

CONFIDENTIAL

75th Meeting

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C.149

12th December, 1968

His Honour,
The Administrator.

PUBLIC RELATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE BRIEFING
SESSION - BOUGAINVILLE INFORMATION
TEAMS

The meeting was held from 0830 to 1600 on 10th December, 1968.

The following officers were present:-

P.R.A.C. Mr. A.P. Newman (Chairman)
Mr. L. Newby *D. 1469*
Mr. G. Ord
Mr. D. Fenbury - (part-time) *Sec Admin's Dept.*
Mr. W. Sippo *DDA*
Mr. T. White

<u>OTHERS</u>		D.D.A.
Mr. W. Dishon		"
Mr. W. Brown		"
Mr. K. Hanrahan		"
Mr. M. Lang		"
Mr. R. Hearne		"
Mr. R. Webb		"
Mr. J.O. Kup		"
Mr. S. Baker		"
Mr. W. Wright		Dept. of Labour
Mr. L. Wake		"
Mr. J. Leigh - (part-time)		D.I.E.S.

Following is a resume of the proceedings.

1. His Honour the Administrator opened the meeting and explained the purpose of the operation. The operation was to be regarded as part of the political education programme. The first team would comprise Mr. R. Webb and Mr. J.O. Kup and would proceed into the field early in January, on a test basis. The second and third teams would go into the field in other parts of the District soon after the results of the first team had been accessed and evaluated. The programme would be a continuing one. His Honour said field teams would be one of several fronts designed to facilitate communication between the Administration and the Bougainville people and to try to gain an acceptance of Administration policies, especially with regard to a unified Papua and New Guinea. His Honour called for full support for the project from all officers concerned.

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2. The Chairman said the Bougainville information teams should regard the operation as a political education exercise designed through informal discussion and supported by radio, to make known the Administration's views concerning unity and other associated issues. He suggested the meeting consider, item by item, the matters on the agenda (folio 134).

(a) Questions that might be asked and replies that should be given

3. The meeting examined a list of sixteen questions that might be asked by Bougainvillians, and framed suitable replies. The questions and recommended replies appear at Appendix A. The Committee agreed that Questions 1, 2 and 16 should be referred to Canberra for comment and advice.

(b) Main points to be made by information teams.

4. It was agreed that emphasis must be on informal discussion, preferably with small groups in a number of villages. As ^{welcoming} ~~welcoming~~, light refreshments should be available to create a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. Parades, formal speeches and "line-ups" are to be avoided. The teams would have to be prepared to talk about any topic, but their objective would be two-fold:

- (i) to disseminate information favouring unity, and
- (ii) to identify thought and opinion leaders, and to enable a feed-back of local indigenous thinking.

(c) The support role to be played by radio.

5. Messrs Newby and Leigh of D.I.E.S. expressed the view that possibly maximum use was not being made of Radio, Kieta. Mr. Brown said a "saturation" campaign was not desirable and could antagonise the people and be counter-productive. A continual "trickle" of information was the best approach. Currently, letters pro and con secession were broadcast, with a leaning // towards those which expressed opposition to secession.

6. So far as the information teams were concerned, it was agreed that Mr. Webb be equipped with a tape-recorder. Discussion with Bougainvillians and a summary of questions asked and replies given, would be forwarded to the District Commissioners at regular intervals. Extracts of these tapes, and where necessary, further comment to reinforce replies given in the field, would then be passed onto Radio, Kieta for broadcast. The tapes should then be forwarded to the Executive Member of the P.R.A.C. for evaluation and possible further use by the Committee.

7. Low key publicity would be given over Radio, Kieta explaining the itinerary and role of the teams, i.e., a political education programme activity. Care must be taken to avoid giving the impression that the teams were being sent to directly counter a Lue secessionist exercise. It should be explained that the operation was a result of requests to explain the question of unity, emanating from the recent Local Government Council Conference, the House of Assembly, and as a result of the recent House of Assembly motion on unity.

(d) Other Support Roles.

8. Mr. S. Neilson of the Department of Education said that a valuable support role could be played, by utilising the existing school publications. (Steps in this regard have already been taken. Please refer folio 80).

9. Mr. Neilson said so far as Mission Schools and teachers were concerned, the support of Father Malenson, the Catholic Father responsible for education in Bougainville, could probably be enlisted. Mr. Brown said that to offset this, the Catholic Father in charge of school social studies, was probably a secessionist sympathiser. Father McVinney's (Head of Catholic education for the territory) support would also be sought.

10. The meeting was of the view that a selective choice of field staff officers of other departments should be made to assist the programme. The selection of these should be left to the District Commissioner on the spot. Briefing material, such as the paper "Secession Talking Points" and the "Question & Reply" attachment should be made available to these Officers.

(e) Approaches and Techniques to be Adopted.

11. It is agreed that the first team should operate in the Siwai area, the second in the Timputz area, and the third in the Wakanai area.

12. In addition to the comments contained in para. 4 above, Mr. W. Wright delivered a paper concerning propaganda techniques (folio 114). Copies of this paper will be made available to the leaders of the information teams, and appropriate techniques contained therein could be applied at the discretion of these Officers. There would be no deliberate attempt to exploit lines of fission at this stage.

+ Additional
sub-branches
to be set up
this year

13. Additional factual information, particularly regarding Administration contributions to the development of Bougainville, and to counter claims that the area had been neglected, was required. This information would be made available.

14. The first team should seek local briefing at both Kieta and Buin before proceeding into the field.

15. It was recognised by those present at the meeting, that the feed-back role of the teams would be as important as the disseminating role. It was important to know what the members of the Lue teams were saying, and the impact that they were making.

16. Mr. Lang, A.D.C. Buin, would provide the first team with a list of thought and opinion leaders (antagonists and protagarists), before the field operation commenced.

17. It was agreed that no police should accompany the teams on patrol. Mr. Lang could make available a local clerk who was familiar with the area.

18. It was agreed that students of the Lue teams could not be ignored if our teams came into contact with them. But emotional debates should be avoided, and the Administration teams/themselves to be necessarily in opposition to the students.

should not show

+ resources capacity & equipment

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(f) Visits by Bougainvillians to other areas of the Territory

19. The meeting was generally of the view that arranging for visits by Bougainvillians to other areas of the Territory, would not contribute anything useful, and could prove to be counter productive. But efforts should be made to transfer some of the Bougainvillian local officers currently employed in Bougainville, to other Districts. This should be a gradual movement and not take the form of an obvious and sudden policy.

(g) "Education" of Bougainvillians working, or attending training institutions, outside of the District

20. It is decided that this matter should be examined in detail at a later P.R.A.C. meeting.

(h) Review.

21. A preliminary review of the exercise should be conducted by the District Commissioner, the field team, and some representatives of P.R.A.C. at Kieta, on the completion of the first information team patrol.

Reporting.

22. An urgent written report should be submitted to the Chairman of the P.R.A.C. (A.A.(S)) as soon as the first phase of the exercise was completed. This report would then be examined in detail by P.R.A.C. before the second team proceeded into the field.

23. The report should take into account -

- a diary of activities and proceedings;
- questions asked and replies given;
- assessment of impact made;
- assessment of impact of LUE teams;
- a list of thought and opinion leaders (antagonists and protagonists);
- comments on techniques used and approaches made which would be useful for future teams.

T.W. WHITE
(Executive Member)