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PATROL REPORTS

District : Western
Station : Lake Murray
Volume : 15
ISBN NO : 9980-910-84-4
Accession NO : 496
Period : 1966-1967

Filmed by/for the National Archives of Papua New Guinea
Port Moresby 1995

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Papua New Guinea Patrol Reports

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TERRITORY OF PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA

PATROL REPORT

District of WESTERN - LAKE MURRAY Report No. 1 of 1966-1967. (ARLA STUDY)

Patrol Conducted by W. H. DeG. Dutton, P.O.

Area Patrolled LAKE MURRAY & MIDDLE FLY CENSUS DIVISIONS
("PROPOSED LAKE MURRAY LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL AREA")

Patrol Accompanied by Europeans Nil

Natives G. NICHOLAS Asst. Ag. Off. 2 Interpreters
4 R.P.N.G.S.

Duration—From 5 / 8 / 19 66 to 3 / 9 / 19 67

Number of Days 29 days

Did Medical Assistant Accompany? No

Last Patrol to Area by—District Services 13 / 5 / 19 65

Medical / / 19

Map Reference Map attached.

Objects of Patrol COMPILATION OF ARLA SURVEY FOR PROPOSED LOCAL
GOVERNMENT COUNCIL.

Director of District Administration,
PORT MORESBY.

Forwarded, please.

13 / 1967

F. A. Dutton
District Commissioner

Amount Paid for War Damage Compensation £.....

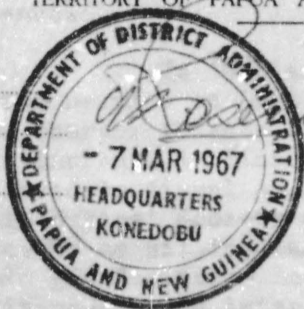
Amount Paid from D.N.E. Trust Fund £.....

Amount paid from P.E.D.P. Trust Fund



TERRITORY OF PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA

67. 3. 15



Telegrams..... 67-6-1
Our Reference.....
If calling ask for JAE.MEP
Mr.....

Department of District Administration,
Western District,
DARU.
1st March, 1967.

The Director,
Department of District Administration,
KONEDCBU.

AREA STUDY - LAKE MURRAY AND MIDDLE
FLY CENSUS DIVISIONS.

A copy of Lake Murray Patrol Report 1/66-67 purporting to the above is attached for your information, please.

2. Since the establishment of a multiracial Council in the Kiunga area fifteen months ago, a number of people from the Morehead Sub-district have voiced over Radio Daru, their disappointment in not having a Council in their area.

3. About twelve months ago Assistant District Commissioner, Morehead, was requested to have area studies done of the Morehead and Lake Murray administrative areas and was reminded of the delayed submission of same per our 40-1-1 of the 9th December, 1966. In making his reply to the latter Assistant District Commissioner, Morehead, contended that a Local Government Council, if established in the Morehead Sub-district, should be done so to cater firstly for the villages directly administered from Morehead. A preliminary survey report has not been received from that Station.

4. The Lake Murray report is inadequate in many respects but this does not constitute sufficient grounds for delaying further the inception of a multiracial Council to cover both the Middle Fly and Lake Murray Census Divisions. A Council in that area should progress equally as well as, if not better than, the Kiunga Council. Expatriate supervision will be an initial and continuing requirement for quite some time.

5. A section by section dissection of the report with supplementary comments as follows:-

(A) INTRODUCTION:

(c) Even though the people have less than a rudimentary knowledge of Local Government and its implications this will not deter them from advocating the creation of a Local Government Council. The all important consideration is whether or not the people feel neglected and by passed in the proverbial "great leap forward." A Council is a status symbol, which must be had. Generally speaking, indigenous people are becoming increasingly conscious of the stigma associated with the non-possession of or identification with some local institution such as a Council or Co-operative Society.

The Lake Murray people are fairly volatile and head-strong and have a rather highly developed sense of land//swamp ownership, no doubt brought about by the people's bias towards foraging for an existence. They are gardeners only

in a marginal sense and lead a semi-sedentary type of existence.

In 1963 an increase in the regular shipping service to Lake Murray plus a continuing increase in Air Charter flights to PANGOA, coupled also with a sudden increase in finances available to the Administration, all served to dispel an atmosphere of frustration. Previous to this Buyers' Society supplies could be held in Daru for six months as nil loading space was available on Administration vessels and Societies lacked the interested supervision and finances which later made possible their rise to affluence.

galled

Commencing in early 1964 paternalistic minded, and perhaps immaturely so, D.D.A. Staff became the Lake Murray Buyers' Society. A number of European Traders and Shooters operating in the area at great profit to themselves became the target for resentment and criticism. Some Traders later complained that the Natives refused to deal with them on the grounds that they would be ~~galled~~ for not selling skins through the Buyers' Society. The tacitly or otherwise approved ~~exclusion~~ exclusion of Traders and Shooters and others considered poor influences has in some respects given the people a false impression of their rights in regard to transients and they can easily go astray in the execution of what they consider to be their rights. Apart from the occasional visit of a Barramundi fishing vessel to Lake Murray, once again much resented, Traders and Shooters are as much a rarity these days as, say, a Westerner in mainland China. Contact with Europeans has thus diminished and is restricted now to Mission and Administration personnel.

(B) POPULATION - DISTRIBUTION AND TRENDS

(a) Neo-natal mortality rate appendix is not attached. It would be impossible to ascertain the number of children who died within one month. This is information the people will not divulge for fear of action being taken against the parents. Apart from an effort made at Ningerum in 1964/1965, patrols in this District do not record observable pregnancies.

Birth and Death rates for both divisions have been checked and corrected as necessary. The Natural Increase Rate for the Lake people is higher and this is to be expected, as these people have ready and quick access to both Mission and Administration health facilities.

(b) Disconnected sections of road may eventually be brought up to Motor Bike standard. It would then be necessary to transport the bike around by boat or canoe.

(c) SOCIAL GROUPINGS

No comment.

(D) LEADERSHIP

Traditional leadership, although a little loose, exists regardless and the advent of Council elections will force the people to make a binding decision. The issue of leadership, I feel, will be resolved in favour of the younger men. Paddling up and down rivers to attend to various Council functions is strictly for young men.

(E) LAND TENURE

Communal

With a background of rigorously contested and jealously guarded land and etc. ownership to their credit, it should not prove difficult to sell the concept of individual ownership of rubber blocks. Commercial effort in getting the blocks established has merit and this is the approach that has been adopted at Kiunga. The people realize that the defined small allotments exist but are happy to make clearing and planting a community effort initially. The psychology of numbers is important to these people. Twenty men as a single work unit will clear a sixty acre block months ahead of twenty men who each and alone clear a three acre block.

These people are basically foragers and will have to cultivate proper gardening habits, the acquisition of which presupposes keenness and an ability to regularize their work. Coconut groves which were mostly established by Patrol Officer Barber in the early 1960's are heavily overgrown, and in some cases, almost completely obliterated by secondary growth. Careless use of fire during the "Dry" causes further damage to surviving groves. Unless the people are prepared to exert themselves after initial rubber planting such a venture will not survive more than five years.

The people will for some time to come continue to make time consuming canoe journeys into the swamps to shoot crocodiles, they now being accustomed to handling cash regularly, and to search for food. At such times rubber blocks will be left unattended. Local Missionaries have passed comment on the habit of pilfering produce from accessible and unguarded gardens, and such a practice is well institutionalised.

(F) LITERACY

No comment.

(G) STANDARD OF LIVING

The consumption of canned foodstuffs is very much related to the turnover in skin purchases and sales.

(H) MISSIONS

No comments.

(I) NON-INDIGENES

See comments under "Introduction."

(J) COMMUNICATIONS

(a) Roads: Apart from the need to occasionally maintain a limited number of walking tracks there is little justification for duplicating river services. The track from the Lake villages across to MIPAN Village, on AGU river, a tributary of the FLY, is the most important. Long distances and sparse population precludes motor cycle track development unless the people themselves decide to press on regardless.

(b) Sea/River: All villages in the area are accessible by boat or outboard driven canoe //dinghy. Lake Murray Station has been without an Administration outboard Motor for ten months due to breakdowns and non-availability of spare parts from Napa Napa.

(c) Air: The Defence Department will proceed with the reconstruction and enlargement of PANGOA strip in April,

1967. This will not obviate the necessity for Patrol Officer in Charge, Lake Murray, to provide water transport to meet all incoming aircraft. When a Station has only one vessel or one outboard Motor, and such is used for patrol work, then connecting services with inwards aircraft completely fall down. In the past officers have used their own personal outboard motors or borrowed Society motors.

The MAKA strip, adjacent to the Station, was tentatively estimated to cost \$120,000.00. The MAKA site is much more elevated than the PANGO site and would not become flooded over if the Lake waters reached an abnormal height.

The reconstruction of PANGO will not benefit the Lake Murray Station.

(K) TECHNICAL SKILLS

No comments.

(L) THE STAGE OF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

No comments. Common resentment expressed against intruding European shooters and Traders is a unifying force.

(M) THE ECONOMY OF THE AREA

Comments on coconut plantings have been made above.

The Lake Murray people are becoming progressively enthusiastic over the planting of rubber. Current figures are:-

Seedlings in Nurseries: Govt. 17,164
Village. 19,078

Area cleared (in acres) - 27 acres
Area planted (in acres) - 18 acres

The District Agriculture Officer was dissatisfied with progress and organisation of the Lake scheme as observed on inspection visits late 1966. Patrol Officer in Charge, Lake Murray, and sundry employees and villagers were sent to Kiunga to view progress and organisation there.

For the period September, 1965, to September, 1966, the Lake Murray Buyers' Society purchased skins to the value of \$20,000.00 and sold goods to the value of \$34,000.00. The Lake Murray Buyers' Society is a flourishing and very influential enterprise, the successful supervision of which by D.D.A. Officers, has sent Administration prestige soaring to unprecedented heights.

The information supplied under this heading is generally inadequate.

(N) POSSIBILITIES OF EXPANDING THE ECONOMY

Rubber, planting, fishing, and sawmilling, are all possible economic ventures and such should succeed with efficient management. The Lake Murray Buyers' Society is financial enough to establish a Freezer Unit at Lake Murray. The river Barramundi, although 'muddy', could be shipped to Port Moresby per M.V. PAPUA and sold locally.

A number of local people possess outboard motors (10hp to 40hp) and the purchasing power of money is now well appreciated. The additional work involved is only secondary importance once a goal is established.

(O) ATTITUDE TOWARDS LOCAL GOVERNMENT

No comments.

6. Lake Murray currently offers a unique situation. The previous Patrol Officer in Charge, Mr. W.D.C. DUTTON, resigned on 27th January, 1967, to become full time Manager of Lake Murray Buyers' Society. Current Patrol Officer in Charge, Mr. C. YOUNG, will therefore operate full time on Council establishment and such is certainly warranted at this stage of Lake Murray development. It will give the Council an opportunity to act almost solely as a political institution. Basically, the report under-emphasizes the important part Local Government plays in educating the people as well as providing them with opportunity to participate in the control of local affairs. It under-emphasizes the need for the people to learn something about politics and political procedures, the importance of elections and voting, and the results of same.

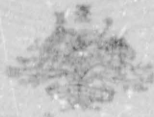
7. No real attempt was made to provide reasonably reliable figures on initial tax prospects. Census sheets show 570 males between 16-45 years, resident in the villages. I think that a tax rate of \$3.00 per head is not unrealistic nor beyond the present financial capabilities of the average male villager. This tax rate would provide the Council with approximately \$1700.00 in tax revenue - on a par with the Kiunga Local Government Council. The sum of \$800.00 has been requested as an initial establishment grant. Reference memorandum 40-1-1 of 9th December, 1966.

8. In its first year of establishment the Council should commence construction of a permanent materials Council Chambers to rival the present Lake Murray Buyers' Society Store building. The Chambers should be properly furnished before consideration is given to Aid Post and other constructions which are currently the concern of the Lake Murray Buyers' Society. The Council must become the bigger and seemingly more affluent brother of the Lake Murray Buyers' Society and Lake Murray provides the situation wherein such can be accomplished.

9. For your information and comment, please.

F.A. Bensted
(F.A. Bensted) *44*
District Commissioner.

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Territory of PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA

Department of District Administration
Lake Murray Patrol Post,
Western District.

21st December, 1966.

TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL.

RE: SURVEY.

Survey and patrol officers have suggested both the Lake Murray and the Middle Fly Game Divisions are better patrolled as a single unit. It is proposed that the Local Government Council should consider both divisions despite the difficulties of the terrain. In order to make a complete survey to test a Council patrol concept, this patrol began in the Middle Fly Game Division at 0800 hours and continued in a complete circuit down the Fly and up the Middle Fly and covered the Lake Murray Game Division at 1400 hours. It was finished up with the village around 1800 hours. This also provided an excellent opportunity to show off the new 27 foot boat and the 2.5 hp. Lake Murray Patrol Society were all very pleased and impressed with it.

The purpose of the patrol was to make a survey of the area and report to the Local Government Council and therefore this report will follow the format laid down in the departmental standing instructions.

DESCRIPTION

(a) The area I think generally widely known there is a lot of swamp land in the Lake Murray area. However this is far from the complete picture. The patrol route was bounded on the west by the West Fly River, on the south by the Middle Fly River, on the east in places by the Middle Fly River, though the Papua people do have some of the Middle Fly, and on the north by the border of the Western District which is now part of the Western District. There is a rapidly growing number of rubber people migrating northwards the lake in order to join in the rubber development which has commenced in the last twelve months.

The country to the west of the Fly River can be written off as swampy ground only for crocodiles and barramundi fish. (According to the patrol report the Lake Murray area is the biggest inland swamp in the Territory) also there is a lot of swamp land on either side of the Middle Fly and surrounding Lake Murray.

The area to the north of the Fly River and the Fly River itself is the north of the lake and consists of unrelenting hills and ridges which are all above the high water level and are covered in thick forest. There are occasional small clearings though to date no large areas of a single species have been found.

The rainfall in the area is approximately 160 inches per year. Most of this falls in the period from March to August. The area is very fertile and producing till now. The area is very fertile and producing till now. The area is very fertile and producing till now.

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(b) Lake Murray is approximately 185 air miles from the District Headquarters, Daru, or 4 hours' flying time. It is a four days' journey from Daru by boat. Morehead the Sub-district Headquarters is approximately 115 air miles or 2 hours' flying time from Lake Murray. At present there is no other practical link between the two stations though a road from Morehead to Everill Junction is a possibility in the dry season. The journey from Port Moresby to Everill Junction by boat takes 6 days.

(c) The Administration has been represented in the area on and off since 1966. In the early years it was only a Police Post and often went for long periods without an officer. In more recent years the Patrol Post has been manned continually but there has been a large turnover of officers.

From past patrol reports it appears that the attitude of the people has passed through the same stages as most of the people in the Western District. Enthusiasm at the first advent of the white men, then disillusionment growing through the years into depression and lethargy as promise after promise and scheme after scheme failed to bear fruit. They even had their Cargo Cult of which thankfully there have been no obvious signs in recent years.

However the people's attitude is at present a mildly enthusiastic one thanks to the crocodile skin bawanga in 1965 and the previous officer's enthusiasm which combined to lift the Lake Murray people's lethargy and the people out of the doldrums. There is still a large element of 'we will believe it when we see it' in their attitude, but they are showing much more interest in the planting of rubber plantations than could have been expected last year. This has been brought about to a large degree by the Administration supplying two consignments of rubber seed almost immediately after they were promised and by the posting of an Assistant Agriculture Officer to Lake Murray. They are beginning to 'seed it'.

There is also a fair interest in a Local Government Council. Though I made no mention of the fact that I was doing a Local Government Council Survey, in several villages the people themselves brought the subject up and were most interested in when they were going to get a Council. They have only a very rudimentary knowledge of the functions of a Council however.

B. Population - Distribution and Trends.

(1) As is shown by the attached Census sheets the population is evenly divided between the Lake Murray and the Middle Fly Census Divisions, but the population in each is far too small to support a separate Council in each Division.

Since the last Census was taken about 100 Pare people have migrated from the Horn of District to the villages of Upovia, Magipope and Uankof in order to take part in the Rubber development. This seems to be a very pronounced trend on the part of the Pare people and is almost certain to continue.

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(b) At present there are only four miles of motor bike track or road in the area. This road would be suitable for a four-wheeled drive vehicle - more is under construction) and the people much prefer to travel by canoe rather than walk. However there are a number of tracks which are used from time to time. There are tracks joining the following villages :

Busaki	to Government Station.	(Motor bike track.)
Busaki	to Hago.	
Asoatama	to Firanga	(Partly by canoe.)
Asoatama	to Boikameya	" " "
Kaviananga	to Boikameya	(Mainly by canoe.)
Firanga	to Boikameya	" " "
Firanga	to Aiamboh	" " "
Hipa	to Government Station	" " "

There are tracks leading into West Irian from the villages of Kaviananga, Kemovai, Bost and Manda (via old Fagigayu) and tracks leading North to Firanga from Hago and to the Pare from Uovia and the Kain River.

(c) The outward flow of labour is not negligible though when the area was first opened up it was as great as could be allowed. Most of the present adult citizens have worked outside the District.

5. Social Structure.

(a) Unfortunately the smaller social groupings appear to have much more importance than the larger ones and this has greatly retarded the growth of any feeling of unity in the area.

For the every day business of life the extended family or in some cases the simple family only is the basic unit. Making pigs, gardening or fishing and sometimes hunting is generally a family concern and each goes to his own particular area.

The clan also has considerable importance especially in combined hunting activities and marriage which is generally on a sister exchange basis. If a man does not have a sister to exchange he must rely on a clan mate to lend him one so that he can get married. Land sub-division is also a matter for the clan.

The only other grouping with any traditional cohesive power is the language group. Village are to a large degree an Administration imposed grouping. There are seven basic language groups in the area and there is still a large degree of rivalry between them. Prior to the Administration's coming it was often necessary for different language groups to form temporary alliances for fighting purposes but today this need no longer exists and there is no really close association between any of the language groups.

There are at present two non-traditional groupings which have a limited but slowly growing cohesive force. These are the 'Christians' and the members of the Buyers' Society. Unfortunately the 'Christians' are not overly numerous and still consider themselves as individual Christians, rather than members of a single Church.

The Buyers' Society is, I think, potentially a greater unifying force, at least in the next few years, as it now covers every village in the two Census Divisions and the people are beginning to realise the benefits they can obtain by supporting it. However it is still a new phenomenon and should the benefits stop or even be a little slow in arriving their loyalty rapidly wanes.

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The only two groups of people within the area surveyed who have much connection with groups outside the area are the Pare who still have close ties with the Pare administered by the Hound Sub-District, (though the present tendency is for the Pare people to move towards the Lake), and the people living along the border with West Irian who have a fairly large degree of contact with people from the other side but because of the border situation this will not have any effect on the formation of a Local Government Council.

D. Leadership.

At present leadership, such as it is, still appears to rest with the traditional leaders, the old clan heads, but there appears to be a growing readiness to listen to the younger more educated men, such as they are. The most notable thing about their social system is the individuality of the people. Without battles to fight there has not been a need for some years for a strong leadership as each family is quite capable of fishing, hunting for food or crocodiles and making magic on its own and in fact seems to prefer to do so.

In the newer enterprises notably the Buyers' Society and the newly formed Evangelical Church of Papua, however the younger (early middle aged) and slightly educated men are being pushed to the fore mainly I feel, because the older men are willing to admit that they do not know anything about these new ideas, though they are not yet ready to handover their leadership in the more basic matters which everybody understands.

There is very little leadership at present because there is nothing in which leadership is really necessary, but with the development of the Buyers' Society and the Evangelical Church of Papua and the formation of the Local Government Council a need for leadership will arise and this leadership will come from the younger men both with some education.

E. Land Tenure and Use.

Throughout the area more importance is attached to the ownership of swamps and sage places than to the ownership of land which generally is owned by the members of a clan all of whom have hunting and gardening rights in common over it. Inheritance is usually patrilineal.

Ownership of sage swamps is very important and there is in some cases individual ownership of swamps which are jealously guarded and the cause of many disputes.

As crocodiles become scarcer disputes or complaints about other people, including European crocodiles shooters hunting in their swamps are becoming more frequent. The accepted custom seems to be that anybody can hunt in the large rivers or the Lake itself (where there are now few crocodiles) but that only the land owners may hunt in the swamps and smaller streams.

Land is now beginning to have a new importance with the commencement of the Rubber Project by the Department of Agriculture and the Buyers' Society. But there is more than ample land available and the only complaint that has arisen so far was from some of the Boisboilavu people who tried to squeeze a little extra blood out of the stone of the Busaki people to whom they sold land some years ago. The complaint was heard on this patrol and found to be completely baseless and arising from the envy of the Boisboilavu people at the success of the Busaki people in planting rubber trees on the land.

This original planting of five acres of rubber trees was a

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scrupulous effort on communally owned land. But all future plantings in all villages will be on individually owned five acre blocks which will be sub-divided out of the land now owned communally. Individual titles to each block will be necessary.

F. ~~LIBRARY~~

(a) There are three schools in the area teaching English up to Standard 5. These are the Administration School at the Government Station, the Unevangelized Fields Mission school at Pungan and the Montfort Catholic Mission School at Baset. In addition the Montfort Mission has teachers teaching Preparatory and Standard 4 in the villages of Winauga, Wanda and Nipon.

The following is a summary of the pupils at the three main schools:

Administration - Lake Murray

Preparatory	28 pupils	Standard 3	59 pupils
Standard 1	78 "	Standard 4	15 "
Standard 2	19 "	Standard 5	12 "

Unevangelized Fields Mission - Pungan

Preparatory	57	Standard 3	30
Standard 1	23	Standard 4	31
Standard 2	18	Standard 5	18

Montfort Catholic Mission - Baset

Preparatory	28	Standard 3	6
Standard 1	10	Standard 4	12
Standard 2	24	Standard 5	9

There were 16 boys and 1 girl from Lake Murray attending Form 1 at Daru High School in 1966. Of these 3 boys will be transferring to Balise Technical School in 1967 and the remainder will graduate to Form 2.

(b) There are approximately 200 semi-literate adults in the area. Unfortunately the larger proportion of them are literate either in their vernacular or Malay. A smaller proportion are literate in Police Sets while only a very few are literate in English. In 1965 Adult Education classes were held on the Government Station by the Administration teacher twice every week.

(c) There is only one girl in the area who has attained Form 4 in school in Port Moresby and she is likely to be returning there to marry.

(d) Most of the people in the area are very interested in listening to the radio, mainly to Radio Daru, Wewak and Suva. There is now at least one radio receiver in most villages, and the younger people send quite an amount of correspondence and requests to Radio Daru.

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G. Standard of Living.

(a) The people have a good deal more money than most others in the Eastern District and hence are able to buy good clothes, tools, utensils, and even outboard motors, however their standard of living in their villages has not improved greatly. Their houses are only of average quality at best and often take many months to complete. Their villages, with exceptions are not kept in good condition mainly because they still prefer the semi-nomadic life, wandering from their base places to go hunting, back to the base place and then wandering off somewhere else. They have not yet learnt to take care for their clothes and tools and are continually buying new ones.

(b) Sago is their staple diet, supplemented by wild game and fish. The Iungun and Iare people also eat a lot of rice, sweet potatoes, yams and bananas, but not as much corn.

Rice, tinned meat and fish, flour, biscuits, and sugar are all very popular foodstuffs and are bought in large and increasing quantities from the Buyers' Society's stores, but still would form only a small part of their diet.

(c) The only two purely social organisations in the area are the Women's Club and the Sports Club, both based at the Government Station. The Women's Club is only recently formed and consists almost entirely of station wives who are, without assistance from any European woman or Welfare Officer, running their club quite capably.

The Sports Club was formed early in 1955 mainly to play soccer. They have built their own Club-house in which films are shown every weekend by the Buyers' Society projector.

Soccer matches are played regularly each Saturday afternoon by up to five Station and Village teams, depending on whether the players are away shooting crocodiles or not.

The club members have recently started leveling the ground for a basket-ball court and a tennis court.

H. Missions.

(a) The two Missions established in the area are the Macfarlane Catholic Mission based at Boet and the Unevangelised Fields Mission based at Pengoa.

The Macfarlane Mission has adherents in the villages of Boet, Manta, Alabak, Tinaga, Pipan and Maer all in the Middle Fly Census Division. At different times in the past years they have had teachers or catechists stationed in all of these villages but for various reasons, mainly the whole village going off crocodile hunting and leaving the teacher with only half a dozen pupils, most of these have had to be transferred.

The Unevangelised Fields Mission is most active in the villages of Amovai, Kiviranga, Boikumava, Amatama, Iwa, Iyas and Imai, at the northern end of the Lakes. In October of 1946 they established two pastors at the Government Station to cater for the spiritual needs of the villagers at the northern end of the Lakes. Of these Boet and Boikuma have had the closest association with the Mission in the past.

There are no apparent tensions or conflict between the adherents of the two Missions. To date religious has not achieved enough importance to be worth fighting over and all the adherents are friendly towards each other.

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- H. (b) Both Missions provide good medical and educational services. Both have fully qualified nursing sisters in charge of their dispensaries at their Stations.

Both have good quality schools, taught by qualified European and Japanese teachers upto Standard 5. Unfortunately neither have been able to establish permanent schools in the villages due to lack of trained staff.

(c) Though both Missions have been established for twenty years 'Christianity' has not been as widely accepted as the services provided by the Missions have been. The Missionaries are highly respected and their work appreciated but the number of converts appears to be limited.

I. Non-Indians.

There are no plantations or commercial establishments owned by Europeans, at all in the area. Crocodile shooters, traders, and fishermen used to consider the Lake Murray area a very good source of quick profit prior to the Buyers' Society's expansion, but now they only visit the area on rare occasions.

J. Communications.

(a) Roads.

Apart from the Government Station there is a grand total of four miles of motor-bike tracks in the area. This track which is suitable for four-wheeled drive vehicles and with drainage and maintenance will be an all season road, runs from the Government Station through the proposed 'Maha' rubber resettlement area to the village of Buseki, the main rubber village in the area. It was completed in two months by the Buseki people who were anxious that the Agriculture Officer should have quick access by motor bike to their rubber blocks. Work is at present going on on the extension of the road to the area where the people of Nago and Acwa villages intend to plant their rubber. The main difficulty at present is that of crossing the small creek between the Government Station and the mainland. Not all canoes are stable enough to carry a motor-bike. This will be temporarily overcome by a pontoon-ferry floating on 40 gallon drums, but a substantial bridge or causeway will be needed in the future so that the rubber can be transported to the wharf.

Roads are badly needed to connect the Government Station with the Fly River villages which at present can only be reached by the Kipax track which involves alternate canoeing, walking and canoeing for one whole day to reach Kipax, and then canoeing down the Fly River to reach the other villages, or by a long three days' boat journey down the Strickland and up the Fly River.

During this patrol long discussions were held with the people about the feasibility of connecting the Fly River villages with Wiagasi a point on the shore of the Lake opposite the Station. It was generally agreed that the land between the Fly River and the Lake was mostly well above high water level and that roads could be built along the ridge tops to Wiagasi from Kipax, Manda and Aiashek villages on the Fly and from Asoatatum and Boikumaya villages and Boboa airstrip on the Lake.

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Work has commenced from both ends on the road from Manda to Biagani but it is expected to take some little time as a route has to be found first and there will probably be at least 30 miles of road to build. When it is completed the travelling time between the Station and Manda and Nipau Villages will be reduced to about two hours with the villages of Boset and Kuum only about three hours further on by canoe and outboard. The people of Aimbak and Asoatatum are waiting to see the outcome of the Manda road before they commit themselves to build their road.

(b) Water Transport is no problem in this area except in a drought like the one in 1965 which was the most extreme one in over twenty years. With a local pilot to guide them up the Strickland River, or perhaps even an echo sounder would be sufficient, boats of up to ten feet draught could easily sail right up to the Government Station nearly all year round. The Mission Station at Pangoa and the airstrip at Boboa are just as accessible to shipping.

Obo at the Junction of the Fly and Strickland Rivers could well be developed into a bulk terminal from which the whole Northern half of the Western District could be supplied. The size of ships that could tie up there would only be limited by the depth of the channel at the mouth of the Fly and the D'Albertis Group of Islands. The depth of the river at Obo has been measured as ninety feet.

At present the Buyers' Society has a bulk store at Obo from where supplies are distributed to its branch stores further up the Fly and in the Lakes.

A recent charter of the M.V. Kuku from Port Moresby to Obo resulted in a freight rate per ton much less than the rate from Luru to Lake Murray. With a regular backload of rubber, timber, frozen fish and meat, cargo rates of less than twenty dollars per ton from Port Moresby are possible on vessels of the size of the M.V. Kuku.

(c) Air. There are two airstrips in the area, both the result of Mission efforts and money. Pangoa (Boboa) which was built by the Unwengalized Fields Mission with Administration assistance and later taken over by the Administration in 1965, is a Category 'C' strip of 2100' x 150'. It has a hard well grassed surface and has not had to be closed once in the last two years. Soon immediately after a four inch downpour a Department of Civil Aviation inspector did not fault the surface.

It is believed that the Commonwealth Department of Works intends to slightly widen, lengthen and resurface the strip sometime in 1967. There is ample space on Boboa to extend the strip to Category 'A' and apparently the only problem would be the shortage of suitable soils to make a surface capable of carrying the heavier aircraft.

The Montfort Mission strip at Boset is a 1500' x 100' restrictive Category 'D' running uphill and across wind and with little possibility of extension or widening. It is however a most useful and necessary strip especially for health and quarantine purposes.

There are three known possible airstrip sites. One at 'Lake' on the mainland approximately one mile from the Government Station. The Administration purchased the land in 1965 but it has since been decided that the cost of building an airstrip there would be prohibitive.

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The second is at Pangoa Mission Station and the Mission is at present considering building it in order to avoid the five mile boat trip now necessary to Pangoa (Boboa) airstrip.

The third possibility is a Obo where a 2000' strip could be built at relatively little expense. The only problem being that it is directly across wind. It is however most likely that further investigation will discover a more in-wind site. An airstrip at Obo would greatly assist the administration and development of that area, which is relatively densely populated (500 or 700 people or more than 20% of the total population).

Situated just above the junction of the Fly and Strickland Rivers it could well become the focal point from which all stations both Administration and Mission in the Northern half of the District could be supplied either by boat or plane. With this possibility in mind the Bayers Society has established a bulk store there to test the practicability of the idea.

K. Technical and Clerical Skills.

There are not many tradesmen in the area. The following is a list of the numbers of people claiming to have had some experience in each occupation :

4 Painters, 5 powerhouse operators, electricians or linemen,
3 carpenters, 6 boatmen, 1 boat's engineer (with references)
8 timber-workers, 11 store clerks.

L. The Stage of Political Development.

There has been little in the way of political development as yet, but the time is definitely ripe for it now as the people are beginning to become aware through meetings of the Bayers' Society and the Evangelical Church of Papua that they are expected to speak their minds and also have a fairly good chance of being listened to. This apparently is in contrast to discussions in the village where I am told everybody speaks at once and listens to nobody and nothing is ever decided.

There is as yet no real unity within the area. Probably the main reason for this is that different groups do not have much contact with each other except at meetings of the Evangelical Church of Papua and the Bayers' Society. These two bodies do have and will continue to have an increasingly unifying effect. When the Local Government Council is formed it should also hasten the process.

There is very little awareness of events political or otherwise outside the area except that which is gleaned from Radio Daru, Fovak, Muzuke and Sukamopura, and this is only partly understood.

The House of Assembly is also confused with the idea of Local Government Councils in their minds and the Government is of course the Department of District Administration's Officers.

Nobody from the area has been away as an observer or participant in any conference or commission outside the District.

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1. THE ECONOMY OF THE AREA.

For the past ten years the main source of income has been the sale of crocodile skins. Prior to that attempts had been made to promote copra, rice, and coffee but none of these had any success though most villages have their coconut trees and one has a plot of coffee. These can not be considered as economic trees.

The Lake Murray people have become by far the richest people in the Western District solely from the sale of crocodile skins.

Originally they were taught the value of the skins, how to hunt them, remove and salt the skins by Chinese traders from Dutch New Guinea and later by European shooters and traders based in Daru. Naturally the prices they received were small. The Lake Murray Buyers' Society was formed in an attempt to obtain better prices for the skins and to supply trade goods to the people. It was formed with local capital, registered under the Native Economic Development Ordinance, supervised by Patrol Officers, and audited and advised at different times by the Registrar of Co-operatives. It grew spasmodically depending on the varying degrees of interest shown in it by the supervising officers. In 1965 a record drought and hence a record slaughter of crocodiles and the enthusiasm of Mr. P. Hayden, the supervising officer combined to rocket the Society to the position it is in now with assets in excess of \$100,000.00 which is more than \$50.00 per man woman and child in the area.

At present the economy of the area is the Lake Murray Buyers' Society Limited.

It has a main retail store at the Government Station and branch stores in the villages of Miwa, Kaviananga and Mijon, and an associated store at Boset run by the only entrepreneur in the area, Leo Heni. It also has a bulk store at Obe at Werill Junction from where cargo which has been shipped direct from Port Moresby is distributed to the branch stores by the Society's 27 foot boat, the S.V. Lake Murray.

The Lake Murray Buyers' Society is by far the largest member of the newly formed Trans-Fly Co-operative Mijon Society Limited which at present is building a bulk store in Daru and has ordered a 50 foot steel hull boat which will carry cargo to the three member Buyers' Societies, Kiunga, Moreshead and Lake Murray.

The only other present source of income is the sale of garden produce by the Busaki people to the Mission at Mijon and to administration staff at the Government Station.

However with a share capital of over \$50,000.00 the Buyers' Society is now in a position where it can diversify its activities and develop new economic ventures.

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N. Possibilities of Expanding the Economy.

Now is the time to diversify the economy of the area. Never before has there been and probably never again will there be such a co-incident of conditions favorable for economic development in the area.

Firstly the Buyers' Society has converted most of its profits from 1965 into share capital and has finance available for new projects.

Secondly the people realize that there will be no more crocodile businesses and they are very keen to find substitute sources of income.

Thirdly the Department of Agriculture has posted an Assistant Agricultural Officer to Lake Murray and are enthusiastically promoting the establishment of Rubber Plantations. So far the Administration has 24,000 rubber seedlings in its nurseries and the Buyers' Society has 16,000. Approximately 2,000 trees have been planted in village plantations.

Fourthly the Unevangelised Fields Mission has posted Mr. B. Varidhi (Diploma of Animal Husbandry) and Mr. A. Radcliffe (professional fisherman) to Bolca to help promote cattle breeding and fishing.

Fifthly the Trans-Fly Co-operative Shipping Society's new boat will shortly be available to backload produce to Daru at reasonable freight rates.

Sixthly there is an over abundance of easily accessible high quality baramundi fish and timber available.

O. Attitude towards Local Government.

The people want a 'Council'. They have only a very vague idea of what it is and what its functions are. They know it collects tax and they are quite happy to pay same if that is the cost of having a 'Council'. They want it to be multi-racial as they are most anxious that one or two Missionaries should be Councillors and help them run the Council.

The Buyers' Society has in the past provided some of the services usually provided by a Council. It has subsidised the building of an aid-post and a classroom and made several donations to the three schools in the area. Its Directors' meetings have been in fact informal embryonic Council meetings as every village is represented by a Director. The society is continuing to act in this way at present.

A Local Government Council is both necessary and desirable for Lake Murray, however it is not extremely urgent and priority should be given to the diversifying of the economy of the Lake Murray people. While ever the people have money in their pockets there will be no difficulty establishing and maintaining a Council. But should the scarcity of crocodiles worsen and the price of skins continue its downward trend and the people have no substantial substitute source of income available to them, their present enthusiasm for a Council would swiftly wane and their dissatisfaction with their return to poverty which will naturally be placed on the Administration, will I am sure, be great. A Council to be effective in an area with a population as small as Lake Murray, must levy a high rate of tax and to pay it the people must have a regular and above average income.