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## **Ethnic Structure, Inequality and Governance of the Public Sector in Papua New Guinea**

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Part of UNRISD Project on Ethnic Structure, Inequality and Governance of the Public Sector.  
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### **Executive Summary**

Papua New Guinea is indeed a multipolar, ethnically fragmented society. This presents unique problems to governance and the management of inequality in public sector institutions – political parties, the parliament, cabinet and the civil service. The clash of values between traditions and Western democracy and capitalism has meant that elite consensus is thwarted in many issues and instances. This has resulted in the instability of the political parties, the parliament and executive (or cabinet), and political interference in the civil service. The performance of these institutions in the management of governance, inequality, and the ethnic diversity in the country has not been effective. Accordingly Papua New Guinea was ranked 133 out of 170 nations in the 2000 Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Programme. The living standards of the people have not been significantly improved over the past 28-29 years of nationhood.

Ironically, Papua New Guinea is surviving democracy. As a developing country, its democratic longevity has spanned some 40 years unlike other developing countries that have had their democratic systems disrupted in less than 20 to 25 years of statehood. What accounts for this longevity? This study shows that while Papua New Guinea does not have strong and effective public sector institutions, it nonetheless suggests that ethnic structure, specifically the small size of ethnic groups and the absence of ethnic domination in the public sector institutions, may indeed be the critical factors in ensuring the country's democratic longevity.

# **ETHNIC STRUCTURE, INEQUALITY AND GOVERNANCE OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA**

**Dr Ray Anere**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Papua New Guinea (PNG) is a nation that is diverse in cultures and traditions. It comprises 817 plus language groups and is a multi-ethnic society. There are 19 provinces, including the National Capital District, with at least 40 languages found in each province. The land area is 463,000 square kilometers while the sea area is around 3,120,000 square kilometers. Based on the 2000 national census, the population is now 5.19 million. The projected growth rate is 3.2 percent per annum. There are more males than females: 51.9% and 48.9% of the total population respectively. There are approximately 108 males to every 100 females. Three official languages are used as medium of instruction. They are English, Pidgin and Motu.<sup>1</sup> The use of these languages is aimed at unifying the different ethnic groups (see Ethnologue). Christianity is the official religion. PNG gained independence from Australia on September 16, 1975.

Regionally, the Highlands region has the highest population of 1.9 million with a growth rate of 2.8 percent. New Guinea mainland (Momase) has 1.4 million with a growth rate of 2.6 percent; Papua has 1.04 million with 2.9 percent growth; and New Guinea Islands has 741,238 with a growth rate of 2.6 percent (Department of Planning and Monitoring, 1999: 9-10; Post Courier newspaper, May 2, 2002:1, 3).<sup>2</sup>

Of the 19 provinces that make up PNG, Southern Highlands province and Morobe (in the Highlands and Momase regions) both recorded populations which passed half a million: 546,265 and 539,404 respectively.<sup>3</sup> Ethnic cleavages tend to become politicized in these provinces in relation to major activities such as parliamentary elections, mining, infrastructure development, and natural resource exploitation due to conflict between clans or landowners, the state and resource developers.<sup>4</sup> Different groups claim ownership of the land in which mining and other resource developments take place, and demand compensation and other benefits.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, ethnic conflict does occur in public sector activities such as elections as in socio-economic activities where questions of land ownership and entitlements arise, in certain parts of the country. Ethnic groups are politicized in elections with the view to mobilizing clan votes – this is to a larger degree the case in the Highlands electorates than in the coastal electorates.

In light of the ethnic diversity, it is necessary to explore the capacity for representation, stability, and governance of public sector institutions in PNG, in the discussions below. This is done first by stating the argument of the report at the outset. Various sections of the report will guide understanding of the argument throughout the discussions.

## **Argument**

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<sup>1</sup> Pidgin and Motu are vernaculars. Pidgin is now spoken across the country. In the 1960s and 1970s, it was spoken in the Highlands, New Guinea mainland (now called Momase) and islands regions. Motu is used mainly in the Papuan region.

<sup>2</sup> The Highlands region is in the interior of the country; Momase is in the mainland north coast; Papua is in the Southern part; while New Guinea islands are in the north and eastern part of the country. The four regions and the different groups that reside in them can be seen in the Ethnologue and insets 1-5.

<sup>3</sup> Southern Highlands is the most populous province followed by Morobe. As a province the former has 10.5 percent of the national population, the latter has 10.4 percent.

<sup>4</sup> In activities such as mining, the resource developers are usually foreign multinationals.

<sup>5</sup> In the Southern Highlands province, for example, the PNG Electoral Commission decided to conduct polling for one day only in certain electorates in the 2002 parliamentary elections, for fear of election-related violence. The Highlands provinces are Enga, Southern Highlands, Western Highlands, Chimbu and Eastern Highlands (see PNG map).

PNG is a fragmented multipolar society. No one ethnic group is large enough to dominate its public sector. There is relative balance in the 'representation' of ethnic groups in parliament, political parties, the cabinet, and the civil service. However, the party system is weakly institutionalized, individuals are more important than parties in electoral politics, and there is some socio-economic inequality between regions and provinces, implying that some ethnic groups are better endowed than others. Even though there is no ethnic domination in the public sector, competition for representation in the public sector is highly ethnic as voters support clansmen and women rather than parties. There has been a high number of candidates (many of whom are independents), high turnover of governments, and local violence. The electoral system of first-past-the-post and the Westminster parliamentary system of government in which MPs can become ministers, coupled with the fragmented, unstable party system may account for this outcome. And although traditional PNG values clash with Western values, they have shown remarkable resilience that they do not easily give way to the imperatives of democracy. Traditional values have in fact penetrated the state such that there is a general lack of respect for the rule of law.

## CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

Over the years political scientists have referred to a society's confidence in its institutions as 'social capital'. The argument goes that social capital is determined by two central features of a society; first, the networks, relationships and organizations that bring people together to try and solve common problems, and, second, the norms, values and traditions which promote cooperation. In *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* Robert Putnam argues that social capital will strengthen state institutions and in turn, effective state institutions will create an environment in which social capital will strengthen society. Most importantly in his study, Putnam also found that it is not the degree of political participation that determines a region's stock of social capital, but rather its character (Putnam in Phillpot, 2003).

The nature of social capital in PNG, by virtue of its ethnic fragmentation, presents some unique problems. Studies reveal that ethnic groups can both generate benefits and costs on societies. Furthermore, ethnic fragmentation affects the performance of political and economic institutions. Most analyses of elections in PNG emphasize the link between tribal affiliation and election candidature. This link can be demonstrated by comparing Eastern Highlands Province (EHP) in the Highlands region, and East New Britain Province (ENB) in the New Guinea Islands region (see PNG map). In ENB there is clearly a larger stock of social capital than is the case in EHP thus politics in ENB is characterized by 'issues' rather than by 'patron-client' relationships which predominate in EHP. In ENB a broad consensus across ethnic lines favors effective government whereas in EHP the multiplicity of ethnic groups frustrates any attempts to maintain a consensus necessary for effective government (Rynkiewicz 2000: 18-22).

The 2000 *Human Development Report* of the United Nations Development Programme ranked PNG 133 out of 177 countries. Certainly, past and present governments have not improved the living standards of the people since independence. This claim is reinforced by the 2000 report of the World Health Organization which ranked PNG as 148 out of 190 nations (Seib 2000: 11). These figures suggest that PNG has low levels of development; this in turn encourages the continuity of the predominantly rural, clan- and tribal-based society in the country. There is a link between low levels of development with low levels of social capital in many provinces, and the continuation of tribalism. Low social capital among the ethnic groups in turn limits efforts by any one of them from dominating the public sector institutions.

Ethnicity is deeply embedded in the cultures and traditions in all provinces. To some degree, this has encouraged patronage and thus has affected the performance of institutions and processes in the public sector (as alluded to in the argument above). The Westminster system of parliamentary democracy, for instance, has not been effectively adapted to PNG's traditional political system (sometimes known as the *institution of big man*). Consequently, different characteristics and outcomes have developed. For example, elected members of parliament are more concerned with delivering goods and services to the ethnic groups that voted them in than to the electorate as a whole. This practice goes against the notion of parliamentary representation which is to serve the interests of an electorate as a whole than any one particular group (Bettison et al. 1965).

Since independence, clan, and, to some extent, regional loyalties have remained strong in PNG. This has interfered with efforts to establish a national identity, as well as a stable parliamentary democracy. The idea of a nation is not widely shared in PNG, and sovereignty seems to be confined to the presence of politicians, police and other state agencies. PNG politics remains fragmented, parochial and insular. It produces diverse political behaviour which makes sense at the local level but often appears incomprehensible and contradictory to national interests (Muingnepe 1994: 105). As a result of the absence of widespread commitment to the Westminster political system, the state has not significantly secured dominance within the national society. It still has limited legitimacy at local levels (Dinnen 1998: 57).

With the localization of political and administrative positions, traditional rivalry between leadership contenders for prestige and power has been carried over into the modern political sphere (Saffu 1996b: 28). Meggitt and Gordon observed 15 years ago that far from being displaced by the downward thrust of central authority, local political traditions have proved remarkably resilient and, in many respects, have successfully penetrated the state. In their opinion, the government is not seen as a mechanism for development, instead it is “an instrument to establish and extend patronage ties” (1985: 84). As a result the political system remains highly fragile. Political discontinuity and institutionalized instability appear to be the main obstacles to political, economic and social development of the country.

The PNG *Independent* newspaper comments that;

There is no such thing as stability in PNG politics...it is instability that feeds the fluidity and sustains the nebulous nature of PNG politics. It is instability that makes and unmakes governments (Independent newspaper, 30 December, 1999: 4).

Politics in PNG is characterized by diverse and fluid coalitions of parties and independents. Under the simple majority system, the number of candidates has constantly increased. This means that office holders are winning by fewer and fewer votes. In many elections, 80% to 90% of the voters end up unrepresented. Nearly all of the current sitting members have a simple majority representing small groups, but not a democratic mandate which would represent the majority of the voters of their electorate. This means that national elections do not mandate current members of parliament to make decisions on behalf of the people. It certainly undermines the very foundations of the democracy which requires that the majority must rule (Somare 1999: 65).

The fact that a minority of voters elect members of parliament continues to undermine the authority and legitimacy of governments. Those elected depend on their ability to reward their voters with all kinds of so-called development services to guarantee re-election. The highly personalized relations between politicians and their small ethnic constituency serve to sustain and deepen political fragmentation. Standish summarizes the 1992 elections thus:

Reduced administrative capability, the use of public funds for individual benefit, the low moral authority of the state and limited state control of society, the intensification of local political competition into conflict, the large scale of electoral cheating and the use of force and intimidation by state and non-state actors in politics (1996b : 278; Electoral Commission 1997).

The high turnover of MPs and the growing number of election petitions add to the discontinuity and lack of experience. These impede the development and implementation of coherent long-term policies and strategies. The World Bank observes that ‘decisions are driven by personal contacts and patronage rather than by concerns of sustainable and long –term development goals’ (1999: xiii). Allegiances in parliament are fragile and members often jump from one party to another or create new parties. Parties in general continue to have weak ideological ties, negligible organizational structures and no mass membership. As Saffu noted, no linkage can be found between parties and voting and governance as related to policy outcomes (1996: 5). The highly unstable nature of PNG politics permits members a high degree of personal autonomy and power and reduces the demand for more responsiveness towards the needs of the public and their electorates. Indeed, the fragmented party system represents not only a challenge for democracy in

PNG, but also for effective governance in the country's public sector institutions (Reilly, 1999: 244; Diamond, et al, 1995: 34).

Other important features of the Westminster system are also missing, such as, a credible and effective opposition acting as a balancing force and a strong parliamentary committee system, with the exception of the Public Accounts Committee, at least since 2002 (National Parliamentary Reports for 1997 and 1998; Post Courier 28. 4. 2000: 1). Most members not in government reside on the middle benches waiting for the chance to improve their political position in the grab for more prestige and resources. Fluidity, formlessness and the lack of a dynamic opposition at the centre still characterize PNG's parliamentary system.

The fluidity has resulted in unstable and easily toppled coalition governments. Their formation, through horse-trading, is correlated to incidents such as kidnapping, bribery and violence. Party leaders restrict the movements of elected candidates from joining others in chosen locations where the horse trading takes place. Since independence, none of the elected governments have survived a full parliamentary term of office. Even the successful vote of no-confidence does not prevent the continuance of undercover manoeuvres in parliament. This kind of unstable and often unpredictable system has been blamed for the emergence of an opportunistic, costly style of politics, prone to non-transparent and inconsistent ad-hoc policy decisions, leading to corruption, cronyism, patronage and bad governance.

Good governance, as an important condition for the overall improvement of a society, requires a transparent, predictable, and accountable government; one which manages scarce resources for development in a way that will improve the life of the entire population (Root 1996; Larmour 1998; World Bank 1999). But through the last two decades political interference with state institutions in PNG has increased dramatically. There has been a high frequency of change in political appointments of leaders, heads of departments and state-owned companies. Good governance is a lesser consideration to political appointments to hold coalitions together or to appease greedy *wantoks* (individuals of the same ethnic group). Recruitment of personal or political allies as heads of departments and senior officials often occurs through individual ministers acting without clear procedures and proper advertisements.

Furthermore, there is no clear structure of responsibility for such ministerial actions. This has consequently led to a serious decline in the power, status, morale and productivity of the administration. There has been a brain drain of professional and intellectual servants into the private sector. The politicization of the bureaucracy through intervention by politicians has steadily undermined processes of policy development, planning and implementation. Problems of efficiency and effectiveness are evident. Performance monitoring and sanctions for poor performance are either absent or not related to outcomes. Most departments have suffered from inadequate financial and human resources and financial mismanagement. Gross misuse, fraud, thefts and suspicious payments of public funds are also occurring as a result of isolated political decisions and common lack of accountability (cf. World Bank 1999).

There has been a total disregard for laws and procedures. A presiding judge who dealt with a disputed opening of a supermarket in Port Moresby (the capital) stated: 'There has not been some minor administrative error but rather a subversion of the whole statutory process' (Post Courier 18.5.2000: 3). A former Chief Ombudsman, Simon Pentanu stated that: 'To the observer, bribery, nepotism and corruption appear to have spread through the entire tree of government and bureaucracy, from the roots, through the trunk and branches, even to new shoots' (Post Courier 15.10.1999: 2). Former Speaker of Parliament once commented on his role as MP thus: 'It's a shame to be a Member of Parliament. It's not a nice place to be in. It's like Bomana (Port Moresby prison), you go in for petty crimes and come back a hard core' (Post Courier 29.3.1999: 5).

The decline of the delivery of public services such as health, education and infrastructure, despite a real boost in budget terms, has increased social fragmentation. PNG has low levels of social capital as implied by the rankings of the United Nations Development Programme and the World Health Organization for 2000 (see paragraph one, page 3).

In 2000 a number of legislative reforms were put in place and were seen as the most important political legislation since independence (Post Courier 30.5.2000: 2). Continuity and stability are the most urgent

factors needed in PNG politics today. Some argue that a return to preferential voting system of pre-independence elections would help to reduce sectional voting and obtain a genuine mandate from the majority of voters.

However, it seems unlikely that the 'Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates and the Organic Law on the Electoral System will bring results that the proponents propose. The failure of the 1995 'Organic Law on Provincial and Local-Level Governments, originally seen as the most far reaching reform since 1975, is a good indication that isolated legislation to change the structure of institutions does not guarantee that there will be changes in the values and attitudes of the voters or the politicians. That is, institutions may come and go but the culture of politics remains. In PNG there are many good laws that are never implemented or enforced. Registration and regulation of parties may reduce party hopping, but they will not support the development of an effective nationwide party system based on programmatic and ideological platforms which could offer people a choice between different governments. The establishment of a stable political order where politicians represent the majority will of the people requires long-term and broad-based efforts in education and voter awareness campaigns that will change, among other things, the political culture. Even that may not be enough to change present political identities, values and behavior, and to overcome parochial, segmented and regional interests so that politicians focus on national issues. If personal conscience and cultural attitudes do not change, the goal of stability will be remain an illusion. Also urgently needed is a political culture that balances collective and individual responsibility as important principles of PNG's parliamentary democracy because these establish a clear line of accountability by the government. As long as politicians adopt the view that 'I am only accountable to the people who live and vote from my electorate' (Post Courier 29 May, 2000: 10), the integrity of representatives in the nation will be in doubt.

There is also a need to put an end to the permanent recycling of leaders to top jobs in government, the public service and state-owned institutions. This practice is still the norm, even when politicians have demonstrated incompetence or undemocratic behavior. It is obvious that if the political system and the bureaucracy do not combat institutional problems and improve capacities in regard to responsibility, transparency and accountability and the delivery of services in the near future, the legitimacy of the state and its institutions will further erode.

In regard to the electoral reform, the success of the limited preferential voting is also highly doubtful. In 1968, the report by the Chief Electoral Officer on the House of Assembly commented: 'The strongest argument against the preferential system is its complexity for the average voter and its complexity for the count' (Reilly 1996: 46). Standish also argues in relation to the 1992 elections in Chimbu province that the preferential voting system would be too complex for the electoral staff, the scrutineers and the candidates (1996: 320). Indeed, it is difficult to see how the Electoral Commission would execute such a complex system when it is at fault in most electorates in previous elections under FPTP (The National 17 May, 2000: 5).

In summary, it is no surprise that the transfer of the Westminster system onto a society based on a totally different cultural and value system has led to contradictions and conflicts, as the experience not only in PNG but in many developing countries demonstrates. PNG will continue to struggle to find the right formula and structures for democratic stability. It will have to find a societal consensus for democratic representation as well as an identity as one nation. In view of the slow economic growth, politics in PNG will have to prevent the further erosion of traditional societies, which still offer social identity and economic self-sufficiency for most of the rural people, and overcome the highly fractionalized and divided society in order to steer towards the stability and human development of the entire nation. The social, political and cultural environment in PNG does not appear to readily encourage the maximum growth of networks, relationships, organizations and appropriate norms, values and traditions (the two central features of a society, according to Putnam) upon which social capital will thrive.

## **ETHNIC CLEAVAGES: A BRIEF DESCRIPTION**

Ethnic cleavages are basically village-based and operate mostly along clan and tribal lines. The extended family system exists although this is gradually being eroded by external influences and urbanization.

Individual groups are autonomous vis-à-vis other groups and the state on a day-to-day basis. PNG is a predominantly rural society where 84 percent of the 5.19 million people live in rural areas. This is due, among other things, to the geographic and ethnic fragmentation and to poor transport and communication infrastructure. Ethnic groups maintain their traditional ways of life; the highest concentration of rural dwellers being the Highlands (Crocombe, R., et al, May 2001:26).

### Fragmented Multi-polarity

According to a UNRISD typology, PNG is a multi-polar fragmented society (UNRISD, 2002: 4). It is assumed that in fragmented multi-polar settings with relatively small ethnic groups, ethnic-based political behaviour is less likely to be prevalent. Since political parties have to appeal to a large cross section of ethnic groups to be electorally viable, they are bound to be inter-ethnic coalition parties. This ensures a rough balance in the representation of ethnic groups in the political parties. It may also be possible for single parties in fragmented ethnic settings to win a majority of votes in elections. Based on the typology below, PNG has 817 plus ethnic groups which are relatively small with the largest group having only 4 percent of the national population and the two and three largest groups having just 7 and 8 percent respectively (UNRISD, May 2002: 4). In fact, according to the 2000 PNG national census figures, the three largest rural ethnic cleavages are found in the Eastern Highlands (see PNG map) which has the third highest number of persons of the national population. These are Kainantu (rural local government) with 84,983 persons or 1.6 percent of the national population; Okapa with 62,041 persons or 1.1 percent; and Unggai Bena with 45,006 persons or 0.86 percent (NSO, March 2002: 22).<sup>6</sup> These are rural local government populations which are mostly based on ethnic groups.

Other social groups do exist and affect ethnic cleavages one way or another. For example, there are matrilineal and patriarchal communities in PNG which do affect the transfer of rights, responsibilities and obligations within ethnic groups. In matrilineal communities, women's clans are the channels of decision making and resource allocation, including the allocation and use of land. In such instances, for example, land is inherited and owned/managed by the children of female members of an individual family. All decision making involving land must involve them and their maternal uncles. Their uncles' children don't have the same degree of authority that they do as they have greater authority over their mother's land. (The PNG map shows New Ireland while inset 4 shows Suau, Buhutu and Misima in the Milne Bay province – these are two provinces that have ethnic groups that are matrilineal.)

The ethnic structure is fragmented geographically as well as shown in the ethnologue and insets.

**Table 1: A Typology of Ethnic Structures with Examples**

Type	Number of Ethnic groups	Share of pop. By largest group	Share of pop. By two largest groups	Share of pop. By three largest groups
<b>Unipolarity</b>				
Botswana	30	70	80	82
Zimbabwe	15	63	76	78
Lithuania	7	80	89	96
Equatorial-Guinea	12	75	77	79
Cambodia	17	90	94	96
China	205	70	78	82
Vietnam	85	87	88	89
<b>Bipolarity</b>				

<sup>6</sup>The largest ethnic group in the Southern Highlands, Kagua, has 35,489 persons, see Kasua in Map inset 3. This represents only 0.68 percent of the total national population. For Unggai Bena, see Benabena in Map inset 3.



Rwanda	2	90	99	100
Burundi	2	85	99	100
Belgium	7	57	90	92
Fiji	10	49	95	99
Latvia	8	55	90	94
Guyana	6	51	82	93
Sierra Leone	20	31	61	69
<b>Tripolarity</b>				
Switzerland	4	74	92	99
Bosnia	7	40	72	91
Nigeria	470	19	38	54
<b>Concentrated Multipolarity</b>				
Congo-Braz	60	51	64	73
Niger	20	43	61	70
Ghana	72	44	57	65
Kenya	61	20	34	47
Togo	43	21	33	42
Ethopia	82	29	37	44
<b>Fragmented Multipolarity</b>				
Cameroon	279	5	9	11
Tanzania	131	15	19	23
Liberia	34	16	28	34
Uganda	46	14	21	28
Papua New Guinea	817	4	7	8
Solomon Islands	66	5	10	13
Vanuatu	109	4	7	9
India	407	50	57	64

Source: UNRISD, May 27-29, 2002, p. 4.

### **Ethnic Cleavages: A Discussion**

The typology reinforces the ethnologue in that PNG is multipolar and ethnically fragmented. There is a heavier concentration of groups in the East and West Sepik provinces, including Madang, Enga, Western Highlands, Chimbu, and the Southern Highlands provinces (see PNG map and insets 1, 2 & 3). Morobe also has a heavy concentration of groups as can be seen in Inset 2 (Siroi to Wampur ethnic groups) and 3 (Wasembo to Menya groups) of the ethnologue. Papua has groups that are scattered throughout region (see coastline of inset 3 & whole of inset 4) while those in the New Guinea Islands region are also scattered throughout the islands, including Manus (inset 5) reflecting the ethnic diversity of the country. Although sea, air and land transport have improved over the past 28 years, lack of education, and other socio-economic services, coupled with the geographic fragmentation, has meant that 85 percent of the population still reside in their places of origin thus reinforcing the ethnic diversity and fragmentation of the country. These factors have also slowed down the development of social capital over the last two and a half decades.

Most of the 817 plus languages are still alive (though there is fear that some may be dying out). Some groups are bilingual due to contacts through trade and missionary work. Many groups have more than one dialect due to the fragmented nature of PNG society. An ethnic group may cover 5 or more villages depending on the nature of geography and extent of contacts with traders, missionaries and other ethnic groups. Some of the languages have, and are being, translated into the Bible specifically for readers in a particular locality. The Bible translation work is undertaken mainly by the Summer Institute of Linguistics, based in the Eastern Highlands province of PNG. Many of the languages are in the Austronesian group.

### **Relations between ethnicity and regions**

There are four regions in PNG; Momase (Morobe, Madang, East and West Sepik provinces), Highlands (Enga, Chimbu, Eastern Highlands, Southern Highlands and Western Highlands provinces), Papua (Western, Gulf, National Capital District, Central, Milne Bay and Oro provinces), and New Guinea Islands (Manus, New Ireland, East and West New Britain and North Solomons/Bougainville provinces) as shown in the PNG map. For ethnic sentiments to transcend the boundaries of immediate localities and provinces to

the regional level, there would have to be issues in the areas of development, politics, the distribution of funds, senior positions in the executive, legislature and judiciary, and to some extent in the civil service, that would allow political leaders especially to mobilize inter-ethnic sentiments to pursue common regional interests. For instance, in terms of development, building a highway road that will link the Central and Milne Bay provinces (in Papua) will require not only political consensus through the mechanism of the Papuan Governor's Conference, but also awareness to be conducted in these provinces to inform landowners of the benefits and implications of having a road built on their traditional land. Relevant landowner groups (families and clans) will have to be brought into the discussions so that all issues are dealt with in a transparent manner.

In terms of positions of high public office, one does see a link between ethnic sentiment and regionalism. Here, political leaders from particular regions try to mobilize the support of fellow leaders from the same region in order to have a prominent person from their region compete, and preferably win through democratic processes, the position of, say, Governor General. The same is said for the post of Prime Minister, or Speaker of Parliament, if the person is of high repute and is a member of parliament. The Governor General, Prime Minister and Speaker are elected by the parliament. The only difference is that the Governor General does not have to be a member of parliament. Accordingly, securing a 'regional vote' in parliament may be necessary if there is a strong desire to have an MP or someone from a particular region take up a position of high office. There is a certain amount of prestige that goes not just to a region or province, but also to the ethnic group to which the incumbent belongs. In short, it is the fear of exclusion in representation in the public sector that prompts the behaviour of public officials to manifest regional and/or ethnic loyalties.

To counterbalance such loyalties, there is concern that, in the civil service, no one particular region should dominate senior (executive) management positions, some of which are taken up through political appointments. Again, the prestige that is associated with high public office would be shared among members of the ethnic group where the incumbent is from. (This is not to say that the ethnic group concerned would dominate public life because one of their clansman or woman has assumed high office.)

Political leaders may pursue common regional interests such as greater political autonomy for their provinces which is granted by the national government. This, however, has not involved mobilization of inter-ethnic support from various provinces in each region. In most cases, political leaders of particular regions who seek to pursue certain regional interests will try to develop common regional approaches through various processes including regional and national governors' conferences.

### **Significance of ethnicity in everyday life**

The ethnic diversity and fragmentation are manifested in various ways in both the urban and rural areas. For example, in the urban squatter settlements, people tend to congregate along ethnic lines which, in many occasions, have led to ethnic fights. The survival of families in urban settlements is organized mainly around the interactions of intra-ethnic groups where members of the same family or clan work together to make ends meet. This could mean operating a canteen on the roadside, or transporting goods to urban markets for sale to make an income.

In the rural areas ethnic cleavages ensure the continuity of communal life, traditions and customs. Families, clans and tribes, through their interactions, contribute to their survival and continuity. However, differences, and even tensions among families and clans, can arise and become aggravated when opportunities become available for traditional land to be used for economic development such as through foreign investment. There are competing claims to the benefits of mining and logging activities by rival clans, sometimes resulting in violence and/or disruption to exploration, mining or logging by foreign companies. And although agreements are signed between the state, foreign companies and 'rightful' land owners, landowner-related issues continue to re-emerge between rival clans, and between 'older' and 'younger' clan members. This is because agreements tend to reduce ownership to a few 'rightful' land

owners, bearing in mind that other groups also claim to be the rightful owners, and that the clan involves a complex social system and obligations leading to the re-emergence of claims. In short, land ownership issues tend to sharpen ethnic cleavages especially in the rural areas when traditional land and the marketplace converge in the name of economic development. Such issues also arise when traditional land is 'sought' by the state to provide vital services.

### **Politicization of ethnicity**

Prior to independence in 1975 ethnic cleavages were politicized through issues such as secession, especially on the island of Bougainville (see PNG map). Discontentment with the distribution of profits from the Panguna copper mine, land owner groups around the mine area (mainly from the Nasioi ethnic group – see ethnologue), together with other groups, mobilized and pursued a political agenda – secession. Negotiation with the then government of Michael Somare (1974-75) resulted in the granting of provincial government status to Bougainville to appease them in their demand for secession. The Bougainville leaders accepted political autonomy; it was not until 1989 when Bougainville's independence reappeared on the national scene as a major issue.

But the most obvious factor in politicizing ethnic cleavages in PNG is the national parliamentary elections. Held every five years, the elections are one national event that draws the attention of voters who follow with intense interest the campaigns and even movements of individual candidates in any given electorate. This is especially the case when clan groups have one of their clan members, especially a male, who is contesting an electorate as a candidate. In such cases, the candidates are most likely to mobilize their respective clans for a bloc vote. The politicization of clan and ethnic groups is so intense that it translates into political competition that is polarized around particular candidates, and in the extreme, result in election-related violence and deaths.

The increasing number of candidates<sup>7</sup> leads to intense political competition especially in the Highlands electorates although this is generally the case all around the country. The Highlands region alone has 39 electorates (or seats) out of the 109 parliamentary seats; Table 12<sup>8</sup> shows that there is greater fragmentation of votes with successful candidates winning in the 10-19 and under 10 percentiles particularly in the Highlands electorates.<sup>9</sup> While Table 12 shows the breakdown of results for the 1997 elections, it is generally the case in other elections that political competition is greater in the Highlands than in other regions, and the fragmentation of votes is also greater in the Highlands than in other regions of the country. Consequently, more winning candidates with diminishing proportion of votes are from the Highlands, and election-related violence more often takes place in the Highlands electorates than in other parts of the country.

Politicization of ethnic cleavages in the Highlands, in regards to elections, has led to gross abuse of election rules by rival candidates and supporters in that region. This has led to an increasing number of election disputes as shown in Table 13<sup>10</sup>. The table also reveals that since the first post-independence elections in 1977, most of the election disputes have come from the Highlands electorates and consequently also, most of the by-elections have taken place in the Highlands electorates.

Clans are politicized in the sense that clan leaders wield enormous influence on their members including the women, who are expected to vote for a candidate from their clan and no one else from outside the clan. Indeed, it could be said that there is very little to no freedom of choice when it comes to casting of votes. While a bloc (clan) vote may assure a candidate of solid numbers, the practice gives very limited freedom of choice to individual voters.

### **SOCIO-ECONOMIC INEQUALITIES**

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<sup>7</sup> See Table 16

<sup>8</sup> See Table 18

<sup>9</sup> See Table 12.

<sup>10</sup> See page 31.

## **Labor Market, Assets Holdings and Incomes, Education and Health**

### **Labor Market**

PNG is a dual society comprising of urban and rural communities. It also has a dual economy comprising of the rural subsistence, cash cropping, plantation-agriculture, mining and forestry sector, and the urban formal capital-intensive and informal labor-intensive sectors. Given the dual nature of the PNG economy/society, 'employment' must be understood in the broadest sense of productive work under various social arrangements that necessarily go beyond the context of employer-employee relationships, that is, capitalist work relations. Most people are in the rural sector and most of them have access to some productive resources of their own even if only land. Very few have nothing to sell but their labor. Thus government (policy) is encouraged to ensure that a 'landless proletariat' does not develop in PNG.

The labor market encounters numerous constraints as the government and relevant stakeholders try to absorb the economically active population into employment activities whether in the formal, informal, urban or rural sectors. Below are factors that constrain the creation of employment; they also give some idea of the extent of challenges the government and other stakeholders face:

- High urban wages relative to rural wages or village income have encouraged excess rural-urban migration and contributed to urban unemployment;
- The urban real wage has been institutionally determined at a high level;
- The labor market is highly segmented and fragmented;
- Informal sector activities have been discouraged by excessive regulation;
- Economic growth in the non-mining economy has been slow;
- The enclave mining sector has generated few backward and forward links to the rest of the economy;
- Government has failed to make adequate investment in rural infrastructure;
- The currency (kina) has been overvalued and foreign exchange excessively regulated;
- The labor force is largely uneducated, unskilled, and inexperienced;
- The level of basic education is low;
- Technical and vocational education have been inadequate and costly;
- The mode of production in the urban sector is capital-intensive, akin to the industrialized countries, rather than labor-intensive;
- The productivity of labor is low, particularly urban labor;
- High non-labor costs have discouraged investment in labor-intensive enterprises;
- Rural factors of production (particularly land and labor) are underutilized because of the absence of free markets;
- Credit is unavailable or too expensive for rural producers;
- The costs of government are high resulting in high taxes on the rural sector;
- Government research and development has been inadequate to stimulate innovation in agriculture;
- Agricultural extension services have been inadequate;
- Absence of business management skills among those who would be self-employed;
- Lack of consistent focus on employment creation by governments; and,
- Weak linkages between urban and rural sectors (Department of Planning & Monitoring, November 1999: 72).

It is clear from the above factors that the labor market is indeed constrained by an unskilled workforce, among other factors. It is also segmented because the above factors imply the lack of structural linkages which in turn limit the growth of social capital. These factors also point to structural problems in the overall PNG economy as much as to the lack of human resource development.

How do the above constraints relate to the ethnic cleavages discussed earlier?

There is little doubt that high urban wages, which are institutionally determined, have encouraged rural-urban migration and thus urban unemployment. The two main urban centers that attract rural migrants are Lae, in the Morobe province of the Momase region, and Port Moresby, the national capital, in the Papua region (see PNG map). While migrants from many ethnic groups are found in both centers, it appears that people from the Highlands region have migrated in large numbers to both centers. They come from Enga, Western Highlands, Chimbu, Eastern Highlands and Southern Highlands (see also insets 1, 2 and 3). In fact, it would be fair to say that most of the 817 plus ethnic groups are found in both Lae and Port Moresby.

Many of the migrants live in urban settlements along ethnic lines. Their daily survival is organized along ethnic lines where clan and family labor is engaged. Unable to find formal employment, much of their labor is directed to informal sector activities, such as planting garden food in adjacent customary land, and selling the produce in urban markets. Not only does this practice generate tension with local customary land owners, but the concentration of their labor in the informal sector contributes to the fragmentation of the labor market. Lack of government investment in the rural economy and infrastructure has also added to the rural-urban migration.

There is lack of basic services in many provinces which suggests that most of them do not have the capacity to absorb their labor force through employment creation. This results in net outward-migration for many and net population gains for only a few who probably have the capacity to create jobs. Long-term or permanent movement between provinces is clearly concentrated in a few provinces. This is shown in Table 2.

**TABLE 2: NET LIFETIME MIGRATION, 1990 CENSUS**

Province	Number of Migrants*
Gulf	- 11,000
Central	- 11,000
Milne Bay	- 9,000
Oro (Northern)	- 2,000
Western	+ 2,000
National Capital District (NCD)	+ 83,000
Simbu (Chimbu)	- 40,000
Southern Highlands	- 23,000
Eastern Highlands	- 18,000
Enga	- 10,000
Western Highlands	+ 38,000
East Sepik	- 30,000
West Sepik	- 5,000
Madang	- 2,000
Morobe	+ 21,000
Bougainville (North Solomons)	- 10,000
Manus	- 4,000
New Ireland	+ 5,000
East New Britain	+ 10,000
West New Britain	+ 22,000

Source: Department of Planning and Monitoring, 1999, pp. 44-45.

\* = minus (-) represents below zero or migration losses while plus (+) represents net gains.

According to the 2000-2010 National Population Policy (NPP) the net population gains to migration are highly concentrated in four provinces. They are NCD, West New Britain, Western Highlands and Morobe. These four provinces account for 93 percent of provincial population gain due to inter-provincial migration, and more than half of this is to NCD. Except for Western Highlands which has the third lowest literacy rate (Table 7), NCD, Morobe and West New Britain have literacy rates above the 60 percent mark. While literacy may play a role here, it is economic activity in these provinces that is the main attraction of migrants from other provinces. NCD is the seat of government; Morobe is an industrial centre; West New Britain is a major oil palm and cocoa producing province, while Western Highlands is a major coffee producing province.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Major economic activities do attract people to migrate from other towns or from rural areas.

Net out-migration (population losses due to migration), on the other hand, is much more evenly distributed across 13 provinces. However, migration loss is still quite concentrated with four provinces (Chimbu, East Sepik, Southern Highlands and Eastern Highlands), accounting for 64 percent of net outward-migration.<sup>12</sup> According to the NPP 2000-2010, it is plausible that the more developed provinces (including NCD) are gaining while the less developed provinces are losing migrants.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, data in the NPP suggest that inter-provincial migration is a form of rural-urban migration, although some migrants may move from a small town to a larger town in another province (Department of Planning and Monitoring, 1999: 45). In short, rural or inter-provincial migration points to a segmented labor market and the lack of capacity by provincial economies to absorb various ethnic groups within their provinces into the labor force.

The Table above suggests that ethnic cleavages are found in urban areas. In Port Moresby, for example, large numbers of migrants, especially those who are not in formal wage employment, are from Chimbu, Southern and Eastern Highlands, Enga, and Gulf provinces (see insets 1, 2 & 3). Migration also affects the political behavior of voters in elections in the urban areas. Electors vote along ethnic lines in the sense that they will vote for a candidate who is from their clan, tribe or original home province. Thus in Port Moresby, a candidate, say, from Chimbu, is likely to appeal mostly to voters who are from Chimbu, including migrants in the settlements who are from that province. Middle class voters are more likely to consider issues and merits of candidates, but it is the grassroots migrants in the settlements who are more likely to consider ethnicity as a basis for their voting decisions in the urban electorates.

#### Inequality in Assets Holdings

It is useful at this stage to look at the value of agricultural exports because these exports reflect inequalities in assets ownership especially in the plantation-agriculture sector, and because 80 percent of the population is involved in one way or another in this sector.

**TABLE 3: AGRICULTURE EXPORTS BY VALUE (KINA, MILLION)\***

	Coffee (QEB)	Cocoa	Copra	Coconut Oil	Oil Palm	Rubber	Other	Tea	Total
1991	79.5	34	5.2	12.8	52.5	1.8	13.5	5.3	204.6
1992	68.1	34.1	11.8	24.2	64.2	1.9	12.7	6.6	223.6
1993	100.5	33.1	14.2	19.6	19.6	2.6	13.7	7.2	270.1
1994	204.8	29.0	14.7	20.1	20.1	2.9	21.4	4.2	374.6
1995	214.5	47.7	27.4	29.7	142.2	4.0	31.5	5.4	502.4
1996	190.3	66.2	49.0	51.4	182.4	4.1	22.5	12.7	578.6
1997	325.9	73.3	47.2	51.1	207.1	6.5	55.7	10.4	777.2
1998	476.4	81.7	38.8	69.7	271.9	7.3	55.5	18.9	1,020.2
1999	417.1	84.6	66.5	95.8	337.9	5.0	139.1	19.0	1,165.0
2000	294.8	84.6	59.9	65.8	306.6	6.4	117.0	20.4	955.5
2001	188.6	110.3	15.5	28.3	290.5	6.8	139.9	22.0	801.1

Source: Bank of PNG; March 2002, Quarterly Economic Bulletin; \* to convert kina to US \$, the value of PNGK 1 as at 8 December 2003 was .2899 US \$. For example, the value of coffee in 1991 is K79.5 million – this would be K79.5 million x .2899 which would equal to US\$ 23.04 million.

It is clear from the table that the two major revenue earners are coffee and oil palm; this is followed by cocoa, coconut oil and copra; then tea and rubber. These crops are grown and produced for export in different regions and provinces of the country. Certain ethnic groups do produce and export two or more commodities at the same time. For instance, some groups in the East New Britain province may produce and export copra, coconut oil, and cocoa at the same time; others in West New Britain may produce and export oil palm, copra, coconut oil and cocoa. There are also groups in both the Eastern and Western Highlands provinces that grow coffee and tea at the same time for export<sup>14</sup> The table above infers that

<sup>12</sup> These provinces have low literacy rates as shown in Table 7; see PNG map for location of provinces.

<sup>13</sup> This reinforces inequality between the more developed and the less developed provinces and thus inequality among ethnic groups between these provinces due to gains or losses of skills and labor.

<sup>14</sup> Vanilla is grown and exported to overseas markets in a number of provinces, most notably in East and West New Britain, plus New Ireland in the New Guinea islands region. It is also grown and exported overseas in East and West Sepik provinces in the Momase

different ethnic groups produce different cash crops, some with two or more crops simultaneously, thus yielding different levels of household income. There is a general perception throughout the country that growers and producers from the Highlands, and East and West New Britain provinces are likely to make more income from their produce and exports than growers and producers, say, from Momase and the Papuan provinces. For reasons relating to structural problems of the PNG economy<sup>15</sup> and fluctuations in world market prices of PNG's exports, there will always be inequalities in household incomes amongst the various ethnic groups. The Meldpa, South Waghi, Dei, Jimi, Kol, Baiyer, Lumusa, North Waghi, Giluwe, and Nebilyer ethnic groups,<sup>16</sup> for example, are likely to earn more from their production and export of coffee than the Suau ethnic group of the Milne Bay province<sup>17</sup> from the production and export of copra. Although copra production in terms of tonnage is generally higher than that of coffee, its export earnings are generally lower than that of coffee.<sup>18</sup>

The major ethnic groups in each province (see insets 1-5) and the crop exports they produce are shown in Table 4 below.

**TABLE 4: ETHNIC GROUP BY CROP EXPORT AND PROVINCE**

Region	Province	Main Ethnic Groups	Crop Exports
Papua	Western	Waia, Tirio, Gogodala, Mutum, Gidra, Bine, Agob, Nambu, Bothar, Suki, Tonda, Aramba, Haroi	Rubber, Timber
	Gulf	Morigi, Minanibai, Omati, Kairi, Kibiri, Ipiko, Purari, Orokelo, Opao, Uaripi, Toaripi, Keuru	Timber
	Central	Aroma, Hula, Koita, Kabadi, Sinagoro, Hiri, Motu, Keopara, Mailu, Koiari, Mekeo, Kuni, Yareba, Maiwa	Rubber * Coffee, Timber
	Milne Bay	Suau, Tawala, Buhutu, Wagawaga, Taupota, Dobu, Garuwahi, Duau, Wedau, Taupota, Misima-Panaeati, Iduna, Watuluma, Budibudi	Copra * Oil Palm, Rubber, Timber
	Northern (Oro)	Orokaiva, Hunjara, Omie, Gaina, Bariji, Baruga, Maisin, Onjab, Ubir, Anuki, Doga, Jimajima	Copra, Oil Palm, * Coffee
Highlands	Southern Highlands	Fasu, Foi, Kasua, Fiwaga, Samberigi, Aimele, Kaluli, Sonia, Huli, Etoro, Beami, Duna	Tea, Coffee
	Enga	Kandep, Wage, Ambum, Kompam, Wapi-Yengis, Lagaip, Porgera, Wabag, Maramuni, Paiela, Hela	Tea, Coffee, **
	Western Highlands	Medlpa, Waghi, Nii, Angal, Heneng, Kewa, Malol, Wiru, Umbu-Ungu, Mbo-ung	Coffee, Tea
	Chimbu	Chuave, Golin, Sali-Yui, Nomane, Dadibi, Gimi, Dom, Sinasina, Kumai, Nagane, Gende	Coffee, Tea
	Eastern Highlands	Alekano, Abaga, Benabena, Kaman, Kalamo, Usarufa, Kosena, Fore, Awa, Awiyaana	Tea, Coffee
Momase	Morobe	Bukawa, Wampar, Labu,	Copra, * Rice,

region.

<sup>15</sup>See page 12.

<sup>16</sup> These groups are in the Western Highlands province of the Highlands region, see inset 3.

<sup>17</sup> Milne Bay province is in the Papuan region, see PNG map

<sup>18</sup> See Tables 3, 4 and 5.

		Musom, Guwot, Mesem, Burum-Mindik, Tami, Mape, Yabem, Kosorong, Mongi, Dedua, Sene, Momare	Cassava
	Madang	Usino, Yangulam, Duduela, Dami, Musak, Bemal, Sumau, Usu, Sihan, Bau, Amele, Bilbil	Copra, Coconut Oil *
	East Sepik	Boikin, Kairiru, Mandi, Bungain, Kaiep, Muniwara, Urimo, Kamasau, Sawos, Tabriak, Murik, Watam, Biem, Buna	Copra *
	West Sepik	Vanimo, Rawo, Kilmeri, Puari, Sera, Warapu, Ningera, Pagi, Fas, Ainbai, Imbinis	Copra, * Timber
New Guinea Islands	Manus	Ponam, Bipi, Dumpu, Elu, Kurti, Kele, Ere, Loni, Papitalai, Lele, Koro, Bohuai, Pak-Tong	Copra, * Timber
	New Ireland	Emira, Tennis, Tigak, Patpatar, Madak, Tangga, Barok, Sursuranga, Konomala	Copra, Rubber * Oil Palm, Timber
	East New Britain	Tolai, Baining, Kairak, Uramat, Simbali, Mau, Makolkol, Sulka, Bilur, Qaqet	Copra, Cocoa, Coconut Oil, *
	West New Britain	Getmata, Gasmata, Mangsing, Gimi, Avao, Miu, Lamogai, Kove, Karore, Bebeli, Bola, Bulu	Oil Palm, Copra, Coconut Oil, * Coffee, Cocoa
	North Solomons	Hahon, Papapana Simeku, Torau, Nasioi, Banoni, Uisai, Antanai, Siwai, Buin, Koromira, Oune	Cocoa, Copra, Coffee, *
Papua	National Capital District	(Most ethnic groups are found in Port Moresby in varying numbers)	

Source: Anere, R. November 27, 20002. \* Vanilla is now being grown, produced and exported to limited foreign markets; although the crop has promising income returns (1kg may fetch around K250-K500 or US\$72.5 to US\$ 145 at PNGK1 to .2899 US\$), production only began on a trial basis around 1999 in West Sepik and West New Britain, and after proving successful, began to pick up in other parts of the country. \*\* Pyrethrum is grown for export to overseas markets.

As can be seen from the table, aside from vanilla, some ethnic groups generate household income from two or more cash crops that yield high income such as cocoa and coffee. Generally speaking, the Highlands and New Guinea Islands people enjoy higher levels of income than those from Momase and the Papuan provinces. In the oil palm-producing province of West New Britain, for example, oil palm growers produce and export alternative cash crops such as coffee, cocoa, copra and vanilla to offset low incomes when oil palm prices decline. Many smallholder oil palm growers view cash crop diversification as a form of income security to hedge against falling cash crop prices. They adjust their production strategies, for instance, by shifting production to oil palm and cocoa when copra prices are low (Lewis, 2000: 1-8).

At any rate it can be seen from the above table that in the plantation sector there are inequalities in assets ownership in terms of access to crop exports. For instance, the people of Koiari in the Central province, Papua region, have access to rubber and coffee exports compared to the Bebeli, Bola, Karore, and Kove people of the Hoskins oil palm-growing areas of the West New Britain province who have access to oil palm, coffee, cocoa, copra and vanilla (Table 4). In the provinces where oil palm is grown, palm oil export is increasingly replacing other cash crop exports although the latter are still important as means of income when palm oil prices are low on the world market.

### Income Inequalities

One implication of the inequalities in the assets ownership especially in the plantation sector is that there are also inequalities in household income. Below is Table 5 which gives an estimated comparison of



household income between producers of the various cash crops based on the tonnage of agricultural exports. (Figures for tons of exports were derived from the Bank of PNG March 2002 Quarterly Economic Bulletin but are not reported in this monograph.) The tonnage of exports is then divided by an average of 50,000 household producers for each of the cash crops. Also, the value of agricultural exports in Table 3 is divided by 50,000. The quotients are then multiplied to get the average household income per crop export. The starting point is 1991.

**TABLE 5: AN ESTIMATED COMPARISON OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME BASED ON THE EXPORT VALUE OF VARIOUS CASH CROPS 1991-2001 (Kina)\***

	Coffee (QEB)	Cocoa	Copra	Coconut Oil	Oil Palm**	Rubber	Other	Tea
1991	1338	487	87	154	3255	2.01	--	9.9
1992	1443	527	224	339	5264	2.05	--	14.7
1993	2613	500	335	353	1960	3.7	--	18.4
1994	5324	301	297	281	2010	3.9	--	5.7
1995	4719	534	712	415	11376	4.3	--	9.1
1996	4947	1085	1960	1028	19334	4.3	--	47.2
1997	7821	1132	1699	1022	24852	11.4	--	27
1998	16197	853	902	1533	2338	14.3	--	50
1999	13347	981	1729	1935	34465	7.4	--	62
2000	7075	1286	1557	1316	42924	9.5	--	69
2001	3885	1610	136	283	40670	9.8	--	77

Source: Anere, R. November 25, 2002. My own calculation using the procedure above; \*\* Does not necessarily reflect household income as oil palm is produced and exported mainly by foreign estate companies in Milne Bay and West New Britain provinces. At any rate, oil palm is still a major export revenue earner for PNG as well as for individual households. A ton of oil palm exports is likely to generate K2000 to K3000 more than a ton of coffee export; \* multiply the kina value by .2899 to convert to US \$, for example, K1338 x .2899 = US\$387.8 for 1991 coffee. PNGK1 is equal to .2899 US\$ at 8 December, 2003.

From the table it is strongly suggested that producers and exporters of coffee, oil palm, and cocoa generally make more household income than those of copra, rubber or tea. And while there are households throughout the country that produce two more cash crops, there are others that produce one cash crop only. For every K87 (US\$25) earned by a copra-producing household, a household producing coffee is likely to earn around K1338 (US\$387.88) – 15 times more. This is also reflected in Table 3 where, for example, export revenue generated by coffee in 1991 was 15 times greater than that generated by copra. This is so despite the fact that in the same year, coffee exports were 42,100 tons while copra was 41,900 tons. In good years the margin could be reduced so that a coffee producer would earn two times more than a copra producer, such as in 1996.

Cocoa producers also earn more household income than copra producers. Again, in 1991, cocoa exports were 35,800 tons yet the industry generated K34 million (US\$ 9.8 million) in export revenue compared to K5.2 million (US\$ 1.5 million) for copra although the tonnage of copra exports was higher than that of cocoa – 41,900 tons (Bank of PNG, March 2002: Table 23). In 1991, a cocoa producer was earning 5 times more household income than a copra producer; from 1994 to 2000 the volume of cocoa exports fell drastically below that of copra which meant that in relative terms, cocoa producers were generating less household income than that of copra producers; in 2001 the picture changed dramatically when cocoa exports surpassed that of copra (Ibid: Table 23).

At any rate the pattern of inequalities in household income from agricultural exports is evident by looking at Table 5; moreover, the inequalities can also be inferred from Tables 3 and 4. Can these inequalities be expressed in terms of ethnic groups? The short and simple answer is yes. The crops are grown in certain regions of the country which means that it is possible to identify the ethnic groups that grow specific crops. As there are some 817 ethnic groups in PNG, it would be a lengthy exercise to identify all the groups and relate them to specific crop exports. As such about 10-15 of the major ethnic groups only in each province were identified and juxtaposed with the cash crops grown and exported. This exercise gives us an idea of the ethnic groups that generally earn 'higher' household income and those whose income is at the lower end, even lower than PNG's average GDP per capita income of K800 (or about US\$232.00) a year.

In terms of income inequality, it is generally the case that oil palm, cocoa and coffee growers and exporters enjoy relatively higher average incomes than growers and exporters of other cash crops. For instance, smallholder (household) growers of oil palm earn an average annual income of K5844 (US\$1694)<sup>19</sup> compared to K1443 (US\$418) for coffee, or even the average annual public service income of K1284 (US\$372). As Table 5 shows, there are indeed significant differences in the average income of the various cash crop producers in PNG. It can also be said that not all households in the plantation sector have the same land acreage and thus the same output. These differences not only influence the level and quality of household welfare; they also point to inequality in the ownership of cash crops as assets among various ethnic groups (see insets 1-5). In other words, inequalities in income may reinforce other socio-economic inequalities, such as literacy or education. For instance, West Sepik in the Momase region, whose 2000 literacy rate is 43.2 percent, did not enjoy high-income producing cash crops (until 1999 when vanilla was introduced) unlike, say, East New Britain, in the New Guinea Islands, which enjoys a 2000 literacy rate of 80 percent (Table 7), and also enjoy high-income earning cash crops such as cocoa. The people of East New Britain are better able to afford education because of the combined income of several cash crops unlike those in, say, West Sepik province (Tables 4 & 5). Generally speaking, the inequalities in income and in other socio-economic sectors are reinforced by the fragmented nature of the labor market discussed earlier.

## Education

Education issues that are addressed in the government's Medium Term Development Strategy (MTDS) include the low rate of literacy, the unsatisfactory proportion of children attending school, the need to make curriculums more relevant, weak management and administration, the low proportion of females receiving education at all levels and the responsibilities of national, provincial and local governments. In recognizing the urgency of addressing these issues at provincial and local levels, approximately three-quarters of provincial government expenditure on priority areas is programmed to go to education.

Table 6 shows enrollments for primary and secondary schools.

**TABLE 6: GROSS PRIMARY AND SECONDARY ENROLLMENT RATIO (%) IN PNG**

Primary Enrollment				Secondary Enrollment			
1980		1990		1980		1990	
Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
51	66	66	78	8	15	10	15

Source: ADB 2001, Growth and Change in Asia and the Pacific: Key Indicators, p. 41.

As can be seen in the above table there is a recurrence of the 1980 pattern in 1990 in that there are more males than females in both primary and secondary enrolments. Therefore, high priority is being given to increasing access to education for females and to providing facilities in remote areas, the primary objective being to achieve universal primary education in the medium term. The focus is on increasing educational standards, especially in the rural areas. Better education leads to better health and builds up skills to be used for income generation. It is absolutely essential that the spread of educational services is improved to allow objectives to be achieved.<sup>20</sup>

Below is Table 7 that looks at literacy rates in PNG.

**TABLE 7: PAPUA NEW GUINEA LITERACY RATES 1990 – 2000 (%)\***

Province/Region	Urban Male	Urban Female	Combined Urban	Rural Male	Rural Female	Combined Rural	Combined Provincial
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<sup>19</sup> Figure was given to me by Norma at a Smallholder Productivity Seminar, December 6, 2002, at the Islander Hotel Ballroom, Port Moresby. Norma deals with smallholder oil palm production matters in PNG.

<sup>20</sup> Gender inequality in education also shapes inequality between men and women in employment in the public service, economic participation, and in the representation of women in the national parliament. Thus, for example, in the composition of the present cabinet, there is only one female minister, Carol Kidu, the Minister for Social Welfare and Development, see Table 20 page 38. In the appointment of Heads of Government Departments, Table 22 shows that the appointments are mostly men, page 44. There is one female who is the Secretary for Industrial Relations – Margaret Elias.

NCD Papua	90.2	86.4	88.5	--	--	--	88.5 (81.3)
Manus NGI	94.5	94.7	94.6	84.2	79.0	81.7	83.9 (62.5)
E.N.Britain NGI	91.1	90.0	90.7	79.8	78.2	79.0	79.5 (73.4)
Milne Bay Papua	93.4	92.3	92.9	77.0	73.7	75.3	76.6 (77.0)
N. Ireland NGI	92.1	91.8	91.9	75.9	72.5	74.3	75.8 (61.4)
N.Solomon NGI	84.0	78.7	81.6	73.2	70.2	71.8	72.2 (NA)
Central Papua	83.3	77.8	80.7	72.5	65.7	69.2	69.6 (66.4)
Western Papua	88.5	83.0	85.9	70.0	59.1	64.6	69.3 (66.5)
W.N.Britain NGI	87.0	81.9	84.7	70.2	63.2	66.7	68.9 (61.0)
Northern Papua	82.6	81.0	81.9	69.5	62.4	66.1	67.5 (62.7)
Morobe Momase	84.8	77.7	81.6	61.4	48.8	55.2	62.0 (52.2)
Gulf Papua	77.8	69.8	74.1	58.5	46.8	52.9	55.1 (61.1)
Madang Momase	86.8	80.8	84.1	56.1	43.5	50.0	53.7 (45.9)
E.Sepik Momase	84.5	77.2	80.6	55.0	41.2	48.0	51.0 (36.1)
W.Sepik Momase	80.3	69.4	75.4	48.2	32.9	40.6	43.2 (30.4)
E.Highlands Highlands	83.0	74.3	78.9	47.3	32.8	40.2	43.2 (25.2)
Chimbu Highlands	72.4	64.7	68.7	46.7	32.4	40.1	41.1 (26.2)
W.Highlands Highlands	75.6	65.6	71.0	40.6	29.6	35.1	37.5 (23.3)
S.Highlands Highlands	84.0	78.7	81.6	38.2	30.2	32.3	35.2 (23.5)
Enga Highlands	81.3	71.4	76.9	38.2	27.8	33.2	34.2 (30.2)
<b>Total</b>	<b>86.7 (74.6)</b>	<b>81.2 (66.6)</b>	<b>84.2 (71.2)</b>	<b>55.2 (44.5)</b>	<b>44.9 (44.5)</b>	<b>50.12 (40.4)</b>	<b>54.3 (45.1)</b>

Source: Guy, R. in Post Courier, Wednesday November 6, 2002, p 11; NGI = New Guinea Islands; \* Figures in brackets in column 8 and in bottom row are for 1990.

Table 7 shows not only inequality in literacy levels between males and females and rural and urban areas, but inequality between provinces. By implication, there is inequality in levels of development between ethnic groups within and between provinces. It is important to remember that there are on average about 40 ethnic groups per province excepting the National Capital District (NCD). The inequalities in literacy levels are also manifested at the regional level. Adding up the averages in column 8, one finds that Papua (Milne Bay, NCD, Central, Gulf, Oro and Western) has 71.1 %; New Guinea Islands (New Ireland, Manus, North Solomons, East New Britain, West New Britain) has 76.1 %; Momase (Morobe, Madang, East Sepik, West Sepik) has 54.2 % while the Highlands (Eastern Highlands, Chimbu, Western Highlands, Southern Highlands, Enga) has 38.2 %. Regionally, Papua and New Guinea Islands have higher levels of literacy than Momase and the Highlands.

Ethnic groups that have higher levels of literacy are in Manus, East New Britain, Milne Bay, New Ireland and the North Solomons provinces (see insets 4, 5 and NGI in the ethnologue map). By implication, there are more educated people from Manus, East New Britain and Milne Bay in top jobs in the civil service than there are from other groups and other provinces. In East New Britain, for example, the Tolais are the best educated and many of them hold top civil service positions. East New Britain boasts of some of the best political leaders both at national and provincial levels.

The inequalities in literacy do correlate with social behavior such as rural-urban migration. Thus it can be observed that low literacy levels for Chimbu, Western Highlands, Southern Highlands and Enga correlate with higher numbers of rural-urban migration for these provinces (see Table 2). The differences in literacy levels suggest that there are inequalities in other areas of socio-economic development. The wider socio-inequalities in turn influence the political behavior of political leaders. For instance, on September 17, 2003, thirty five MPs from the Highlands region signed a letter to the Prime Minister, requesting K500 million (US\$144.9 million) to be earmarked in the 2004 budget for the urgent repair of the Highlands Highway which runs from Enga, through other Highlands provinces, down to Lae in the Morobe province. Alternatively, the Highlands leaders suggested that part of the annual Australian aid be used to fund the maintenance of the highway. Continued neglect of the highway, according to the leaders, will lead to a

deterioration of vital transport and other socio-economic services and marginalize many groups in the Highlands provinces. In short, literacy and other socio-economic inequalities do reinforce social and political behavior of political leaders and various citizen groups.

## Alternatives

What alternatives can be taken to reduce the inequalities in literacy levels? The glaring inequalities are cause for concern such that alternative action plans are proposed with the view to improving the management, organization, funding and teaching of literacy in PNG. One measure is to increase the national government's involvement in literacy through annual budgetary support, and, in addition, the government's financial and material support for NGOs involved in improving literacy rates. Another proposal is to create incentives that will motivate literacy teachers to spread their services to areas that are poorly catered for at present. A third proposal is to strengthen partnerships between the formal elementary school system, churches and NGOs. Fourth, it is being proposed that the national government set aside K1.4 million (just over US\$400,000) each year to help purchase materials and to pay a modest allowance for literacy teachers; one that will help motivate teachers. Fifth, it is also proposed that NGOs continue to provide initial training and follow-up training for literacy teachers, and that incentive structures be devised to enable recognition of the teachers' qualifications thus giving them status and career mobility. Lastly, it is being proposed that to ensure sustainability of literacy programs, some donor assistance would have to be sought by NGOs.

Education programs are to be directed towards:

- Setting and implementing appropriate educational curriculums;
- Raising teacher numbers and standards;
- Upgrading school buildings and equipment; and
- Reducing administrative costs (AusAid 1997: 116).

## Health

In the government's 2000 MTDS, the principal issues identified were poor health standards in PNG compared with other developing countries, deteriorating health data in the past five years, a strong urban and curative bias in health services, fragmentation and inefficiencies in health services, poor condition of facilities (including the need to replace medical equipment), poor supplies of drugs and the responsibilities of national and provincial governments. The focus of expenditure over 1997-1999 was preventive health care and high priority was given to delivering services in rural areas. Raising the quality and quantity of health care workers, improving administrative efficiency and restoring and upgrading buildings and equipment were also given priority attention.

Poor health standards in PNG have generally contributed to low life expectancy at birth. Current estimates indicate that life expectancy ranges from 46 years in Gulf and West Sepik provinces to 61 years in the NCD. The Momase and Highlands regions have the lowest life expectancy, but the variation between regions is not great compared to variations between provinces. Two provinces stand out as having especially high overall mortality as indicated by life expectancy: Gulf and West Sepik (see PNG map). The problem is most severe in Gulf where there has been little improvement since 1980; in West Sepik, life expectancy has improved by four years since 1980, but this rate of improvement is extremely slow.

The life expectancy at birth by province, for 1980 and 1996, are shown in Table 8 below.

**TABLE 8: LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH BY PROVINCE, 1980 AND 1996**

Province	Region	1980	1996
Gulf	Papua	46	41
Milne Bay	Papua	57	52
Western	Papua	47	55
Oro	Papua	48	56
Central	Papua	51	56

National Capital District	Papua	52	61
Enga	Highlands	46	51
Southern Highlands	Highlands	44	52
Western Highlands	Highlands	52	55
Eastern Highlands	Highlands	53	56
Simbu	Highlands	50	56
West Sepik	Momase	42	46
East Sepik	Momase	49	53
Morobe	Momase	51	53
Madang	Momase	51	54
East New Britain	New Guinea Is.	53	54
West New Britain	New Guinea Is.	51	56
New Ireland	New Guinea Is.	54	56
Manus	New Guinea Is.	51	57
Bougainville	New Guinea Is.	59	n.a.

Source: Department of Planning and Monitoring, 1999, p. 41; n.a. = not available due to conflict on Bougainville island between 1989 to 2001.

It is clear from the table that there are inequalities in health services, as measured by life expectancy at birth, between regions and more so between provinces. Gulf – the province with the lowest life expectancy both in 1980 and 1996 also has low literacy rates (Table 7) and high outward migration (Table 2).<sup>21</sup> In terms of economic activity and household income, Gulf does not have a variety of cash crop production activities as do other provinces. This is shown in Table 4.<sup>22</sup> As a result household income for ethnic groups in that province (see Map Inset 3) would be less than, say, K700 (US\$202.90) per capita per annum.<sup>23</sup> By contrast, provinces with low literacy rates but enjoy a variety of cash crop production activities or high-income yielding cash crops such as coffee, may have higher levels of migration gains and higher levels of life expectancy. This is the case especially with Western Highlands in the Highlands region.<sup>24</sup> In other words, low level of literacy is compensated for by strong cash crop production and high-income cash crops, as well as by migration gains, with most migrants working for business houses and the provincial administration. Even Southern Highlands which has low literacy rates (Table 7) has improved its life expectancy from 1980 to 1996. This is due to strong economic activity and higher household income, based on gold and oil production and mine-related employment for the locals, especially after 1990. The point here is that low levels of literacy or education need not necessarily lead to low levels of life expectancy, suggesting that economic development in some sectors, income-earning activities and strong political leadership, among other factors, are crucial. At any rate, the Table suggests that some ethnic groups especially those in the New Guinea Islands provinces have higher life expectancies than those in West Sepik and Gulf provinces (see insets 1-5).

The socio-economic inequalities (labor, assets ownership, income, education and health) do encourage certain types of social and political behavior, such as rural-urban migration or national parliamentarians from specific regions articulating common positions on specific development issues. Specific political forums set up under law to deal with socio-economic inequalities include the national governors' conference, regional governors' conference (Momase, Papua, New Guinea Islands and Highlands), and the Joint District Planning and Budget Priorities Committee (JDPBPC) at the local government level. Specific types of social behavior are emerging in response to socio-economic inequalities in the form of civil society organizations (CSOs) and landowner groups. Landowner groups would require health clinics and schools from resource developers while certain CSOs would conduct workshops and training programs to educate workers on the impact of government decisions or laws that may apply to them, or educate villagers on the social injustices done to them by logging firms and other market forces. Landowner groups are organized around ethnic groups principally the clans. At the political level, workers are organized into trade unions as means of bargaining with government, in response to, say, inequalities in formal wages. These forms of social and political behavior are aimed at addressing inequalities and marginalization; they also reflect the ethnic diversity of PNG and the fragmentation of the labor market.

<sup>21</sup> See pages 20 and 13 respectively.

<sup>22</sup> See pages 15-17.

<sup>23</sup> This figure is based on the rate of US\$.2899 for PNGK1.

<sup>24</sup> See Table 7, Table 3, Table 2 and Table 8.

## **POLITICS OF ETHNICITY AND NATIONALISM**

The inequalities discussed above, and how they shape the politics of ethnicity, have, in the first place, been shaped by their historical past, especially in the post WWII era from 1949 to 1975 under Australian colonial rule. After WWII the United Nations gave Australia the mandate to administer New Guinea as a Trust Territory while Papua remained as a British protectorate. In 1949-50, the Australian federal parliament adopted the Papua and New Guinea Act thus amalgamating the two territories into one. A Legislative Council was set up and elections were held every three years, commencing in 1951, to represent the views of the indigenous people as well as expatriates in the Territory. For the first time, the diverse ethnic groups were organized into regional electorates who would elect their representatives to the Council. It could be said that in 1951, no indigenous person would have contested the election.

Under the Papua and New Guinea Act of 1949-1950, the Australian federal parliament also passed the Native Village Council Ordinance in 1950 which allowed for the establishment of village councils. The councils were elective bodies whose composition was by way of election of councilors to the councils. Thus ethnic groups were also organized into council districts where they would elect their representatives to the councils. The councils were to promote peace, order and good government and carry out basic functions in the name of local development. By 1960, more than 100 village councils had been established. It appears here that the Legislative Council and the village councils had, for the first time, exposed ethnic groups throughout the Territory to rudimentary forms of representative democracy as far back as the early 1950s. Legislative Council elections were held every three years (1951, 1954, 1957 and 1961).

An important event as part of PNG's history was the United Nations Visiting Mission to the Territory led by Sir Hugh Foot in 1962. The mission recommended, in its report, that Australia speed up the political, economic and social development of the Territory in light of what appeared as 'foot dragging' in the delivery of basic services. A year later the Australian federal parliament passed the 1963 Electoral Ordinance allowing for the first ever popular elections under adult franchise in 1964. The elections that year led to the 1964 House of Assembly; two other elections were held in 1968 and 1972 for the second and third Houses of Assembly. In retrospect, it was the 1963 Electoral Ordinance and the 1964 elections that would allow the more than 800 ethnic groups to elect their representatives and thus be represented at the highest decision making body - the House of Assembly.

The first indigenous political parties emerged between 1965 and 1967, but it was really in 1967 and 1968 that parties began to make their intentions known of contesting the 1968 elections. Pangu party, the former political party that was headed by PNG's current Prime Minister, Michael Somare, stirred up some nationalist feelings through its radical stance on two major political questions – self government and independence. Somare wanted self government and independence in the life of the third House of Assembly – 1972 – 1976. There was some opposition to early self government and independence, mainly from the United Party, led by the late Sir Tei Abal. Ethnically, Somare is from East Sepik, in the Momase region, while Abal is from Enga, in the Highlands region. Throughout the latter 1960s through to the mid 1980s, at least, the public perception was that Pangu was a Momase-based party while the United Party was a Highlands-based party. People tend to associate the parties with their founders place of origin. Abal's opposition to early self government and independence arose from the fact that the Territory did not have a skilled work force, an educated population, a strong public service including political parties, and a strong vibrant economy. He maintained that a strong public service, among the others, was necessary to serve and unite the diverse groups together.

Somare had the upper hand. Not only did he win in the 1968 elections and led a coalition of parties that advocated self government and independence; he also won in the 1972 elections and led a coalition again and continued his radical stance on both issues. He was appointed as Deputy Chairman of the Administrator's Executive Council- a position he used to great advantage on the two issues where he would make it clearly known to the Australian Administrator his coalition's position. Australia was prepared to listen and support the views of the people of the Territory.

Soon after the 1972 elections, preparations were made both in Port Moresby and Canberra for self-government on December 1, 1973. Australia willingly agreed to the date. There was no serious opposition

from any group within the Territory. After self government the political and constitutional development of the Territory continued. A Constitutional Planning Committee (CPC), which was set up in 1972 toured the country to gather the views of the people on independence. There was no resistance from any group except for Bougainville who wanted to secede from the rest of the country. September 16, 1975, was the date set for independence. Australia gave its total support and, with the absence of any strong opposition throughout the country, independence became a reality on that date. Bougainville unilaterally declared its independence about a week prior to September 16.

Bougainville's determination to secede from PNG manifested sentiments of ethno-nationalism. It saw itself as a nation based on its unique ethnicity. Ethnically and culturally, it was different from the rest of PNG. There were other ethnic groups that were discontent with specific issues such as the handling of expatriate-owned plantations and the acquisition of native land, such as the Tolais of East New Britain (see ethnologue), however, none of these groups pursued secession as their goal.

In short, Australia granted self government and independence to PNG but did not prepare its people for national self reliance, let alone pursue state capacity building for effective governance. Many state institutions today lack the capacity for effective governance, let alone effective representation, thus undermining the integrity and internal cohesion of the state. Otherwise, PNG did not have to struggle to get its independence. There was no organized popular movement that served to mobilize the people and as a force for nationalism.

### **Papua New Guinea: The Institutional Context**

At independence PNG inherited a public sector, its institutions and a political system that was largely fragmented. It adopted a unitary Westminster parliamentary system and had a home grown constitution where there is separation of powers between the legislature, executive and judiciary. It has an Ombudsman Commission which is constitutionally independent from other arms of government (Geno, 2002:1-9). It has a system of unitary decentralization where three tiers of government exist and that the provincial and local-level governments are subordinate to the national government. Sovereignty is not shared and both the provincial and local governments are largely funded by the national government. They are part of a broader system established by constitutional laws, comprising a wide range of institutions, procedures and other formal arrangements for dividing the powers and resources of government. In addition to meeting such aims as achieving a more efficient and responsive government system than the previous highly centralized colonial administration, the originators of the decentralized system—particularly the pre-independence Constitutional Planning Committee (CPC)—had clearly political aims. There was to be a radical redistribution of power, requiring the creation of new centers of power able to act as a counterbalance to the central government as well as operate as new arenas for resolution of local tensions and disputes. In 1977 the Organic Law on Provincial Government (OLPG) was adopted as the framework; this was repealed and replaced in 1995 by a new law—the Organic Law on Provincial Government and Local Level Government (OLPGLLG). At present all provincial and local governments come under this law.

PNG also has an independent media, and there are civil society and non-government organizations, trade unions, periodic and open elections plus a free market economy. It is a member of the British Commonwealth with the Queen as head of state represented by a governor general. The constitution allows for the disciplined forces of defence, police and the correctional services all of which are constitutionally subordinate to the executive government.

The preamble to the constitution and the constitution itself set a very high standard of leadership. In order to make the constitution and the various organic laws alive and real, fundamental but important democratic constitutional institutions were established. Among the leading democratic institutions, preceded by the parliament, were the Ombudsman Commission, Electoral Commission, Auditor General's Office, Public Services Commission, the Public Prosecutor's Office and the Judiciary (Geno, 2002: 9).

By and large, the constitutional system in PNG encourages democratic and economic pluralism whereby interactions among a plurality of actors are considered necessary to accommodate the country's ethnic diversity. Many of the issues raised and discussed thus far have been serious enough that they have entailed

public sector reforms which have been encouraged and supported mainly by donor agencies such as the World Bank and the IMF. Even PNG's close neighbour, Australia, has been very concerned with the reforms because of their importance for donor assistance and foreign investment. Said John Howard, present Prime Minister of Australia: 'The government must understand that unless the reform process in PNG is pursued the business environment will not be attractive for investors in the country...PNG needs to allude to globalization like the rest of the world in order for it to salvage its economy...Countries that don't have strong macroeconomic policies will find themselves missing out...the reforms were a vital recovery process...' (The Independent newspaper, August 15, 2002: 1-2).

Within the institutional contours laid out above, nationalism has not been a major force in PNG politics. This is because the country did not a common external 'enemy' in order to unite the 817 plus ethnic groups and as such it did not have to struggle for its independence. The ethnic fragmentation continues to be a constraint to nationalism in the sense that people's loyalty mostly revolves around their clans or tribes and much less to the state. This partly explains why, in elections, clans are the primary means of mobilizing votes and not the political parties. Even the public sector is fragmented partly because of patronage and the lack of loyalty to the state, and partly because personal, clan, ethnic or regional interests do permeate the state's decision making processes and use of public resources. This is evident, for example, in the use of public funds where, in many instances, monies assigned for specific public purposes (projects) are deposited into the private bank accounts of political leaders and/or public officials.

While PNG is ethnically and geographically fragmented, its people realize that the country's ethnic and cultural diversity is an important source of its unity. They further realize that none of the 817 plus ethnic groups is large enough (no ethnic group is larger than 4 percent of the national population) to dominate the public sector. For that reason, the only overarching entity that can hold the different groups together, albeit not to the satisfaction of all citizens, is the state. It is seen as the guardian of national interest, public welfare, and thus the welfare of individual ethnic groups. But, as alluded to thus far, the state is constrained in its efforts to foster national cohesion based on historical, ethnic/cultural, geographical and economic factors as outlined above.

## THE MANAGEMENT OF ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

In light of PNG's multi-polar fragmented setting it is useful to ask: do public sector institutions like the political parties, parliament, cabinet and the civil service reflect the ethnic cleavages in the country? In other words, to what extent does ethnic dominance exist in the composition of political parties, parliament, cabinet, and in the staffing of the civil service in PNG? <sup>25</sup>

### Party System, Independent Candidates, Elections and Rules

PNG has a multiparty system. In the lead up to the 2002 elections there about 43 political parties registered under 2001 Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates (OLIPPAC). This law came into effect on February 22, 2002 and was applied in the 2002 parliamentary elections. As of November 2003, the number has declined to twenty two. At any rate the number of political parties has grown since 1968 (Table 9).

**TABLE 9: POLITICAL PARTIES 1968-2002**

1968	1972	1977	1982	1987	1992	1997	2002 2003
5	4	6	8	14	11	12	43 22

Source: Anere, R. May 18, 2002

The party system is unstable, fragmented, highly personalized, fractionalized, and fluid. Due to these factors, no government since independence has survived its full parliamentary term of five years.<sup>26</sup> The political parties try to appeal to voters on the basis of dominant personalities rather than as coherent broad-

<sup>25</sup> These questions will involve exploring the capacity for representation, stability, and governance of public sector institutions in PNG, in relation to the basic argument of this discussion, as stated on page 2.

<sup>26</sup> See Table 21.



based vehicles for translating public preferences into government policy. Moreover, there are power struggles within parties and party hopping is all too familiar. It is hoped that OLIPPACC will stabilize the party system (Reilly, 1999: 229, 230).

## Rules

What are the rules that regulate the behaviour of political parties in elections and what are their outcomes? How representative or uneven is the selection of candidates for parties along ethnic lines? How do policy makers and citizens view the selection of candidates?

Political parties in PNG are inter-ethnic in their composition and generally seek the support and votes from various groups across the country in terms of candidates they endorse in elections. In the June 2002 elections, for example, the National Alliance party's candidates were selected from across the country. This is generally true for the other major parties (People's Progress Party, Melanesian Alliance, People's Democratic Movement, Pangu Party and People's Action Party).

Below is Table 10 that shows the number of candidates by region and political party.

**TABLE 10: CANDIDATES BY REGION AND POLITICAL PARTY**

Year	Party	Papua	N.G.Islands	Momase	Highlands	Total
1987	PPP	22	14	23	30	89
	MA	7	13	20	5	45
	Pangu	25	16	29	34	104
	PAP	23	0	2	3	28
	PDM	7	13	17	39	76
1992	PPP	13	6	16	9	44
	MA	6	15	13	17	51
	Pangu	22	11	30	23	86
	PAP	21	0	3	18	42
	PDM	10	4	11	22	47
1997	PPP	8	6	25	27	66
	MA	7	11	20	2	40
	Pangu	16	10	35	11	72
	PAP	26	6	20	37	89
	PDM	10	2	17	30	59
2002	PPP	--	--	--	--	--
	MA	--	--	--	--	--
	Pangu	--	--	--	--	--
	PAP	--	--	--	--	--
	PDM	--	--	--	--	--
	NA	18	14	23	26	81

Source: Anere, R. 1999, 2003; -- = not available.

Although the table shows just five major parties, the picture is generally true of other political parties where there is the absence of bias against ethnic groups in the selection and endorsement of candidates in elections. A party may not endorse any candidates in a given region, but this is not indicative of bias, rather it suggests financial or logistical constraints on its part. Moreover, the party may not have been approached by candidates from that region for endorsement. Another major reason why parties show no bias in candidate endorsement is the mentality that they (parties) would rather endorse candidates whom they think will win seats for them; parties do not win seats for candidates – it is candidates that win seats for parties. Parties therefore have every reason not to be biased against any ethnic group because of their need for votes and good candidates. In other words, party endorsement of candidates is generally representative of ethnic groups based on their (parties') need for good candidates and voter support.

From the table it can be seen that National Alliance candidates were selected from various regions and provinces. Even within each province, candidates were selected from different electorates. This is in compliance with Section 60 subsection 1 (a) of OILPPAC which says that parties can only endorse one candidate (male or female) per electorate (CDC, 2001: 28). There is no ethnic, provincial and/or regional

domination of the party's choice of candidates. This confirms the assumption stated earlier<sup>27</sup> that in multi-polar fragmented settings, where ethnic groups are relatively small in size (less than 4 percent of the population), ethnic-based political activity is less likely to be prevalent. National Alliance's candidate profile is generally indicative of the other major, and minor, political parties as well. Ethnicity is not a regular criterion in the selection of party candidates for elections in PNG.

Independent MPs are also seen as representatives of ethnic groups in parliament; they also seek the votes of individuals and groups in elections. Although independent MPs do join parties after elections (to enhance their chances of being in government), they are expected to deliver goods and services to voters, irrespective of their status during and after elections.

Table 11 shows the number of party candidates and independents in elections and parliament since 1987.

**TABLE 11: NUMBER OF PARTY CANDIDATES AND INDEPENDENTS IN ELECTIONS AND IN PARLIAMENT**

Year	Elections		Parliament	
	Independents	Party Candidates	Independents	Party Members
1987	957	556	28	81
1992	1289	376	36	73
1997	1687	684	34	75
2002	1220	1612	19	90

Source: Anere, R. 1999, 2002.

The table suggests that while independent candidates outnumber the number of party endorsed candidates in elections, it is political parties that make up the majority of the membership of each parliament. This means that it is parties that are the principal organizers of coalitions in the formative stages of government. Prior to the passage of OLIPPAC in 2000, it was the personalities of individual party leaders and their numerical strengths that would determine which party would take the lead in forming a coalition. Since 2000, OLIPPAC has ensured that it is the party with the highest number of endorsed candidates declared elected that would be invited by the Governor General to form a coalition government. At any rate, the table suggests that it is political parties that are responsible for shaping public sector institutions and the representation of various ethnic groups through decision making and implementation processes at the parliamentary and executive levels.

How else does OLIPPAC regulate the selection of candidates on the part of registered political parties in PNG? Aside from Section 60 subsection 1 (a), subsection 1 (b) also prohibits a party which is not registered from endorsing a candidate while subsection (c) prohibits a candidate from accepting endorsement from more than one registered political party at the same time (CDC, 2001: 28).

Although parties try to appeal to a wide cross-section of groups in terms of their composition and in their selection of candidates in elections, they are undoubtedly fluid; they lack in structure, cohesion and stability. Clan loyalties, tribal and ethnic connections reinforce sub-national loyalties such that broader loyalties to the state and political parties are lacking. The fluid nature of political parties suggests that sub-national loyalties in PNG do not easily give way to democratic institutions, processes and outcomes.<sup>28</sup> Personalities are more important in party politics than the strengthening of the parties themselves.

The composition and selection of party candidates is based on the candidates' ability to win seats for the parties, regardless of their ethnic origin, and the general voting public no longer regards political parties as belonging to any particular region of the country. This is very different from public perceptions of political parties in the 1964, 1968, 1972 and even in the 1977 elections. To the extent that this represents a major shift in perception, it can be stated here that some positive changes are taking place in the election culture in PNG.

<sup>27</sup> See UNRISD assumption, page 7.

<sup>28</sup> This is true for political parties as much as for elections where political survival for party members is more important than serving their constituents; in elections some voters resort to double or multiple voting rather than adhere to the principle of one-person-one-vote.

Another aspect of PNG elections that has gained increasing attention is the large numbers of independent candidates (Table 11). In the 1987, 1992 and 1997 elections, the number of independent candidates exceeded that of party candidates. In the June 2002 elections, out of a total of 2832 candidates, 1,220 of them were independents. Just like there is an overall increase in the number of party-endorsed candidates, there is also an increase in the number of independent candidates.

## Outcome

The large numbers of independent and party-endorsed candidates in every election suggests that ethnicity is an important factor in the conduct of elections, and in the results that elections produce.<sup>29</sup> Large numbers of candidates means that voters' thinking is 'localized' in that voters think of a candidate as a relative, clansman or simply being from the same area and thus speak the same language (Staffu, 1996: 1-42). Actual votes are compartmentalized into clan, tribal or area votes. Inter-ethnic popularity on the part of candidates is, to say the least, very limited. In the 1997 election, 105 of the 109 winners won with votes under 50% of total votes in their respective electorates; and of these, 16 won with votes under 10% of the total in their electorates (Electoral Commission, 1997:10). It is obvious that ethnicity does indeed influence voter thinking and voting behaviour in PNG elections. In the 2002 election, for example, there were media reports of widespread ghost names in the common roll, and double and multiple voting across the country including the national capital of Port Moresby in support of a candidate as a clan member. This means that the democratic principle of one-man one-vote is violated due to competing ethnic interests. Moreover, the democratic practice of free and fair election is undermined also due to competing ethnic interests. The integrity of the parliamentary election, the legitimacy of the election results, and the integrity and legitimacy of the post-election parliament and government thus are thrown into question and could be challenged in a Court of Disputed Returns (Post Courier, June 19, 2002: 2).

At any rate, competing ethnic interests, coupled with large numbers of candidates in every election, among other problems, do indeed contribute to election results that do not reflect the majority principle of liberal democratic elections (Table 18). There is a higher incidence of fragmentation of votes in the Highlands and Momase regions (Table 12) where two of the most populated provinces - Southern Highlands and Morobe - are located. This suggests that the incidence of ethnic votes is also higher in these regions than in the others.

The progressive increase in the number of candidates as shown in Table 16<sup>30</sup> also suggests that elections are a means of redistributing power as reflected in the high turnover rates (Table 19)<sup>31</sup>, and redistributing national wealth, public resources and opportunities for development and participation. They can also be seen as means of managing diversity, inequality and competition in PNG through the redistribution of power, and hopefully, national wealth, opportunities, and access to state decision making and resources.

Table 12 shows the votes obtained by winners in the 1997 election by region. It suggests that the fragmentation of votes based on local considerations (or ethnic votes) is higher in the Highlands and in the Momase electorates than in electorates in the Papuan and New Guinea Islands regions.<sup>32</sup>

**TABLE 12: VOTES OBTAINED BY WINNERS AND BY REGION: 1997 ELECTION**

Region	Total seats	Under 10 %	10-19 %	20-29 %	30-39 %	40-49 %	50 % >
New Guinea Islands	17	0	4	5	3	2	3

<sup>29</sup> Ethnicity may not be an important criterion for party endorsement of candidates but it is an important source of support for the candidates themselves.

<sup>30</sup> See page 35.

<sup>31</sup> See page 36.

<sup>32</sup> Not only do the Momase and Highlands regions have more electorates, they are also more populated, see page 1 of this monograph. There is a relationship between high population levels, number of electorates, high incidence of clan/ethnic votes and the fragmentation of votes.

Papua	20	2	12	5	1	0	0
Momase	29	6	11	10	1	0	1
National Capital	4	1	1	1	1	0	0
Highlands	39	7	19	11	2	0	0
Total	109	16	47	32	8	2	4

Source: PNG, Electoral Commission, 'Report to the Sixth Parliament on the 1997 National Elections' in The 1997 General Election Report, July 1997, Port Moresby, p. 10.

Election rules include one person-one vote, security of polling officials and ballot boxes, one party-one candidate per electorate, and one candidate-one party endorsement. Some of these rules, excepting Section 60 subsection 1 (a), (b) and (c) have been violated in every election. For example, the principle of one-man-one-vote has been grossly violated in the June 2002 elections. Among the reasons are funding shortfalls, logistical and security deficiencies, and competing ethnic interests in the elections. These factors have led to election disputes and by-elections (Table 13).

**TABLE 13: ELECTION DISPUTES AND BY-ELECTIONS SINCE 1977**

YEAR	DISPUTES	SUCCESSFUL	BY-ELECTION ELECTORATES**
1977	9	6	Baiyer-Mul, Obura-Wonenara, Kairuku-Hiri, Kompam-Ambum, Menyamya, Moresby North-East.
1982	NA	3	Chuave, Manus (Provincial) Unggai-Bena
1987	42	10	Aitape-Lumi, Ambunti-Dreikikir, Central (Provincial), Enga, Gazelle, Kavieng, Komo-Magarima, Manus (Open), Talasea, Southern Highlands (Provincial)
1992	63	7	Abau, Angoram, Dei, Sumkar, Henganofi, Komo-Magarima, Tewai-Siassi
1997	89	3	Kagua-Erave, Chimbu (Provincial), Eastern Highlands (Provincial).
2002	93	7	Wabag* open, Moresby Northeast, Abau open, Chimbu provincial, Anglimp-South Waghi, Tewai-Siassi, Yangoru-Sausia

Source: Anere, R October 4, 1999; May 26, 2003; \*= Elections in the Wabag open electorate involved abuse of election rules which were attributed to the PNG Electoral Commission staff and not the winning candidate. The elected member for Moresby Northeast is seeking a Supreme Court ruling to overturn the ruling of the Court of Disputed Returns. By-election for the Abau open in the Central province was completed by the mid December 2002 under Limited Preferential Voting; \*\* = Reference to the PNG map and the ethnologue insets will give an idea of the ethnic groups involved in the by-elections, for example, in Abau, the people of Mailu, Magori, Laua and Igora went to the polls between December 6 and 13, 2002.

It can be seen from the table above that about 45 percent of by-elections (1977-2002) took place in various Highlands electorates. This is because of the high incidence of double or multiple entries of names of individual voters, including the use of ghost names in the common roll for electorates in the Highlands region, among other breaches of various election rules and procedures. Election-related violence was also high in that part of PNG. In the 1997 elections, the army was called out to support the police ensure a trouble-free election in the Highlands (Post Courier, 1997, June 2). The table above gives some idea of the extent of violation of election rules in PNG resulting in successful court challenges and thus by-elections.

The Highlands provinces generally have high levels of population density,<sup>33</sup> a factor that helps to encourage high levels of inter-ethnic conflict in elections, which in turn increases the likelihood of election-related violence. In the 2002 elections, for example, seven people were killed in election-related violence in the Highlands region. Of the seven deaths, two were in the Eastern Highlands, two in Enga, two in Chimbu, and one in the Western Highlands (The National, June 24, 2002: 1-2). Different clans rally behind different candidates which generates rivalry or conflict between them. Thus, it can be stated that elections polarized clans in certain parts of the country which in turn has led to election-related violence. Since FPTP voting is zero-sum in nature, the polarization of clans has been an inevitable outcome. And to the extent that political parties have not encouraged their candidates and their (candidates') supporters not to engage in violence

<sup>33</sup> See page 1 of monograph.

and/or breach election rules, they too would be responsible to some extent for the large number of election disputes and by-elections (which are in fact costly).

### Representative capacity of political parties

The representative capacity of political parties, in terms of the number of electorates, ethnic and other groups they purport to represent based on their election platforms, can be gauged by the number of parliamentary seats each party has won in the elections. Table 14 looks at just eight of the political parties plus independents.

**TABLE 14: PARLIAMENTARY SEATS WON BY 8 PARTIES AND INDEPENDENTS: 1968-2002 ELECTIONS**

Party	1968	1972	1977	1982	1987	1992	1997	2002
Pangu	11 (13%)	31 (31%)	38 (35%)	52 (48%)	26 (24%)	22 (20%)	14 (13%)	6 (6%)
National Party	1 (1.2%)	10 (10%)	3 (2.8%)	14 (13%)	13 (12%)	2 (2%)	0	3 (2.7%)
People's Progress Party	--	10 (10%)	18 (17%)	10 (9%)	6 (5.5%)	10 (9%)	17 (16%)	6 (6%)
National Alliance	--	--	--	--	--	--	8 (7.3%)	18 (16.5%)
People's National Congress	--	--	--	--	--	--	6 (5.5%)	3 (2.7%)
People's Democratic Movement	--	--	--	--	16 (14.7%)	15 (13.8%)	7 (6.4%)	11 (10%)
People's Action Party	--	--	--	--	6 (5.5%)	13 (12%)	5 (4.5%)	5 (4.5%)
Independents								16 (15%)
United Party	--	40 (40%)	10%	7%	3.2%	0.1%	1.8%	2 (1.8%)

Source: PNG Electoral Commission, Election Reports 1968-1997, Port Moresby; Post Courier newspaper, Monday July 29, 2002, p. 4 for 2002 election figure.

As can be seen in the table, no party has ever won more than 50 percent of the electorates in any one of the elections. Pangu and the United Party were popular in some of the election years but like all parties, their popularity has declined even in the 2002 elections. This is due to the fact that the party system is generally weak. In terms of election results then, political parties in PNG can not be seen to be majoritarian and/or representative institutions of the various groups and the general public because of the simple plurality of seats they win through their elected candidates. The same can be said also for successful independent candidates.

### Parliament

Like the political parties, there is no ethnic, and for that matter provincial and regional domination of parliament. Table 15 shows the composition of the parliament by region and province.

**TABLE 15: COMPOSITION OF PARLIAMENT BY PROVINCE AND REGION-1977-2003**

REGION/PROVINCE	NUMBER OF MEMBERS	% OF TOTAL (109)
<b>Papua Region</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>22.0</b>
Central Province	5	4.6
Gulf Province	3	2.7

Western Province	4	3.7
Milne Bay Province	5	4.6
Oro Province	3	2.7
National Capital Province	4	3.7
<b>New Guinea Islands Region</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>15.6</b>
Bougainville Province	4	3.7
East New Guinea Province	5	4.6
West New Britain Province	3	2.7
Ireland Province	3	2.7
Manus Province	2	1.8
<b>Momase Region</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>26.7</b>
Morobe Province	10	9.1
Madang Province	7	6.4
East Sepik Province	7	6.4
West Sepik Province	5	4.6
<b>Highlands Region</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>36.0</b>
Chimbu Province	7	6.4
Eastern Highlands Province	9	8.3
Enga Province	6	5.5
Southern Highlands Province	9	8.3
Western Highlands Province	8	7.3

Source: Anere, R. May 4, 1998.

The parliament consists of 109 members. Looking at the table it is clear that the Papua region has a 22 percent representation; New Guinea Islands 15.6 percent; Momase 26.7; and the Highlands, 36 percent. There is no ethnic domination. Regionally, however, the Highlands and Momase regions have higher levels of representation in parliament than the New Guinea Islands and Papua. This is largely due to the population sizes of the regions.<sup>34</sup>

Both also have more electorates than the latter two (as shown in column two of the table).

## Rules

What are the rules that determine election to parliament? What have been the outcomes? Is representation in parliament even along ethnic lines? What is the perception of policy makers and citizens of members of parliament? First, it is important to state here that Section 50 of the PNG constitution provides for every citizen who is full capacity and is of voting age (18 years and over) the right to vote and stand for public office at genuine, periodic and free elections (PNG Constitution, 1975: 29-30). General elections are held every five years in PNG. Second, it is useful to note here that Subsection 1 (a) of Section 105 of the constitution states that “A general election to the Parliament shall be held within the period of three months before the fifth anniversary of the day fixed for the return of writs for the previous general election” (Ibid: 52). There is an Organic Law on National and Local Level Government Elections (OLNLLGE) that sets out the rules for the conduct of parliamentary elections.

The OLNLLGE requires that the common roll be updated for each national election. The common roll is the heart of democratic elections in PNG as is the case in any democratic country where periodic elections are held. It (OLNLLGE) also upholds fundamental principles of democratic elections such as one-man one-vote and freedom of choice; 18 years as minimum age for voting; residential qualification of at least 6 months to qualify for registration and voting; and election awareness conducted through the local media (Liria, 1997: 27-28).

Section 97 of OLNLLGE calls for supplementary elections in the event that an election in an electorate is declared as having ‘failed’ because of gross violation of rules such that the outcome cannot be accepted. Other rules on electing members to parliament can be found in Section 60 Subsection 1 (a) (b) and (c) of OLIPPAC which contain provisions on the endorsement of candidates. Subsection 1 (a) states that a

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<sup>34</sup> See page 1.

registered political party shall not endorse more than one candidate (whether male or female) in any one electorate. Subsection 1 (b) states that a political party which is not registered shall not endorse a candidate while subsection 1 (c) states that a candidate shall not accept endorsement from more than one registered political party at the same time (CDC, 2001: 28).<sup>35</sup>

In short, rules that determine election to the national parliament are or can be found in the national constitution, OLNLLGE, and in OLIPPAC.

## Outcomes

Based on the rules, what have been the outcomes of parliamentary elections? It is pointed out here that the outcomes can be gauged by looking at the large numbers of candidates (Table 16); voter participation rates (Table 17); fragmentation of results (Table 18); and, incumbent turnover rates (Table 19).

**TABLE 16: NUMBER OF CANDIDATES 1964-2002 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS**

Year	Number of Electorates	Number of Candidates	Average Electorate per
1964	54	298	5.5
1968	84	484	5.8
1972	100	611	6.1
1977	109	879	8.1
1982	109	1125	10.3
1987	109	1513	13.9
1992	109	1655	15.2
1997	109	2372 (2 deceased)	21.7
2002	109	2832	26.0

Source: Anere, R. September 14, 2002.

Section 50 of the national constitution;<sup>36</sup> an electoral culture (supposedly) of free and open elections; the first-past-the-post (FPTP) voting system; and desire for the ultimate ends of power, among other factors, would no doubt have encouraged the increasing number of candidates in every election. The constitution nor does any of the organic laws referred to above places a limit on the number of candidates in any one particular election.<sup>37</sup>

Table 17 shows the voter participation rates which are generally high by world standards.

**TABLE 17: VOTER PARTICIPATION RATES IN PNG ELECTIONS 1964-2002 (%)**

Lowest Turnout 1991-1994		Highest Turnout 1991-1994		Papua New Guinea	
USA	39	Malta	96	1964	72.3
Switzerland	46	Belgium	93	1968	63.0
Russia	50	Latvia	90	1972	60.0
Poland	53	Iceland	88	1977	68.9
Finland	68	Slovenia	86	1982	66.3
		Denmark	84	1987	72.9
				1992	81.2
				1997	74.8
				2002	75.0 *

Source: PNG Electoral Commission, National Elections 1987 Report to the Fourth National Parliament, August 5 1987, Port Moresby; Saffu (ed.) 1996, p.7; Anere, R. 1998, 'The 1997 General Election and Democracy' in CATALYST, Nick de Groot (ed.) Social Pastoral Journal for Melanesia, Volume 28, No 2. Goroka, PNG: The Melanesian Institute for Pastoral and Socio-Economic Service Inc., p. 154; \* = personal estimate.

<sup>35</sup> The Constitutional Development Commission is the author of OLIPPAC.

<sup>36</sup> Section 50 of the PNG Constitution provides for the right to vote and stand for public office for every citizen who is 18 years or older and who is not under death sentence or imprisonment of 9 months or more.

<sup>37</sup> This applies to political parties as well.

The high voter participation rates in PNG can be attributed, among other things, to the fact that the national constitution and the OLNLLGE and OLIPPAC all endorse the concept and practice of adult suffrage. In addition, clan-based voting has encouraged large voter turnouts in PNG elections.

The irony of the large numbers of candidates and high voter participation in parliamentary elections in PNG is that winning candidates get elected by an increasingly small proportion of votes in their respective electorates. This outcome can be attributed to the election laws as much as to the culture of clan-based and bloc voting and to the zero-sum nature of FPTP. Table 18 looks at the fragmentation of votes for winning candidates.

**TABLE 18: BREAKDOWN OF RESULTS – 1964-2002 ELECTIONS**

Year	Under 10 %	10-19 %	20-29 %	30-39 %	40-49%	50% +
1964	0	0	1	3	11	33
1968*	--	--	--	--	--	32
1972	0	0	11	16	37	34
1977	0	11	37	26	16	19
1982	4	20	33	20	14	18
1987	2	39	41	13	4	7
1992	9	45	33	14	3	5
1997	16	47	32	8	2	4
2002**	15	37	16	10	3	1

Source: Anere, R. September 15, 2002.

\* Figures were not available for the various percentiles other than the 50 % plus 1 bracket; \*\* Figures exclude the six electorates in the Southern Highlands province that were declared as 'failed' in the June-July 2002 elections. Supplementary elections were, however, held in those electorates in April of 2003. The Fasu, Foi, Kewa, Nembi and Huli ethnic groups were among those involved in the supplementary elections, see ethnologue inset 3.

There are no legal limits as to the number of candidates hence the large numbers as seen in Table 16. Consequently, a trend has emerged where there is fragmentation of votes as can be seen above. Votes are thinly spread among many candidates such that an increasing number of winners are elected with votes that do not capture the majority of voters in their respective electorates. These factors also contribute to the high incumbent turnover (attrition) rates in PNG elections (Table 19).

**TABLE 19: INCUMBENT TURNOVER RATES 1968-2002 ELECTIONS**

Year	Sitting MPs re-elected	Percentage re-elected	Sitting MPs not re-elected	Percentage not re-elected	Total Number of MPs
1968*	24	51	23	49	84
1972	38	52	35	48	100
1977	35	38	56	62	109
1982	50	48	53	52	109
1987	56	53	48	47	109
1992	44	40	65	60	109
1997	51	48	57	52	109
2002**	22	24	70	76	109

Source: PNG Electoral Commission Reports, 1968-1997; Ben Reilly, 1998; Anere, R. 1998; PNG Post Courier newspaper, Monday, July 29, 2002, p. 4. \*= Total number of MPs from the 1964 House of Assembly was 54. The number of seats for the 1968 House of Assembly was 84. The percentages are worked out by adding columns 2 and 4 which becomes the denominator. The table represents only sitting MPs seeking re-election; \*\* Figures do not include the six failed electorates of the Southern Highlands province prior to the supplementary elections in April, 2003. Six members in the Sixth Parliament resigned as MPs just before the 2002 elections after they were referred to a Leadership Tribunal for alleged misconduct in office. They did not re-contest their seats.

Generally speaking, elections involve a strong interaction between state and PNG traditions where there is festivity as well as electioneering taking place at the same time. Attendance at campaign rallies and during polling is reinforced by clan obligation where clan members avail themselves to listen and/or to vote for a candidate of the same clan, tribe, linguistic or geographic area.

## Electoral governance



Although voter turnouts have been high in PNG, the country does not have an effective democratic citizenry over the 28 years of its independence. This means that people generally do not have a good understanding of what constitutes a democratic election other than simply casting a vote with the hope of electing a representative who would bring development to one's electorate. Consequently, many election rules have been violated in every election; the most common ones being double and multiple voting. This practice violates the rule of one-man-one-vote and thus contributes to the inequality of votes. Double and/or multiple voting is usually attributed to flaws in the common roll such the appearance of ghost names, names of trees, rivers even names of deceased persons, and double or multiple names of living persons. Some candidates and their supporters who deliberately violate election rules encourage double and/or multiple voting. Rival supporters even intimidate other supporters to vote for their favourite candidate. Such practices were conspicuously evident in the 2002 elections so much so that polling was extended from July 15 to July 29. Also, because of the gross violation of election rules especially in the Southern Highlands province, six of its electorates in which elections were declared as failed did not have elected representatives when the seventh parliament had its first meeting on August 5, 2002 (Post Courier, Thursday, 19 September, 2002: 5).

In the kinds of violations as described above, it is clear that elections in PNG, especially the 1997 and 2002 elections, can hardly be seen as being free and fair. Election-related violence is not uncommon particularly in the Highlands provinces of PNG (see PNG map). In many instances this is attributed to the politicization of clan and tribal cleavages. Theft of ballot boxes and papers, illegal printing and filling out of ballot papers, fighting and deaths are not uncommon especially in the Highlands electorates.

The combined outcome of all of the above factors is that, under FPTP, elections in PNG have produced non-majority results (see Table 18). Citizens, policy makers and, in particular election officials, would like to see major improvements to the common roll, and a voting system that would yield majority results. To this end, the previous government of Sir Mekere Morauta, in the sixth parliament, successfully passed an organic law on elections that will now replace FPTP with limited preferential voting (LPV). The idea is that LPV will capture an absolute majority, if not, at least a representative majority of say, 40-49 percent of votes in a winning candidate's electorate PNG (The Independent newspaper, September 12, 2002: 7).<sup>38</sup>

Although no one ethnic group dominates the composition of parliament, ethnic sentiments are strongly embedded in the process of parliamentary elections. This is suggested by the high voter turnout and incumbent turnover rates as shown in Tables 17 and 19.<sup>39</sup>

### **Lack of parliamentary stability**

Like the executive, the parliament has its share of lack of stability. In 2000, it was adjourned for six months, from December 2000 to June 2001, although it fulfilled the constitutional requirement of sitting for 60 days in a year (Post Courier, December 2000: 1). The reason for the long adjournment was that no opportunity could be given to the Opposition parties and factions from within the governing coalition to move a motion of no confidence against Prime Minister Mekere Morauta and his ruling People's Democratic Party. This move raised grave concerns amongst the public who felt that power struggles and the need for survival amongst the parties not only destabilized the parliament; it also deprived parliamentarians of carrying out their representative duties. The parliament was also denied the opportunity to address important national issues thus undermining the general process of parliamentary representation.

In short, the lack of parliamentary stability (1978-1999, see Table 21)<sup>40</sup> has less to do with rules and procedures of parliamentary elections; rather it has more to do with the dynamic interplay of party politics and the operation of the Westminster parliamentary system, more specifically, the fusion of the executive with the legislature, that provides a propitious environment for power struggles by political parties in their bid to occupy the seat of government.

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<sup>38</sup> The idea of LPV will be discussed in the Section on Institutional Reforms, specifically on the Organic Law on National Elections, p. 53.

<sup>39</sup> Clan and tribal votes are included in the high voter turnout and incumbent turnover rates.

<sup>40</sup> Table 21 suggests that through party politics and the fusion of the executive with the legislature, parliament was/is also involved in power struggles. This renders it less stable in terms of its capacity for law making, ethnic group and constituent representation.

## Executive

The composition of the Somare cabinet after the 2002 election is shown in Table 20 below.

**Table 20: Composition of Cabinet by Region, Province, and Ethnic Group**

Office	Incumbent	Region	Province	Ethnic Group**
Prime Minister	M.Somare	Momase	East Sepik	
D/Prime Minister (Trade & Industry)	A. Marat*	New Guinea Islands	East New Britain	Tolai
Foreign Affairs & Immigration	R. Namaliu	New Guinea Islands	East New Britain	Tolai
Works	G. Kapris	Momase	East Sepik	Maprik
Inter-Government Relations	P. Barter	Momase	Madang	Naturalized citizen
Welfare & Social Development	C. Kidu	Papua	National Capital District	Naturalized citizen
Culture & Tourism	A. King	Momase	Madang	Bogia
Fisheries	A. Baing	Momase	Morobe	Markham
Education	M. Laimo	New Guinea Islands	Bougainville	Buin
Mining	S. Akoitai	New Guinea Islands	Bougainville	Wakunai
Health	M. Pep	Highlands	Western Highlands	Dei
Finance & Treasury	B. Philemon	Momase	Morobe	
Public Service	P. Temu	Papua	Central	Abau
National Planning & Monitoring	S. Brown	New Guinea Islands	East New Britain	Gazelle
Communication & Information	B. Semri	Momase	Madang	Usino
Lands & Physical Planning	R. Kopoal	Highlands	Southern Highlands	Nipa-Kutubu
Forestry	P. Pruaitch	Momase	West Sepik	Aitape
Transport & Civil Aviation	D. Polye	Highlands	Enga	Kandep
Environment & Conservation	S. Zibe	Momase	Morobe	Huon Gulf
Internal Security	Y. Silupa	Highlands	Eastern Highlands	Lufa
Science & Technology	A. Willie	Highlands	Chimbu	Kerowagi
Justice	M. Maipakai	Papua	Gulf	Kikori
Labour & Industrial Relations	P. O'Neill	Highlands	Southern Highlands	Ialibu-Pangia
Correctional Services	P. Oresi	Papua	Oro	Sohe
Agriculture & Livestock	M. Maladina	Papua	Milne Bay	Esa'ala
Defence	Y. Karpa	Highlands	Enga	Lagaip-Porgera
Petroleum & Energy	M. Avei	Papua	Central	Hiri
Housing	Y. Bao	Highlands	Eastern Highlands	Kainantu

Source: Ray Anere, August 29, 2002; \* Marat was removed as Deputy Prime Minister in November 2003 following a leadership struggle and change with his People's Progress Party which prompted a cabinet reshuffle by Prime Minister Somare. Member for Esa'ala open, Moses Maladina became the new Deputy Prime Minister. Maladina is parliamentary leader of the People's Action Party; \*\* = Except for Marat and Namaliu who are identified by their ethnic group, all other MPs are identified by their electorate names and not by the ethnic groups they represent. To get an idea of the ethnic groups the MPs represent, see the ethnologue map, and insets 1-5, and the provinces and regions in which the MPs come from, by looking at the PNG map.

As can be seen from the Table there is no ethnic dominance in the composition of the cabinet in 2002. This has generally been the case since the first post-independence government following the parliamentary elections in 1977. There is a rough equality between regions, provinces, and thus ethnic groups. In terms of regions, Momase has 9 ministries, Highlands 8, Papua 6, and New Guinea Islands 5. In other words, there are 28 ministries in total. Under the PNG constitution, Section 144 states that the number of ministers and

thus ministries shall not be less than six or more than one quarter of the number of members of parliament which is 109 (PNG, *The Independent newspaper*, August 15, 2002: 5; PNG Constitution, 1975: 67).

Large ethnic groups such as the Benabena in the Eastern Highlands (inset 3) do not have a dominant presence in the cabinet. Looking at the table above, it is clear that the elected member for the Unggai Bena electorate is not a member of the Somare cabinet. Thus, it is suggested here that, with the two largest ethnic groups each representing less than 2 percent of the national population,<sup>41</sup> ethnic domination of the cabinet is unlikely at least in the foreseeable future. It is also clear from the table that PNG has an inter-ethnic coalition cabinet.

## Rules

What are the rules that determine the selection of membership to cabinet in PNG? As the above table suggests, all cabinets are inter-ethnic coalitions. In relation to the question, an important legislation on the formation of government is worthy of examination here. This is the Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates (OLIPPAC). This law was passed by the PNG parliament and was included in a gazette on February 22, 2001. It came into force before the 2002 elections. Section 76 subsection (1) states that ‘... on the date of return of the writs in a general election, the Electoral Commissioner shall advise the Head of State of the registered political party which has endorsed the greatest number of candidates declared elected in the election, and the Head of State, acting with, and in accordance with, the advice of the Electoral Commission, shall invite that registered political party to form the government. The Somare cabinet, as seen in Table 20 above, was formed on the basis of subsection (1) Section 76 of OLIPPAC. Generally speaking, subsection (1) and subsections 2 to 8 provide for the formation of government as well as the election of prime minister by the parliament. Subsection 4 of Section 76 provides for the first sitting of parliament, during which the party with the highest number of endorsed candidates declared elected, and invited under subsection 1, shall nominate a candidate for election as prime minister. This occurred on Monday, August 5, 2002.<sup>42</sup> This was the procedure followed for the election of Somare as prime minister by the national parliament. Prior to that, Somare’s National Alliance party and other political parties and their elected members willing to be partners in a Somare-led coalition, gathered at Kokopo, East New Britain province of the New Guinea islands (see PNG map), to put together a coalition. A Memorandum of Understanding between the political parties helped to strengthen the coalition. Political horse trading did take place during the formation (as has always been the case in past elections).

The distribution of ministerial portfolios takes into account the number of elected members parties have on the floor of parliament, and the need for a balance in the representation of the four regions of the country.<sup>43</sup> There is no written rule to govern the distribution of portfolios. The considerations mentioned here, however, have become accepted conventions in the formation of government and in the allocation of portfolios. As mentioned above, the Momase region has 9 ministries, the Highlands 8, Papua 6, and the New Guinea Islands 5. The distribution of the national population by region is also a vital consideration. The 2000 national population census reveals that the Highlands has 38 percent of the national population, Momase 27.6 percent, Papua 20.1, while the New Guinea Islands has 14.3 percent (NSO, 2002: Table 1).

## Outcomes

Here it is useful to ask: what have been the outcomes of Section 76 subsections 1 and 4 of OLIPPAC? While the 2002 elections were marred by violence, bribery and breach of elections rules and procedures, Section 76 subsections 1 and 4 of OLIPPAC have allowed for more predictability and order in the formation of government although horse trading did take place. In this regard, OLIPPAC is seen to be doing justice to the party that wins the highest number of parliamentary seats in an election. Accordingly,

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<sup>41</sup> See page 7.

<sup>42</sup> All but six of the election writs were returned to the PNG Electoral Commission on or by July 29, 2002. Six electorates in the Southern Highlands were declared by the Electoral Commissioner as having ‘failed’ elections because of election-related clan violence and gross violation of election rules.

<sup>43</sup> At each coalition-formation gathering following an election, a formula may be agreed on. For example, it may be agreed that each political party that brings three members to the coalition will be given one ministerial portfolio.

Somare's National Alliance party was invited to form government under subsection 1 of Section 76. In the 1997 election, Bill Skate, now Speaker of Parliament, became prime minister when parliament elected him, although his People's National Congress party did not win the highest number of seats. In this regard, OLIPPAC has made a significant progress in terms of predictability it ensures in the formation of government.

Adherence to the above conventions means that policy makers and citizens generally accept the distribution of cabinet ministries. In the 28 years of independence since 1975, no ethnic group has demanded a redistribution of ministries, say, because of gross inequalities between the regions as there is generally a rough balance in the distribution of cabinet posts.

## Representation

Interests of ethnic groups do, however, get represented at the cabinet level. Landowner groups from the Highlands generally make more compensation claims on the government (and have sometimes succeeded) for government property built on clan land, than do similar groups from other provinces. They also make compensation and other claims on mining companies carrying out exploration and /or mining activities on their land. In such instances the Minister for Mining and relevant government authorities would have to meet directly with the landowners to seek their views for representation in cabinet. In other words, in the absence of any ethnic dominance in the cabinet, direct access to it (cabinet) is sought through ministerial and official channels, in matters where government and/or economic activity requires the use of traditional land.

Perceived or actual inequalities and injustice can become powerful factors that lead to the politicization of ethnic structures such as landowner groups. For example, angry landowners in one of PNG's richest resource provinces, Enga, in the Highlands region, have been pushing for a K70 million (US\$18.2 million) compensation claim which they say is owed to them since 1996. On 12 July, 2002, they attended a court hearing in Port Moresby in pursuit of their demand. At the time of writing no decision was made by the court (Post Courier, July 15, 2002: 7). The landowners would be from the Konai, Kandawo and Agala ethnic groups (see inset 3).

## Lack of Executive Stability

While ethnic domination of the cabinet does not presently exist, and has not existed since the first post-independence election in 1977, the cabinet itself has nonetheless been unstable and has lacked coherence. Motions of no confidence have been made against ministers of cabinet and Prime Ministers (Table 21).

**Table 21: Second to Sixth National Parliament: Motions of No Confidence**

Dates	P.Min/Min	Mover	Yes/No	Votes (Yes:No)
1978 3 March (P157-160)	Min. Bruce Jephcott	Iambakey Okuk	No	(27:36)
1978 18 August (P299-301)	Min. Pato	Tei Abal	No	(31:50)
1978 24 August (P323-325)	P.Min. M. Somare	Roy Evara	No	(35:68)
1978 16 Nov. (P361-365)	P.Min. M.Somare	Noel Levi	No	(45:63)
1979 27 August (P562-563)	Min. Delba Biri	Clement Poye	No	(25:50)
1979 6 Sept. (P599-600)	P.Min. M.Somare	Galewa Kwarara	No	(34:63)
1980 11 March (P791-797)	P.Min. M.Somare	Iambakey Okuk	Yes (Chan as P.Min.)	(57:49)
1981 23 Feb. (993-997)	Min. Warren Dutton	Pita Lus	No	(40:57)
1981 8 Sept. (P1123-1125)	Min.Roy Evara	John Noel	No	(20:63)
1985 25 March	P.Min. M.Somare	Julius Chan	No	(19:68)

(P643-645)				
1985 14 June (P755-756)	Min. Karl Stack	Thomas Negints	No	(29:55)
1985 21 Nov. (P909-911)	P.Min. M.Somare	Julius Chan	Yes (Paiaf Wingti as P.Min.)	(58:51)
<b>1986</b> 2 Dec. (P1243-1245)	Dep.P. Min. Julius Chan	Michael Somare	No	(45:52)
<b>1988</b> 4 July (P193-195)	P.Min. Paiaf Wingti	John Momis	Yes (Rabbie Namaliu as P.Min.)	(58:50)
<b>1994</b>	P.Min. Wingti made snap resignation and re-election within 24 hours	--	--	--
<b>1999</b> 14 July	P.Min Bill Skate resigned on July 5	--	Yes (Mekere Morauta as P.Min.)	(99:5) (5 votes to Francis Koimanrea)

Source: PNG, Parliament House (Port Moresby: Parliament Library, 1988, 1994, 1999).

As can be seen from the table, in March 1980 Prime Minister Somare was removed from office and replaced by Sir Julius Chan (57 Yes, 49 No in parliament). On 21 November 1985, following the 1982 elections Prime Minister Somare was removed and replaced by Paiaf Wingti (58 Yes, 51 No in parliament). And on 4 July 1988, following the 1987 elections, Prime Minister Wingti was removed and replaced by Rabbie Namaliu (58 Yes, 50 No in parliament) (Constitutional Review Commission, June 1996: 28-29). In 1994, following the 1992 elections, Prime Minister Wingti made a snap resignation and 're-election' within 24 hours; and in mid-1999, after the 1997 elections, Prime Minister Bill Skate resigned from office resulting in parliament electing a new prime minister with 99 in favor of Mekere Morauta and 5 in favor of Francis Koimanrea.. Morauta remained Prime Minister until the June 2002 elections when Somare once again became the Prime Minister.

### Causes of Instability

What have been the causes of executive instability over the last 28 years (1975-2003)? And what have been the outcomes? A number of institutional factors have been responsible for the apparent executive instability. Frequent change of party allegiance by members of parliament has been a common practice prior to the passage of OLLIPAC in 2001. Members shift loyalty by joining other parties to maximize their chances of acquiring a ministerial portfolio. By the same token, parties enter into and break up coalitions in order to maximize their chances of being in government or get better deals. After all, political parties in PNG, as anywhere else, seek to occupy the seat of government as their foremost objective.

Another causal factor relates to the voting attitudes of voters. In PNG voters elect individual candidates on primordial and secondary-association considerations and not for a party per se. Parties therefore are not obliged to the electorate to account for the behaviour of their members, or their own, in and outside the parliament. Members of parliament therefore choose to join other parties, or switch sides on the floor of parliament at their own volition.

Votes of no confidence have been frequently exercised in the PNG parliament. There have been three successful votes of no confidence; first in the second parliament 1977-1982; second in the third parliament 1982-1987; third in the fourth parliament 1987-1992; and fourth was a change of prime minister in the sixth parliament 1997-2002 (see Table 21 above). The practice of motions and votes of no confidence have been viewed as a cause of instability on the part of the executive and political parties. Initially, the constitution of PNG provided a sixth month protection of the incumbent against such a motion and vote.

Under the Namaliu government 1987-1992, a constitutional amendment was successfully introduced which extended the grace period enjoyed by a government. The period is now 18 months of constitutional immunity after a government is sworn into office. Also motions and votes of no confidence cannot be entertained in the last twelve months in the life of a parliament.

At any rate, the no-confidence mechanism, especially when successfully applied, provides an opportunity for members of parliament to switch ministerial portfolios and parties. Thus the vote of no confidence has been another factor that has destabilized the executive and the party system in PNG.

Another major factor that has caused executive instability, prior to the passage of the 2001 OLIPPAC, was factionalism within the political parties. The problem was serious enough that it resulted in the lack of internal coherence in the organizational structures of the political parties. Back benchers could rebel against their party leaders and worse still, against the government. It is possible for one section of a party to be in government, while another to be in the opposition. In the latter part of 1973, for example, allegiance to the United Party was diminishing because half of the party's front benchers expressed interest in accepting government ministries, if offered by the government. The United Party was in the Opposition (Hegarty, 1991: 10). Factionalism within political parties was thus another cause of executive instability. In short, executive instability was caused more by the desire and struggle for power, perks and privileges by individual parliamentarians and political parties than by considerations of ethnicity.

### **Outcomes of Instability**

What have been the outcomes of executive instability? One of the most conspicuous effects was that, since 1977, no government had survived its full term of 5 years in office. This is evident in Table 21 above. Public servants and the general public in PNG have been gravely concerned with the frequency of instability. The perception of many ordinary Papua New Guineans is that politicians are primarily interested in power and in their own political survival. They are less interested in serving their constituents and the general public. The performance of the public service has also been adversely affected both as a result of changes of prime minister and of ministers through cabinet reshuffles. Peter Tsiamalili, Secretary for Department of Personnel Management states that "In many instances, the professional competency of the Departmental Heads has been undermined by frequent ministerial changes, frequent changes of Ministerial priorities, improper and illegal direction on deployment of funds, inappropriate and conflicting policy direction, and interference in staffing and administrative matters for selfish motives". He added that improper attempts to remove Departmental Heads and replace them with political cronies, and lack of Ministerial support for legitimate plans and initiatives were also factors that undermined the professional competency of Departmental Heads. Underperformance of public servants has also been noted as a result of the factors mentioned here (Tsiamalili, 6 March 2002: 7).

It is obvious from the above account that the executive in PNG has been unstable and is lacking in coherence. This is largely a result of votes of no confidence in the prime minister<sup>44</sup> and the fragmented and unstable party system. The general effect is that the executive has at times, if not most times, been preoccupied with political survival and patronage rather than focus on the implementation of the national goals and objectives as stated in the national constitution. As a further consequence, the constitution of PNG has survived the last 28 years of independence but it has not achieved its goals and objectives, for example, in terms creating and strengthening societal loyalty to the state through the various ethnic groups (Yash Ghai in Standish, 1999: 17).

### **Civil Service**

We now turn to the public service. First, the composition of the public service will be discussed.

#### **Composition of the Public Service: Heads of Departments**

Below is Table 22 - it shows the heads of government departments and the regions, provinces and ethnic groups they come from.

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<sup>44</sup> When Rabbie Namaliu was Prime Minister between 1988 and 1991 he faced eight potential votes of no-confidence (Standish, 1999: 17).

**TABLE 22: HEADS OF GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS (prior to formation of Somare Government in August 2002)\***

Department	Head	Region	Province	Ethnic Group
Prime Minister	Robert Igara	Papua	Milne Bay	Wedau
Bougainville Affairs	Bill Dihm	Papua	Central	Motu-Koita
Environment & Conservation	Wari Iamo	Papua	Central	Aroma
Foreign Affairs	Evoa Lalatute	Papua	Gulf	
Home Affairs & Social Development	Joseph Sukwianomb	Momase	East Sepik	
Justice				
Lands	Pepi Kimas	New Guinea Islands	Manus	
Mining	Kuma Aua	Papua	Gulf	Baimuru
Tourism	John Kambua	Highlands	Western Highlands	Tambul-Nebilyer
Defence	Fred Punangis	Highlands		

Works	Alphonse Neggints	Highlands	Western Highlands	
Fisheries	Michael Beatty	Australian		
Privatisation	Henry ToRobert	New Guinea Islands	East New Britain	Tolai
Education	Peter Baki	Papua	Central	Mekeo
Provincial & Local Level Affairs	Leo Maninga	Highlands	Western Highlands	Lagaip-Porgera
Health	Nicholas Mann	Highlands	Western Highlands	Kunjip
Planning	Philip Kikala			
Finance				
Police				
Correctional Services				
Agriculture				
Trade & Industry	Jonathan Soten	Momase		
Labor & Employment	Margret Elias (female)	New Guinea Islands	New Ireland	Madak

Source: Anere, R. June 26, 2002.

It can be seen from the table that the heads of government departments come from across the country. There is no ethnic domination at the management level. Although there are slightly more Papuans and Highlanders, the concerned individuals do not necessarily come from the same ethnic groups even if they are from the same province. At any rate heads of government departments tend to change sometimes along with changes in the cabinet. For instance, it is becoming increasingly evident to the public that under the new Somare-Marat government (following the June 2002 election), changes in senior management positions have seen individuals from the Momase region take up positions in the public service, corporate entities and statutory bodies. In the table above, Robert Igara from Milne Bay in the Papua region was replaced by Joshua Kalinoe as Chief Secretary, a privilege that was exercised by the government particularly Prime Minister Somare. He (Somare) is from the East Sepik province in the Momase region. Kalinoe is also from the East Sepik province.

The table, however, does affirm the assumption in the UNRISD typology that in multi-polar fragmented societies with relatively small ethnic groups, each group being less than 4 percent of the national population, ethnic-based political activity (or more specifically, domination) is less likely to be prevalent.

The public service, however, is not immune to politicization from the political leaders. Such leaders create and maintain patronage as a means of promoting their interests. Peter Tsiamalili, present Secretary of the Department of Personnel Management, told a conference on governance in March 2002 that in many instances, the professional capacity of the Departmental Heads has been undermined by:

- Frequent Ministerial changes;
- Frequent changes of Ministerial priorities;

- Improper and illegal direction on deployment of funds;
- Inappropriate and conflicting policy direction;
- Interference in staffing and administrative matters for selfish motives;
- Improper attempts to remove a departmental Head and replace him with a political crony; and,
- Lack of Ministerial support for legitimate plans and initiatives (Tsiamalili, 2002: 7).

Tsiamalili added that misdirection and disorientation of government departments that result from improper Ministerial interference often causes a management break down and serious under performance against legitimate plans.

## **Rules**

What are the rules that determine the selection of personnel to senior management positions in the public service and what have been the outcomes? According to Tsiamalili (2002) effective leadership at the senior management level depends upon persons selected and appointed to departmental heads. He points out that regulations will be issued by the Head of State (Governor General) under the Public Services (Management) Act to ensure that they are appointed solely on merit and not political affiliation. In addition, the Public Services Commission will play a more important role in the selection and appointment process and reduce or eliminate the amount of arbitrary political interference in the appointment process. Departmental Heads' contracts will only be revoked as a result of poor performance as assessed by the Central Agencies Coordinating Committee and reported to the National Executive Council (cabinet) through the Public Services Commission. Other procedures that will be followed include performance-based contracts which will be entered into by Departmental Heads enabling them to define specific annual performance targets and quality standards in managing finances and staff (Tsiamalili, March 6, 2002: 8).

The performance of both past and present governments (1975 to 2003) clearly suggests that the Public Services (Management) Act and other bureaucratic procedures have not been fully complied with in respect of the selection and appointment of personnel to senior management positions in the public service. The present Somare government is no different from its predecessors. Since assuming office in August 2002, it made changes to senior management positions in both the public service and corporate organizations. In certain instances, it has appointed experienced persons who are loyal supporters of Somare's National Alliance party. For example, in mid October 2002 the government replaced Sir Henry ToRobert as Managing Director of the IPBC,<sup>45</sup> and instead appointed Masket Iangalio, a former member of parliament and member of Somare's National Alliance party, Masket Iangalio. And although he has years of experience in public sector management, and as a former politician, the attitude of the Somare government in this and other instances is clearly indicative of nepotism and the application of political criteria in certain appointments in both the public service and corporate sector (Post Courier, Tuesday, October 8, 2002: 2).

The government's desire to rid the public service of corruption has been less than impressive. This is evident in expressions of public sentiments. For instance, Post Courier, one of the local newspapers reported that the present government was appointing political cronies to top positions in the public service and in statutory bodies like Telikom, the IPBC,<sup>46</sup> and the National Emergency and Disaster Relief Services (Post Courier, Thursday, October 10, 2002: 10). In the eyes of policy makers and the general public, such practices only amount to political patronage which every government, including the present Somare government, finds hard to resist. While the general public may voice their opinion on the matter, there is little that they could do in relation to such appointments. They know, however, that elections are the only time when they would vote against governments that engage in such practices which in their view constitutes improper conduct and abuse of power. There is little wonder that turnover rates have been high in all PNG elections.<sup>47</sup>

## **Outcomes**

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<sup>45</sup> See page 44.

<sup>46</sup> IPBC was formerly known as the Privatisation Commission set up under the World Bank's Structural Adjustment Program in PNG to privatize certain state assets.

<sup>47</sup> See Table 19.



What have been the outcomes of what seems to be the deliberate violation of the principles of meritocracy in the appointment process? Political patronage is no doubt the motive behind such violations. In turn, senior levels of the public service, including the PNG Defence Force, have become politicized. Under 1986 legislation, ministers can control senior appointments, and this has allowed governments to replace competent and experienced senior officials with their political cronies, many of whom are less competent and less experienced. The integrity of several departmental heads has been reduced to being politically compromised 'yes men'; and professional civil servants have been demoralized and made insecure as a result (Standish, 1999: 6).

The above outcomes are further compounded by changes at the executive and senior management levels. From July 1997 (following the 1997 election) to mid-July 1999, when Bill Skate was Prime Minister, there were three Deputy Prime Ministers and three Finance Ministers, in the 23 months the Skate government was in power. Patronage extends to key institutions such as the PNG Defence Force and the Bank of Papua New Guinea. The central bank is no doubt crucial to financial stability in the country because of its control over currency, credit, and overseas transactions. And although its political independence is valued, it is nevertheless not immune from political interference. By July 1998, when the Skate government was still in office, the Bank had its Governor changed in three months. Standish (1999) reveals that by early 1999, few departmental heads had held their positions for more than a year. There is little doubt that this is the direct outcome of patronage which all governments undertake to ensure their survival (Standish, 1999: 6).

### **Governance**

How do policy makers and citizens view the practice of patronage in the appointment process of the civil service? Without doubt, many senior policy makers have viewed the practice with fear and insecurity knowing that they could lose their jobs at any time should the government of the day decide to appoint its cronies. For the citizens appointing 'yes men' to senior positions has only lead to cynicism and loss of confidence in the government. The views of ordinary citizens are best expressed in a Post Courier newspaper article thus: 'If there is a genuine reason to change the bureaucrats, why use thugs? The country is riddled with enough corrupt practices and corrupt men...distinguished performers are unceremoniously dumped just because the government thinks one of its cronies can do better than a career professional' (Post Courier, Friday October 11, 2002: 10).

Not only are policy makers, citizens and the business community concerned about the quality of governance, they are equally concerned about the capacity of the government to manage the economy. This concern has come about because of the frequent changes to senior positions in the civil service. To this end, the Treasurer under the present Somare Government, Bart Philemon, has assured the nation that the (current) government has 'more quality people than governments since the early 1990s' (Post Courier, Friday November 8, 2002: 2). Philemon was responding to claims that there were many challenges facing the government thus his assurance that as long as he remains the Treasury and Finance Minister, there will be no changes to the positions of Secretary in his department and Governor of the Bank of Papua New Guinea. Philemon gave the assurance because the private sector, donor agencies and the general public were very concerned about the ability of the Treasurer and the government to steer the economy back to recovery (Post Courier, November 8, 2002: 2).

The above paragraphs reveal only part of the wider picture on the politics of representation in the public service. Representation involves not only appointment but also the distribution and use of public resources such as development funds. In essence representation is tied to money politics where public funds are seemingly used both for development and political survival. In this nexus development funds have been absorbed in annual national budgets, since 1983. For instance, the 1999 national budget, Bill Skate's<sup>48</sup> government claimed an expenditure target of K2097 million (US\$607.9 million) and a projected deficit of K80 million (US\$23.2 million), purported to greatly increase development funds (which should be capital investment), but most of this increase was actually disguised recurrent expenditure, especially electorate funds for members of parliament who were supporters of Skate (Standish, 1999: 11).

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<sup>48</sup> Bill Skate was Prime Minister until his resignation on July 5 1999, see Table 21. Parliament passed the 1999 budget in November of 1998.

Parliamentarians were enticed to pass the 1999 budget with the offer of K124 million (US\$35.9 million), over K1 million (US\$289,900) per member in electorate development funds. Otherwise known as slush funds, the process began with small amounts under Prime Minister Somare in 1983 and has become a tool for survival. In 1999, for instance, the government under Bill Skate paid K500 000 each (US\$144,950) to all its 62 members; the Opposition's 36 members did not get their share of the funds. This was blatant discrimination and not in the spirit of popular representation. The Opposition persuaded the National Court to order payment. Few members give their slush funds to provincial and local-level governments thus compounding their lack of ability to deliver basic health and education services or to maintain infrastructure. Failure on the part of members to give their slush funds to provincial and local-level governments also compounded their already worsening cash flow situation since 1995. While each received K500 000 in slush funds in 1999, Christian church agencies which were sanctioned by government to provide health and education services in many rural areas, were drastically short of salaries and operational funds. It is ironical also that while members were getting their slush funds, the twenty provincial governments in PNG experienced cuts of K120 million (US\$34.7 million) in 1999 following a bad year in 1998 (Standish, 1999: 11).

So where is the public service at considering the patronage and the manner in which slush funds are used by members of parliament? From the above accounts it is clear that the senior level of the public service is compromised, and furthermore, the public service, through provincial administrations, is gravely short of funds to effectively deliver basic goods and services, a situation that would have complemented the activities of church agencies but sadly not.

The situation of the public service described here clearly manifests the lack of good governance. The legitimate use of the slush funds by MPs and their ability to account for the funds have been seriously questioned by individuals, the media and even by the parliamentary public accounts committee. There has been abuse of the slush funds in many instances, including deposits of the funds, in part or total, into the MP's personal bank accounts. The rights of ordinary citizens to basic services such as health, education and infrastructure are denied due to abuse and shortage of funds. The ability of the state to govern (make and implement decisions) is also undermined; and furthermore, the manner in which power is used to coordinate resources for social, economic and political development through a plurality of other actors is questionable in the sense that the process lacks transparency, accountability and consensual decision making (Larmour, 1998: 2-3). On the whole, there has been some politicization of the civil service in terms of appointments and patronage based on the self-interests of individual political leaders, political parties and civil servants than on the interests of ethnic groups.

### **Majoritarian and consensual outcomes**

At this point it is useful to ask: is the public service in PNG oriented towards consensual and majoritarian outcomes? In light of the discussion above it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that political bias associated with appointments in the public service and the use of slush funds by political leaders has led, among other things, to the lack of funds to deliver vital services to ordinary citizens in the rural areas. This situation does have the potential to erode the capacity of the public service to promote consensual outcomes because of politically-motivated decisions in resource allocation and in the delivery of essential services.<sup>49</sup> In this regard, the funding and location of development projects may go towards particular ethnic groups that provide electoral support for the incumbent parliamentarian, meaning that the majority of the electorate or ethnic groups within the electorate are not receiving the level and quality of attention they desire.

With regard to the availability of public funds, the chairman of the National Economic and Fiscal Commission (NE & FC) Nao Badu, said in a seminar aimed at reviewing inter-governmental fiscal arrangements on Wednesday November 6 2002, that '...previously, the national government was not able

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<sup>49</sup> In other words, the public service may not effectively carry out broad national goals and objectives because of political interference by Ministers and political bias in the allocation of public resources.

to provide the full grants for the years 1996 through to 2002' for provincial governments, hence the review (English, Wednesday November 6, 2002: 5). Badu stated that the seminar would allow the NE & FC to review provisions under the 1995 Organic Law on Provincial and Local Level Government in relation to the transferal of grants.

The NE & FC aims to come up with a system of transferals that:

- The national government can afford;
- Ensures there was equal distribution of funds to provinces according to their needs but with consideration to the availability of funds;
- Encourages transparency and accountability to ensure monies were properly spent;
- Addresses the inequity in levels of development among the different provinces; and
- Shows the differences in the capacities of different provinces to effectively spend the monies based on their needs (English, Wednesday, November 6, 2002: 5).

A system of transferal of grants that is transparent and accountable suggests that this is an alternative way to enhancing the capacity of the public service at national and provincial levels not only to deliver vital services, but also to manifest 'majoritarian' considerations when basing their decisions on the needs of the majority of members of the communities and/or provinces concerned. Such a system would also dilute the political bias that is inherent in the use of slush funds by MPs and in the appointments to senior positions in the public service.

We now turn our attention to institutional reforms in PNG

#### **INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS: AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**

The Leadership Code will be discussed first as this law sets the standards of leadership and governance in PNG. The Ombudsman Commission of PNG was created under the PNG constitution as well as two organic laws; one on the Ombudsman Commission and the other on the duties and responsibilities of leadership. The Leadership Code is found in these laws as well as in a more recently enacted legislation and which will be discussed shortly, OLIPPAC. Basically the Leadership Code tells leaders what they shall and shall not do. If they do not comply they commit misconduct in office. The code may be summarized as follows:

1. Protect your integrity and the integrity of government at all times – Constitution, Section 27;
2. File your annual statements honestly and annually – Organic Law on Duties and Responsibilities of Leadership (henceforth OLDRL);
3. Do not ask for or accept unauthorized benefits – OLDRL, Sections 5, 11 and 12;
4. Always disclose your interests in official matters – OLDRL, Sections 6 and 15;
5. Seek approval to hold shareholdings and directorships – OLDRL, Sections 7 and 8;
6. Do not engage in any paid employment other than your official employment – OLDRL, Section 9;
7. Do not enter into government contracts without approval – OLDRL, Section 10;
8. Use public money strictly in accordance with conditions attached – OLDRL, Section 10;
9. Do not misuse official information – OLDRL, Section 14;
10. Always cooperate with the Ombudsman Commission and the tribunal – Constitution, Section 27 (4) and OLDRL, Section 23; and,
11. You must abide by OLIPPAC (Cannings, March 2002: 1-2).

The summary is a simplification of the Leadership Code and is a representation of what the people of PNG are telling the leaders and what they (the people) are demanding of them. In the words of PNG's present Chief Ombudsman, Ila Geno: 'Good leadership and good country management will come when there is compliance with the constitution. Leaders must remain conscious at all times of their special and profound obligations to the people they are required to selflessly serve' (Ibid: 1-2).

The above summary provides a useful background for the analyses of the party system, electoral rules and public service reforms which are important areas of governance of public sector institutions and thus their impact on the management of diversity, competition and inequality in PNG.

### **Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates (OLIPPAC) 2001**

Serious problems threatening the integrity of political parties, government and of the parliament stem from the weak political party system which has consequently led to frequent changes of governments since independence.<sup>50</sup> The time and energy political leaders spend on horse trading and changing of government is incalculable. And the consequences for a country that is ethnically diverse and 80 percent rural are undesirable, especially the social disorder, frequent changes in policy directions by different ministers and others that follow from executive instability (Riyong, June 28, 2000: 3-4).

Accordingly, the intention of OLIPPAC is to implement Sub-divisions VI 2.H of the PNG constitution which provides for the protection of elections from outside or hidden influence and the strengthening of political parties. There are three broad areas: (1) the registration of political parties, (2) the funding of political parties, and (3) the strengthening of political parties.

OLIPPAC was certified by the then speaker of the PNG parliament on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2001 thus enabling parts I, II, III, IV, and VIII to immediately come into force. These parts were necessary for the executive government to appoint members of the Central Fund Board of Management to enact the required constitutional regulations and, to effect the registration of political parties. Parts V, VI, and VII came into force on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2002, so the entire provisions of OLIPPAC are now in force.

The Central Fund Board members were appointed and sworn into office on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2001. The Board has approved the constitutional regulations on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2001 which were subsequently approved by the National Executive Council (cabinet) on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

As a result of the enforcement of the provisions of OLIPPAC, there are now 43 registered political parties, 20 more than before the law came into force. These parties have been issued with Certificates of Registration and were published on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2002, in national gazette number G. 59, to comply with Section 20 of OLIPPAC.

In essence, OLIPPAC has set in motion the development of a new political culture, one in which only registered political parties can do the following:

- (1) Endorse candidates for elections;
- (2) Nominate candidates for elections; and,
- (3) Receive public funding for their operations (Bengo, 6 March, 2002: 3).

OLIPPAC also strengthens political parties as legal institutions in which the people can participate in the political affairs of the nation. This means that the new culture shifts the attention of political parties away from being parliament-centered to being people-centered in their operations. The scope of effective participation of political parties and the people is enhanced in the process where the latter may influence the quality of leadership and the policies impacting on national development. Political parties will also become more people-centered in the national issues they deal with such as agriculture, rural infrastructure, health and education.

### **Issues**

At least five specific issues have emerged since all provisions of OLIPPAC came into force after February 22, 2002. They are:

- (1) The large number of registered political parties (43 during the 2002 elections but the number has since dropped to 22);

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<sup>50</sup> See Table 21.

- (2) Increased number of candidates with political parties endorsing candidates in the majority of 109 electorates in the 2002 elections;
- (3) The possibility that five or more political parties might have the same number of successful candidates on return of writs which may create a difficult precedent in the formation of government;
- (4) Similarities in goals and aims of political parties thus leading to the marketing of personalities rather than national development issues; and,
- (5) Failure of political parties and candidates to disclose contributions of cash or kind from citizen individuals and groups during elections (Bengo, 6 March, 2002: 1-8).

The above issues expose to some extent the limitations of OLIPPAC by the nature of its design and by the terms of reference issued to the CDC who drafted the law. The terms of reference did not allow the CDC to put a limit on the number of political parties.<sup>51</sup> Thus, OLIPPAC can not determine how many political parties will contest any one election. Second, with regard to the increasing number of candidates,<sup>52</sup> OLIPPAC has no provisions on the number of candidates that will contest an election.

While the likelihood of two or more political parties having the same number of successful candidates after the return of writs, in any one election, remains under 50 percent, the possibility is nonetheless there and may impact on the formation of government. How does OLIPPAC deal with such a scenario? Section 76 subsection 2 of OLIPPAC states that where two or more registered political parties have the same number of candidates declared elected in an election, the Electoral Commission shall advise the Head of State, who shall, upon and in accordance with advice from the Electoral Commission, invite each of these registered parties to form the government. Subsection 4 (b) states that at the first meeting of parliament following a general election, being a meeting at which the Prime Minister is to be elected, each of the parties invited under subsection 2 may nominate a candidate for election as Prime Minister. Subsection 5 (b) states that the parliament shall vote as to whether any of these candidates is to be elected as Prime Minister (CDC, 2001: 37-38).

As far as similarities in goals and aims of political parties are concerned, OLIPPAC is limited in its ability to deal with this matter because its provisions only disallow similarities in party names, emblems, etcetera, which may make it confusion for voters; it does not, however, deal with similarities in goals and/or aims of political parties.<sup>53</sup> This is a weak point in OLIPPAC's ability to regulate the party system - a weakness that will allow personalities rather than national issues and party strategies to determine party popularity in the political marketplace.

On the last issue of the disclosure of contributions of cash or kind received by candidates and political parties, Section 57 subsections 5 (a) and (b), 7 (a) and (b), and 8 (a) and (b) provide for candidates and parties to inform the Registrar of Political Parties of the contributions received from citizens, non-citizens or international organizations within 30 days of the receipt of the contributions. Failure to comply with the provisions will constitute an offence which is punishable under the law. The monetary fine is usually an amount not exceeding the amount of the contribution in relation to which the offence was committed. The Central Fund Board of Management, which was created under OLIPPAC, is the authority that will determine the amount of monetary penalty (CDC, 2001: 25-27).

The above are some issue areas which have one way or another tested the effectiveness of OLIPPAC after the June-July 2002 elections. For instance, the provisions on disclosure of contributions have not been complied with by all except 5 candidates and one political party out of a total of 103 elected candidates (excepting 6 electorates in the Southern Highlands who will have supplementary elections in April 2003) and 43 registered political parties (Bengo, 27 May, 2002: 7). Those parties and members of parliament who do not comply with the provisions of Section 57 of OLIPPAC will be dealt with accordingly under the law.

Another issue area which has exposed the limitations of OLIPPAC is where a registered political party has its parliamentary members sitting on both sides of the floor of parliament. Pangu Pati, the party that led

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<sup>51</sup> See Table 9.

<sup>52</sup> See Table 16.

<sup>53</sup> Section 23 subsection 1 (d) of OLIPPAC deals with the grounds of objection.

PNG to independence in 1975, is split and consequently has its parliamentary members sitting on both sides of the house. This situation has exposed a loophole in the law and there have already been calls by PNG's Registrar of Political Parties to strengthen the law through legislative changes.

In a different situation, the People's Democratic Movement (PDM) party dismissed its founder and former Prime Minister, Paias Wingi, from the party so that he is now an independent member of parliament. While the provisions of OLIPPAC were followed in this instance, a faction of the party has flouted the law by declaring a freshman politician and member of the PDM, John Muingepe,<sup>54</sup> as leader of the Opposition and not the leader of the party and another former Prime Minister, Sir Mekere Morauta. This faction also declared Muingepe as leader of PDM. The event took place on the floor of parliament in November 2002 which was an obvious contradiction of the law. The Registrar of Political Parties has since announced publicly that, according to provisions of OLIPPAC, Morauta is the duly elected leader of PDM and that he will be recognized as such as far as the activities of the Opposition and PDM are concerned.

There are at least two other members of parliament who have violated provisions of OLIPPAC by switching to other political parties after the June-July 2002 elections. The law prohibits this behavior under Section 77 subsection 1 (a), (b) and (c). Should the violation continue then Registrar would regard the concerned members as having resigned from the registered political parties of which they were members and, under Section 79 (b), the Speaker of Parliament shall inform the Registrar of the matter. The Registrar shall, under Section 79 (c), refer the matter to the Ombudsman Commission for investigation (CDC, 2001: 39).

At the time of writing, January 15, 2003, the two members have not yet been referred to the Ombudsman Commission for investigation.

### **Stability of political parties, executive and parliament**

Generally speaking, OLIPPAC makes it illegal for members of political parties to switch allegiance in and outside of parliament; it is also illegal for members who elected the Prime Minister to vote against the government's budget and against constitutional changes his government introduces (Section 77 subsection (c) (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv)). These are measures designed to ensure party and executive stability. This law was for the first time put to test in the June-July 2002 elections and although elections in the Southern and the Western Highlands provinces encountered violence and other breaches of election rules, the provisions of the law in relation to elections were generally complied with throughout the country. For example, all registered political parties endorsed one candidate per electorate and candidates sought endorsement from one registered political party only, as provided for in Section 60, subsection (1) a), (b) and (c) of the law. Up to January 15, 2003, party hopping has been limited to two members of parliament only. In this regard there is some degree of party stability, and if the Office of the Registrar is adequately funded under the national budget to administer OLIPPAC, most parties would generally comply with the law.

In the November, 2003, sitting of parliament, Section 77, subsection (c) (i) to (iv) may have been violated when the government introduced a constitutional amendment to extend the grace period against motions of no confidence from the present 18 to 36 months, whereby certain political parties who voted for the prime minister in August 2002, voted against the amendment. The People's Progress Party in particular had some of its parliamentary members voting against the bill, while others voted for it. This matter has since been referred to the Registrar of Political Parties for investigation with possible referral to the Ombudsman Commission for further investigation.

At any rate, OLIPPAC seems to have reduced party hopping but not instilled the discipline necessary for voting along party resolutions and in line with Section 77. Political self-interest rather than party unity and ethnicity that determines voting behaviour in parliament.

### **Organic Law on National Elections (OLEN) 2002**

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<sup>54</sup> Muingepe is member for Bulolo open electorate in the Morobe province of the Momase region; Morauta is the member for Moresby Northeast open in the National Capital District, Papua region.

In 2002 an organic law on national elections was passed in the PNG parliament allowing for a form of limited preferential voting (LPV). The LPV replaces the first-past-the-post (FPTP) voting which has been in existence since the first post-independence national elections in 1977. It will be applied in any future by-elections<sup>55</sup> and in the next general elections in 2007. One major problem with the FPTP system is that candidate numbers are high, which leads to low winning vote tallies and hence to 'unrepresentative' outcomes.<sup>56</sup> Intensive competition has led to violence in the Highlands region and to many fatalities. Members of parliament tend to focus their attention on a small proportion of voters (mostly their clans), once elected, which leads to political opportunism, unstable governments and poor governance (Standish, 13 October, 2002: 1).

Will LPV produce election results that are more majoritarian than the fragmented results which have become the trend under FPTP? To answer this question the strengths and weaknesses of LPV will be analyzed first. In LPV a limited number of preferences are required of the voter. Although the CDC recommended five, the cabinet under the Mekere government in 2001 revised it downwards to three. Voters therefore will indicate three (1, 2, 3) compulsory preferences. Any preferences beyond three will not be counted and ballot papers with less than three preferences will be declared invalid – the two preferences will not be counted.

Voting is 'limited exhaustive' in the sense that three preferences (1, 2, 3) are compulsory although the ballot paper may have the names of twenty or more candidates on it. The 50 percent plus one principle is retained and counting is done exhaustively in the sense that all three preferences will need to be counted in an attempt win the majority of votes in the event that no one candidate is popular enough to secure the majority in the count of first and/or second preferences.

There are several expected benefits. First, it is predicted that the need to seek preferences will encourage more accommodative and less confrontational campaigning. People will have the chance to allocate their first preferences to their clan's candidate, and subsidiary preferences to others thereby fulfilling traditional obligations to kin. Second, and for women in particular, LPV will provide a chance to spread their preferences without coercion from kinsmen thus enabling wider political choices for them. Third, it is hoped that preferences will go to better candidates, once people have fulfilled their traditional obligation to vote for fellow clan members. Improved political leadership should result. Fourth, new voting procedures will lead to winners mandated by higher votes who will therefore be more representative than at present. Members of parliament are thus more likely to be accountable to their entire electorate, rather than to a small minority, as is currently the case. The expected outcome is better governance both within provinces and nationally. And, fifth, campaign tensions and election violence among and between local groups is expected to subside (Standish, 13 October, 2002: 1).

In short, the LPV is optimistic of raising the winning vote tallies preferably to the 50 percent plus 1 threshold compared to the vote tallies under the FPTP thus making the results more majoritarian.<sup>57</sup> At the same time, however, LPV may widen the scope for accommodating clan or ethnic obligations through the distribution of second and third preferences than has been the case under FPTP.

### **Weaknesses**

One of the major difficulties of elections in PNG is the large number of candidates which has been growing steadily ever since the 1964 first House of Assembly elections.<sup>58</sup> While the FPTP voting has allowed for candidates with a simple majority of votes to be elected to parliament, LPV is seeking 50 percent and above for a candidate to be declared elected. Going by the large numbers of candidates in previous elections, LPV is likely to make it extremely difficult for the majority of candidates to reach the threshold. This will most likely be the case for candidates in Papua, Momase, NCD and the Highlands electorates given that in past

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<sup>55</sup> By-elections are expected in seven electorates due to nullification of election results by the PNG Court of Disputed Returns (for five electorates), and deaths of two MPs in 2003.

<sup>56</sup> See Table 18.

<sup>57</sup> See Table 18.

<sup>58</sup> See Table 16.

elections, the winning vote tallies have generally been lower in these regions than in the New Guinea Islands region.<sup>59</sup>

In light of existing clan structures and PNG's political culture, it is likely that high candidate numbers will continue in the 2007 elections. This is because each clan or tribe wants its own candidate. Inter-group competition is likely to continue. Post-election conflict is also likely to continue in some areas, especially the Highlands, if preference deals fall through. Political behavior will only change if the changes are seen to benefit political actors. Previous experience with preferential voting in PNG (1964-1972) shows that LPV system is unlikely to deliver majorities of primary votes. Furthermore, future members of parliament will probably not be as representative as hoped, which reduces the chances of improved governance (Standish, 13 October 2002: 1).

OLES may also have limited ability to promote gender equality in elections. This is because voter preferences are biased against women thus reinforcing inequality in the formal political arena. Moreover, female candidates are not an attractive option for many political parties based on the perception that parties would rather endorse candidates who are going to win seats for them. Accordingly, female participation and success rate in all post-independence national elections since 1977 have been less than that of men. Table 23 shows female candidature; it also includes the 1972 election.

**TABLE 23: FEMALE CANDIDATES AND MPs 1972-2002**

Year	Total Candidates	Female Candidates	Percentage of Female Candidates	Female MPs
1972	608	4	0.66	1
1977	879	10	1.14	3
1982	1124	17	1.51	1
1987	1515	18	1.25	0
1992	1655	16	0.97	0
1997	2372*	55	2.3	2
2002	2832	35**	1.2	1
<b>Total</b>				

Source: Sepoe in Saffu, ed. 1996, p. 109; Anere, R, 2000, p. 63; \* = 2 deceased; \*\* = personal estimate.

It is evident from the table that female participation in national elections is extremely low. The number of female members of parliament is also very low indeed. Women do not have an equal voice as men do on the floor of the PNG parliament.<sup>60</sup> Their participation in the national political arena remains under three percent. Comparative evidence shows that the marginalization of women in PNG politics is part of a much wider picture. For instance, women involved in politics may be seen as follows: Europe 18 percent; North America 10 percent; Asia 7 percent; Africa 7 percent; Pacific 5 percent; and South America 4 percent (ESCAP, 1993).

### Implications

There are major administrative and financial implications involved with operating LPV. The voting materials and counting system need to be modified and staff will need further training. The counting of preferences is likely to take weeks longer. This new system will require considerable additional funding for electoral staff, security forces and for extensive and effective public awareness. On a positive note, however, LPV may raise the vote tallies for popular female candidates than is generally the case under FPTP. LPV therefore may encourage positive changes in voter attitudes by enabling voters to think beyond their immediate clans or ethnic groups in the allocation of preferences.

### The new decentralization: 1995 OLPGLG and ethnic groups

The provincial government system set up under the 1977 OLPG was described as costly, divisive and marred by gross mismanagement and corruption (Post Courier, 2 October 1992). Following the 1992

<sup>59</sup> See Table 12.

<sup>60</sup> Female participation in parliament has remained under 3 percent since 1972.



election, the coalition government of Paias Wingti began to seriously review the provincial government system. Legislation for amendment of the constitution to enable the repeal of the 1977 organic law was being drafted. Around the same time four provincial governments were suspended and three more were suspended in 1993 (May, 1997: 387).

Needless to say, the drafting of the legislation did not go without opposition from provincial politicians, and especially from the New Guinea Islands Premier's Council who, at an Islands Premier's Council meeting in May 1995, announced the formation of a new political party, the Movement for Greater Autonomy, and proposed the formation of an Islands State Government (Post Courier 26 April; 8 May 1995). Several national parliamentarians began talking about opposing the legislation at its third reading, and even calling for the rescinding of the first and second reading both of which were successful.

When the legislation came to a vote on 27 June 1995, a majority of Pangu members voted with Haiveta to support the bill, and with the support also of Wingti, it was passed 86 to 15. Those who voted against the bill or abstained from the voting included five cabinet ministers: Philemon and Nalau (Pangu Party), Momis and Narokobi (Melanesian Alliance Party), Paul Pora (National Party). The following week all five members were sacked from cabinet.

The 1995 OLPGLLG effectively abolished the provincial government system set up in 1977. Under the 1995 law, provincial governments now consist of:

- All members of the National Parliament from the same province;
- Heads of rural local-level governments;
- One representative of the heads of urban authorities and urban councils;
- Up to three paramount chiefs or their appointed nominees representing local areas where the chieftaincy system is in existence and is accepted;
- One nominated woman representative; and,
- Up to three other members appointed from time to time by the provincial assembly.

The ministerial system under the 1977 OLPG was replaced by a committee system.

What is suggested above is that ethnic groups throughout PNG are represented through a provincial government comprising of a provincial executive council, a provincial assembly and various committees made up of a combination of personnel listed above. What are the rules that determine the selection and composition of the provincial executive council and the provincial assembly? Under the 1977 OLPG and its successor, the 1995 OLPGLLG, each province has a chief executive and provincial legislators. What this means is that ethnic groups are linked to their provincial governments through their respective chief executives and legislators. Under the 1977 OLPG the chief executive was called premier; under the 1995 OLPGLLG, he/she was and is called governor.

Both under the 1977 OLPG and the 1995 OLPGLLG the premier and/or the governor were elected by the ethnic groups that reside in their respective province. The difference between the 1977 and 1995 laws is that in the former, representation of ethnic groups was done through the cabinet or portfolio system; while in the latter, groups were represented through the committee system. Why did this change come about in 1995 under the OLPGLLG? It can be argued here that the dynamics of Westminster unitary parliamentary system (fusion of the provincial executive with the provincial legislature) has rendered provincial governments and legislatures less competent and representative than what the various groups in the provinces had expected.<sup>61</sup> Power struggles to occupy the seat of government led to patronage and political bias in resource distribution, corruption, financial mismanagement, and lack of accountability.

Regular observers on the politics of provincial government in PNG maintain that, within the period 1977 to 1995, the provincial government system has had limited effectiveness and there was general laxity of financial administration. "These failings had led to distrust and cynicism with which provincial governments have been regarded by their constituents. At the same time, many of the problems evident in

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<sup>61</sup> Power struggles, political survival, and even votes of no-confidence in premiers and later governors have also taken place at the provincial level as they have at the national level.

provincial government reflect the more general tendencies in PNG politics during the late 1970s and 1980s.” These included a deteriorating level of government performance, growing nepotism and corruption, and declining standards of financial management (May, 1997: 383).

In retrospect, there is little doubt that the decision to proceed uniformly in the creation of provincial governments in all nineteen provinces perpetuated imbalances and generated particular problems in some of the less developed provinces. But it is also true that the national government was generally slow, and sometimes reluctant, to address the emerging problems of provincial governments, for example, in relation to lack of accounting and auditing capabilities. Rather, the response of the national government was primarily to re-centralize, largely ignoring resolutions of the Premier’s Council, rendering the Fiscal Commission moribund, and moving to facilitate the suspension of provincial governments. By the end of 1994, only four of the nineteen provinces had not experienced at least one period of suspension. In part this response reflected the growing significance of political activity at the provincial level, a trend which many national politicians found threatening.

As stated above, the politics of representation in the provincial government system has been divisive, costly, and, at best, corrupt. It is therefore fair to say that provincial governments have not been as effective as the general public had wanted. By 1994 three were regarded as being relatively successful in managing ethnic structures and inequalities. All but three out of the nineteen provincial governments have been suspended more than once by various national governments. Distrust and cynicism for these provincial governments suggest that they have not managed ethnic structures and inequalities well in as many as sixteen provinces. Tribal wars which are frequent in the Highlands region are, in essence, ethnic conflicts over land, competing claims in land compensation, etcetera. This suggests that the ability of provincial governments in some parts of the Highlands region in managing ethnic structures, diversity and inequality has been less than satisfactory.

### **Majoritarian or consensual outcomes**

Are provincial governments geared towards achieving majoritarian or consensual outcomes? Nepotism, patronage and corruption, among other factors, have undermined the integrity of provincial governments. This means that provincial governments have not always promoted consensual outcomes. If anything, divisiveness and the other factors mentioned above have always been a part of the provincial government system both under the 1977 and 1995 organic laws. Even the election of provincial governments which was based on FPTP voting and one which is not oriented towards majoritarian results, until by-elections after the 2002 election, means that many provincial government members have won in their respective districts with simple majorities (like their national counterparts).

The divisiveness within provincial governments suggests the lack of consensual outcomes which meant that some ethnic groups have been given scant attention in the distribution of basic services and resources, including public funds. The apparent inequality in the distribution of services and resources is influenced not so much by ethnicity but by the politicization of decision making and resource allocation processes. To some extent this has meant that resources and development projects have been given to or have been located in areas that are the electoral strongholds of many political leaders. This meant that political criteria have on numerous occasions influenced decision making and resource allocation rather than the consideration of issues on their merits.<sup>62</sup>

Provincial governments do come together in regional forums<sup>63</sup> such as the Papuan Governors’ Conference; the Highlands’ Governors’ Conference; the Momase Governors’ Conference; and the New Guinea Islands

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<sup>62</sup> Although the 1995 OLPGLLG was intended to better represent ethnic groups within the provinces,, political patronage has at many times influenced decision making such that resource distribution and location of development projects, have not been equally spread among various ethnic groups in each of the provinces. This directly explains why there is a high incumbent turnover rate in parliamentary elections-see Table 19, column 5. The high incumbent turnover rates in turn reflect the practice of voting along clan or tribal lines.

<sup>63</sup> Governors’ Conferences are held only once each year as such they are not seen by various ethnic groups as managing and

Governor's Conference. These conferences serve as opportunities by which the governors of each province within each of the four regions could get together to discuss matters of common interest affecting the regions and reach decisions that could be implemented at the provincial and national levels.

There is no strong link, however, between these regional bodies and ethnic groups within each of the four regions. Such groups find that although many provincial governments are not as effective as they should be, they are nonetheless the bodies that are responsible for the day-to-day running of provincial affairs and thus representation of the interests of the various ethnic groups. Even the 12-year Bougainville conflict which had raised ethno-nationalism to some degree on the island of Bougainville, there was hardly any ethnic group on Bougainville that had tried to push for the issue of Bougainville independence through the New Guinea Islands Governors' Conference. Concerns of various groups on that island were brought to provincial-level bodies such as the Bougainville Transitional Government.<sup>64</sup>

In short, the 1995 OLPGLLG has well-meaning intentions. (This is not to suggest that it is a perfectly designed law.) It is the politics of patronage, power struggles, and personal political survival rather than ethnicity per se that have brought about the lack of consensus in decision making and resource allocation processes. This has eroded the capacity of many provincial governments for effective and equitable representation of ethnic groups in their own provinces.

### **Civil Service Reform**

In the December 2002 session of parliament, the government introduced amendments to the PNG constitution aimed at ensuring public sector appointments are based on merits. The Somare government is thus committed to addressing the issue of instability and lack of performance in the public sector by proposing changes to the manner in which Department Heads are appointed and dismissed. The implications for PNG are grave; and, as it will require amendment to the national constitution, it is vital that the issues and proposed remedies are publicized and widely supported by the general public and civil society.

### **A New Process for Appointing, Dismissing and Suspending Department Heads**

Currently, Heads of Departments are appointed by the Head of State acting on the advice of the NEC following consultation with the Public Services Commission (PSC). In some cases, consultation may take place with the Commissioner of Police, also with the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Appointments in accordance with section 193 of the PNG constitution. The National Executive Council (NEC) is required to consult the PSC, but is not bound to accept the PSC's views or recommendations.

The constitutional amendments would give the PSC a much more active role in the procedures for selection, appointment and dismissal of Departmental Heads and others, than is the case at present. The new arrangements will ensure greater discipline and integrity to the selection, appointment, suspension, and dismissal process. PSC will declare vacancies, advertise for applications, interview applicants and recommend to NEC a short list of up to three candidates, selected by the PSC on the basis of merit from those who have formally applied for the job (The National newspaper, December 2, 2002: 9).<sup>65</sup>

The NEC will then choose which of the candidates to appoint. The NEC will only be able to appoint a candidate who has formally applied, and has been successful in making it on a merit-based shortlist. If NEC does not consider any of the candidates have sufficient capacity to do the job required of them, then it can

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representing their interests on a day-to-day basis.

<sup>64</sup> A Bougainville Peace Agreement was put in place in early 2002. The three pillars of the agreement are (1) weapons disposal, (2) greater autonomy, and (3) a referendum on Bougainville independence around 2013.

<sup>65</sup> These measures are aimed at eliminating political appointments to the public service, see page 21.

require PSC to re-advertise the position. If Ministers know of a promising candidate, they can encourage them to apply, but they cannot insist that they be included on the shortlist.

Prior to the drawing up of the shortlist, PSC will be required to consult the Prime Minister and the relevant Minister for their views and also to liaise with the Central Agencies Coordinating Committee on information that it has on the past performance of any of the candidates.

### **Ensuring a Non-Partisan PSC**

Given the increased importance of the PSC in appointing and dismissing departmental heads, it is vital that the commissioners<sup>66</sup> receive bi-partisan support in parliament and the support of public servants and the citizens at large. They will be appointed by a committee comprised of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, the Chief Justice, and head of the appropriate parliamentary committee and the Chief Ombudsman.

### **Dismissal of Departmental Heads**

Dismissal of Departmental Heads will be at the sole discretion of the PSC. It will only occur following an investigation into the grounds for dismissal as set out in the Departmental Head's contract. These grounds will consist of the following:

- (1) Misbehavior;
- (2) Breach of contract or terms of employment;
- (3) Incompetence;
- (4) Ill-health;
- (5) Consistent poor performance; and
- (6) It is in the interest of the State (The National newspaper, Monday, December 2, 2002: 9).

The "Interest of the State" will continue to be grounds for dismissal. However, the prerogative for determining this will be the PSC's. NEC will be able to request PSC to investigate whether there are grounds for dismissing a Department Head but it will not be able to request his or her dismissal.

### **The Appointment of Provincial Administrators**

At present, Provincial Executive Councils (PECs) have little say in the appointment of Provincial Administrators. Sometimes, Administrators are appointed for political reasons. The new system addresses these flaws thus:

- (1) The PSC will provide a ranked list of candidates for a PEC to consider;
- (2) If the PEC does not any of the candidates, it can request that the position be re-advertised; and,
- (3) Otherwise it forwards a recommendation to the NEC for appointment (The National, December 2, 2002: 9).

The above are constitutional amendments that were introduced in the PNG parliament in December 2002. Watchdog organizations such as Transparency International (PNG) Inc. and its Coalition Partners, including the Public Sector Reform Advisory Group have given their full support to the present government to ensure that the principle of meritocracy, pride and professionalism are restored in the public service (The National, December 2, 2002: 9).

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<sup>66</sup> These are the members of the Public Service Commission.

## ANALYSIS

By and large, PNG is indeed a multi-polar, ethnically fragmented society with 817 plus ethnic groups (Table 1). The average number of people per household is 5.1 persons for the country as a whole. In the provinces, this average ranges from 4.1 (Eastern Highlands) to 6.0 (National Capital District and the Western province).<sup>67</sup>

Variations have taken place within groups and these have depended on a number of factors. They include the degree of access to education and health services, economic opportunities, transport, infrastructure and communication; their geographic location, population size, culture, historical contacts with colonial administration and pre-colonial missionaries and traders, climatic conditions, and equally important, access to state decision making and resources. These factors vary in themselves thus affecting the patterns of change within and among the ethnic groups. To analyze variations within each of the 817 plus ethnic groups would be a laborious exercise indeed. However, some general variations which have affected ethnic groups one way or another, and in varying degrees, can be observed. Some of the variations are more conspicuous and thus observable while others are more subtle.

If the literacy levels in Table 7<sup>68</sup> are of any indication, it is that ethnic groups in Manus and East New Britain (in the New Guinea islands) are better educated thus have greater access to economic opportunities, state decision making and resources, including participation in the public sector. One manifestation, for example, is that Manus would have among the highest number of educated persons working in the public service than, say, provinces of the Papua and Highlands regions. Also, if one looks at Table 20<sup>69</sup> the composition of cabinet, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Immigration is one of the longest serving members of parliament, among his other parliamentary colleagues. He first entered parliament in 1982 and had served in various ministerial capacities, including being Prime Minister from 1988 to 1992. His colleague and former Deputy Prime Minister, Dr Allan Marat, was leader of the People's Progress Party until November 2003, is a first-time politician. Like Namaliu, he comes from East New Britain province. Here is a situation where, on the one hand, a long-serving member of parliament is presently a senior

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<sup>67</sup> The National Capital District and Western province are in the Papuan region.

<sup>68</sup> See page 20.

<sup>69</sup> See page 38.

cabinet minister, and on the other, a first-time member of parliament, was the former deputy prime minister and leader of a major coalition partner in the ruling coalition. This combination is indicative of the high literacy rates in East New Britain and by implication, higher levels of education and of participation in the economic sector and the public service generally. Ethnic groups of Manus would fit in the same category. A further implication of Table 7 is that ethnic groups in East New Britain, Manus, and other provinces of the New Guinea Islands region enjoy the benefits of more experienced and stable political leadership than groups in other provinces and regions.

Table 24 shows that of the New Guinea Island provinces, East New Britain province is the most stable in terms of election turnovers based on the 1997 elections.

The table shows that East New Britain returned all its sitting members; this is a strong indication of the stable leadership the province enjoys compared to other provinces. Manus and other New Guinea Islands provinces are generally stable in terms of low turnover rates suggesting also continuity and experience in political leadership provided by their elected leaders.

**TABLE 24: 1997 ELECTION: RE-ELECTED AND NEW MEMBERS**

Region/Province	Members elected	Returned/Re-	New Members	Vulnerability ratio of old to new (%)
<b>Papua</b>	<b>10</b>		<b>14</b>	<b>2: 3 58%</b>
Central	2		3	1 : 2
Gulf	1		2	1 : 2
Western	0		4	0 : 4
Milne Bay	3		2	2 : 1
Oro	3		0	3 : 0
National Capital District	1		3	1 : 3
<b>New Guinea Islands</b>	<b>12</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>6 : 2 29%</b>
Bougainville	3		1	3 : 1
East New Britain	5		0	5 : 0
West New Britain	2		1	2 : 1
Manus	1		1	1 : 1
New Ireland	1		2	1 : 2
<b>Momase</b>	<b>13</b>		<b>16</b>	<b>6 : 8 55%</b>
Morobe	7		3	2 : 1
Madang	1		6	1 : 6
East Sepik	3		4	1 : 2
West Sepik	2		3	1 : 1.5
<b>Highlands</b>	<b>13</b>		<b>26</b>	<b>1 : 2 66%</b>
Chimbu	3		4	1.5 : 2
Eastern Highlands	2		7	1 : 3.5
Enga	1		5	1 : 5
Southern Highlands	4		5	2 : 2.5
Western Highlands	3		5	1.5 : 2.5

Source: Anere, R. May 4, 1998.

Continuity and experience in political leadership—a trait of East New Britain, Manus and other New Guinea Islands provinces—appears to correlate with the high literacy rates (Table 7) and by implication high educational achievements, and participation in the economic sector and the civil service. By contrast, all five Highlands provinces have lower literacy rates and, as a region, the Highlands have 66 % electoral vulnerability level. There is greater loss of parliamentary continuity and experience for the Highlands provinces than for the New Guinea Islands which had a 29 % vulnerability rate in 1997. There is a

suggestion here that low literacy rates appear to correlate with high election vulnerability or turnover rates as demonstrated by the Highlands provinces (Tables 7 and 24 respectively).

What is further suggested in the correlation is that high literacy levels and/or education tends to orientate groups towards modernity whereas low literacy levels tends to reinforce social divisions such as clans thus in turn reinforcing traditions among certain groups. Such a situation is strengthened by issues and activities such as land disputes and clan/tribal warfare which are frequent occurrences especially in the Highlands provinces of PNG. Ethnic cleavages are strong in the Highlands provinces combined with land disputes, clan warfare, and low literacy rates. There is little wonder, therefore, that elected members of parliament from the Highlands are not only vulnerable to losing their seats (Table 24) but there are also more post-election disputes and by-elections in the Highlands provinces than in other provinces of the country (Table 13).<sup>70</sup>

There is no doubt that variations occur within groups. From the point of view of literacy rates, it is clear that literacy levels differ within and between groups thus determining their exposure to modernity through education and participation in economic activities and in the civil service. In this instance as many as eleven ethnic groups in Manus and fourteen in East New Britain have greater access to higher education, wage employment in the civil service and economic opportunities than, say, thirteen ethnic groups in Enga in the Highlands region (see ethnologue insets 5 & 3).

High levels of literacy and/or education are not the only determinants of social change within ethnic groups. Table 4<sup>71</sup> shows that tea and coffee are grown mainly in the Highlands provinces of the country, crops which have fetched good income for many rural families because of good world market prices. Good prices for coffee and tea have made many educated and semi-educated Highlands families in urban and rural areas to own, manage and operate their own businesses ranging from coffee and tea plantations in the rural areas, to trade stores and urban public transport systems in the towns and cities. An urban and a rural entrepreneurial class have emerged as a result of investments generated from cash crop activity and income. The geographic location and appropriate climatic conditions, apart from desire and determination to work hard, have meant that household income varies among ethnic groups, thus the degree of economic participation also varies among the various ethnic groups. Ethnic groups from the Highlands, New Guinea Islands, especially East and West New Britain, are likely to have greater access to economic opportunities and thus higher levels of household income than those from Momase and the Papuan provinces (Tables 3, 4 and 5).<sup>72</sup>

Gender does not appear to affect ethnic structure as much as literacy and education levels, cash crop and income-related economic activities, and migration. Table 2<sup>73</sup> shows that provinces where major economic activities are undertaken, they are likely to attract migrants from other provinces. This means that many ethnic groups are not geographically static, including those whose provinces are the location of major cash crop, mining or petroleum activities. Tables 3, 4 and 5 show coffee, cocoa, and oil palm as major cash crop activities, and as such, groups that produce these crops not only enjoy higher levels of household income, but most likely also ascend to the level of being rich rural peasants and/or entrepreneurs through their efforts (see ethnologue map and insets 2 & 3).

Table 23<sup>74</sup> shows that, while women take an active interest in parliamentary elections, their low success rate suggests that gender and gender issues do not significantly affect ethnic structure or vice versa in PNG. Such issues also have not appealed to electorates as important considerations during elections. This is because the gender concept and gender issues have not significantly penetrated traditional structures such as clans, and traditional values and practices. Women in rural PNG have not been adequately sensitized to the concept and to gender-related issues and the implications on their lives. Thus confronting ignorance has become an important concern for many agencies of state as they try to bring vital services to the rural areas.

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<sup>70</sup> See page 31.

<sup>71</sup> See pages 15-16.

<sup>72</sup> See pages 14-18.

<sup>73</sup> See page 13.

<sup>74</sup> See page 55.

The pattern of ethnic cleavages is such that they are essentially rural based; some are matrilineal while others are patriarchal. These cleavages have been gradually changing since independence in 1975. The major processes that have led to the changes are education, urbanization, rural-urban migration, high-income cash crop activity<sup>75</sup> and access to foreign mining enclaves, foreign logging activity, land owners who form themselves associations as means of enhancing their bargaining strength with the state and multinational mining and/or logging firms. These processes have caused further changes in ethnic structure in PNG in the sense that land owners, and generally the people, in both the rural and urban areas, are becoming not only more class conscious but they are also aware of the need for bargaining leverage with the state and foreign companies, as well as the benefits (or lack of benefits) of effective bargaining.

PNG has been facing tough economic times since the early 1990s and while the urban areas provide a false sense of security for those who have migrated, and even those who intend to migrate, the present Somare government has seen it necessary to place emphasis on an export-driven domestic policy with rural agriculture and infrastructure as being the necessary ingredients. This policy approach is seen as necessary to discourage rural-urban migration based on the realization that agriculture, and other people-related sectors such as tourism and the informal economy, are areas where people can not only engage in productive activities but also be assured of an income. The formal public sector is increasingly unable to absorb the growing number of high school, college and university graduates which numbers around 50,000; the economy can only absorb around 5000 to 7000 per year leaving a good 40,000 or so unemployed each year.<sup>76</sup>

Recruitment to the public service does show limited nepotism along ethnic and regional lines except in isolated cases. The practice is not widespread so that it has not eroded the quality of the public service. However, the quality of the public service is affected by political interference, corruption, and lack of appropriate training, among other factors. These have become a national concern, and with the prodding of the World Bank/IMF under the structural adjustment program, public service reforms have included, among other things, appointments based on merits.<sup>77</sup>

The intensity of political competition among ethnic groups in the Highlands electorates does not translate into dominance of public institutions: the public service, political parties, cabinet and parliament by elites from that region (Table 22).<sup>78</sup> This is not to suggest that isolated cases of nepotism along ethnic lines or that other forms of nepotism do not exist, rather it is to suggest that ethnic-induced nepotism in public sector institutions is constrained to a large degree by the small sizes of each ethnic group – none being no more than 4 percent of the national population. Such practice has been further constrained by awareness of the adverse consequences it can bring upon those who indulge in it. As Table 22 shows, there is no ethnic dominance of government departments in terms of senior management positions.

The rules that determine the selection of personnel to the public service have become part of the public service reforms at the prodding of the World Bank and the IMF.<sup>79</sup> As recent as Thursday 13 March 2003, the PNG parliament passed a bill that amended the Public Service Management Act (1995) empowering the PSC to play an independent role in the selection of heads of civil service organizations. The bill will become law as soon the Speaker of Parliament certifies it (Post Courier newspaper, Friday, March 14, 2003: 2).

Numerous benefits are likely to follow from the law. There will be greater discipline and integrity in the selection, appointment and dismissal of bureaucratic heads. There will also be greater stability and consistency in the relationship between the public service and the executive arm of government as political leaders will no longer interfere in the selection and dismissal process of the public service. Above all, ethnicity will not be the criteria in the appointment process.

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<sup>75</sup> See page 13.

<sup>76</sup> Constraints to the labour market (p. 12) limit the capacity of both the formal and informal economy to absorb graduates from educational institutions.

<sup>77</sup> See page 59.

<sup>78</sup> See page 44.

<sup>79</sup> See page 59.



As for the party system, citizens and policy makers alike expect to see greater stability in behavior among parties, between the parties and parliament, and between them and the executive arm of government under OLIPPAC. This law was put to test in the June 2002 parliamentary elections and, looking back, it can be said that the success of the law is evident in at least three areas. First, OLIPPAC was able to regulate the behaviour of political parties in the elections in that they all had to be registered parties in order to contest the elections. Second, all the parties had complied with section 60 of the law subsections 1 (a), (b) and (c) in that none of them endorsed more than one candidate in any one electorate; they endorsed varying numbers of candidates because they were all registered; and no candidate accepted endorsement from more than one registered political party at the same time (CDC, 2001: 28). Third, whilst the outcome of the elections as to which candidate or party would win in an electorate was unpredictable, the formation of government was, however, more predictable than in previous elections. This is because OLIPPAC's provisions on the formation of government (Section 76, subsections 1-8) make it very clear as to the party that would form government and the procedures that would be followed (CDC, 2001: 37-38). In this regard, the National Alliance party of Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare had the highest number of endorsed candidates declared elected – 18 out of 93 declared winners- thus qualified to form government under Section 76 subsection 1 of OLIPPAC. Again, ethnicity will not be the criteria in the formation of government.

Policy makers and citizens are generally content with the ability of OLIPPAC to regulate the behavior of parties in at least in the 2002 elections. However, Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare (2003), Transparency International PNG Inc. and women's groups argue that the law could be improved in terms of candidate endorsement. To this end, Prime Minister Somare has committed his government to amending OLIPPAC so that relevant provisions are modified to ensure that political parties set aside a certain percentage of endorsement for women candidates in future elections (perhaps as early as the 2007 elections). This would be the most significant change since 1975 where OLIPPAC would ensure greater political equality between men and women in PNG.

OLIPPAC is the first important legislation aimed at instilling discipline among political parties since independence in 1975 both on the floor and outside of parliament. Significant improvements in the behaviour of parties are expected that would lead to greater executive stability. The frequent motions of no confidence (Table 21)<sup>80</sup> could be a thing of the past if the relevant provisions pertaining to motions and votes of no confidence in a Prime Minister or a Minister of cabinet were strictly enforced by the Registrar of Political Parties.<sup>81</sup>

As for the cabinet, its composition from 1975 to the present has really been the results of political horse trading by political parties and the leader of the party with the highest number of endorsed candidates declared elected, especially under OLIPPAC. In some instances such the 1997 elections, the leader of a party who was influential and quick in mobilizing a group of parties to put together a coalition, even if that party did not have the highest number of its endorsed candidates, elected. It is safe to state here that after twenty eight years of independence, there are not laws that would determine the composition of government. This is the difference between OLIPPAC which determines which party or parties that will form government, and the actual composition of a ruling coalition in which there is the absence of any written rules. At any rate, there is a rough balance in the representation of ethnic groups through their elected leaders in the 19 provinces.

The norm of regional and provincial representation in cabinet has always been observed in the composition of cabinet over the years. This is to ensure a minimum degree of political, executive and social stability and to minimize, as much as possible, any forces of fragmentation and/or disintegration in the country. For the past 28 years governments have had a short life span of about 25 months as a result of votes of no confidence (Table 21).

Citizens, public servants, the local business community, foreign investors and foreign donors have been very concerned with the turn over of governments over the past 28 years which has generally resulted in

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<sup>80</sup> See page 41.

<sup>81</sup> These provisions are contained in Sections 82, 83, 84, and 85 of OLIPPAC.

delays in implementing development projects, unnecessary dismissal of bureaucratic heads, and mixed signals being sent to foreign investors and aid donors. For these groups, however, there is some comfort now in that the implementation of OLIPPAC will most likely bring about a significant degree of executive stability in the life of the present government and parliament (2002-2007) and beyond. OLIPPAC therefore represents an important contribution to good governance in PNG in the first decade of the new millennium.

Despite the 817 plus ethnic groups in the country, the people are nonetheless represented through 109 elected members in the national parliament. The rules that determine the election of representatives are the election laws known as the organic law on elections in which changes have been made to the voting system from the first-past-the-post to the limited preferential voting, and to the organic law on national and local-level government elections.<sup>82</sup>

With the change from the first-past-the-post to the limited preferential voting, and with the Prime Minister's undertaking to change relevant sections of OLIPPAC to ensure greater endorsement of women candidates by political parties, the 2007 and future elections may see more female candidates elected to the national parliament, provincial assemblies and even local government councils. In this regard OLIPPAC has potential for reducing political inequality between men and women in terms of political representation.

The governance measures instituted in the public service, the party system, cabinet and the parliament are no doubt aimed at improving the delivery of goods and services with the view to reducing inequalities in areas such as incomes, assets, employment, education and health. While Tables 3, 5 and 6,<sup>83</sup> show that income inequalities still exist especially as they relate to PNG's agricultural production and exports, both past and present governments have enacted legislation and made decisions that would diversify and improve the agricultural base with the view to distributing income earning opportunities throughout the country.

The present Somare government has embarked on an export-driven economic recovery program aimed at diversifying and improving agricultural production, the manufacturing sector, and encouraging downstream processing in the economy. It is policy regimes such as this that have great potential to link government with the people and thus encourage their economic participation. The ability of the government to absorb the various ethnic groups into mainstream production is an important way of reducing the ever-increasing gap between the rich and poor sections of the PNG community.

There is no doubt here that inequalities in incomes, say, between households with better crop outputs and export income, as opposed to those with less outputs and income (Tables 4 & 5)<sup>84</sup>, have generated the perception among political and administrative elites that they should not face the hardships that other sections of the community do. Consequently, decisions were made to increase their wages at the expense of the general public. In this regard, larger socio-economic inequalities do seem to influence inequality in the public sector where there is greater income security for political and administrative elites than there is for ordinary public servants and workers.

Inequalities in assets at the macro level do influence attitudes and practices of public officials in the public sector that lean towards corruption or other forms of abuse of power. Indigenous elites aspire to exhibit consumption tastes similar to those in Western societies by acquiring wealth and property of one kind or another, in many instances, by flouting the rule of law. This in turn undermines the quality of governance in public sector institutions in PNG.

Gender inequalities at the societal level are also reproduced in public sector institutions. Table 23 shows that women's participation in the parliament has remained under 2 percent since 1975. And in parliamentary elections, their popularity levels and thus their success rates are very small compared to male candidates; many are not even considered for endorsement by political parties. Table 22 shows that all but one bureaucratic heads of government departments are male. In other words, in the senior management

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<sup>82</sup> In 2002, local level government elections were conducted simultaneously with the parliamentary elections.

<sup>83</sup> See pages 14-18.

<sup>84</sup> See pages 15-18.

levels of the public service, men still dominate career positions. A similar situation exists in the private sector and in statutory organizations. Traditional attitudes where families 'invest' in boys more so than in girls do seem to manifest in gender inequalities in public sector institutions. It would seem that traditional attitudes in PNG are not easily giving way to the imperatives of democracy, such as gender equality.

In education there is inequality between ethnic groups, provinces, regions and between the male and female segment of the population. Using literacy rates as an indicator of education, Table 7 shows that inequality exists between urban males and urban females, and between rural males and rural females. The inequality is greater between the 'combined urban' and 'combined rural' strongly suggesting that more public resources are spent on urban education than on rural education. There are significant differences in literacy levels between provinces suggesting that certain ethnic groups in some provinces are more educated than other groups in other provinces. According to the Table, ethnic groups in the New Guinea Islands region are better educated, followed by those in Papua, Momase, and then those in the Highlands region.

It would seem that the wider inequalities in education (not just in literacy rates but in other areas such as school enrollments) are reproduced in public sector institutions as well. From Table 22,<sup>85</sup> it can be seen that the overwhelming number of heads of government departments and statutory bodies are from the New Guinea Islands and Papua regions. This is explained, among other factors, by the fact that the citizens of both regions have been exposed to western education longer than those, say, in the Highlands, through schools run by church organizations, the Australian colonial administration, and later by the independent state of PNG. Of particular interest here is the fact that Manus province, which has the highest literacy rates in PNG (Table 7), also would have a very large number of educated Manusians in the civil service. This is a common fact as there are many educated citizens of Manus who hold very senior positions especially in the civil service but also in statutory organizations. There are more citizens of Manus with doctoral degrees than any other provincial or ethnic group in PNG. What can be said here is that, given that wider inequalities in education are reproduced in the public sector, the state in PNG is, in reality, a shadow or reflection of the PNG society, which undermines its role supposedly as an autonomous agent of social change. The state, after all, is the largest employer of the indigenous middle class. The PNG society is the mirror of the state; the state is not, or at least it does not appear to be, the mirror of PNG society. This may be the case of 'strong society-weak state' in PNG where traditional values and practices are still a powerful source of legitimacy as opposed to modern values as embodied in the national constitution.

Inequalities in health do exist between the four regions, the provinces, and by implication between ethnic groups in terms of, among other things, poor conditions of facilities (including the need to replace medical equipment) and the poor supplies of drugs. The literacy rates shown in Table 7 generally suggest that those provinces with higher literacy rates provide better services, including health, than those with lower rates. For example, the East New Britain province which ranks second in Table 7 has shown, say, from 1990 to 2003, that it has the administrative, financial and technical capacity to carry out a wide range of services for its people, including improving health services at the district and village levels.<sup>86</sup> Generally speaking, the lesser developed provinces do not enjoy the same degree of improved levels of health services as do the more developed provinces.

It can be shown that inequalities in health are reproduced in public sector institutions and processes. An assumption here may serve as an explanation. It is generally assumed that if the people, including the female population, are exposed to better education, not only will the country develop but the health of the public will generally improve through knowledge, information and better choices. In other words, education is a necessary means by which the population can become engaged in productive activities and general improvements in health can come about. Demographic pressure and long-term development conceptions do exert some influence in the rationalization for higher proportion of government funding directed at education than health in public sector budgetary decision making.

The patterns of employment in the public and private sectors are segmented, according to the 1999 National Population Policy 2000-2010 (Department of Planning and Monitoring 1999: 72). And further employment

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<sup>85</sup> See page 44.

<sup>86</sup> In late May, 2003, a delegation representing the East New Britain province called on the national government for greater autonomy based on its capabilities and achievements, EM TV news. This call was reiterated in January of 2004.

creation –either in the form of rural self-employment, urban wage employment (formal or informal sector) or private sector employment has been constrained by various factors. Some of these factors have been highlighted earlier.<sup>87</sup>

While a coherent national policy of employment generation in PNG remains to be developed, a wide range of remedial measures have been suggested for improving the capacity of the PNG economy to absorb labor, and some of these have been implemented. Box 1 shows some of these measures:

**BOX 1: REMEDIAL MEASURES FOR IMPROVING THE CAPACITY OF THE PNG ECONOMY TO ABSORB LABOR**

Deregulation of wages and equalization of the urban and rural minimum wage	Improved advisory and extension services in agriculture and fisheries
Rapid increase in the numbers receiving basic education through educational reform	Structural adjustment program including: tax reform, tariff reform, privatization of public assets, reduction in public service costs, application of user-pay policy to social services, deregulation of foreign exchange, etc.
Removal of legal obstacles to 'informal sector' activities in urban areas	Creation of markets for rural land and labor to remove 'slack' in the economy
Reduced crime and urban lawlessness	Decentralized planning to provinces and districts
Overcoming existing shortages of skilled manpower through improved training	Better technical assistance to village producers
Encouraging labor-intensive manufacturing in small and medium-sized enterprises	Improved credit for village-based projects
Major public investment in transport and communications infrastructure	More research aimed at improving agricultural outputs
Increased apprenticeship intake	Maintenance of macroeconomic stability
New emphasis on managerial training with emphasis on self-employment	Industrialization to promote small scale manufacturing
Promotion of sub-contracting to support growth of small firms	

Source: Department of Planning and Monitoring, November 1999, pp. 72-73.

Most of the measures in Box 1 are aimed either at correcting structural problems in the overall PNG economy, or at improving the quality of PNG's human resources. On the structural side, many of the above measures have already been implemented. In 1992, the urban minimum wage was reduced to K23 (US\$6.6)<sup>88</sup> per week, and this has probably had a dampening effect on rural-urban migration. A Structural Adjustment Program has been implemented, including the deregulation of foreign exchange to allow the value of the Kina to be determined by market forces. User fees have been introduced in a number of areas, including health and education. Tax and tariff reform measures are to be implemented shortly. The State has commenced the divestiture of its equity holdings in commercial enterprises. Several state-owned entities have been 'corporatized' and some have been privatized. The decentralization of development planning to provinces and district governments has been accomplished in theory but the capacity to produce decentralized plans remains weak in most provinces (Department of Planning and Monitoring 1999: 72-74).

On the whole, patterns of employment in the public and private sectors remain segmented despite measures implemented to correct structural problems in the economy and to improve the quality of human resources in the country. This is suggested by the figures for net outward migration for all but seven provinces as shown Table 2.<sup>89</sup> The constraints which are, in fact, structural problems as shown in pages 13-14 are, to a large degree, and in varying combinations, responsible for large flows of outward migration. Provinces where there are major economic activities, aside from the 'urbanized' economies of the National Capital District and East New Britain, have become the key destination of both inter-provincial and rural-urban migration. This is indicative of not just a segmented economy but also of a segmented labor market in the public and private sectors.

<sup>87</sup> See page 12.

<sup>88</sup> This amount translates into US\$5.98 per week at .2600 US\$ for PNGK1.00, May 30, 2003.

<sup>89</sup> See page 13.

In the area of elections, electoral data going back to 1977 (and even the pre-independence elections)<sup>90</sup> suggest that voter preferences are segmented along clan and tribal lines than along political party or policy lines. The fragmentation of votes (Table 18) is the result of the large numbers of candidates (Table 16) and also the FPTP voting system. Consequently, votes are cast along clan or tribal lines. This reinforces the election culture of 'the predominance of local considerations' where loyalty is accorded to the clan and not to broader political variables such as the party. Also wider issues of public policy importance do not play a major role in voter decision making.

Ethnic cleavages determine the outcome of elections in PNG. This is partly also due to the absence of broader political and/or ideological cleavages since independence in 1975. As a result, sub-national loyalties dominate the election/political culture and do not seem to easily give way to the imperatives of democracy.

In the same vein, political parties do not express themselves in any major political, ideological, and/or class cleavage ever since party politics emerged into the national scene in 1968. There is also the absence of mass parties. This is one reason why parties do not matter much to voters in elections and that voter preferences are expressed along clan or tribal lines. Although the number of political parties has increased (Table 9),<sup>91</sup> they are still seen as urban-based creations many of which become active at times of elections only to find themselves become inactive or disappear from the national scene altogether after elections.

One issue associated with parties is that of party hopping and thus party instability. It is hoped that OLIPPAC will stabilize the party system to some extent, and thus contribute to executive stability, since it came into force in 2001-2002. This is not say that intra-party and intra-coalition power struggles will be eliminated altogether; rather, the incidence of party hopping and votes of no-confidence in the Prime Minister will be reduced. The multiparty system, including multiparty coalitions, will still encourage trade offs of loyalty for positions of power, influence, perks and privileges through any loopholes in OLIPPAC and normal Westminster parliamentary conventions, such as the privilege the Prime Minister enjoys in making cabinet reshuffles which is the time he manipulates the rewards and punishments.

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<sup>90</sup> See page 36.

<sup>91</sup> See page 27.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the following questions will be answered;

### **What is the politics of representation in the public sector?**

In essence, the analysis thus far renders support to the argument that there is relative balance in the representation of ethnic groups in the PNG parliament, political parties, cabinet, and in the civil service. This is because none of the 817 plus ethnic groups is large enough (none is more than 4 percent of the national population) to dominate any of these public sector institutions. However, at present there are serious legitimization problems encountered by the state due, among other things, to weak party system, clan-based voting, large numbers of candidates in elections, fragmentation of votes under FPTP, and the general resilience of PNG's traditions, cultures and political culture which, to an increasing degree, have permeated the state. While PNG is ethnically diverse, and the composition of public sector institutions do reflect that diversity, democratic values and principles do not seem to be easily inculcated in the minds of the people, including some of the elites.

PNG suffers from a fragmented polity. This is manifested in the clash between traditional and Western values, and, given the resilience of traditional values and PNG's political culture the general consequence has been the lack of loyalty to the state. This is in part because the traditions and political culture have permeated the state. In this context, cooperation among the elites and between the elites and the general population, in terms of creating new values and attitudes that will generate wider loyalty to the state, is somewhat constrained. Consequently, Westminster parliamentary democracy has not been effectively adapted to the PNG society. Another consequence is the lack of elite consensus in ensuring the integrity of the state. This is evident in the lack of party, executive and parliamentary stability and even in political interference in the civil service. In turn, such an environment renders political parties, the executive, the parliament and the executive less effective in not only managing inequality among the 817 plus ethnic groups but also in managing good governance in the public sector in PNG. That PNG is ranked 133 out of 177 countries in UNDP's 2000 Human Development Report is itself testimony that past and present governments have not improved the living standards of the people over the years.

As an ethnically fragmented society where sub-national and thus parochial loyalties are not easily giving way to the imperatives of democracy, it is not difficult to understand why the Westminster system has not 'grown its roots' in the PNG polity over the past 28 years of sovereign nationhood. In many ways the state is severely limited in its capacity to penetrate and mobilize the people, and respond to their collective demands. Aside from periodic elections and a free media, the pillars of democracy, including transparency and good governance, have not been firmly developed in the rural areas.

### **How effective are the institutions in managing the ethnic structures and inequalities observed?**

Four key public sector institutions responsible for managing ethnic diversity and inequalities have been discussed thus far. They are the cabinet, parliament, political parties and the public service. PNG has a Westminster unitary parliamentary system which means that all institutions are linked one way or another to each other, for example, the fusion of the executive with the legislature. The short answer to the question is that these institutions have not been effective in terms of managing ethnic structures and inequalities among the various groups. Some of the issue areas where the lack of effectiveness of these institutions can be gauged are land compensation claims by landowner (ethnic) groups; urban settlements where migrants squat illegally on traditional land; relations between landowner communities and resource developers

(usually foreign companies); use of public funds for personal interests in numerous occasions; and clan violence in elections. Inequality lies at the core of these issues and is a compelling reason, for example, why landowners demand land compensation or people migrate into towns only to end up squatting illegally on nearby traditional land.

The workings of each of these institutions may shed some light on why they have not been so effective in managing the ethnic structures and inequalities. As for the cabinet - its composition reflects the ethnic diversity of the country. In other words, no ethnic group is deliberately left out in the cabinet meaning that a group can have its elected representative become a member of cabinet if he/she 'plays his or her cards correctly.' However, the formation of the cabinet inevitably involves power struggles and trade offs (of loyalty for power, perks and influence).

Political horse trading is potentially destabilizing for cabinet and for political parties because trade-offs and pay-offs begin with cabinet formation and continue throughout the life of the government. The trade offs encourage individualism rather than party solidarity in that power and perks will be offered to individuals. Consequently, some parties will have some of their members in Government while others in the Opposition. This is presently the case with the Pangu Party. It is not uncharacteristic for the cabinet to be preoccupied with political survival because of the likelihood of a vote of no-confidence in the Prime Minister, especially after the 18-month grace period allowed by the constitution is over. This leads the cabinet to deviate from its legal mandate which is to construct policies and make decisions aimed at addressing important development issues such as land compensation claims; urban squatter settlements; relations between landowner communities and resource developers; and clan violence in elections, among others. In short, trade-offs and pay-offs in relation to cabinet formation and coalition unity leads to the absence or lack of effective policy linkages between cabinet and society in terms of managing the ethnic structures and socio-economic inequalities through the various issue areas.

The formation of government/cabinet is now being regulated by OLIPPAC since 2001-2002. This is all the more necessary since there are 22 registered political parties out of which as many 10-15 parties could be vying for a place in cabinet. While OLIPPAC's provisions make it predictable in terms of the party or parties that will form government, the provisions do not make it predictable and transparent in terms of the parties that will become part of the coalition government. This is left to political horse trading where loyalty to the party that is invited by the Head of State to form government is traded off by the smaller parties for power and perks, that is, for inclusion in the government. Horse trading makes the formation of government less transparent as the public will not know the composition of the coalition until, say, two weeks after the return of election writs and prior to the first sitting of the new parliament.

The inherently unstable nature of coalition government undermines the integrity of parliament and parliamentary rule through the unitary Westminster parliamentary system in PNG. Power struggles within the coalition and between political parties is contagious in the sense that the parliament's law making function is affected because parliamentarians divert their time, energies and resources to political survival than to the business of law making. It is little wonder that issues such as rural-urban migration and land compensation have not been given enough policy attention over the past 28 years.

Parliament's capacity for law making is also affected by post-election court battles or suspension of members of parliament, by-elections, and/or 'failed elections' as in the case of the 2002 elections. In each of these defaults of parliamentary elections, the integrity of parliament and parliamentary rule is no doubt eroded. Some electorates go without representatives for more than a year. Otherwise members of parliament whose election victories are being challenged by losing candidates can not perform their representative and/or ministerial duties effectively because their time and energies are diverted to election challenges in court battles.

Power struggles have at times led the government to gag the parliament by manipulating its sitting sessions in order to avoid a possible vote of no confidence in the Prime Minister. In 1999, for example, the gagging of parliament almost put the country into a constitutional crisis when it appeared increasingly likely that parliament may not meet its constitutional requirements by sitting for at least 62 days in any one year.

In short, parliament is less able to effectively make laws in order to manage the different ethnic groups and inequalities because it is continuously subjected to power struggles. This perhaps is an obvious disadvantage of the unitary parliamentary and multiparty nexus in PNG. It is hoped that OLIPPAC will reduce the frequency and intensity of power struggles thus enable the parliament to focus on law-making.

Political parties are key players in power struggles at the parliamentary level. Each party wants to occupy the post of government. Their actions have led to instability of the party system, of the executive, and have compromised the parliament's law making function by accommodating party interests rather than people's interests. Parties therefore have not become an effective link between the state and the different ethnic groups. In that regard, party policies have also not adequately reflected the interests of the various groups throughout the country. It is also hoped that OLIPPAC will stabilize the party system by ensuring that those parties and members that voted for the Prime Minister in the first sitting of the new parliament, will remain loyal to the incumbent throughout the life of the parliament.

The public service is another public sector institution that has been the subject of our analyses. There is no ethnic domination of the public service. There are, however, several key problems that affect its performance; financial constraints; political interference; management deficiencies; and delivery of vital services to meet the needs and development aspirations of the various groups. Political interference is partly a flow-on effect of power struggles at the parliamentary level and/or ministerial changes at the cabinet level. Public service reforms have led to amendments in public service laws aimed at curbing political interference and at improving management systems. This means that the public service could now concentrate on improving its service delivery capabilities in order to better meet the needs of the people.

While affirmative action in the form of public sector reforms have been undertaken to enhance executive stability, ensure the integrity of parliament and its effectiveness in law-making; enhance party stability; and to improve the performance of the public service, it can nevertheless be said that the unitary parliamentary system is a contagious phenomena in that the problems of one institution can and do affect the workings of the others.

#### **Are the above institutions geared towards achieving majoritarian or consensual outcomes?**

Theoretically, the above institutions are geared towards achieving majoritarian or consensual outcomes. This is because the principles of democracy and of the Westminster parliamentary system are enshrined in the PNG constitution and in the laws of the land. However, for the past 28 years the practice of government has fallen short of adherence to the rule of law at acceptable levels such that public confidence in government and in the institutions of state, including the institutions that have been the subject of discussion, has been modest. Elites have used these institutions to trade off public office for personal gain in one form or another for their own self interests. Executive and political party instability, subjecting the parliament to power struggles, and interference in the public service are direct manifestations of the trade off-pay off processes. While generally speaking these institutions have tried their best to promote majoritarian or consensual outcomes in their operations, it is the attitudes of some elites that have not been compatible with the values and principles in the constitution that have undermined the good intentions of these institutions. This is a problem of state building in PNG in the sense that resources and capabilities can be infused into the institutions, but it is difficult to infuse values into the officials and leaders who staff or who are members of these institutions. Consequently, the institutions have often time been less able to match deeds with democratic ideals such as majoritarian or consensual outcomes. For the past 28 years the FPTP voting system in PNG has repeatedly produced election results that have been way short of 'majority rule' in as many as 96 percent of the 109 electorates. At any rate, public sector reforms have begun; they provide some hope, for example, that political parties whose candidates win constituent seats in elections will do so with majority votes under the new limited preferential voting. In addition, the new public service reforms now means that the Public Services Commission can more easily arrive at consensual decisions in appointments to the public service as the reforms make it illegal for political interference to be entertained by political leaders.

#### **Do majoritarian institutions necessarily exclude groups on the basis of ethnicity?**



As an ethnically diverse country, the well being of the people and of the nation is dependent upon meeting the needs of the various groups. The unity of the country is built upon its diversity. To this end, no group is excluded on the basis of ethnicity. The parliament, for example, has a membership of which the coalition government of Prime Minister Somare commanding the majority. This ensures that all the four regions, the 19 provinces and thus all ethnic groups are represented in the decisions of parliament. There is inequality, however, among the various ethnic groups, between the elites and the ordinary masses, even among the elites, and between indigenous groups and foreigners but this is not the result of ethnicity. History, geography and climate, political and administrative capabilities, resource endowment (comparative advantage), corruption and the general receptivity to change of the various ethnic groups are among the factors responsible. Above all, however, it is poor governance in the public sector institutions that is among other factors responsible for the various forms of inequality that have been observed.

**If institutions seek to promote majoritarian outcomes, do they also contain safeguards that can yield consensual outcomes?**

Yes- since 1998, there have been legislative reforms undertaken in several important areas. These are: (1) OLIPPAC aimed at regulating and stabilizing the political parties; (2) the 2001 Superannuation Act aimed at eliminating political interference in the superannuation industry and protecting members' financial contributions; (3) 2002 Organic Law on National Elections which introduced limited preferential voting aimed at ensuring that winning candidates have a wider representative base of votes in the electorates; and (4) Public Service reforms aimed, among other things, at eliminating political interference in the public service, and promoting accountability and transparency in the public service.

How are consensual outcomes assured in these legislative reforms? OLIPPAC encourages political parties to conduct their affairs in line with decisions reached by their respective caucuses and party constitutions. In other words, consensual outcomes on party affairs are expected to come from caucus meetings; moreover, party constitutions are expected to ensure internal and organizational cohesion-suggesting that when constitutions are followed, consensus is more readily reached by party members and caucus meetings.

The 2002 Organic Law on National Elections introduces the limited preferential voting which will most likely raise the winning candidates' vote tallies from the present twenty percent and under to, say, 40 percent plus, or better still, 50 percent and above. It is expected that the election results in any by-elections prior to 2007, and in future elections, to be better accepted by the majority of voters in various electorates. In other words, preferential voting will accommodate the will of the majority of voters in each electorate than is presently the case under first-past-the-post voting. Preferential voting therefore is more consensus-oriented than the FPTP system.

Under the public service reforms, the Public Services Commission is given greater powers and independence to recruit public servants, especially senior management personnel. The commission will also manage public service matters under Public Service Standing Orders and other relevant laws. Political interference is illegal. This means that the reforms will encourage greater consensual outcomes as well as transparency and accountability.

**What alternatives can be suggested on the basis of evidence derived from the inter-relations of ethnic structures, inequalities and electoral behavior?**

At this point an alternative system to the limited preferential voting will be discussed. It is called 'exhaustive party preferential voting' or EPPV for short. What is EPPV? EPPV is a voting system where there are two sets of preferences for the voters. First there is the candidate vote and, second, there is the party vote. Ballot papers will show boxes, names and photographs for the candidate vote, and likewise, names of parties and candidates endorsed by the parties, and photographs of the candidates endorsed by the parties. Voting is by way of preferences (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> etcetera) where the winning threshold is still 50 percent plus 1. If a candidate wins a seat in the candidate vote then he or she is declared the winner. Counting will stop at this point. Party preferences will not be counted. It is important to note here that the candidate who wins the seat could either be an independent, or he or she could be endorsed by a party. If no candidate

wins a seat in the candidate vote, then the party preferences are counted. When a party wins a seat, it (the seat) is declared in the name of the party and the candidate endorsed by the party to contest the seat. In other words, a party can not and should not contest a seat without a candidate; they must endorse candidates in order to contest seats and thus qualify to have their names and candidate names on the ballot paper. It is important to note here that the candidate that represents the electorate on behalf of the party may not be the same as the candidate that may have won the seat in the candidate vote. That is, parties shall not endorse more than one candidate in any one electorate at the same time. Similarly, no candidate shall seek endorsement from more than one political party for an electorate at the same time. Moreover, no candidate shall contest an electorate both as an independent and as a party candidate at the same time. By implication, a party that does not contest an electorate does not have the right to claim the winning candidate should that candidate be an independent. The independent has the right to remain independent while serving in parliament, or he or she may join up with any of the parties that contested the electorate during the elections.

These conditions should be incorporated into election laws with appropriate penalties should they be violated by parties and candidates.

How is EPPV different from FPTP? EPPV is different from FPTP in a number of ways. The differences, it is hoped, make EPPV an improvement in electoral governance from the present FPTP. EPPV should, over time, reverse two worrying trends that are presently strongly associated with FPTP. They are the increasingly large numbers of candidates, and the diminishing proportion by which winners get elected in PNG elections. Moreover, EPPV encourages voters to vote for parties and not just for individuals which has been the case since universal suffrage was first introduced in the 1964 House of Assembly elections. Since that time, parties have not meant much to voters in the elections. Candidates must therefore win seats for parties rather than parties seeking to win seats for candidates.

EPPV will encourage the reduction in candidate and party numbers by requiring that each candidate and/or political party provide evidence of an electoral base by furnishing the PNG Electoral Commission with names of 1000 voters (male and female voters) who are supporters of an individual candidate and/or a political party based on their first preference voting intentions. If a candidate is endorsed by a political party, then the 1000 supporters are the same for both the candidate and the party in question. This is because the candidate will have his/her photograph appear in the party section of the ballot paper. A candidate who is not endorsed by a political party but is contesting an electorate will still need to furnish names of 1000 supporters based on first preference voting intentions to the Electoral Commission. This candidate will stand as an independent. It is noted here that the names of each independent candidate's or candidate-and-party supporters will be checked against the common roll kept by the commission. This is to ensure that the names are valid and that the names of an independent candidate's supporters are not the same as those of other candidates. This applies to a party and its candidate as well. In other words, no voter or supporter will have first preference voting intention, thus first preference vote, for two or more candidates, or two or more parties at the same time. This is to eliminate double or multiple voting for the same candidate and/or the same party. If an independent candidate wins an electorate the Electoral Commissioner would declare the name of the candidate. If a political party wins a seat (electorate) the Electoral Commissioner would declare the name of the candidate who won the seat on behalf of the party that endorsed him or her.

Will EPPV increase the vote tallies of winning candidates from their present low levels of under 10 percent, and 11 to 29 percent to 50 percent and above, or at least 35 to 49 percent? At the very least, the winning candidate may be slightly more representative of the wider electorate under EPPV than before. In other words, the winning tallies may now be in the higher 30s to the 40-49 percent bracket which is better than is presently the case. This is because the first and/or second preference(s) may go to certain candidates to meet family, clan or tribal obligations, while the other preferences will go to those candidates whose qualities are deemed by the voters to be the most appropriate in terms of representing the electorate. If there is overwhelming support for the 'clan' or 'tribal' candidate, he or she may win with 50 percent plus 1 or at least by a respectable majority, say, in the 40-49 percentile. If a candidate with the 'appropriate' qualities has overwhelming support, than again he/she may win by a respectable or an absolute majority. Even in electorates where candidates do not receive overwhelming support, there will still be one amongst them

who is likely to be more 'popular' than the others. He or she will receive more preferences than the others and thus will receive a respectable majority.

At any rate, one principal benefit of EPPV would be a reversal of an aspect of PNG's political culture from the insignificance of political parties to a greater significance of political parties because voters will be voting for them aside from independent candidates. By implication, political parties would be obliged to commit themselves to bringing development to the electorates in return for the electoral support they get from the voters. In the medium to long term parties will seek mass membership from among the voters in order to have solid electoral bases, and in so doing get citizens to be involved in party decision making. Women may and can also become members of, and even hold executive positions in, political parties. The internal democracy of parties will improve and they will become a more effective link between voters and government.

At this point it is necessary to point out that the discussions thus far point to poor governance by public sector institutions in PNG such that there is continued inequality between groups. It is necessary also to reiterate here the UNRISD hypothesis that where ethnic groups are less than, say, 10 percent of the national population, no one particular group is likely to dominate public sector institutions is generally valid. The PNG study shows that none of the 817 ethnic groups is greater than 4 percent of the total national population thus no one group has dominated any of the public sector institutions discussed thus far. What are the underlying causes of poor governance and inequality in PNG then?

From the discussion and analyses there are at least three factors that can be extrapolated; first, the multi-polar and fragmented nature of PNG society such that there is predominance of clan and other sub-national loyalties in state-society interactions; second, the institutional design of public sector institutions, laws, policies and processes; and third, the mindset of various officials or elites in the public sector institutions that do not complement and thus reinforce the value system and principles of democracy as embodied in the national constitution. It may even be said that the constitution itself is responsible for poor governance in some areas such as the party system and elections, by not limiting the number of political parties, and the number of candidates contesting parliamentary elections.

The constitution encourages freedom of association, amongst other liberties; this has contributed to the growth in the number of political parties so that there are now 22 of them, having dropped in number from 43 in the 2002 elections. This means that coalition governments in PNG are inevitable. By their very nature, coalitions are generally unstable as the likelihood and frequency of conflicts is high. PNG has not been immune to this danger resulting in power struggles and frequent changes of government. This contributes to poor governance.

On the whole, however, the assumption taken from the UNRISD typology that, in multi-polar fragmented societies where ethnic groups are relatively small, ethnic-based political activity is less likely to be prevalent appears to be validated in the PNG experience. This study has also affirmed the argument stated at the outset that there is a rough balance in the representation of ethnic groups in the parliament, political parties, the cabinet and the civil service. This is so in spite of the fact that there is a weak party system, a generally unstable executive through fluid multiparty coalitions and a parliament that has frequently been distracted by power struggles between political parties and independent members of parliament. Competition for representation in parliament has become highly competitive along ethnic lines, more so than in the political parties, the cabinet and in the civil service.

At the conceptual level, the PNG study points to the limitation of Robert Putnam's argument on social capital; the study suggests that in PNG's multipolar, ethnically fragmented setting there is lack of commonality of values which thwarts cooperation among all sectors of the population – a condition that is necessary for social capital to thrive which in turn will encourage affirmative action, among other things, to reduce inequality. The predominance of loyalty to the clan or one's ethnic group as opposed to the state is indicative of the lack of common values. But PNG's case is indeed interesting – on the one hand, it has a weak party system and a Westminster model that has not been effectively adapted, yet, on the other, it still is a "democracy." As a developing country, it has a democratic longevity of at least 40 years unlike other developing countries that have experienced military coups, say, within 20 years of statehood. What accounts for this longevity? This study suggests that although a strong party system may be an important

condition for “good democratic performance” (Powell 1982), in PNG’s setting, the absence of ethnic dominance in public sector institutions and the relatively small sizes of ethnic groups, with the largest ones being less than 10 percent (or 4 percent in this case) of the national population, that these characteristics may be necessary though not sufficient conditions for democratic longevity.

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