

## Chapter 3

# Guided Democracy

### The Gunther Select Committee and a House of Assembly

After half a century of patrolling coastal villages and half a generation of police rule in the Highlands, government in the 1950s still relied on ‘native leaders’ to relay their purposes to isolated villages and report back. The middlemen could act as ‘traditional’ Big Men, such as Bin Arawaki from the Eastern Highlands and Kup Ogut from the Western Highlands (Chapter 2), or as ‘modern’ office-bearers such as Lukas Chauka in Local Councils.

Less personal arrangements were in the wind. After a report by the Melbourne Law Professor David Derham in 1960, the new policy was to remove police from the *kiaps*’ control,<sup>1</sup> while Local and District Courts would eventually displace *kiap* courts. Elected Local Councils began to emerge, replacing the *luluais* and *tultuls* — village officials appointed and answerable only to the *kiaps*. Rural Progress Associations and Cooperative Societies were introduced or beefed up to boost production.<sup>2</sup> In Weber’s terms, these reforms would move governance from its charismatic to its bureaucratic stage.

The Administration relied on rural ‘native leaders’ even in the Legislative Council. From three of 12 non-official members, the number of ‘native members’ grew to seven in 1961, but they were still deferential. Young Ilinome Tarua listened to Murari Dickson from Kwato Mission in Milne Bay. ‘He never talked about what happened’ in Council, preferring his real interests, ‘evangelical work and cricket’. In 1961, Alice Wedega, also from Kwato, became the first woman member and flew to Sydney to learn parliamentary procedures.

John Gunther instructed them that when it comes to voting, they had to vote in the Administration. However ... I think Auntie Alice would have voted against the government view allowing Papua New Guineans to take alcohol ... [because] a missionary at Kwato had told us that alcohol is evil.<sup>3</sup>

Alice and her colleagues usually did support the Administration, but tinkering with land tenure antagonised even the most compliant. Since 1952, a Native Land Commission had struggled to simplify and record native title. After 10 baffled years, Hasluck lost patience

and proposed to convert land from customary tenure into a new form of title to encourage investment and inheritance from fathers to sons (gender equity being far from his mind). A Land Titles Commission would determine rights and register them under a Land Registration (Communally Owned Land) Ordinance, or in individual title under the Land (Tenure Conversion) Ordinance.<sup>4</sup> When the bills came to the Council, however, speakers demanded more protection for customary owners. It took a year to amend the legislation to meet this demand, and the amendments made the law unworkable.<sup>5</sup> This was a Damascus Road moment when expatriates saw that indigenous members could stymie the Minister.<sup>6</sup>

Unknown to these crafty converts to democracy, the Minister was leaning the same way. In 1960, the UN created a Decolonisation Committee and Harold Macmillan asserted that 'winds of change' were making African independence inevitable. The Dutch departure from West Papua was imminent, and Sukarno's unstable and destabilising Indonesia would share a land border with Australian territory. Prime Minister Menzies announced a new view of decolonisation: 'If in doubt you should go sooner, not later.' To counter anti-colonial critics, the Territory's indigenous representatives must become more visible and audible.<sup>7</sup> In brief, Hasluck needed Native Members to shield him from the UN; Australian-elected members needed Native Members to shield them from the Minister; and official members expected Native Members to shield them from importunate expatriates.

To represent democratic reform as a Territory initiative, the Legislative Council was told to create a select committee on constitutional change. To ensure that this committee's advice matched the Minister's vision, it was chaired by the chunky and punchy John Gunther. After studying medicine in Sydney and practicing in the Solomon Islands, he had 'a good war' in which he ran important field trials on Manus Island. After the war, he was appointed Director of Health.<sup>8</sup> When Hasluck gave him free rein and a liberal budget, he built hospitals and clinics across the country and enlisted dozens of ex-army medical orderlies. Lacking doctors, he recruited European refugees from Australia, where non-British doctors were barred from working. He launched military-style campaigns against specific diseases, armed with the magic bullets of penicillin, sulfa drugs, quinine and DDT. The epitome of paternalism, his officers sprayed villages, treated Highlanders for TB before working on the coast, and created maternal and child health services. In 1956, Hasluck shifted Gunther and his fierce charisma to the job of Assistant Administrator and manager of the Legislative Council.

The Gunther Committee's Interim Report in 1962 admitted frankly that its proposals, 'though largely based on the freely expressed wishes of the people, *in fact go well beyond* the conservative proposals which they themselves put forward'.<sup>9</sup> The Report recommended a House of Assembly, most of whose 54 members would be elected from a common roll. The Administrator would preside alongside 10 other officials, and 10 elected seats would be reserved for expatriates. Indigenous people's representatives would predominate. Quizzed by Menzies, Gunther guaranteed that he would control this House and steer administration business through it.<sup>10</sup> This was no empty boast: he could count on the 'Native Leaders'.

Gunther's committee was suspended during the tour of a remarkable UN Visiting Mission, led by the astute British diplomat Sir Hugh Foot. As Director of Education, Leslie Johnson could see what the mission was doing. Its Principal Secretary (James Lewis) held talks with officers of the Administration and endorsed the reforms that they were planning. This mission not only 'made positive, firm and constructive proposals on matters of magnitude', but tried to impose a timetable for their achievement. They did not change the direction of policies, but accelerated them. Publicly, the Gunther Committee responded to Foot's initiatives. Behind the scenes, the shoe might have been on another foot.<sup>11</sup> At any rate, Gunther's interim report was so well received in Canberra that he never wrote a final report.

The dawn of democracy required a great effort to enrol voters, organise the poll and explain the procedures. Maddocks watched as Local Government Councils disseminated unreliable information:

the villager's only hard source was the electoral education patrols which set out to instruct him in his duties as an elector, which distributed informational material and later recorded his vote. He saw and heard the candidates before the election, though often not all of them, and afterwards he occasionally saw and heard his member, though some never did enjoy this privilege.<sup>12</sup>

This democracy did not bubble up from below but trickled down from on high to protect the status quo.<sup>13</sup> And the electors vindicated Gunther's judgment by picking candidates likely to support the Administration (see Appendix). Nine Australians and the missionary Percy Chatterton won reserved seats, and six other Australians won open seats. Seven of the Australians were *kiaps*, including John Pasquarelli, who also traded in artefacts.<sup>14</sup>

The 38 Papua New Guineans outnumbered the 26 expatriates. Mission networks helped: 14 winners professed to be Catholic and 12 Lutheran. (Only Pasquarelli ever criticised the missions, and he was not re-elected.) Nineteen members had never been to school (18 were Highlanders) and only four had studied beyond primary school. Perhaps 20 were illiterate and only 11 were fluent in English. Most were comfortable in Tok Pisin, but Handabe Tiaba — a Southern Highland fight-leader — shared no language with any other member: after double translation, an official summarised proceedings for him.<sup>15</sup> Koitago Mano from Ialibu had not realised that Port Moresby was on the same island as the rest of the country. Few members had any idea of the structure of the Government, or how an assembly might affect it.

A seminar introduced members to Westminster procedures — naturally, no attempt was made to modify arcane precedents. The language of business was English so, despite interpreters, 'there was a totally inadequate exchange of ideas'. Johnson suspected that some officers tolerated this mystification because it reinforced their control.

When the Assembly met, bizarre precedents were set:

Proceedings commenced with the Speaker ... reading a total of 18 messages from the Administrator, informing the House that he had assented to 19 ordinances, and had reserved 7 ordinances for the Governor-General's pleasure, that the Governor-General had assented to 10 ordinances and had not disallowed a further 32 ordinances [of the old Legislative Council]. Minutes later, an Official Member (Secretary for Law), speaking in English and using legal and parliamentary jargon, introduced the Explosives Bill 1964 [which] passed all stages (including insertion of an official amendment in committee) in less than ten minutes. In a sense the tone was set, and it altered relatively little during the ensuing four years.<sup>16</sup>

The introductory seminar allowed leaders to emerge — within limits. J. K. McCarthy had spent his adult life in New Guinea, and he spoke well and wittily in Tok Pisin. The elected members wanted him as Speaker and he was keen to serve; but, as he was an official, the Administrator could (and did) veto that choice and the post fell to Horrie Niall, formerly DC of Morobe. The seminar also selected indigenous undersecretaries to explain government business to other elected members. Although officials briefed them each morning on the day's business, they were merely decorative. Simogun Pita — policeman and war hero — complained that 'the Government has made me an Undersecretary but I do not know what I am supposed to do and my Department has not shown me'. Most were puzzled and so were the heads of the departments to which they were attached, since undersecretaries had no formal powers. Even for garnering support, the device was clumsy. In total, undersecretaries cast 289 votes for administration motions but 123 against. Paul Lapun was interested only in Bougainville and voted more often against (28) than for (20) the Administration. Like Lapun, Nicholas Brokam was seldom seen in his department. Lepani Watson was often absent and voted often against the Administration, whereas Robert Tabua was seldom absent and rarely opposed the Administration.

In 1966, Johnson succeeded Gunther as manager of government business. Calmer than Gunther, he had a more detached manner and he was a perceptive observer of the House and its ill-assorted members. He recognised and tried to address the frustrations of the undersecretaries. He shifted Matthias ToLiman, the teacher, to Education, Sinake Giregire, the coffee grower to Agriculture and Lepani Watson, the Cooperatives Officer, to Trade. The benefits of this reshuffle were few and undersecretaries' initiatives rare: Giregire did carry a bill to ban playing cards, but Tabua failed in an attempt to control crocodile hunting.

The House met in a modest building in downtown Port Moresby. Some meetings lasted a week; a fortnight (the budget session of 1967) was the longest. Members were paid and undersecretaries received a bonus. Most expatriates stayed at a hotel, while most Papua New Guineans stayed with *wantoks* (kin) — one lodged with the Johnsons' servant. Eventually, John Guise's and Lepani Watson's houses became 'political salons', but the salons were isolated from the electors. The exception — Tony Voutas — shows why. Voutas was unusual, not least in having a degree in Political Science before he became a *kiap*. As a candidate in a 1966 by-election, he ran 'a long, arduous, novel and

sophisticated campaign in his mountainous electorate' and created a network with a representative in each of 250 villages. He could not reform the House, but he held regular electorate meetings.<sup>17</sup> No other member followed his exhausting example.

Political reality bore little relation to the law. The only formal curbs on law-makers were the assent of the Administrator or the Governor-General, and a ban on introducing money bills. More effectual was Canberra's provision of two-thirds of the budget. Official members were not allowed to vote or speak independently<sup>18</sup> and few others had the confidence to try. But there were flickers of mutiny. In the life of the old Legislative Council, only six of 856 bills had been introduced by private members (and four passed). In the first 12 meetings of the new House, 40 of the 252 bills were introduced by private members, who also circulated draft bills to provoke the Administration to introduce its own.<sup>19</sup>

Gunther's control was helped by divisions among elected members. He sat at one end of the horseshoe of seats. Directly opposite sat Ian Downs, the irascible former DC. Johnson mused that a forum including the very articulate Downs, Stuntz, Gunther and McCarthy 'provided limited opportunity for self-expression by others'. In any case several members merely brought forward their electors' requests. The rowdiest member was Peter Lus from the Sepik; the most mystical was Koriam Urekit from East New Britain who showed his electors a large iron key, 'explaining that it was the key to the House of Assembly, which could not begin work until he got there'. Tei Abal, a medical orderly from Enga, and the teacher Matthias ToLiman, from East New Britain, did use the House as a springboard for national leadership, both on the conservative wing of opinion.

During the second meeting, an elected members' group formed around Guise (who resigned as undersecretary) and ToLiman, but the group imploded. Johnson surmised that expatriates were ambivalent about indigenous leaders, that they jostled for the role of power-behind-the-throne, and that most indigenous members had only parochial interests.

These manoeuvres revealed Guise as the likeliest popular leader. As a police sergeant major, he had represented the Territory at the Queen's coronation, and he had the ambivalent advantage of mixed-race status. He was older and more fluent in English than most others. 'By virtue of experience, ability, personality and political nous he was the outstanding indigenous member,' thought Johnson. 'He spoke, wrote and read English well and was fluent in Pidgin and Motu.' He seemed more calculating than passionate, and he channelled his great political ambitions into another Select Committee on Constitutional Development, chaired by himself, with Brokam, Giregire, Pita, Downs, William Bloomfield and John Stuntz (elected members), and Gunther, W. W. Watkins and Johnson (officials). They then coopted Lapun, Abal, Wegra Kenu and Dirona Abe. The young West Australian Fred Chaney was secretary.

Alas, its modest outcomes created no role for him (Chapter 4) and the docile House fulfilled the role scripted by Hasluck, providing cover for paternalism. When the UN Decolonisation Committee advocated target dates for self-government, ToLiman moved that only Papua New Guineans should determine the timing. All 22 indigenous

speakers supported him. The same alliance supported Abal's Development Capital Guarantee Declaration to protect overseas investment.

Gunther and Johnson made the House toe the line, but the official members paid a high price in frustration. Johnson recalls that:

we were too often faced with policies originating in Canberra and about which we had not had opportunities to advise our views. Further we were conceded little room for manoeuvre in gaining acceptance of these policies.

He told Warwick Smith — the Secretary of the Department — that officials must be able to compromise within broad policy, but

*the policy ... of insisting that we adhere closely to their rigid interpretation of policy, required us to devote so much of our energies to getting approved legislation through the House unchanged that we had little time for the more important task of educating and involving members in the democratic process.*

To secure the votes, Johnson had to rely on dubious tactics. He would pass business on the first day of a sitting, before elected members could form another view. Later in the week, and especially at night, a quorum melted away. So well did he play these games that only one bill was vetoed and one other returned for a technical amendment.

## Barnes and Warwick Smith

An elected House implied devolution, but Canberra's control tightened, partly through better communications but largely because of changes in personnel. The Hasluck era ended in 1963 when Sir Paul was promoted to Defence. Territories fell to the lean, taciturn and courtly Charles Barnes, a Country Party backbencher from Queensland.<sup>20</sup> It is not clear why the Country Party wanted this portfolio: possibly to prevent the Territory from undercutting Australian farmers.<sup>21</sup> Barnes had prospected for gold and flown planes on Cape York before he settled down to breed horses. Now in his sixties, he had sat in Parliament for five quiet years and he was amazed by his elevation. His party leader, 'Black Jack' McEwen, explained,

'I couldn't put one of my younger men there. I know you are not ambitious (self-seeking) and you can never win in this portfolio' ... The expression, 'no-win situation' became more and more obvious during the next eight years.<sup>22</sup>

This was the only office Barnes ever held. A subordinate described him as kind and honourable, loyal to God, Queen and Country — and inarticulate. Another resented the time needed to protect Barnes from questions in Parliament, and all were nervous when he spoke in public.<sup>23</sup> In 1965, for example, he read a prepared address quoting the Derham Report: 'At the present time to speak of self-government is unreal. There is no *self* to govern

or to be governed.’ During Question Time he strayed beyond his brief, implying that self-government might be 20 years away, that most people did not want it, and that the UN Trusteeship Council was half-hearted.<sup>24</sup> While none of this was untrue, it was all impolitic.

Barnes had no interest in policy, so McEwen advised him to appoint George Warwick Smith as Departmental Secretary. In his 40s, Warwick Smith was hard-driving and hard-nosed. He operated in this structure:

Secretary (George Warwick Smith)  
 No Deputy Secretary (unlike most departments)  
 Three First Assistant Secretaries each heading a Division  
 Three or Four Sections per Division, each headed by a Director.

Senior officers — all men — thought well of themselves. Their later careers justify this estimate but at the time they often seemed bumptious.<sup>25</sup> Warwick Smith often left posts empty until the ideal candidate appeared, which intensified pressure on his staff. He drove people so hard that some broke, but, his subordinates conceded, he was ‘an excellent policy-man’.<sup>26</sup> That was just as well: he assumed Hasluck’s policy-making mantle. His style fostered rivalries, as Patrick Galvin noticed when he joined Territories in 1967 as Section Head in International Relations, having met Warwick Smith’s criterion that he was under 40. Two of the First Assistant Secretaries were the Englishman John Ballard and the Dunera Boy Gerry Gutman. In the next few years, Gutman was outmanoeuvred by his junior, Tim Besley, who was ‘highly skilled in picking up other people’s ideas’. The intellectual Gutman was clumsy in office politics and quit when it became clear (through an acting appointment) that Besley had overtaken him.<sup>27</sup>

Warwick Smith was detested throughout Konedobu. He argued that the Minister was responsible to Parliament for every action taken in his name, and it was the Secretary’s task to protect this authority from usurpers. While he might have delegated power to elected Territory leaders, he flatly refused to pass responsibility from an elected minister in Canberra to non-elected officials in Konedobu. An admiring subordinate conceded that ‘that relationship was ... especially irksome ... at the Port Moresby end because there seemed to be this brake always in Canberra’.<sup>28</sup> His obituary concedes that his ‘proclivity to intervene in day-to-day matters ... was the source of much irritation and frustration within the administration and the Territory’.<sup>29</sup>

So the style changed but in most respects policy continued. Minister and Secretary were of one mind — the Secretary’s — that political change ‘could not be divorced from economic development’, which was a ‘long hard road’.<sup>30</sup> Warwick Smith was pleased to find Papua New Guineans as conservative as himself. Reporting a meeting with another of the political education tours initiated in 1962 (Chapter 2), he told the Administrator:

No Member suggested any further political advance and many reiterated the view that they wanted no more political changes until economic and social development had caught up with the present political situation. Several members were critical of [the moderate nationalist group] Pangu and one ... said he thought that the initiative

for this party had come from Australia ... Their general attitude was one of considerable conservatism as concerned political advance and there was no little touch of doubt whether the Territory ... was not being pushed along at too fast a rate.<sup>31</sup>

This might have been what rural dignitaries thought, but it perfectly describes Warwick Smith's own views.

Barnes's visits to the Territory were brief, but Warwick Smith kept control and ensured that the Administration did not think beyond today, and telex allowed ever-closer oversight. Officers in Konedobu, and even District Officers, were losing their autonomy. Tight control provoked challenge. Gunther had expected to become Secretary of the Department if Hasluck had remained minister. In the new dispensation

he thought with some justice that his judgement of both the desirable and the possible was at least as good as that of officers in Canberra. He rejected in his forthright way the detailed oversight to which we were all subjected. He stalked out of a meeting between the official members of the [Select] Committee and Warwick Smith in Port Moresby, and shortly afterwards resigned from the Administration altogether ...<sup>32</sup>

His colleagues remained but they shared his indignation:

We felt irritation at the close surveillance of our parliamentary activities but by and large we did not disagree too much with the thrust of established policy except as it may have restricted the activities of our individual departments.<sup>33</sup>

When Sir Donald Cleland retired as Administrator in 1966, Barnes plucked David Hay from Foreign Affairs to succeed him. Warwick Smith spelt out Hay's tasks so precisely that there could be no doubt about Canberra's control. Hay's job was:

to maintain law and order; to contribute his suggestions and advice towards the formulation of policies ... and to carry out these policies in such a way, and in harmony with the Government's long-term objectives in relation to the Territory, that the process of change is a smooth one and that a program of balanced development can be progressively achieved without divisive effects.<sup>34</sup>

At 50, Hay had enjoyed a fine career in peace and war. Courteous, courtly and conservative, he favoured gradual change. His devotion to order made him prefer officers who were loyal rather than innovative. His inaugural address in 1967 confirmed Australia's promise 'to support PNG so long as that is what they want'. He restated the standard pledge 'to defend PNG as if it were part of the Australian mainland'. He explained Australia's commitment to fund economic and social development; and spoke of gradual moves towards self-government. He wanted 'to create something new without first having to destroy existing institutions. This means that the movement can proceed at a pace you want and in an atmosphere of calm.'<sup>35</sup>

And he was determined to bring departmental heads to heel.

In the early days you had pirates like Gunther ... who had been inclined to take no notice of the Canberra instructions, but in my day I took the view that as senior officers you just had to do what you were told.

The demotion of Gunther from minister's favourite to administrator's *bête noire* is a measure of the new control. To head the Administrator's department, Hay defied advice by appointing the tough-minded DC Tom Ellis rather than the independent-minded David Fenbury. Equally, he was irritated by the Public Solicitor's Office and its head, Peter Lalor, who 'acted as a kind of legal adviser to the opposition to the government'.

But Hay chafed under many restraints. As in Australia, the Public Service Commission enjoyed statutory power over appointments. The Territory Commissioner, Gerry Unkles, applied rules strictly, reported to the Minister and to the Commission in Canberra, and tried to avoid Hay. The same paralysis was produced by rules of financial delegation, which meant that every proposal was costed first in Port Moresby, and again in Canberra.

In Konedobu, potential policy-making centres emerged. One was the Central Policy and Planning Committee. Hasluck strangled it at once: that committee 'is quite inappropriate as an embryo Cabinet: ... members have a totally wrong conception of its function if they have views entertaining the idea for a moment'. If decisions were to be made locally, they were the province of an Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee in which the Administrator, his assistants and heads of departments met only once a month. The Administrator's Council could conceivably devise policy, especially after 1968 when elected members of the House were added. However, a majority of elected members on the Council

was meaningless unless their advice was sought and heeded on a much wider range of issues than in the past. Also, despite the fact that all Councillors were Members of the House of Assembly, there was no other relationship between the Administrator's Council and the House.

Coordination might also have been possible through financial oversight. After the World Bank report, Alan McCasker was seconded from the Australian Treasury as Economic Adviser in 1965. A bluff, seasoned and professional analyst of great ability but little political flair, he was imprisoned in a subordinate role that made minimal use of his talents.<sup>36</sup>

Policy shifts were less dramatic than changes in personnel and management style. The most marked was a new emphasis on economic development. In Downs's analysis, the new era differed from the old in its commitment to economic development to reduce dependence on Australia. The blueprint was the World Bank report which emphasised:

overseas investment and continued European participation in development strategies. Political gradualism was seen by the Minister as a necessary restraint to encourage investment from overseas and gain time for a measure of economic independence to be achieved.<sup>37</sup>

This strategy provoked hot debate,<sup>38</sup> and it deepened the authoritarianism of relations between Canberra and Konedobu, and between Konedobu and the *kiaps*.

## The Paternalistic State

Based on *kiaps* and patrols, the Administration was essentially rural. Officials were comfortable with 'native leaders' but suspicious of 'educated natives'. When the Hahalis Welfare Society (Chapter 1) tried to act independently, for example, they were briskly brought to book. Their methods scandalised missionaries and *kiaps*; but it was their independence of mind that really affronted Church and State.<sup>39</sup>

This climate inhibited the emergence of tertiary study. In Hasluck's view, education (like democracy) must grow from the bottom up. Primary education must be widely spread before secondary education, and tertiary training must await widespread secondary schooling. But he did appoint a committee to consider tertiary education and it did recommend a university. Two members of the committee died in 1962, and no action eventuated until the Foot Committee revived the issue. In response, the Currie Commission (comprising George Currie, Gunther and Oskar Spate) was launched in March 1963, and proposed a university and a technical institute.<sup>40</sup> The need was urgent as there were only three Papua New Guinean graduates (Henry ToRobert, John Natera and Joseph Aoa), and yet the report 'shuffled around Canberra for almost a year until pressures on the Department and the Minister finally elicited authority for us to proceed'.<sup>41</sup>

As late as 1966 therefore, the Territory's only higher education was provided by the Catholic Holy Spirit Regional Seminary in Madang. When seminarians launched a journal, *Dialogue*, officials bridled. The DC read the second issue with anxiety. He was annoyed that the first issue was welcomed by Spate at the ANU, Gunther as Vice-Chancellor-designate of the University of Papua New Guinea, and two bishops. This material, the DC warned Cleland, 'merits the immediate attention of the Internal Security Authorities'. Cleland, who agreed, assumed that the editorial and an article on Bougainville must have been ghost-written, probably by Father Wally Fingleton. They 'come close to inciting subversion. They are probably the most inflammatory items on Administration/indigenous relationships yet published by a non-Communist organisation', although it was rumoured that another Catholic publication might be 'even more strident'.<sup>42</sup>

The editorial was signed by Leo Hannett. His later career allows no doubt that he wrote his own material. His essay was a critique of administration paternalism, and especially the recent mining legislation. Citing impeccably non-socialist sources (Winston Churchill, Pope John XXIII and President Kennedy), he urged the House to protect the people's rights. After Daniel Tsibim's article on Bougainville, John Momis argued that theology should be taught at the University of Papua New Guinea, Michael

Lugabai considered the moral effects of urbanisation, Michael Aike wondered if the Church could insist on celibacy, Ignatius Kilage sought ways to graft baptism onto ancestral rites, Leo Mek pondered the outcome of the impending election, and Theodore Miriung asked if Papuans and New Guineans possessed a sense of gratitude.

*Dialogue* published a high proportion of the country's intelligentsia.<sup>43</sup> To the DC and Administrator, however, already in dispute with the Church, their articles were indefensible:

following on the astonishingly frank attack mounted by Bishop Lemay of Bougainville against the mining legislation, [they] may indicate the commencement of a new phase in Administration/Catholic Mission relationships.

Distrust of 'educated natives' is even clearer in Barnes's reaction when he inaugurated Tos Barnett's course for Native Magistrates at the Administrative College. He had not been briefed on the nature of the course, and arrived to find a moot in progress, with roles played by Papua New Guineans — the accused and the police, of course, but also the prosecutor and the magistrate. Barnes turned to Barnett in shock and whispered, 'But they're all natives!'<sup>44</sup>

Suspicion of higher education was widespread. In 1970, the University of Papua New Guinea's Waigani Seminar assembled a lively collection of politicians, economists, political scientists, anthropologists and public servants.

With unbelievable obtuseness the Administration discouraged public servants from attending the seminar and in one or two cases actively forbade them to do so ... The seminar ended with a paper presented by George Warwick Smith ... The lifeless delivery and content of the paper itself and the low-keyed and soporific filibuster which followed ... dramatically illustrated the great gap between the lively potential of this country and the prosaic ... approach of Canberra and Konedobu.<sup>45</sup>

An issue that excited educated Papua New Guineans was the regulation of mining. Since public debate was discouraged, the main forum was the House of Assembly. Even here debate was limited, as officials were never allowed to deviate from positions laid down in Canberra. When prospectors of Conzinc Riotinto (CRA) found payable copper ores, the House had to pass legislation (drafted in Canberra) to regulate the large-scale enterprises that had evolved in recent years. There was resistance by direct landowners and unease among many others when the Crown insisted that it owned all sub-surface ores. Bougainville's member, Paul Lapun, proposed to divert 20 per cent of royalties to landowners. When other members failed to support him, he scaled down his proposal to 5 per cent. He still lost the vote by 22 to 30.

Lapun's intervention provoked 'a sharp difference of opinion' between Canberra and Konedobu on the (correct) assumption that Lapun would return to the charge when the House met again. The department wanted to invoke Standing Orders to prevent the revival of an issue so soon after it had been settled, whereas the Administration thought

it only fair to ventilate the issue. In the reprise, Lapun won by 31 to 21 and the Administration had to dissuade the department from disallowing the amendment.

But this was a sideshow. Real negotiations were conducted entirely between the company and the department, and the agreement was enacted by the House pro forma.<sup>46</sup> *Kiaps* did discuss the project with villagers but, as James Griffin put it:

The people were not *consulted* as to whether they wanted the mine or not; but at least after a time it was *explained* to them what was involved ... As [DC Ashton] said to this writer: 'Explain to them! Why we've explained it to them till we're blue in the face.'<sup>47</sup>

The closest that Papua New Guineans came to negotiating was in an ad hoc meeting in Canberra, when CRA sponsored a fact-finding tour by five Bougainvilleans. They had two hours of talks with department officials who had been debating what (if any) benefit should go to landowners. The officials took the opportunity to test opinion.<sup>48</sup> The Bougainvilleans made three points: the Administration should increase its development funding in Bougainville; landowners should receive some share of royalties; and developers 'should allocate a proportion of their profits to a local development fund ... A figure of 25% of profits was mentioned'. The minute-taker noted that:

- 1 A promise has been given in general terms.
- 2 There is no legal obligation for payments to the indigenous people ...
- 3 A case can be made for an ex gratia or extra legal payment ... for what amount to political reasons but it would be preferable for the provision to be made through the normal programme of public works ...

If a Special Development Fund were considered, payment could take the form of: a contribution ... from the royalties ...

a payment from the mining company ... is not considered impractical if the amount is not too large, e.g. £10,000 per annum or up to 2% of profits ...

a payment of royalties or profits to individual landowners. This ... would create an undesirable precedent.

additional Administration funds ...

Later, the minute-taker was more circumspect, pointing out that

the views expressed by departmental officers were sympathetic and the delegation ... seems to have assumed, of course quite wrongly, that this sympathetic view was tantamount to a promise that [their] proposals would be accepted.<sup>49</sup>

So the delegation believed that its claim had been accepted, until Barnes declared — in Kieta — that all benefits should flow to 'Papua New Guinea as a whole'.

In the House, expatriates were harder to control than Papua New Guineans. It was Downs, not Guise, who led a campaign to reshape the budget. It was the *ex-kiap* Barry

Holloway who proposed ministerial government — in the Parliamentary Executive (Interim Provisions) Bill 1965. In the last session (1967), Voutas, another *ex-kiap*, tried to mandate equal pay for women. Guise was much less radical. He proposed to merge church and state schools. Johnson noted that this measure would benefit mission schools, so it was supported by members who ‘had an eye on the Church’s influence on the minds of voters’.

But the first dispute to overturn Canberra policy was squarely a concern of Papua New Guineans. In almost all respects — labour relations, court procedures, parliamentary practice, access to alcohol, clothes and books and mineral rights — the Territory was being made to conform with Federal Australia (see Chapter 5). The exception was the wage structure. Papua New Guinea’s bureaucrats were deployed in the three Australian Public Service grades, with a Territory supplement: Division One for departmental heads; Division Two required a High School Leaving Certificate; Division Three required a trade certificate. In a rare recognition of local circumstances, a Fourth Division (Auxiliary) was added ‘for Papua New Guineans who did not have appropriate qualifications to enter the high ranks’.<sup>50</sup> By 1962, 30 Papua New Guineans were in Division Two. In the long run, an indigenous public service might be paid slightly more than their counterparts in Australia. To avert this outcome, Hasluck resolved to create a Territory public service, with salaries geared to the local economy, and expatriates shifted into an auxiliary division. The bill was passed on the last day of the Legislative Council, while officials held a majority. The new salary scale was not specified.

When the local salary scale was finally published in September 1964, Teachers’ College students rallied behind Ebia Olewale, President of the Students’ Council, who had been briefed by his Australian lecturers. The students readily agreed to ‘go down to Konedobu to talk to the Administrator and the Education Department’. However, the protest was limited:

I asked students from other colleges, like Admin College, where Michael Somare and Albert Maori Kiki were, from Posts and Telegraphs and from PNG Medical College to come along with us but they retracted because they were already public servants and they were being paid, and they would be sacked if they marched with us ...

So we marched on Konedobu ... Dr Gunther met us ... and the Director of Education came, and they assured me that yes, they were going to review our case ...

When the Tertiary Students’ Federation resolved that Olewale visit all the colleges in the Territory, he turned again to Gunther: ‘Dr Gunther must have discussed it with Sir Donald Cleland, they gave me a ticket and accommodation warrants.’<sup>51</sup>

Having internalised the principle of equal pay for equal work, public servants and students faced not only a denial of that principle but a drastic pay cut. When the matter came to the House, 24 elected members spoke. All accepted the need for a salary scale geared to the economy, but all objected to the figures proposed. Downs proposed some local control over the Public Service Commission. The department was shocked, and the

official members resisted the push, but the motion was carried the same day, with no elected member opposing it.

Villagers still ignored the House but public servants — Australian as well as Papua New Guinean — saw that they could make it their forum. Although Canberra continued to treat the House merely as an instrument for carrying out orders, this coup hinted that it might become a rival centre of power.

## Appendix: The First House of Assembly

### Open

John Pasquarelli (Australian)	Angoram
Paul Lapun	Bougainville (Undersecretary, Forests)
Waiye Siune	Chimbu
Uauwi Wauwe	Chuave
Pita Lus	Dreikikir
Koriam Michael Urekit	East New Britain
Lepani Watson	Esa'ala Losuia
Zure Zurecnuoc	Finschhafen (Undersecretary, Treasury)
Robert Tabua	Fly River (Undersecretary, Public Works)
Sinake Giregire	Goroka (Undersecretary, Assistant Administrator, Services)
Keith Tetley (Australian)	Gulf
Graham Pople (Australian)	Gumine
Keith Levy (Australian)	Hagen
Ugi Biritu	Henganofi
Koitaga Mano	Ialibu
Barry Holloway (Australian)	Kainantu
William Bloomfield (Australian)	Kaindi (died, succeeded by Tony Voutas)
Siwi Kurondo	Kerowagi
Tambu Melo	Kutubu
Singin Pasom	Lae
Poio Iuri	Lagaip
Ehava Karava	Lakekamu
Makain Mo	Lumi
Suguman Matibri	Madang
Paliau Maloat	Manus
Pita Tamindei	Maprik
Gaudi Mirau	Markham
Momei Pangial	Mendi
John Guise*	Milne Bay (Undersecretary, DIES)
Kaibelt Diria	Minj
Eriko Rarupu	Moresby
Nicholas Brokam*	New Ireland (Undersecretary, Assistant Administrator, Economic)
Muriso Warebu	Okapa
Edric Eupu	Popondetta (Undersecretary, Lands)
Matthias ToLimam	Rabaul (Undersecretary, Administrator's Department)
Stoi Umut	Rai Coast
Meanggarum James	Bamu

Dirona Abe	Rigo-Abau (Undersecretary, Public Health)
Handabe Tiaba	Tari
Wegra Kenu	Upper Sepik
Tei Abal	Wabag
Leine Iangalo	Wapenamanda
Paul Manlel	West New Britain
Simogen Pita*	Wewak-Aitape (Under Secretary, Police)

### Special Electorates

Percy Chatterton		Central
John Stuntz*	<i>ex-Kiap</i>	East Papua
Ian Downs*	<i>ex-Kiap</i>	Highlands
Frank Martin		Madang-Sepik
Oriel Ashton		New Britain
William Grove		New Guinea
Horace Niall*	<i>ex-Kiap</i>	North Markham
Graham Gilmore		South Markham
Donald Barrett*		West Gazelle
Ronald Neville		West Papua

### Officials

1964		November 1967
John Gunther, Assistant Administrator (Services)	-	Leslie Johnson
Harold Reeve, Assistant Administrator (Economic)	-	Frank Henderson
W. W. Watkins (Law)	-	Watkins
A. P. J. Newman (Treasurer)	-	Newman
W. F. Carter (Posts & Telegraphs)	-	Carter
Frank Henderson (Agriculture, Stock & Fish)	-	William Conroy
J. K. McCarthy (Native Affairs)	-	Tom Ellis
Leslie Johnson (Education)	-	Roy Scragg (Health)
Noel Mason (Labour)		

\* formerly a member of the Legislative Council

### Administrator's Council

Gunther, Reeve and McCarthy; Guise, Brokam, ToLiman, Tabua, Zurecnuoc, Downs and Stuntz.

Source: Johnson, "Westminster in Moresby".

### Footnotes

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3. Ilinome Frank Tarua, in 'Hindsight'. See also Alice Wedega, *Listen My Country*, Sydney, 1981.
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5. Leslie W. Johnson, 'Westminster in Moresby: Papua New Guinea's House of Assembly, 1964–1972', undated, annotated typescript in the possession of Christine Goode.
6. Ian Downs, *The Australian Trusteeship*, p. 217.
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9. Ian Downs, *The Australian Trusteeship*, p. 237.
10. Hank Nelson, Personal Communication.
11. Johnson, 'Westminster in Moresby'.
12. Ian Maddocks, 'Udumu a-hagaia'.
13. Johnson, 'Westminster in Moresby'.
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15. Mark Lynch, 'Communication and Cargo: some roles performed by Members of Papua New Guinea's House of Assembly, 1964–1972', MA thesis, Sussex University, 1972; Hank Nelson, 'Our Great Task', in *Meanjin*, Vol. 62 (3), 2003, pp. 123–35; Johnson, 'Westminster in Moresby'.
16. Lynch, 'Communication and Cargo', p. 41.
17. Lynch, and A. C. Voutas, 'Elections and Communications', in Marion Ward (ed.), *The Politics of Melanesia*, Waigani Seminar Papers, 1970.
18. Sir David Hay's memoirs, National Library of Australia Oral History Collection.
19. C. J. Lynch, 'A Description of Aspects of Political and Constitutional Development and Allied Topics', in B. J. Brown and G. Sawyer (eds), *Fashion of Law in New Guinea*, Butterworths, Sydney, 1969. Lynch was the parliamentary draftsman. This was his presentation to the International Commission of Justice in Port Moresby in September 1965, updated to October 1968.
20. E. P. Wolfers, 'January–April 1967', in Moore and Kooymans, *A Papua New Guinea Political Chronicle 1967–1991*.
21. See comments by E. G. Whitlam and E. P. Wolfers in 'Hindsight'.
22. Loraine Nott, *CEB: exploits of an uncommon man*, Pioneer Press, Warwick, Qld, 1989, p. 62.
23. Interviews with Don Mentz and Sir Frank Espie.
24. A 452/1 62/1161, Barnes's address to the Melbourne Junior Chamber of Commerce, August 27, 1965, and correspondence with the Australian mission to the UN.
25. Interviews, Tim Besley and Don Mentz.
26. Interviews, Don Mentz, John Greenwell and Paul Kelloway.
27. Interview, Pat Galvin.
28. Pat Galvin, in 'Hindsight'.
29. John Farquharson, 'George Warwick Smith', *Sydney Morning Herald*, December 31, 1999.
30. House of Representatives, March 31, 1966, pp. 805-6; and May 2, 1968, pp. 1059; Downs, *The Australian Trusteeship*, pp. 368-76.
31. A 452/1 67/6847, Warwick Smith to Hay, undated (but 1967 or later).
32. Johnson, 'Westminster in Moresby'.
33. Ibid.
34. Downs, *The Australian Trusteeship*, p. 286.
35. This and the following quotes are from Sir David Hay's interviews, National Library of Australia, 1973.

36. Interviews, Ross Garnaut and John Langmore.
37. Downs, *The Australian Trusteeship*, p. xix.
38. R. G. Crocombe, 'That Five Year Plan', *New Guinea*, December 1968/January 1969; H. Arndt, R. Shand and E. K. Fisk, 'An Answer to Crocombe – I, II, III', *New Guinea*, June/July 1969; R. G. Crocombe, 'Crocombe to his critics', *New Guinea*, September/October 1969.
39. Max and Eleanor Rimoldi, *Hahalis and the Labour of Love*, Denoon, *Getting Under the Skin*.
40. The University of Papua New Guinea grew up in Port Moresby while the other institution went to Lae, where it eventually became the University of Technology.
41. Ian Howie-Willis, *A Thousand Graduates: conflict in university development in Papua New Guinea, 1961-1967*, Australian National University, 1980.
42. 66/5311, Administrator to Department, enclosing DC Hicks to Administrator, November 3, 1966, enclosing Vol. 1, section II of *Dialogue*.
43. John Momis was elected to the House in 1972 and has represented Bougainville ever since. Ignatius Kilage became an intellectual and Ombudsman. Theodore Miriung became a lawyer and led Bougainville's interim provincial administration when he was assassinated, probably by the PNG Defence Force.
44. Interview, Tos Barnett.
45. Robert Waddell, 'May-August 1970', in Moore and Kooymans, *A Papua New Guinea Political Chronicle 1967-1991*.
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47. James Griffin, 'Bougainville', *Australia's Neighbours*, 68, 1970.
48. 66/458, Ahrens's note, dated September 30, 1965.
49. 66/458, Lattin's minute and draft response, February 10, 1966.
50. Johnson, 'Westminster in Moresby'.
51. Sir Ebia Olewale, in 'Hindsight'.