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PAPUA BESENA:

CASE STUDY OF A SEPARATIST MOVEMENT

Nao Badu

Submitted for the degree of

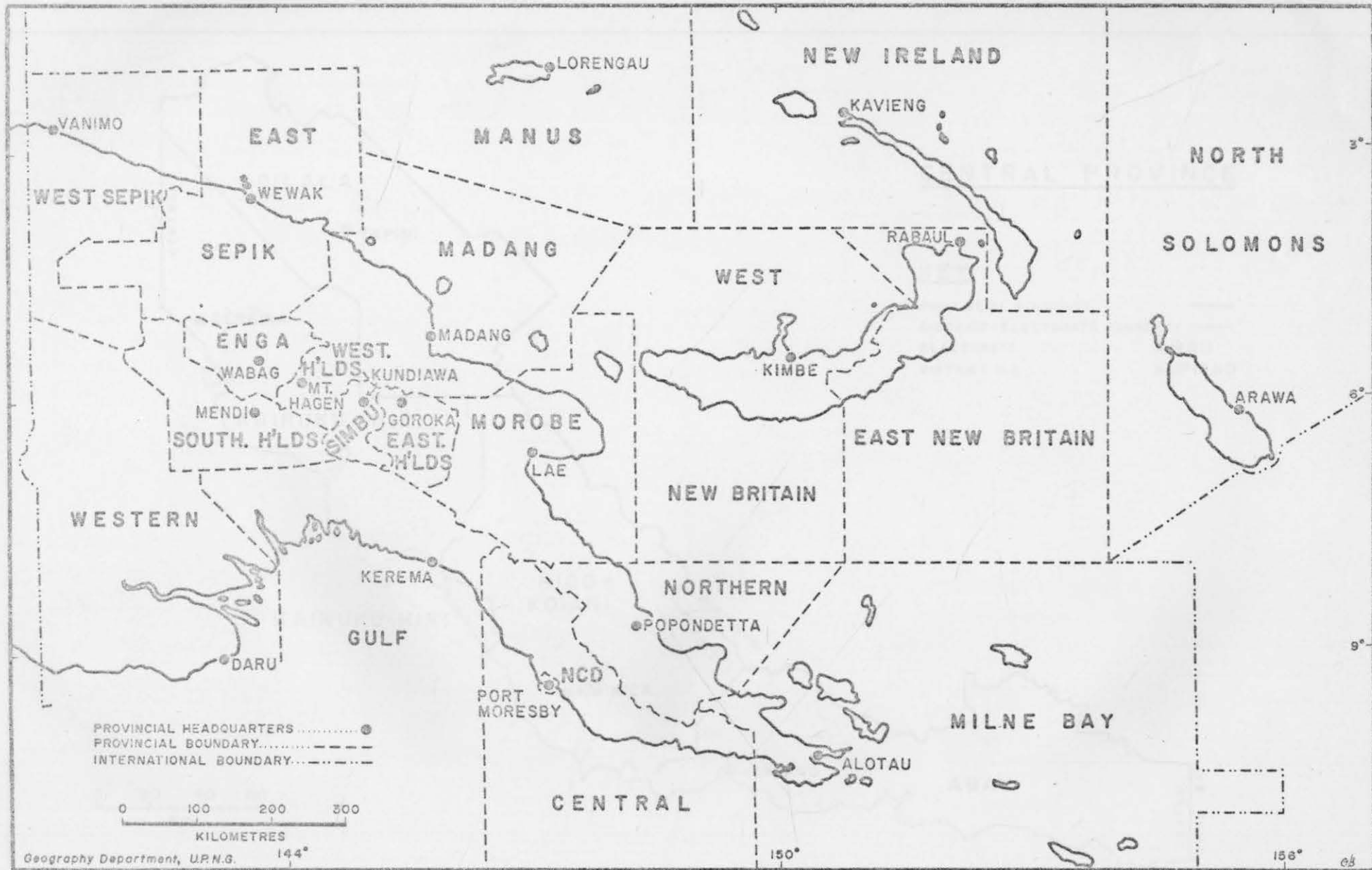
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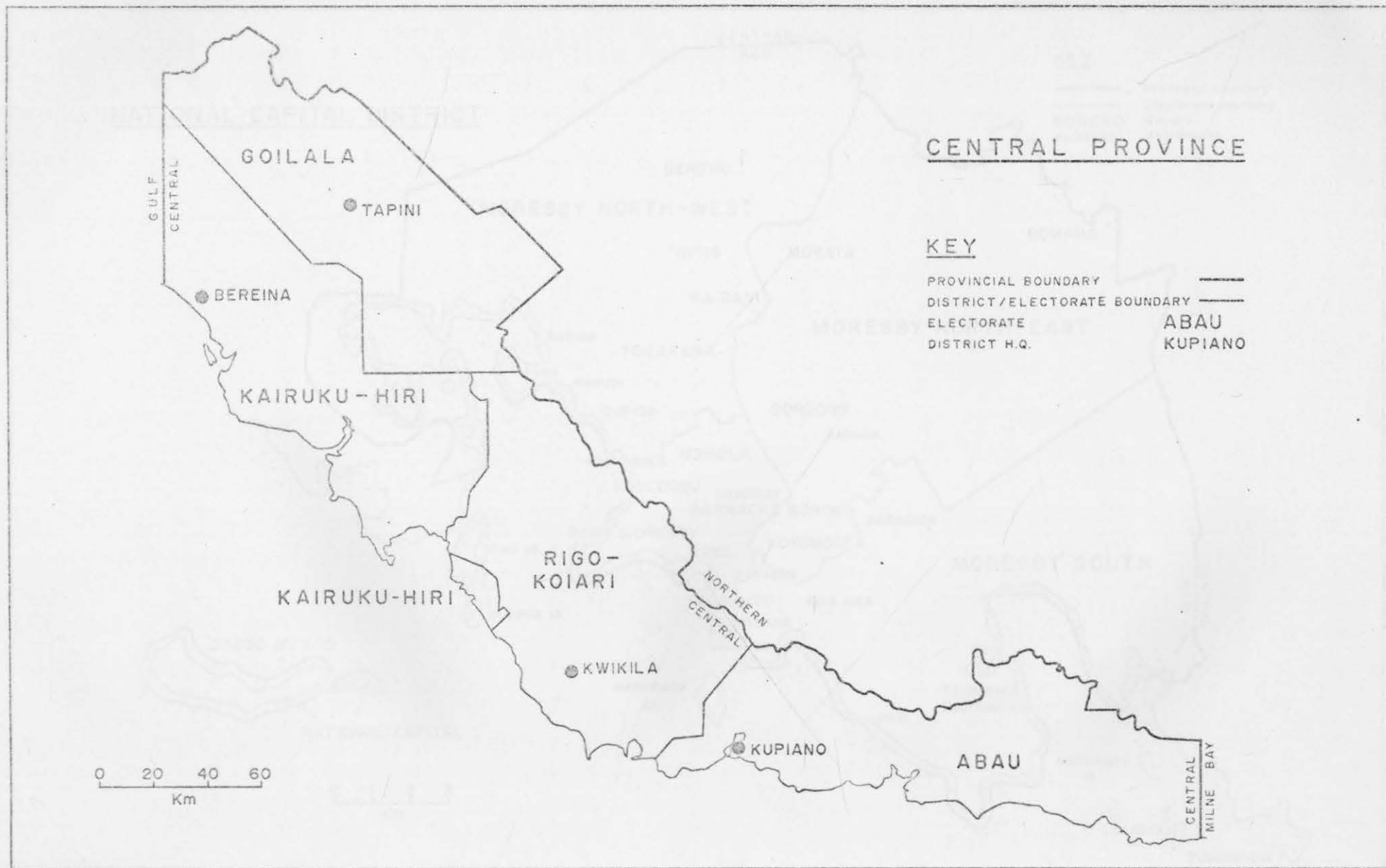
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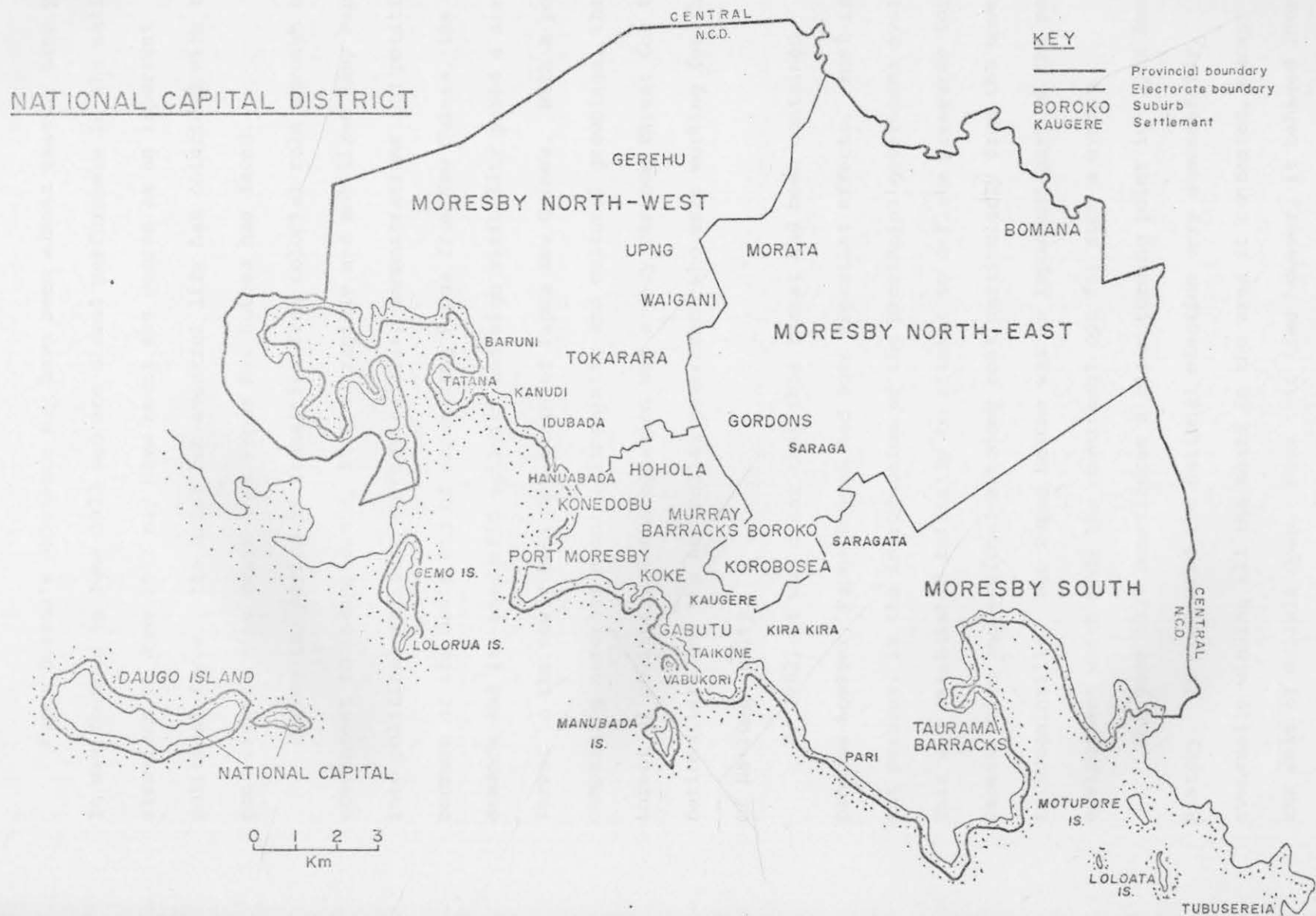




NATIONAL CAPITAL DISTRICT

KEY

- Provincial boundary
- Electorate boundary
- BOROKO Suburb
- KAUGERE Settlement



INTRODUCTION

Papua Besena's existence may have been almost exactly nine years. It was founded in June 1973 and its dismal performance in the national elections in June 1982 may have meant its demise as an important political force. Its brief but eventful life has coincided with the most crucial nine years that Papua New Guinea has faced.

During the period of transition from colonial rule through self-government to independence, it grew rapidly and mobilized many Papuans into political activity through rallies, demonstrations and petitions. Because of its basic aim of separating Papua from New Guinea, its strident demands and its energetic activity and high visibility posed a serious threat to the newly emerging state of Papua New Guinea. With a population comprising numerous ethnic, linguistic and cultural groupings, the threat of political disintegration was a very serious threat for the nationalists and the Australian government who were working for the goal of national unity.

By 1982, it was clear that this threat had been contained. In the process however, Papua Besena had some important effects. Most important perhaps, is the introduction of the provincial government system. This was established initially to attempt to deflate pressures for secessionism and regional autonomy most particularly from the movement in Bougainville. But Papua Besena was an important part of the political environment which made the government opt for such a system.

The year 1977 constitutes a clear turning point in Papua Besena's history. It contested the national election very successfully, eventually winning all the seats in the area it contested, except for the seat of Goilala Open. From this time however, it behaved increasingly like a regional political party and less like the secessionist mass

movement it originally aspired to. From this time, it had clearly established a niche in national politics. But with independence already successfully achieved, its goal of secessionism receded and there were increasing conflicts in Papua Besena about pragmatic adjustment to the national political system.

The aims of this thesis are basically twofold. Firstly, it attempts to document a chronicle of the history of Papua Besena. This paper looks at the background in which Papua Besena arose, its internal functioning, its rise to prominence in PNG politics and entry into government, and eventually, its decline in the 1982 elections. Secondly, the history of Papua Besena is examined in an analytical sense. The historical picture presented is then used to analyse the dynamics of the movement. These include the aims of the movement, its spheres of activity and influence, modes of operation, leadership and the reasons for its rise and decline.

In terms of research methodology, several modes have been utilized to collect the necessary data. The first of these was the usual search of published and other documented historical accounts and analytical material relating to Papua Besena. These included books, journals, newspapers and other relevant documents. Several Papua Besena leaders were unwilling to be interviewed so I adopted a strategy of concentrating on a few of the key figures in the Papua Besena movement. These included leaders, organizers and opinion leaders in the communities and areas in which Papua Besena operated. This field research also included personal observation of the events in which Papua Besena played a part. The 1977 and 1982 national elections are also cases where personal observation was used to supplement and analyse data from primary and secondary sources.

Chapter Two looks at a brief history of Papua from early colonization up to the period immediately before the establishment of Papua

Besena. It examines the early symptoms of potential conflict and unrest in Papua and the historical events and political actors that either caused or highlighted them. This is important in the sense that much of the dissatisfaction expressed by Papua Besena leaders and supporters in the early years of its existence were concerned with the practices and events that took place before the establishment of Papua Besena itself. This will set the stage for beginning the political chronicle of Papua Besena. As Papua Besena's political activity is in some ways a continuation of historical tension under colonial rule, this chapter provides the necessary background perspective.

Chapter Three traces the political history of Papua Besena from its establishment in June 1973 to the 1977 national elections. This was the period in which Papua Besena was definitely on the rise in terms of popular support. Efforts at mass mobilization were very successful and Papua Besena leaders were very active in organizing mass rallies and demonstrations to protest to the government and further increase their support base. This chapter tries to assess the probable causes of this rise in the support base of Papua Besena and how this affected Papua Besena's relationship with the government and the Papuan people.

Chapter Four examines Papua Besena from 1977 to 1982. The 1977 election saw the rise of Papua Besena to considerable heights in terms of political power. The 1982 election results saw a dramatic fall in electoral support and political clout for Papua Besena. This chapter looks at events between these two elections also and attempts to explain factors within Papua Besena itself and also its relationship with the government and the Papuan people in order to analyse their consequences. In particular it looks at the circumstances under which Papua Besena became a coalition partner in the national government in 1980.

Chapter Five looks at the involvement of Papua Besena in the

affairs of the Port Moresby City Council, the largest local government body in all of PNG. For a period, Papua Besena was in clear control of the City Council. This chapter shows conflict within Papua Besena about the status of the movement and the role of organization. It also shows how practices within the leadership affected the support base of the movement and its relationship with the government and is an interesting case of how Papua Besena used the power that it achieved. The chapter also shows how the Papua Besena movement related to one of its ancillary groups.

Chapter Six examines the main aims of Papua Besena. It analyses Papua Besena's call for Papuan secessionism and separatism and the reasons and justifications that its leaders put forward. Conflicts within the movement about a moderation of these aims to calls for regional autonomy are also examined. The chapter thus focusses on the political ideology of Papua Besena as a secessionist movement and a movement for self-determination.

Together, these chapters will hopefully provide a basis for the final analysis of Papua Besena, the nature of the movement, the extent of its support, its impact on the political history of Papua New Guinea and the changes which have resulted out of this on the PNG political system and also within Papua Besena itself. Finally this concluding chapter sums up the causes for the rise of Papua Besena and its decline and discusses its future as a force in PNG politics.

Because of the ambiguity of the nature of Papua Besena, scholars have used different terms to describe the movement. Terms such as micro-nationalist, ethno-nationalist, separatist or secessionist have all been used by different observers to describe Papua Besena and the use of these terms has in many ways contributed to some understanding of particular aspects of Papua Besena. Yet in some ways, the search for some precise definition of Papua Besena can be a handicap if a

comprehensive understanding of Papua Besena is the aim of inquiry. There are many facets of Papua Besena which defy classification into one particular species of political movements. As will be elaborated on later in this paper, there are aspects of Papua Besena which can be associated to political party type organizations, mass movements, elitist organization and pressure groups. Its modes of agitation and arena of operation are also not constants and this complicates the problem of precise definition. This is not to refute the value of the search for precise definition. Indeed, without previous studies which attempted to do this, an understanding of Papua Besena would be more difficult. The comparative study of political movements has contributed a lot of insights into their nature and Papua Besena is no exception. However, the basic approach of this paper is that, whatever label or description is attached to Papua Besena, it is through close analysis of the movement itself that one can fully grasp the nature of the movement and how it affects itself and its political environment. Hence the use of terminologies has been limited to those parts which discuss factors that previous users of these terminologies used to discuss the various facets of Papua Besena. On the whole, political 'movement' has been utilized as the broadest description to analyse Papua Besena in its many facets.

CHAPTER TWO

A HISTORY OF PAPUA AS AN ISSUE

This chapter briefly looks at the history of Papua from early colonization up until 1972. Its main aim is to outline the major events that involved controversy over the status of Papua. These include colonial policy and the attitudes of key figures as well as the historical periods in which these factors contributed in their respective roles. Before these are examined, the subject of Papua is examined as the basic issue behind all this discussion of Papua Besena. An examination of the early history of Papua and its gradual emergence as an issue will serve as a basis for the analysis of Papua Besena because there is a direct relevance of Papuan history to most of the issues that Papua Besena raised later on.

The Issue of Papua

There is no single 'Papuan' issue that can lend itself to definition but rather a series of interrelated arguments, grievances or demands, all of which have been emphasized at different stages which, together, make up the Papuan issue. For the sake of analysis, these demands or arguments have been separated even to the extent that they might seem to be independent issues themselves. However, in actual fact, they are so interrelated that it would be impractical to discuss one aspect without at least touching on the others.

The first of these is the argument put forward that Papua was an Australian colony, legally separate from New Guinea, and consequently there was no basis for the unification of these two territories. As will be shown later, many Papuan (and expatriate) people or groups have, at some stage or other, utilized this argument to suit their own

inclinations. From the years in which the Queensland government pressured the British government to annex Papua in the 1880s, through Murray's desire at first to unite Papua with New Guinea under his governorship, and then when he failed in that, to keep them separate, through the United Nations Trusteeship Council's wish to keep the two territories distinct, and, finally, to the most separatist demands in the early 1970s, the whole issue of Papua has certainly had a controversial history.

The second argument that has contributed to the issue of Papua has been essentially economic. A lot of dissatisfaction has been expressed about the degree of economic development in Papua as compared with New Guinea. Economic policy and practices in both Papua and New Guinea have been dictated by outside interests according to their different ideological inclinations (like Murray's paternalistic policies), colonial development strategies (like the report by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development in 1964) or simply capitalist motivations. Examples of these latter interests are the desire of the Australian government, along with the support of private commercial interests, to maintain pre-1949 economic practices in Papua when the Australian government finally gained control of both territories under the Papua and New Guinea Act of 1949.

The third major aspect of the Papuan issue is perhaps the most complex of them all in that it is somewhat hard to pin down and assess its significance. This is the psychological impact of 'Papuanism', the development of a sense of what some scholars have termed, 'sub-nationalism'. After over a hundred years of being referred to as Papuans, many people have come to think of themselves as a group, distinctly identifiable from New Guineans and other regional entities. Again one can point to the Murray era as a period in which this type of attitude was encouraged, even if this might have been done unintentionally. Even

early United Nations insistence on keeping New Guinea separate and distinct from Papua contributed to this. The importance of this aspect of the Papuan issue is that it has been manipulated and distorted out of all proportion by proponents of Papuan separatism in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Some Papuan people have developed arguments based on race and ethnicity in support of separate Papuan nation-hood. Papua Besena features prominently in this regard where a group of people became a militant force over the issue of the status of Papua.

These are what I consider to be the major issues contributing to the wider issue of Papua. There are a lot of other considerations which will be looked at later in this paper. The above brief summary can be used to identify the history of Papua from the earliest days up to the period in which Papua Besena was at its most vocal point. Because of their interrelated nature, I have attempted to discuss them in their historical context in order to show how they have played a central role in the whole issue of Papua and to serve as a preliminary basis for understanding the history and nature of Papua Besena.

The Early History of Papua

Papua was formally declared a colony by the British on 6th November 1884, in the same year that New Guinea was claimed by the Germans. The proclamation made by Commodore Erskine in a ceremony attended by the resident L.M.S. missionaries and the several local Hanuabada villagers gathered by the missionaries for the occasion, bears some relevance to the whole issue of Papuan separatism and other related disputes in later years. Commodore Erskine proclaimed:

Your lands will be assured to you, your wives and children will be protected. Should any injury be done to you, you will immediately inform Her Majesty's officers, who will reside amongst you, and they will hear your complaints and do justice. You will look upon all white persons whom the Queen permits to reside amongst you as your friends, and

her Majesty's subjects. The Queen will permit nobody to reside here who does you injury. You will under no circumstances, inflict punishment upon any white person; but if such a person has done you wrong, you must tell Her Majesty's officers of that wrong in order that the case may be fairly inquired into. You must know that it is for your own security and to prevent bloodshed that the Queen sends me to you and will send her officers to live amongst you. Should bad men come amongst you, bringing firearms and intoxicating liquors, you are not to buy them and are to give notice at once to the Queen's officers so that such men may be punished. Always keep in your minds that the Queen guards and watches over you, looks upon you as her children and will not allow anyone to harm you, and will soon send her trusted officers to carry out her gracious intention in the establishment of this Protectorate.(1)

Thus the entity known as Papua was born, though from the time of the proclamation up till the Australian government took over in 1906, the entity was known as British New Guinea. The spirit of this proclamation might lead one to think that the British came to Papua primarily for the intention of protecting the primitive people from being exploited by outsiders and to introduce a more enlightened Western version of justice to these people.

Like most of the former colonies and other territories conquered or acquired by the great powers of Europe within the last two centuries, Papua has been the subject of great power competition for reasons of economic exploitation, strategic manoeuvring and others associated with empire-building. In the wake of these attitudes, societies have been disrupted without effective replacement institutions in many cases. Colonialism in Papua had the effect of uniting, to some extent, the various traditional autonomous societies into a wider association. While this was by no means a major colonial objective, it gave rise to what I have termed, the issue of Papua and to subsequent consideration of whether Papua should be a separate country, whether it should stay united with New Guinea, or even at one stage, whether it should become a seventh state of Australia.

One of the earliest recorded instances of the local people's reaction to these changes was when the missionary James Chalmers is reported to have overheard a Papuan confiding to another: 'Now we are satisfied,' he said, 'now we know that the Queen [of England] is our protector'.² That Papuan could not have realized that the basic sentiment expressed in that remark was to have such an impact on the political history of Papua in later years.

The Schedule in the proclamation defined the area to be annexed as:

All that portion of the southern shores of New Guinea commencing from the boundary of that portion of the country claimed by the Government of the Netherlands on the 141st meridian of east longitude to Cape East, with all islands adjacent thereto south of East Cape to Kosman island inclusive, together with the island in the Goschen Straits. (3)

The border between German and British New Guinea was defined after a meeting between the British and German governments the following year in Europe.

The British government, although reluctant to annex Papua, was finally persuaded to act after agitation from the Queensland government. The Queensland government was anxious to stop the German influence in lands which were uncomfortably close to Australia.

The main reason behind the Queensland government's desire to bring Papua under the control of the British Empire was fear of German expansionism. An observer, commenting on this stated that:

They [the Australian colonies] saw at their doors, in the intended New Guinea settlement, German soldiers, German fleets, German competition with their trade, a great German rival influence menacing their wealth, their institutions, their independence. It was a thing too horrible to contemplate, a thing to be instantly denounced. (4)

In February, 1883, the Premier of Queensland, Sir Thomas McIlwraith, ordered his Government's Agent-General in London to urge the British Imperial Government to annex that portion of New Guinea to Queensland.

The British government refused to act and so McIlwraith instructed the resident Police Magistrate at Thursday Island, H.M. Chester, to annex the south-eastern portion of the island of New Guinea. McIlwraith was supported by representatives of missions working in the area but this act was not recognised by the British Imperial Government.

The British Imperial Government, already under great pressure from trying to keep control of its world-wide empire, was not very enthusiastic about the idea. Papua did not look promising in terms of commercial development on the scale that they enjoyed in India, the Caribbean islands and in most of their colonies elsewhere. The change in attitude came when the German government announced the formation of the New Guinea Company and its intentions to annex the north-eastern portion of the island of New Guinea and nearby islands. This was what finally induced the British government to act. When Commodore Erskine of the British Navy arrived in Port Moresby in November, 1884, he found that H.H. Romilly, one of the British Deputy Commissioners for the Western Pacific, had apparently misread his instructions, and had already declared the Protectorate on 23rd October. Hence, Erskine had to make the claim all over again.

The original strategic goals that the Queensland government along with the other Australian colonies had agitated for were thus realized in the sense that the British claim halted the German influence from spreading any closer south to the Australian mainland. But other factors began to raise problems for the 'protectors'. The Protectorate had to have an administration to implement directives and to keep law and order. Conflicting attitudes and views on the actual role of the colonial administration flared up immediately and they intensified later when the territory began to be opened up.

The first four years of British colonial rule were not very dramatic

in the sense that administration and general contact with the local people were still very limited. Under the provisions of the British Settlements Act of 1887, a Legislative Council was established by letters Patent which also provided for the appointment of an Administrator and an Executive Council.⁵ However the powers of the Legislative Council were limited and whatever powers it had were subject to the consent of the Home Government. The British Secretary of State was the person to whom the Administration had to answer. The Protectorate administration was legally unable to do more than to protect the local people against the excesses of outside detrimental activities. It had no legal authority to intervene in native affairs but was authorized to acquire land. The early administration was headed by Sir Peter Schratckley who was succeeded by John Douglas after his death. When the British Settlements Act was enacted, this changed the status of Papua (or British New Guinea as it was then called); it then became a colony of Great Britain on 4th September 1888, four years after Commodore Erskine claimed it as a Protectorate.

The most significant aspect of the MacGregor administration, which began after Douglas, was the establishment of the Armed Constabulary in 1890. He started off with two Fijians and twelve Solomon Islanders and by the time he left in 1898 he had managed to recruit well over one hundred Papuans as policemen. Village constables were also appointed in the areas where the influence of the Administration was established. MacGregor was succeeded by LeHunt as Lieutenant-Governor, then Judge C.S. Robinson took over in 1903. He committed suicide a year later over an administrative scandal and was succeeded by Captain F.R. Barton who, in turn, was replaced by J.H.P. Murray in 1907.

The Murray Era

In 1905, the Australian Parliament passed an Act which formally made the colony of British New Guinea an Australian possession. The name British New Guinea was changed to Papua by the Act and the system of joint British/Australian administration which had been in force since the British annexation in 1888 was abolished. The final transfer was not completed until the appointment of Hubert Murray as Lieutenant-Governor of Papua in 1908. Then began the incredibly long reign of Murray, a period of over thirty years which ended in his death in 1940.

The essentially paternalistic attitude of the British administration was continued and was even more encouraged by Murray. This was reflected in his attitude to the natives and in the policies that he initiated. Government policies were aimed at preventing the disintegration of Papuan societies and at protecting them from undesirable influences. The Liquor, Arms and Opium Ordinance, which was one of the first Ordinances to be enacted, was directed towards this aim. There were no courts at the village level and the village constable was not given much power. Oram notes that 'In spite of failures, large numbers of people under British rule were given a wide measure of administrative and judicial responsibility which was progressively increased as their countries developed economically, politically and socially. In Papua however, there were no courts or treasuries, village constables were given limited responsibility and Councillors had no statutory responsibilities at all'.⁶ The Native Labour Act of 1907 which was passed before Murray was appointed as Lieutenant-Governor established closer controls over the recruiting and employment of villagers and the embryonic administrative apparatus under Murray made every effort to enforce it.

Murray's paternalistic attitude was also reflected in his views on the capability of Papuans to hold courts of law. He was of the firm

belief that it would be impossible to introduce courts presided over by the Papuan people. 'I know many intelligent natives and I think I can go as far as to say that I have many personal friends among them, but I do not know any that I could trust with the trial of a case, however simple.'⁷

This was the general attitude of the Australian administration and the Australian community in Papua. They considered that the capacity of the Papuan people to adapt rapidly to the Western levels of civilization was limited either because Papuans were genetically inferior or because the process of development would take a considerably long period of time. Thus Murray was reported to have stated towards the end of his long reign as Lieutenant-Governor that the best Papuans were on the same level of ability as the worst Europeans 'but I cannot think they are equal'.⁸ Murray clearly stated his own views on education. He believed that the general level of European civilization was too far above that of Papuan culture to serve as a suitable model, but that if the Papuan 'is educated and taught to work, it is possible that he may in time reach a fairly high standard'.⁹ He was opposed to the idea of 'the creation of a Papuan intelligentsia, and would rather aim at the diffusion of an elementary education...over as wide an area as possible'.¹⁰ Further evidence of Murray's outlook towards the intellectual capabilities of the Papuan people is shown by his statement in 1912 that, 'I do not think that we should attempt to give the Papuan anything in the nature of a higher education, nor do I think that we should ever dream of conferring upon him any political rights. He is inferior to the European, and, if we wish to avoid trouble, we should never forget this, and should never look upon him as a social and political equal'.¹¹ Although this view was later modified as Papuans became more and more accustomed to the introduced Western structures of administrative and economic

organization, the views that Murray expressed were the dominant attitude of the Australian colonial administration in Papua at the time.

These perhaps overly brief observations of Murray's attitude during his term as Lieutenant-Governor might portray him as a racist and exhibiting a negative attitude towards the natives. But it must be kept in mind that Murray probably had the interests of the people in mind and that this was the dominant attitude of the colonial officers in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. What is more important is that, because he was totally dedicated to these values and attitudes and, because of his determination that Papuans would exercise no authority until they had 'advanced' according to European notions, this meant that Papuans virtually did nothing for themselves. Another reason for this was the misplaced Australian, or Murray's own, egalitarianism, which dictated that no Papuan or group of Papuans should get ahead of any other. This attitude continued even after the post World War Two period under the label of 'uniform development'.

The implications of these attitudes are twofold. Firstly, the emphasis on protectionism, the relative neglect of economic development and the colonial administration's emphasis on 'equal opportunities' meant that the people did not have much chance in gaining experience in these introduced values and practices of either commercial or government and administrative affairs, to the extent that they were more or less trained to rely on the white man for guidance. The people were led to believe in the assumption that Australia was going to spoon-feed them until they became non-white Australians. Secondly, Murray's belief in uniform educational opportunities for advancement and his opposition to the encouragement of an indigeneous intellectual elite was beneficial in that no Papuan rose to prominence in his era so as to effectively challenge the administration; but was severely detrimental to Papua as

a whole in the sense that, instead of equal or uniform advancement education-wise, the result seems to have been one of uniform stagnation. Oram writes of the Murray era, 'While difficult to measure, the psychological effect of smothering paternalism was to have even more serious consequences. It led to a passivity and an attitude of dependence in the face of external challenges which were to leave the villagers defenceless against rapid social change in the future.'¹²

The first concrete indications of the rise of Papua's political future as a potential issue became evident during the First World War years. It was during those years that Murray first expressed hope of becoming Governor of a united Papua and New Guinea after the defeat of Germany when the German colony of Kaiser Wilhelmsland (New Guinea) came under Australian military administration under Brigadier E.A. Wisdom in 1914. In 1919, Murray was appointed as chairman of a Royal Commission which was set up to look into the proposition of uniting Papua with New Guinea under Australian rule. Murray, who was probably aspiring to become Governor of a united Papua and New Guinea, was in favour of the proposition but was out-voted by his fellow Royal Commissioners; the Australian Government representative, Atlee Hunt, and Walter Lucas of the Burns Philip trading company. Hastings, explaining the fairly obvious reason why Murray was out-voted states that: 'while everyone might pay lip-service to Murray's protectionist policies in Papua, no one wanted them in New Guinea where a combination of richer soils and a more systematic German exploitation of a larger labour force had resulted in profitable estates which the Australian Government was determined to expropriate and exploit.'¹³ Here was another instance of how commercial interests played a crucial part in determining the future status of Papua as well as New Guinea. Apart from this case, Murray himself never really suggested any long term plans for Papua other than vaguely

assuming that it would eventually become a seventh state of Australia and that New Guinea would have its own independence.

Post World War One Papua

After the First World War, the German colony of New Guinea was given to the newly formed League of Nations which entrusted its administration to Australia as a League of Nations Mandate. With the enacting of the New Guinea Act in 1921, the Australian military administration ceased and was replaced by a civilian administration, thus beginning the period of separate administration for both Papua and New Guinea while under the same control: Papua as a colony of Australia and New Guinea as a League of Nations Mandated Territory. It is quite obvious that this was a crucial period on which much of the basis of separatist sentiments in more recent times are based. It also helps explain why many Papuans accuse the Australian government of deceiving them about their legal political rights when Australia supported a united Papua and New Guinea later on. Even before the Second World War, Australian High Court decisions were delivered to the effect that:

the Constitution of Australia...required opposite goals for the two territories: Papua as an acquired territory, was destined for gradual absorption into Australia... The Mandated Territory [of New Guinea], not having been "acquired" and no legal title having been vested in the Commonwealth, was in law and in fact, "a place outside" His Majesty's domain. Although controlled as an integral portion of Australia, its development is not towards but away from absorption into the Commonwealth. (14)

Even before that decision, Murray had completely reversed his stand and opposed amalgamation of the territories. His main argument this time was in line with the Australian Government policy of the late 1930s which stated that there was a basic difference in policy separating the two territories.

The policy of separate administration for the two territories was

continued until 14th February, 1942, when civilian administration was suspended in both territories by regulation under the National Security Act of 1939. The two territories were for the first time brought under a single administrative structure during the years of the Second World War. The Australian military forces formed A.N.G.A.U. (Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit) to carry out civilian administrative as well as military operational functions. The Papua New Guinea Provisional Act of 1946 provided for the first time joint civilian administration and this was replaced by the Papua New Guinea Act of 1949 which provided for the establishment of a single Legislative Council, Executive Council and Supreme Court.¹⁵ However, even then, this Act was altered in certain respects at the request of the United Nations Trusteeship Council to ensure 'that the identity and status of the Territory of Papua as a Possession of the Crown and the identity of the territory of New Guinea as a Trust Territory shall continue to be maintained'. Under the Charter of the United Nations Trusteeship system, New Guinea was even then, meant to have a separate political future from Papua. Thus there was created a situation where the area was called the Territory of Papua and New Guinea (T.P.N.G.) and yet in another strictly legal sense, it was two territories, one controlled for and by Australia, and the other controlled by Australia for the United Nations.

Emergence of Papuan Discontent

During the latter part of the 1960s, specific Papuan thinking began to come out into the open. Certain Papuan members in the House of Assembly began talking of Papuan rights and the status of Papua. As time went by it became increasingly clear that the Australian government policy of absorbing Papua into the Commonwealth was not a very realistic idea. There were two basic reasons for this. Firstly, after World War II,

there was a period of decolonization in the Third World in which former colonial powers were rapidly granting self-government and independence to their colonies and the United Nations was pushing for a rapid acceleration of this process. The Australian government knew that it had to eventually grant independence to New Guinea but the problem was that since the enactment of the Papua-New Guinea Act of 1949, the two territories had been administered as if the eventual aim were to unite them under one government. This meant that it was now almost impossible to dismantle the administrative structures that had facilitated the administration of both Papua and New Guinea jointly, and the establishment of another administrative set-up to prepare New Guinea for eventual independence. Besides virtually nothing had been done to facilitate Papua's eventual absorption into the Commonwealth.

Secondly, for Papua to become a state of Australia, a very unlikely step would have to be taken: the White Australia policy would have to be abandoned. This was never very likely during those years. These two factors point to the fact that the Australian government never intended to incorporate Papua into the Commonwealth. While sections of the emerging leadership in Papua had become aware of this political reality, others who were slow to catch on still had doubts about the intentions of the Australian government.

The 'foot-dragging' attitude of the Australian government in not spelling out its intentions fully about the future of Papua created a lot of uncertainty. There is very little doubt that until as recently as 1969, Papuans were still being given to understand that they might still have a separate country or become full Australian citizens. The Australian government, in reassuring United Nations fears about incorporating New Guinea into the Australian Commonwealth, along with Papua, stated to the Trusteeship Council that it was up to both

territories to decide their own future. On the 16th March 1970, however, Australian government officials made Australia's position quite clear by pointing out that 'the difference in status between Papuans and New Guineans was "of little consequence now" and that Papuans were apparently not real Australian citizens because they did not do national service or pay Australian income tax or have the right to enter Australia without special permission.'¹⁶

However, it was then too late. Many Papuans genuinely believed that they were going to either become full Australian citizens or become fully independent.

By the late 1960s, the effects of almost one hundred years of separate rule began to increasingly manifest themselves in the people of both Papua and New Guinea. Chatterton commented on this when he stated that after so long the name Papua had acquired an emotional content.¹⁷ The same was the case for New Guinea too. The most significant evidence of this was the open conflict that flared up in Port Moresby in 1968. In June, violence erupted among a large crowd of spectators at the rugby league match in Boroko, Port Moresby. It was quite obvious that the rivals in this conflict were Papuans against New Guineans (or rather, vice versa, as it was the New Guineans who were the aggressors; Highlanders in particular). The fighting flared up again the next day at the annual Papuan Agricultural Show and it spilt out onto the streets from the showground as mobs of New Guineans charged through the showgrounds and streets bashing up hapless people in their way. The irony of this incident was that the vast majority of players in both the Papua and New Guinea teams were Australians working in the respective regions.

This incident contributed substantially to the increasing publicising of Papuan thinking of their rights and status. Hence, when Australian Prime Minister, John Gorton, made a visit to the Territory

in July 1970, he was confronted with Papuan representatives who questioned him on the status of Papua in relation to both Australia and New Guinea. He however did not make any explicit statement on the relationship between Papua and New Guinea but did make it clear that either with or without New Guinea, Papua was now set on the course of self-government and eventual independence. This was probably the most explicit statement that the Australian government had made up to that point of time concerning Papua's status and identity in relation to Australia. The significance of this statement was well summed up by one commentator: 'Without consulting the people of Papua, Australia had made Papua an Australian Territory; then cast it off without reference to the wishes of the Papuan people.'¹⁸

Apart from the feelings among Papuan leaders of being deceived by the Australian government of their legal status as citizens of Australia, they began complaining about economic discrimination. Economically, New Guinea was well ahead of Papua which, apart from other considerations, was beginning to experience the culmination of years of economic stagnation brought about mainly as a result of the Murray era of protectionist policies. The Territory of Papua and New Guinea's programme of economic development, adopted in 1968 and based on the report of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, called for what Woolford suitably describes as: 'the financially rational but politically dubious assumption that investment should be concentrated upon areas that promised the biggest and quickest return'.¹⁹ This of course meant that Papua would lose out even more considering the relative economic development that New Guinea had already achieved and the opening up of the Highlands as a potentially profitable region for economic activity. These events and developments prompted John Guise, the Speaker of the House of Assembly to write to Charles Barnes, the

Australian Minister for Territories: 'I am not prepared to see Papua neglected in order to maintain Australian prestige at the United Nations in New York.'²⁰ Guise said frustration and discontent among the Papuan people was fast reaching the point where they would be uncontrollable. Other prominent Papua Members in the House of Assembly also expressed similar sentiments. As Papuan leaders became more aware of the discrepancies in economic development between Papua and New Guinea and the attitudes of the Australian government which they regarded as having sold them out, they began to become even more active in terms of agitation and the first attempts at organizing opinion to call for redresses to their grievances then began to emerge.

Papua Action

The first real attempt at organization based on the Papuan issue was made by Ebia Olewale, before he joined the Pangu Pati. He formed the Papua Action movement in the House of Assembly with the aim of attempting to organize public opinion and recruiting as many members in the House as possible to agitate for a bigger share of the national economic development funds and other resources. Olewale claimed: 'There are places in Papua that have been forgotten for years. We do not make disturbances but the day will come when you can expect some disturbances such as an uprising.'²¹ He went on to argue that 'instead of concentrating on certain parts of the country for developmental purposes, let us have uniform development'. Olewale toured many villages in the Papuan region in an attempt to gain mass support for the Papuan Action movement and also visited Local Government Councils. He had no intention of forming Papua Action into a political party but claimed that the movement was to awaken the Papuan people and to attempt to create an atmosphere for work and urged Papuan House of Assembly members to encourage these objectives.

During a visit by Gough Whitlam, then Leader of the Opposition Labor Party in the Australian Parliament, leaders of the Papua Action movement threatened the Australian government that Papua would secede from the proposed union with New Guinea unless more economic development funds were diverted to Papua.²² People also queried him on the question of Papua's status, but Whitlam replied that the Australian Labor Party was not in favour of splitting the country and was only interested in uniting Papua with New Guinea into independence.²³

Lack of sympathy from the Australian government on the question of Papua's status as separate from New Guinea combined with the apparent lack of support from the villagers all contributed to the very brief existence of Papua Action. Most of the Papuan members in the House probably saw Papua Action as a potential secessionist movement and so didn't support it fully. This was despite occasional threats by individuals in the House of Papuan secessionism. On the whole, their demands were limited to insisting on a bigger share of the national cake and local parochial demands.

When Barnes, the Australian Minister for Territories, made a visit to the Territory in November-December 1970, he immediately came under heavy criticism from Papuan leaders. Cecil Abel told him that Papuans would learn to hate Australia unless they were given more funds for economic development in Papua. He claimed the Minister's belated interest in Papua highlighted the Australian government's 'longstanding insensitiveness to feelings and the aspirations of the Papuan people',²⁴ while concentrating on the economic, educational and social development of New Guinea.

There are a couple of important reasons why Papua Action failed to gain support that it needed in order to be successful. Firstly, there was a considerable gap between politics in the House and the village

people's level of awareness of these broad issues. People were pretty much uninformed on these issues and there was still a lot of suspicion about Olewale's motives behind his claims. Also, unlike Abaijah who later concentrated on the areas of heavy population densities like Port Moresby where it was relatively easy to reach so many people, Olewale's attempt failed because he didn't have the resources to follow up on his first round of publicity in the rural areas. The somewhat complex nature of his claims also made it fairly difficult for people to begin to really identify with them.

Secondly, as stated above, most of the Papuan members in the House did not view Papua Action with any favour because of their personal opposition to secessionist movements, which was what many of them considered the Papua Action movement to be, or was going to be. It must be kept in mind that most of them were nationalists. Their most immediate aim was to press for a greater share of economic development funds in Papua and the question of agitating for Papua's legal status was not so important to many of them.

The issue of Papuan nationalism was again raised during the debate on the report of the Select Committee on Constitutional Development which was tabled before the House of Assembly at its first sitting for 1971 in March. The Committee had been set up in June, 1969, and charged with the task of preparing for the consideration of the House of Assembly a set of proposals to serve as a guide for future constitutional development.

In March 1971, Bert Counsel, a strong supporter of Papuan rights and former leading member in the defunct Papua Action movement, made a very critical speech against some of the proposals made by the Select Committee on Constitutional Development. Counsel, who was an expatriate, was the member for Gulf and Western Regional electorate. He was

particularly critical of its proposal for the name 'Niugini' as the name for the country and on the Committee's warnings of the dangers of breaking away.²⁵ He stated in his speech in the House that:

The Territory as a whole might well not benefit if groups did break away, but what is not said [in the Committee's report] is that Papua would benefit tremendously if it did break away. I am fascinated to read this. The Territory must do this and do that. Territory development as a whole must be geared towards self-government during the life of the next House. I assume that all this means is that the money keeps pouring into Bougainville and the Highlands; - anywhere, as long as it is not Papua. (26)

Later on in the debate he made a scathing speech on the proposal to name the country 'Niugini':

Ever since the first time I spoke in this House, I have warned Papuans that they have gradually and deliberately been sold down the drain. Now I hope all Papuans can see how far down this dirty drain we have gone. Not only has the Administration and the Select Committee deliberately and repeatedly ducked the question of what our rights and citizenship status are, but now they are trying to tell Papuans that because New Guineans want the name 'Niugini' for the proposed obscene union between the two countries, Papuans now want to be called 'Niuginians'. I do not care how you spell it - it is the sound that counts. Ask any Papuan whether he is a New Guinean and you will probably get a punch in the bracket. The only way I would ever support this name would be if you spelt it 'Niugini' and we passed a Law to make the pronunciation of that word 'Papua'. There might be a few oddballs around here who say they can put up with the name, but I will tell you truly that a good ninety-nine percent of Papuan people do not want that name. (27)

On 20th May 1971, in an attempt to deflate the growing Papua movement, the Administrator, L.W. Johnson, issued a statement authorized by the Australian Minister for External Territories, Charles Barnes, 'to reaffirm that it is the policy of the Australian Government to advance Papua New Guinea to internal self-government and independence as a united country'. He explained that in practice, there had been no difference in the legal status between Papuans and New Guineans since the Administrative union of the two territories in 1947.²⁸

However, the issue of Papua was again raised in the next session

of the House in June 1971 by Papuan members, as a 'matter of public importance - political welfare of the Papuan people'. They were particularly critical of the United Nations Visiting Mission, which they claimed, had urged unity without any real consultation with the people of Papua. It was also during this session that Counsel, the Member for Western and Gulf, presented the results of a 'survey' which he had conducted earlier which showed that many Papuans were opposed to uniting with New Guinea. He claimed that the results of the survey showed that Papuans feared they would lose their identity, receive less development funds, and have decisions continually made for them by others. Along with the questionnaires which had been drafted with the help of some Papuan members, was a circular which warned that if something were very important to Papua, but New Guineans did not like it, then Papua would not win out because of the overwhelming number of New Guinean representatives in the House of Assembly. Seventy questionnaires along with the circular had been posted to Local Government Councils in the Papuan region.²⁹ Of these questionnaires, only forty were returned. Of those returned, eighty per cent said they did not want union with New Guinea at that stage; just over half said they did not want union with New Guinea at any time and all the respondents wanted equal voting power with New Guinea in any proposed union. The results of the survey were somewhat dubious because of the inbuilt bias of the questionnaire and circular. However, the next day, Counsel moved a motion in the House which called on the Australian government:

not to take any action, either of its own volition or as the result of a request of this House as a whole, that would alter the existing status and rights of Papua and Papuans without the express approval of the Papuan people or their elected representatives. (30)

He went on to claim that:

this motion is not secessionist; neither is it separatist; it is an honest attempt to see that justice is done to the Papuan people as a whole. It is an attempt to prevent the government from riding rough shod over the wishes of the Papuan people. (31)

In the debate that followed, an amendment was moved successfully by John Poe, a Papuan representing a New Guinean electorate, which removed the phrase 'either from its own volition or as the result of this House as a whole', from the original motion. The motion was finally carried in its amended form by a vote of thirty votes to twenty-five. Those who voted against the motion were mainly New Guineans except for four Southern Highlanders. Papuan members said they spoke not for separation but for the right to be consulted about their own future. Some New Guinean members gave their support because they considered that the Papuans had made a reasonable request and the Australian government should at least give some thought to their request. Several members stated that they were strong supporters of national unity; but none were prepared to argue that nationalists in Papua New Guinea could not grant the right of self-determination to particular groups. A group of Papuan members then moved for a resolution calling on the United Nations to send a delegation to inspect Papua, the next time a United Nations Visiting Mission came to New Guinea.

The idea was that United Nations delegation should compare conditions in the two territories.³² The motion had considerable support but, instead of a United Nations delegation, Toua Kapena moved an amendment to substitute it by a group of Australian Parliamentarians. The amended motion was then approved, inviting representatives of the Australian Parliament to tour Papua to find out what the people wanted. When Barnes, on behalf of the Australian government rejected this request, he contributed to the arguments of those Papuans who claimed that

Australia's only concern was to get out of Papua as quickly and as cheaply as possible. Barnes instead proposed that a delegation of Papuan Parliamentarians visit Australia to put their point of view direct to the Australian government. The Administrator's Executive Council accepted the proposal and selected Oala Rarua Rarua, Toua Kapena, Tore Lokoloko, Lepani Watson and Andrew Wabiria, the five Papuans who held ministerial portfolios.

They left for Australia early in November 1971 and put forward a number of proposals to the Australian government which were designed to ensure a more acceptable relationship between Papua and New Guinea. The main measures proposed were a regional government system for Papua and a greater share of developmental funds. Of the former demand, Barnes replied that this should be left to the new House of Assembly. On the latter, he promised to engage an independent consultant to prepare developmental programmes for all the less developed areas in both Papua and New Guinea.³³ However, this exercise proved to be of limited value in coming to any suitable solution to the issue of Papua and its related economic grievances. Barnes had in effect 'washed his hands of Australian responsibility for future constitutional safeguards for Papua.'³⁴

It was very shortly after these events that Miss Josephine Abaijah intervened in the Papuan issue by nominating for the House of Assembly seat of Central Regional in the 1972 elections.

It was quite obvious from the rather awkward manner in which the Australian government had tried to 'wrap up' the issue of Papua that the exact opposite effect had occurred. Papuans were becoming increasingly aware of the debate that had been going on for some time and were beginning to be sensitive about the issues that had been raised. However there was no leader who had the conviction to effectively work towards

organizing these periodic agitations into a coherent mass movement. Abaijah's entrance into the scene of the debate was crucial in the sense that, with target dates for self-government and independence being frantically proposed, time was beginning to run out for those who advocated 'Papuanism'. This was the period in which the Papua issue could have faded in its intensity because of the fairly intense discussions about self-government and independence. Abaijah provided the leadership, along with the conviction, to be able to attract an amount of support such as had never been enjoyed by earlier advocates of the Papua issue. The ground-work or foundations of Papua Besena had been firmly established and kept alive by the events and debates that have been discussed in this chapter. Abaijah was able to use these to her advantage and make Papua Besena a successfully mobilized movement, despite the fact that the basis of many of her protests were still as debatable as those of her predecessors.

Footnotes

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CHAPTER THREE

PAPUA BESENA: 1973-77

This chapter will attempt to outline the early history of Papua Besena, from its establishment in 1973 up to 1977. This was the period in which the movement enjoyed increasing support and received a lot of attention from the media and the government. In general, this period saw the rise of Papua Besena as a force in Papua New Guinea politics. This chapter will attempt to put forward a case history of Papua Besena's rise. This will then be examined in relation to the next chapter in which fragmentation within Papua Besena in the period after the 1977 elections caused a decline in support for Papua Besena.

Quite a number of political movements sprang up in Papua New Guinea in the latter period of Australian colonial rule. Many of these were small and very local groups who felt vulnerable politically and economically in the face of growing nationalism (i.e. Papua New Guinean nationalism) and the impending transfer of power from Canberra to Port Moresby. Many people were suspicious of independence and even political parties like the United Party which was formed most specifically to oppose early independence were expressing their concern at the rapid unfolding of events which indicated quite clearly that Australia was prepared to hand over responsibility to the indigenous people as soon as possible in the early 1970s.¹ Political movements sprang up in many parts of Papua New Guinea, some specifically to safeguard the interests of local people and others with broader aspirations. The rise of Mataunganism on the Gazelle Peninsula and Napidakoe Navitu on Bougainville are some of the more well-known manifestations of people's consciousness of the rapidly changing political situation and their attempts to accommodate these changes. Papua Besena was one of these

political movements which arose as a result of these changes and pressures.

Papua Besena was able to attract considerable attention with the broad, fairly well articulated aims and objectives expressed through a charismatic leader in Josephine Abaijah. It was able to get the support of many people because it seemed at the time to offer the form of political security that people wanted in those times of uncertainty when people had not yet cast off their suspicions of the new phenomenon called independence. The most important factor that worked in Papua Besena's favour was its base in Port Moresby, the capital city of the nation and headquarters of the Australian colonial administration. Thus, it was able to reach with considerable ease the large concentration of people who live in and around Port Moresby, the biggest urban centre in Papua New Guinea. Although the strength of Papua Besena at the time of its founding was not very clear, it is quite obvious both from the reaction of the public and the government, and from the publicity that it enjoyed in the media, that the movement has since made a big impact on the recent political history of Papua New Guinea.

This chapter will attempt to outline the early history of Papua Besena, especially Abaijah's role and her attempts at mass mobilization for the Papua Besena cause. A brief mention will also be made of the other political movements which arose during the same period in the Port Moresby area which were closely related to Papua Besena in terms of aspirations and leadership personnel.

The founder of Papua Besena, Josephine Abaijah, had very definite and strong feelings about the distinction between Papua (which she claimed to have had a unique political experience), and New Guinea. Miss Abaijah describes Papua Besena as a nationalist movement. Besena can be translated loosely as 'the descendents of, or the children of';

thus the nationalist basis of Papua Besena's claim of Papuans as being one people distinct from New Guineans and any other people. However, in many ways Abaijah's conception of Papua seemed much smaller than the official boundaries recognized. Under some circumstances, it seemed that people whom she regarded as Papuans were people who were so regarded by others. It was quite obvious in the early history of Papua Besena that Southern Highlanders and other people from the inland areas of the Gulf and Western Provinces were not mentioned very much because of the ambiguity of Papua as Abaijah saw it, and the arbitrary boundary between Papua and New Guinea imposed by the colonialists. The main criteria used by Papua Besena leaders for identifying Papuans were those people living in areas which were constantly contacted through patrols, missions and other forms of contact by officers of the Administration and other groups that came into Papua through the Australian connection. These were chiefly the areas in which Hiri-Motu, the lingua-franca of much of Papua, was fairly widely spoken.

Abaijah first emerged into the limelight of Papua New Guinean politics during the 1972 elections. Before the elections she was employed in the Health Department as Principal of the Health Education Institute of Papua New Guinea.

During her election campaign in January and February, 1972, Abaijah presented a mildly secessionist platform. She described herself as a 'Papuan with a nationality, name and common future with other Papuan people'.² She was supported by Percy Chatterton and John Guise, two of the most popular people in the Papuan region at the time. Her campaign cost her about \$3,000. She walked through to many of the villages within the Central Regional Electorate distributing campaign pamphlets and speaking to the people and putting in a very intensive advertising effort in the national newspaper, the Post Courier.

One of her main obstacles in the election campaigns was the mere fact that she was a woman. Many people at the time still thought that she was stepping out of line by attempting to become a politician, an occupation which up until then had been an exclusively male domain. In fact an article in one Australian newspaper summed up quite well the feelings of many people at the time. 'Papuan women are regarded by their men as basically mothers and wives. During her [Abaijah's] tour of the hill country [Goilala area] village men occasionally tore up her pamphlets in front of her to show their anger.'³ But Abaijah rejected these criticisms that she was a candidate for women only. After she had been elected she was quoted as saying, 'I was elected by men as well as women. The men in the house don't just work for men. I'm not going to separate the sexes.'⁴ Her record as a parliamentarian ever since has shown that she had other ideas about separation which had little to do with women's liberation and representation of women only in Parliament.

The candidates for the seat of Central Regional were as follows:

- (a) Kevin Javia Zomai
- (b) Frederic David Anderson
- (c) Josephine M. Abaijah
- (d) Kevin Frederic Fletcher
- (e) William John Fielding
- (f) Thomas Farr Rosser
- (g) Michael John Galli

Abaijah easily defeated her six male opponents in the ensuing elections. She won with a huge total of 15,979 votes; at least 9,000 votes ahead of her nearest rival. Although she did not poll too well in the inland areas, she practically swept the coastal areas.

After the elections she was approached by officials from both the Pangu and United Party who offered to give her a ministerial portfolio

in return for her support but she refused both these offers. 'I don't want to be committed,' she said. 'Apart from that, one of the messages that came through while I was campaigning was that the people don't want their member to be a Minister. They think Ministers are stooges and have no time to spend with their own people.'⁴ Hence, she remained committed to her election platform: that is, to promote the Papuan nationalist cause.

Immediately after the elections she set to work, visiting villages and Papuan settlements explaining to the people the political and economic situation of Papua as she saw it and attempting to build the foundations for the establishment of Papua Besena a year later in July 1973. It wasn't long before her public utterances began to bother the other Papuan Members and especially the Papuan Ministers. 'Miss Abaijah's forthright Papuan nationalism is no doubt embarrassing to those of her Papuan colleagues who have become Ministers in the Coalition Government, though it is rumoured that some of them expressed somewhat similar sentiments to hers during the election campaigns.'⁵ However, it seems that during those first few months after her election, she wasn't as radical in her beliefs as she might have appeared to be. It seems she was still testing out the level of opposition to her public statements and wasn't yet prepared to dissociate herself fully from events that were going on at the national level. In November 1972, Abaijah was Papua New Guinea's official representative at the Eighteenth Annual Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference held in Malawi. She said at the conference, 'Our government is optimistic about the future of the country, but with self-government and independence, it is most unlikely that we will avoid our share of political problems and turmoil.'⁶

On 3rd June 1973, a meeting was held in Abaijah's residence in Hohola, Port Moresby, after which the establishment of Papua Besena was

announced. According to Abaijah, Papua Besena was formed by a council 'comprising villagers, councillors, professional people, tradesmen and other people.'⁷ It is not clear how many people attended this meeting or who these people represented. However, from the outset, it was quite clear that Abaijah was the leader and chief spokesperson for Papua Besena. The movement was centred around her and a few other loyal supporters, among whom were Dr Eric Wright and Reverend Percy Chatterton.

On 10th June 1972 a meeting was organized in the urban village of Kilakila in Port Moresby. Dr Eric Wright, Abaijah's advisor, spoke in a very heated voice attacking the unmarried male New Guineans in the city of allegedly molesting Papuan women. He also attacked the rapidly increasing numbers of New Guinean squatters who were settling illegally on Papuan land. The Reverend Percy Chatterton who also supported the Papuan separatist cause also spoke at the meeting. Then finally Abaijah addressed the crowd and the meeting became confused as supporters, skeptics and the nationalists (advocates of the union between Papua and New Guinea), began to argue amongst themselves and the meeting finally broke up in confusion.

Although many people supported the claims made by Abaijah and her Papua Besena colleagues, there was by this time a lot of interaction between Papuans and New Guineans and many of the people, especially educated young Papuans questioned many of Abaijah's claims. Other meetings were held in the villages of Boera, Porebada and Tubusereia. Throughout all these meetings Wright accompanied her. Papua Besena meetings were also held in the villages in the Bereina area and the Rigo and Abau areas. By the time she had visited most of these areas it was obvious that the issue of Papuan separatism was reaching a potentially explosive situation in the tense period before self-government and independence.

After the announcement of the establishment of Papua Besena, Abaijah began to increase pressure on the Australian government to take steps to prevent the approaching political union of Papua with New Guinea. Papua Besena officials delivered a letter on 11th July 1973 to the Administrator, Mr L.W. Johnson, claiming that Papua should become an independent country solely governed by Papuans and, until this happened, it should remain part of Australia. Johnson replied that they were chasing an impossible dream and that they would do better to work for strong district governments within a unified Papua New Guinea.⁸

A couple of weeks later, a series of events occurred in Port Moresby which were to give a tremendous boost to many of the claims made by the Papua Besena leaders and so further enable them to get increased support for the movement from Papuans. The events were the Papua versus New Guinea inter-Territorial football matches which were to be played on the weekend. Rugby league and soccer were played in Port Moresby while Australian rules football was played in Lae. On the two days before the games were due to be played, Abaijah held three meetings in and around Port Moresby where she again expressed her separatist sentiments. Early Sunday morning, an angry New Guinean crowd gathered on the road to Morata past Waigani and then proceeded to sing and shout abuse about Abaijah for about half an hour. Then they dispersed with threats of bashing up Papuans who supported Abaijah. That afternoon, Sunday 22nd July, 1973, all three matches were played and they were all won by the Papua teams. Then fighting started at the Boroko oval after the rugby league match was over. New Guineans started throwing punches and wielding bottles and sticks at the Papuan spectators and the violence quickly spilled out onto the streets. Papuans barricaded themselves in their villages and settlements while New Guineans went on a rampage, smashing the windscreens of buses and cars and stoning motorists on the

roads. All the shops were quickly closed and the streets were rapidly deserted except for the rioters and the police. There was further sporadic rioting on Monday and Tuesday and the police had a hectic time dispersing the rioters with teargas and arresting anyone behaving in a riotous manner. By Tuesday afternoon, the police had the situation under control although rumours of further fights continued to sweep the city for several more days.

Papuans were angry and were then preparing to organize and mobilize themselves against the New Guinean rioters. Police stationed roadblocks on the highways leading to Bereina, Sogeri and Kwikila to prevent truckloads of villagers armed with knives, spears and axes from entering the town. They turned back several truckloads of angry villagers from the Rigo sub-district who had armed themselves and were about to enter the town and there were reports that the Keremas, Mekeos and Goilalas who lived in the town were preparing themselves to go out and counter the New Guinean aggressors. The antagonism was not as clear-cut as that, however. Some elite New Guineans were also attacked and some Papuans fought each other. However, on the whole it was mostly young New Guineans who were the aggressors. The irony of the riots was that the majority of players in both the Papuan and New Guinean teams were Australians who were working and residing in the respective regions at the time.

Abaijah took advantage of the riots to further publicise and justify her claims that Papuans should not be forced into a political union with New Guinea. Papua Besena leaders claimed that Papuans were not even safe in their own town, and Abaijah called for the immediate repatriation of all unemployed New Guineans back to their own areas and that strict controls be placed on internal migration, especially between Papua and New Guinea.

On 26th July, four days after the outbreak of violence, Abaijah

and Wright addressed a forum at the University of Papua New Guinea in which they spoke on their basic themes of the political and economic domination of Papua by New Guinea and the need for Papuan independence. Some of the students supported them on the arguments that they raised about the inequalities of economic development between Papua and New Guinea but, on the whole, the student body was not too impressed with her justifications for Papuan separatism. The students themselves had marched through the town on the day after the riots broke out as a show of national unity and solidarity and many of them blamed Abaijah for causing the riots that took place.

Throughout the rest of 1973 and 1974 Abaijah continued to intensify her campaign. The Post Courier ran her press releases frequently⁹ and its letters to the editor column was constantly printing letters which flooded in, expressing people's views on the issues that Papua Besena raised.

Sometime after that, Abaijah and Wright began to travel overseas trying to gain international recognition for Papua Besena. In August 1973 they made a highly publicised tour of the eastern states of Australia and spoke at University campuses and other public gatherings and received quite a lot of media coverage. But despite her efforts, she failed to impress the Australian public and the Australian government who didn't agree with the separatist views.

After her Australian tour, Abaijah then went to the United Nations in New York and finally to London to present a petition to the Queen. These efforts too failed to arouse international public opinion in favour of Papua Besena. On their return to Papua New Guinea, Dr Wright was threatened with charges relating to breaches of the Public Services Ordinances and subsequently resigned from the Public Service.¹⁰

In October 1973 Abaijah announced the formation of the Papuan

Democratic Union as the political wing of Papua Besena.¹¹ Then in November the name was changed to Papua Party. Abaijah stated that it would be responsible for developing structures in political education and political activation.¹² Earlier that month a Papuan Black Power group was formed with the objectives of developing an awareness of Papuan identity and of supporting Miss Abaijah's efforts to create an independent Papua.¹³ Later on Abaijah said that eventually there would be a Papua Pioneers Youth movement, a Papua Reconstruction movement and Papua Investments.¹⁴ These plans all failed to get off the ground as Papua Besena itself was struggling to survive in those times.

On Self-Government day, 1st December 1973, the Papua Besena flag was raised for the first time, one at the provincial centre of Bereina and another at the suburb of Kaugere in Port Moresby. At both meetings the message was proclaimed that the Papua Party was celebrating self-government for Papua and not for Papua New Guinea as a whole.

In public at the time, Somare seemed to regard Papua Besena as nothing more than a minor irritation in the side of the government. However, when Papua Besena began to consolidate its strength in the Central Province, he began to seriously consider moves to counter its fragmenting effects on the budding young country. Hence, in August 1974, he announced the appointment of a special task force to look into development problems of Papua and to make recommendations for appropriate remedies. Meanwhile Abaijah had been busy leading several demonstrations and speaking at gatherings in different parts of the Central Province. In April 1974 she led a demonstration against alleged police brutality during an incident at the Wanigela canoe settlement near Koki market. Her initiative later led to the holding of a Commission of Enquiry to look into the allegations.¹⁵ Then in May she led a delegation of Koiari people to make certain demands and to claim compensation from the Papua

New Guinea Electricity Commission for alleged broken agreements over the building of the Sirinumu dam and for Port Moresby's power supply.¹⁶

This was followed by a demonstration.

In June 1974 Abaijah led two days of demonstrations by the wives of Papuan workers in Port Moresby. The women went out to protest against rising inflation which they said was caused by the Central Government, and presented a list of their demands to the government. During the demonstrations, damage was done by some of the more militant women to the offices which the prime minister and his staff used. Damage was also done at the airport premises when the women followed some ministers to the airport. Some of the ministers were even jostled and punched by the women. Somare accused Abaijah of hoping for a woman or child to be seriously injured 'so that she can have a martyr for her cause', and described the violence and abuse as 'total irresponsibility'.¹⁷

All these activities contributed to the rapid rise of Papua Besena as a force to be reckoned with in Papua New Guinean politics. By championing the cause of specific groups of people like the Koiari people or the low income earner, Abaijah and the Papua Besena movement provided a lot of appeal to the various Papuan groups living in and around Port Moresby.

In comparison to the later activities of Abaijah on the Papuan separatist cause, the early period seems to have been when Abaijah was at the peak of her active involvement in the Papua Besena movement. There was no other contender who came even close to challenging her role as leader of Papua Besena. This period also seems to be one in which there was the greatest increase in support for Papua Besena as a mass movement. The actual increase in support, as will be shown later, in the more recent case, was one of support for Papua Besena involvement in Parliament, as opposed to non-parliamentary leaders of an informal

movement as Abaijah had hoped to establish.

One of the things that really shocked the government, especially Somare's Pangu Pati, was when Papua Besena supporters gained control of the Port Moresby City Council after the Council elections in April 1974. Papua Besena won eleven seats in the Council, including the one which Dr Eric Wright won: Pangu was able to win only eight seats and there were four independent Councillors and one Peoples Progress Party Councillor. Although the independents held the balance of power, the lobbying that Papua Besena councillors conducted immediately after the elections paid off for them so they were able to form the ruling group within the Council. Consequently the Papua Besena councillors were able to keep out all the Pangu councillors from all the important working committees. In June the Council decided to pass a motion in favour of a separate independence for Papua.

Papuan Members of the House of Assembly had meetings in mid-June 1974 but they failed to come to any agreement, especially Olewale and Abaijah. Olewale claimed that although they were seeking the same goals by different methods, Abaijah was 'too emotional' for him to become involved with her Papua Besena movement.¹⁸

Towards the end of 1974 the separatists attempted some serious efforts at integrating to form a common front. Apart from Papua Besena which was the only movement which could, with some credibility, claim mass support, a number of other movements with at least partially similar aims and objectives had sprung up.

Papua Besena did not have the field of Papuan separatism all to itself. Other groups had sprung up almost simultaneously with similarities in their aims and leadership personnel. Although not as significant as Papua Besena, these groups (all of which have disappeared as separate distinct groups), were beneficial to Papua Besena in that,

through their own individual areas of operation, they were able to effectively transfer some of the support for themselves on to Papua Besena when they gradually died out or became integrated into Papua Besena. All this added fuel to the Papuan issue. Among the groups with which Papua Besena formed some sort of association were the Social Workers Party of Papua New Guinea, the Papuan Black Power Movement, the Papuan Liberation Movement, the Papuan Republic Fighters Army and the Papua Group in the Port Moresby City Council.

Social Workers Party

The Social Workers Party was formed amongst waterside workers and other unionists on 20th May 1973, with the stated aims of uniting students, urban and village workers. It also aimed to push for workers' control and self-management, the establishment of cottage industries and heavier taxes on expatriate wages. Its socialist oriented programme included greatly increased workers' wages, social security schemes, localization and 'the defeat of capitalism, imperialism and colonialism in all spheres of the global universe.'¹⁹ Initial membership was 30 but by June, the party's president Laki Laya, claimed that this had grown to 360. This figure seems greatly exaggerated. Laki Laya, union organizer with the Port Moresby Council of Trade Unions, Manu Raho, also a full-time industrial organizer, and party president, Peter Kavo were all Papuans. They claimed that about \$500 had come from Australian sources for office equipment and they were expecting more. They also claimed that they had the support of Australian unions.²⁰ The party appeared to be mainly based in the Waterside Workers Union and it was not surprising that Peter Kavo said the party supported the principles of the Papuan movement (i.e. Papua Besena)²¹ because the union was dominated by Papuan workers. However, the Social Workers Party was never

a significant political force and by the end of 1973, it had merged into the Papua Besena movement in terms of support. Manu Raho was later to join the Papua Besena group in the City Council.

Papuan Black Power Movement

Formed in September 1973, the Papuan Black Power Movement embraced 'all dedicated Papuans who are against a unified Papua New Guinea'.²² The objectives of the movement included the protection of the freedom, rights, history, prestige and identity of the Papuan people and strongly supported Josephine Abaijah 'in her efforts to create Papua as an independent nation'.²³ There is no information readily available about the size and strength of this movement in terms of membership and organization which leads to the obvious conclusion that its significance as a political force was also negligible. Leo Kavaua, president of the movement, was also personally in support of Josephine Abaijah and, as their stated aim above shows, there were no significant differences between this movement and Papua Besena. Not long after it was formed, internal conflict and disagreements within the leadership of the Black Power Movement led to the establishment of a breakaway movement called the Papuan Liberation Movement. Both groups, however, quickly disintegrated and their supporters joined the mainstream of Papua Besena under Abaijah.

Papuan Liberation Movement

The Papuan Liberation Movement was formed with a platform of non-violence. McKillop states quite correctly that the threats of violence and the actual outbursts of violence in some of the Papua Besena rallies and demonstrations was the main thing which led to the formation of the movement.²⁴ It was led by James Mopio who declared himself 'a man of peace'. He carried a bamboo smoking pipe which he called a peace pipe

as a symbol of his style of approach to agitation on the Papuan separatist issue. Not much is known about the extent of support for this movement and it seems that it was centred around Mopio and a few friends. Like the other movements, it too had become non-existent by 1976 when Mopio won the by-election for Central Regional in January 1976 and announced the formation of the Papua Party.²⁵

Papuan Republic Fighters Army

Another movement which was formed during the early 1970s was the Eriwo Development Association founded by Simon Kaumi. This group was also involved in public demonstrations over the Somare government's attitude towards the Constitutional Planning Committee report and particularly with demonstrations over the question of citizenship. After being suspended from his position as Secretary of the Department of the Interior for making public statements against his Minister, John Poe, Kaumi went back to his home province, Northern Province, and organized a group of supporters to form the Eriwo Development Association. Not long after that he led a group of his supporters onto a run-down plantation owned by an Australian planter at Jiropa in the Northern Province. He then declared that he was taking it over in the name of the Papuan people and proceeded to train his followers of approximately two hundred men daily in military style. He announced that this was the core group of his Papuan Republic Fighters Army and began liaising with Abaijah and the other Moresby based separatist groups. Somare decided against sending in the riot squad to stop the 'army' and when ordinary police were eventually sent in, Kaumi's men surrendered without resistance and only six men were arrested and charged with 'carrying offensive weapons'. After that, parliament passed legislation making it an offence to organize private armies.

Late in February 1975 about fifty of Kaumi's men went on a symbolic march across the Kokoda trail from the Northern Province to Port Moresby. The whole exercise turned out to be a big disappointment for the men who took part, when at the end of their march, they were met only by a handful of policemen and several curious spectators. Kaumi himself flew into Port Moresby from Popondetta two hours late and wasn't there to meet the men. Immediately after that event, Kaumi was sacked from the Public Service. This also was the end of the Papuan Republic Fighters Army as an active group.

Papua Group

In late 1973, leaders of the Papuan Black Power Movement made a proposal to form a Council of Papuan Affairs, to which Abaijah agreed. The objective of the Council was to provide a common forum for all Papuan organizations, including Papuan local government councils, church groups, students and all other Papuan groups. Nothing came out of this proposal but a Papua Group was formed in 1974 immediately after the Port Moresby City Council elections in April. After a meeting between the Papuan councillors who were anti-Pangu, Papua Besena leaders and prominent Papuans in the Public Service and the private sector, Abaijah announced the formation of the Papua Group.²⁶ The Group then immediately announced a set of demands to the government:

- immediate provincial-stage government for Papua,
- legal aid for Papua from Australia,
- a Papuan regional local government conference in Port Moresby to be financed by the Central Government to discuss the first two demands.²⁷

The government agreed to hold a meeting to discuss these demands and so a meeting was organized between the Papua Group, Papuan ministers

in the government and Somare in late 1974. Unfortunately the meeting didn't succeed in coming to an agreement because it disintegrated when Somare had to leave during the session to attend to another engagement. Although there was a very good chance of the Papua Group and Papua Besena merging into a single group, Abaijah's insistence that Papua Besena remain an informal movement of the people contributed to prevent this. Then towards the end of 1974, conflict of views flared into the open and in November Abaijah told Somare he was wasting his time 'carrying on the discussions with the Papua Group', describing it as a 'phony splinter group that has no following' and as being 'loaded with government agents'.²⁸ From this time on, the Papua Group then disintegrated. Some of the members of the Papua Group then turned their support to Papua Besena directly. The group in the City Council also began to identify themselves as Papua Besena councillors.

Tensions between Papua Besena and the Central Government

Papua Besena has on many occasions presented more direct challenges to the legitimacy of the government through its actions and proclamations. The government, for its part, adopted a very passive strategy of countering the threats to national unity presented by Papua Besena. It made few public statements directly against Papua Besena and preferred to let the situation cool down by itself. This strategy worked well for the government. On self-government day (for Papua New Guinea), 1st December 1973, the Papua Besena flag was raised for the first time, one at the provincial centre of Bereina and another at the suburb of Kaugere in Port Moresby. At both occasions, it was proclaimed that the ceremony was for celebrating self-government for Papua and not for Papua New Guinea.²⁹

These meetings did nothing to disrupt the official self-government day activities. However, when Papua Besena began to consolidate its strength in the Central Province, Somare began to seriously consider moves to counter its fragmenting effects on the budding young country, or more particularly its effects on the authority and popularity of the government. He began to appreciate the seriousness of the threat that Papua Besena posed when ever some of his Papuan ministers began to question the desirability of Papuan union with New Guinea at independence.

Even within the House of Assembly and the Coalition government the impact of Papua Besena was already causing some differences of opinion. Some Papuan ministers even went so far as to question the desirability of a united Papua New Guinea. Ebia Olewale, who was then Minister for Commerce, questioned whether the coming political union of Papua with New Guinea was the only option open for Papuans. He said this at the opening speech that he gave at the annual Agricultural show. This indicated that there were certainly parliamentarians and even Papuan ministers in the government who even at that relatively early period were considering alternative arrangements.

The government then adopted a more practical approach at attempting to undermine the growing influence of Papua Besena. At the instigation of Somare's research officer and Pangu president, Moi Avei,

who was also a Papuan, the government established a Papuan Village Economic Task Force to recommend 'on all types of developmental opportunities in Papua'.³² The all Papuan membership of the Task Force included:

Moi Avei	- Chairman	Tom Koraea
Naipuri Maina	-D/Chairman	John Waiko
John Kasaipwalova		Jean Kekedo
Dus Mapun		Louis Mona

The recommendations of this Task Force resulted in the establishment of the Papuan Village Economic Development Fund. The government also attempted to engage Papua Besena leaders, especially Abaijah in open debates to counter Papua Besena. A public meeting was held in Kwikila, the administrative centre for the Rigo sub-district, in which the government organized a public debate intended specifically to discredit the Papua Besena movement. Senior government ministers from all the main regions of the country were present as a show of national solidarity. However, these efforts did not succeed very well since Abaijah had already established enough doubt in the minds of many people in the villages which she had visited on her previous tours for the people to change their minds. Her more frequent contact with the village people compared to the government team's record was a major factor in her favour and it turned out that the government failed to discredit Papua Besena and force it into political oblivion. The government was in a dilemma: if it failed to oppose Papua Besena, it might seem it could not answer the movement's claims but if it engaged Papua Besena in public debate, the government could give Papua Besena even more credence.

In November 1974, a policy document was put out under Abaijah's name. It set out the nature of the Papua Besena movement, its aims and aspirations, leadership and views on many issues concerning the

movement and Papua. By then independence day for Papua New Guinea was only months away and Abaijah wanted to set the date for Papuan independence. In February 1975 the City Council met and the Papua Besena councillors, through their numerical majority, committed the Council to supporting a unilateral declaration of Papuan independence.

Then on the morning of 16th March 1975 the red, white and blue flag of Papua was raised at Kaugere, Port Moresby. Papua Besena supporters sang the national anthem of Papua. Abaijah displayed some items on the ground which were intended as symbols of Australian colonial rule. These were two sticks of tobacco, a hunting knife, a steel axe, some calico and three ship's biscuits. These items, which Abaijah wanted to present to the then Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator Don Willesee, who was in Port Moresby at the time, were intended to represent the gifts made to Papuan village leaders when Papua was annexed in 1884 by the British. The Australian flag was then lowered as a symbol of the end of Australian colonial rule in Papua. The ceremony was repeated in the nearby villages of Tatana and Baruni and again at the old golf course in Kaugere in the afternoon of the same day. The whole exercise was simply a symbolic gesture of Papua Besena leaders saying that they were not going to accept the formal unity of Papua with New Guinea as one nation on 16th September 1975. In fact Abaijah was not even in the country on Papua New Guinea's independence day. She was in Sydney, trying to raise money to support the families of a number of village men jailed for rioting in the Rigo sub-district. Her absence was a political statement in itself.

Early in 1976, by-elections were held to fill in two new regional seats for Parliament due to a restructuring of the electoral boundaries. They were Central Regional (created by dividing the old Central Regional electorate into the National Capital District Regional, held by Abaijah

and Central Regional itself), and Western Highlands Regional (created by dividing the old electorate of same name into Enga Regional, held by Anton Parao and Western Highlands Regional itself). The election for the seat of Central regional was won by the Papua Besena candidate James Mopio. The results of the voting were as follows:

1.	James Mopio	(Papua Besena)	5,964 first preferences	9,149 total
2.	Dirona Abe	(Independent)	5,163 " "	6,504
3.	Patrick Avi	(P.P.P.)		4,443
4.	Moi Avei	(Pangu)		3,367
5.	Hoidae Henao	(Papua Besena)		1,523
6.	Lahui Tau	(United Party)		1,396

When Abaijah was asked about the future of Papua Besena after Mopio's victory, she replied that Papua Besena would be trying to gain more Papuan seats to give it greater parliamentary representation. 'We are not like Bougainville - we do not want to secede. What we are against is forced political union with New Guinea', she explained.³³

Later on at a meeting in Port Moresby, it was decided that Papua Besena would be represented in Parliament by the newly formed Papua Party. It would have two parliamentary representatives, Abaijah and Mopio. Another meeting was held in Abaijah's home in Hohola in which it was decided that a platform would be drawn up for the Papua Party later on and circulated to get people in rural and urban areas to endorse it. The meeting was attended by about fourteen people, including Jack Baure, the Papua Party Secretary, City Councillor Mahiro Kivovia, Gope Goka, Simi Maka and Abaijah herself.

The first half of 1976 was the period in which the issue of provincial government was at its height. However, at the time when most political leaders were in agreement that the autonomous provinces should be created right out from the boundaries of the old districts, Papua

Besena leaders were probably the only ones among a few other individuals who were suggesting a much broader regional government for the whole of Papua. They evidently saw this as another step towards eventual Papuan independence. One other exception was the call from Pangu ministers, Gavera Rea and Reuben Taureka, both Papuans. In a statement released on Monday 19th July, Rea, then Minister for Labour, Commerce and Industry, said Papua should be allowed to form its own government.³⁴ He claimed he would oppose provincial government as it would break Papua into little units that would later become oppressed. Dr Reuben Taureka, then Minister for Information and Broadcasting, supported his statement. However, these statements were brushed aside by the Papua Besena leaders as attempts to assure these two Ministers re-election in the nearing elections. Papua Besena leaders said in a statement that they would only accept a form of government which would be run by Papuans and with Papua as a separate country.³⁵ This was supported by the Governor of Papuan Black Power Movement, Leo Kavaua. Early the next month, the City Council, at its monthly meeting, passed a motion favouring the idea of a separate government for Papua.

Then on 29th August Papua Besena organized a rally at the suburb of Kaugere in Port Moresby to discuss the question of a regional government for Papua and the replacement of Sere Pitoi as chairman of the Public Service Commission. The rally was attended by about 3,000 Papuans and among them were some senior public servants.³⁶ Some Papuan Parliament Members also attended including Turi Wari, Member for Poroma Kutubu in the Southern Highlands, Dennis Young, Regional Member for Milne Bay, Kingsford Dibela, Member for Alotau, who succeeded John Guise as Speaker of Parliament when Sir John became Governor General, and the Lord Mayor of Port Moresby, Councillor Mahuru Rarua Rarua. Speakers at the rally included Leo Kavaua, Goasa Damena, President of the Public

Service Association, Abaijah and Mopio. Dibela and Young were not prepared to commit themselves to the calls for Papuan independence and they probably reflected the general feeling of the majority of people that they represented. Despite the huge turnout at the rally, the majority of people in other Papuan districts and many others within the city itself were in favour of the establishment of provincial government such as was proposed by the Central Government.

The strength of Papua Besena was becoming quite obvious and its supporters were becoming increasingly vocal in their demands for Papuan independence. The Papua Besena controlled Port Moresby City Council voted on 10th November to support Abaijah's call for the immediate repatriation of Highlanders to their own provinces following a fight the week before in the Port Moresby suburb of Geregū in which three houses were wrecked.³⁷ The Council was becoming increasingly divided as political squabbles broke out between Pangu and Papua Besena councillors and allegations about corruption and inefficiency were increasingly being made against the Papua Besena dominated Council.

The period from 1973 to 1977 was the most eventful period for Papua Besena. There were attempts to extend the support base of the movement. Other organizations were established, out of which the movement was able to benefit, but this period also saw the disintegration of such pro-Papuan groups as the Papuan Liberation Movement and the Papuan Republic Fighters Army. This was also the period in which Papua Besena had direct confrontations with the Government. This was a crucial period for Papua New Guinea, leading up to and after independence. Many of the events outlined in this chapter can be better appreciated if they are examined in relation to the uncertainties which are commonly found in countries which are approaching independence. The history of decolonization and the rise of nationalism, especially in the Third World, is abundant with

cases of conflict, sometimes of a very violent nature, between the inheritors of political power in the new states and other groups which attempt to assert themselves as distinct groups with particular demands and aspirations. Papua Besena went further than merely asserting itself. Sections of the growing movement began to compete for a share of effective political power in the new state. The main outcomes of this were twofold. While Papua Besena in the post-1977 period achieved tremendous political power, its popularity somewhat paradoxically declined in terms of mass support. This is the main theme of the next chapter.

Footnotes

1. The United Party was dominated by expatriate planters in the Highlands who feared for their business interests in the event of self-government and independence at this early stage would result in political and economic insecurity.
2. Griffin, J., 'Movements for Separatism and Secessionism' in Clunies Ross, A. and Langmore, J. (eds), Alternative Strategies for Papua New Guinea, Oxford, 1973.
3. The Australian, 20 February 1972. Quoted in Membrey, R., 'Josephine Abaijah', Yagl-Ambu, vol. 1, no. 3, September 1974.
4. Pacific Islands Monthly, May 1972, p.35.
5. ibid., September 1972, p.35.
6. Post Courier, 13 November 1972.
7. ibid., 25 June 1973.
8. Woolford, D., Papua New Guinea: Initiation and Independence, University of Queensland Press, 1976.
9. Standish, B., 'Papua New Guinea Review', Australian Quarterly, vol. 45, no. 3, September 1973, p.125.
10. Post Courier, 28 August 1973 and subsequent reports.
11. ibid., 25 and 26 October 1973.
12. ibid., 14 November 1973.
13. ibid., 25 and 26 October 1973.
14. ibid., 2 January 1974.
15. ibid., 24 April 1974 and subsequent reports.
16. ibid., 17 May 1974.
17. ibid., 13 and 14 June 1974.
18. The Age, 27 June 1974.
19. The Australian Quarterly, vol. 25, no. 3, September 1973, p.119.
20. Melbourne Sun, 2 May 1973.
21. Post Courier, 4 July 1973.
22. Daro, B., 'The Papua Besena Movement: Papua Bainai, Tano Bainai, Mauri Dainai', IASER Discussion Paper, December 1976.
23. See Post Courier, 25 and 26 October 1973.

24. McKillop, B., 'The Papuan Separatists as a Non-Violent Political Movement', Yagl-Ambu, vol. 5, no. 4, December 1978.
25. Post Courier, 8 April 1976.
26. ibid., 11 April 1974.
27. Daro, op.cit., p.18.
28. Post Courier, 26 November 1974.
29. ibid., 3 December 1973.
30. ibid., 17 June 1974.
31. Melbourne Age, 27 June 1974.
32. Hegarty, D., 'Papua New Guinea', Australian Journal of Politics and History, vol. 20, no. 3, December 1974.
33. Post Courier, 10 February 1976.
34. ibid., 20 July 1976.
35. ibid., 26 July 1976.
36. ibid., 30 August 1976.
37. ibid., 11 November 1976.

CHAPTER FOUR

PAPUA BESENA: 1977-82The 1977 Elections

Being an election year, 1977 was an important year for Papua New Guinea. For Papua Besena, it was one of the most important milestones in its history which later reached its peak of political success with the entrance of Papua Besena parliamentarians into the government. However, the period from 1977 to 1982 also saw the emergence of symptoms of strife within the Papua Besena ranks which have culminated in an open conflict. This has resulted in a split within Papua Besena.

The 1977 elections were probably the most intensely fought in the short history of parliamentary politics in Papua New Guinea.¹ Papua Besena candidates within the city hired passenger motor vehicles and used their own private vehicles to transport chanting and shouting supporters through the streets. All other candidates did the same. Papua Besena's main opposition came from the large and well financed Pangu campaign machinery. In the final weeks leading up to the actual election days, all the candidates stepped up their campaigns to such an extent as has never been witnessed in the city. Papua Besena had candidates for all the electorates within the National Capital district and all but the Goilala Open electorate within the Central Province.

With the University of Papua New Guinea, the already established Pangu Pati branch was out campaigning for their candidates. A few weeks before the actual elections, some Papuan students organized a forum and invited Abaijah and Mopio to address the Papuan students. It turned out that a large number of New Guineans students also attended the forum to listen to Abaijah and Mopio. After the forum the Papuan students who

(1) The general elections should be held every three years instead of five.

supported Papua Besena decided to form a branch at the University. Due to the approaching elections, they hastily organized a meeting, appointed office bearers and then contacted Abaijah and the other Papua Besena candidates, offering to help out in their campaigns and to man the polling booths as scrutineers.

Jack Baure, the Papua Party Secretary, and other Papua Besena officials organized a meeting at Diharoha Primary School to organize the campaigning and outline the official Papua Besena organizational structure. The meeting was also attended by Abau candidate Gerega Pepena and City Councillor Frank Griffin. Other meetings of a similar kind were held in Abaijah's home in Hohola. Hence, it was through these organizational efforts, co-ordination and each individual candidate's personal standing within their respective electorates that Papua Besena managed to successfully contest most of the seats within the Central Province and the National Capital District. The main reason why Papua Besena lost the seat of Moresby North-East was that they had two candidates for the same seat. Goasa Damena was the official Papua Besena candidate and Lahui Tau, who had switched from the United Party after the by-election for Central Regional, was the unofficial candidate. Thus Papua Besena lost the election for Moresby North-East to Patterson Lowa, the Pangu candidate, due to the split Papua Besena votes.

However, the final results of the elections indicated that Papua Besena was now electorally in command of the Central Province and the National Capital District.

The main emphasis of Papua Besena's official election platform was on the general concepts of justice, integrity and equal development. Other major aspects of the platform were:

- (i) The general elections should be held every three years instead of five;

- (ii) Regional nationalism should be encouraged;
- (iii) Education up to form four (grade 10) should be available to all children;
- (iv) Youth development should be given priority;
- (v) Urban Development should be decentralized;
- (vi) Workers should be given fairer consideration; and
- (vii) The use of public money should be tightly controlled.

Although most of the candidates had substantial influence within their own villages and ethnic groups, the nature of the electorate in the National Capital District in particular required candidates to have some common binding factor with the different ethnic and regional groups of Papuan people living in the city. The Papua Besena movement was ideal for making this appeal. For example, Mahuru Rarua, a Motuan from Hanuabada village, had to get votes from Papuans living in the suburbs of Gerehu, Waigani and Konedobu to have some chance of winning.

Apart from the overall loss that the Pangu Pati in particular suffered in the Central Province and the National Capital District, and the tremendous support that Papua Besena gained, there was one particular contest that badly affected the Pangu Pati. This was the humiliating defeat that Sir Maori Kiki, the former Deputy Prime Minister and Pangu candidate, suffered against Abaijah in the contest for the seat of National Capital District Regional. Kiki, acting against the advice of Somare and the Pangu campaign strategists, decided to challenge Abaijah instead of nominating for one of the seats in the Gulf Province where he comes from. He was relying on his trade union background and the close working relationship that Pangu had had in the past with the union movement and also to a great extent on the support of the large number of migrants from the Gulf Province living in Port Moresby. Nevertheless, although he was backed by what was probably the most efficient and well

funded campaign machinery of the Pangu Pati, he lost very convincingly to Abaijah. Abaijah polled 12,631 votes, more than double the 6,191 votes in favour of Kiki. The other unseated Pangu candidate, Labour and Commerce Minister Gaverea Rea, lost by a very narrow margin of only 25 votes after a recount, to the Lord Mayor of Port Moresby, Councillor Mahuru Rarua-Rarua, for the seat of Moresby North-West. James Mopio retained his seat of Central Regional by a comfortable margin of almost 12,000 votes ahead of his nearest rival, while Sevese Morea and Galeva Kwarara polled extremely well to gain outright victories in the newly created electorates of Moresby South Open and Rigo Open respectively. Voting in the Abau electorate was conducted on 20th August, almost two months after polling finished in the other parts of the country. In this election, former Information and Broadcasting Minister and Pangu Candidate Dr Reuben Taureka was defeated by the Papua Besena candidate, Gerega Pepena.

Papua Besena's winning streak was further advanced by the by-elections for Moresby North-East. After the original elections, Dr Goasa Damena, one of the two Papua Besena candidates, put out a petition challenging the validity of the election of Pangu candidate and Minister for Police in the new Pangu/P.P.P. Coalition government, Patterson Lowa. The Chief Justice upheld the petition and declared the election void and ordered a by-election. Under the constitution, candidates must have resided in the electorate for which they nominated for a period of two or more years. The decision of the Court was delayed when Lowa, a former P.N.G. Defence Force Colonel, appealed to the Supreme Court, asking the Court to rule that the National Court did not have the jurisdiction to hear Damena's petition and also to prohibit the Chief Justice from handing down his decision on the petition. However, the Supreme Court ruled against Lowa on both instances and so the

by-election for Moresby North-East was conducted.

In this by-election Lahui Tau, the other Papua Besena candidate, agreed to step down and give Damena a better chance of capturing all of the Papua Besena votes. By this time Papua Besena was already in the Opposition in Parliament with the Peoples United Front, led by Iambakey Okuk. Hence he was able to enlist the support of Okuk. A meeting of Highlanders living in the Moresby North-East electorate was organized by Damena at Lahui Tau's residence in the suburb of Korobosea. Okuk addressed them and told them that if they wanted the Peoples United Front to become the government and if they were against Somare and the Pangu Pati, they should vote for Damena as this would increase the Opposition numbers and thus increase their chances of ousting the Pangu/P.P.P. government.

The Pangu Pati did almost exactly the reverse of what Papua Besena had done. They decided that they were not going to endorse Lowa again and instead nominated Kiki this time as their candidate for Moresby North-East. Lowa was adamant and refused to withdraw his nomination although he wasn't the official Pangu candidate this time. Hence the stage was set for what was one of the closest contests of the elections. Once more Kiki was defeated by a Papua Besena candidate, this time Dr Goasa Damena, former Public Service Association President and at the time of the election, a private medical practitioner in Port Moresby. Thus, the number of Papua Besena parliamentary representatives was increased from seven to eight.

One further by-election was conducted, this time for the seat of Hiri-Kairuku. It was caused by the death, after the original elections, of the incumbent member and Papua Besena man, Simon Foi'eke. Once again the seat was won by another Papua Besena candidate, Joseph Aoae, who was the former Secretary for Law.

After the elections came the crucial period of lobbying for support by the major parties in their bid to form the government. There were approaches made by the United Party to woo Papua Besena members. The Post Courier reported an agreement between Mopio and defeated United Party candidate, Harry Hoerler for Papua Besena to form some sort of a coalition with the United Party as the major partner and other independent members.² Nothing came of this supposed agreement. Abaijah herself was approached by members of the Alliance for Progress and Regional Development formed by Momis and Kaputin and with a membership of some New Guinea islands members. By this time the Papua Besena parliamentarians were starting to feel more confident as a group and were bargaining to become a junior partner in the coalition government that Okuk was attempting to form as an alternative to the Somare/Chan Government then in office.

Papua Besena in Parliament

In November 1977 an Opposition member, James Mopio, began legal action to remove the Prime Minister, Michael Somare, from office. Mopio, who was then parliamentary leader of Papua Besena, took out a Supreme Court writ claiming that Somare became Prime Minister unconstitutionally. In an affidavit accompanying the applications, Mopio claimed that the ballot in Parliament which appointed Somare as Prime Minister was unlawful because it was held on the same day as the ballot for the Speaker of Parliament, Mr Kingsford Dibela. Mopio claimed that, under the Constitution, the ballot should have been held on the 'next sitting day... the writ initiates application for an order directing the Speaker to hold a new ballot'.³ Mopio's application relied on an interpretation of procedures which should be used constitutionally during a ballot for the Prime Minister.

Although Mopio's application failed, this action was significant.

Firstly, it signified the start of Papua Besena's involvement as a group in Parliament. They now had the numbers to become a decisive factor in many votes within Parliament. Secondly, Mopio's action was the start of events in Parliament which eventually were to lead to the fall of the Somare Government. On 3rd May 1978, the Speaker of Parliament, Kingsford Dibela, announced Parliament's decision to officially recognize the National Alliance as the Parliamentary Opposition. The National Alliance was made up of the Peoples United Front, led by Iambakey Okuk, Papua Besena and some members of the United Party who defected to the new Opposition. The United Party, led by Sir Tei Abal, had been ousted and several weeks later Okuk announced the formation of an eleven member shadow ministry. Two of these shadow ministries were allocated to Papua Besena. They were the shadow ministry of Education to Galeva Kwarara, and shadow ministry of Decentralization and Regional Government to James Mopio.

Papua Besena activity outside Parliament was now getting more organized and intense. In August 1977, the students in the University of Papua New Guinea branch of Papua Besena held a demonstration at the Islander Hotel in Port Moresby, where leaders of the South Pacific countries were attending the Eighth South Pacific Forum. More than thirty students with placards gathered outside the hotel and called on the Forum leaders to recognize the Papua Besena call for Papuan independence. They stood behind a tight police guard and shouted their demands while Mopio went inside and distributed copies of their demands to the Forum participants.

In November, more than five hundred people, mostly Koitabu, Koiari and Motuans, assembled in a rally at Ela Beach to protest about land rights, especially the government's plans to introduce legislation to stop people claiming compensation and ex-gratia payments on

government land. The rally was also attended by Damena, Kwarara and Abaijah. The demonstrators then marched up to Parliament House to present a petition outlining their grievances to the government.

Papua Besena and the Papua Party

In retrospect, 1977 is a pivotal year for Papua Besena. Its electoral success was a sign of its popular support and growing strength, but it also necessarily changed the nature of the movement, providing it with new opportunities and problems, which created new internal divisions. It is necessary now, therefore, to examine the growth of the Papua Party and, more generally, the state of Papua Besena's organization in order to better understand the party's later decline.

In November 1973, Abaijah announced the decision to form what she called a 'political arm' of Papua Besena which would be called the Papua Party. She stated that the party would be responsible for 'developing structures for the future government of Papua, as well as to participate in political education and political activation.'⁴ The party wasn't actually formed until after James Mopio won the by-election for the seat of Central Regional in January 1976. In April, Mopio announced that it had been formed and that it would soon formulate policy. Mopio announced that the party 'aimed at good and stable government through democratic principles, national self-determination and the abolition of old colonial influences.'⁵ From then on a group of militant supporters of Papua Besena met together in several meetings and formulated a draft constitution, basic policy strategies, and a chart outlining the basic organizational structure of the party. However, like the Papua Group in the City Council, they preferred to use the Papua Besena label for reasons of simplicity and popular appeal and not Papua Party or the Papuan Democratic Union as Abaijah wanted. Abaijah wanted

the party to be called a separate name because she wanted there to be a clear distinction between the Papua Party which she saw as the organized political wing of Papua Besena, which was the anti-colonial movement. On the other hand, her opponents in this issue wanted to use the name Papua Besena interchangeably so that supporters (especially during the elections) would not be confused by two names used by a group of candidates. The question was then left unresolved. Interim office-bearers of the party were appointed but apart from Jack Baure as party secretary and Kas Magari, it is not clear who the other office-bearers were. Later meetings that were held saw the appointments of Tau Kinibo and Sibona Kopi as the other officials in the party executive, apart from Baure and Magari.

The draft constitution and the organizational structure of the party were presented at a Papua Besena meeting that was held on the premises of the Diharoha Primary School in Port Moresby and both were voted on and passed in their draft form. The meeting was attended by students from the then newly formed University branch of the Papua Party, some candidates for the 1977 elections, and the interim office-bearers of the party. Equipped with some sort of a party leadership and officials, the Papua Party thus geared itself to conduct an electoral campaign for the first time. The results of the election showed that the party, although hopelessly deficient in responding to central direction, was nevertheless still able to achieve some degree of co-ordination in that candidates contesting the National Capital District seats at least were elected on the Papua Besena ticket. Goasa Damena, the only candidate in the N.C.D. who failed to get elected in the initial elections, was able to defeat his rivals in the by-election for Moresby North-East. However, ironically the electoral success of the candidates put up by the Papua Party was perhaps the single most important factor which triggered off the intense

internal conflict among the Papua Besena leadership, and which finally culminated in the split between Abaijah and her own personal supporters and the parliamentary wing members of Papua Besena. The main issue behind this split was the distinction between the two groups, Papua Besena and Papua Party, each with different perceptions of their roles and of their membership.

It was quite clear that after the 1977 elections Papua Besena was going through a period of change. The movement as Abaijah saw it was losing momentum as the Papua Party began to emerge as the dominant group. Abaijah herself began to devote most of her time to writing a book of her experiences as a leader of the Papua Besena Movement. The Papua Party had been using the Papua Besena label and it seems that as the broad aim of total Papuan independence began to lose appeal even among some supporters, the new Papua Besena leaders were attempting to reconcile the other Papua Besena grievances with the overall development strategies of the whole country. The parliamentary wing negotiated itself into a partnership with the United Party and later on, with the Peoples United Front alliance led by Okuk, both of which were then in the Opposition in Parliament. Finally, on 12th March 1980, the parliamentary wing became a partner in the National Alliance Government in coalition with the P.P.P., the National Party, half the United Party and the Melanesian Alliance.

The Papua Party was just one section among many which Abaijah, at various times, envisaged for the broad Papua Besena movement. These included a Papuan Pioneers Youth Movement and Papua Investments.⁶ Abaijah herself explained the reasons for outlining plans for other organizational arms of the movement in a document that she released in November 1974:

Papua Besena has developed policy papers and structures for an independent Papua but it has only done this under pressure as Papua Besena does not see that Papua Besena has a functional role in the Government of Papua after Papua becomes an independent nation free from Australia and free from New Guinea. (7)

It is worth noting here that Abaijah seems to be contradicting herself in this document because she also says that '...we are not trying to create a new society with new structures and leaders'.⁸ The above-mentioned plans of organizational structures are not established institutions and therefore are plans of new structures.

Premdas claims that 'Papua Besena has acquired a number of business enterprises to generate income and has assisted Papuan villagers in jointly purchasing such facilities as trade stores, trucks and other vehicles'.⁹ However, he presents no evidence to show that this has occurred. It is true that Papua Besena leaders do have business interests and that some of them do assist village groups but there is very little evidence to suggest the existence of a Papua Besena business wing. Records at the Company's Registry in Port Moresby show that a group of Papua Besena personalities have registered a Papua Besena construction company but apart from data revealing who the executive of the company were, and other minor details, there is no evidence that the company really exists. Even if it does exist, it is only registered under Papua Besena in name only and owned exclusively by the major shareholders/directors. These were Mopio and Baura. Furthermore, although the company allows for a total of fifty shareholders for Papua Besena members, there are no records to show that attempts have been made to expand the number of shareholders.

In its early days Papua Besena, like many embryonic mass movements, had an almost complete absence of formal organization. Its nucleus was the group who were active around Abaijah. At this time, people defined their own role largely by the extent of their involvement. This

informality suited Abaijah's ideas of leadership.

A Papua Besena leader is known entirely by his acts, his attitudes, his followers or the leadership role that [he/she] assumes in the Papua Besena anti-colonial movement. Nobody appoints him or her. (10)

This notion of the Papua Besena leader as a charismatic leader is an important one to Abaijah. Her emphasis on the informal nature of leadership in Papua Besena is much greater than in any other Papua Besena leader. Hence her involvement in many extra-parliamentary activities like marches and demonstrations as opposed to protest within the floor of parliament. However, for a long time she managed to combine the two very effectively and this is the main reason why she stood for parliament. The use of her personal charismatic qualities to stir supporters into political activity like the marches and demonstrations has boosted mass support both for her and the movement. Simultaneously, she and her fellow Papua Besena Parliamentarians raised issues in Parliament and have used their combined voting strength to lobby for the various issues that they raise in Parliament. But her hopes for the rise of the charismatic Papua Besena leaders without the parliamentary connection have not been realized.

The nature of leadership in Papua Besena inevitably changed when a significant number were elected to Parliament. After that there is a very strong connection between Papua Besena and Parliament in terms of who becomes a Papua Besena leader. Goasa Damena, who had been interested in Papua Besena since its early days and had participated actively in many of the activities of Papua Besena, was not prominent as a Papua Besena leader until his election to Parliament. Similarly, Gerega Pepena, who was virtually unknown among the Papua Besena personalities, was suddenly recognized as a Papua Besena leader upon his election to Parliament. It seems that Papua Besena supporters,

sympathizers and aspiring leaders regard Parliament and the authority that it represents as a vital factor for the political activities of Papua Besena. Supporters of Papua Besena have, through the many rallies and demonstrations, realized that unless there is a Papua Besena representative in Parliament, their demands cannot be fought for in the supreme legislature of Papua New Guinea. Hence militant personalities like Goasa Damena and Galeva Kwarara, although agitating publicly against issues like the encroachment of settlements illegally on Papuan lands and a greater distribution of 'development' to Papua, didn't succeed in being recognized as Papua Besena leaders until their election to Parliament. Current leaders and aspiring leaders now realize this and so the general trend is that militant Papua Besena agitators like Bobby Gaigo and Papuan people who want to make certain demands to the Government, take their grievances to their local Papua Besena MPs, like Mahuru Rarua, who then present them to the appropriate persons on their behalf. If a rally or demonstration is called, it is usually led by a Papua Besena Parliamentarian or the demand or petition is presented to, or through him, to the appropriate persons.

As founder of the movement, Abaijah had naturally assumed leadership of it from the beginning.

Nobody will challenge my leadership in Papua Besena. If they stick to the same aims of Papua Besena, then they will become co-workers. If their influence is stronger than mine, then I will be their strongest supporter but no future leader can take away from me the leadership status connected with the past events as these are part of my personal life and experience. (11)

However, as the party and the political environment changed, this simple view has proved inadequate.

One of the earliest cases of dispute among the Papua Besena leadership was between Abaijah and Mopio. In July 1977, immediately after the national elections, Mopio began to negotiate with an

unsuccessful United Party candidate, Harry Hoerler, for Papua Besena to support the United Party in a coalition in the Opposition.¹² Mopio was rebuked by Abaijah for attempting to endorse his own candidates in the by-elections for Moresby North-East and Kairuku-Hiri. This open challenge to Abaijah brought forth a very frank reply from her that Mopio was not the leader of the Papua Besena movement.¹³ The failure of the candidates that Mopio endorsed in the various electorates to win seats did not help Mopio's position very much. These series of events also caused the other Papua Besena parliamentarians to call for and pass a vote of no confidence in Mopio as a Papua Besena leader in July 1978. From then on, Mopio seems to have kept a fairly low profile on internal power struggles within Papua Besena. The other major rift which has finally resulted in the split within Papua Besena leadership has its roots in the period immediately after the 1977 elections.

Signs of Splits in Papua Besena

There began to emerge among some Papua Besena parliamentarians, a more moderate and realistic appreciation of the political situation that Papua Besena as a political movement was facing. Parliamentarians like Galeva Kwarara and Joseph Aoa began to accept the fact that Papua was now united with New Guinea and that to further deny that fact was going to take them nowhere. Hence they began to formulate alternative arrangements that would be more viable under these circumstances and at the same time would not deviate too much from the main thrust of the Papua Besena cause: that is, government for Papua by Papuans. The hardliners like Mopio and Abaijah were still arguing for the total separation of Papua from New Guinea. These differences of opinion gradually began to affect the movement itself and the behaviour of the politicians themselves.

Early in 1978, Abaijah left for Australia again and was absent for

most of the first Parliamentary sitting of the year. It was while she was away that the symptoms of a definite split began to 1976, he had been gradually alienating himself from the mainstream of Papua Besena's organizational attempts and had had exchanges between himself and Abaijah. Differences of opinion began to emerge between him and the other Papua Besena parliamentarians. What finally brought the conflict into the open was Mopio's decision to continue endorsing his own brand of Papua Besena candidates. During the by-elections of the Moresby North-East and Kairuku-Hiri Open electorates, and even during the 1977 elections themselves, he fielded his own candidates against some of the other Papua Besena candidates. Hence, during the parliamentary sitting in July 1978, the other Papua Besena Parliamentarians passed a vote of no confidence in Mopio.¹⁴ Although these events can be interpreted as a split in the sense that Mopio and his supporters within the ranks of the aspiring politicians that he endorsed in the various elections were alienated from the main body of the Papua Besena hierarchy, they also caused a positive effect on the movement itself. The moderate Papua Besena members were now in a position to bargain for effective political power by aligning themselves with some political parties and groups in Parliament and outside and thus, enabling them to press for their demands for within the system where they could operate effectively.

At the Waigani Seminar held in September 1978 in the University of Papua New Guinea, the 'moderates' and a chance to air their views Joseph Aoa, in addressing the Seminar which was on the theme of Decentralization, announced Papua Besena's (or at least one faction's) case for the introduction of regional governments in a unified Papua New Guinea. In his keynote address, he proposed a federal system of government, with states representing broad regional interests. Under

this federal system, the states would be larger than the provincial boundaries with more power than was proposed for the provincial governments. The proposal recommended that the Central Government, under this set-up, would only control foreign relations, trade, finance, defence, police, public service and courts of superior jurisdiction.¹⁵ All residual powers not vested in the central government should rest with the states. He stated that Papua Besena was looking for a constitutional framework which would guarantee political security for Papuans against outside domination, complete control over land and resources and also complete control over priorities of economic development.¹⁶

The split among the parliamentary members of Papua Besena did not affect the thrust of the movement's support of issues that came up from time to time. In these times of mini crisis when they were called upon to press for the representation of people's demands, they acted in a united effort that was sometimes lacking even within the national political parties. One such further event that demonstrated this was in August 1979, when more than 2,000 Papua Besena supporters again marched on Parliament to petition the Prime Minister, Michael Somare. The demonstrators, many of whom were traditionally dressed, again gathered at a rally at Ela Beach where Abaijah addressed the crowd. Then they marched up to Parliament House to present their petition to the government. Among the demands that they made to the government, they called for:

1. The repatriation of all non-Papuans unemployed in Port Moresby back to their home provinces.
2. The restoration of social order in Port Moresby, (due to the increasing lawlessness in the city which the Papua Besena supporters claimed, was caused by unemployed New Guineans. Highlanders in particular

were singled out as the worst offenders).

3. Abandoning the policy of 'bung wantaim'.¹⁷
4. Regional autonomy for Papua and control of law and order.
5. Papuan politicians to serve their region first instead of other people.

As well as Abaijah, many other prominent Papua Besena leaders attended the demonstration. Among them were parliamentarians Sevese Morea, James Mopio, Goasa Damena, Gerega Pepena and Joseph Aoae. The Central Provincial Government Secretary, Raga Maro, also attended.¹⁸ As a result of this noisy and somewhat disorderly demonstration, the Papua Besena parliamentarians were called to sit before the Parliamentary Disciplinary Committee to justify their alleged undisciplined manners during the demonstration.

Papua Besena in the Government

The transition which resulted in Papua Besena becoming part of the Chan Government occurred, when, after three unsuccessful attempts, the Opposition led by Iambakey Okuk finally managed to muster the numbers in Parliament to oust Somare and the United Party coalition. When Julius Chan withdrew the Peoples Progress Party from the Pangu/P.P.P. coalition, he joined the Peoples United Front and Papua Besena in the Opposition. However Somare managed to survive the third vote of no confidence when a section of the then fragmented United Party joined the Pangu Pati. The most immediate cause of the collapse of the Pangu/United Party coalition was a split in the government which followed a ministerial reshuffle on 16th January 1980. Two ministers, including the United Party's Roy Evara, were dropped and changes in ministerial portfolio were made for some of the others. This resulted in a split within the United Party which led to the majority of the party's fifteen parliamentary members

leaving the government. Fr Momis, one of Somare's senior ministers, was not satisfied with what he regarded as a demotion from the ministry of Decentralization to Minerals and Energy and together with John Kaputin, announced their intention to resign. Soon after, they announced the formation of a new political party led by Fr Momis. This new party which was called the Melanesian Alliance, was made up of the three Mataungan Association members from East New Britain and the four North Solomons Members of Parliament.¹⁹

With its numbers dwindling rapidly, the Somare Government approached Papua Besena for support by offering some ministerial portfolio. On Tuesday 12th February 1980, a meeting was held at the office of Tony Ila, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, in which Papuan Pangu ministers offered two ministerial portfolios to Papua Besena. Papua Besena parliamentarians Joseph Aoa, Sevese Morea, and Mahuru Rarua, who attended the meeting, refused the Pangu offers.

On the weekend before the final vote of no confidence was taken, Papua Besena leaders and officials held a meeting at the Rouna Hotel just outside Port Moresby. The Papua Party, which comprised the parliamentary wing of Papua Besena, met with the Executive of the Party to screen members for particular portfolios in the anticipated changeover of government. The Executive decided to press for at least the portfolios of Finance and National Planning to be allocated to Papua Besena. They decided to nominate Sevese Morea for the position of Speaker of Parliament, Commerce to Mrs Waliyato Clowes²⁰ and either Finance or National Planning to Galeva Kwarara with one other person to be decided on by members of the parliamentary wing themselves.²¹

The fourth and final vote of no confidence in March 1980 finally succeeded and the government was defeated by a vote of 57 to 49 against it. The new government was composed of the former Opposition Alliance

which was formed earlier in the year in February out of a big section of the United Party, the Peoples Progress Party, National Party, Melanesian Alliance and Papua Besena. Sir Julius Chan was appointed as Prime Minister. Papua Besena was given four ministries in the new Government which was made up of twenty-five ministers. They were as follows:

Galeva Kwarara	-	National Planning and Development
Goasa Damena	-	Housing and Urban Development
Joseph Aoae	-	Forests
Gerega Pepena	-	Defence

The distribution of ministerial portfolios among the parties in the new National Alliance Coalition Government was as follows:

<u>Parties/Groups</u>	<u>Number of Ministries</u>
Peoples Progress Party	7
National Party	6
United Party	4
Papua Besena	4
Melanesian Alliance	3
(Independents)	1
	—
TOTAL	25
	—

Another Papua Besena parliamentarian, Sevese Morea, was later elected as Speaker of Parliament, replacing Kingsford Dibela. The voting for the position of Speaker of Parliament was taken in March 1980. Morea narrowly defeated his only rival, Michael Pondros of Manus by 53 votes to 52.

After the changeover of government, the gap in the leadership of Papua Besena began to widen. Members of the parliamentary wing, especially the government ministers, tended to band together because of

the fact that they were part of the government team. Events like Cabinet meetings and other government business tended to pull these leaders together. Abaijah and Mopio on the other hand were finding it harder to organize and mobilize people on the issues that were raised after the new government came into power because people began to refer their grievances and demands to the Papua Besena ministers. So, in effect, the extra-parliamentary activities which Abaijah and Mopio's popularity used to thrive on, began to lose weight in favour of directly petitioning the government through the Papua Besena government ministers. The period after 1980 saw a rapid decline in the use of the rally and demonstration as effective tools used by Papua Besena for promoting its cause.

Another consequence of this turn of events was a clear moderation of some of Papua Besena's more radical views such as separatism. However this needs to be qualified. The parliamentary members were more or less placed in a situation by their membership in the government to consider the national interest within their respective fields of operation as ministers. This had to be reconciled somehow with the aspirations of Papua Besena. The general compromise that they struck upon was a moderation of Papua Besena aims like separatism. Hence since their inception as government ministers they have had to walk a tightrope between their positions as partners in the government of Papua New Guinea on the one hand, and as leaders of Papua Besena on the other. In the case of Abaijah, this period saw a brief retirement on her part. She withdrew from public view and began to devote much of her time to writing a book of her experiences. Occasionally she would make public statements in the press but these were generally of a defensive nature such as writing replies to criticisms of Papua Besena and her long absence from the country. In terms of her views of Papua Besena, they have changed very little. She was still insistent on the nature of Papua Besena as

an anti-colonial movement with no formal organizations except for some associated wing as she outlined in 1974. So the rise to prominence of the other Papua Besena leaders in Parliament affected her standing in Papua Besena to some extent.

The differences managed to persist despite attempts to establish some level of cohesion within Papua Besena and finally culminated in a split in the movement. Part of this can be attributed to Abaijah's own views and her uncompromising attitude as well as discrepancies in her attitude and practices. Her perceptions of the charismatic leader may not have been realized and she herself has been forced more or less to rely more and more on her role as a parliamentarian to maintain leadership of the movement. The strategies of mass rallies and demonstrations have gradually given way to periodic outbursts in Parliament. In a way this reflects the declining interest of the Papua Besena supporters in some of the ideas which she has been expounding, especially on Papuan separatism. The leaders who comprise the parliamentary wing of Papua Besena have been forced by circumstances to be more pragmatic in their approach. Four of these leaders have been government ministers and one, Sevese Morea, was the Speaker of Parliament. These positions have to a large extent dulled their more radical ideas and have meant that they began to behave more like national leaders with the interests of the country as a whole taking some precedence, rather than the parochial interests of Papua Besena only. Abaijah thus endorsed her own candidates for the 1982 elections which meant there were two Papua Besena candidates for many of the seats that they contested. By this action, she was perhaps hoping that her candidates, if successful, would be more responsive to her leadership and the ideas on organization that she espouses. The situation with the parliamentary wing was not so clear-cut either. As the elections began to loom, the fragile nature of the organizational links

between the parliamentary members became more apparent. There was no organization and cohesion between members as a whole and they were mostly going into their election campaigns as single individuals. Perhaps the only semblance of unity was their use of the Papua Party label for campaign purposes.

The executive of the party disappeared soon after the changeover of government when the party members showed no interest in heeding the recommendations of the party executive committee members on allocation of ministerial portfolios. Also, without a constitution, the executive has remained ineffective. The constitution has remained in draft form only and despite demands from members of the executive, final endorsement was never forthcoming. Members of the parliamentary wing have met from time to time but their main item of agenda for discussion was the split with Abaijah and instead of concentrating on attempts to mend the rift, were more concerned with having the upper hand. This was also the case with the Abaijah faction. The results of the 1982 national elections bore out the consequences of engaging in faction fighting, especially in an election year. Both factions recorded disastrous losses in terms of electoral performance.

1982 Elections

On the whole, the Papua Besena electoral performance in the 1982 national elections was pathetic. As a group, it had about nine years involvement in national politics. For most of the candidates, this was at least their second attempt in national elections. In terms of campaign funds and other resources, the Papua Besena candidates, especially the incumbent parliamentarians, were much better off than they were in the 1977 national elections. They had resources which they had amassed during their terms in parliament, not counting the prestige

that they had as Members of Parliament. If all these factors are considered together, the Papua Besena parliamentarians obviously had an advantage over most of their opponents. Yet the results of the election showed a clear swing against most of them. In the period during the changeover of government, when Papua Besena's parliamentary strength was at its peak, it had eight confirmed members. Four of them were ministers in the Chan Government and one was the Speaker of Parliament. The preliminary results of the 1982 elections clearly indicated a massive decline in its strength in Parliament. Out of eight, only three have managed to get re-elected. The results of this election are a direct consequence of many important events and changes that had their origins most probably in the context of Papua Besena's direct participation in the national government. In examining Papua Besena's electoral performance and the reasons behind its failures, the various factors which have been discussed throughout this thesis will have to be considered because they played a very important part in bringing about or setting the stage for the more recent events.

Before going into the more specific factors which explain Papua Besena's poor electoral performance in 1982, it should be noted that the turnover of national politicians, particularly government ministers, in elections in Papua New Guinea is very high. The 1977 elections showed that the figure for the number of unsuccessful government ministers to get re-elected was about fifty percent. Hence, a very general explanation for the poor performance of Papua Besena might be this characteristic feature of elections in PNG. However, this is insufficient to explain the particular case of Papua Besena.

The most important factor which accounts for Papua Besena's poor performance in the 1982 elections and the general decline of Papua Besena, was the split within its leadership ranks. The conflicts within

the leadership ranks that were discussed previously in chapters six and seven were among the most important contributing causes of the downfall of Papua Besena. Out of all the various disagreements between different individuals or groups of individuals within the leadership ranks, eventually the more deep and serious cleavages began to widen and solidify as the elections began to loom. The final result of this was a split between Abaijah and the members of the parliamentary wing of Papua Besena, the Papua Party. Hence, Abaijah endorsed her own candidates to stand against some of the incumbent Papua Besena/Papua Party parliamentarians. The consequence of this was fatal. Apart from the obvious vote-splitting effect that this caused, there was another very important related consequence. This was that the Papua Besena voter was not given a clear indication of who the official Papua Besena candidate was, that is, if there was such a thing as an official candidate in this particular election. Although the parliamentary wing members stood as either Papua Party candidates or as pro-Papua Party independents like Mahuru Rarua Rarua, they also used the Papua Besena label too. Thus in this muddle in which two candidates in the one electorate would be claiming to be the legitimate, endorsed Papua Besena candidate, the pro-Papua Besena voter was expected to cast his vote.

Another factor which has a very strong connection to the split in Papua Besena was its reluctance and inability to take positive measures to achieve its goals, which in turn reflected the lack of cohesion among what was supposed to be a group of like-minded people. The issue of hardline secessionism versus a more moderate goal of regional government was one of the underlying reasons for the split. Despite her sometimes contradictory statements, the separation of Papua from New Guinea was one of the views from which she would not bend throughout the years. It was on the basis of this that Abaijah charged the parliamentary wing

members of betraying the cause of Papua. Hence, her negative attitudes towards formal organization in Papua Besena meant that the candidates that Abaijah endorsed, campaigned individually with minimal co-ordination. On the other hand, the parliamentary wing members, despite feeble, half-hearted attempts at electoral organization, failed because of a different set of reasons. This was basically their inability to organize themselves. They were in a dilemma of organizing themselves into some semblance of a party election campaign machinery to compete more effectively and, on the other hand, were handicapped by internal petty squabbles. To complicate matters even more, there was a feeling that organizing along party lines was detrimental especially in their case since they were supposed to be a separatist organization and not a political party like Pangu, for instance. The formation of the Papua Action Party was essentially to capture the Papua Besena vote, a factor which the Papua Besena leaders were well aware of. Hence Papua Besena did not go all the way and declare themselves either a political party or separatist movement during the 1982 elections. All this illustrated the chaotic situation that Papua Besena found itself in by 1982. The results of the elections showed the obvious consequences of this folly.

Within a comparatively short period of less than nine years from 1973 to 1982, Papua Besena has survived many challenges and has undergone drastic changes. What started off as an anti-colonial movement and against political union with New Guinea, has now split and ended up being part of a government that ruled Papua New Guinea at least up till after the 1982 national elections. This in itself highlights many of the phases of the gradual transformation of Papua Besena as a movement into perhaps what could be termed as a political party. At least the majority elements of leadership in Papua Besena have attempted to organize Papua Besena along party lines through the formation of the

Papua Party. This group of Papua Besena leadership has become more realistic to the current political situation and they have adapted their original aims of the movement to more practical modes of action. The results of the 1982 national elections have determined to a large extent the future of Papua Besena. The conflict was essentially between Abaijah and the candidates that she has endorsed on the one hand, and on the other, members of Papua Party, the parliamentary wing of Papua Besena, who all contested the elections again. The results of the election clearly reflect the consequences of these cleavages. The results also show quite clearly that Papua Besena is on the decline.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
9. Swales, A., 'Communitarian Politics in Papua New Guinea', *Pacific Affairs*, vol. 50, no. 1, 1977, p. 81.
10. See Appendix B.
11. Abaijah, J., *Private Papers*, 1975. Cited in Swales, A., 'The Papua Besena Movement', *Joint Discussion Paper*, December 1976, p. 13.
12. Post Courier, 19 July 1977.
13. *Ibid.*, November 1977.
14. *Ibid.*, 19 July 1978.
15. See transcript of Abaijah's keynote speech in Post Courier, 27 September 1978, p. 8.
16. *Ibid.*
17. This was the government's slogan which was used to promote a sense of national unity among the people.
18. Post Courier, 29 August 1978.
19. For a more elaborate account of the circumstances which led to the changeover in government, see Walker, S.P., 'From New Guinea in 1980: A Change of Government, Aid and Foreign Relations', *Asian Survey*, vol. 21, no. 2, February 1981.
20. Mrs. Clowes was a Papua parliamentarian who was initially sympathetic to Papua Besena but decided against associating herself fully and later supported the formation of another political party, Papua National Alliance (PANA).

Footnotes

1. For a brief study of the 1977 national elections, see Premdas, R., 'Papua New Guinea: The First General Elections after Independence', Journal of Pacific History, vol. 13, 1978, pp.77-90.
2. Post Courier, 19 July 1977.
3. ibid., 13 October 1977.
4. ibid., 14 November 1973.
5. ibid., 4 June 1976.
6. ibid., 12 September 1974.
7. McKillop, B., 'The Papuan Separatists as a Non-Violent Political Movement', Yagl-Ambu, vol. 5, no. 4, December 1978, pp.28-29.
8. ibid., p.28.
9. Premdas, R., 'Secessionist Politics in Papua New Guinea', Pacific Affairs, vol. 50, no. 1, 1977, p.51.
10. See Appendix B.
11. Abaijah, J., Private Papers, 1975. Cited in Daro, B., 'The Papua Besena Movement', IASER Discussion Paper, December 1976, p.13.
12. Post Courier, 19 July 1977.
13. ibid., November 1977.
14. ibid., 19 July 1978.
15. See transcript of Aoa'e's keynote speech in Post Courier, 27 September 1978, p.5.
16. ibid.
17. This was the government's slogan which was used to promote a sense of national unity among the people.
18. Post Courier, 29 August 1979.
19. For a more elaborate account of the circumstances which led to the changeover in government, see Wolfers, E.P., 'Papua New Guinea in 1980: A Change of Government: Aid and Foreign Relations', Asian Survey, vol. 21, no. 2, February 1981.
20. Mrs Clowes was a Papuan parliamentarian who was initially sympathetic to Papua Besena but decided against committing herself fully and later announced the formation of another political party, Papuan National Alliance (PANAL).

21. This information was given by Sibona Kopi, one of the committee members of the Executive wing of the Papua Party.

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The Papua Wing

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CHAPTER FIVE

PAPUA BESENA IN THE PORT MORESBY CITY COUNCIL: 1974-80

This chapter presents a short case study of Papua Besena political activity at another level: the Port Moresby City Council. The Council was the local government body charged with the responsibility of administering a variety of municipal functions in the National Capital District. It was the largest of the local government councils in PNG.

Following the 1974 elections for the PMCC, a Papua Besena group was formed by some of the Papuan councillors. This group dominated the Council for four years. After the 1978 Council elections, the Papua Besena councillors tried to maintain their control of the Council but were defeated by a 'Pangu' coalition which took control until the Council was suspended by the national government in October 1980. This short case study illustrates something of the nature and style of Papua Besena politics in the organizations which it involved itself in. It also illustrates or parallels, to some extent, the rise and gradual demise of Papua Besena which I have traced in the previous chapters.

The Papua Group

The first indications of Papua Besena's entry into the politics of the PMCC was in April 1974 when Abaijah announced the formation of a Papua Besena group in the Council. However, despite their declared support of Papua Besena, this group hardly provided the organizational basis on which to establish an effective formal structure for the Papua Besena struggle. As McKillop points out quite correctly, these councillors were more interested in their personal comfort and used the Papua Besena label as a front for pursuing their own material benefits and were not promoting any organizational strategies for the movement.¹

Also, despite Abaijah's insistence that there be a clear distinction between the Papua Besena anti-colonial movement which she perceived as a non-formal mass movement, and any other organized body, the group adopted the Papua Besena label. The reasons why this group preferred using the Papua Besena label was because it was already a popular catchword and also as Membrey observes, there was no point in forming a group if its policies and name are not going to be widely disseminated.² The group did set out general objectives to call for an immediate provincial/state government for Papua and by sheer force of numbers, did commit the Council into adopting a Council Resolution calling for Papuan independence on the 16th March 1975, but these were rather ineffective and pathetic policies. The central government's threat to abolish the Council immediately put a halt to any further interest that these councillors might have had on the Papuan separatist issue in the Council. From that time on, these pro-Papua Besena councillors dropped their pretences as an organizational arm of Papua Besena. Relations between them and Abaijah then began to deteriorate rapidly as a result of this.

The 1974-78 Council

The candidates in the 1974 Council election who were later to form themselves into the Papua Besena group in the Council did not campaign as a group. Although their campaign platforms were essentially similar to the Papua Besena position, they did not declare themselves as outright supporters of the Papua Besena movement until they were elected into office. One of the main issues that most of them raised during their campaigns was that non-Papuans, they claimed, were running their affairs of the Council to the detriment of Papuans, who should rightfully control the Council as Port Moresby was a 'Papuan' city. This grievance was directed mainly against the Pangu Pati which was

already involved in the affairs of the Council, although some of the Pangu councillors in the previous Council were Papuans. Hence, after the elections in April 1974, the majority of candidates of Papuan origin organized themselves into a group to counter the Pangu Pati and adopted the Papua Besena name. This move was approved by Abaijah, who saw this as a further victory for Papua Besena. So, except for the use of the Papua Besena label, she declared her support for the establishment of the Papua Group in the Council. The first step they took in their move to gain control of the Council was to elect one of themselves to the position of Lord Mayor. Then they successfully elected themselves into controlling majorities in all the important Council Committees.³ This was the start of four years of mismanagement and misuse of Council funds and resources under Papua Besena and probably marked the beginning of the controversy over the powers and functions of the Port Moresby City Council which finally resulted in its suspension.

The Council Committees were the most crucial of the council's working bodies. They had powers to decide policies within their respective fields and only a majority vote of the whole Council could override their decisions. They were also the most vulnerable in terms of allowing scope for political patronage and outright corruption. Forms of corruption began to emerge as soon as these committees began to function. Some of the councillors tried to persuade the Council's administrative officers not to prosecute business concerns in which they had interests. There were also occasions in which councillors attempted to influence Council works contracts and tenders in favour of friends and relatives and in many cases to themselves. All of these practices were obviously against the interests of the Council.

One of the most controversial decisions that the Papua Besena dominated Council took was the decision to support Papuan independence.

The Council voted on 25th February 1975 to support Abaijah's call for Papua to become independent, separate from New Guinea. During the debate in the Council's general meeting for that month, a Papua Besena councillor read out an unsigned statement which he claimed was written by a 'rebel group of senior public servants', who proposed the unilateral declaration of Papua as a republic. Then followed a very heated debate in which the issue was argued over. Many of the councillors, among them a number of Papua Besena councillors, thought that the issue was too sensitive to raise in the Council as the national government by that time was watching the Council very closely. However, the motion to support Papuan independence was put to the vote. It came out that the motion was passed despite the fact that a substantial number of councillors abstained from voting. Hence, the Council was committed by the vote of some councillors into supporting the call for Papuan independence. This decision by the Council drew strong reaction from the Somare government. The Minister for State, Mr Boyamo Sali, threatened to sack all the councillors and replace them with a Commission to be appointed by the government. A number of the Pangu councillors resigned from the Council. Among them were Lady Elizabeth Kiki, Mrs Nahau Rooney, who was later to become a minister in the Somare government, and Peter Malala who was formerly the Town Clerk for the Council.

Another cause for much of the uproar against the Council was the overseas trips that councillors were taking. The biggest group of councillors ever to leave on a single overseas trip was the tour to the Philippines by a party of eleven councillors on 21st May 1975. Ten of these councillors were from the Papua Besena group. The only Pangu councillor who went on this trip subsequently defected from the Pangu group and quite understandably, joined Papua Besena. Two of the councillors who went on this trip visited Manila again in February 1976.

In February 1980, these two councillors claimed a refund of their air fares, and were later reimbursed K454 each. The councillors granted themselves other trips to Australia but the groups were much smaller because of the enormous financial difficulties that the Council was experiencing and also because of mounting criticism and accusations of squandering Council funds from members of the public and the government. Much of the criticisms against these overseas trips by councillors was quite valid. The Council has always been hampered by severe financial difficulties in its efforts to provide essential services to one of the most (if not the most) rapidly expanding urban area in the whole of Papua New Guinea and certainly the biggest and to some extent the most important city in the whole country. The necessity for sending eleven councillors on a 'study tour' has never been justified fully and the relevance of the Filipino study has always been under question. Criticisms of this nature were certainly not very encouraging for a Council which wasn't all that popular in terms of staff morale and maintaining the confidence of the people of Port Moresby whom it was supposed to serve. At this stage, even staunch Papua Besena supporters were beginning to question the practices of the councillors. The Council was becoming increasingly inefficient as political squabbles broke out and intensified between Pangu and Papua Besena councillors and even among the Papua Besena councillors themselves. Allegations about corruption and bribery were increasingly being made against Papua Besena councillors. As a result of these accusations, two councillors were sacked from the Finance and Executive Committee, the Council's highest policy-making group. Councillors Aroa Geno and Manu Raho announced that they no longer supported Papua Besena and were joining the Pangu group in the Council. Consequently, Papua Besena councillor, Sevese Morea, introduced the motion to sack them from this committee. Papua Besena

councillors Waibua Garia and Daure Gaigo were elected to replace them on the Finance and Executive Committee.

The 1978-80 Council

Unlike the previous Council election in April 1974, the Papua Besena candidates openly advertised their support for Papua Besena in the hope that this would get votes for them. However, even at this stage, the Papua Besena group in the Council hadn't yet established strong links with the executive of the Papua Party. Hence there wasn't much coordination of the electoral campaign for the candidates who were contesting the Council elections in 1978. It was basically left to each individual candidate to organize and finance his own campaign effort. The Papua Besena group's main opponent in this election was once again the Pangu Pati, although it contested the elections under the sponsorship of a group of trade unionists who called themselves the Workers Pressure Group. This group was co-sponsored by the Port Moresby Council of Trade Unions which has in the past had very close ties to the Pangu Pati.

The Papua Besena candidates, most of whom were former councillors, campaigned largely on their past personal achievements in bringing improved services to their respective wards. Their campaigning relied largely on the amount of services that the Council had allocated to their wards to gain votes for them as well as appeals to ethnicity and identifying with prominent institutions within their respective wards like the different church groups and community welfare groups. The Workers Pressure Group candidates based their campaign effort on the working population of the city. The usual promises of better services to the workers should they gain control of the Council and criticisms against the Papua Besena's past record in the Council were their main campaign strategy. Hence they used the slogan 'time for a change' in

their campaign.

However, in the final analysis, it really was a battle between Papua Besena and the Pangu Pati for control of the council. A considerable proportion of the voters cast their votes along these lines without much regard for the individual candidate. So, although the personal background and leadership qualities of candidates may have counted somewhat, it was the decision to vote for either a Papua Besena or Pangu controlled Council that really was at stake.

The results of the election showed that Papua Besena still had a large support base despite the poor performance of the previous Council. However, there was a difference in this election in the sense that quite a large number of independent candidates were also successful. This was what made the difference and both groups realized this. So the brief period between the announcement of all the election results and the swearing-in of the councillors was spent in lobbying for the support of these independent councillors, and the tightening up of the allegiance of councillors in both groups. From the outset it was quite clear that these independent councillors were not very impressed with the Papua Besena group and so the Workers Pressure Group ended up as the victor in the bid to gain control of the Council by successfully negotiating the support of the independents. This new alliance was called the Port Moresby Citizens Group. The group met and decided to nominate Kipling Uiari, the then Secretary for Labour and newly elected councillor, as their candidate for the position of Lord Mayor. With their slight advantage in terms of numbers, they managed to win this position and that of Deputy Lord Mayor which was won by Sogo Sebea. The Papua Besena Group lost their chances of gaining control of the Council through arguing and disputing among themselves as to whether they should nominate Mahuru Rarua Rarua or Sevese Morea. In the allocation of positions in

the various Council committees Papua Besena councillors were virtually left out, thus reversing the trends that they had set in the previous Council.

Some Papua Besena councillors have used the Council as a stepping stone to further their political careers. At least four Papua Besena ex-councillors contested the 1977 national elections. Out of this number, two succeeded and were members of the 1977-82 parliament. Mahuru Rarua Rarua was and still is the Member for Moresby North-West, while Sevese Morea was the Member for Moresby South and occupied the seat of Speaker of Parliament from 1980 to 1982. Also, as I stated before, many of the allegations about Papua Besena councillors using the Council to advance their own personal interests are not entirely without basis. These negative aspects of the Papua Besena group's term in the Council have overshadowed the positive contributions that they have made in terms of improving services to the people of Port Moresby.

However, it is also true that since Papua Besena entered City Council politics in 1974, it has created quite a bit of controversy over the role of political groups in an institution which is supposed to be a primarily service-oriented organization, devoid of party politics. The presence of the pro-Pangu group in the Council did not improve the image of the Council either. The conflict between these two groups which in many ways was an extension of the broader conflict between Pangu and Papua Besena at the national level, can be said to have contributed directly to the eventual suspension of the Council in September 1980. Another development which surrounds the circumstances under which the Council was suspended was that Papua Besena was in partnership with the National Alliance Government at the time in which the Council was controlled by the trade union and Pangu elements. The situation had been reversed in 1975 when Boyamo Sali, a Pangu government minister,

threatened to sack the Papua Besena controlled Council when they (the Papua Besena councillors) voted to commit the Council into supporting a unilateral declaration of Papuan independence in 1975.

The fate of the Port Moresby Council was sealed when the Government decided in late 1981 to abolish the Council altogether and replace it with an organization called the National Capital District Commission. Like the parent group, the Papua Besena group in the Council had reached the pinnacle of power and lost it through abuse of privilege. The situation was somewhat worse for the Papua Besena group in Council because, with a relatively smaller organization, their misuse of power and privilege was clearly visible to the voting public. Feeble attempts were made in the press for the reintroduction of the Council but these were abandoned in favour of other activities like election to the national parliament. Hence, the 1982 national elections saw many of these former Papua Besena councillors competing for seats in the National Capital District. It was not surprising therefore that all of them were defeated in the elections.

This case study of Papua Besena's participation in the politics of the Port Moresby City Council has some very interesting parallels with its history in parliamentary politics. Both the Council Group and the Papua Party in Parliament won convincingly in the first elections that they contested respectively. The Papua Party was at the pinnacle of its political power in the 1977-82 Parliament. The Papua Group in the Council was in full control of the 1974-78 Council. Both groups did not do so well in their second elections. The number of Papua Besena parliamentarians dropped dramatically after the 1982 elections and the Papua Group in the Council was ousted from its seat of power after the 1978 Council elections. These facts point out some interesting considerations on the nature of support for Papua Besena and also reflect the

general trends of Papua Besena's style of politics in the formal organizations that it was involved in.

It was clear that by 1978 Papua Besena support in the City Council was on the decline. Although Papua Besena lost by a very narrow margin to the pro-Pangu group in the Council, this signified the downward trend in popular support. The changing nature of the city's population contributed to this trend as migration of non-Papuans into the city increased. A clear indication of this was shown later in the 1982 national elections when it became clear that the electorate of Moresby North-East contained a majority of New Guineans in the voting population. This clearly confirmed one of the worst fears of Papua Besena; that Papuans would be dominated by New Guineans in their own lands at least in terms of population only. Yet, one should not discount the fact that Papua Besena's performance in the 1974-78 Council did affect Papua Besena's performance in the 1978 Council elections. The results were an indication of people's gradual awareness of the style of politics that Papua Besena was playing in the Council.

This case study also illustrates some general trends of Papua Besena politics in the Council that have their parallels at the parliamentary level. The most apparent of these was the lack of group effort and cooperation. Both in Parliament and the Council, Papua Besena has been continually plagued by faction-fighting and conflict among the individuals within the groups. Papua Besena's inability to maintain some degree of organizational discipline and outline its goals clearly was constantly thwarted by rebellious individual ambition and the desire by the leaders to improve their material status. These were the basic ingredients which contributed to the eventual demise of Papua Besena.

Footnotes

1. McKillop, B., 'The Papuan Separatists as a Non-violent Political Movement', Yagl-Ambu, vol. 5, no. 4, December 1978, p.11.
2. Membrey, R., 'Josephine Abaijah', Yagl-Ambu, vol. 1, no. 3, September 1974.
3. See Appendix.

CHAPTER SIX

AIMS OF PAPUA BESENA: SECESSIONISM

Papua Besena has so often been called a secessionist movement that to a large degree the term has stuck, despite a moderation of the goals of the movement due to splits among the factions that comprise Papua Besena. As a result some of the original goals of the movement have been modified by the more moderate demands of groups like the parliamentary wing of Papua Besena. This provides an interesting case of sometimes conflicting demands from the same overall Papua Besena movement, with demands for total separation or secession as well as for some degree of autonomous government for Papua within a unified Papua New Guinea being expounded almost simultaneously by the different factions of the movement. In this context, it is very difficult to identify the aims of the movement as they themselves change throughout time due to various developments that have taken place both within the movement and within the whole national political system. Nevertheless, there are some trends within the movement which can be used to identify the general direction which the movement is headed for one of the most salient of these trends is what seems to be a general moderation of the secessionist goals of the movement.

The root of Papuan secessionism or separatism is embodied in the two goals of economic development and political self-determination. These two goals are interlocking and Papua Besena leaders have used them to support their demands. They argue, firstly, that the economic development of Papua is placed at a subordinate position to New Guinea because of the latter's superior political power in the nation's highest legislative/representative body, the National Parliament. Secondly, they argue that the economically inferior Papuan will always

be forced to forfeit its own interests for the interests of the nation which are biased in favour of New Guinea: a situation which they claim was caused by Australian colonial policy and continued by the Papua New Guinean Government. The other issue which Papua Besena stresses is the concept of national self-determination, where every group of people who see themselves as separate and distinct should have the right to rule themselves. The promotion of Papuanism, the 'we as Papuans and they as New Guineans' feeling by Papua Besena is central in this thinking. These grievances provide the driving force behind Papua Besena.

As Papua Besena flourished because of discontent with a central authority, be it either the Australian colonial administration or the Papua New Guinea government, its tendencies are essentially anti-centralist. Yet the goals of Papua Besena have been moderated to some degree by factors such as the government's response to its demands and the nature and degree of mass support for these goals in the long run. These two factors, among other minor considerations, have taxed the strength of Papua Besena to a large degree. If the original aims of Papua Besena were self-determination and independence for Papua, then these have been watered down to a large degree. Hence, there developed a situation where the means utilized to achieve the aims have in fact become ends in themselves. The most obvious example of this was the quest for political power through participating in national politics within Parliament. Events in recent years have shown that sections of the Papua Besena leadership were arguing for a regional government for Papua. This also affected politics within the movement so that while some leaders wanted the movement to be organized along party lines, others like Abaijah wanted it to maintain its informal nature. The following discussion will examine both the original demands of Papua Besena along with those means of achieving them or temporary measures adopted by the leaders

which have become ends in themselves.

Secessionism

A survey of the rise of movements for self-determination shows an abundance of such cases. Yet the rate of success of these movements is not very encouraging for proponents of Papuan secessionism. However, this did not deter Josephine Abaijah from agitating for Papuan secessionism. To her Papua Besena had only one aim: 'To make Papua a free, independent nation and make the Papuans free people and masters of their own lands, their own resources, immigration, and their own lives'.¹ To her and other hard-line Papuan secessionist leaders, independence for Papua is the ultimate goal of Papua Besena. In this context Papua Besena's role is seen as: 'freeing the minds of the Papuan people; lifting from the Papuan people the slave mentality of colonialism, and destroying the colonial myth in Papua'.²

There are two related points which proponents of Papuan secessionism use to justify and support their claims. Firstly, there is the point mentioned in chapter two of this paper that Papua was never legally united with New Guinea at any stage. Although this might seem a very minor point in these times of harsh political realities, it has provided some very embarrassing moments for the government of PNG which asserts its sovereignty over the whole country and yet did not legislate for a union of both Papua and New Guinea prior to the enactment of the constitution. In some ways, this point provides one of the strongest bases of Papuan secessionism. Secondly, Papuan separatists, especially, have the opinion that Papua was dumped by Australia into forced union with New Guinea.

The self-interest of Australia is why Papua became an Australian Territory and the self-interest of Australia is the sole reason why we [were] dumped as a dependent colony of New Guinea and forced into political union with that country.(3)

Although Connor⁴ is correct in stating that colonized people are seldom consulted about the boundaries of the state in which they are granted political independence as new states, the problem is compounded in the case of Papua by the ambiguity of Papuans as a people who identify themselves as a separate, ethnic, cultural and linguistic group as opposed to any other group or groups of people. Abaijah was well aware of this problem facing Papua Besena demands for Papuan independence and many of her attempts to promote Papuan nationalism are well documented. The branding of New Guineans after the football riots of 1968 and 1973 as undisciplined barbarians as opposed to Papuans as peace-loving people; and the announcement of a Papuan flag and national anthem are some of the methods utilized by Papuan secessionists to promote Papuan nationalism. Even the term 'Besena', which can be loosely translated as 'tribe', is intended to be used in this quest.

The major obstacle that hardline secessionists within the Papua Besena leadership see in terms of mobilizing mass support and gaining recognition is getting Papuans to regard themselves as having a common history and common destiny as distinct from others. This is the main stumbling block of Papua Besena secessionists. Connor sums this up quite well in his answer to the question of what constitutes a nation:

In the final analysis, the coincidence of customary tangible attributes of nationality, such as common language or religion is not determinative. The prime requisite is subjective and consists of the self-identification of people with a group - its past, its present, and, most important, its destiny. (5)

The numerous meetings, rallies and demonstrations that Papua Besena has staged have not produced sustained mass support for the movement's secessionist goals. These activities may have served to persuade Papuans to be anti-government or anti-colonial and 'freed their minds', but, there was no basis for the awakening of a sense of Papuan nationalism in

the strict sense of the term because it never existed. There are more than a hundred different languages spoken by numerous self-differentiating ethnic groups in Papua with no overall common history and traditions.

Other problems which faced Papua Besena's secessionist stand included its leaders' own reluctance to clearly spell out an alternative governmental system for an independent Papua. Abaijah's insistence that Papua Besena is a 'peoples movement' with no formal leadership and organization contributed to the weakness of its separatist aspirations. Any movement or organization which does not have any alternative plans as replacements for the system against which it is struggling has that much less chance of success.

In addition to the psychological dimension of 'freeing the minds of the Papuan people', the secessionists adopted a non-violent approach to pressing for their demands. The adoption of non-violent action programmes was probably chosen, among other considerations, on the premise that the use of non-violence will invite repression as a counter-measure by the central government, which can then be capitalized on and used for political mileage by secessionist leaders in the form of secessionist propaganda. On mentioning plans to pull down Papua New Guinea flags in 1975 and replacing them with the flag of Papua Besena,⁶ James Mopio stated that:

This would be a peaceful way unless the police arrested this group. We will let them do so but they must be very careful not to hit anyone with batons. Because if they do, so far as we are concerned, they have started the violence. (7)

However the Somare Government was quick to catch on to this and used a strategy of passive response which rendered the non-violent tactic virtually useless, as will be seen. In fact, as McKillop points out, the government proved to be more adept than Papua Besena in the use of non-violence as a political instrument.⁸ Somare had repeatedly stated that no action would be taken against separatists unless they broke the

law.⁹

Another tactic that Papua Besena leaders proposed was the confiscation of all Australian owned properties in Papua and their return to the Papuan people.

Because of the great harm that Australia has done and continues to do in Papua while we were helpless under its colonial rule, Papua Besena strongly supports the confiscation of all Australian owned properties in Papua and their free return to the Papuan people.(10)

The taking over of the Jiropa plantation by Simon Kaumi and his supporters in late 1974 was an isolated attempt by supporters of the movement and it proved to be of no consequence as the plantation was already rundown and the Australian owner was intending to move out anyway. The Somare Government did not even bother to attempt any police measures and maintained a non-involvement stand. As it had hoped, the incident did not cause any 'domino effect' and so it turned out to be a pathetic attempt at baiting the government. Since then, nothing has been heard of the plans by the Eriwo Development Corporation to develop the place into a tourist attraction.¹¹

Other forms of highlighting Papua Besena's secessionist policy were the unilateral declaration of Papuan independence on 16th March 1975 and Papua Besena's boycotting of the Papua New Guinea self-government and independence day celebrations on 1st December 1973 and 16th September 1975, respectively. The boycotting of these two crucial dates were inconsequential in that, although crowds assembled at Papua Besena rallies at Bereina and Kaugere for the self-government date, the only actions were fiery political speeches. The only thing that seemed potentially sensational during independence was the presence of a traditional rainmaker instructed by Papua Besena leaders to ruin the celebrations. His 'magic', however, was of no consequence and the national celebrations proceeded as planned. The unilateral declaration of Papuan independence was

intended to be a symbolic gesture aimed more at Australia than at New Guinea. It was aimed at impressing on Australia Papua Besena's refusal to accept union with New Guinea, or, as Abaijah put it, 'Australia's aim of dumping Papua as a destitute colony of New Guinea'. Somare aptly summed up the government's lack of concern about this declaration: 'If six villages go and declare independence, I do not take it as a mandate from the people'.¹² The Parliamentary wing of Papua Besena or Papua Party which Abaijah had announced in November 1973 had by 1980 moderated its aims and was nowhere near what Abaijah had hoped it would become: that is, the foundations of an alternative government for an independent Papua. Secondly, rare as the case may be for a secessionist movement to be successful in its ultimate goal, it is even more rare for any to have achieved success using non-violence as a political tactic. One of the reasons is that Papua Besena leaders are 'reluctant or unable to organize so as to offer the violence which makes secessionism politically viable'.¹³

Regional Government for Papua

The concept of regional government for Papua had been proposed in the early years of Papua Besena's activities but it was some years later that it was proposed as a concrete alternative. It was first proposed as an interim step by Abaijah who stated that:

Papua Besena strongly opposes the idea of Papua as a state in a combined country of Papua-New Guinea. If this occurs as an interim step, then that is O.K. but it has nothing to do with the aims of Papua Besena. (14)

Then in September 1978, Joseph Aoae presented a paper to the Waigani Seminar in Port Moresby in which he stated Papua Besena's moderated aims of a regional government for all of Papua. The advantage that Papua Besena leaders pointed out for a regional government for Papua under a federal system of government was that the states would be larger units

which would have more wide-ranging powers delegated to them and would also be more capable of handling them competently because of the greater resources at their disposal. According to Aoae, a federal system of government was in the best interests of Papua since it would guarantee for Papuans:

- political security from outside domination,
- complete control over land and resources,
- complete control over priorities of economic development,
- and,
- all residual powers which are not vested in the central government...rest with the new states.¹⁵

Provincial government, the Somare Government's experiment at decentralized government, has been rejected by Papua Besena leaders as 'inconsequential' because of the relatively smaller amount of finance and other resources that provinces could hope to command in comparison to state government for all of Papua in a federal system of government.

It is quite clear that the basic motive behind this is to provide for as much internal autonomy as possible; for Papua to gain control of its own economic development and political decision-making; to decide for itself on crucial decisions such as the states in other federal systems do, without putting it in a competitive position with the numerically and economically stronger New Guinea.

As stated previously in this chapter one of the other grievances that Papua Besena used to justify Papuan secessionism was the economic argument. Papua Besena leaders saw a bias that stemmed from the colonial era and believed that the rectification of this economic imbalance lay essentially in the political solution of Papuans deciding their own economic policy for themselves. They saw a definite conspiracy on the part of the Australian government, as Abaijah has stated many times.

The destruction of economic and political self-reliance in Papua is a definite colonial policy aimed at forcing Papua into a political union with New Guinea, so that Australia can contribute to the development of one country instead of two, and cover up for a century of indifference and neglect in Papua. (16)

At the same time, Papua Besena leaders claimed that the central government had not done much in trying to remedy this economic imbalance. Aoae claimed that:

The Somare/Chan Government had done nothing to allay the fears of Papuans that because they were numerically outnumbered in the nation's highest legislative body, Papua would be forever subjugated to the numerical superiority of New Guinea. (17)

Although there is a basis for the argument of economic imbalance against Papua, especially Abaijah's point that the implementation of the 1964 World Bank Report discriminated against Papua in the interests of more economically productive areas. However this does not constitute grounds for secession since there are large areas of New Guinea which even now are as under-developed as some of the Papuan regions. Hence the national government's reversal of policy to pay more attention to the economically poorer areas in the whole country does accommodate the economic grievances that Papua Besena raises.

One of the more specific policies that Papua Besena stressed was the land issue. In spelling out Papua Besena's stand on this, Galeva Kwarara stated at the University in 1980 that if Papua ever became independent, all alienated lands would be returned to the original owners and redistributed with the approval of the customary owners so that they would benefit also in terms of land rates that would be paid to them by the users of these lands. Like most of the policies on the various issues that Papua Besena stressed, the land policy was never articulated very well to include how the land was going to be redistributed.

Separatism or Regional Autonomy

As I stated previously, the two goals of separatism and regional government for Papua are expressed almost simultaneously to the extent that it is difficult to say what the official Papua Besena view is, that is, if there is an official view. Abaijah and her followers maintain that Papua should be separate from New Guinea totally, while pragmatists like Joseph Aoae and the members of the parliamentary wing are proposing more practical solutions to remedy the fears of economic under-development and political domination by New Guinea. Both of these goals or demands deal with the distribution of political power: the secessionists demand that total political power be given to Papua as a separate country, while proponents of regional autonomy for Papua want adequate political power to be able to effectively deal with problems facing Papua without going to the extreme of breaking away completely from the country. Hence, there is a conflict of demands within Papua Besena, the outcome of which seems to have indicated that the pragmatists within the movement have been gradually dominating it. So far the government has worked consistently in undermining the basis of Papua Besena's grievances by initiating various developmental projects in Papua like the giant copper mine at Ok Tedi in the Western province of Papua and by the introduction of provincial government as a way of winning the support of the people in the areas where Papua Besena has its strongest support and those in which it had the potential to win support.

It seems that both aims of separatism and regional government have ended up as failures. Papua Besena's term in Parliament seemed to have provided the most ideal time for promoting the regional autonomy argument, but as recent history shows, self-interest and lack of conviction prevailed. Hence, Papua Besena has failed in both of its major aims. In competing for the support of the masses, the government of PNG has

out-maneuvred Papua Besena by presenting more attainable and realistic goals and policies. This, together with the other factors like organization and leadership finally resulted in the sharp and abrupt fall of political power and also mass support.

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19. ...
20. ...

Footnotes

1. See Appendix B.
2. ibid.
3. Abaijah, J., 'The Suppression of Papuan Independence', World Review, vol. 15, no. 1.
4. Connor, W., 'Self-Determination: The New Phase', World Politics, vol. 20, no. 1, October 1967.
5. ibid., p.30.
6. The flag consisted of the White Southern Cross with the cross of Christ above it on a pale blue background.
7. The National Times, 3 March 1975.
8. McKillop, B., 'The Papuan Separatists as a Non-Violent Political Movement', Yagl-Ambu, vol. 5, no. 4, December 1978, p.90.
9. Post Courier, 19 March 1975.
10. Appendix B.
11. Daro, B., 'Papua Besena Movement', paper delivered to Australian Political Studies Conference, Sydney, 1976.
12. Post Courier, 19 March 1975.
13. Griffin, J., 'Papua New Guinea', Australian Journal of Politics and History, December 1975.
14. Appendix B.
15. Aoa, J., 'Decentralization: Papua Besena View', Premdas, R. and Pokawin, S. (eds), Decentralization: The Papua New Guinea Experiment, University of Papua New Guinea, 1979, p.30.
16. ibid., p.27.
17. ibid.

CONCLUSION

In its turbulent nine year history, Papua Besena experienced both a rapid growth and an equally dramatic decline. It is the aim of this conclusion to draw together the preceding chapters by considering the reasons for both its rise and fall.

As I have tried to stress in this thesis, Papua Besena arose because of a series of historical circumstances. Hence, any attempt to analyse the movement must be done in its historical context. It arose during a period of uncertainty which Papua New Guinea faced as it moved from the status of two colonies to a single united and independent sovereign state. In the wider sense, the rise of Papua Besena and other movements of this sort has been summed up well by Clifford Geertz.

It is the very process of the formation of a sovereign civil state, that, among other things, stimulates sentiments of parochialism, communalism, racialism and so on, because it introduces into society a valuable new prize over which to fight and a frightening new force with which to contend. The doctrines of the nationalist propagandists notwithstanding, Indonesian regionalism, Malayan racialism, Indian linguism or Nigerian tribalism are, in their political dimensions, not so much the result of colonial divide-and-rule policies as they are the products of the replacement of a colonial regime by an independent, domestically anchored, purposeful unitary state. Though they rest on historically developed distinctions, some of which colonial rule helped to accentuate (and other of which it helped to moderate), they are part and parcel of the creation of a new polity and a new citizenship. (1)

This statement also applies in the case of Papua Besena. It arose out of dissatisfaction with colonial policies and practices. At the same time it arose in the historical context of a newly emerging civil state of Papua New Guinea.

Chapter two outlined the colonial policies and practices which provided much of the basis for the rise of Papua Besena. Although not through colonial divide-and-rule policies, the creation of Papua (and

New Guinea) provided the basis for a new and wider association which had become established in the minds of many people. Hence, when it became obvious that colonial rule was ending and was going to be replaced by self-government, uneasiness began to be increasingly expressed in the form of self-determination and regionalism. Several more particular factors which contributed to the rise of Papua Besena will be summarized in the light of this general framework.

One of the factors which facilitated the rise of Papua Besena was that the issue of the status of Papua was never resolved, at least legally. Papua Besena has used this to its advantage in attracting mass support. More importantly, many Papuans had begun to identify themselves as Papuans as a result of almost a century of being described as such by the colonial power. Hence, Papua Besena was able to exploit this sense of Papuanism. Yet, this in itself was not sufficient to enlist mass support for Papua Besena.

Another factor which can be used to explain the rise of Papua Besena was the sense of economic insecurity and deprivation. Although Papua Besena blamed Australian colonial policies and practices for being the root cause of development imbalances between Papua and New Guinea, Papua Besena expressed fear that these would be continued under an independent Papua New Guinean government, dominated by New Guineans. Hence, the Papua Besena leaders' use of dramatic statistical facts like imbalances in parliamentary representation, population and land were very effective in soliciting support for the movement.

It is very important to understand the significance of the area of Papua Besena activity to understand the general context of how it arose. Quite clearly, Papua Besena was centred in Port Moresby, the capital of the country and the most populous urban area. Because of heavy migration, it was, even by the early 1970s, the most ethnically

plural community in the whole country. In addition to that, it had the usual problems like unemployment, squatter settlements and regional hostilities. Again Papua Besena used these to its advantage by portraying migrant New Guineans as being threats to Papuan women, land, and employment and business opportunities. In many cases, stereotyping strategies used by Papua Besena leaders proved to be very successful. The rugby league riots were seen by many Papuans as supportive of Abaijah's claims that the New Guineans were by nature more aggressive and undisciplined than Papuans. All this added fuel to the Papua Besena cause as its leaders claimed that Papuans were under threat of even being dominated in a 'Papuan city'. The use of social problems in an urban setting where there was more contact between Papuans and New Guineans to mobilize Papua Besena support makes Port Moresby a very crucial base for the movement. This seems to have been borne out by the fact that support for Papua Besena extended only as far as the roads went out of the city. Thus the villages which supported Papua Besena most were those which were easily accessible from Port Moresby.

In a more direct way, the rise of Papua Besena can be attributed to the efforts of one woman, Josephine Abaijah. She, more than anybody else, provided the determination and coherent, charismatic leadership for Papua Besena to establish itself as a force in PNG politics. Her qualities as a forceful orator and an organizer moved hundreds of people into political activity. Despite the leadership disadvantages and handicaps that women in traditional societies faced, she emerged as a very influential person.

Through her energetic leadership, Papua Besena was skilful in organizing protest activities that were symbolic of many Papuan fears and grievances. For a period, Papua Besena appeared to be a growing mass movement.

All these factors together contributed to the rise of Papua Besena. The personal attitudes of Papua Besena leaders and their supporters considered in the light of the political, social and economic situations as they perceived them provided the foundations for the rise of Papua Besena.

Despite its initial success, Papua Besena had, by mid-1982, reached its full downward slide. Again, the reasons for this fall lie within its internal situation and the changing political environment within which it operated. Again, there is an intermingling of factors which have to be considered together to understand the causes for the decline of Papua Besena as a force in PNG politics.

During the first years of its existence, the major tools that Papua Besena used to win support for its cause were marches, petitions, rallies and demonstrations. The three targets for these efforts were the Papuan people, the government and the international community, especially the Australian government and public. Appeals to the international community were the most unsuccessful of them right from the beginning. Attempts at petitioning the government to accept Papuan self-determination also met with tactful refusals. The government, aware that Papua Besena was attempting to tear up a very delicate union of two territories and threatening the sovereignty of the state of Papua New Guinea, managed to contain Papua Besena without resorting to extremes of violent repression. Using its resources advantage and growing legitimacy, the government was able to undermine Papua Besena's support base by responding with material benefits and offering political stability. This was a very crucial factor in the competition for popular support between Papua Besena and the government. Where Papua Besena offered political uncertainty if only for a short while before the establishment of an independent Papuan government, the national government on the other hand appeared to

offer political stability and some degree of decentralized political decision-making power. The introduction of provincial governments was thus one of the major factors which undermined Papua Besena's anti-colonialism, foreign domination argument. These factors show that in the competition for political points and popular support, Papua Besena did not score as well as the central government. Hence, the trend is that, while Papua Besena's support base was considerable in the early years, this has been eroded by government initiative and Papua Besena's failure to compete effectively.

The field of electoral politics shows quite clearly the trends of support for Papua Besena. At its establishment, Papua Besena had one parliamentary member, Miss Josephine Abaijah. After the elections in 1977 and the by-elections were over Papua Besena had increased its parliamentary membership to eight. The 1982 elections saw a big drop in electoral support for Papua Besena which managed to get only three members elected. Papua Besena was clearly at the height of its popularity by 1977. But they were obviously at their peak and could not increase their support and parliamentary representation considerably without expanding their geographical base. Outside of the Central Province and the National Capital District, they had no significant support at all. Their area of electoral competition and mass mobilization was centred in the Central Province and the NCD only. As they had no real political ambition to increase their support base to other Papuan provinces, all they could hope for was to try to maintain their electoral strength in the Central Province and the NCD. However, political infighting and petty squabbles showed their consequences quite dramatically when even Abaijah, the founder and acknowledged top leader of the movement, failed to be re-elected. In the election, it was not so much Papua Besena against the government as it was Papua Besena against other competitors.

This was the situation in which Papua Besena really had to compete. The elections in the Central province and NCD involved Papuans against Papuans as well as New Guineans. In some electorates, especially the NCD electorates, Papua Besena's problems were complicated by the large number of non-Papuan voters. All these factors contributed towards the poor performance of Papua Besena in the 1982 elections. Hence, with its electoral power base eroded, Papua Besena's future seems bleak.

As well as mass support, one of the most important things for any political movement which wants to succeed in its aims is group solidarity and cohesion. Papua Besena's record of group solidarity is very poor. It has been plagued by faction fighting and leadership challenges within its leadership ranks and mass support on the one hand, and internal conflict. Hence one of the major reasons for the poor performance of Papua Besena in the 1982 elections was publicity which the split within its leadership received. Electorally, the split which emerged fully immediately before the elections, was suicidal. Another ingredient for success that Papua Besena failed to use was effective organization. Because of their disinclination to achieve their secessionist goals through radical and violent means, Papua Besena leaders should have placed appropriate emphasis on the alternative which they opted for. A long struggle requires organization to maintain the support base. In this they also failed. Hence, this also was illustrated by the 1982 election results.

For most purposes, the history of Papua Besena has shown that it has displayed some characteristics of separatist movements. It has fed on the fears and even created fears about foreign domination, New Guineans in this case. It attempted to enlist support by invoking stereotyped characteristics of New Guineans and Papuans to illustrate perceived 'cultural' traits between both Papuans and New Guineans. Colonial

policies like Australia's paternalist attitude towards Papua and the World Bank Report which emphasized priority in economic development terms on potentially productive areas were also used to elicit support for the Papuan cause. Finally, the argument of political self-determination for all self-identifying peoples was used. All these led to prophets of gloom, predicting on the base of literature on movements of this sort that violence and repression was the inevitable outcome.²

Yet the methods used by Papua Besena to attempt to alter the political relationship with the larger unit (New Guinea) have not been successful. This was not because of the repression that the government had used. On the contrary, one can say that the government and Papua Besena have not fitted ideally to the literature on the conflict between the larger unit and the separatists. It can be said with some basis that Papua Besena has not been whole-hearted in its calls for the separation of Papua from New Guinea. Many of their actions have only been symbolic. History shows that separatist movements which have succeeded have achieved their objectives through violent struggle, entailing inevitable loss of life. Yet Papua Besena has clung to non-violence as a strategy for achieving the break-up of Papua from New Guinea. The strategies used by Papua Besena have only resulted in piecemeal changes which have benefited the central government more than it has helped Papua Besena. Because, at least nominally, the fundamental aims and goals of Papua Besena are revolutionary, its methods of achieving them should have been revolutionary for them to have some chance of succeeding. It never had the power base - geographically, popularly or organizationally - to adopt more militant tactics. Instead Papua Besena has compromised itself a great deal by competing in national elections and participating in the government of PNG and thereby, ironically, acknowledging the sovereignty of the state of Papua

New Guinea. The end result is that Papua Besena has undermined itself and its support base which is basically built on anti-New Guinean sentiment.

Finally, an important factor which might also be considered in an attempt to explain the reasons why Papua Besena is on the decline is the foundations of a Papuan state. As an ethno-nationalist movement, its foundations are very weak indeed. The collective psychology of Papuanism has not developed fully among the populace. Papua Besena has failed to mobilize support among the masses from the Western Province to Milne Bay in the form of separatist struggle. This, as Connor points out, is an essential ingredient of successful separatist struggle.

A prerequisite of nationhood is a popularly held awareness or belief that one's own group is unique in a most vital sense. In the absence of popularly held conviction, there is only an ethnic group. (3)

In the competition for the loyalties of the Papuan people, the national government has worked more methodically and systematically in capturing this. The result is that Papua Besena has been co-opted into the mainstream of PNG politics so that by 1977, it had developed features that were not very different from other political parties in Papua New Guinea. On the basis of all this, one can claim that Papua Besena as a separatist movement has died out as a political force. With even its attempts at organizing along party lines having failed, this leads one to cast doubt on the whole future of Papua Besena as a political force of any kind in Papua New Guinea.

Footnotes

1. Geertz, C., 'The Integrative Revolution', in Geertz, C. (ed.), Old States and New Societies, New York, 1963, pp.120-121.
2. Premdas, R., 'Secession and Political Change: The Case of Papua Besena', Oceania, vol. 47, no. 4, 1977, p.283.
3. Connor, W., 'Nation-Building or Nation-Destroying', World Politics, vol. 24, no. 3, April 1972, p.337.

Put a tick over YES or NO for each question and post it to
 Mr Connor at the House of Assembly as soon as possible.

1. Do you want Papua to be one country with
 New Guinea NOW? (See notes: this means
 Papua will always have to do what New
 Guinea will do.)

YES NO

2. Do you want your country, Papua, to join
 to all New Guinea later on?

YES NO

3. Do you think Papua and New Guinea should
 remain as one country all the time.
 Should Papua have the same number of votes
 as New Guinea?

YES NO

4. Do you want Papua to be one country with
 New Guinea?

YES NO

If you want something else, write it down here.

Source: David Stephen, A History of Political Parties in Papua
 New Guinea, Lansdowne, Melbourne, 1972, p.131.

APPENDIX A

The Questionnaire which House of Assembly Member, V.B. Counsel, distributed to Local Government Councils in the Papuan region.

Questionnaire

(Put a tick over YES or NO for each question and post it to Mr Counsel at the House of Assembly as soon as possible.)

- | | | |
|---|-----|----|
| 1. Do you want Papua to be one country with New Guinea NOW? (See notes: this means Papuans will always have to do what New Guineans tell them.) | YES | NO |
| 2. Do you want your country, Papua, to join up with New Guinea later on? | YES | NO |
| 3. Do you think Papua and New Guinea should remain as one country all the time, should Papua have the same number of votes as New Guinea? | YES | NO |
| 4. Do you want Papua to be one country with New Guinea? | YES | NO |

If you want something else, write it down here.

Source: David Stephen, A History of Political Parties in Papua New Guinea, Landsdowne, Melbourne, 1972, p.130.

APPENDIX BBASIC DOCUMENT ON PAPUA BESENA POLICY

1. Papua Besena is an anti-colonial movement.
2. Papua Besena is not a political party.
3. I am the founder and spokesman of Papua Besena but Papua Besena does not appoint any leaders or create any particular structures.
4. Papua Besena leaders may arise but they are not appointed.
5. Papua Besena supporters are in almost every village in Papua, among the highest and lowest public servants, in the police force and the army. Papua Besena supporters come from every walk of life but I do not appoint anyone of them as a leader.
6. A Papua Besena supporter is known entirely by his acts and his attitudes. A Papua Besena leader is known entirely by his acts, his attitudes, his followers or the leadership role that he assumes in the Papua Besena anti-colonial movement, Nobody appoints him or her.
7. This is a very important concept in Papua Besena because we expect all Papuans will support Papua Besena or Papuan Nationalism. We are not trying to create a new society with new structures and leaders but we are freeing the minds of the Papuan people which is the first step to making a free independent nation and Papuans free people.
8. Papua Besena belongs to the Papuan people. It belongs equality [sic] to the poor and the rich, to rural people and the town people, to the village farmer and the professional worker alike. All are equal.
9. Papua Besena has only one aim:
 - A. TO MAKE PAPUA A FREE, INDEPENDENT NATION AND MAKE THE PAPUANS FREE PEOPLE AND MASTERS OF THEIR OWN LIVES, THEIR OWN RESOURCES, IMMIGRATION AND THEIR OWN LIVES.

10. Papua Besena will achieve this aim or objective by freeing the minds of the Papuan people, lifting from the Papuan people the slave mentality of colonialism, and destroying the colonial myth in Papua.
11. Papua Besena strongly criticized the role that Australians played in Papua. Australia, instead of developing Papuan resources, Papuan independence and Papuan freedom of mind and spirit has given us the rotten lies of the colonial myth:
 - a. Papuans are inferior to all other foreigners and cannot do anything properly.
 - b. Papuans are timid, non-aggressive people and can easily be controlled by colonial masters.
 - c. Papua is poor and has no resources.
 - d. Papuan lands will be much safer and Papua will be much better protected if they are dominated by New Guinea than if they controlled their own land, resources and lives themselves.
12. The colonial myth of foreign superiority and Papuan poverty and hopelessness was first implanted in the minds of Papuans by the Australian colonialists but it is now being carried on by other foreigners and New Guineans, particularly in the Territory Education institutions where Papuans are being brainwashed to follow a certain line instead of developing freedom to think and make up their own minds.
13. Papua Besena will free the minds of the Papuan people from the dependent slave mentality of colonialism but the Papuans themselves must gain their own freedom in their own way.
14. Papua Besena follows along the lines of such movements as peaceful, non-violent, anti-colonial movements in other parts of the world which obtained their objectives by freeing the minds of the people

from the evils implanted by colonial indoctrination.

15. Papua Besena has developed policy papers and structures for an independent Papua but it has only done this under pressure as Papua Besena does not see that Papua Besena has a functional role in the Government of Papua after Papua becomes an independent nation free from Australia and free from New Guinea. The papers are for discussion purposes only.
16. Papua Besena strongly opposes the idea of Papua as a state in a combined Papua-New Guinea. If this occurs as an interim step, then that is O.K. but it has got nothing to do with the aims of Papua Besena.
17. Papua Besena supports all Area Authorities and other Papuan Groups who oppose state government for Papua New Guinea.
18. Papua Besena wants strong autonomous District (Provincial) and Community Government in a free, independent Papua.
19. The Western District, Gulf District, Southern Highlands, Northern District, Milne Bay District and Central District should all have strong autonomous District Government.
20. Each district in Papua should be largely responsible for controlling its own lands, resources and immigration.
21. The entry of New Guineans and other foreigners into Papua will be strictly controlled.
22. Large towns should be developed in the Gulf District to serve the vast resources of the area and a large town developed in the Marshall Lagoon/Abau area to serve the link with the Northern District and Milne Bay.
23. Port Moresby should be decentralized to Bereina and Kwikila and each of these towns should become District capitals.
24. There is no limit to the number of structured organizations that

can arise in Papua but these are not the Papua Besena anti-colonial movement. Papua Besena will affect every structure and every organization that develops in Papua.

25. The Districts of Papua should be called states. Additional STATES or larger STATES can be created if necessary. This is entirely a matter for the Papuan people.

At present the Papuan states would be, but no doubt some of the names would be changed.

WESTERN STATE

PAPUAN HIGHLANDS STATE

GULF STATE

CENTRAL STATE

NORTHERN STATE

MILNE BAY STATE

A Federation of these states would form the FEDERATION OF PAPUA or the REPUBLIC OF PAPUA.

26. Because of the great harm that Australia has done and continues to do to Papua while we were helpless under its colonial rule, Papua Besena strongly supports the confiscation of all Australian owned property in Papua and their free return to the Papuan people. Australia can thus compensate its own people and make up for its disgraceful disregard and neglect during the period of its colonial rule in Papua.

J.M. ABALJAH, MHA
PAPUA BESENA LEADER
25TH NOVEMBER, 1974

Source: McKillop, B., 'The Papuan Separatists as a Non-Violent Political movement', in Yagl-Ambu, vol. 5, no. 4, December 1978.

APPENDIX C

1977 ELECTION RESULTS OF THE SEATS CONTESTED BY PAPUA BESENANational Capital District

1. John Banono	1,693
2. Tom Kimala	1,132
3. Albert Maori Kiki	6,191
4. Ron Boyce	393
5. Josephine M. Abaijah*	12,905
TOTAL	<u>22,314</u>

Moresby South Open

1. Dadi Toka	391
2. Ravu Sanuel	440
3. Mahuru Seaka	608
4. Arua Au	410
5. Willem Rumbiak	173
6. Sevese Morea*	3,537
7. Bill Rudd	1,122
8. Oala Oala Rarua	1,540
TOTAL	<u>10,642</u>

Moresby North-West Open

1. Daure Gaigo	445
2. Bemalo Okona	91
3. Lance Kousa	254
4. Gavera Rea	3,133
5. Amarty P. Kila	832
6. James Isorua	831
7. Mahuru Rarua Rarua*	3,158
8. Sinaka Goava	519
9. Bobby Gaigo*	108
10. Albert Ivaraoa	296

Moresby North-East

1. Gilbert Kose	382
2. Fide Bale	517
3. Goasa Damena*	614
4. Harry Hoerler	705
5. Lahui Tau*	643
6. Patterson Lowa	1,423
Informal	463
TOTAL	<u>4,747</u>

Moresby North-East
(By-Election July 1978)

1. Goasa Damena*	1,031
2. Albert Maori Kiki	1,003
3. Ron Boyce	842
4. Harry Hoerler	769
5. Patterson Lowa	525
6. Fide Bale	166
7. Ted Godwin	82

* Papua Besena candidates

Central Provincial

1. James Eki Mopio*	21,347
2. John Ovia	9,678
	<hr/>
TOTAL	31,022
	<hr/>

Abau Open

(Supplementary Election)

1. Cliff Ianamu	2,121
2. G. Pepena*	2,285
3. Moses Anai	557
4. B. Terry Genia	421
5. Tuakana John	383
6. Reuben Taureka	1,732
7. Dani Vere	95
	<hr/>
TOTAL	7,585
	<hr/>

Rigo Open

1. Sio Misina	508
2. G. Kwarara*	2,997
3. Mairi Mairi	129
4. Kenneth K. Noga	281
5. Len Henao Sabadi	295
6. Gorua Dirona	707
7. Sere Pitoi	1,367
8. Nagama Geno	270
	<hr/>
TOTAL	7,267
	<hr/>

Kairuku Hiri Open

1. Alan O. Ame	1,062
2. Simon N. Foieke*	2,893
3. Joseph Aoae*	2,366
4. Siosi Samaea	1,724
5. Taumaku Morea	2,217
6. James Moaba	1,759

FINAL TALLY

(a) Moresby Regional	Josephine Abaijah	(Papua Besena)
(b) Moresby South	Sevese Morea	(Papua Besena)
(c) Moresby North-East	Mahuru Rarua Rarua	(Papua Besena)
(d) Moresby North-West	Patterson Lowa	(Pangu Pati)
(e) Central Regional	James Mopio	(Papua Besena)
(f) Kairuku Hiri	Simon Foi'eke	(Papua Besena)
(g) Rigo	Galeva Kwarara	(Papua Besena)
(h) Abau	Gerega Pepena	(Papua Besena)
(i) Goilala	Lui Mona	(P.P.P.)

APPENDIX DPAPUA BESENA COUNCILLORS IN THE 1974-78 COUNCIL

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Mahuru Rarua Rarua (L. Mayor) | 10. Philip Maimu |
| 2. Sevese Morea (Deputy) | 11. Lahui Tau |
| 3. Lohia Doriga | 12. Albert Ivaraoa |
| 4. Sisia Baeau | 13. Henry Hiri |
| 5. Aroa Geno | 14. Waibua Caria |
| 6. Frank Griffin | 15. Manu Raho |
| 7. Haraka Iduhu | 16. Daure Gaigo |
| 8. Madaha Resena | 17. Tau Vere |
| 9. Mahiro Kivovia | |

Note: Daure Gaigo and Manu Raho were elected in a Council by-election after the resignation of Pangu councillors Peter Malala and Nahau Rooney.

Dr Eric Wright was also replaced after he was deported from the country by the government.

COUNCIL COMMITTEES IN THE 1974-78 COUNCILFinance and Management

1. Mahuru Rarua Rarua
2. Sevese Morea
3. Lohia Doriga
4. Sisia Baeau
5. Aroa Geno
6. Frank Griffin
7. Henry Hiri
8. Haraka Iduhu
9. Albert Ivaraoa
10. Mahiro Kivovia
11. Madaha Resena
12. Robert Orr (Pangu)

Tax Assessment

1. Mahuru Rarua Rarua
2. Frank Griffin
3. Sisia Baeau

Building

1. Lohia Doriga
2. Albert Ivaraoa
3. Mahiro Kivovia
4. Sisia Baea
5. Cecil Weldon (Pangu)

Land Rates and Building
Tax Review

1. Mahuru Rarua Rarua
2. Sevese Morea
3. Frank Griffin
4. Sisia Baeau
5. Haraka Iduhu

Tax Review

1. Mahuru Rarua Rarua
2. Sevese Morea
3. Aroa Geno
4. Albert Ivaraoa
5. Mahiro Kivovia
6. Brian Bell (Pangu)

Note: Except when stated otherwise, all members in these Council Committees were Papua Besena councillors.

Non-Papua Besena Independents

1. Harry Mearns (United Party)

WEST PAPUA COUNCIL GROUP

Workers/Professionals Group

1. Willie Patak
2. Jack Cook
3. William Wilson
4. Paul Francis
5. Jim King
6. Bill King
7. Ted Cook

Independents

1. Kipling Hani
2. Jack Selas
3. Matthew Mui-Mui
4. Sam Jones
5. Brian Bell
6. Mahiro Kivovia
7. Thomas Mearns (United Party)

ADMINISTRATIVE OF WORKS BY THE COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Committee	Workers/Professionals	Independents	Total
a. Planning and Development	2	14	16
b. Housing	1	3	4
c. Building	1	2	3
d. Water and Power	1	2	3
e. Public Transport	2	2	4
f. Markets	1	2	3
g. Social Services	1	2	3
h. High Roads	1	2	3
i. Development and Housing Loans	1	2	3

(Note) The other Building Committee member was Councillor Harry Mearns, the United Party Independent councillor.

APPENDIX ECOUNCILLORS IN THE 1978-80 COUNCILPapua Besena

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Mahuru Rarua Rarua | 7. Iahui Tau |
| 2. Madaha Resena | 8. John Torrisheba |
| 3. Haraka Induhu | 9. Dou Babaga |
| 4. Lohia Doriga | 10. Ron Pedder |
| 5. Ulea Auma | 11. Daure Gaigo |
| 6. Sevese Morea | 12. Aroa Geno |

Pro-Papua Besena Independents

1. Harry Hoerler (United Party)

PORT MORESBY CITIZENS GROUPWorkers Pressure Group

1. Moeka Helai
2. John Kosi
3. William Edoni
4. Paul Arnold
5. Iga Kila
6. Max Rai
7. Moi Avei

Independents

1. Kipling Uiari
2. Sogo Sebea
3. Matthew Nou-Taboro
4. Maua Kemo
5. Brian Bell
6. Mahiro Kivovia
7. Thomas Nekints (United Party)

DISTRIBUTION OF SEATS IN THE COUNCIL COMMITTEES

<u>Committee</u>	<u>P/Besena</u>	<u>Citizens Group</u>	<u>Total</u>
a. Finance and Executive	0	14	14
b. Licencing	1	5	6
c. Building	1	5	6
d. Rates and Taxes	1	4	6*
e. Public Transport	0	6	6
f. Markets	1	5	6
g. Social Concerns	1	5	6
h. Hiri Moale	3	6	9
i. Resettlement and Housing Loans	1	5	6

Note: *The other Building Committee member was Councillor Harry Hoerler, the United Party/Independent councillor.

APPENDIX FLEADERSHIP OF PAPUA BESENA:selected leaders onlyMiss Josephine Abaijah

The person most associated with Papua Besena and probably the most popular of the Papua Besena leaders is the founder of the movement, Miss Josephine Abaijah. She was born at Wamira village near Dogura in the Milne Bay province and spent her early childhood on Misima island. She attended the local primary school and after completing this, was awarded an Administration scholarship to attend high school at Charters Towers in Queensland, Australia. She left after obtaining her Junior Certificate and went to Port Moresby where she worked as an office secretary with the Administration. It was in Port Moresby that she gained her Matriculation Certificate by attending adult education classes. From then on, she went on to build up quite an impressive educational background. These include a Diploma in Health Education from London University and the Papuan Medical College, and studies at the All-India Institute of Rural Health and the University of the Philippines. She was the first Papua New Guinean to study at the latter two institutions. Immediately before her election to the House of Assembly in 1972, she was working as Principal of the Health Education Institute of Papua New Guinea. She has successfully contested the 1972 and 1977 national elections. Papua Besena was founded by her in 1973. Abaijah has some business interests which include at least two newsagencies in Port Moresby. She lost the 1982 national elections to Phillip Bouraga, a former Commissioner for Police. This itself was ample proof of the sorry state that Papua Besena had been facing by the time of the 1982 elections.

James Mopio

Mopio, aged forty-five, comes from Aipeana, a Mekeo village in the Bereina Sub-district of the Central Province. He is married and has seven children. He attended the local primary and secondary schools from about 1945 to 1952 and graduated at form three level. He then went on to attend the Popondetta Agricultural Training Institute in the Northern Province where he gained a Certificate of Agriculture in 1963. He had been working in the Department of Agriculture since then as an Assistant Rural Development Officer and finally ended his career in the Public Service in 1974 when he resigned to contest the Central Regional by-election. After his successful bid for parliament, he attempted to establish a Papuan Liberation Movement but soon after merged into the Papua Besena movement. Mopio was chosen by the Papua Party as its first parliamentary leader in 1976 but was deposed by Galeva Kwarara in July 1978. Mopio's term as a member of Parliament ended abruptly in December 1981 when an Ombudsman Commission initiated set of charges relating to breaches of the Leadership Code were successfully upheld by a Leadership Tribunal. This made Mopio the first Papua New Guinean Parliamentarian to be dismissed from office. The decision of the Tribunal, headed by Justice Greville Smith, means Mopio is not eligible to stand for election to any public office for a period of three years.

Galeva Kwarara

Galeva Kwarara, aged forty years, comes from Kapakapa village which is about sixty kilometres east of Port Moresby. He is a teacher by training and has worked for more than eight years in the Department of Education. He served as an Inspector of Schools in the Teachers Education Division of the Department of Education in 1968-69 and was also Deputy National Secretary of the Papua New Guinea Teachers Association,

one of the biggest unions in the country. Kwarara received his basic primary and secondary schooling in the Central Province and went on to gain the Public Service Higher Certificate from the Australian School of Pacific Administration in Sydney. Kwarara first publicly associated himself with Papua Besena when he sought and obtained Abaijah's endorsement for the 1977 National Elections in which he won the seat of Rigo Open. He was appointed to be the leader of the Papua Party, which was the Parliamentary wing of Papua Besena, after Mopio was ousted from the position and held the position for a period of three years until he himself was replaced by Gerega Pepena in April 1981. He was Deputy Leader of the Opposition before the changeover of Government and after the constitutional overthrow of the Somare Government on 12th March 1980 was given the portfolio of Minister for National Planning and Development in the National Alliance under Prime Minister Chan. Kwarara again nominated to contest the seat of Rigo Open in the 1982 National Elections and managed to get re-elected.

Gerega Pepena

Gerega Pepena, who is about 36 years old, comes from Paramana village in the Marshall Lagoon area of the Central Province. He is also a teacher by profession and was promoted up to the position of Provincial Superintendent for the National Capital District in the Department of Education. Pepena had completed form four education before training as a teacher. He is married and has four children. Like Kwarara, he also sought and got Papua Besena endorsement for the 1977 elections and won the seat of Abau Open. He was given the Defence portfolio when the government changed hands and one month later, managed to wrestle the leadership of the Parliamentary wing of Papua Besena from Galeva Kwarara. Pepena also renominated for the seat of Abau Open in

the 1982 elections but was defeated by Jack Genia.

Goasa Damena

Goasa Damena was born in 1936 in Papa village, about thirty kilometres west of Port Moresby. He attended the Fiji School of Medicine in Suva and went on to do a postgraduate training in New Zealand. He joined the Public Service as a doctor and worked from 1963 to 1976 when he resigned to enter private practice. Damena was elected to the post of president of the Public Service Association, the biggest trade union in the Country in 1976 for one year. He is married and has five children. Damena had been actively interested in Papua Besena since its formation and attended some of the early Papua Besena rallies in 1974 and participated in much of the agitation that Abaijah and her followers were involved in. He contested the 1977 elections for the seat of Moresby North-East but polled very poorly partly because there was another Papua Besena candidate, Lahui Tau, contesting the same seat. Damena however managed to appeal successfully to the Supreme Court to declare the elections in Moresby North-East invalid, challenging the successful candidate Patterson Lowa. Hence, a by-election was then held in late June 1978 in which Damena managed to defeat Pangu's Sir Maori Kiki by a mere 28 votes. The changeover of government saw Damena holding the portfolio of Minister for Housing and Urban Development. He also nominated for the 1982 national elections again for the seat of Moresby North-East, but was defeated by the Pangu candidate, Tony Siaguru.

Mahuru Rarua Rarua

In terms of age, Mahuru Rarua Rarua, who at 52 years old is the most senior of the Papua Besena Leaders. He was born in 1930 in Hanuabada village in the National Capital District and attended the

local primary school, then went on to Sogeri where he spent five years finishing his secondary schooling and training as a school teacher. He spent three years as a teacher before joining the co-operative movement. He received technical training on co-operatives in Fiji for three months and from 1951 to 1956, worked for the Institute of General Services which was a predecessor in co-operative activity until the formation of the Federation of Co-operatives in 1956 in which he served as General Secretary and Manager until 1971. When this was absorbed into the Papua New Guinea Union of Co-operatives, Mahuru became General Secretary. In 1971 he entered into a full-time political career as a member of the Port Moresby Town (later City) Council. In 1974, he was elected for a second term to the Council and this time, managed to capture the position of Lord Mayor. It was during this period when a pro-Papua Besena group was formed in the Council that he emerged as a Papua Besena leader. Mahuru also contested the 1977 national elections and won the seat of Moresby North-West. He then immediately joined the Parliamentary wing of Papua Besena. In 1978, he contested the City Council Elections for a third term and was once again successful. He served in the Council until its suspension by the Central Government in October 1980. Mahuru also nominated for re-election to Parliament as the member for Moresby North-West and won the seat by a comfortable margin in the 1982 elections.

APPENDIX G

PAPUA BESENA CANDIDATES: 1982 ELECTIONS

<u>Papua Party Faction</u>	<u>Abaijah Faction</u>	<u>Electorate</u>	<u>Winner</u>
Galeva Kwarara	Maguli Gubaea	Rigo	G. Kwarara
Gerega Pepena	-	Abau	J. Genia
Goasa Damena	John Torrisheba	Moresby N/East	Tony Siaguru
Mahuru Rarua Rarua	-	Moresby N/West	M.R. Rarua
Joseph Aoae	-	Kairuku-Hiri	J. Aoae
-	Josephine Abaijah	N.C.D.	P. Bouraga
-	Simi Maka	Central	T. Diro

1982 ELECTION BREAKDOWN

<u>National Capital District</u>		<u>Moresby North-West Open</u>	
<u>National Capital Provincial</u>			
1. Nou Kukuna Kari	3910	1. John Kosi	1218
2. Toua Kapena	1553	2. Thomas Nekints	872
3. Frank Griffin	2412	3. Mahuru Barua Rarua#	5221
4. Fide Bale	3083	4. Andrew Dani	1057
5. Leo Debessa	2835	5. Aime John Ekusio	380
6. Phillip Bouraga	8662	6. Amos Toua	333
7. Len Henao Sabadi	1796	7. Gavera Rea	3558
8. Amarty Patterson Kila	1677	8. Daure Gaigo	447
9. Hoidae Henao	1301	9. Jerry Dujew	226
10. Josephine Abaijah*	6696	10. Gavera Ovia	1256
11. Dick Avi	3041	11. Boni Muten	90
12. Lohia Korema	2687	12. Dadi Toka	947
13. John Loko	2732	13. Loa Boko	1314
14. Siosi Samaea	1004	14. Joseph Morehari	567

Papua Party Candidates

* Abaijah endorsed candidates

Moresby South Open

1.	Margaret Loko	613
2.	Bill Rudd	1542
3.	Gilbert Kose	522
4.	Sevese Morea#	1874
5.	Timothy Raula	319
6.	Arua Au	1598
7.	Legu Vagi	2124
8.	Pidi Monise	444
9.	Koraea Kapella	389
10.	Jack Daure	1000
11.	Maua Kemo'o	1415
12.	Ovia Nou-Taboro	650

Central ProvinceCentral Provincial

1.	Simi Maka*	3079
2.	Lucas Laiam	720
3.	Arua Henari	1025
4.	Golila Pepe	1704
5.	Momoru Kini	4050
6.	Ted Diro	23628
7.	George Mapai	2531
8.	James Makario	4098
9.	Vavine Tauni	2608

Moresby North-East Open

1.	Tony Siaguru	4644
2.	Reva Mase	291
3.	Allen Vagi	277
4.	Stewart Nekints	612
5.	John Torrisheba*	838
6.	Goasa Damena#	2726
7.	Ron Boyce	1240
8.	Harry Hoerler	1478

Kairuku-Hiri Open

1.	Gau Henao	823
2.	Hugo Berghuser	3256
3.	Moi Avei	2563
4.	Joseph Aoae#	3413
5.	Allan Ame	997
6.	Vovoi Selu	1439
7.	Piti Kopi	241
8.	Nicholas Auo	1269
9.	John Kumin	183
10.	Arere Hitolo	1634
11.	Victor Tom	369
12.	Joseph Kassman	396

Rigo Open

Abau Open

1. Gima Kini	2001	1. Richie Joseph	504
2. Ila Vele	309	2. Gerega Pepena#	1039
3. Makuna Rawali	465	3. Lavau Velekiri	364
4. Maguli Gubaea*	619	4. Fred Mark	1192
5. Galeva Kwarara#	4191	5. Reuben Taureka	123
6. Alu Vuivagi	205	6. Jack Genia	1740
7. Sere Pitoi	848	7. Nornet Marai	559
8. Launce Vetari	264	8. Kone Vanuawaru	1041
9. Nagama Geno	119	9. Varo Vevao	1525
10. Keni Kone	227	10. Voro Vele	396

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