

AUSTRALIA, PAPUA NEW GUINEA AND THE
WEST NEW GUINEA QUESTION 1949-1969

by

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This thesis is my own original work

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SYNOPSIS

This thesis is an historical analysis of Australia's West New Guinea policy over a twenty year period from 1949 to 1969. It begins by showing how the traditional importance of New Guinea to Australia shaped the policy that was adopted when the territory fell into dispute between the Netherlands and Indonesia in 1949. It traces the development of Australia's WNG policy from support for Dutch sovereignty to eventual acceptance of Indonesia's claim, and, later still, to encouragement of a favourable outcome for Indonesia in WNG's Act of Free Choice in 1969. It describes the international pressures that were brought to bear upon Australia's WNG policy as the WNG dispute developed before its settlement with the New York Agreement in 1962, along with the pressures that came to bear upon Australia as conditions in the territory deteriorated under Indonesian rule before the Act of Free Choice in 1969. This study shows the relevance of those pressures not only for WNG policy but for Australia's developing foreign policy, as well: New Guinea's change from a vital Australian security interest in 1950 ran parallel with a change in Australian foreign policy priorities as a whole from dependence upon an alliance association outside the region to the pursuit of the regionalism that was seen by most Australians to be as irrelevant as it was unnecessary at the outset of the period under consideration.

This thesis also describes the consequences of the WNG dispute for New Guinea. It traces the development of WNG nationalism and the contribution to its character made by Dutch tutelage and subsequent Indonesian mal-administration. It describes the problems which were a result, including rebellion and repression in WNG, a refugee movement into PNG and subsequent border incidents as refugee numbers increased with the approaching Act of Free Choice. It traces Australia's response which changed from co-operation across the border with the Dutch, to border freeze and a defence development programme when the Dutch were replaced by Indonesians, and, later still, to eventual co-operation with Indonesia. Finally, this thesis describes Papua New Guinea's response to the events that were taking place on

and across the international border in the period under consideration. It shows how and explains why the PNG response in this period of eventually rapid political change was one of both fear of Indonesia, sympathy for the people of WNG, and pan-Papuan sentiment, on the one hand, and of reaction from PNG's own emerging nationalist elite as they saw Indonesia, Australia and the UN ride rough-shod over the interests of WNG on the other. It also shows how that part of the PNG elite which took office as the government of the self-governing and later independent PNG came to accept the kind of realism propounded by Australia's Minister for External Affairs, Gordon Freeth, in 1969, and so the logic of the politics of the Australian-New Guinea-Indonesian triangle.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ADC	Assistant District Commissioner
ADNB	Antara Daily News Bulletin
ADO	Assistant District Officer
AIA	Australian Indonesian Association
AIIA	Australian Institute of International Affairs
AIPS	Australian Institute of Political Science
AJPH	Australian Journal of Politics and History
ALP	Australian Labor Party
ANMEF	Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force
ANU	Australian National University
ANZAC	Australia-New Zealand Agreement
ANZUS	Australia, New Zealand, United States Treaty
ASOPA	Australian School of Pacific Administration
CAB	Current Affairs Bulletin
CD	Census Division
CNIA	Current Notes on International Affairs
CPD	Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates
CPP	Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
CT	Canberra Times
DASF	Department of Agriculture, Stock and Fisheries
DC	District Commissioner
DDA	Department of District Administration
DDM	Djakarta Daily Mail
DDS&NA	Department of District Services and Native Affairs
DEA	Department of External Affairs
DNA	Department of Native Affairs
DNG	Dutch New Guinea
DO	District Officer
DT	Djakarta Times
DVP	Democratic People's Party

ECAFE	Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East
EEC	European Economic Community
ENG	East New Guinea
EPANG	United New Guinea Party
FUNDWI	Fund of the United Nations for the Development of West Irian
HAD	House of Assembly Debates
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ICJ	International Court of Justice
IH	Indonesian Herald
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IO	Indonesian Observer
KLM	Koninklijk/Luchtvaarts/Maatschaapij
LCD	Legislative Council Debates
LCP	Liberal and Country Party
LGC	Local Government Council
MHA	Member of the House of Assembly
MHR	Member of the House of Representatives
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NEI	Netherlands East Indies
NG	New Guinea
NNG	Netherlands New Guinea
NSW	New South Wales
NYT	New York Times
OCAM	Organisation Commune Africaine Malgache et Mauricienne
OIC	Officer-in-Charge
OPM	Organisasi Papua Merdeke
OUP	Oxford University Press
PARNA	National Party
PARSEPP	Papuan Youth Party
PC	Post Courier
PIM	Pacific Islands Monthly
PIR	Pacific Islands Regiment
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PO	Patrol Officer
PONG	New Guinea Orange Party

PP	Patrol Post
PR	Patrol Report
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
RI	Republic of Indonesia
RPNGC	Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary
RSL	Returned Servicemens' League
SDPR	Sepik District Patrol Report
SEATO	South East Asia Treaty Organisation
SMH	Sydney Morning Herald
SPC	South Pacific Commission
SPP	South Pacific Post
TI	Times of Indonesia
TPNG	Territory of Papua New Guinea
UAR	United Arab Republic
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNOPI	United Nations Office of Public Information
UNTEA	United Nations Temporary Executive Authority
UPNG	University of Papua New Guinea
US	United States
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VPD	Victorian Parliamentary Debates
WI	West Irian
WDPR	Western District Patrol Report
WNG	West New Guinea

A NOTE ON NOMENCLATURE

For simplicity, except in the case of quotations, West New Guinea (WNG) is used throughout this thesis to refer to the western half of the island of New Guinea. Under Dutch rule until 1962, the territory was known as Dutch New Guinea, Netherlands New Guinea or West New Guinea. Under Indonesia rule thereafter, it became West Irian, Irian Barat and, most recently, Irian Jaya. Similarly, the eastern half of the island is throughout called Papua New Guinea (PNG). As a colony of Australia until 1975, at different times it was known as the Territory of Papua and New Guinea, Papua-New Guinea, and Papua and New Guinea.

The people of WNG have been referred to as Papuans in the earlier period when the Dutch encouraged West Papuan nationalism, and Irianese once the territory passed to Indonesia. The people of PNG on the other hand, when not "locals" (which they prefer to "native" or "indigene") are throughout Papua New Guineans.