

Chapter 4

Impasse

The Guise Select Committee

John Guise's Select Committee was scarcely more democratic than Gunther's. Not only did it contain three expatriate elected members of the House, but also three officials, one of whom (W. W. Watkins, the abrasive Law Officer) became deputy chair, while Fred Chaney was its secretary. Watkins argued for 'certain matters to be the subject of talks between the Commonwealth Government and the Committee'.¹ As members were keen to protect the Australian connection, they consulted Canberra on the following agenda before they consulted the people.

Matters for Discussion

- 1 In the event of the people deciding that they wish Papua and New Guinea to be one country, the following alternatives arise —
 - a that Papua becomes a Trust Territory [with] New Guinea and Papuans become Australian protected persons rather than Australian citizens; or
 - b that New Guinea become[s] an Australian Territory and New Guineans acquire Australian citizenship rather than a status of Australian protected persons; or
 - c that there be a Papuan and New Guinean citizenship.

[In any event] there would also be a desire to continue close association with Australia. The Commonwealth Government's view as to the extent of such an association is sought.

- 2 Could a statement be made on the application of Commonwealth migration provisions [in each of these cases].
- 3 Does the Commonwealth Government consider that a period of internal self-government is desirable ... ?
- 4 [If so,] has the Commonwealth Government any views on [how ... any such system should ensure that the best advice possible ... is still available to the Administrator who remains responsible for the administration of the Territory

and the carrying out of Commonwealth Government policy so long as Australia provides major financial assistance.

- 5 Has the Commonwealth Government any views as to whether there should be a form of Ministerial Government ... or ... some pattern akin to the American system ...
- 6 In the event of the people attaining self-government ...
 - a Would Australia be prepared to continue to provide major financial assistance ... and under what conditions.
 - b What would be the nature of the links between Australia and the Territory at Government level.

It is the desire of the Committee to assure the Commonwealth Government that the people of Papua and New Guinea will accept the principles of the Rule of Law ...

This extravagant deference may be the product of Watkins' pen as much as the committee's wishes. Buried in the humble language, however, was an explosive question — could the Territory become Australia's seventh state? Certainly not! If the department had little interest in devolution, it was positively alarmed by integration. They stage-managed the meeting with private talks with officials beforehand, and they reinforced Barnes with high-powered colleagues. The committee therefore met Treasurer William McMahon, Attorney-General Bill Snedden and Minister for Immigration Hubert Opperman.²

Through Marjorie Crocombe, Guise knew of the 'free association' agreement between New Zealand and Cook Islands. Cook Islanders enjoyed partial independence and they could live and work in New Zealand.³ Guise might have wanted a similar relationship with Australia, or even statehood, or he might have hoped only to clarify choices. In any event, Barnes and his colleagues scotched the idea. Such a breach of White Australia would — as J. D. B. Miller put it — prove political suicide for the party that proposed it.⁴ Neither Papuan Australian citizens nor New Guinean Australian Protected Persons could be treated as 'constituent members of the Australian community'.

Barnes's sanitised report (the talks 'took place in an atmosphere of cordiality and frankness') repeated the formula that the Territory had the right to determine its own direction and pace. While the people could opt for independence, any continuing association with Australia 'would require the agreement of the Australian Government of the day'. But ambiguity persisted. The meeting agreed that Papua New Guineans could be asked

whether they wanted constitutional development to take a course directed towards separation from Australia or ... towards evolution of an association or relationship with Australia which will endure after self-determination ...

And constitutional change was still shackled to economic development:

Until the Territory has moved further forward economically and the people are able through the spread of education to understand better the issues involved, the Government was willing to see the Territory continue in its present relationship...

The meeting consented also to the continued exclusion of Papua New Guineans from the mainland. Although the White Australia Policy had been relaxed and 400 Papua New Guineans were now studying in Australian schools, skilled Papua New Guineans should live and work in their own land.⁵

But even now Barnes dreamed of a seventh state, asserting that ‘possible further forms of association’ should not be ruled out. For his own reasons, Guise ran a similar line, ‘complaining that Federal Ministers had been vague about the possibility of Papua and New Guinea becoming a seventh State’.⁶ This was hot air. Barnes agreed to nothing except to increase the membership of the House, and to extend the powers of undersecretaries.

This reform was modest — but so were the committee’s ambitions, as is clear from the narrow questions they put to the people:⁷

- 1 Do the people consider that the present composition of the House meets the needs of the Territory ... ?
- 2 ... are there enough electorates or too many or too few?
- 3 Should there be more rigid qualifications for candidates, eg., ability to read and write English or Pidgin or Motu, specified standard of education, etc.?
- 4 Do you think it is necessary we should still have Special Electorates?
- 5 Should all positions in the House ... be open to all persons regardless of race ... ?
- 6 Should there be official members in the House ... ?
- 7 These are the important questions but have you any other views on other matters ... ?

Most of the people were content with this agenda, but there were other views. The boldest, over the signatures of 10 to 13 men, proposed a non-racial democracy exercising real autonomy. They sought immediate but limited responsible government, in which elected members of the House would form a Cabinet and exercise authority ‘in all domestic affairs’. A Public Service Board would replace the Public Service Commission, to foster local officers who lacked ‘rigid academic qualifications’. The Administrator would be replaced by an Australian High Commissioner and an indigenous deputy.

The department harrumphed that ‘the statement is “anti-colonial” in tone and appears to be the work of Cecil Abel’.⁸ In a sense they were right. The only people with the vision and drafting skills to compose such proposals were public servants and students. Cecil Abel, son of the missionary Charles Abel and inheritor of Kwato Mission, was teaching at the Administrative College where he met the (now-legendary) Bully Beef Club — a discussion group of trainees. Despite their national vision, they described themselves in regional terms:

Albert Maori Kiki	Gulf	Mike Somare	Wewak
Oala Rarua	Port Moresby	Elliott Elijah	Trobriands
Sinaka Goava	Hanuabada	Cecil Abel	Milne Bay
Kamona Waro	Hula	Karl Nombri	Chimbu
Ebia Olewale	Daru	Ilomo Batton	Sepik
Gerai Asiba	Daru	Reuben Taureka	Marshall Lagoon
Pen Anakapu	Suau		

The Political Scientist Ted Wolfers noted that Abel was the only Australian, Nombri the only Highlander, and only three (Somare, Batton and Nombri) were New Guineans.⁹ Hay was quick to point out that they were ‘in no sense leaders and represent their own views and possibly those of a section of the Tertiary student population’.¹⁰ The irascible Watkins was blunter: these ‘impertinent’ men showed ‘absolute disregard for what has been done in the Territory’.¹¹ But they were not alone in their disgraceful ingratitude: two former *kiaps* in the House — Voutas and Holloway — made similar submissions. Their ideas were also ignored.

The contrasts between the Gunther and the Guise Committees are instructive. Supported by the Minister, Gunther secured large changes without public support. Guise enjoyed access to all parties, but not their trust.¹² Johnson summed him up like this:

Guise was never prepared to put his [mixed-race] status at risk to grasp at the prize. Had he unequivocally put himself in the van of those demanding early self-government he would have been far in front of all possible rivals, but he equivocated and was passed by others who had less to lose by a radical stance.¹³

The planter and politician Tom Leahy admired Guise’s intelligence and his vision but he ‘was never really sure what road he would be on or who he should follow. He could never make up his mind whether he was native or white.’¹⁴ Guise’s ambivalence was a strength as he balanced the views of Australian officials, expatriates, worried Papua New Guineans and public service cadets. But balance sounded like equivocation, and ruled out a bold scenario such as that of the ‘13 angry men’ — or the two excited *ex-kiaps*.

Nor did the committee misrepresent the public. Hay’s analysis of public meetings describes the narrow range of debate. Attendance was good and interest evident. Few men spoke, and no women. Apart from a few young educated men, most speakers claimed to be formulating community views, and these were conservative.

Most expressed a wish for some further constitutional progress but within strict limits. There was no criticism at all of existing arrangements ... The young men ... had more radical views but there was nothing very extreme. There was not a good knowledge of the existing arrangements nor of the powers of the present House ...

The name Under-Secretary was not popular. The word Minister was commonly suggested though this did not imply Ministerial status in the Australian sense ...

There was widespread criticism of the failure of Under-Secretaries to combine successfully their representative duties with their Ministerial responsibilities ...

No-one knew much about the function of the Administrator’s Council ...¹⁵

Not only did the department manage the House: it managed its attempts to reform itself. Warwick Smith reminded Cabinet that Territory opinion should determine the

pace of change, and that the best test of opinion was the Select Committee itself and the House. Their credibility would suffer 'if the Government appeared to have influenced the Select Committee to the exclusion of the Territory people'.

On the other hand it would be advantageous if the recommendations made by the Select Committee were of such a nature that the Government could accept these without embarrassment. [If Cabinet were to articulate its views] it might be possible for some influence to be exercised towards an acceptable result, for example, by 'floating' suggestions through the official members of the Select Committee or by informing the Select Committee of the Government's attitude ...

To help Cabinet form a view, Warwick Smith drafted one:

- Although authority would be devolved, the Commonwealth would remain responsible and 'the Minister would retain the right to direct policy or to question any action'.
- Authority would *not* be devolved in relation to 'reserved' subjects, including internal security, external affairs, defence, constitutional advance, law and information.
- Constitutional change must be balanced by the need to preserve standards of administration.
- In view of the Territory's extreme economic dependence, 'the Commonwealth must determine the strategy of the Budget'.

Within those parameters, 'quasi-ministers' might exercise powers 'within defined limits for certain selected departments dealing with matters of immediate electoral concern such as Education, Health and Works'. There was a good case for abolishing the racial qualification for the 10 special electorates and relying instead on an educational qualification. There was also a case for enlarging the membership of the House and of the Administrator's Council.¹⁶

To keep the Select Committee on the rails, Warwick Smith required reports from official members, to an extent that Guise could not have guessed. This enabled him, for example, to defeat a plausible proposal that the House take control of revenue raised locally. By describing the effects (in his view, dire) of two budgets and divided authority, he repelled the reformists.¹⁷ He could readily accept other ideas arising from community meetings: doubling the number of elected members, not requiring formal education in candidates, and scrapping the racial criterion for special electorates. So the Guise Committee achieved only the little advances scripted for it.

On these bases, the second House of Assembly was elected in 1968 and declined to exercise even the powers delegated to it. The House had a majority of elected members and even the Executive Council was dominated — numerically — by seven elected members sitting with the Administrator and three officials.¹⁸ Either body could therefore have used its numbers to resist or deflect Australian policy, but no such rebellion occurred because most members were content to be appendices to the Administration. They had no mandate — nor had they asked for one — from an uninterested electorate. Instead, they had a mandate from Canberra.

The Second House of Assembly

The House was full of Papua New Guineans, but it was still an Australian legislature. It accepted, for example, that members should wear suits, so an enterprising outfitter imported a hundred. Many were too long in the sleeve and leg for owners who — especially after drinks — had trouble navigating. They accepted other precedents with the same docility. As before, members began with a week's seminar, when Guise surprised them by choosing to be Speaker. Newly elected Tom Leahy wondered how a Cabinet would operate. He found out in his role as interpreter for the Secretary to the Australian Cabinet, Sir John Bunting, who flew in to explain. 'By the time he finished we were in no doubt as to what a Cabinet was.' However, 'in that first Cabinet I don't think there was an English speaker'.¹⁹

Twenty-one of 54 members of the House were re-elected, and again some were ex-kiaps. Mission links were still valuable: 29 elected members were Catholic, 11 Anglican and six Lutheran, besides several other Protestants. Twenty-six had never been to school, but all now claimed to speak Tok Pisin, if not English. Most spoke only for their constituencies: even the Mataungan radical Oscar Tammur, the most fluent and voluble speaker in English and Tok Pisin, focused on the turbulent affairs of the Gazelle peninsula. A few expatriates had wider interests: the retired missionary Percy Chatterton made himself a human rights ombudsman.²⁰

Party attachments fluctuated, but several Members were affiliated with the Papua And New Guinea Union (Pangu) which favoured early self-government. Pangu formed in June 1967 when the '13 angry men' won support from the radical ex-*kiaps* Holloway and Voutas and seven other members of the First House — Lapun, Lus, Brokam, James Meanggarum, Paliau Maloat, Wegra Kenu and Siwi Kurondo. Pangu's leader was 32-year-old Michael Somare, a generation younger than Guise and born at the opposite end of the Territory, in the Sepik District. Guise had been a policeman, Somare was the son of a policeman, and he won support from public servants, students and academics. But he had a rough ride in the House, where a majority

was determined to put the Pangu Pati firmly in its place by rejecting that party's initiatives irrespective of their merit. It seemed too, that [many] white elected members ... were endeavouring to orchestrate their black colleagues to crush political initiatives that might accelerate any movement towards self-government.²¹

Downs had been a trenchant debater in the First House, but he did not recontest. A year later he complained to Hay that the Administration seemed to oppose every Pangu proposal. Hay denied this, but he conceded that several European members did oppose every Pangu proposal, and:

Perhaps some of this rubbed off on to some Official Members. It was not, however, the Administration's policy ... I added that Pangu complicated the situation by reason of the fact that they regarded themselves as the opposition and behaved as such.²²

Somare used his first speech as leader to position Pangu as a 'loyal opposition', but the exchange between Downs and Hay captures the increasing ill-temper of proceedings. In 1971, for instance, when *kiap* Jack Emanuel was murdered in East New Britain, several members denounced the Mataungans and hurled abuse at Tammur. And Pangu could give as good as it got. Somare once dismissed Tei Abal as a stooge, and dredged up the settlers' term of abuse, 'rock-ape'.²³

In the second House, the preponderance of elected members was even greater than before; but they were no more likely than the first to assert themselves. The Select Committee wanted undersecretaries to be called ministers. The department compromised with 'Ministerial Members', but they were even more docile than the old undersecretaries. To get things going, five bills passed through all stages in half an hour.²⁴

White members formed an Independent Group, comprising Lussick, Leahy, Buchanan, Watts, Neville, Fielding and Middleton, and drew in Abal and Giregire. They could often muster 50 votes and they helped (with Pangu) to polarise the House. Independent in name, they supported the Administration. The official members in the first House were 'always nervous' about the passage of the budget. To Johnson's relief:

In the second House we could always count on majority support, for it was now Ministerial Members who presented their Departments' estimates and defended their deficiencies.²⁵

In 1969, Voutas initiated a Select Committee on Parliamentary Procedures, which tabled 80 proposals to clarify members' confusion. Interpretation remained a problem, relieved partly by Highland *kiaps* appointed for the purpose, and by more officials speaking Tok Pisin. The most effective outcome of the Voutas Committee was standing committees, in which members could study bills before they came into the House. Still, most members floundered in Westminster traditions in parliamentary papers, procedures and speeches.

There were some heated exchanges. A Public Order Bill, provoked by Prime Minister Gorton's visit to Rabaul (see below), proposed some emergency powers. Academics protested but the House enacted the bill over the protests of Chatterton, Somare and Tammur. An issue that galvanised public servants was the Public Service Commission's rash attempt to rename the Administrative College. When Pangu moved to restore the old name, two ministerial members crossed the floor and five abstained, so Pangu's motion was carried.

More typical of the House, in 1969 a committee looked into education. ToLiman, as Ministerial Member for Education, endorsed its advice to merge mission and government schools into a national system. This was a popular proposal, yet Donatus Mola from North Bougainville denounced it as 'a Communist type policy', since 'the Missions are teaching only for spiritual needs while the Administration teaches only for material needs'. Mercifully, his objection was ignored, and six months later the legislation came to the House. When Mola's Bougainville colleague Lapun moved to protect the right of missions to maintain their own fees, ToLiman told him that the Catholic representative

in Port Moresby had helped draft the legislation. It was, said Johnson, ‘ToLimán’s finest hour’. Perhaps it was: but it was brief. It is also the only clear case of a ministerial member shaping policy. As a school for parliamentary procedures, the House was inept. As a school for the government of an independent country, it was grotesque.

Nation-Building and the Sceptics

The best nation-building was done in real schools at a time of great expansion. Sir Alkan Tololo, the first national Director of Education, recalled that ‘we helped to organise the competition to have a flag and surprisingly it was one of the girls from a school in the Gulf Province who designed our flag’. Equally important was the choice of English as the medium of instruction. ‘We opted for English, a uniting factor: that is why we brought in the English-speaking teachers from Australia. Let’s unite the country.’²⁶

As Speaker at the opening of the House, Guise appealed for national unity; and the Governor-General asserted that ‘national unity is essential’. (The prospects were bleak: the next weekend a riot followed a rugby league match between Papua and New Guinea.) Guise wanted the House to adopt a name, a flag and an anthem. Oddly, the Department chose ‘to dissuade this premature effort to short-circuit the orderly process of decolonisation’:

There is a danger ... if the adoption of common symbols is used by some people to force the pace of political development beyond what the majority of people wish to see it.²⁷

But most resistance to national unity came from within.

The House was usually a spectator in separatist conflicts because so many members were local activists, ambivalent about national unity. One of the most critical debates was to endorse a management regime for the Panguna copper mine in Bougainville.²⁸ This would be an immense open-cut, larger than any in Australia. It would be hugely expensive, and investors wanted security, so Panguna needed specific legislation as well as the basic law discussed in Chapter 3. The lead company was Conzinc Riotinto Australia (CRA), the Australian branch of the London-based giant, Rio Tinto. The agreement had been negotiated between the department and the company and, although resisted by landowners, it was vital that the House not amend it. The Administration’s problem was to maximise benefits for the whole Territory, whereas members of the House focused on the interests of their immediate constituents. Before the bill came to the House, therefore, Hay discussed it with his executive councillors, who ‘showed great interest in the means of making the Agreement well known to other Members of the House’.²⁹

The second-reading speech spelt out the benefits for the Territory. On benefits for Bougainville it was vague: after Lapun’s amendment to the mining law, landowners would receive 5 per cent of royalties — but this meant only 5 per cent of 1.25 per cent of the value of the ore. More stress was placed on education, health, services and jobs. In reality, most skilled and semi-skilled work would be done by expatriates, and the

company would import most of its supplies. Only slowly did members see what landowners grasped at once: the laws claimed the ores for the Crown. In gauging landowners' views, the officials ignored their elected representatives. The opinions of the *kiaps* and CRA's research persuaded Hay that the people would acquiesce, and the House bowed to the seemingly inevitable: the Mining (Bougainville Copper Agreement) Ordinance 1967 became law on November 30. *Kiaps* could now tell landowners that the deal had the approval of the people, through their elected assembly.

That was obtuse. Papua New Guinea was a remote abstraction and Bougainvilleans did not accept that the House represented them.³⁰ Secession began to be debated and Lapun, the meat in this terrible sandwich, read this resolution to the June 1969 session:

We, the Nasioi and Rorovana people in general have been wronged by the Australian Administration's desire to force its will upon we people in the matter of resuming native held lands and the Arawa plantation ... at no time has the Government given us cause to have confidence in it or caused us to trust it.

Lapun implored the officials: 'Do not take the people's rights away. Do not attack them when they freely express their political views on secession.' Joseph Lue (Bougainville regional) floated the popular but surprising view that self-government was divisible: 'These groups on the Gazelle Peninsula and in Bougainville want something now ... Give them self-government tomorrow. All others shall receive self-government as they are ready.'³¹

More important than the debates in the House were events on the ground, when Rorovana and Arawa villagers organised passive resistance to surveyors, and provided great copy for Australian reporters. James Griffin recalled:

[The *Sydney Sun*] carried on the front page a picture of a helmeted policeman with a truncheon lifting aside a bare-breasted woman ... The *Sydney Daily Mirror* ... referred to 'Bloody Thugs' and 'Australia's Bullies in New Guinea', and asked, 'Where the hell are we heading?' There was also a companion photograph of riot squad police wearing gas masks, carrying batons and looking very intimidating.³²

The ABC reported that the story 'hit the Australian Press like a baton charge'.³³ Five morning papers led with it, and it made the front page of four others (but not the Hobart *Mercury*, more excited by a 'Rise in Devil Population in Tasmania'). The *Canberra Times* described the events as a disaster. When Barnes declared that force would be used to maintain law and order, the Melbourne *Age* (August 7, 1969) sniped:

If Mr Barnes had more tact, understanding and skill, The Age might suggest that he travel to the island and attempt to settle the dispute in talks with the Bougainvilleans. But his past performances suggest that he would be better advised to stay in Canberra.

Most severe was the *Australian*. On the morning of the first protest, it grieved: 'The ineptitude of the Administration ... is a matter of the deepest concern.' Six days later, it complained that: 'Even now, incredibly, the implications of what is happening on Bougainville do not seem to have seeped through to the Australian Government.'

By comparison, public protests were lame. In Canberra, Leo Hannett addressed a meeting of 90 people, including Jim Davidson, the Professor of Pacific History at the ANU. Next day, 30 ANU students demonstrated. In Brisbane, the Revolutionary Socialist Students Alliance printed a fiery pamphlet by the Trobriand Island poet John Kasaipwalova,³⁴ but it was the media that disturbed the Minister. The Administrator denounced an ABC television program as 'a clever piece of propaganda aimed at undermining the Australian public's confidence in the Government and its Papua New Guinea policy'.³⁵ The Government was proceeding to acquire land that the landowners refused to yield, but they had lost control of the public relations agenda. As the head of the *kiaps*, Tom Ellis feared that enemies were massing under Paul Lapun, not to halt the mining operation but to attack the Administration and gain more compensation. 'There is only one prime target being attacked in Bougainville at the present moment by anyone and this is the Administration.'³⁶ And when the department reviewed its options, it recognised that a House of Assembly Committee would be counterproductive and might provoke secession.³⁷

Bypassing the House, Lapun flew to Australia with another local leader, Raphael Bele, ostensibly to seek High Court intervention.³⁸ Papua New Guineans had always been escorted (Chapter 1), but these men travelled alone. In Melbourne, they met Sir Maurice Mawby of the mining company. CRA could count the costs of delay and the benefits of compromise, so they soon found common ground. When Lapun and Bele met Barnes and Prime Minister Gorton, they could offer an alternative to Barnes's strategy, and one that was acceptable to CRA. Gorton agreed at once and Barnes had to announce his own backdown: the Government would welcome negotiations with the people, CRA and the local company, Bougainville Copper Limited (BCL), would negotiate directly with landowners, and discussion could range widely. Gorton insisted that CRA not only negotiate but be *seen* to do so.³⁹ So agreement was reached *despite* the House. Highlanders thought the Administration was 'pussyfooting' around protestors. Pangu's Voutas and Somare wanted the mine as revenue for the nation. From 1967 until production began in 1972, therefore, the House was split.

During his campaign to reconcile people to this development, Hay preached the virtues and benefits of unity. As the academic Robert Parker put it,

Ten Bougainville leaders were conducted to other parts of the Territory to see the benefits of economic development while five indigenous ministerial office holders were sent to Bougainville to put the Administration's case.

Incensed by Parker's draft entry for *Australia in World Affairs* — 'polemic journalism rather than history' — Hay persuaded the editor to change the last words to:

And five indigenous members of the AEC [Australian Executive Council] went to Bougainville at the Council's request to explain Administration policy.⁴⁰

This was manipulation. It was also an under-count: seven (Lue, Tore Lokoloko, Abal, Paul Langro, Oala Oala-Rarua, Somare and Voutas) had visited Bougainville.

In hindsight, Hay had two regrets. One was the development of Panguna.⁴¹ The other was his acceptance of a disputed election in Rabaul. The tension that disrupted local government grew out of land, the most emotive issue anywhere in the Pacific. Mainly through alienation in the German era, much of the best land in the Gazelle had been lost to the Tolai.⁴² In the 1920s, Australians began to convert land in German ownership into Torrens title, which is indefeasible. Native claims could be heard, but in that high-colonial era they were probably discounted. Then the land register was lost during the Japanese occupation, so fresh investigations began in 1951. Nick O'Neill observed the attempts of Tolai to establish claims, beginning with Varzin Plantation. When Tedep and others claimed 'native customary rights' over the land, the Commissioner of Titles rebuffed them and ordered the title to be placed on the new register. Tedep appealed to the Territory Supreme Court, which upheld his claim. So far so good, but the matter was taken to the High Court of Australia, which held that the loss of the register did not destroy existing title. Secondary evidence would be enough to establish that registration had probably taken place. 'There could be no enquiry into whether or not the land was properly obtained from its traditional owners in the first place.' These arguments offended the Tolai, and yet the traditional owners of Japlik and Vunapaladig land lost a similar claim:

They claimed that they had a right to be on the land because from time immemorial they owned the land which had never been used by others. The Supreme Court decided that because there was a restored title to the land, no claim of right could be made to the land contrary to that title.⁴³

Against this background, many Tolai mistrusted the 1969 proposal to replace their Local Government Council with a Multiracial Council for Rabaul town. Many saw this as a device to allow Chinese and Australians undue influence. Land and race issues were a toxic brew, and the Mataungan Association organised a boycott of the council election. So popular was the boycott that fewer than one in five voted, but the officials refused to yield. When Hay and other dignitaries attended the opening of the council, a Mataungan protest drowned out proceedings.

They were now locked into an impasse. To maintain services, the council had to collect taxes, which many refused to pay. To prosecute them would be inflammatory. To ignore them would reward subversion. Seeking a resolution, DC Jack Emanuel would 'go out for whole nights, sitting in the villages, listening and talking'. So did *kiap* Ross Allen.⁴⁴ These struggles dragged on until Emanuel was murdered and the police retaliated violently.

The House was again irrelevant because it could not form a view, and the officials were divided. The hawks were led by Tom Ellis. Hay recalls that

Ellis, with all his faults, was an expert in how to arrest people — that is what he loved doing better than anything else — and in the kind of field work that comes naturally to the [Department of District Affairs] staff.

Ellis treated the Mataungans as ‘the enemy’. Hay did try to resolve issues: he and Barnes (with Kim Beazley of the Labor Party) enlisted Moral Rearmament as peacemakers. On police matters though, Hay trusted Ellis more than Ray Whitrod, the progressive Chief of Police. Ellis was not alone: Toliman (a non-Mataungan Tolai), Pangu members and the AEC were all gung-ho for firm action. So, it seemed, were other Local Government Councils. Nor was the department flexible. When Hay tried to buy two plantations to redistribute, Warwick Smith insisted that this be done (at glacial speed) as a commercial deal by the Development Bank.

Weeks of tension followed until September 1, when leading Mataungans Damien Kereku and Melchior Tomot walked into the council offices, stole the keys and made threats. Hauled before the magistrate, they were well represented by Ikenna Nwokolo, the first African at the Territory Bar. The magistrate found the accused guilty but, to the dismay of the prosecution, imposed no penalty and berated the Administration! That judgment led to a Commission of Inquiry into the best form of government for the Gazelle. Hay welcomed the commission and named the anthropologist Scarlett Epstein as a consultant to it. But his hope of resolution was dashed when Barnes appointed as commissioner a Queensland mate, Peter Connolly QC, who rejected conciliation and applauded the Administration’s hard line. This fanned the flames. In sporadic outbursts of temper, council members were assaulted — and so was *kiaf* Fenton, when Tomot swung a hay-maker at Hay. But direct action was not a Mataungan monopoly: Ellis began (in Hay’s delicate phrase) ‘a period of intensive and active patrolling in which — well, you can put it in various ways — the rule of law was restored’.

The victims of ‘intensive and active patrolling’ won little sympathy in the House. In 1970 Tammur moved that Australia grant self-government by the end of 1972, with the usual proviso that ‘those parts of the Territory which do not wish to have self-government may continue under the present system’. If the House had known that Gorton also wanted self-government, they might have accepted Tammur’s motion, but Gorton’s shift was still a secret, so the motion failed by 14 to 51. That lopsided vote, thought Johnson, was because Tolai

were the most affluent of Papua New Guineans, had the best education facilities and occupied many senior posts in the Administration. Members thought that they had little to complain about.

These grievances festered. At the end of 1971, the head of the Territories Department’s Government and Law Division concluded that the main security problem was ‘how to

deal with the Gazelle'. Land disputes would intensify and litigation would usually fail because:

[traditional owners] will only succeed now where there is some defect in title and it will be purely coincidental if this coincides with some legitimate claim to ownership according to their customs.

Three hundred disputes were outstanding. Tolai would occupy the land as squatters and 'if the law is to be enforced action should be taken to remove the squatters'. There was no chance of conciliation.⁴⁵

As these crises deepened, the House grew perverse. Pangu nationalists found common ground with anti-colonial separatists, while the United Party conservatives favoured national unity. But even the United Party had doubts. As Abal put it, 'Unity depends on some equalisation of standards of education, economic and social development.' When Brere Awol introduced a motherhood motion in favour of national unity, Somare defended the separatists, and Lapun asked:

How are we going to promote unity in this country when certain areas are getting all the benefits while others are being neglected? It seems to me that the neglect of the people of the New Guinea islands has been the cause of their desire to secede ... I believe that the best solution would be to ask Canberra for a referendum.

Papua was the third threat to unity, again invoking uneven funding. Bert Counsel, an Australian married to a Papuan, was the leading advocate for separation:

A fat lot of use it is for a Papuan member to stay in the House. All he is ever asked to do is to approve development expenditure for New Guinea. [And] there is no way in the world that we in Papua will ever be happy at the prospect of being told what to do by a bunch of Highlanders.

To quash this sentiment, Johnson authorised a statement in the House that it was Australian policy to move Papua New Guinea to self-government 'as a united country'. Any difference in legal status between New Guinea and Papua 'has been of little consequence since the approval by the United Nations of the administrative union in 1947'. A motion was proposed by Pangial and carried 30 to 25, seeking a committee to test Papuan wishes. The majority was an unholy alliance of all Papuan members, Pangu and Julius Chan's new People's Progress Party (PPP). Although the motion was carried, it had little popular support. When the Territories Minister invited Papuan ministerial members to Canberra, they 'went in hope and returned in disappointment' with nothing more than the promise of a study.

When the second House rose, Johnson claimed much too much merit for its members:

We have grown to think of Papua New Guinea as one country ... This has been a national parliament and it has been the genesis of national feeling.

In 1964 the House had very considerable powers but the people of Papua New Guinea did not think of government as something belonging to them. The Government is now free to grow from the will of the people ...⁴⁶

On the other hand, members had not helped to pacify Bougainville, they had shown no sympathy for the Mataungans and they divided over relations between New Guinea, Papua and Australia. To blame the members is easy, but they did not betray the values of their constituents. Tested in the 1972 election, they emerged quite well. Most expatriates lost their seats, but Neville, Middleton, Ward and Chan were returned, while Chatterton and Voutas retired. Of 63 indigenous members, 38 were re-elected.

The Second House had been ineffectual, but much responsibility for this sad condition must lie with the Territories Department, which insisted on Westminster forms, determined the House's structure, limited its functions and manipulated its will.

Appendix: Members of the Second House of Assembly (First Session)

Open

John Guise*	Alotau	Discreetly Pangu
Nauwi Sauinambi	Ambunti-Yangoru	
Peter Johnson	Angoram	
Meanggarum James*	Bogia	Pangu
Karigi Bonggere	Chimbu	
Uauwi Wauwe Moses*	Chuave	
Sinake Giregire*	Daulo	Ministerial Member, Posts & Telegraphs
Kokomo Ulia	Dreikikir	
Norman Evenett	Esa'ala	Died, replaced by Timothy Ward
Meck Singilong	Finschhafen	Assistant Ministerial Member, Rural Development
Matthias ToLiman*	Gazelle	Ministerial Member, Education
Louis Sebu Mona	Goilala	
Sabumei Kofikai	Goroka	
Ninkama Bomai	Gumine	
Pena Ou	Hagen	
Boino Azanifa	Henganofi	
Toua Kapena	Hiri	Ministerial Member, Labour
Michael Kaniniba	Huon Gulf	Pangu
Turi Wari	Ialibu	
Paulus Arek	Ijivitari	
Kaura Duba	Jimi	Died, replaced by Thomas Kavali, NG National
Rauke Gam	Kabwum	
Yano Belo	Kagua	
Noel Casey	Kainantu	
Anani Maino	Kaindi	
Koitagá Mano*	Kandep-Tambul	
Koriam Michael Urekit*	Kandrian-Pomio	
Daniel Bokap	Kavieng	
Tore Lokoloko	Kerema	Ministerial Member, Public Health
Siwi Kurondo*	Kerowagi	Assistant Ministerial Member, Forests, NG National
Tom Koraea	Kikori	
Oscar Tammur	Kokopo	
Taimya Kambipi	Kompiani-Baiyer	
Andrew Wabiria	Koroba	Assistant Ministerial Member, Surveys & Mines
Lepani Watson*	Kula	Assistant Ministerial Member, Cooperatives
Poio Iuri*	Lagaip	
Pupune Aruno	Lufa	
Angmai Bilas	Mabusu	Ministerial Member, Trade & Industry
Paliau Maloat*	Manus	Pangu
Pita Lus*	Maprik	Pangu
Thomas Leahy	Markham	
Momei Pangjal*	Mendi	
James McKinnon	Middle Ramu	
Percy Chatterton*	Moresby	
Mek Nugintz	Mul-Dei	
Mangobing Kakun	Munya	Pangu
Julius Chan	Namatanaí	
Patik Nimanbor	Nawae	
Tegi Ebei'al	Nipa	

Donatus Mola	North Bougainville	Additional Asst. Ministerial Member, DIES
Warren Dutton	North Fly	
Muriso Warebu*	Okapa	
Epineri Titimur	Rabaul	
John Poe	Rai Coast	
Nathaniel Uroe	Rigo-Abau	
Katigame Endekan	Sobe	
Paul Lapun*	South Bougainville	Pangu
Ebia Olewale	South Fly	Pangu
John Middleton	Sumkar	
John Maneke	Talasea	
Matiabe Yuwi	Tari	
Wesani Iwoksim	Upper Sepik	
Tei Abal*	Wabag	Ministerial Member, Agriculture, Stock & Fish
Kaibelt Diria*	Wahgi	Assistant Ministerial Member, Local Government
Yakob Talis	Wapei-Nuku	
Leine Iangalo*	Wapenamanda	
Brere Awol	West Sepik Coastal	
Beibi Yambanda	Wewak	

Regional

Joseph Lue	Bougainville	Assistant Ministerial Member, Technical Education
Oala Oala-Rarua	Central	Pangu, Asst. Ministerial Member, Treasury
Eric Pyne	Chimbu	Died, replaced by John Nilles
Dennis Buchanan	Eastern Highlands	
Oriel Irving Ashton*	East and West New Britain	Ministerial Member, Public Works
Michael Somare	East Sepik	Pangu
Jason Garrett	Madang	
Walter Lussick	Manus and New Ireland	
Cecil Abel	Milne Bay	Pangu
Tony Voutas*	Morobe	Pangu
William Fielding	Northern	
Ron Neville*	Southern Highlands	
Virgil Counsel	Western and Gulf	
John Watts	Western Highlands	
Paul Langro	West Sepik	Assistant Ministerial Member, DIES

* members of first House of Assembly

Official members

Frank Henderson	– Asst. Administrator (Economics) who died and was replaced by James Ritchie, who resigned and was replaced by Harry Ritchie
Leslie Johnson	– Asst. Administrator (Services) who became Administrator and was not replaced.
W. W. Watkins	– Law, who retired and was replaced by Lindsay Curtis, who resigned and was replaced by Bill Kearney
A. P. J. Newman	– Treasurer
Tom Ellis	– Director, District Administration
Donald Grove	– Lands, Surveys and Mines
Charles Littler	– Inspector, District Administration
Stanley Foley	– DC Chimbu
Ronald Galloway	– DC Port Moresby
Herbert Seale	– DC Lae, who resigned and was not replaced

Footnotes

1. A 452/1 66/2960. Draft questionnaire in Watkins to Cleland, March 11, 1966, enclosed in Cleland to Department, March 11, 1966.
2. *Ibid.*, Department to Administrator, telex, April 14, 1966.
3. Ron Crocombe, personal communication, December 2003.
4. J. D. B. Miller, 'Australia's New Guinea Problem', seminar paper, International Relations, ANU, reprinted in *Journal of Pacific History*, 2005.
5. A 452/1 66/2960, text of Barnes's statement on April 21, 1966.
6. Johnson, 'Westminster in Port Moresby', quoting ABC radio broadcast, April 25, 1966.
7. 66/2960, Administrator to Department, May 20, 1966.
8. *Ibid.*, enclosed in Administrator to Department, August 13, 1966.
9. Edward P. Wolfers, 'January-April 1967', in Moore and Kooyman, *A Papua New Guinea Political Chronicle 1967-1991*.
10. 66/2960, Administrator to Department, March 23, 1967.
11. Wolfers, 'January-April 1967', p. 11.
12. 66/2960, Administrator to Department, enclosing Assistant Administrator to Administrator, March 31, 1967.
13. Johnson, 'Westminster in Port Moresby', p. 8.
14. Tom Leahy, *Markham Tom: Memoirs of an Australian Pioneer in Papua New Guinea*, Crawford House, Adelaide, 2002, p. 152
15. 66/2960, Administrator to Secretary, February 23, 1967.
16. A 452/1 66/943, Draft of Cabinet Submission 1194 of January 27, 1966.
17. A 452/1 66/2960, notes and correspondence with Cleland, Dick and Watkins.
18. *Ibid.*, folio 271, and Secretary to Administrator, July 9, 1966. The officials were the Administrator, two assistants and the Director of District Administration. Members from the House were Nicholas Brokam, Ian Downs, John Guise, John Stuntz, Robert Tabua, Matthias ToLimán and Zure Zurenuoc.
19. Leahy, *Markham Tom*, pp. 155-6.
20. Percy Chatterton, *Day that I have Loved*, Sydney, 1974.
21. Johnson, 'Westminster in Port Moresby'.
22. 68/5563, Part II, Administrator to Department, June 2, 1969.
23. David Hegarty, 'September–December 1971', in Moore and Kooyman, *Papua New Guinea Political Chronicle 1967–1991*.
24. Mark Lynch, 'Communication and Cargo'.
25. Johnson, 'Westminster in Port Moresby': the source of the quote and of the following paragraphs.
26. Sir Alkan Tololo in 'Hindsight'.
27. Johnson, 'Westminster in Port Moresby', quoting a message on file 69/3605, undated.
28. Denoon, *Getting Under the Skin*
29. 67/1104, Part 2, Administrator to Department, May 15, 1967.
30. Hay, interview, National Library of Australia.
31. Johnson, 'Westminster in Port Moresby'.
32. Jim Griffin, 'Bougainville', *Australia's Neighbours*, January–February 1970.
33. Text in 68/5448.
34. 69/3671, Hannett's address, Canberra, August 5, demonstrations: see also 70/1623.
35. 68/5448, Minutes of October 22, 23, 30 and 31; Department to ABC, October 28; Administrator to Department, January 16, 1969; and (undated) reply.
36. 69/4123, Ellis's notes for the Administrator, August 9, 1969.
37. 69/3687, minute of August 14, 1969.
38. *Post Courier*, August 11, 1969.
39. 69/3687, 'Notes for Prime Minister and Minister ...', August 20, 1969; 69/4453, record of discussions, 2pm, Thursday August 21, 1969; and 69/4453, FAS note for file, August 22, 1969, and appendices.
40. *Ibid.*
41. *Ibid.*, and Greenwell's comments in 'Hindsight'.

42. Nick O'Neill, in 'Hindsight'.
43. Administration of TPNG v Blasius Tirupia [197-72] PNGLR 229. See also William Kaputin, 'Indefeasibility and Justice', in Peter Sack, *Problem of Choice — Land in Papua New Guinea's future*, ANU Press, 1974, pp. 159–60.
44. Trevor Shearston's vivid historical novel, *Straight Young Back*, brings these skirmishes to life.
45. A452 T29, 1971/3088, John Greenwell's minute, December 7, 1971, on an interdepartmental committee.
46. Johnson, 'Westminster in Port Moresby'.