the Administration: they could make rules about health and cleanliness; gardening and livestock; local customs; registration of births and deaths; and a number of other things. Some councils did not pass many rules: at other times their rules went against (were repugnant to) the main laws of Papua and New Guinea and were cancelled by the Administration; when this happened people lost interest. This method of local government was something new for the people of New Guinea, and it took time for them to grow used to it. By 1960 people all over the Territory were asking that councils be established in their district. At first it was thought that some of these areas would not be able to find enough money to pay council tax, but the people were very keen to have councils. By the middle of 1960 there were 36 councils in the Territory, representing 250,000 people. At the same time, there were Papuan and New Guinean members or Town Advisory Councils and District Advisory Councils. These Councils advised the Administration on work to be done in the various districts and townships in the Territory. They did not have the powers to tax the people or make rules, but they had some influence on official policy. Local leaders thus had another opportunity of speaking out for their people. This was another aspect of broad development, with the government helping the people to develop simultaneously a sound economy and a system of government.

United Nations Pressure for Self-government

The general feeling in Papua and New Guinea favoured the balanced development policy. But there were critics of the slowness of such a policy in bringing results. They felt that Australia should move more quickly towards self-government for Papua and New Guinea. They maintained that it was not essential to wait for the villagers to learn more about economic development and
local government, as there were sufficient Pauans and New Guineans in the towns who knew about these things. They should be allowed to govern themselves, then they could teach their own people. Some critics of the Australian policy were people from the Asian and African states that had recently gained self-government. Every year in the United Nations the Trusteeship Council, (which supervised Australia’s governing of the Territory of New Guinea) there were strong criticisms of Australian development plans for New Guinea. By 1960 there was much pressure on Australia to leave the country. There were accusations that Australia only stayed on in New Guinea to make a profit from the country—ignoring the millions of pounds spent in the Territory every year for development. The Australian government thought it was doing the right thing, while the Pauans and New Guineans, were generally happy with their government. The pressure on Australia to make concessions for self-government became stronger and stronger. Some people were worried about the future of the country, feeling that there would be too little time for the balanced development Mr Hasluck hoped for. The job of governing New Guinea was becoming more complex and difficult. Although much had been achieved since the war, there was still a long way to go, and great uncertainty about the future.

Contest for West New Guinea

This uncertainty arose partly because of the contest for West New Guinea between the Dutch and Indonesians. The western half of the main island of New Guinea had been governed by Holland since long before World War II. At that time Holland had also governed the many islands of the East Indies. These islands had been occupied by the Japanese during the war, and at the end of the war, the people of the East Indies wanted Holland to give them self-government. The Dutch rejected their claims and for several years there was fighting throughout the islands. Then in 1949 the Dutch were forced to leave, and the independent Republic of Indonesia was created. Indonesia asked Holland to hand over West New Guinea to the new Republic (the western tip of New Guinea is only a few miles from Indonesia). The Dutch refused this request in 1949. The Liberal-Country Party government supported the Dutch over the question of West New Guinea, while the Soviet Union supported the Indonesian claims at the
United Nations. Australia was in an awkward position, attempting to keep friendly relations with Indonesia, as well as support the Dutch claim to stay in West New Guinea. President Sukarno of Indonesia was threatening to go to war against the Dutch by this time.

**Attack on West Irian**

In January, 1962 the Indonesians began a series of small attacks against West Irian. For a time it seemed that these might develop into a war. It was felt by some in Australia and New Guinea that Australian troops would be needed to protect the Territory. The struggle for West Irian was eventually settled peacefully, but it left many people in Papua and New Guinea feeling apprehensive about the future. Within a space of two or three years the situation in the Territory had changed; it appeared that the slow but steady progress of the post-war years might not have been enough. Australia would now have to move more quickly to give the people in the Territory more responsibility for their own affairs. When the Indonesians had attacked West Irian, the Dutch had moved quickly to give more responsibility to the local people. Yet even this had been too late, and the Dutch had had to leave. Had the time come for Australia to start handing over Papua and New Guinea to its own people?

**Problems of the Future**

This was the situation in 1962. Mr Hasluck had by that time been Minister for Territories for more than eleven years, had seen great progress and overcome many problems. He still believed in the policy of balanced development for the Territory, but saw that some changes might now be necessary. At this time the United Nations Trusteeship Council sent a group of experts to inspect Australian work in the Trust Territory of New Guinea. These U.N. Missions visited the Trust Territory every three years, (the 1962 Mission was the fifth since the war). The missions reported to the United Nations on what they saw; they sometimes criticized Australian policy, and they often made suggestions. The Fifth Visiting Mission, under the leadership of Sir Hugh Foot, made criticisms and suggestions which brought about more rapid change in Papua and New Guinea after 1962. The mission's Report (usually known as the Foot Report) was published just
before Mr Hasluck ended his long term as Minister for Territories. The period of slow, steady development was now to make way for more rapid changes.

Books for Further Reading
Australian Institute of Political Science, *New Guinea and Australia.*
Simpson, C., *Plumes and Arrows.*

Advanced Reading
*South Pacific*, Sydney (Journal of the Australian School of Pacific Administration, published from 1946 to 1959).
Chapter Twelve

Problems of Change


The Foot Report

THE report on the administration of New Guinea by the United Nations Visiting Mission in 1962 had tremendous influence on Australian policy for the Territory. The person most responsible for the Report was the leader of the Visiting Mission, Sir Hugh Foot. He represented Great Britain at the United Nations and had previously been an officer in the British Colonial Service, and Governor of some former British colonies. Thus he was a man sympathetic to Australia’s problems, and very experienced in colonial government. His conclusions would have to be considered very carefully by the Australian government. Many of the suggestions in the Foot Report went against the policies which the Australian government had been following for some years. There was a single major theme in the report: it stated that the government had been wrong in waiting for the people of Papua and New Guinea to develop to the point where they would want to govern themselves. This, the Report said, would take too long. Before this point could ever be reached, pressure at the U.N. would force Australia to leave the Territory. If this were to
happen, New Guinea would find itself in trouble; the broad base of the economy and local government councils would be there, but there would be no skilled administrators, politicians and judges to run the country. These men would have to be trained as quickly as possible. There must be more rapid economic and political development.

Changes in Education Policy

The Foot Report first recommended that the government should force the pace with education. The policy of having a broad base of people educated to primary school level was inadequate at this stage; the Territory would need highly-trained people to replace Australian public servants. Education at both secondary and tertiary levels would be required for these people, and an educated elite trained to govern the country. The Report suggested that much more money be spent on secondary education, and recommended that a university be established in the Territory as soon as possible. The Administration had by this time built some secondary schools, and in April, 1962 Mr Hasluck had announced that a university college (branch of an Australian University) would be set up by 1966. Nevertheless, the Foot Report clearly urged the government to go a good deal further and very much faster than had been intended.

Changes in Economic Policy

The Report stated that the government would have to hasten economic development. Not enough was known about the economy and resources of Papua and New Guinea. It was recommended that the World Bank, an international organization, should be asked to complete a survey of the Territory by the end of 1963. The Foot Report made a few direct suggestions about the economy of New Guinea, but here again pointed out that more definite plans should be made for the future of the country. The government could no longer rely on the steady development of village cash crops and plantations. It would have to push things along by bringing more money into the country and finding and establishing new industries. The government had gone some way towards doing this by 1962—for example, the Department of Trade and Industry had been established. Still the U.N. Visiting Mission recommended that more should be done.
Political Changes

The Foot Report favoured faster political progress in Papua and New Guinea. The Legislative Council had been reformed as recently as 1961, but the Report recommended further changes. It suggested that a new body, with 100 members, be set up. This would contain very few official members—perhaps only three or four. And the elections would be based on a common roll—that is, the principle of one man one vote—each person’s vote would be equal to every other person’s. This would be an important step towards self-government. If the Administration had only three or four representatives, it would have little chance of dominating policy making in a House of Assembly with over 90 elected members. The people’s representatives would learn to govern themselves very quickly by practical experience. From the Report it appeared that they would control the budget and thus the large amounts of money which Australia gave to the Territory each year.

Select Committee on Political Development

As in the cases of the economic and educational recommendations of the Foot Report, the government had already considered political changes before the Report was published. In early 1962 the Legislative Council had appointed a Select Committee on Political Development. This Committee included official, non-official, Papuan and New Guinean members. Their job was to recommend, in detail, any changes which should be made in the Legislative Council. The Committee visited many places in the Territory and its members spoke to many people. By the time the Committee reported back to the Legislative Council the Foot Report had already been released; it seems that the Committee’s recommendations were a mixture of its own thoughts and the ideas of the Foot Mission. It suggested that the name of the Legislative Council be changed to the House of Assembly. The House should comprise sixty-four members; ten of these would be officials and ten would be Europeans elected by all of the people in large areas, such as Western Papua, the Highlands, and so on. The remaining forty-four members would represent Open Electorates, which would be smaller areas about the size of Sub-Districts. Any person could stand for election in the Open Electorates. These suggestions of the Select Committee were not as far-reaching as those of the Foot Report.
but they were accepted by the Legislative Council and elections for the new House of Assembly were set down for March, 1964.

The Currie Commission on Higher Education

The Australian government was less willing to alter its policy on education than it had been to allow some political change. In February, 1963 the Minister for Territories appointed a Commission of three members to look into every detail of higher education in Papua and New Guinea, and decide whether it was time for change from the broad-based education policy. The commission on Higher Education was led by Sir George Currie, who had headed universities in Australia and New Zealand. He was assisted by Professor O. H. K. Spate, of the Australian National University, and Dr J. T. Gunther, Assistant Administrator for Services in New Guinea, and they reported back to the Minister in March, 1964. The report contained a great deal of information about all types of higher education: medical, agricultural and administrative training, teacher training, and technical education. Many of the recommendations were accepted by the Government. The suggestion that a university be established at Port Moresby as soon as possible attracted most attention, and the government was slow to act on it. A university in Papua and New Guinea would in time obviously produce an elite; it would be very expensive to establish and maintain; and because of this and the cost of expanding secondary education, there would be less money for primary education. It seemed that the Australian policy of gradual development in the Territory must end.

The World Bank Report

The Australian government invited yet another body of experts to advise it about the third recommendation of the Foot Report—economic development. As suggested by the Foot Mission, the World Bank was asked to send experts to New Guinea to see what should be done to improve the economy and industries of the Territory. The Bank sent ten advisers to New Guinea; they travelled throughout the Territory from June to September, 1963, visiting towns and villages, plantations and small factories, and spending much time talking with people and public servants in the Territory. The World Bank Report was published in 1965, and stated that Papua and New Guinea could make substantial progress
in the coming few years; this would require even greater amounts of money from Australia to assist development. The Report stated, however, that the full benefits of development would only come if three main policies were followed. Firstly, the Administration would have to concentrate on the richer areas for development and pay less attention to the poorer parts of the Territory. Secondly, it would have to reduce the standards of services in New Guinea and try to save money in any other way possible; the Territory was not rich and could not afford things which were common in Australia. Thirdly, the people of Papua and New Guinea would have to take on more responsibilities for the development of their country; they were not giving the Administration enough help.

Policies for Economic Development

The World Bank Report recommended that the Administration should do everything possible to get more people to invest money in Papua and New Guinea; the villagers had no money to spare, so this investment would have to come from Australia and overseas. Thus the political stability of Papua and New Guinea was important, for without stability, investors would not risk their money. The Report also stated that development in the Territory would depend heavily on European public servants to advise the people, and on European settlers to teach villagers how to improve their agriculture, as they had done in the Highlands. The World Bank wished to see the cattle industry in the Territory expanded. It believed that secondary industry would develop if left in the hand of private enterprise, and that more attention should be paid to mining and to crops such as oil palm, pyrethrum and tea. The Report recommended that the Territory’s people should pay for some of the services which the Administration provided, including medical treatment and sanitation, and that public servants should pay higher rents for their houses.

Problems in the World Bank Recommendations

The Committee on Political Development and the Commission on Higher Education had both made recommendations which seemed to bring Papua and New Guinea closer to self-government. The World Bank Mission, on the other hand, made suggestions which seemed to delay self-government. For example, if more European settlers were brought to the Territory, they
would want to keep New Guinea under Australia's control; feeling this would make their money and investment more secure. If more Australians were brought into the Public Service, extra money from the Territory budget would have to be spent on them and their houses and their leave fares; this too would make it harder for New Guinea to become self supporting. Several criticisms were made of the World Bank Report. People felt that the Report contradicted itself, recommending on the one hand, lower standards and on the other, an increasing number of European settlers who were used only to high standards of living. Did this mean that only local people would have to accept the lower standards? Critics of the Report felt that such things could create political troubles.

A New Minister for Territories

Soon after these reports were presented to the government Mr Paul Hasluck left the Department of Territories. He was made Minister of Defence after the Australian elections in 1963 and later became Minister for External Affairs. The responsibility for running the Territory was now handed over to Mr C. E. Barnes, a member of the Country Party. Mr Barnes had had little to do with Papua and New Guinea before he became Minister; his interests were different from Mr Hasluck's. For a time Mr Barnes was not a member of Cabinet, (which decided the policy of the Australian government); this meant that the new Minister for Territories could not exert as much influence as Mr Hasluck had been able to, as a member of Cabinet for many years. So at a time when new and important plans for New Guinea were being presented, so the Territory seemed to be losing some of its influence in the government's headquarters (Canberra.) Mr Barnes was later brought into the Cabinet, but was dropped again after the elections of November, 1966. During the period from 1963 to 1966 it was often difficult to rate the priority given to the New Guinea question in Canberra. Although the grants of money to the Territory were increased every year, the government did not move as fast as the reports on political development and education had suggested it should.

House of Assembly Elections

At this stage the government did not intend to put aside the plans which had already been made. The House of Assembly elec-
tions were the next main step in New Guinea development: these were held in March, 1964, and voting for the elections took one month. Every person in the Territory was given the chance to vote, and this meant that a great many villages had to be visited, and the method of voting carefully explained in advance to the people. A number of villagers were unable to mark their ballot papers, but they whispered their choices to election officials; the vote was thus kept secret, as in all democratic countries. Voting was not compulsory, but 70 per cent of the Territory’s population voted. This showed that they were taking close interest in politics. The candidates for election to the House of Assembly made speeches to the people: most (European, Papuan and New Guinean) stated that they would work for their home areas and would try to look after the interests of New Guinea as a whole. They said that they wanted Australia to remain in the Territory, which made the government confident that it had done the right thing in holding the elections at this time. Although some villagers perhaps had trouble in understanding what the elections were all about, a very good start had been made.

Members of the House of Assembly

The new House of Assembly contained only ten official members, together with fifty-four non-official, elected members. There had thus been a big change in the four years since 1960, when the Legislative Council had been controlled by an official majority. With so few votes in the House of Assembly, it was possible that the Administration could easily be defeated by the votes of the elected members. However, the members of the House would not oppose the Administration without cause. The elected members included ten Europeans representing the large Special Electorates and six Europeans who were from the Open Electorates—these men felt that self-government should not be hurried. A number of the other Open Electorates, particularly in the Highlands, were represented by men who supported the Administration. Thus the official members could count on the support of most of the elected members. When the elected members disagreed with the Administration, a compromise would be reached after discussion and debate. The most serious conflicts arose in the debates over the budget (the way the money would be spent). The elected members wanted to have more control over the spending of money in the Territory.
Political Parties

None of the members belonged to a political party and attempts in 1965 to form a United New Guinea National Party were generally ignored by the members of the House. Nor did the members acknowledge any particular political leader. Mr John Guise, of Milne Bay, was chosen as Leader of the Elected Members in 1964, but he resigned after two years, as many members did not agree with his ideas for changes in New Guinea; the elected members of the House then abolished the position of Leader. Under the existing composition of the House, members who did not want rapid change—conservatives—were in a majority. Australia had little cause to expect demands for self-government from this House of Assembly.

Select Committee on Constitutional Development

Although the House of Assembly was mainly conservative in its outlook, it nevertheless wanted plans to be made for the next Territory elections in 1968. The House voted in 1965 to establish a Select Committee on Constitutional Development which would tour Papua and New Guinea finding out what people thought about further changes in the House of Assembly. The Committee wanted to know whether the House should have more responsibility; it was not really interested in asking whether the Territory should have self-government. However, one or two members of the Committee were interested to hear what the people had to say about self-government. Differences of opinion on this point arose among the members, and the membership of the Committee changed several times. The Select Committee found that there were some, particularly among the more educated people living in the towns, who wanted political development in Papua and New Guinea to proceed at a faster rate than before; others, villagers in particular, were not so keen on rapid change. In this way many different schemes and suggestions were put to the Select Committee for consideration.

The differences of opinion which the Select Committee found between townspeople and villagers resulted from the different backgrounds and lives which these groups now led. Although many changes had been brought to the villages, particularly since World War II, life remained as it had been. Villagers grew their food; helped each other in their many tasks; and were able to rely on the
friendship of the other members of their clan. In some areas labour was short because many young men had gone to the towns to work, but at home there were schools and aid posts and the people could earn some money by growing cash crops. The life was quiet and simple, but few people would deny that it was an improvement on the days before the Administration came.

**Problems of Urban Life**

The young people were the first to become bored and leave the villages. Some had been to school and had to go to the towns to find employment. Some heard tales of the towns and went there to see what the life was like. Others stopped in the main centres after working on plantations, then found they had too little money to take them home again, and so the population of the towns grew. Life was not always pleasant and easy there: houses were often scarce; people could not find work; and food was usually expensive. Friends or clansmen were sometimes hard to find, and men became lonely, particularly since there were far fewer women in the towns than men. Ill feeling between different groups was created when some were able to adjust better to the conditions of a new way of life. Many of these people became discontented as they could see all around them the conditions under which Europeans lived. Europeans had large houses and cars and pleasant clubs to visit; some people believed Europeans were taking too much for themselves and giving too little to Papuans and New Guineans. They thought that too much of the money given by the Australian government was going to Europeans, instead of helping all the people.

**Pressure from Urban Areas**

The drift to the towns (or urban areas) had occurred in all parts of the world and brought with it certain problems. It has been called the process of urbanization. Providing housing, electricity, sanitation and other services in the towns cost the Administration a great deal. Law and order were more difficult to keep—on one or two occasions there were fights between groups of people from different language areas; others were attacked in their houses or while in the streets at night. It was feared that things might become much worse in the future. Another effect of urbanization was to bring into contact with each other people who were discontented
with their present way of life, or with the progress being made in the Territory. Some of these people believed that their way of life would improve if they could gain more responsibility and control of New Guinea affairs, and they suggested to the Committee on Constitutional Development that New Guinea should be given self-government before very long. But they were a minority. Many more people living in the villages did not agree with this. The Australian government did not feel that the call for self-government represented the thinking of the great majority of New Guinea people. The government was willing to grant self-government to New Guinea only when the majority of the people asked for it.

**Wage Scales**

Tensions between educated townspeople and the government increased when the Papua and New Guinea Public Service was reformed and two different scales of wages were introduced. There was a need to bring many more local officers into the Public Service. By August 1964, 168 local officers were members of the Third Division and 19 were members of the Second Division. At this time these officers received the same salaries as Europeans in similar jobs, less the special expatriate allowance. In 1962 the Minister for Territories agreed that a great increase in the number of local officers in the Public Service was needed; however, if they were paid, as previously, at the rate of expatriate (or overseas) officers there would be little money left for the many other aspects of development in New Guinea. The Minister said,

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

Since an independent New Guinea could not hope to pay wages at the expatriate level, local officers would have to be paid at a lower rate than previously. Expatriate or overseas officers would have to receive a relatively high salary, otherwise they would probably leave the Territory; and there were no trained local officers to replace them.
Reconstruction of the Public Service

The Minister went on to suggest that the Public Service remain a single organization—an integrated service—with all positions open to both overseas and local officers, but with different salary scales. For example, both local and overseas officers could be promoted to the position of District Officer, but the local officer would receive the lower salary, even though he would do the same amount of work as the expatriate and have equal responsibilities. The Public Service Association agreed in the end to have an integrated service, but took some time to make up its mind. Several of the overseas officers disliked the scheme. The main problem was that few people knew how the reconstruction of the Public Service would affect the officers concerned. Overseas officers were very uncertain of their future in the Territory and asked for a compensation scheme which would pay them large amounts of money if they lost their jobs in the Territory to local officers. They said it would be hard for them to find equal jobs in Australia if they were forced to return there.

Public Service Ordinance, 1964

The Public Service Ordinance, 1964 created an integrated service and brought many more Papuans and New Guineans into the Public Service; most people who had previously been Administration Servants could join the integrated service. The salary scales for local officers were announced in September, 1964. They were much lower than overseas rates, and lower than almost everybody had expected. Some people said that the salaries would be too low for officers to live on; certainly, they would have very little money to spare. Many people felt that the difference between overseas and local rates of pay was too great; in most cases an overseas officer received about two-and-a-half times as much as a local officer in a similar position. The government argued that this was all that Papua and New Guinea could afford to pay local officers.

Effects of Different Salary Scales

The main effect of the new Public Service Ordinance was to make permanent the differences in living conditions between Australians and Papuans and New Guineans in the Public Service. Under the old system, local officers had hopes of gaining higher
salaries which would allow them to buy motor cars and similar things. It appeared that under the new Ordinance they would not be able to do this. The majority of local officers were very dissatisfied with this situation. They made their complaints to the Public Service Association—a union representing public servants. The Association agreed to take the case to the Arbitration Court, where claims for higher wages are heard. The case lasted for many months while the members of the Public Service Association argued with the Administration. The Administration increased local officers’ wages and made special allowances to officers living on out-stations where food and freight were expensive. The Public Service Association believed that the increase was too small, however. Critics of the Administration said that the wages system was simply racial discrimination. Since most of these critics and local officers lived in the towns, this situation created more tension and uncertainty in these centres. Regular demands for more responsibility and, on occasions, self-government, came from the urban areas. There were frequent arguments about the future of Papua and New Guinea.

Seventh State or Self-government?

In the mid-1950’s, when people first began to talk seriously about the Territory’s future, they often assumed that Papua and New Guinea would join Australia as a seventh state. The Territory had a number of different laws, different land policies and so on. It was suggested that becoming a seventh state might in fact be bad for New Guinea—that the skilled people would leave for higher paid work in Australia, leaving the Territory shorter still of experienced workers. In addition, New Guinea people had a culture of their own, and would perhaps be able to express themselves better in an independent country. When the educated people of the towns began to speak out, they mostly seemed to favour self-government with close ties with Australia, but they did not always know what was involved in the idea of a seventh state. During the 1950’s Mr Hasluck had spoken of a free, close and permanent association with Australia, but he had not definitely said that New Guinea could become a state. Many people still hoped for statehood, but they were never really certain that it would definitely be offered to them. Few people in Australia gave the matter much
thought; they still did not think that the future of the Territory had to be decided urgently; most waited and hoped for the best.

As the 1960's advanced, the Australian government had still made no definite statement about the future of New Guinea; whether it could become a state or not. Many people in the Territory, particularly in the Highlands, kept asking Australia to stay in the Territory. When Australian policy was criticized in the United Nations, the Australian delegates there stated that the majority of people in New Guinea were against self-government at this time. As time passed, however, conflict developed between those that wanted Australia to remain, and those who wanted self-government. The Australians working in New Guinea became uncertain of the future; larger numbers began to resign and the newcomers were placed on short contracts instead of being made permanent officers of the Public Service. Highlands members in the House of Assembly asked the government to keep Australian control for many years to encourage public servants to remain in New Guinea.

During these discussions, nothing that the Australian government said about the future could satisfy everyone. The people were told finally that they could decide their own future: the Australian government would hand over self-government or full independence whenever the people said they wanted it. But only setting a definite date for self-government would have satisfied the critics of Australian policy at the United Nations. As the demand for more responsibility continued, Australia found herself in much the same situation as the old colonial powers in Asia and Africa. The Australian government wanted to remain for as long as possible in the Territory and by providing more education and economic development, ensure that the people were prepared for self-government.

Second House of Assembly

One of the major steps in the movement towards eventual self-government involved granting increased responsibility to the House of Assembly—to the elected members, in particular. Following the recommendations of the Select Committee on Constitutional Development, the membership of the House was increased, so that the second House compared with the first as follows:
Electoral districts for the sixty-nine open electorates of the 1968 elections.
PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

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<th>1964-1967</th>
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<td>Official members</td>
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<td>Elected members</td>
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<td>Special electorates</td>
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<td>64</td>
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<td>Under-Secretaries</td>
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<td>Members</td>
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The elected members now had a very large majority over the official representatives. The large electorates, the name of which was changed from Open to Regional, could be represented by any person having the Intermediate Certificate or its equivalent; the racial qualification was changed to an educational one. Four Papuans and New Guineans were returned in these Electorates. Nine Europeans were returned in Open Electorates, making a total of thirty in the House, the largest number ever. When the second House met in 1968 Mr John Guise was elected Speaker, the first Papuan to hold such an important position in the Territory.

Administrator's Executive Council

Under-Secretaries were replaced in the second House by Ministerial and Assistant Ministerial Members. The latter were appointed to various departments by the Administration from members nominated by the elected representatives in the House from among their number. From the first they were given more duties and additional powers by the Administration, in comparison with the Under-Secretaries. In addition, the Ministerial Members were appointed to the Administrator's Executive Council, the senior policy-making body in New Guinea. During the period of the second House the powers of Ministerial Members were defined.
The Highlands electorates for the 1968 elections.
more clearly, and in 1970 they were placed in charge of several Administration Departments.

Political parties

The second House of Assembly saw the emergence of organized political parties for the first time in the Territory's history. Several parties entered candidates in electoral contests, but only one—the Pangu Pati—was able to gain a substantial number of seats and maintain party discipline in the House. The party refused to accept Ministerial appointments, on the grounds that this would reduce its ability to oppose Administration policy. Pangu (standing for Papua and New Guinea union) demanded increased responsibility in New Guinea and a rapid advance to self-government. A number of its members were younger, educated men, who aroused the suspicions of some of the more conservative members of the House. As a result, the situation arose where almost every suggestion by Pangu was opposed by the rest of the House; Pangu did not help its own case when it used tactics which annoyed other members.

More changes proposed

While the majority of members in the House of Assembly were not keen to hasten self-government, they nevertheless felt that more influence over New Guinea affairs should be transferred to the Territory itself. They believed that too much power rested with the Australian government in Canberra. Early in 1968 the government department which supervised New Guinea affairs was reorganized. It was no longer responsible for the Northern Territory and was renamed the Department of External Territories. Mr Barnes remained Minister for External Territories, a post he retained after the Australian election of October 1969. Several people criticized Mr Barnes, who replied by listing the many developments which had occurred during his term as Minister. He restated his policy that New Guinea could have self-government whenever the people requested it.

The House of Assembly agreed that another inquiry should be made to see whether the people's opinions had changed. For the third time a Select Committee was appointed to investigate the constitutional and political development of the Territory. The
chairman on this occasion was Mr Paulus Arek. The third committee had rather longer to carry out its inquiry than previous committees. It toured New Guinea and held its first discussions with the Prime Minister of Australia in February 1970. In addition, there were more people wishing to make suggestions to the committee. Witnesses such as members of the Pangu Pati and people from the university were ready to make stronger statements than those put to the previous committees. The hearings continued for many months and it became clear that the debate on New Guinea’s future was increasing in force and complexity.

Advances in Education

Other changes added to the complexity of the Territory’s development. The University of Papua and New Guinea, with Dr J. T. Gunther as Vice-Chancellor, began a preliminary year in 1966 and its first undergraduate courses in 1967, producing its first graduates in 1970. As expected, the university proved one of the main centres of debate on New Guinea questions and produced some suggestions for radical solutions. These antagonized a number of people, and so another point of controversy was established in the Territory. It was suggested that university students were too outspoken and too ambitious. Some older leaders believed the radical statements were a threat to steady progress in New Guinea. A few feared an alliance between students and a radical group such as the Pangu Pati, followed by demands for changes which many people would not be ready to approve. Students from other colleges, some of them run by the Administration, also caused concern.

Within a year of its establishment, the university figured in another controversy. It had been decided to establish an Institute of Higher Technical Education in Port Moresby, next to the university, in order to provide courses not available elsewhere. There were complaints that too many important teaching centres were being set up in Port Moresby, and too few in New Guinea. Before long, the House of Assembly agreed to move the Institute to Lae, where it is a growing establishment. With the opening of the secondary teachers’ college at Goroka in 1967, higher education continued to spread throughout the Territory.
Primary and secondary schooling expanded rapidly, but it could not keep pace with the growing demand for education. It was estimated that only about half of the children of school age would be able to find places in the classroom. The main problems occurred at the upper levels of secondary school, where for years the number of pupils completing the final year was insufficient for the many demands made by the Administration for clerks, teachers and patrol officers, by private firms for trainee businessmen, by the police and army, and by the university and colleges. Moreover, the secondary schools could accept only a part of the numbers completing primary education. Young people who were unable to continue their education found it difficult to obtain the jobs they wanted. Many were reluctant to return to the villages, and so they joined the drift to the towns.

Public Service Localization

The heavy demand by the Administration for educated young people arose from the policy of localizing the public service; that is, it was decided that Papuans and New Guineans should be appointed to as many posts within the Administration as they could fill efficiently. This scheme had been in operation for several years, with the establishment of the Administrative College in 1963 and the reconstruction of the public service in 1964. However, it gained impetus in 1969, when a special unit was established by the Public Service Board to hasten the localization of the Administration's staff. The Board itself was a big step in this direction. It was set up in April 1969 to replace the Public Service Commissioner, with one of its four members a Papuan and another a New Guinean. By 1969 there were more than 13,000 local officers in the public service.

The great increase in the number of local officers meant that no substantial increases in overall salary rates could be paid from the Territory's limited finances. The differences between overseas and local officers' salaries continued to attract criticism, so the Administration changed from separate salary scales to a "single line" of payment. That is, a basic salary was set for all officers, with overseas officers receiving a large allowance in addition. This did not alter the feeling of a number of Papuan and New Guinean public servants that they were not being treated fairly.
Increased Economic Development

It remained a fact that higher salaries for local officers of the public service, and increased spending on such things as hospitals and schools, would mean a slowing of the pace of economic development. And it was settled policy that New Guinea production would have to increase enormously during the 1970s if the Territory were to have a firm foundation for self-government. Although some areas presented great problems, improved economic methods were spreading through the great majority of villages. Agricultural extension, co-operative societies, cattle projects, new crops like tea and pyrethrum, all contributed to village progress. In many cases local government councils joined in the development schemes. At the same time, the major initiatives came from the Administration and from European businessmen.

Five-year plan

In 1968 the Administration announced a five-year plan for New Guinea development that extended the schemes and targets of the World Bank Report. The plan predicted that between 1968 and 1973 some $1,000 million dollars would be spent in the Territory, partly through Commonwealth grants and partly from internal revenue. The plan laid emphasis on the “indigenization” of the economic effort (the counterpart to the “localization” of the public service). Nevertheless, a great deal depended upon European investment, in terms of both money and knowledge. While villagers produced more, almost all of the facilities for processing and transporting their crops remained under the control of overseas interests. In addition, large new projects like timber milling and copper ore production relied almost wholly on European initiative. This was inevitable, and it cannot be suggested that such projects should be neglected; but it does mean that the New Guinea people have no chance of gaining control of the economy for many years. It is possible that the people will be given full political responsibility while still lacking economic power. This could lead to problems if the New Guinea political leaders wish to pursue different policies from the European investors.

Copper and Bougainville

By far the most important single economic development in New Guinea history came with the decision by an international mining
company to produce copper from deposits near Kieta in Bougainville. The total investment for the project will be more than $200 million. A new town has been built, a new port provided, and the export of ore will help to reduce the deficit in the Territory's balance of payments. The Administration has acquired an interest amounting to some $20 million in the project so that the people, through the government, will have some stake in it. Under the Bougainville scheme, the village people have been paid compensation for their land, houses and gardens, and will receive a small percentage of the value of material taken from their area; this is known as a royalty payment.

Despite the importance of the copper scheme, and the terms offered the people, there was considerable controversy at the time it was begun. Some of the villagers in the area were unwilling to give up their land, regardless of the amount paid for it, because of its importance to their way of life. A settlement was finally reached, but not before numbers of special officers and police had been sent to the area to explain the situation to the people and exert the Administration's control over them. Similar conflicts were likely to occur in other districts where the needs of modern development clashed with the traditional needs and beliefs of the people. In some instances the people became more outspoken and better organized in their opposition to official policies.

Political Issues

The Bougainville problems, and one or two others, developed into public controversies which were reported widely in the newspapers and became political issues in Australia as well as in the Territory. The first of these involved West Irian.

West Irian and refugees

The agreement under which West Irian was handed over to Indonesian control provided that the people were to vote in an "act of free choice" during 1969 as to whether or not they wished to remain part of Indonesia. Numbers of West Irianese opposed Indonesia's presence, some organizing violent resistance and others crossing the border into eastern New Guinea as refugees. The Australian government had no wish to see these people agitating against Indonesia within Australian-controlled Territory; Australia
wished to remain friends with Indonesia. At the same time, a number of people maintained that the Indonesians were governing badly in West Irian. Then in 1969 it appeared that the West Irianese were not being allowed a full vote of "free choice", and that picked representatives were being persuaded to support Indonesia’s case. There was little that the Australian government or the people of Papua and New Guinea could do about the West Irian situation. Nevertheless, several members of the House of Assembly and some younger leaders were disturbed at the situation. They gave strong support to the refugees’ case. Their opposition had no effect on the final outcome of the vote, and West Irian remained with Indonesia; but this showed that some Territory people were becoming interested in issues outside Papua and New Guinea.

Threats of Secession

A similar interest in outside issues occurred in Bougainville and other New Guinea islands in 1969. Some leaders in Bougainville maintained that their island had been neglected by the Administration, which concentrated too much money and attention on the large towns like Port Moresby. They said they would be better off if they joined the people of the British Solomon Islands, who were of similar language groups, or broke away (seceded) altogether and set up a separate country. A few men in New Britain followed by stating that the New Guinea islands as a whole should set up a federation separate from the Papua and New Guinea mainland. Attention later shifted from this issue, but it showed that a number of people were ready to voice dissatisfaction with affairs in the Territory.

Gazelle Peninsula

The statements by New Britain leaders were a reflection of growing disquiet with the situation in the Gazelle Peninsula, in particular. The people were short of land, there was a lack of suitable employment for younger men, and the influence of the elders in the villages was being challenged by their more educated sons. These problems came into the open through an issue which was only partly related to any of them: multi-racial local government. The Rabaul area was one of the first in the Territory to
have local government, and it was eventually decided to have Europeans as well as Gazelle Peninsula people in the council. The existing council voted to approve the new step, but some people in the villages were opposed to the idea. They organized marches and demonstrations, several councillors were injured, some people were gaoled, and enormous numbers of police were flown in to Rabaul to keep the peace. This was a complex, important issue which continued into the 1970s, but its initial significance was that the opposition was the first organized, radical movement in the Territory; it also showed some anti-European trends.

While the outer areas of the Territory attracted a good deal of attention, the great majority of villages saw steady progress and no significant unrest. Most of Papua and New Guinea was quite stable, with the people generally satisfied with development. From one point of view the situation was quite sound, with only a few spots demanding attention; from another, problems were appearing because small parts of New Guinea were moving considerably apart from the rest of the country in expressing demands and dissatisfaction. There was still little feeling of unity among the people as a whole.

Australian Attitudes

The New Guinea situation was brought to the attention of many Australians by the visit to New Guinea during January 1970, of Mr Whitlam, the Leader of the Opposition in the Commonwealth Parliament. Mr Whitlam toured a number of areas, stating that the Australian Labor Party, of which he was leader, favoured much faster development in the Territory. He publicly disagreed with the Minister for External Territories and the Prime Minister. Mr Whitlam's attitude was strongly opposed in many quarters and attracted heavy criticism from the Prime Minister. This was the first occasion for twenty years that the two major political parties in Australia had clashed strongly on New Guinea matters.

It was suggested by some observers that New Guinea would become one of the major political issues in Australia during the 1970s. However, this neglects the fact that the great majority of Australians know little about the Territory and have had no interest in it. There is no longer any real doubt that Papua and New Guinea will be granted internal self-government within a few
years. The two major questions are: How soon? and, Will Australia continue to give massive financial aid to the Territory once self-government is achieved? Mr Whitlam criticized the government for suggesting that aid may be reduced if self-government comes too soon. Yet if Australians do start to take a greater interest in New Guinea affairs, they will soon observe that Australia has spent a good deal of money in the country. They will be less likely to suggest that more money be spent there than to demand that some of the existing grant be kept in Australia.

By the middle of 1970 it appeared that events were bound to move faster in New Guinea. The Minister for External Territories announced that he would retire from Parliament by 1972, while there were important changes among the officials in charge of Territory affairs. The Administrator, Mr Hay, was transferred to Canberra as Secretary of the Department of External Territories. This is the first time that a man with first-hand experience of New Guinea administration has held the job. His place as Administrator was taken by Mr L. W. Johnson, who had impressed many people in his former position of Assistant Administrator for Services. Again for the first time, the officials in charge in Canberra and Port Moresby have worked closely together.

In July 1970 the Prime Minister, Mr Gorton, visited New Guinea, the first Prime Minister to do so in eight years. He announced that the Australian government would give final control over several aspects of New Guinea’s internal affairs to the Administrator’s Executive Council. However he did not set a final date for self-government, and Australia retains control of such matters as defence and external affairs. Mr Gorton said that any further changes would have to await the report of the Select Committee on constitutional and political development. Some people thought that the Prime Minister had suggested the changes, partly as a response to Mr Whitlam’s New Guinea visit. Whatever the case, Australian politicians are paying more attention to the Territory.

The emergence of New Guinea as a political issue in Australia tends to indicate that the country is approaching some degree of maturity. The question for the 1970s is whether the case for New Guinea will continue to be stated by Australians on the people’s behalf, or by New Guinea’s leaders themselves.
Books for Further Reading
Ryan, J., *The Hot Land*.
White, O., *Parliament of a Thousand Tribes*.

Advanced Reading
Department of Territories, *Australian Territories*.
Council on New Guinea Affairs, *New Guinea and Australia, the Pacific and South East Asia*.
CHRONOLOGY

50,000 B.C.  Arrival of man in New Guinea
3,000        Beginning of Neolithic Revolution in New Guinea
A.D.  1512  D'Abreu may have sighted New Guinea
          De Meneses gave the name *Papua* to the north-west coast
1545        De Retes named the island *New Guinea*
1526        Marist Brothers established mission on Woodlark Island
1847        McFarlane established L.M.S. station in Torres Strait
1871        Reverend Lawes arrived in Port Moresby
1874        Reverend Brown commenced work in the Duke of York Island
1882        Father Navarre and other members of the M.S.C. arrived at Matupit
1884        Britain claimed Papua and Germany claimed New Guinea
1885        M.S.C. established at Yule Island
1886        Reverend Flierl started the Simbang mission
1888        MacGregor took up his position as head of the administration in British New Guinea
1891        Reverend Bromilow commenced work in the Milne Bay District
1898        Le Hunte became Lieutenant-Governor of British New Guinea
1899        German government took over from the New Guinea Company in German New Guinea
1901        British New Guinea transferred to control of Commonwealth of Australia, but not accepted until 1905
1901        Goaribari massacre
1903 Le Hunte retired. Judge Robinson appointed Acting Administrator
1904 Robinson replaced by Captain Barton
1905 Papua Act passed
1906 Royal Commission appointed to enquire into conditions in Papua
1907 Murray appointed Acting Administrator. Head tax introduced in German New Guinea and first government school established
1908 Murray appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Papua
1910 Gold discovered on the Lakekamu River. Capital of German New Guinea moved from Kokopo to Rabaul
1914 Australia occupied German New Guinea
1915 Stricter labour laws passed by Australian military administration
1918 Native Plantations Ordinance and Native Taxation Ordinance passed in Papua. Captain Detzner surrendered after remaining at large throughout the war
1919 Treaty of Versailles. Australia given mandate to administer German New Guinea. Royal Commission appointed to report on proposed union between Papua and New Guinea
1920 New Guinea Act passed
1921 Military administration ended in New Guinea. Navigation Act applied to Papua and New Guinea
1922 Gold prospecting on Waria and Bulolo Rivers
1924 Copper smelting in the Astrolabe Ranges
1925 Navigation Act abolished
1926 Gold discovered at Edie Creek
1928 Karius and Champion crossed New Guinea from the Fly to the Sepik
1929 World Depression began. Rabaul strike
1930 Leahy explored headwaters of the Purari River
1931 Rubber from Papua and from the Territory of New Guinea admitted to Australia free of duty
1933 Legislative and Executive Councils established in the Mandated Territory. Taylor and the Leahy brothers explored much of the Highlands. Students from Papua sent to Australia to train as Medical Assistants

1935 Hides and O'Malley explored the Southern Highlands

1939 Committee appointed to report on the union of Papua and New Guinea

1940 Death of Sir Hubert Murray at Samarai

1941 Japanese declare war and attack Rabaul


1943 Allies counter-attack. General fighting in New Guinea. People working on plantations and fighting for Allies

1944 Allies advance in Pacific. Damage to villages

1945 Japanese surrendered. Provisional civil administration established. Colonel J. K. Murray appointed Administrator

1946-7 Public Service expanded. War Damage Compensation. New Native Labour Ordinance

1948 Co-operative Societies established. Patrols and new stations in Highlands

1949 Papua and New Guinea Act passed. Liberal-Country Party government came to power. Mr Spender Minister for External Territories

1950 First Local Government Councils established

1951 Mr Hasluck appointed Minister for Territories. Legislative Council met

1952 Colonel Murray dismissed. Policy of development from below. Free, close and permanent association mentioned

1952-62 Expansion of health and education services. Law and order extended in Highlands and other Districts. People take more part in economic development. Trouble in West Irian
1957 Personal tax introduced
1959 Income tax introduced. Elected members resign from Legislative Council
1961 Legislative Council reformed. Majority of non-official members
1962 Indonesian attacks on West Irian. Foot Report on New Guinea published. Select Committee on Political Development
1963 Currie Commission on Higher Education and World Bank Mission begin work. Elections in Australia and Mr Barnes appointed Minister for Territories
1964 Elections for House of Assembly. Changes in the Public Service
1965 Select Committee on Constitutional Development appointed
1966 Public Service wage case begins. Debate on self-government continues. First courses begin at the University of Papua and New Guinea
1967 Goroka Teachers' College and the Administrative College opened
1969 Public Service Board replaces Public Service Commissioner. Work begins on copper mining at Bougainville. West Irian “act of free choice”
1970 Mr Whitlam visits New Guinea. Ministerial Members appointed in charge of some departments. Visit of the Prime Minister, Mr Gorton. Administrator's Executive Council granted final control of some aspects of internal government
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