

I have been deeply dismayed on receiving your letter of 16th August. I need to say at once that I regard both the tone and the argument of your letter as deplorable.

I find particularly deplorable your reference to the "colonial system imposed by Canberra" and "Canberra colonialism". You must be aware that these are terms of opprobrium and offence. If they were used in a communication to the Government by an accredited diplomatic representative of a friendly country his withdrawal would be requested from his home Government.

I am also amazed and disappointed that in spite of your long residence in the Territory you appear to have so little understanding of the Administration's policies and endeavours, the problems facing us and the urgent need of attacking them. There is much in the more detailed arguments which you put which is incorrect. To quote one example you say about timber rights "The present Ordinance is utterly devoid of native approval, that is for sure." The present policy on timber rights in fact requires 100% concurrence by the native owners to any sale and in many cases such as Tonolei the Administration officers have spent many years of patient work in tracing the owners to ascertain their consent to the sale of the timber rights. This consent was obtained. In such cases it sometimes happens that individuals or minority groups subsequently raise objections which can be publicised and magnified if such individuals and minority groups enjoy support from local or other expatriates. There is an element of this situation in the difficulties encountered in Bougainville.



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Your own statements on this situation seem contradictory. On the one hand you appear to be saying that your missionaries are not supposed to intervene in the quarrels between Council Members and non members and between the C.R.A. adherents and dissidents. On the other hand you seem to be saying that the people opposing the C.R.A. project are right and that you support them. You also appear to be saying that the indigenous people (and they are many) who support the C.R.A. project are wrong, that the Administration is wrong and that the House of Assembly is wrong in the view it is taking on this issue.

There are, as you know, many missions and many high dignitaries of many churches in the Territory. If time permitted it I should be happy to engage in personal dialogue with each one of them and anyone else who needs to be convinced that the Government and the Administration are sincerely and constructively discharging their responsibilities to the people of the Territory and are doing everything and more than is demanded of them under U.N. Trusteeship Agreement. However, time does not permit me to engage in such prolonged dialogue nor is it my task to do so. Nevertheless, I suggest that you might usefully reflect on the following excerpt from a report prepared by a Mission of the World Bank the principles of which are fully accepted in our policies:

"...However, improvement in the well-being of the people in a primitive society means change, and change disturbs customs and the way of life. The tendency of the indigene has been to cling to the past, to tradition, to special beliefs and to oppose the unknown.

...While substantial progress has been made in bringing the native people forward, the Mission is convinced that the motivation of large numbers to take part in a modern economy is as difficult a task as any that faces the Administration. It will not be adequate for only a few to take part: many must do so."



I have noted what you have said about Father Wiley; that he never called the meeting (to which I referred in my last letter) and did not know that it was taking place. But I think I should also tell you that Government officers have been advised by Local Government Councillors that the meeting was called by a Father Joseph of Father Wiley's Mission and according to them on Father Wiley's instruction. I must add that I do not find it easy to understand how Father Wiley can dissociate himself from responsibility for a meeting which he personally attended and which took place on the Mission for which he is responsible.

Your letter to my mind clearly carries the implication that you disapprove of the Administration and the Government's policies, that you are aware that these are actively obstructed by at least one missionary under your control and that you propose that this opposition should continue. I regret that I must tell you that this is not an attitude which I regard as satisfactory or acceptable. If you persist in this course I shall need to advise the Australian Government that I have concluded that your attitude and some of your mission activities are contrary to the interests of the Territory and irreconcilable with its sound administration.

This would be my attitude quite apart from the importance of the C.R.A's project in Bougainville. The importance of this project, however, is very great and involves many important considerations for the Territory's economic future, considerations which far exceed in scope and significance the narrow parochial considerations of Bougainville district.