

2. Historical background to the conflict

Papua New Guinea is a nation of six million people that has regional geopolitical significance, sharing a long border with Indonesia. Bougainville is a large island (surrounded by smaller islands, the largest of which is Buka separated by a narrow strait from Bougainville Island) north-east of the island of New Guinea and north-west of the Solomon Islands. Ferocious fighting between Japanese and Australian and US forces took place in Bougainville during World War II. This resulted in a decline of the indigenous population of perhaps 25 per cent, the flight of Europeans and Chinese from Bougainville and cost the lives of 42 000 foreign soldiers (Nelson 2005:194–6). Papua New Guinea gained independence from its Australian colonial masters in 1975. In the years before independence, there had been agitation for Bougainville not to become part of Papua New Guinea. Most people of Bougainville saw themselves (with the blackest skin in the Pacific) connected racially, culturally and by historical trading relationships much more with the Solomon Islands than with Papua New Guinea. Over time, an independent nation of Bougainville, rather than integration with the Solomon Islands, became a rallying cause. A civil war that for many was aimed at independence broke out in 1988, continuing to 1997. After years of negotiations, in 2005 an Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG) was established within Papua New Guinea.

International support for Bougainville's independence was almost non-existent. The general reaction was that Papua New Guinea was struggling to be viable as a nation, so what chance would an island of 160 000 people (just before the war) have? Today the population is probably more than 200 000. Bougainvilleans themselves looked around and saw a Pacific of island micro-states separated from other island states by vast expanses of ocean. Like most of them, Bougainville was diverse, with Polynesian enclaves as well as the dominant Melanesian population. Sixteen Austronesian and nine non-Austronesian (Papuan) languages are spoken on Bougainville (Tryon 2005).

Early history

We know humans have occupied Bougainville for more than 29 000 years (Spriggs 2005), but we know little about the dates of their arrival and from where they travelled. There were extensive trading relationships with islands

to the north and south. The southern trade with what are now the Solomon Islands imported shell money (which was ceremonially central in Bougainville), lime and fish in exchange for pigs, vegetables, pottery and decorated weapons (Oliver 1973:20).

Europeans first paid attention to the large island when two French ships commanded by Louis de Bougainville anchored there in 1768. Between 1820 and 1860, British, French and American whaling vessels became more frequent visitors and took on some Bougainvillean crew. After 1870, large numbers of Bougainvilleans were forced or volunteered to work as indentured labourers on plantations in Queensland, Fiji, Samoa and New Britain (Oliver 1973:23). In 1902, the Catholic Society of Mary (the Marists) established a mission on Bougainville. From the 1880s, the territories later to form Papua New Guinea were administered by Britain (then from 1906, Australia) and Germany. The German Colonial Administration in Rabaul annexed Bougainville in 1884 and opened a post at Kieta in 1905. Germany and Britain agreed to split the Solomon Islands, with the most northerly islands (mainly Bougainville Island) going to Germany. A few European planters and traders began to settle on the coast about the turn of the twentieth century. Before 1905, the most commercially important German copra plantation firm, the Neuguinea-Kompagnie, provided the nearest thing to an administration in Bougainville. German rule ended in 1914 when an Australian expeditionary force arrived. After World War I, the League of Nations granted Australia a mandate to govern the German territory in New Guinea, including Bougainville, and after World War II the entire territory became part of the United Nations' international trusteeship system, administered by Australia until independence in 1975.

The Europeans found societies that lived well off the land, growing taro,¹ green vegetables, tropical fruits, coconut, breadfruit, almonds and sago, fishing and eating occasional meat from pigs and possum. Large villages of hundreds of people were common on the coast. Most Bougainvilleans, however, lived in multi-household hamlets of a grandmother's family, her daughters' families and her granddaughters' families. Each household comprised a husband and a wife or wives and their children. Marriage did not occur within a matrilineage, so men would move to live in another matrilineal hamlet on marriage. Cultural exceptions are Buin, Siwai, Nissan Island and the outlying Polynesian Islands, which are patrilineal (Saovana-Spriggs 2007:8). Among the matrilineal Nasioi, marriages do occur within the same clan (Ogan 1972:14). While cultural differences across Bougainville are considerable, across the whole island similar clans recur, often with the same totem and origin myth of the clan.² People can therefore travel to unfamiliar parts of the island and experience some sense of

1 Shifting to sweet potato after World War II.

2 In some places, clans are divided into two exogamous moieties.

spiritual and ritual unity with others from their clan who live there. I can ask for and receive help from people of my clan whom I have never met and who do not speak my language. The Catholic Church, and to a lesser extent smaller Protestant churches, has become another unifying spiritual influence. A final integrative force spread by the Catholic education system, but initiated by the indentured labour system for plantation production by workers from different language groups, was the gradual spread of Tok Pisin (Pidgin), which is now the *lingua franca*.

Groups of residential hamlets formed fighting units of variable composition depending on male leadership contingencies. In some regions (Buin, Buka, some of North Bougainville), leadership is hereditary, but mostly it is based on feats of leadership such as giving feasts for large aggregations of people. Warfare seems to have been common across Bougainville in pre-European times (Oliver 1973:72)—though see Oliver's (1955:412–18) own doubts based on interviews with older men on how many battles they had in fact experienced. In Buka and the far north of Bougainville, victors engaged in cannibalism, while headhunting was common in the south. Warfare was, however, regulated by sophisticated peacemaking practices, such that while warfare was frequent, loss of life was almost always modest. One reason why there is so much to learn from peacebuilding in Bougainville is that Bougainvilleans have such vast cultural experience as brokers of war and brokers of peace. The Catholic Church led a process of religiously justified pacification that was effective in ending intertribal warfare and wiping out cannibalism and headhunting. When anthropology student John Braithwaite spoke to old men who had eaten human flesh in Bougainville in 1969, they spoke with a certain shame of practices that predated their enlightenment by the word of God. Pacification also depended on the German and then Australian colonial authorities demonstrating superior firepower. This was accomplished by very small numbers of colonial police training and arming local 'police boys'. It is impossible to say how much of the credit for pacification rests with these guns or with the sermons of the missionaries or with deaths from European diseases. But as has been conjectured with Dutch pacification in Eastern Indonesia, Howley (2002:22) notes that pacification occurred so quickly and easily in Bougainville that both the Bible and the gun could have been little more than excuses for indigenous peacemakers to grasp a permanent peace with their neighbours that they had long wanted.

Pacification also proceeded through indirect rule by coopting big-men—respected leaders renowned for giving large feasts—and appointing them as *luluai* (the word for chief in one New Britain language). These men were given a badge, hat and silver-headed stick and could retain 10 per cent of the colonial taxes they collected. The essentials of the *luluai* (renamed *kukera* or hatmen

after their police hats) system were retained under Australian colonialism. For much of Australian colonial history in Bougainville, the province was ruled indirectly by just four very junior subdistrict *kiaps*.

As talk of independence for Papua New Guinea began to get serious in the 1960s, there were leaders in Bougainville who wanted to go it alone, or with the Solomon Islands. Great impetus was given to this movement by the discovery of mineral wealth, which secessionists believed might underwrite independence, but particularly by the way the mine was established—as discussed in the next section. In 1968, a group of Bougainvillean students, civil servants and politicians living in Port Moresby formed the Mungkas (a Buin word for black) Society. It became a crucible of secessionist thought and activism. Back in central Bougainville in 1969, a secessionist social movement, Napidakoe Navitu, quickly gained a large following.

The mine

In 1964, a huge copper and gold deposit was discovered near the centre of Bougainville. By the standards of the time, Bougainville Copper Limited (BCL), whose principal investor was Conzinc Riotinto Australia (CRA), had a comparatively advanced sense of corporate social responsibility. This was based on an enlightened self-interest whereby management advised shareholders that unless they treated the emerging nation of Papua New Guinea and its citizens well through the economic opportunities it created, a future leadership of the independent nation might nationalise such a large asset. BCL funded tertiary scholarships for indigenous students without requiring eventual company employment. It funded agricultural extension. It provided capital for Bougainvillean business start-ups through the Panguna Development Foundation. BCL agreed with government demands that it, rather than the government, pay for nearly all the infrastructure the mine needed: roads, electricity, water, telecommunications, ports, airstrips, housing.

The PNG Territory Administration exercised an option to acquire 20 per cent of the equity in the mine and also received a royalty of 1.25 per cent on the value of its revenue from copper-concentrate sales for the 42-year term of the lease. A large number of shares were reserved for purchase by indigenous individuals and groups and many were purchased by church organisations, for example, though we do not know how many individual Bougainvilleans benefited. There were, however, 9000 PNG resident shareholders (Griffin 2005:295). The company agreed to comparatively high territorial taxes on its profits, starting with a three-year tax holiday (terminated 15 months early), then a 50 per cent company tax rate (rather than the normal 25 per cent [Regan 2003]), increasing

over the years to a maximum rate of 66 per cent (Oliver 1973:158). Michael Somare's PNG coalition government in 1974 responded to criticism that the mine was exploitative by renegotiating upwards the government's share of earnings. We will see that by contemporary standards, the BCL deal was a very good one for the PNG state, but miserly to local landowners. It was the offer to local landowners that was a major proximate cause of the war.

A deal struck the year the Bougainville war started granted landowners in Porgera more than 20 times the share in the earnings of the mine in royalties compared with what the Panguna landowners received (Matthew 2000:736). This was part of a general shift among mining companies in Papua New Guinea and beyond as a result of what were seen as the mistakes of Bougainville 'from paying resource rents to the state for technocratic distribution in the national interest towards paying resource rents to landowners in the immediate vicinity of their operations' (Claxton 1998:96). Claxton (1998:97) goes on to criticise this strategy as 'hastening the retreat or even capitulation of the state before the power of multinational companies and local interests'. Anthony Regan pointed out in commenting on this paragraph that the same sort of deal was indeed being offered in Bougainville that year.

PNG leader Somare also in 1974 sought to counter the growing threat of Bougainville secession by negotiations that led to an Interim Provincial Government and by passing all the royalties from the mine (as opposed to the larger tax revenues) through to the province (apart from the 5 per cent of the 1.25 per cent royalty that went to landowners). In September 1975, the Interim Provincial Government of Bougainville nevertheless declared independence unilaterally. The PNG National Parliament suspended it the next month and anti-PNG Government riots ensued in Bougainville. During 1976, Somare settled this conflict by agreeing to a permanent provincial government with some credible powers and resources: the North Solomon Islands Provincial Government. There were also undertakings to further devolve powers to the province over time, though these were mostly not honoured (Momis 2005:315).

The mine was a massive, complex operation in exceptionally rugged terrain that required a great deal of expatriate engineering and mining expertise. Nevertheless, the company had a commitment to create indigenous employment and to train locals to take over from expatriates. At the peak of construction in 1971—much of it by non-BCL employees—there were 3861 expatriate and 6328 PNG employees.³ There were basic problems with BCL's corporate responsibility analysis. Its enlightened self-interest was driven by fear of expropriation by Port

3 This fell to a workforce of about 4000 for much of the 1980s, about one-third of whom were Bougainvillean. Another 4000—about half Bougainvillean—were employed in businesses dependent on BCL (Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade 2005:18).

Moresby politicians or by what Anthony Regan called a PNG administrative state characterised by limited mobilisation around political identities until the approach of independence, so BCL royalties, taxes and reserved shares were designed mainly to impress elites in the capital and its affirmative-action policies measured success in creating employment opportunities for citizens of all Papua New Guinea. This is not to say it did not also try hard to create opportunities for Bougainvilleans; about half the apprentices and half of the highest paid Papua New Guineans were local Nasioi.⁴ Its success in creating opportunities for imported workers—especially from the New Guinea Highlands—was, however, one of the factors that led to civil war. Second, BCL's corporate responsibility analysis—in a manner typical in the 1960s—was focused on creating economic opportunities for a poor nation to the neglect of environmental impacts. The colonial administration also embedded dysfunctional regulatory arrangements in the Bougainville Copper Agreement such that the PNG Minister for the Environment in 1988 could complain that his department was prevented from taking action against pollution by the mine because the agreement vested that authority in the Department of Minerals and Energy (Gillespie 1999:13). BCL was probably a comparatively environmentally concerned miner for its time, yet the environmental impacts turned out to be huge. And their effects were concentrated on large communities around Panguna and in the river valleys between the mine and the coast. Within these deeply aggrieved communities—indeed communities that were grieving for their lands—the conflict began. The mine was a large physical scar on the land, but a deeper spiritual one for communities whose landscape was intensely implicated in their spiritual life.

Most fundamentally, BCL's attempts to be a responsible corporate citizen were to no avail simply because the mine was so big—far bigger than any mine in Australia. Some 150 000 tonnes of rock waste and tailings were discharged every day from the mine area (Brown 1974:19). It could not be dug without formidable displacement of villages and displacement of soil that washed down steep mountain valleys into rivers that became dead zones. It could not be built without thousands of men with white and brown skin (or 'redskins', as the locals called the New Guineans) who could not but dominate the local space, who consumed too much alcohol, harassed local women and created a deep sense of dread that the local culture, laws and identity were being crushed. The outside workers also brought problems of public drunkenness and prostitution that were new to the area and scandalised church elders. Paul Lapun put it this way in 1988: 'You didn't tell me what would happen to my environment...

4 But in 1971 the total of Nasioi BCL employees was only 241 (Denoon 2000:168). So while BCL was trying to husband the best skill-development opportunities for Nasioi, most of the 20 000 Nasioi did not get jobs in the mine and there was still a feeling of having their land overwhelmed by massive numbers of immigrant workers in Panguna and Arawa. Nasioi people were more unskilled in vocational terms than people from many other parts of Papua New Guinea.

When I was young they fooled me and now I am old and still alive to see the result of my decision I weep. Who cares for a copper mine if it kills us' (Denoon 2000:200).

These grievances also created opportunities for locals motivated by greed. Some we interviewed thought the founder of the BRA, Francis Ona, was one of those men. Most considered he was not, but that there were others who promoted the war to advance interests in controlling the mine, controlling Bougainville, capturing the Panguna Landowners' Association, and so on. So the sheer size of the physical and economic impacts of the mine made for both huge grievances and huge opportunities for greed.

BCL got off to a bad start by prospecting the land without the permission of landowners and with some unsophisticated and offensive analysis to the effect that the Panguna Valley was uninhabited and sparsely utilised. There was incompetence in failing to come to grips with the complexities of shared tenure for land and a crude imposition of colonial land and mining laws over the top of this complexity. There was a failure to grasp the spiritual, cultural and social dimensions of land; it was not simply the commodity that BCL negotiators treated it as being. Minister for Territories, Charles (Ceb) Barnes, was not listening when he visited Bougainville in 1969. His interpreter told us that women from the mine site sang a song for Barnes about how sacred the land was for them and about their incomprehension of why it was being taken away: 'In matrilineal society, when women wail and confront something, it's a big signal.' Barnes did not hear it and rambled about the nation's minerals belonging to the whole nation.

Some of the brightest and best Australian lawyers of that generation—Anthony Mason advising the Commonwealth as Solicitor-General and Ninian Stephen as counsel for BCL—were offering advice on how to fend off any Australian High Court challenge that might enforce a more sensitive engagement with the indigenous land-tenure issues. Ultimately, the High Court did hear the matter and decided in 1969 that Australia had the power to take land in Commonwealth territories without the obligations to provide just compensation (*Teori Tau vs The Commonwealth*, [1969] CLR 564; Havini 1999:8). Beneath all of that failure to come to grips with the complexity of the land BCL devastated, there was a simple conflict that was more irresolvable between the principle of the national development of a poor nation and a pre-modern, local understanding of shared ownership: 'The principle that royalties paid on the treasure from one's own land would be used for the Territory as a whole, and not for the land's owners, or even for Bougainvilleans in general, was considered by some Bougainvilleans to be insanely alien, or transparently deceitful' (Oliver 1973:164).

Bougainville's House of Assembly member, Paul Lapun, struggled for years to eventually rally colleagues from across Papua New Guinea to roll the colonial administration and allocate 5 per cent of the 1.25 per cent copper royalty to the Panguna landowners. Sadly, though, fighting over that modest pot became another factor contributing to the conflict. Because the politics of land rights had delayed a lucrative flow of profits, when distributions to local landowners began, there was 'more haste than planning' (Denoon 2000:169). Crude, inaccurate procedures were implemented for calculating who was entitled to what share; 'the view from Canberra overlooked such difficulties' (Denoon 2000:169). The interest in Canberra was in announcements of the aggregate dollars paid out to indigenes. These dollar amounts were unprecedented in the Pacific and sounded impressive, but they were in fact little compensation for removing the homes, the lands, the livelihoods, the spiritual lives and the entire way of life of people.

Resistance to the mine became a major regional news story in 1969 when Australian media covered the physical resistance of women and men in Rorovana, where BCL built a port for the mine. The footage was shocking: bare-breasted women putting their bodies in the path of Australian bulldozers, resisting passively and being attacked by helmeted riot police with batons. The newspaper headlines—'Australia's shame', 'Australia's bullies' (Denoon 2000:2)—did indeed outrage many Australians. They added to the impetus in the Australian labour movement to push for early independence for Papua New Guinea. The international coverage did raise some questions of how different the meaning of land was to Bougainvilleans compared with white Australians. Three young Bougainvilleans—one of them Theodore Miriung, who in 1996 was to be assassinated as Premier of the Bougainville Transitional Government—said 'land is our physical life—food and sustenance. Land is our social life; it is marriage; it is status; it is politics; in fact, it is our only world' (Dove et al. 1974:29). Donald Denoon's (2000:127) account of why the story had little traction beyond the South Pacific is revealing, as in the words of one agency journalist, 'the violence itself was quite a good little spot news story but the real story about background and motives is too complicated for overseas readers, it would take too long to explain'.

The Rorovana incidents sent a warning signal that should have triggered more nuanced analysis towards preventive diplomacy by the social democrats Gough Whitlam⁵ and Michael Somare, who were surging relentlessly towards leadership of their nations. Whitlam and Somare—like the conservative

5 Edward Wolfers made the interesting comment on our draft that 'Gough Whitlam, in particular, was always clear that the decision for Papua New Guinea's independence was at least as much concerned with the future of Australia (Australia's international reputation, and the effects that continued colonial rule might have on Australian society) as of Papua New Guinea.'

minister Barnes,⁶ the senior bureaucrats in Port Moresby and the leadership of BCL—proved incapable of preventing the war by re-examining the social justice of the mine through the lens of the local landowners. Having BCL contribute even more to the national development of Papua New Guinea seemed to them all the appropriate social democratic paradigm of responsiveness required.⁷ Investigative journalists and university experts did not excel at analysing and communicating to political, business and administrative elites the complexity of the responsiveness that was needed. Instead of constructive international engagement with preventive diplomacy, the Rorovana warning signal simply produced self-righteous vilification of an exploitative multinational, of overzealous policing and of a callous colonial administration. Independence for Papua New Guinea and tougher rents and taxation of BCL would fix that in the eyes of an Australian democratic left that was at its zenith of community support as the opening of the mine approached.

BCL was getting much more sophisticated advice from a fine anthropologist in Douglas Oliver of Harvard University. While Oliver saw many of the flaws in the way BCL was managing the land-compensation issues, and spoke out against them, he did not allow these to shake his ultimate advice that ‘opposition would be limited, and that people would be reconciled to the mine eventually’ (Denoon 2000:201). Social science is useful in diagnosing the problems a particular course of action might cause and even in making probabilistic predictions of what is more and less likely across a large *n* of cases. It is not useful for predicting what will happen in an *n* of 1. Douglas Oliver made an *n*-of-1 prediction in the section of his 1968 report to CRA headed ‘Some predictions regarding external relations between CRA and Bougainville natives’ (Denoon 2000:217). This rosy ‘it will blow over’ analysis was one of the obstacles to the preventive diplomacy needed to head off the war.

In 1978, landowners became more organised, uniting to form the Panguna Landowners’ Association to lobby over their many grievances. BCL hoped the landowners would give up if it kept delaying and fobbing them off; however, BCL negotiated a new compensation package supplementary to the major agreement with the PNG Government after frustrated landowners looted the Panguna supermarket. This established a Road Mine Tailings Leases Trust Fund that invested in local plantations and in the Panguna Development Foundation. The new fund was designed to provide some basic services to landowners in education, health care, water supply, transportation and scholarships for

6 The senior author had conversations with Whitlam and his successor as Labor leader, Bill Hayden, in Bougainville when they visited in 1969. He also ineffectively raised concerns with Ceb Barnes in this period in the context of helping set up public meetings in which Barnes and Hayden spoke on the mine.

7 Anthony Regan, in commenting on this paragraph, added that Bougainvillean political leaders in the 1970s were focused more on securing limited resources from the mine revenue for their new Interim Provincial Government than on securing substantial redistribution to landowners.

students in higher education (Okole 1990). Many landowners, however, came to view the fund as operating for the personal gain of board members of the Panguna Landowners' Association.

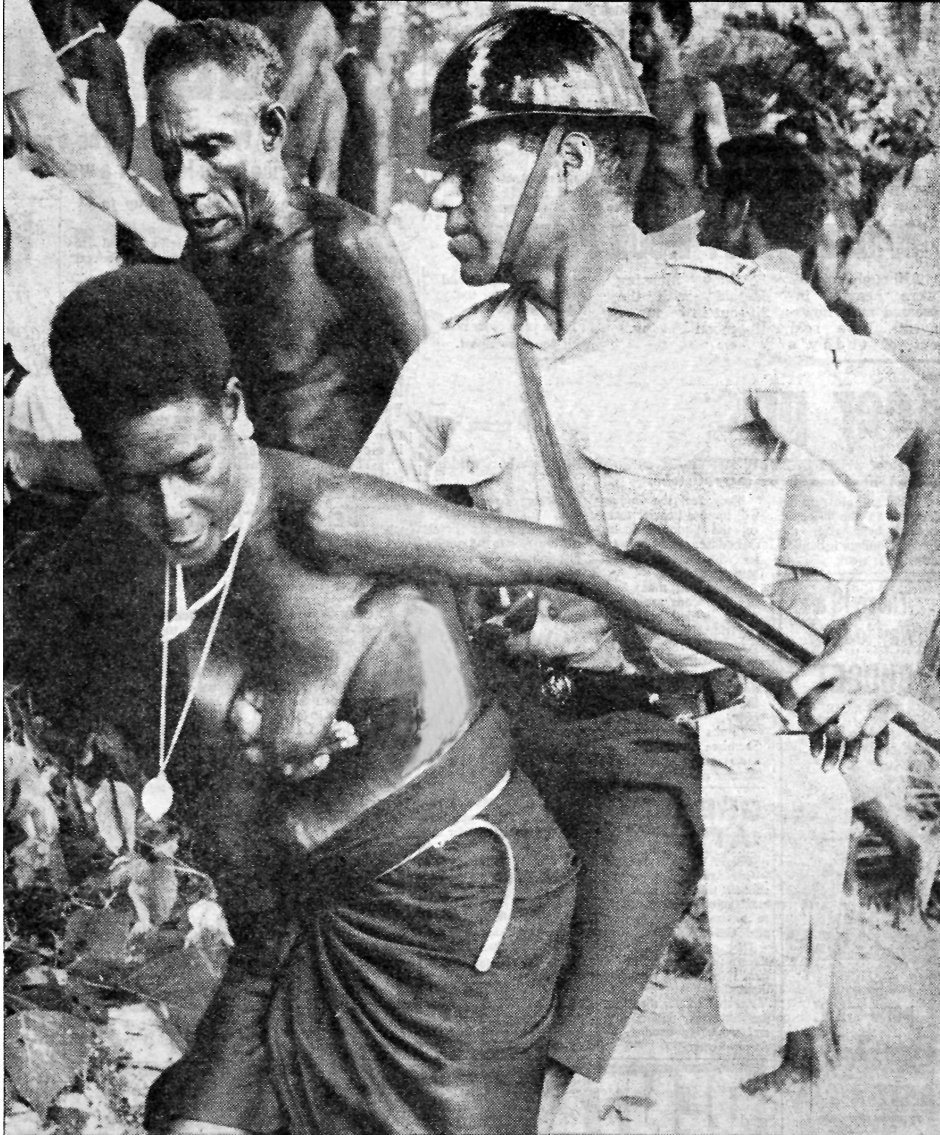


Figure 2.1 Rorovana women resist the bulldozers moving in, 6 August 1969

Photo: *Sydney Sun*

A combination of infighting among Bougainvillean political leaders who were on guard against adversaries gaining credit for getting a better deal for landowners (Griffin 1990:11) and a recession that was pinching BCL and PNG Government finances meant that the 1981 review of the mining agreement (provided for in

Somare's 1974 renegotiation) never occurred. This did not help the legitimacy of the Panguna Landowners' Association. '[H]ad the government under Prime Minister Sir Julius Chan renegotiated the BCA [Bougainville Copper Agreement] in 1981, the bloody Bougainville crisis may have been pre-empted' (Momis 2005:310).

A new generation frustrated by not only BCL but the non-confrontational politics of their elders, led by Francis Ona and Perpetua Serero,⁸ formed the New Panguna Landowners' Association in 1987. Melchior Togolo (2005:285) and some whom we interviewed alleged that greed was a motive, that some in the new association were 'refused loans because of past loan delinquency' after more rigorous accountability for its trust fund was introduced. What they demanded was massive and they were not taken seriously: K10 billion for environmental damage, 50 per cent of BCL profits and transfer of BCL to Bougainvillean ownership within five years. Carruthers' (1990:41) summary of the relative share of wealth generated by the mine from 1972 to 1989 shows how unrealistic the K10 billion plus 50 per cent of profits claim was and how little of the wealth from the mine went to Bougainville—particularly the landowners:

- K million
- National government 1078
- Provincial government 75
- Landholders 24
- Non-government shareholders 577
- Total 1754

Carruthers' numbers above also show that the national and provincial governments were making (in taxes, fees and dividends) twice as much from the mine as the mostly foreign private shareholders.⁹ These numbers are about the share of profits in the wealth created by the mine. There is also labour's share—a large proportion of which went to citizens of Papua New Guinea. While the minority expatriate employees were much more highly paid, they spent a lot of their salaries in Papua New Guinea.

In August 1988, the New Panguna Landowners' Association occupied the offices of the foundation controlled by the association and declared the appointment of a new board of the association. A key member of the old board, Mathew Kove, was allegedly murdered on the orders of his nephew, Francis Ona, in early 1989. By then, the legal battle over control of the association was moot as the mine was about to close and the New Panguna Landowners' Association had launched the BRA as a Bougainville-wide uprising led by Ona.

⁸ Perpetua Serero died soon after the civil war began.

⁹ Similar proportions apply in the numbers provided in a more detailed breakdown by Hilson (2007:29).

Closure of the mine in May 1989 because of the violence was a massive setback for the PNG economy. The mine was providing 45 per cent of Papua New Guinea's export income, 17 per cent of internally generated government revenue and 12 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) (Carruthers 1990:38). It had completed 1000 apprenticeships and trained 11 000 PNG employees in industrial skills, which many had taken to jobs in other parts of the economy. Four hundred tertiary graduations had been funded. All this training input into the PNG and Bougainville economies stopped with the war.

Immigration

Concern was widespread in the areas where immigrant workers were employed (by BCL and its contractors and also as plantation workers) over disrespect for local customs and local women, especially by Highlanders from New Guinea. Highlanders were seen as primitive, especially because of their quick propensity for payback violence. An incident in the Highlands in 1972 focused this stereotype. Two respected Bougainvillean civil servants—one a physician—were beaten to death after they struck and killed a little girl with their car. Some research at the time among southern Bougainville students ranked a hierarchy of social acceptance that placed 'New Guineans' highest (after Bougainvilleans), followed by 'Papuan', 'Europeans' and, last, 'Highlanders' (Nash and Ogan 1990:10; Moulik 1977:103–6).

Immigrant workers from the mainland established many squatter settlements in Central Bougainville, some of which became violence hotspots or were perceived that way. The conditions of dislocation created by rapid urban development in fact also incubated a great deal of violence and property crime by Bougainvillean gangs. In addition to taking thousands of jobs at the mine, the migrants bought up many local businesses such as bus services. Howley (2002:33) alleges that mainlanders ran three brothels. Another 'redskin' ran an organised crime business based on gang members robbing houses. These were disturbing developments for the formerly well-ordered, low-crime Bougainvillean societies.

The rape, murder and mutilation of a popular nurse from the hospital unleashed a fury against 'redskins' in 1988. The 'Koromira Home Guard' armed and cleared their area of 'redskins', killing any men who resisted (Howley 2002:35).

Conclusion

There was a historical basis and a movement for Bougainville separatism before the mine. We will see in the next chapter that when dissatisfaction over the

mine and over the related issue of immigration boiled over as violence, Francis Ona was able to broaden his armed coalition by linking the mine issue and the immigration issue to the separatist movement. The Australian left and progressive forces within BCL itself were concerned about the mine causing injustice—or being seen by Papua New Guinea to cause it—from the late 1960s. But they viewed this injustice in the frame of a wealthy multinational exploiting a Third-World nation. Their emphasis was therefore on compensating the PNG Government for environmental destruction and guaranteeing Port Moresby a generous windfall from the profits. This involved a misunderstanding of the more local nature of the felt injustice that would endanger peace and development. Both BCL and its critics on the left in Australia failed in particular to grasp the importance of clumsy compensation policies that opened divisions between old and young local landowners and between landowners and ‘redskin’ immigrant workers.