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***PATROL REPORTS***

DISTRICT: MANUS

STATION: BALUAN, 1957-1958

Original documents bound with reports  
for: Manus, volume 10.

# Papua New Guinea Patrol Reports

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TERRITORY OF PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA

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MANUS DISTRICT REPORTS 1957/1958

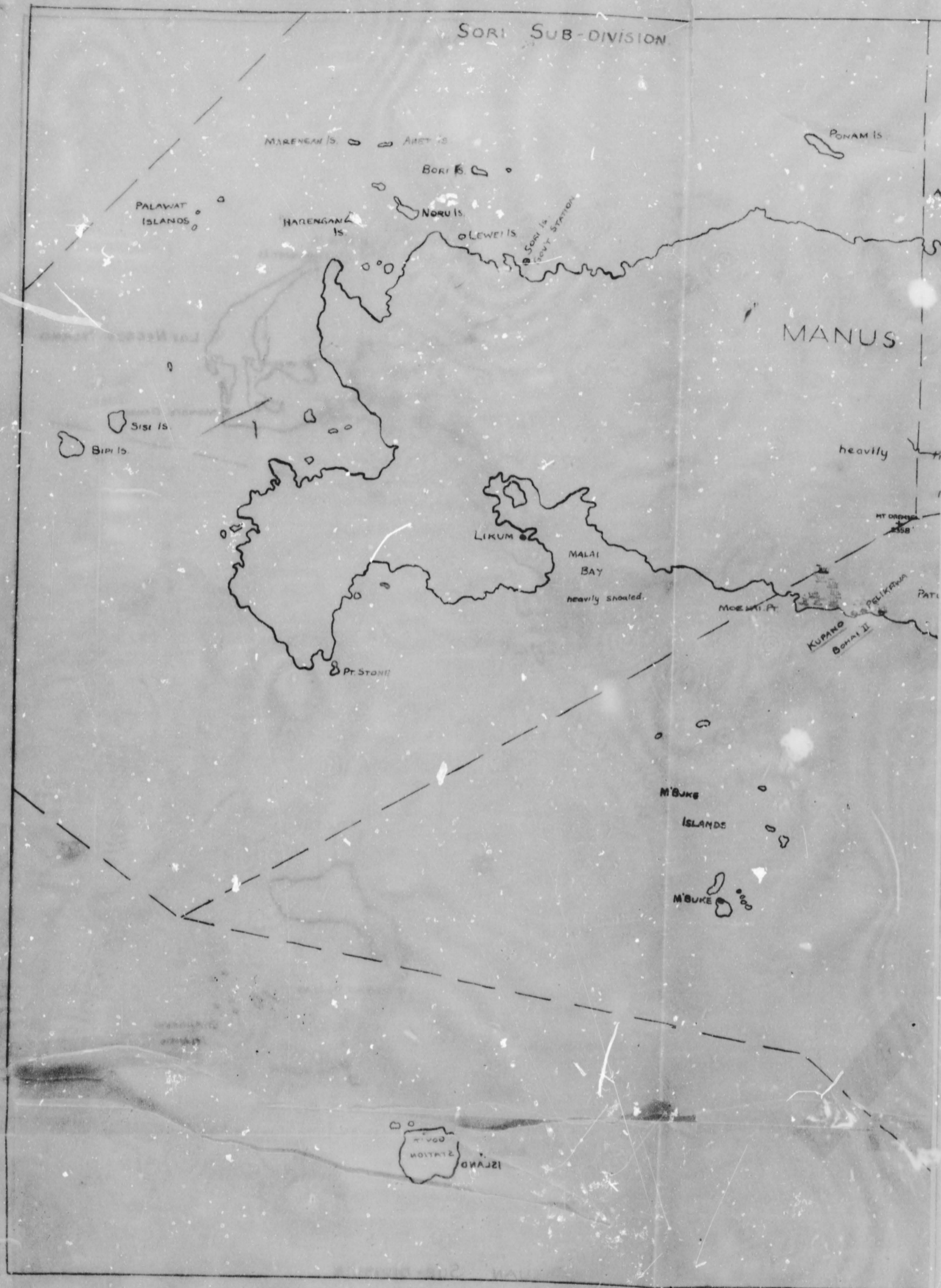
- No. 1 WESTERN ISLANDS CENSUS DIVISION F. V. ESDALE  
No. 2 SAU-BIPI CENSUS DIVISION P. E. LEWIS  
No. 3 WESTERN ISLANDS CENSUS DIVISION J. T. A. GEMMELL  
No. 4 LORENGAU-SAU CENSUS DIVISION A. F. WADSWORTH  
No. 5 SAU-BIPI CENSUS DIVISION P. E. LEWIS  
No. 6 SAU-BIPI CENSUS DIVISION P. E. LEWIS  
No. 7  
No. 8 SAU-BIPI CENSUS DIVISION P. E. LEWIS

BALUAN

- No. 1 BALUAN - SOUTH COAST MANUS, BUKE, & JOHNSTON IS K. I. CHESTER  
No. 2 BALUAN COUNCIL AREA W. G. MURDOCH  
No. 3 BALUAN - BUNAI CENSUS DIVISION W. G. MURDOCH
-



SORI SUB-DIVISION



MAP TO ACCOMPANY  
BALUAN PATROL REPORT

No. 1. OF 57/58

DRAWN BY:- A.E. WADSWORTH (C.P.O.)



LORENGAU SUB-DIVISION



SLAND

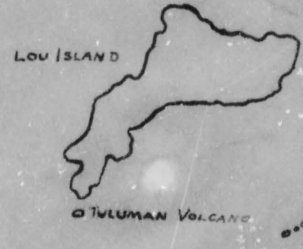
LOS NEGROS ISLAND

mbered and rugged terrain

METAWARI R.

MISSION

TAWI IS.



LOU ISLAND

TULUMAN VOLCANO

ST. ANDREW ISLANDS

PAM ISLANDS

JOHNSTON ISLANDS

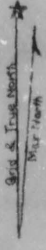
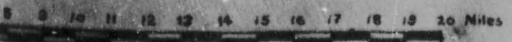


BALUAN ISLAND

GOV'T STATION

BALUAN SUB-DIVISION

253940 or 1 inch equals 4 miles



-LEGEND-

- Main Centre
- ▲ Govt Station
- ⚓ Mission
- Village (M'BUNAI - COUNCIL  
KUPANO - NON-COUNCIL)
- ☁ Swamp



30-15-16

1st November, 1957.

The District Officer,  
Manus District,  
LORENGAU.

Patrol Report No.1. 1957/58-Baluan.

Receipt of the abovementioned Patrol Report  
is acknowledged with thanks.

Please watch carefully, the tendency to  
conduct illegal "Courts". We have had experience of  
them previously and they can lead to most undesirable  
practices. The Manus people enjoy litigation and  
enjoy power.

Officers should appreciate that trading be-  
tween the inland people and those from the Islands  
is an institution which has withstood the test of time  
despite differences between the trading parties that  
have arisen.

It should be appreciated by all our officers  
that native life is based on reciprocity and the con-  
catenation of obligations.

A good report adequately covered by your  
remarks.

*J. K. McCarthy*  
*J. K. McCarthy*  
(J.K. McCarthy)  
Acting Director.

PPA





TERRITORY OF PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA

30/10/16 ✓



In Reply  
Please Quote

No. 31/1 - 71.

District Headquarters,  
Manus District,  
LORENGAU.

8th October, 1957.

The Director,  
Department of Native Affairs,  
PORT MORESBY.

PATROL REPORT BALUAN NO. 1 OF 1957/1958

Original of the above-mentioned  
Patrol Report by Mr. K. I. Chester, covering  
a recent patrol to South Coast of Manus Island,  
together with a copy of the District Officer's  
comments thereon, is forwarded, please.

Sections of the Report dealing with  
the activities of other Departments have been  
extracted and copies forwarded to Departmental  
representatives within this District.

Attached also please find Claims for  
Camping Allowance submitted by Messrs. K. I.  
Chester and A. F. Wadsworth for your  
certification.

It is anticipated that the next  
patrol to be undertaken by the Assistant  
District Officer, Baluan, will commence early  
in November, 1957, and will include those  
villages on the North Coast of Manus which were  
recently, by Proclamation in the Government  
Gazette, included in the Baluan Native Local  
Government Council Area. The formal election  
of Councillors in these villages will be  
supervised during this forthcoming patrol.

(E. G. Hicks)  
District Commissioner.

EGH/MB

31/1 - 697A.

District Headquarters,  
Manus District,  
LORENGAU.

8th October, 1957.

The Assistant District Officer,  
Patrol Post,  
BAUAN.

PATROL REPORT BALUAN NO. 1 OF 1957/58

Receipt of the above-mentioned Patrol Report, together with accompanying claims for Camping Allowance submitted by Messrs. Chester and Edsworth, is acknowledged.

The following comments are made on various matters dealt with in the Report :-

NATIVE SITUATION.

The situation as revealed by your comments under this heading appears to be quite normal and healthy.

With regard to the practice of Councillors and village elders conducting illegal "courts" in the villages it has always been my experience that such activities are confined almost exclusively to very minor village disputes, anything of a serious nature being brought before the Court for Native Affairs in the normal way. Under such circumstances I do not think that there can be any real objection to the practice provided adequate safeguards are taken to ensure that no breaches of law which should rightly come before Magistrates for Native Affairs are dealt with by these "unofficial courts". The imposition of fines or terms of confinement by Councillors is, of course, quite illegal and any such cases which come to your notice should be reported immediately.

The regular weekly markets held on the south coast of Manus are an old institution and represent virtually the only avenue through which the sea-faring Manus can trade their sea foods for the sago and garden produce obtainable from the littoral MATANKOLS and the inland USIAI. The holding of these "bungas" at regular intervals has long been part of the pattern of life for these south Manus and inland people. While it is difficult under the circumstances as outlined by you to avoid the system of acknowledged debts from week to week, native participants should be encouraged to ensure that all such just debts are repaid promptly, thereby avoiding the undesirable situation such as you have described.



As already observed in my comments on the Baluan Council's monthly returns for August, 1957 (vide 14/4/7-52 of 2nd October, 1957, addressed to the Director of Native Affairs with copy to you for information), it is abundantly clear from the unrealistic nature of many of the suggestions put forward for consideration in connection with the Council's 1958 draft financial estimates that a majority of the people still has no clear conception of the functions of the Council or of the limitation upon any spectacular expansion which its limited finances impose. For this reason not only members of the Council itself but as many people as possible from the villages should be encouraged to attend Council meetings, particularly those dealing with the Council Annual Estimates, in order that these vital aspects may eventually be made clear to them.

The problem of settling the landless Manus people, more particularly the PERIS and the MOUKS, is a difficult one and one to which, in my opinion, the Council will need to give serious consideration as a matter of urgency. However, I do not think that the purchase of SCHELLALAU Plantation by the Council would materially assist in solving the problem. The possibility and practicability of the Council purchasing the Plantation property for re-settlement purposes was, I believe, considered some years ago but was not proceeded with because of the high price (£2,100) asked by the owners, Edgell and Whiteley Limited of Lorengau. However, I again discussed the matter of the sale of SCHELLALAU Plantation with the General Manager of the Company at Lorengau and he has advised that he will again take the matter up with other Directors of the Company in Sydney with a view to offering the Plantation for sale at a reduced figure. I will advise you further when details of any new offer are available.

#### INLAND WATERWAYS.

Information already submitted in respect of Department of Native Affairs Circular Instruction 213 of 6th August, 1955, should not be confused with that required on form headed "Patrol Officer's Stream Report". With regard to the latter form please note that the Director of Public Works has indicated that such reports should only be submitted with patrol reports where it appears that bridges will have to be provided at some future date to allow access to or where there are heavy population groups or where industry may be developed.

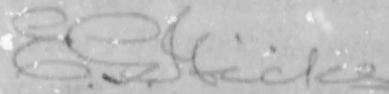
#### APPENDICES.

Copies of Appendices A, B, C and D to your Report dealing respectively with Health, Agriculture, Education and Police have been forwarded for the information of Departmental representatives concerned.



MAF.

The map accompanying the Report is neatly prepared but should show the route followed by the Patrol.



(E. G. Hicks)  
a/District Officer.

c.c.  
The Director of Native Affairs,  
Port Moresby.

D I A R Y.

Wednesday, 7th August, 1957. Departed Baluan per M.V. EROS, (Trawler Master Hague in command), at 1800 hours and arrived off N'DROVA Plantation at 2200 hours. Anchored for the night.

Thursday, 8th August, 1957. Departed N'DROVA at 0630 hours, and disembarked personnel and stores at M'BUNAI at 0700 hours. Met by District Commissioner, Mr. Hicks, and accompanied him to the M'BUNAI Teacher Training Center where he officiated at the opening of the Center. Area Education Officer, Mr. Howlett, and Education Officer Smith present. At 1030 hours Council Meeting commenced, and District Commissioner made presentation of Gavel Set to the President PALIAU. Council Meeting resumed after lunch, with the District Commissioner present throughout.

Friday, 9th August, 1957. Departed M'BUNAI at 0700 hours, and arrived off Johnston Islands at 1100 hours. District Commissioner officiated at the opening of the School, and viewed dancing etc in honour of the occasion. Returned to M'BUNAI, and trawler with District Commissioner aboard left for LORENGA. Remainder of afternoon spent attending to native matters.

Saturday, 10th August, 1957. At M'BUNAI. Council Meeting resumed, and on completion commenced General Meeting of tax payers. Disappointing reaction from assembly.

Sunday, 11th August, 1957. Observed. Visited N'DROVA Plantation. Unofficial inspection.

Monday, 12th August, 1957. At M'BUNAI. Attention to mail and correspondence and discussions with Education Officers. General native matters and inspection of housing etc.

Tuesday, 13th August, 1957. Departed M'BUNAI on foot through Schellalau Plantation to PERI. At the invitation of the Area's Education Officer, writer officiated at the opening of the school at PERI. Annual General Meeting of tax payers. More interest shown at meeting than the one at M'UNAI. Left for PATUSI at 1130 hours, by Mr. Howlett's privately owned launch, arriving at 1300 hours.

Wednesday, 14th August, 1957. At PATUSI. General Meeting of tax payers from PATUSI and NCHANG, again rather dispirited.



Inspection of villages and coconut groves and general native matters.

Thursday, 15th August, 1957. Departed PATUSI 0845 hours by canoe and arrived LONDRU at 1000 hours. C.P.O. to METAWARI Village and on to LOI. Held general meeting at LONDRU of the LOICHA and LONDRU people. Attention to general native matters, and on to LOI Village, arriving at 1330 hours. General Meeting LOI tax payers.

Friday, 16th August, 1957. C.P.O. to PATU Mission to collect statistical information for annual report and then on to PELIKAWA. Self commenced hearing of Land Dispute, and then visited land subject of dispute up the METAWARI River. Returned to LOI and then on to TAWI Island, and PELIKAWA, arriving at 1500 hours.

Saturday, 17th August, 1957. Annual General Meeting of the PELIKAWA, TAWI Island tax payers. Attention to village matters and inspection of housing and plantations. Visited "Bung" (Native Market) during afternoon. Note from F.O. Lewis at present on patrol in the MALAI BAY area, re dispute between the M'BUKE and MALAI BAY people.

Sunday, 18th August, 1957. Trawler Thetis, Trawler Master Rafferty in command, arrived off PELIKAWA at 0930 hours. Embarked personnel and stores and departed for M'BUKE at 1000 hours. Trawler with C.P.O. to MALAI BAY to collect P.O. Lewis. General Meeting of tax payers and attention to village matters. Visited M'BUKE Plantation and discussions on Native Labour with Manager Mr. T. Rhoades.

Monday, 19th August, 1957. Trawler with P.O. Lewis on board arrived M'BUKE at 0945 hours. Discussed land problem with him, and as Trawler has to be back at Lorengau by Tuesday, was unable to sit in on the case. Departed M'BUKE at 1130 hours, and arrived Johnston Islands 1410 hours. General Meeting of tax payers, inspection of school housing and other native matters. Departed Johnston Island 1545 hours, arriving Baluan at 1845 hours.

END OF DIARY.



INTRODUCTION.

This was the writers first visit to the area, and the object of the patrol was to familiarise myself with the area, and at the same time conduct the Annual General Meetings of the tax payers in their respective villages. Previously the Annual General Meetings were held at BALUAN and M'BUNAY, and whilst I understand there were good attendances from both those places, the majority of the people from the more distant villages did not bother to attend.

At the same time routine general administration was attended to, but as the annual census and statistical patrol had already been carried out during May of this year (see Patrol Report Bal 3 - 56/57), these figures are not included in this report.

NATIVE SITUATION.

The native situation in general would appear to be quite normal. There were no signs that any of the Cults with which these people have been associated over the years, are still in existence. It may be that they have been driven underground, and if such is the case, it would be quite possible that a new officer to the area would miss these signs. I felt that more harm than good would be caused by suspicious questioning but a close watch was kept for any outward signs either in general conversation or in unusual activities in the villages, but nothing was seen or heard to give me the slightest feeling of unrest in the area.

The "Church for the Cemetery" vide Patrol Report Bal 3 - 56/57, is no longer there, the people themselves having removed it, after a discussion between Councillor Samol, and the District Commissioner, some months ago.

At Johnston Islands, a place which has caused some concern over the years, a couple of recent graves were noticed to have shelters built over them. Casual questioning revealed that they were built there to keep the rain off the grave, and so stop it seeping through into the coffin. Seemingly a logical answer, and I place no significance on this at all, and only mention it in passing to show that the patrol was alert towards any outward manifestations of a ghost cult or other unrest.

Most villages along the route of the patrol are still using curfew bells, and reveille bells, which nobody seems to resent, and home made megaphones are quite conspicuous. Through these the Councillor or the Council Constable make announcements concerning the villagers as a whole.

Most villages also have a central meeting house, and here they discuss various village matters, and I suspect hold their minor "Courts". These "Courts" though completely illegal, I am afraid are here to stay, and the sooner we can legislate for them, and put them on a legal footing, the better. The only cases which were brought to me for hearing under the Native Regulations, were those which obviously had no solution that could satisfy both parties, or those whose decisions they were unable to enforce. I suspect that the basis behind the decisions in these "Courts" (a term which does not adequately describe them, but which I use for want of a better term), is compensation. I have no evidence to show that the Councillors are actually fining people, otherwise I should have been forced to take some action, but I believe that they are adjudicating in divorce and adultery cases and arranging settlements in minor land disputes. I am also of the opinion that these "Courts" have the full backing of the village people.

Whilst at PELIKAWA, a rather involved land dispute came up, and as is the practice, I asked the Councillors to help me by collecting all the information they could. That night, I decided to go over to the Meeting House where I thought the Councillors and the influential men would be. Arriving completely unannounced, I saw the two Councillors sitting at a table, surrounded by a large group of the older men obtaining the genealogy of the contestants. The whole meeting was being conducted in a most orderly manner, with one man taking it all down in pidgin English. The way the Councillor was handling the meeting showed that he was no stranger to this type of work and had obviously handled matters in this way before.

Again, whilst at M'BUKE it was reported that a native had been using explosives for fish. I subsequently dismissed the charge because of insufficient evidence, but I later found that the Councillor from M'BUKE had reported this matter to President PALIAU at the M'BUNAI Council Meeting. PALIAU had replied that it was something for the patrol to decide when it reached M'BUKE, and not a word was said to me about the business until I reached M'BUKE, which tends to show that these matters are often fully discussed before they come to the ears of the patrolling officer.

One of the established Native Markets, which has been operating between the Islanders and the main Island, has been causing some concern in the past few months. Apparently the Islanders bring over smoked fish, coconut oil and any fresh fish that they may have caught on the way. These items are traded for sago and other native vegetables. They have evolved a system of credit which ensures that the Islanders get



rid of all their fish and other perishable items. This works in the following manner. A comes over from MOK and he probably has caught 3 King fish on the way. He wishes to sell them, but B who would like them has already traded his sago. There is no point in A taking his fish back to Baluan because they will only go bad, so B takes the fish and promises to pay A with sago at the next market day. The debt is recorded in a notebook by the unofficial clerk. At the next market day (the market is usually held once per month), the canoes from MOK arrive, and stand off from the shore and theoretically the debts incurred at the previous market are called out by the clerk and the exchange made in front of many witnesses. However, in practice, on arrival of the MOK canoes the USIAI people rush the canoes for the highly prized coconut oil, all debts being forgotten in the undisciplined scramble. By the time Village Officials have restored order, B has probably traded all his sago for oil, and his debt to A is not settled. This gives rise to ill feeling, and several fights have occurred. The whole thing was thrashed out between representatives of both groups, with charge and counter charges being levied, and it was agreed that the method they have evolved for the collection of debts should continue and that a Council Constable should be present to assist with the maintenance of good order. This Market is at LOI and is conducted between the inland METAWARI's, a non Council Village, and the MOK and other island people which are in the Council.

Meanwhile, at PELIKAWA, I took the opportunity of visiting the established Market held weekly there between the M'BUKE and occasionally the Johnston Island people, and the PELIKAWA people. This was a most orderly affair. Rough tables have been erected in a shady spot, and when the M'BUKE canoes are sighted, the PELIKAWA people bring down their produce and lay it out on the tables. The M'BUKE people then come ashore and rove around trading fish, oil, tobacco and the occasional turtle. Actually it was a most spirited form of bartering with hardly a word spoken. An Islander would sidle up to a table, lay down a smoked fish along side a couple of bundles of sago and if the woman in charge of the stall was interested she would pick up the fish and place it in her bag and the Islander would pick up the sago. If the person in charge of the stall was not interested, then she would just let the fish lie there. Not a word would be spoken and hardly a glance exchanged. Perhaps the presence of Mr. Wadsworth and myself may have put a damper on spirited bargaining but I don't really think so.

The Annual General Meeting of tax payers, was not