

# NIMBORAN

*A study of social change and social-economic development  
in a New Guinea society*

BY

DR. W. J. H. KOUWENHOVEN

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DOOR

DR. W. J. H. KOUWENHOVEN

J. N. VOORHOEVE - DEN HAAG

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study of the introduction of a project for development in a changing New Guinea society is the result of a four-years stay in the Nimboran area (Netherlands New Guinea), where I was stationed as District Officer charged with the execution of the development project.

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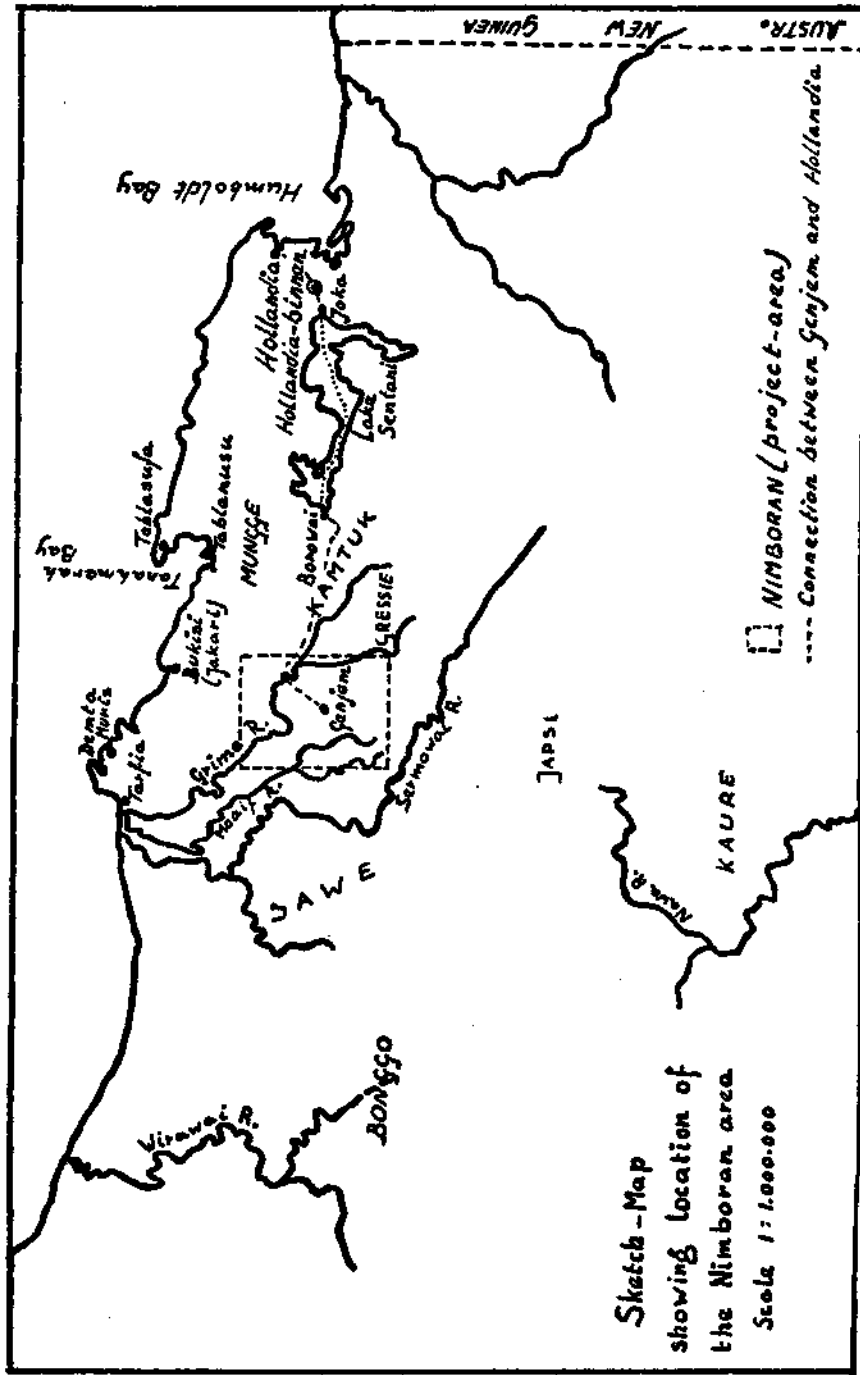
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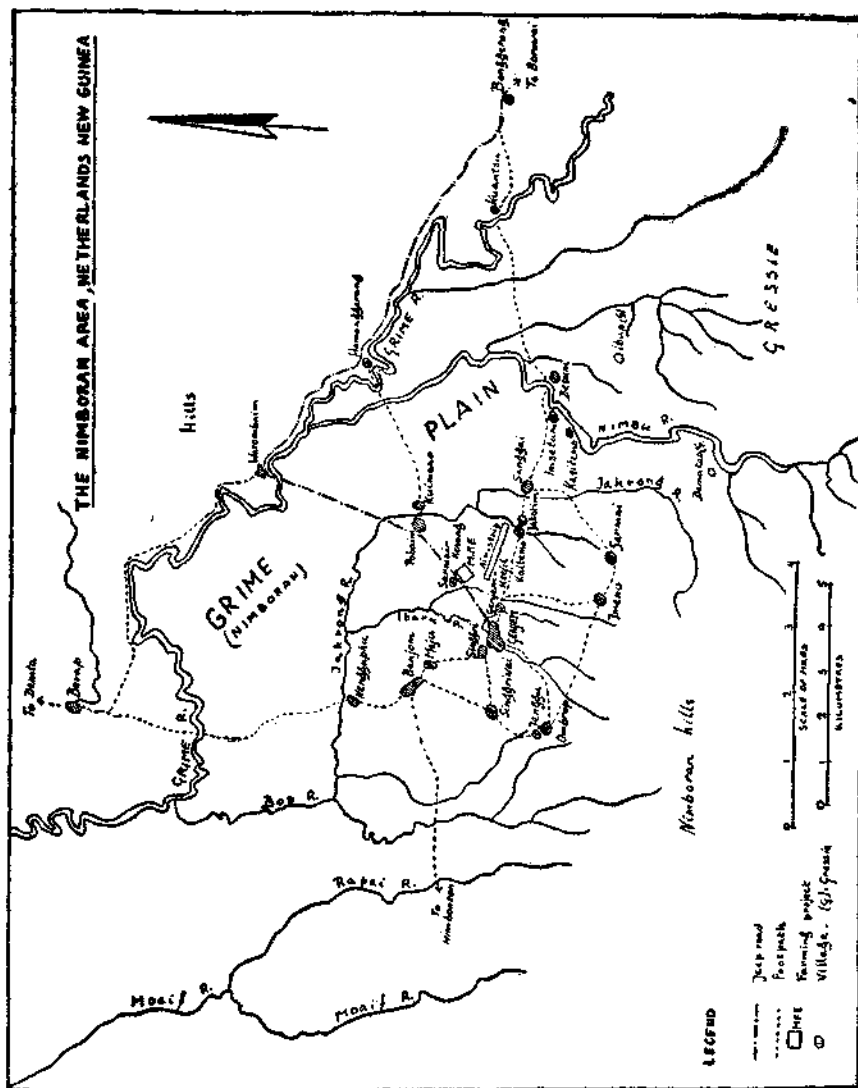


Sketch-Map  
showing location of  
the Nimboran area  
Scale 1:1,000,000

□ NIMBORAN (project-area)  
---- Connection between Genjem and Hollandia

Map 1





## INTRODUCTION

Nimboran is the name given to the area about twenty miles west of Lake Sentani, and fifty miles west of Hollandia — the present administrative centre of Netherlands New Guinea — which is inhabited by the Nimboran people.

In the last few years the name Nimboran has obtained some publicity due to the introduction of a so-called Community Development Project in the area.

This project which was supported by the South Pacific Commission was meant as a Pilot Project, the Commission's interest in it being its "value as a demonstration of (a) particular technique(s) considered capable of application in other parts of the Commission's region" <sup>1</sup>).

Also for the Government of Netherlands New Guinea for which it was the first project of such a nature, it was an attempt at finding a practical method for the development of indigenous society so that it would "be able to enter into communication with the modern world without further aid from outside and without damage to itself," and would "feel at home in this situation ... and react rationally to the inevitable demands of time" <sup>2</sup>).

The project, therefore, was primarily an experiment by which the Government hoped to gain practical knowledge about the possibility of undertaking so-called Community Development Projects and the consequences of such undertakings for Netherlands New Guinea, while the South Pacific Commission was mainly concerned with the contribution which this specific project would make to the knowledge of community development in the South Pacific area in general.

The execution of the Nimboran project was entrusted to the District Officer of the area who worked under the direction of a supervisory board which had been established in Hollandia, and which consisted of a number of representatives of different Governmental Departments.

During the course of the project it soon became clear to the Government that the project demanded far more attention than had been originally planned for. The continuation of the approach which originally had been adopted was bound to make such heavy demands on the Government apparatus that it remained to be doubted whether the Government would live up to these requirements which had not been foreseen, and which were no longer in accordance with the original set-up of the project. After 1954, therefore, the Government decided to discontinue its original approach and adopt a different policy.

The few years during which the development project was proceeding in Nimboran, have, thereby, become a closed phase in the history of Nimboran society, and there is some point in viewing this phase as a part of the whole process of change which Nimboran culture has experienced during the last decades, due to its ever increasing involvement in a world which

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<sup>1</sup>) Introduction to Dr J. van Baal's "The Nimboran Community Development Project" pp. III—IV.

<sup>2</sup>) Dr J. van Baal: op. cit. p. 28.

is so entirely different from the one the Nimborans had been familiar with.

The material for this study has been arranged in such a way that the book consists of four parts.

The first part deals with some aspects of traditional Nimboran culture and is, therefore, an attempt at reconstruction of old forms. In the second part a review is given of the contact of this culture with another culture of an entirely different nature and the consequences of this contact, exemplified with a few concrete instances. The third part is a survey of the Nimboran project, its origin, the preliminary planning, and, finally, its introduction in Nimboran society. In the fourth part some of the effects of the project on Nimboran society are subjected to a closer scrutiny, and an analysis is made of some of the phenomena and problems which came to the fore during the execution of the scheme, and which are not without meaning for this project as a Pilot Project.

In reconstructing some aspects of traditional Nimboran society and the pre-war influence of Administration and Mission on Nimboran, I was greatly handicapped by the lack of documentary evidence concerning these periods.

With the aid of the field-notes of John Erik Elmberg, a Swedish student of cultural anthropology who visited Nimboran in 1949, and owing to his willingness to discuss these notes with me personally, it has been possible to gain a clearer view of many seemingly unrelated aspects of traditional Nimboran culture.

The Reverend J. Bijkerk, who was the first Protestant Missionary to come to Nimboran in 1925, and who had close connection with the Nimborans at the time of their first contact with Western culture, also proved willing to supply me with very valuable information, while the *Zending sbureau* in Oegstgeest (Head Office of the Protestant Mission) allowed me to use a number of documents which proved to be of great value.

The information concerning the administration of Nimboran from 1925 onwards was drawn from a number of *Memories van Overgave*<sup>1)</sup>.

Because formerly Nimboran formed only a part of Hollandia District, little detailed information is given in these notes concerning Nimboran. However, they proved to be of some use in unveiling a little of the recent history of Nimboran.

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<sup>1)</sup> Notes of the District Officer concerning his region which are made at the time of transfer of authority to his successor in order to supply the latter with an adequate survey of conditions in that region.

## PART I

### CHAPTER I

#### Some aspects of traditional Nimboran Culture

##### 1. *Location*

When, in 1903, Professor Wichmann travelled to Nimboran to investigate a rumour that layers of coal were to be found in the basin of one of the Moaif River's tributaries, he started his journey inland from Tarfia, a village close to the mouth of the Moaif and the Grime Rivers. The route which was followed by the expedition — along the Moaif River — was the common trade route which the people of Nimboran, and those of the coast, used to communicate with each other. By the expedition — which had its headquarters at Metu Debi in Humboldt Bay — it was considered the most obvious way to reach the people who lived behind the hills which separate the plains of the Grime and the Nimbu Rivers from the Pacific coast. Yet, there had been other possibilities — which were to be explored later by the patrols of the Military Exploration Detachment — for Nimboran not only maintained relations with the peoples of the coast, but also with the Gressies living east of Nimboran, and with the Kamtuk and Mungge villagers who are closely related to one another, and who lived close to the shores of Lake Sentani and in the vicinity of Tanahmerah Bay. Many frequently trodden paths led from Nimboran to these regions. Another less frequently used trail led from the village of (Warom)baim to the coastal village of Jakari, which is now called Bukisi.

Less friendly were the relations between the Nimborans and the Sawé and Japsi people who had their abode in the extensive plain west of Nimboran and in the hills forming the watershed between the basin of the Nawa (or Idenburgh) River and its tributaries in the south, and the plain, reaching from the foot of these hills to the coast in the north.

##### 2. *Villages*

The impression which Nimboran made on the 1903 expedition was that of a well-populated area where the people lived in relative prosperity.

The dwelling-places of the Nimborans were to be found mostly in the southern Nimboran hills, preferably on the least accessible hill-tops or ridges. A small part of the Nimboran people lived in the northern hills, close to the banks of the Grime River, while an even smaller group had its home in the middle of the plain at the cross-roads of trade-routes in the area.

Little evidence has remained of the traditional way of living, but going by descriptions given by the population, and judging from the few still existing dwellings which were built according to the traditional style, an attempt at reconstruction of the original lay-out of the traditional Nimboran village is still possible.

The old type of dwellings in the Grime plain was essentially different from those in the surrounding areas. They were built to withstand attacks by hostile neighbours. Two types could be distinguished: houses built on

the ground, and houses on piles. Especially, the first type occurred more frequently. These were built of logwood with a roof of sago leaves, while the sides of the house were made of strips of the bark of a wild palm, lashed together with a rattan string, thus forming a thick and solid protection against arrows, even when loosened at short range. The walls were provided with a large number of peep-holes, about two inches in diameter, and from thirty to sixty inches from the ground.

The people slept on a raised floor of *g a b a* (the main rib of a sago-palm leaf) in the centre of the house. The floor consisted of close-packed clay.

As the village was usually built on a hill-top or narrow ridge, the houses mostly stretched in a long row along the summit of the hill or ridge. The surrounding area had been cleared of all obstacles, allowing the villagers a clear view of anyone who ventured in the vicinity of the village.

In case of an enemy attack women and children went into the house. The men might launch a counter-attack in the case of a small enemy force. In case of an attack by a larger force they were more likely to withdraw into the houses and take up their positions behind the peep-holes.

The clearing around the village would force the attackers to expose themselves, thus giving the besieged an ideal opportunity to aim their arrows which were loosened through the peep-holes.

The dwellings of the Nimborans were one-family dwellings, each house accommodating one household. A village was formed by the members of one *tang*<sup>1)</sup> only, each one counting not more than about thirty to fifty people. Thus, the Nimboran hills must have been speckled with a large number of hamlets, scattered all through the area.

### 3. Subsistence

The Nimboran has always been known as an industrious agriculturist who has reached a degree of development which is slightly higher than that found amongst the neighbouring peoples.

Sago being the staple food in this part of New Guinea, the cultivation of crops is usually undertaken as an addition to sago gathering. The gardens, therefore, usually are small, and no over-abundant crop is harvested. The variety of food-crops grown is not excessively large.

In Nimboran the aspect of indigenous agriculture is — and has been for as long as the area is known to us — more promising. Sago is indeed also the staple food in Nimboran, but in addition to it, the food-crop garden occupies a prominent place. The situation as it presents itself in contemporary Nimboran does not differ greatly from the traditional pattern of indigenous agriculture.

Each individual household has its own fields. Most commonly in the southern or northern hills, where the soil is fertile, and the sloping ground guarantees an efficient drain of surplus water.

The main crops grown are yams, taro, sweet potato, cassava, several leaf-crops, and bananas. The garden averages  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 acre per family in size, usually it is fenced in and well cared for. In the garden a shed or a bungalow is often built to accommodate the people during longer working-

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1) See page 27.

spells, and to store products and fire-wood. Mostly it is a small and very simple affair — not more than a hovel — but at times it may serve as a second home to the family, and be quite large and comfortable.

The fields are not farmed according to a particular pattern. The garden layout is optional, and usually a jumble of crops is met with, but each plant appears to be well cared for, and hardly any weeds are growing around it. Usually the aspect of a Nimboran garden is very attractive, and on seeing one it cannot be denied that it gives evidence of an unusual devotion of the Nimboran to his work.

The tools, formerly used for farming, were very simple, the main implements being a digging-stick and a stone axe. It is understandable that with these tools no extensive fields could be farmed by one household. The garden, therefore, was small. Increased production was achieved by more intensive planting and better care. This probably led to a speedier exhaustion of the soil, and, consequently, a sooner shifting was called for, shifting cultivation being the only known solution to the problem of soil-exhaustion from intensive use in Nimboran where a relative abundance of fertile forest ground is available. The time spent on one particular patch has, therefore, never been longer than one year, or rather, the period needed for preparing the field, planting, and harvesting, which covered almost a whole year from the end of one season to the close of the next.

The crops were harvested according to the need of the family. Thus the garden gradually became exhausted, only the crops taking a longer time to ripen or producing more than one yield being left to grow. By the time most of the crops had been harvested the garden was not looked after any longer. The time had then also come to make a new garden.

This task was taken up at the close of the rainy season or at the beginning of the dry season. The men set out to cut the bush, leaving a mass of fallen trees. After that part of the work was done, the whole household co-operated in bringing order in the chaos. First the whole tangle of shrub and timber was set fire to which cleared away the worst of it. Then the limbs were lopped off the trees and stacked against the stumps and trunks. Part of this was burnt, and part of it saved for fencing the garden and for firewood. The large tree-trunks were left as they were. Later they would be overgrown and decay. The burning of the garden was an important event as it marked the beginning of a new gardening season. But before the burning could be carried out the cut shrub and felled timber had to be tinder-dry, and, therefore, a period of drought had to precede this event. Numerous pillars of black smoke rising up from the hills bordering on the plain after a long dry spell were a common sight in Nimboran during the months from June until August.

It will be clear that with this system of shifting cultivation there were periods during which the production of the garden was negligible. This was usually the case from April until September or October, when the old garden had hardly any crops left to be harvested, and the new garden had not yet come into production. The fact that in Nimboran sago was also a staple food was a good enough guarantee against famine or food shortage, although it has happened that the dry season brought about a drought which caused the little rivers and streams to be left dry, preventing the gathering of sago because of the lack of water. Such an occurrence

usually spelled serious trouble for the people, as it is said to have done some thirty or forty years ago.

The flooding of flat stretches of low ground to create artificial marshes where sago could be planted was commonly practised in Nimboran.

The method used to obtain sago did not differ much from the methods used elsewhere in New Guinea. The pith was pounded out of the trunk with the aid of a round hollow-ended stone clamped in a wooden handle. The pounding of pith was a task assigned to the men, like the felling of the palm and the splitting of the trunk. The women washed and strained the sago-pith and carried the sago to the village. Sometimes they were helped by their husbands in transporting the sago.

Other food-providing activities were hunting and fishing. Hunting was a normal occupation for the male members of a household while accompanying their women to the garden or sago patches. They usually hunted small game like birds, rats, and the like. Hunting bigger game like boar and cassowary, which was preferably done in a well organized drive, was usually taken part in collectively by all members of a *tang* and, therefore, did not occur frequently. Dogs were commonly used to bring the game to bay.

However, this did not mean that the Nimboran would not try occasionally to kill some bigger game on his own account. One has to keep in mind though, that, to accomplish this, the man had to move deeper into the jungle. Often he would even be forced to camp out for several days. He had to feel very secure in doing this because, apart from the possibility of encountering roaming Sawés or Japsis, there were always the numerous spirits (*kesüe*) for which the Nimboran felt a deeply rooted respect. A more preferable way to hunt boar, therefore, was the cutting and splitting of a sago palm when there was a full moon. Game would come for the fresh sago, and the hunter, concealed in a shelter made of leaves, and aided by the clear moon, would be able to take a well aimed shot.

The catches made at the daily hunting trips were few and almost negligible. Consequently, hunting remained of secondary importance as a means for sustaining the family. The same applies to fishing which was practised in the numerous streams and rivers which yield a variety of fish, shrimps, and mussels, which are favourite delicacies. However, the simple methods used for fishing hardly made it profitable to fish in deep water and, therefore, the dry season, when rivers are reduced to rivulets, and pools of standing water are formed due to the falling of the water level, was considered the appropriate time for fishing on a large scale. An extremely dry season causes the big rivers like the Sermowai and the Grime to fall partly dry. Many Nimborans then used to head south (Sermowai) to catch mussels which were smoked and carried to the village in large quantities, or up north (Grime) to catch deep-water fish by slightly poisoning the pools with derris root.

#### 4. Trade<sup>1)</sup>

The subsistence economy of the Nimboran family hardly called for

<sup>1)</sup> The procurement of commodities which were essential for the subsistence of the family; not included in this, is the exchange of old valuables.

an additional supply of goods from the outside, while in Nimboran there was little specialized production of goods which might have been in demand elsewhere. Nevertheless, trade relations did exist between Nimboran and the coastal villages of Tarfia and Muris. Mention of this fact is also made by Lorentz <sup>1)</sup> and by van der Sande <sup>2)</sup> who tell about a conflict existing between the villages of Tarfia and Nimboran at the time of the 1903 expedition, which conflict was very eagerly adjusted by the Tarfia people because they were dependent on Nimboran for the major part of their sago supply <sup>3)</sup>.

The sago was obtained by the Tarfia people themselves from the extensive Nimboran-owned sago area south of Tarfia. In return, the Nimborans received salt, dried and smoked fish, and shell ornaments.

Nothing is further known about trade relations maintained by the Nimborans. It is not improbable that exchange of goods and products took place between Nimboran and Gressie, Kamtuk, and even Mungge, but it is hardly likely that this happened on such a large scale as to have been of much influence on the pattern of family subsistence in Nimboran.

The family seems to have been well able to provide for its own needs without being directly dependent on others. Although trade relations were not wholly lacking, there was — from a subsistence point of view — little cause for the growing of extensive trade relations with non-Nimborans.

### 5. *The family* <sup>4)</sup>

In its daily life and work the family formed a closed group, for the greater part left to its own resources. As far as is known there never has been question of communal effort to sustain the different families of a *tang*. The family had its own garden, and gathered its own sago in the sago marshes which belonged to it.

The family dwellings were built by the male members of the family. In exceptional circumstances they might be helped by relatives, but usually it was the head of the family with his unmarried sons who did the work. If there happened to be no sons in the family the man had to do the work all by himself.

Providing the family with food, shelter, and its daily necessities, was a task which primarily fell to all the members of the household. The numerous activities which together constituted this task were divided among the different members of the family, male as well as female.

The major task of the man was the protection of his household against possible danger coming from outside. He would never venture far from his village without taking his bow and arrows along. When the women had to go to the fields — which hardly ever were located close to the village — they would be accompanied by their men who carried weapons. When the women worked in the garden, the men would remain in the vicinity

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<sup>1)</sup> Mr. H. A. Lorentz: "Eenige maanden onder de Papoea's" pp. 156—166.

<sup>2)</sup> G. A. J. van der Sande: "Ethnography and Anthropology" Nova Guinea Vol III p. 90.

<sup>3)</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>4)</sup> The term "family" will be used to denote the nuclear family, i.e. a married man and woman, and their offspring.



guarding their womenfolk, and at the same time keeping a lookout for any possible game which might come their way. On the way home the women had to do all the carrying: tubers, vegetables, firewood, and sometimes one, or even two children, either perched on the top of their over-loaded string bags, or slung in another string bag or bark cloth in front. The girls would also be carrying something, even the little ones, in their miniature string bags, hung from the forehead, and with tiny bundles of firewood on their heads. The men would walk behind their women, carrying no more than their bows and arrows, their axes or sago-pounders, and the small string bag containing their tobacco, lime, betel-peppers, areca-nuts, and some other odds and ends. The small boys would carry a miniature bow, and arrows made of the ribs of sago-palm leaf, but they would never take over a part of the load of the women. It was the man's task to guarantee the safety of his folk, and to be on the alert for possible game, and, therefore, he could not be encumbered by heavy loads which would impede his movements. The children — almost from the time they had begun to walk — were made familiar with the tasks which would fall to them by the time they had grown up, and they had to copy the behaviour of their elders as soon as they were able to.

The man had also other duties, apart from the protection of his family and the procurement of meat. In the foregoing, mention has already been made of the share of the men in preparing the fields for cultivation and in procuring sago. The more cumbersome work: felling trees, stacking the logs, the splitting of the sago-palm and sago pounding, was taken care of by the men. Apart from that they had to build the fences around the garden.

Planting the crops was done by both, men and women, but once the field had been planted it was the task of the woman to tend the planting and harvest the crops. The head of the family was to decide when, and where, a new garden was to be made.

Not only outside the village did the men and women perform their own special tasks. At home also, each had his own responsibilities, although many tasks were done by members of both sexes.

The preparation of meals was the major responsibility of the woman, who also tended the fire in the house. She had to cook at least one copious meal a day, which was usually prepared after the members of the household had returned from their daily occupations. The main dish consisted of a thick sago-gruel made by pouring hot water over raw sago while stirring, to which salt was added (if available) and sometimes juice of lemon. The sago-gruel was consumed with a stew of vegetables. The only utensil used for eating was a three-pronged wooden fork which — after having been wiped clean on the thigh — was either put away in the little string bag, or stuck in the hair. Other regular meals were not consumed, but roast bananas or tubers might be eaten when it was convenient (often in the morning before leaving the village). When the people had to spend the day outside the village some food was usually taken along, either roast tubers, bananas, or sago balls which had been prepared by the women beforehand.

Apart from cooking, the women had many other duties in and around

the house. Although it was not considered wrong for a man to perform many domestic tasks he would be more likely to leave those to the womenfolk. The woman was held primarily responsible for the proper management of the household, and she would be blamed by her husband if she failed to do so. Domestic quarrels occurred frequently, the man accusing his woman of indifference and lack of diligence, especially when he found no food to his liking at home, or when something had been mislaid, and the woman — always ready for battle — upbraiding her husband with laziness, leaving her to do all the work while he gallivanted through the village, or pretended to go out hunting, but not even managing to bring back some meat.

Fights might easily ensue from such conflicts which usually ended in the woman being beaten to submission.

The antagonistic attitude between spouses was a common feature of family life in traditional Nimboran society. The man had no absolute power over his wife, for she might leave her husband if he tried her too far, and seek refuge with her family, which would side with her if she were in her rights, and demand satisfaction from the man and his relatives. The woman would hold this as a threat over the head of her husband if he accused her of faulty behaviour and slackness in her domestic duties.

On the other side, the man knew only too well that he required a wife to bear him children, and to attend to his needs. His relatives had helped him to collect sufficient valuables to make up a marriage-gift, and if his woman left him, due to his own faults, his relatives would turn against him. For then they would be compelled to acknowledge the injustice done to the woman, and might have to contribute to the compensation which was bound to be demanded by the offended relatives of the woman. If the woman did not come back — which seems to have been the case less often — the man would meet with difficulties in finding another woman, for his relatives would not be eager to assist him to collect sufficient marriage money a second time.

If the man was within his rights, and the woman actually forsook her duties towards her husband, and either she ran away or she was repudiated by her husband, the matter would be settled between the relatives of both sides. The woman's kin would then be compelled to return a part of the marriage-gift if she would not return to her husband. The children — in such a case — would be claimed by the father.

Despite the prevalence of antagonism between husband and wife there was also room for affection to grow between the two, especially, when both lived up to each other's expectations, and gave little cause for serious accusations. Undoubtedly, personal feelings also played a part, which is shown clearly in the case of old Kasuwai of Ombrop village, who has kept his first woman all along, even though she never bore him any children, which is a serious shortcoming for any woman in Nimboran and justifies the repudiation of a woman by her husband 1).

Apart from the tasks which were performed by the different members

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1) J. E. Elmerg: "Islands of Tomorrow" p. 209.

of a household to provide for its daily needs, the adults also had several tasks to fulfil as members of the community.

The men did not only protect their own families, but they also partook in the wars which were waged against hostile neighbouring peoples. Although a man never was actually compelled to join a warring party, and although the warrior was after personal gain in the first place (see also pp. 35 etc.), the responsibility of upholding the name and honour of the group rested with him, and he could not very well shirk his duty without being held in contempt by the community.

Other activities in which all the men of a village took part were the collective hunts when big game was hunted down, or the catching of fish by slightly poisoning the pools of the large rivers in the dry season. After the hunt the game would be prepared for consumption by the men and divided amongst the members of the *tang*, the head of the *tang* receiving the larger portion and the man who actually brought down the game not receiving anything as for him the meat was taboo.

In the case of feasts (*kabi*) the men and the women had to do their share of the preparations which were to be made. The men went on large-scale hunts while the women remained in the village to cook the necessary food which was to be distributed at the feast by the men. In the case of an *éram-be-kabi* (see pp. 29 etc.) preparations were more elaborate and kept the men and women occupied during a considerable time.

From the above it may be concluded that in traditional Nimboran society the stress was on the family in the first place. Although on special occasions the co-operation of men and women of a whole village was demanded, in its common daily life the family was left to its own resources. In its struggle for existence it was primarily dependent on the industry of the members of the household and on their devotion to the tasks allotted to each one of them.

The kinship terminology of Nimboran stresses the importance of being the eldest, a feature which is encountered many times in Nimboran culture, while „the bilateral trends in kinship terminology”, van Baal writes, „may be interpreted as a stressing of the relevance of the nuclear family”<sup>1</sup>). Although „the relations between the various members of the family seem to be on a very free and easy basis”<sup>2</sup>), there are indications which point to tensions between older and younger brother having frequently occurred. As yet, no sufficient explanation has been given of this feature.

The relations between parents and their children usually were good. The son had a great many obligations towards his father which — if properly observed — would dispose the father favourably towards him, thus leading to a thorough education which would ultimately enable the youth to partake fully in adult occupations.

Although little is known about initiation of the young boys and girls, or about the ritual for that purpose, it has been shown beyond doubt that a period of initiation for members of both sexes was observed. However, the education of the young also received much attention from the parents.

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1) Dr J. van Baal: "The Nimboran Community Development Project" p. 10.

2) *ibid.*

In the foregoing mention has already been made of the fact that children were encouraged to copy the behaviour of their elders.

The girls were taught the different domestic tasks and the art of making string bags, while the boys had to practise shooting with bow and arrows from the time they were able to hold a miniature bow properly. With the physical development of the boy the size of his shooting equipment would gradually increase, while the targets selected by his father would be more difficult to hit. When he grew older, the boy would be told the myths of his people. Little by little the stories of the Nimboran ancestors would be revealed, and the boy would become gradually acquainted with the why and wherefore of things, and with the strange powers which governed life on earth and the ways and means to dispose them kindly towards himself. He would be told how to make medicine for profitable hunting and successful warfare, and also taught sorcery practices to inflict evil on his enemies.

How much was told to the boy depended on the disposition of the father towards his son. If the latter behaved well and lived up to the demands of his father he would be taken sooner into his confidence. Yet, the father would be reluctant to reveal everything he knew, for as soon as the son had gained all the knowledge he could expect from his father there was little left to bind him to his parent, and he might begin to forsake his duties towards him. Therefore, the father would keep some of the most essential facts to himself, hoping to reveal them no sooner than at his death-bed when he would no longer have use for his sons<sup>1</sup>).

The father also had another hold over his son, for the main contribution of the father to his son's success in life was the marriage-gift which was bound to be supplied for the son's wife sooner or later. If, therefore, the son misbehaved and thus roused the wrath of his parent, this might easily result in the latter withholding his support in supplying the marriage-gift which was bound to put a spoke in the wheel of the youngster's marital ambitions.

After marriage the son might for a long time be kept unprivileged. Even if he had left his parental home and built his own house he would at first remain dependent on his father. Only after his younger brother had married did the elder son become fully independent. He would then get his share of the sago- and forest area which his father had intended for him. He would also receive a share of the family valuables (stone axes, beads). In case there were three sons the second one became independent by the time the third married. The youngest son did not become independent until his father had died. But then he would get all the remaining sago- and forest area which his father had kept for himself. If a man had only one son the latter would be dependent on his father until the father died. At the death of his father he inherited all the land and valuables. It is understandable that sons were to keep strictly to the sequence of marriage. A younger one could not get married before his elder brother.

In the case of a man dying without leaving any heirs, all his earthly

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<sup>1</sup>) The estrangement which grew between the two generations in later years has caused many of the old secrets to die with old people. There still are a few old men who can relate their ancient myths and customs, but with their death the few remaining sources of our knowledge concerning traditional Nimboran culture will disappear.

possessions and garden crops were to be destroyed, and a taboo was laid on his land and sago area for an indefinite period. Sago palms which flower and wither without having been harvested are still a not uncommon sight in Nimboran.

The same rules of inheritance applied to an *éram* <sup>1)</sup>. The *hamong* (a stone armlet), a special *remaku* (a blue-black bead), and a number of *undo kua mendi* (stone axes of exceptionally large size), which were the chief's heirlooms (*Wo-benang*, they were not common valuables and, therefore, never used for customary payments), were inherited by the eldest son, his lawful successor. The other valuables were divided between the eldest son and his brothers, each receiving a share which had been previously agreed upon. If an *éram* died without leaving any sons, the *wo-benang* were passed on to his successor, even though he be of another branch of the *tang*. The ordinary valuables and other possessions, as well as his crops and sago, were subjected to the same rules as those of the common villager.

The share which each of the sons would receive out of the inheritance after the death of their father was allotted by the father before he died, and before any land had been issued to them. Therefore, no conflict was likely to arise in the event of the sudden death of the father.

The eldest son would have the greatest influence in family affairs after the death of his father. In matters concerning marriage, land-disputes, and the like, his views counted and were to be respected. The eldest son might even practically take the position of the head of the family before his father died but had become too old to look after these things properly.

#### 6. *Marriage and the marriage-gift*

Through marriage, ties were created between the different families within Nimboran society, causing an extensive web of relations to come into existence, which complicates the finding of a specific system in marriage relations. Dr J. van Baal who made a survey of kinship relations in Nimboran in 1952, came to the conclusion that no regular connubial relations existed between the clans <sup>2)</sup>. "On the contrary" —he states— "while keeping within the limits, formed by Nimboran society, the people gave the impression of aiming at contracting marriages with as many different clans as was possible". A survey made of thirty-six marriages of men and women belonging to one of the clans of the village of Genjem Besar, brought to light that these had been contracted in twenty-two different clans. In five cases three marriages were contracted with one clan, and in four cases two marriages with one clan. The other cases concerned one marriage per clan. Marriage was patrilocal. The newly-wed were to live in their own home as soon as possible. In present day Nimboran, therefore, the young husband often builds a small hut behind, or next to, the parental home which will serve as a temporary home for the couple until either the

1) The head of a *tang*. See also pp. 29 etc.

2) Dr J. van Baal: "The Nimboran Community Development Project" p. 8. Up to now van Baal has been the only qualified anthropologist who has given a written survey of Nimboran kinship relations. Although van Baal's notes refer to present conditions they concern the more general principles of kinship and marriage relations, and can, therefore, be considered as being also applicable to traditional Nimboran culture.

The following has been derived mainly from van Baal's notes.

opportunity to build a more permanent home has offered itself, or an increase of the family, or deterioration of the temporary dwelling call for speedier action on the part of the husband. Whether this custom of segregation from the parental home immediately after marriage was practised in former times is not certain. At the time it would have been more likely that a young couple would at first live with the man's family until a new house, which was in character with the prevailing type of dwellings and which offered sufficient protection, had been built.

"There is" — van Baal writes — "a wide choice of eligible marriage partners: the custom of preference marriages with a particular relation is not followed. On the other hand, in addition to a fairly strict clan exogamy, an extensive kinsfolk exogamy, said to stretch over two generations, is acknowledged. This would still permit first cousins to marry, as long as they were not of the same clan" 1). Van Baal made a few genealogies but he could not arrive at a definite conclusion from them. He got the impression, however, that the marriage ban stretched back over a third generation.

A major feature of marriage and marriage rules was the marriage-gift which had to be made by the family of the groom to the family of the bride. A rather elaborate description of the gift, its preliminaries and its symbolism is given in the *Memorie van Overgave voor de Onderafdeling Hollandia* of 1947 2), which is too detailed to be retold here. A description of the major characteristics of this gift shall have to suffice to give an impression of the mutual obligations created between the two families.

Originally the marriage-gift consisted of a number of indigenous valuables (*harta* 3) which existed in different kinds and values. The main items were stone axes (*undo kua nendi*, *undo kaimaning*, *undo dabu kopsking*), and old beads of different colouring (*remaku*, *tauo*, *natu*, *sajam*). Each item had its own exchange value. These *harta* goods were the highly treasured possession of the head of the family, and the exchange of *harta* was an event which warranted elaborate preparation and an extensive preliminary exchange of cordialities between the parties concerned. It seems that originally the marriage-gift was of a more or less fixed value. This can be concluded from the fact that the different items of a marriage-gift are said to have symbolized the different parts of the body of the bride (a number of *undo kaimaning* symbolized the bones, a *undo dabu kopsking* the heart etc.). The destination of several of the items composing a marriage-gift was also fixed to some extent. A *undo dabu kopsking* was meant for the parents of the girl as a consolation for the loss of their daughter. The *undo kaimaning* were given to more distant relatives of the girl, and usually contributed by the more distant relatives of the boy. The amount of *undo kaimaning* could be slightly increased if need be. Thus the marriage-gift consisted of a traditionally determined assortment of *harta* goods with

1) Ibid.

2) pp. 110 etc.

3) *Harta* is a Malay word which is generally used by the population in Hollandia region to denote the old valuables which — apart from having exchange value — were also endowed with special powers. As I am not familiar with a possible collective word for these valuables in the Nimboran language, the Malay word will be used.

a margin to allow for a slight increase or decrease of the number of specific items in accordance with the actual wishes of both parties concerned. The marriage-gift in case of a common marriage, consisted of some 25 items. In the case of a son and a daughter of *érams* being concerned, the price amounted to some 36 to 40 items.

A definite opinion on the time of settlement of a marriage-gift, the conditions of payment, and the actual amount paid has never been obtained. This is partly a consequence of the thorough changes which have taken place in this field, and the completely different attitude which is now taken towards this institution, causing it to be brought into disrepute. It seems that the exchange of a marriage-gift was started as soon as an agreement was reached between the parents of the boy and of the girl. Very often such an agreement had already been reached at the time when the two were only children, as the exchange of *h a r t a* goods was a major aspect of marriage, and the urge to acquire *h a r t a*, which was sometimes born out of pure necessity because other debts had to be paid, could easily lead to a premature marriage arrangement.

The description of the original marriage-gift arrangement as it is given by the Nimborans, makes one strongly suspect that marriage was impossible before payment was completed. The ceremonial offering of a *sajam* (white bead) to the bride's mother as a final payment, which had to occur at the actual wedding, hardly leaves any room for much speculation on this point. We can, therefore, safely assume that the marriage-gift was contributed by the family of the boy to the family of the girl, that the amount paid was more or less fixed and only slightly subjected to modification, that the marriage-gift was given in advance, and that a special bead offered in final payment served to close the transaction between the parties concerned. It is also clear that not only the near relatives of the boy and the girl were concerned, but rather, the whole *tang*. On the side of the male party, for instance, all members combined in amassing the items needed to compose a marriage-gift with the prospect of a future share in a marriage-gift to be received when a daughter was to be married, while similar support could be anticipated when, for them, the time had come to provide a marriage-gift for a son.

An additional contribution might be added to the marriage-gift by the father of the groom if he had many sons and only little land and sago to divide amongst them. The family of the bride would then provide their daughter with sago and land. In this way a solution existed in the case of shortage of land. The question whether the bride's family would be willing to part with some of its land and sago-area would then be a chief consideration in contracting a marriage.

However, not only *h a r t a* passed hands in the event of marriage. A secondary contribution of goods was made by the groom's relatives on the day of the wedding, consisting of such items as arrows, areca-nuts, string bags, clay pots, and the like. Things, therefore, that were of practical value, articles not picked at random, but agreed upon long before the wedding was to take place, and, hence, to be qualified as an additional contribution.

The contracting of a marriage involved two parties which both tried to settle things to their best advantage. The party which was to

provide the other one with a bride for one of its young male members expected generous compensation for the loss of one of its women who was to join the ranks of the others, and whose industry and other talents would be lost to her parents and become of benefit to the man she was to marry. The only possible compensation was the exchange of *h a r t a* which had to be surrendered without stinginess.

Yet, marriage in traditional Nimboran culture cannot be considered a transaction which was terminated after the two parties involved had fulfilled their obligations, and after which the woman was to be considered the property of her husband or his kinsfolk while her own relatives had no further interest in the matter. On the contrary, the woman maintained close ties with her own kin, even after marriage. Reference to this fact was already made in the previous paragraph when the relations between husband and wife were discussed. That the woman retained some independent control over some matters is also shown in the case of land being given to her by her father when she married<sup>1)</sup>. But the most striking example of the maintenance of relations with her own kin, and the duration of the indebtedness of the husband's relatives towards the woman's family is provided in the case of *mendu*.

The birth of the first child was an event of considerable importance. The husband and his family would derive satisfaction from the fact that the woman had proved to be fertile and able to bear children, while the woman's relatives could credit her with an added virtue. The event would stress anew the indebtedness of the man and his people to the wife's relatives, and a gift of *h a r t a* was demanded. This gift was called *mendu*, and consisted of an *undo buki*, a stone axe the edge of which is polished to an exceptional translucency, to be given to the child's mother, while the father of the child's mother received a *tauo* (green bead). The gift was said to ward off sickness and evil, and to guarantee a prosperous life to the child. It was also meant as a token of gratitude for the fertility of the woman.

This gift of *mendu* was an event of some importance, and a feast had to be given.

A similar exchange of *h a r t a* is still made in present day Nimboran. Although it is to be doubted whether the institution exists in its pure form, a brief description of the feast in its present form may serve to throw some light on the ceremony with which the exchange of *h a r t a* is supposed to have been made.

When a first (male?) child has been born, the mother's relatives go to the village of the child's father, and arrange for a ceremonial exchange of goods to take place. The size of the gift, to which now is added the overdue part of the marriage-gift which exists in nine cases out of ten, and the price for a pig which will be presented, is stipulated, and the child's father's relatives will consent to the exchange to take place at some future date when the items composing the gifts are expected to have been collected.

The child's mother's relatives then return to their village, and get busy arranging for the selection or purchase of a pig which will be given in

<sup>1)</sup> In a later paragraph (11) this matter will be more fully discussed.



exchange for the gifts received, at the same time serving as an imposition of their will on the child's father's relatives who can neither refuse the pig nor shirk their duty to live up to their obligations. The pig is caged in the village until the day of debt settlement. Meanwhile, one of the child's mother's relatives occasionally goes to the village of the father and inquires whether the sum agreed upon has already been collected. As soon as such is the case a day is fixed for the exchange of goods to take place. At the appointed day the child's mother's relatives assemble early in their village, bringing small quantities of garden-produce along with them.

The pig, having grown rather fierce in captivity, is then caught and hogtied under a loud clamour of voices and shouts, and strapped to a long pole which is decorated at one end with carved ornaments. The decorated end of the pole is covered with a large piece of leaf-sheath.

Finally, the people are ready to set out for the village of their debtors, the men carrying the pig, and the women carrying the garden produce in their string bags. When they have almost reached their destination the procession is halted. The leaf-sheath is removed from the tip of the pole, and the pole and the pig are adorned with flowers, streamers of young palm leaves, and coloured plants. The men, carrying or accompanying the load, stick flowers in their hair, and singing and dancing sets in.

At first a few "practice runs" are made on the spot, and when everything has been found to be in order the procession continues on its way, but now singing and dancing uninterruptedly, at times suddenly turning about, retracing its steps, then returning again to its original route.

Finally, the village is reached and — watched by all villagers — the procession moves in the direction of the house of the child's father where all relatives are assembled. Singing and dancing now reach their climax, the procession moving backwards and forwards until, finally, the pole with the pig is rushed into the house. If the entrance is too small the sides of the house are torn out to make a passage. The women, who accompanied the pig on its last journey, and who discarded their string bags in front of the house, troop after it into the house. The singing of the men — who remain outside — is taken over by them, their voices gradually rising to a higher pitch, the house rocking and swaying under the rhythm of the dancing feet. Meanwhile, a bone dagger is slowly stuck into the heart of the pig by one of the child's mother's male relatives (no particular one), the sound of the singing voices drowning the squeals of the agonized dying pig. Then, all of a sudden, the racket stops. The pig is dead, and the women begin to leave the house. The *h a r t a*-gift is then passed to the respective claimants and food is offered to the guests. The pig is cut into pieces, and the morsels of meat are distributed amongst the child's father's relatives, the mother's relatives not receiving anything. The gifts of garden-produce which accompanied the pig, are also divided amongst the father's relatives.

This feast is called in Nimboran *ibue-meseing-kabi* (= the feast of presenting a pig). It may also be held in case of other debt settlements. A typical feature of this feast is that the party receiving the pig is in duty bound to pay its debt, increased by the "cost" of the pig.

On the preceding pages a more elaborate description has been given of some of the usages in traditional Nimboran concerning the exchange of *h a r t a*. The description served in the first place to illustrate the importance which was attached to the possession of *h a r t a*, and the ceremony with which the exchange took place. In a following paragraph more will be disclosed about the function of the old valuables in traditional Nimboran culture.

However, the foregoing is indicative of more than that, for it shows that there existed other relations in Nimboran than those between the members of one family. The family, though forming a more or less independent social unit in some respects, was also an integrate part of a larger whole. In this connection attention is drawn in the first place to the *tang*.

### 7. *The Tang*

Nimboran society counted a large number of local, patrilineal, patrilocal and exogamous clans<sup>1)</sup>, which were called *tang*. The *tang*, consisting of a number of families<sup>2)</sup>, usually counted not more than from 30-50 members. It is curious to note that the *tang* originally did not own a proper name. If — in former times — one wanted to indicate the *tang* to which one belonged, the name of the then officiating head of the *tang* (*éram*) was generally used: "It was one of Jambé-*éram*'s people who visited here yesterday", or "Kukong of Wandí-*éram* is going to trade salt at Tarfia..."

An elaborate system of names for *tangs* or divisions of *tangs* apparently was not called for. As an *éram* was a conspicuous personality in Nimboran society, the use of his name usually sufficed in identifying any single member of his *tang*<sup>3)</sup>.

Van Baal assumes that the village<sup>4)</sup> is an acknowledged institution in Nimboran society, such being indicated by the fact that traditionally the village was associated with a symbol, such as a bird or (and) a tree<sup>5)</sup>.

Unfortunately very little is known about the actual implications of these symbols, while the reconstruction of the old forms is seriously handicapped by the fact that in contemporary Nimboran most of the people are no longer familiar with the why and the wherefore of their traditional institutions.

Apparently it used to be common practice for a *tang* to subdivide after it had grown beyond a certain size. The separation of a part of a *tang* was a matter to be decided by the *éram* who, to effect a separation, handed

1) Dr J. v. Baal: op. cit. p. 7.

2) see p. 17 footnote.

3) When the first census was taken in Nimboran some thirty years ago, the Administration — not realizing the absence of proper names for the different *tangs* — insisted on the people stating the name of their "family". They — eager to please — thought up names, thus giving the name of a hill, river, or other prominent landmark in the vicinity of which their dwellings happened to be located. Others, not quite getting the idea, gave the name of their father. In that way the utmost confusion was created which lasted until 1951, when, on the initiative of the people, a way was found out of the tangle by naming every *tang* after its common male ancestor.

4) *tang*-village. See also p. 14.

5) op. cit. p. 7. According to Elmborg the *tang* usually was associated with a bird and a tree.

a ceremonial stone axe to the senior male member of the separating branch, and defined the place where these people should thenceforth live and build their village.

Thus the size of the villages was kept small by artificial means. The purpose of this has never been told. It is not beyond possibility that the sites, usually selected for the building of a village, in the end proved to be too small to hold an increasing population, which may have led to the subdivision of a *tang*. However, this — most probably — was only a factor of minor importance, and never the sole cause of the frequently occurring division of *tangs*. Another factor, to which more weight may be attached, is the fact that after the separation the newly formed *tang* used to lead its own existence as a patrilineal exogamous clan which made it possible for both parties to intermarry. Equal attention should be paid to the relationship between the *éram* and the *tekai* (the helper of the *éram*, manager of his affairs, the "younger brother" of the *éram*). In many cases the separating branch was the *tekai*-group. Accounting for the fact that the *tekai* in his position of manager of affairs for the *éram* had the exceptional opportunity of enforcing his own will upon the community, it appears quite possible that many divisions originated from a clash of powers within the *tang*.

Very often one comes across the relationship of "elder and younger brother" being also applied to *tangs*, like, for instance, in the present-day village of Sanggai where the *tang* Hamong (also the name for the stone armband belonging to the *wo-ienang*) is "elder brother" and the *tang* Sem is "younger brother." In this case a division has been effected (two separate *tangs* exist) which most probably arose from a conflict between the *éram*-group and the *tekai*-group. As was said previously, van Baal found indications that tensions between elder and younger brother occurred frequently in traditional Nimboran. Many of the old myths also refer to these tensions which sometimes led to a conflict which usually was solved by the younger brother's departure for another place, or by his disappearance into the ground.

Through marriage relations and the frequent divisions of *tangs* an intricate web of relations between the different *tangs* came into existence which is very difficult to unravel, especially since each *tang* in its turn will try to relate its origin in such a way that it will be credited with high seniority, possibly even more than it can lay claim to, while — in case a separation was effected due to conflict — the blame will be put on the other party concerned.

According to Nimboran narrators, the creation of a new *tang* was a thing not difficult to accomplish. One is easily led to the belief that people actually were in a position to leave their *tang* at will, and found a new one elsewhere. However, it is to be doubted that things were really so easy, for, on the other hand, one is told over and over again that Nimboran-man was tied to his *tang*, and only the *éram* had authority to effect a separation.

In the notes to the diagrams on pages 54-56 (figures 1-3) a number of case histories of the origin of several villages — as related by the parties concerned — is given. They will also serve to give an impression of the intricateness of the relationships between the different *tangs*.

## 8. *Tang-authority and the éram-be-kabi*

The head of the *tang* was the *éram*. In his management of the *tang* he was assisted by a helper named *tekai*. In contemporary Nimboran the function of *tekai* is sometimes compared with that of an orderly, which — to say the least — is a misappreciation of the importance of his task, for it was of such a nature that in actual practice he had a large dose of direct authority in the village.

The *éram*, ideally, was the eldest son of the eldest son, down the generations from the time of the founder, the first *éram*.

When there was no son it was a younger brother of the *éram* who succeeded him at his death.

The function of *tekai* was also hereditary, the first one — ideally — being the younger brother of the founder-*éram*.

Nowadays the *éram* is generally pictured as a gentle, peace-loving protector of his people. The *éram* should always aim at the preservation of peace within his *tang*, he was to see to it that no violence was done to his people, and that the latter should avoid hostilities between their *tang* and outsiders, for such would undoubtedly lead to violence being committed which would endanger the safety of the *tang*.

The *éram* never was the leader of his people otherwise than through his *tekai*. His position in the *tang*, primarily, was a position of immense prestige. To his people he was an awe-inspiring figure to whom homage was paid, and who was always entitled to the best of everything. Yet, although he was the acknowledged chief of his people, and the central figure in his *tang*, in actual life he was — by the nature of his position — too far removed from his subjects to have real close contact with them. The gap which thus existed was filled by the *tekai* whose presence also aided in further stressing the distance between the *éram* and the common villager.

One does not get the impression that the *éram* was an active supreme power in the *tang* who ruled his people and defined their course of behaviour for them. His main concern was his own position, and his first and last aim was to get recognition of his prestige, not only within his own group, but also from outside. Conflicts within the *tang* were not solved by the *éram* in the first place, but rather by way of mutual agreement between the parties concerned, the *éram* claiming a — not insignificant — share in the indemnification which was to reconcile the opposed parties. Only if internal conflicts threatened to endanger the prestige of the *éram*, or to effect his thoroughly guarded — almost sacred — position would he be likely to interfere personally or — more likely — through his *tekai*. It was the *tekai*'s task to protect the interests of the *éram* in the village, probably even more than to look after the interests of the villagers who were mostly left to look after themselves.

When an *éram* died he was to be succeeded by his eldest son or younger brother. Yet, the successor did not immediately — and automatically — become also an *éram* with all the prerogatives of that function. At first he would only be claimant to the position, and called *dekening* which means "the first" or "number one." Immediately after the death of his predecessor the *dekening* would inherit the *wo-benang* which were endowed with supernatural powers, and which also marked him as the rightful

successor of the deceased *éram*, but he could not automatically step into the place which had been vacated.

A *dekening* did not have the prestige of an *éram*, and, although he was recognized as the future *éram*, and people held him in sufficiently high esteem, he missed the qualifications which made an *éram*.

The elevation of a *dekening* to the position of *éram* was an event of immense importance which involved not only the people of his own *tang*, but a much wider group of people. If one were to believe the narrators of today, not only the whole of Nimboran was involved, but also the people of Gressie, Kamtuk and so on, yes, even the people of Sentani and from the coast used to come to this event. Of course, such statements must be taken "cum grano salis", but they indicate clearly that the *éram-be-kabi* — which was the feast of investiture of an *éram* — was an occurrence in Nimboran which surpassed all others in scope as well as in importance. Unfortunately we do not know enough of this feast — which in some respects is like a grand ritual — or of its implications, to grasp its full meaning and its actual function in Nimboran society.

Several descriptions of the *éram-be-kabi* have been given, but none of those gives a satisfactory answer to the many questions which exist in relation to this feast<sup>1)</sup>. The fact that the *éram-be-kabi* usually was referred to by Nimborans as *the kabi*, or just, *kabi*, adds to the growing confusion because often one does not know anymore whether the related occurrences refer to the *éram-be-kabi* only or to all *kabi*, and one gets the impression that even the narrators are no longer sure of it themselves.

Yet — mostly owing to the survey of traditional Nimboran culture which was carried out by Elmberg in 1949 — it is possible to venture on an effort to arrange the fragments of information in such a way that from them we may derive an indication of the implications of the feast.

It should be established at the outset that the investiture of an *éram* was not a matter which concerned only the *tang* of the future *éram*. A *dekening*, therefore, could never decide for himself when his *éram-be-kabi* should take place. Only another *éram* was entitled to perform the ceremony of investiture, and it would be his people who would perform the elaborate ceremonial dances which accompanied the feast.

Who the other *éram* was to be was determined by the intricate system of obligations and counter-obligations which had grown between the different Nimboran *tangs* through the years, and which were subjected to continuous shifting. In the event of investiture of a first *éram* of a newly created *tang*, it usually was the *éram* of the *tang* from which the new one branched off who was responsible for the ceremony.

Another condition, which was decisive for the selection of the time for an *éram-be-kabi*, was that no other *éram-be-kabi* was to be held or to be in

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1) J. E. Elmberg: "Nota naar aanleiding van een ethnologisch onderzoek in de Nimboron, Gressi en Japsi in Juni tot September 1949".

K. W. Galis: "Het Eram-feest te Bonggrang".

W. J. H. Kouwenhoven: "Algemene Memorie van Overgave Onderafdeling Hollandia 1947".

Reference to the feast is also made by Dr J. van Baal in his "The Nimboran Community Development Project" and by J. P. Kabel in his "De kèsjèp-beweging in Nimboran".

preparation at the time of the feast. Apart from that there should be no war at the time of an *éram-be-kabi*. Hostilities had to be postponed until after the feast.

If one takes into consideration that the preparations for an *éram-be-kabi*, and the feast itself covered eighteen months (counted by the sun's orbit), it becomes clear that an *éram-be-kabi* could not be decided upon without thorough weighing of the circumstances, and prolonged consideration of the interests of others who were also concerned. It is hardly possible therefore, that an *éram-be-kabi* occurred at frequent intervals, and it was no exception when a *dekening* had to wait many years before he was elevated to the position of *éram*.

When an *éram-be-kabi* had been decided upon, the time had come to start the preparations. They were to be arranged in such a manner that the *kabi* would coincide with the dry season, for rain during a *kabi* was to be avoided at all costs as this would spell certain disaster.

The preparation of an *éram-be-kabi* consisted of several activities. According to some Nimboran narrators special gardens were made, but no certainty exists whether that meant that special communal gardens were created for the purpose, or that all those who were to contribute to the tremendous quantities of food which are supposed to have been consumed during the feast, extended their own gardens for the purpose. Apart from that, fabulous quantities of sago were gathered and stored, while a few days before the actual feast large-scale hunts for boar and cassowary were organized. These activities fell to the *tang* of the future *éram* and to those who belonged "to his side", for the *tang* of the new *éram* stood not alone. It maintained ties with other *tangs* (through hereditary relations which should probably be seen in connection with the division of *tangs*, discussed previously), which were in duty bound to assist, and which would — in turn — receive assistance when it would be needed by them on a future occasion. The opposite side — the *tang* which was to perform the ceremony — also had its assisting partners who would later share in the large quantities of garden produce which were to be given in return for the performance of the ceremony.

With the opening of the preparations for the feast, a number of severe taboos was laid on the community. The most outstanding taboo was the ban on the killing of people. During an *éram-be-kabi* no people were to perish by violence. War and an *éram-be-kabi*, therefore, were incompatible.

Other taboos were the prohibition of sexual intercourse, and at some stage — which coincided with the arrival of *Indjo* <sup>1)</sup> in the village — no crayfish (*uwap*) was to be caught. It is not known exactly at what

<sup>1)</sup> *Indjo* is a word which is also found in connection with several other words. It is the name of a female supernatural being. *Indjo* dwelt in the mountain rivers in the south of Nimboran. She was closely associated with water. Her power was feared, for if she were displeased she would send rain and thunder, and drown the earth with everything on it. According to Elmberg the voice of *Indjo* was originally reproduced by spinning the shell of a large crayfish on a length of string (like a bull-roarer). Later, the sound was made by blowing bamboo water-flutes (*imo* which is also the common name for bamboo). The voice of *Indjo* was said to emanate from the water in these flutes. The flutes were never blown in the open, but only inside a special house: *indjo-jamo* (= house of *Indjo*) which was also the house of initiation for the boys. The voice of *Indjo* could not be reproduced at random, but only on special occasions.

particular point of time the different taboos were laid on the community, but it is almost certain that several of them stood in some relation to *Indjo*.

When the preparations for an *éram-be-kabi* were started, the regular beating of *unggu* (Nimboran for drum) would set in. The drum-beating was continued for a long period, denoting that the preparations were in progress. A reply to the drum-beating would be given in the village which was to "bring" the *kabi* to the village of the new *éram*, and where the dances which were to be performed during the feast were thoroughly rehearsed, for there had to be no flaw in the performance of the dancers.

Meanwhile, in the "receiving village" a *jao* was erected, a house constructed on top of the roots of an upturned tree-trunk which was especially built for the occasion, and which would only do service at the actual feast. The building of the *jao* was the last of the numerous preparations which were made. The *jao* was decorated with the *wo-benang*, according to the narrators, as a token of the (future) *éram*'s standing.

When the *jao* was finished, the beating of drums would cease, and *Indjo* would take up her abode in the *jao*, which event was marked by the commencement of the blowing of *imo* which would be continued for several days. From then on the *unggu* had to be silent.

The feast was then ready to start, and people would come from all over Nimboran. The guests were lodged with villagers and in numerous hovels which had been erected for the occasion. The feasting would last for several days.

During the actual feast the focus of attention was at the *jao* in which *Indjo* dwelt during the *kabi*. Little is known with certainty about the things that took place inside the *jao* during these days. The people still are not very communicative on this subject, and Elmer suspects happenings which the people are ashamed of disclosing. All the time that *Indjo* made her presence known by the sound of the water-flutes, the women were to keep to their houses, for if they caught sight of *Indjo* — it was said — they would fall ill and die. Outside the *jao* a number of ceremonial dances were performed, while a profusion of food was distributed among the guests. The men were supposed to derive great satisfaction from the ceremonies, and were blessed with fortune on hunts and in warfare, they would make profitable exchanges in *harta*, while their women and gardens would be fertile. The ancestors — who otherwise were dwelling in *Semèn*, the underworld, and who were holding an eternal *kabi* at which the horn of plenty was overflowing — were supposed to be present at an actual *kabi*. During the feast the living and the dead communicated with each other, and the promises of impending good fortune and fertility were the result of this contact, for the ancestors had power over all these good things.

After a few days (when the ceremonies within the *jao* had come to a close?) *Indjo* would disappear from the *jao* in a cloud of ashes, and the final stage of the ceremony would be enacted: the announcement of the investiture of the new *éram* which was made by the *éram* of the other *tang* during a special ceremony. The last dances — in which women also took part — were performed, ending with the *hngari* (= bird of paradise). During this final dance and song the dancers lifted their headwear — which was adorned with numerous birds of paradise — off their heads. The other adornments, leaves and flowers, were removed and trampled

under the dancing feet, and the wooden headpieces, elaborately decorated, were surrendered to the new *éram*. From now on he was allowed to wear two *bingari* — the bird which dwelt in *Semèn* with the ancestors, and which only came out during the day-time — as a token of his dignity.

The taboos were lifted, and those who had violated these taboos during the *éram-be-kabi* were brought to justice on the instruction of the new *éram*, for an *éram-be-kabi* could not bring prosperity if the severe rules were not properly upheld. As killing was not allowed while the feast was in progress, the violators of the taboos were to be removed afterwards. If this was not done the *kabi* had not succeeded, and no profitable results would come of it. The *kabi* was an event of immense importance to the Nimborean. It gave him the highest degree of satisfaction that he could ever hope for. During the few days that the feast lasted he lived in a dreamworld of unprecedented super-abundance of food, continuous dancing, and communication with the ancestors by which some of the prosperity, which is a characteristic feature of life hereafter, would become his share.

The ceremony of *éram-be-kabi* hints at several connections with other Nimborean institutions and beliefs. However, these connections are only vague, and we dispose of too little detailed information to be definitely sure on the subject.

In the first place there appears to be a relation between *éram-be-kabi*, *Indjo*, and *indjo-ku* (rainy season)<sup>1)</sup>. According to Elmberg, the *éram-be-kabi* had to be held at the height of the dry season, but he also mentions the fact that other narrators talked about December, which would be in the beginning of the wet monsoon<sup>2)</sup>. In this context it is curious to note that Lorentz, who visited Nimborean in 1903, tells about a great feast which was being held, or in preparation, at the time of his visit to Nimborean. The Tarfia carriers called it a "p e s t a T a h u n B a r u" which is Malay for New Year's celebration<sup>3)</sup>. Apparently the feast, to which the carriers seem to have been invited also, caused an association of ideas which made them explain it as a feast similar to our New Year's celebration (the coming of a new year, of a new time). In contemporary Nimborean the same expression is often used when people refer to the *éram-be-kabi*, hence — probably — the mention which is made of December — the last month of our calendar — as the time at which the *éram-be-kabi*, was celebrated.

Then there is the possible connection between the feast and the myth of *Warikreng*. The communication with the dead ancestors, the expectation of good fortune being the outcome of a *kabi*, the taboo on sexual intercourse, and numerous other details seem to be an indication of this.

*Warikreng* was a mythical being. At first he was small and ugly and ridiculed by all, even by the unmarried girls. After he had been mocked

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<sup>1)</sup> The common Nimborean word for rainy season is *sajanggu* (*saj* = rain, *janggu* = season). *Indjo-ku* is a less known word in contemporary Nimborean, actually denoting the time of *Indjo*. Thus it was applied to the wet monsoon, "when the sun goes down, red leaves and fruits are taboo . . . , the disadvantageous time in which sickness of an epidemical nature often occur" (J. P. Kabel: op. cit. p. 117).

<sup>2)</sup> J. E. Elmberg: op. cit. p. 31.

<sup>3)</sup> H. A. Lorentz: op. cit. pp. 165 etc.



again by two girls, his mother — *Bawakrong* — felt sorry for the boy and delivered him of his ugly skin. He was "reborn" tall and with a fair skin. He was hidden for three days, and then he began his wandering through Nimboran, but he concealed himself from the people. He was a great hunter, and never failed to kill numerous animals. His "hunting-medicine was very powerful." One day he was seen in a garden by two girls (the same ones who had mocked him when he was small and ugly) but *Warikreng* fled. However, as he had had his hair dyed red with oil and red earth, he left a smudge of the red dye on a banana-palm where he bumped his head when fleeing. The girls, astounded at his tallness, measured the height of the mark with a stick and took the stick home. *Warikreng* related his experience to *Bawakrong* who considered that the time had come to make a great feast — *kabi* — and bring *Warikreng* out into the open.

Preparations were started, and at night *Bawakrong* would be heard beating the *unggu*. Mortal people, on hearing this, said to each other: "Listen, that is the sound of the underworld," for an *unggu* could not be beaten after the sun had set. Finally, the day had come for the first *kabi* that was ever held in Nimboran. A platform had been erected on which *Warikreng* was to be seated. People came from far and wide to attend the celebration. When everybody was present *Warikreng* appeared, adorned with two *hngari*, and followed by a large number of people who all had fair skins and were adorned with one *hngari*. They were the people of the underworld, the dead ancestors. At the sight of these beings the assembled people took fright, and when they smelled the smell of the dead (*kesüe-tenggu* = lit. the smell of *kesüe*. *Kesüe* is the common word for spirit of the dead) they all fell on the ground as if they were dead. *Warikreng* mounted the platform and spat betel-nut juice over the people after which they came back to life again. The feast was continued, and enormous quantities of food and pork were consumed (all that had been prepared by *Warikreng's* people under supervision of *Bawakrong*). Then the idea occurred to the two girls who had seen *Warikreng* in their garden that he might be the man, and they fetched their measuring stick and measured *Warikreng*, finding that he was just as tall. *Warikreng* was then allured into the house of the two girls, and made to cohabit with them. Because of this incident the feast came to an abrupt end, for *Warikreng* and his *kesüe* were angered by the behaviour of the people, and they all disappeared in a cloud (ash or rain) into a hole in the ground, taking with them all wonderful things such as strong hunting medicine, powerful *harta*, and the like, which otherwise would have been shared with the living people.

The hole where *Warikreng* disappeared was in the old village of *Bawakrong*: *Hno*. The hole is still there, only now it is covered with stones and shrubbery.

The myth clearly contains many elements which are of relevance to the *eram-be-kabi*. To mention only a few: there are the reunion of the living and the dead, the *hngari* as a symbol carried by the group of *Warikreng*, the horn of plenty which was overflowing at a *kabi*, and the promise of good fortune and prosperity if no taboos were broken, the power of *Warikreng* — the lord of the underworld — over life and death.

To this may be added that at an *éram-be-kabi* the *jao* had a secret name which had to be guessed by the dancers. It always proved to be the name of one of the villages in the underworld. The fact that the house was built on the roots of an upturned tree is — according to Elmberg — an indication that the *jao* is associated with the underworld.

Finally, mention should be made of the conclusion drawn by Elmberg, who states that the songs of an *éram-be-kabi* mostly centred around "the calling up of the spirits of the dead." Originally they were probably sung where there was a hole in the ground or a stone heap <sup>1)</sup>.

Less clear is the connection between *Indjo* and the *éram-be-kabi*. No mention is made of *Indjo* in any of the old Nimboran myths. Elmberg, therefore, presumes that *Indjo* is an element which was introduced into Nimboran at a later stage, while it was more or less forcibly introduced into the *éram-be-kabi* by putting *Indjo* inside the *jao* at the time of the festival. Originally *Indjo* only came to *indjo-jamo* where she communicated with the people, and which is commonly described by the people as a sort of club where the young men were also initiated. Elmberg does see a possible connection, however, between the myth of *Warikreng* and initiation. According to him the *Warikreng* myth "would have been ideal for an initiation myth."

Another link between *éram-be-kabi* and initiation of the young men is also hinted at by the Nimboran narrators. According to several of them initiation only took place at the time of a *kabi* <sup>2)</sup>. Elmberg thinks that previous to the appearance of *Indjo* in Nimboran-cult the young males were initiated in war. This would also coincide with the belief that the rites which were performed inside the *jao*, and of which we know so little, had something to do with men regaining strength for new wars and protection against possible harm. That initiation and the *éram-be-kabi* were thus somehow linked to each other is not unfeasible.

## 9. War

War was decidedly no minor feature of traditional Nimboran culture. The figure around which everything, related to warfare, centred was the *éram-be-pro* (*pro* = arrow) or war-lord of the *tang*.

A Nimboran could never be forced to go to war. It was up to the individual to decide whether he would take part or not. There are still a few older men who never joined in a warring-expedition. Yet, warfare was essential, for it afforded a man not only prestige and respect from other people, but also success in life.

For the *éram* war-making seems to have been a matter with which he would have as little concern as possible. In case a *tang* was urged by others to partake in a warring-expedition (a request which was also made through the *éram-be-pro*) the *éram* would most strongly oppose this and point out to his men the dangers they would expose themselves to, the misery their going off to war would cause their relatives, and the possibility of their getting killed which would bring even greater misery to the family. In the end, at least some of the young men would stick to their decision to go to war. The *éram* would

1) J. E. Elmberg: op. cit. p. 63.

2) This presumption is also advanced by J. P. Kabel: op. cit. p. 119.

muster them, and after having complimented them on their bravery would warn them to be very careful, not to take unnecessary risks, and to pay much attention to their *éram-be-pro* and his advice.

The *éram-be-pro* seems to have occupied an important position in Nimboran society. Although the Nimboran will now try to convince you of the peace-loving attitude which was so typical of former Nimboran society, there are many indications which prove the opposite. According to Elmberg, the boys were submitted to a thorough training in warfare. In Gressie it is told that the major part of the art of war-making was taught during initiation, which is said to have lasted many years, and which was done in the *indja-jap* (the equivalent of *indjo-jamo* in Nimboran). Elmberg was not able to get full confirmation of a similar practice having been followed in Nimboran. Although most of the details about initiation are left in the dark we may be quite certain that the main purpose of initiation was connected with making the young men acquainted with the hardships of war, the rites of war, and methods of self-defence in the event of war. The Nimborans sometimes tell that these things were taught to the boys by the older people (fathers) as a normal feature of their education.

Several of the older men in Nimboran have actively taken part in wars, and sometimes pride themselves on the fact that they killed one or more enemies. The skilled warriors had a special name which was *pro-inggambu*. They were experts in avoiding arrows which were directed at them, and — under the guidance of the *éram-be-pro* — they led the younger and unskilled warriors to war. After a war had been successfully finished, a feast would be held in the villages of the returned warriors. At this feast the genitals of the slain enemies, stuck in cleft pieces of sugar-cane, were scorned by the women because of their lack of vigour. The men would sing, imitating the cries of agony and the begging for mercy of the enemy.

Elmberg states that the *éram-be-pro* was elected by the *éram*. I never had this statement confirmed. The *éram-be-pro* is said to have always been the greatest warrior. Only his skill in war and his abilities as a leader of the warriors were decisive for him becoming the war-chief. His position was then acknowledged at a meeting at which participation in war was discussed. The *éram* definitely had a say in these discussions. He actually presided at the meeting, as has been pointed out above.

It is difficult to find a definite answer to the question of the function of *éram* in war-making. An informant (Uruo) in Genjem Ketjil said to Elmberg that war was not a matter concerning one village (*tang*) only. It concerned the whole of Nimboran. War was waged between peoples and between language-groups<sup>1</sup>). From one village (*tang*) two men would take part, from another one five, and so on. That is — the informant said — the reason why the *éram* has no direct authority in war-matters. He was concerned only as far as members of his *tang* were involved.

The killing of the enemy bears too much semblance to a ritual with which one could not easily dispense to deny its importance for traditional Nimboran society. The enemy had to be killed preferably with a bone dagger, drawing

<sup>1</sup>) For "language-groups" the informant (Uruo) used the Malay word *b a h a s a*. It should be noted that the Nimborans do not distinguish between languages and dialects. A language or a dialect that is not the same as the language of the Nimborans they will call a different *b a h a s a*.

as much blood as possible by stabbing in special places so that the blood would spread on the ground. Bamboo-knives were brought along to cut the achilles-tendon in case the victim offered too much of a struggle and thus prevented accurate stabbing. Kasuwai, another informant to Elmberg, complained that he had actually killed three people, but nevertheless, his wife had never borne him any children. Fertility of women and gardens was to be the outcome of a successful war.

Personally, I prefer to see it thus, that the *éram* had nothing to do with the actual acts of war but had to preserve the balance between the conflicting interests which arose in case of war-making (the security of his *tang* and its members, and the necessity to kill in order to gain the blessing of fertility). We must also take into account that those who lived on the outskirts of Nimboran had more frequent conflicts with neighbouring tribes, while those who lived a more sheltered life in the middle of Nimboran, mostly took part in wars which originated in the border-area, and only when they felt the necessity to do so. It is likely, therefore, that the *éram-be-pro* took a more prominent position in the *tangs* which lived in the outskirts of Nimboran. It is said of Benjom and Ombrop villages that they were more frequently involved in wars than any other village in Nimboran, but that they were always aided by different people from other *tangs*. The villages of Genjem and Singgri seem to have been their main assistants.

The construction of houses in traditional Nimboran might be indicative of a constant threat of attack by enemies. According to Nimboran narrators the wars which were waged by the Nimborans usually were retaliation wars.

However, one cannot be certain that this is no wishful thinking on the part of the "emancipated" Nimborans, for the interest which was taken in preparing the youngsters for war certainly points in the opposite direction, while the strong defences in the Nimboran villages may also be indicative of increased fear of a retaliation attack by the neighbouring people who were constantly threatened by the Nimborans.

An *éram-be-pro* remained in that capacity as long as he could prove his value. When too many casualties were made amongst his men, or when he became too old he would be replaced by another.

#### 10. Nimboran society as a whole

In view of the elaborate web of relations between the numerous Nimboran *tangs*, the existence of which was so clearly evident in the case of *éram-be-kabi* and war, it is worth while to give some attention to the views which were held by the Nimborans regarding the origin of Nimboran society.

The following represents the view of central and eastern Nimboran on the origin of Nimboran society.

The first people lived on a little hill, south of the present-day village of Genjem-ketjil (originally Inggenem-Hamung) at a place called *Nggi*. *Nggi* was the place where several events related in Nimboran mythology took place, and not far from *Hno*, the village where *Warikneng* made the first *kabi*, and later disappeared.

It appears that at that time there also lived people in Jansu, a village in the southern hills of Gressie. At one time all the people were called to Jansu, and a big feast was given. In Jansu the first *érams* were appointed. Apparently the

Japsi people were not invited. They came to the feast, but finding that they were not wanted made trouble, stealing food and threatening the women guarding the food. Consequently, they were cast out and since that time the Japsis have ever lived in enmity with the other people, Nimborans included.

Thus Nimboran received its first *éram* in *Nggi*. From *Nggi* the first distribution of people took place (*tang* division?). *Wapombang* was one of the first settlements down in the plain, and a nucleus from which at a later time the second distribution occurred. Thus all Nimboran valley became gradually populated, the people setting out from the first and second nuclei, *Nggi* and *Wapombang*.

Different readings were given by the people from the villages in southern Nimboran, south-western Nimboran, and northern Nimboran. However, the true origin of Nimboran society was for the greater part left in the dark. As may be surmised from the few tales given in the notes to figures 1-3 on pp. 54-56, Nimboran society is composed of a number of groups which partly came from elsewhere, like the people of Imeno who partly came from Japsi, partly from the people living in the area of the Berap-lakes between Berap and the coast (the villages of Muris on the coast are supposed to have come from this same nucleus which points to a relationship between Imeno and these villages), and partly are natives of Nimboran proper.

Then there are also people outside what is now considered Nimboran proper, who trace their origin back to Nimboran, like the people of Kuantsu who told that they actually lived at the place where nowadays the village of Sanggai is located, but that they were driven out by the Nimborans.

The ties which still exist between several Nimboran *tangs* with people outside Nimboran also point to a different origin, and to different relations that have existed in former times. Thus a *tang* of Ombrop (*Wau*) claimed a relationship with people of Jansu, which is more or less corroborated by the myths told in Ombrop, and related to Elmberg.

There was an outspoken difference in the details of the myths and tales as told by the different Nimborans. A further inquiry into these myths and tales in and around Nimboran might, at least, throw some light on the probable origin of the different Nimboran *tangs*, and of the social unity which is evident in contemporary Nimboran.

From what has been related in the last few paragraphs it has become evident that in many respects Nimboran earlier formed a whole, a group with similar interests of which the composite parts were closely linked by an intricate web of mutual relations and obligations. The interdependence of the different parts also found expression in the attempt to trace back the origin of Nimboran society to a pair of common ancestors, or to a common village of origin.

Noting the mutual relationship between the different parts of Nimboran society, it is logical to wonder whether this relationship has also found expression in the political organization of Nimboran society. In other words, did a higher authority than that of *éram* exist in Nimboran, or had one ever existed in former times?

The Nimborans denied this, although they pointed out one of the headmen — the *éram* of the *tang* *Jéwi* in *Kasitemo* — as being the "senior amongst the *érams*", a "primus inter pares", therefore, who enjoyed this status because he

was considered a direct descendant of the first *éram* of the Nimboran people who lived at *Nggi*, the first nucleus of distribution.

The territory which formerly belonged to *Nggi* did not belong to anybody anymore, or rather, it was considered communal territory, and the *éram* of *Kasitemo*, successor to the *éram* of *Nggi*, exercised authority over this territory in the name of Nimboran society.

Another indication pointing to the interrelation of the different *tangs* in Nimboran and the existence of a "senior *éram*", was the restriction put on the use of large stretches of *alalang*-grass<sup>1)</sup> in the Nimboran plain. These vast grassy plains, forming a part of the territory over which certain *tangs* had control, acquired a special value because they rendered it possible to practise fire-hunting<sup>2)</sup> which was a favourite occupation of the Nimboran population. In the course of time several areas had been reserved for this particular purpose all over Nimboran. A well known stretch was the plain — almost 500 acres in size — between the villages of *Imsetum* and *Kuмено*. This plain actually fell under the control of three *tangs*, but they had no longer any authority to dispose freely of this particular part of their territory. The vast *alalang*-plain was permanently reserved for fire-hunting by Nimboran society as a whole.

Organizing a fire-hunt, which was carried out about once every two years on a particular stretch of land, was done in joint deliberation by all the *tangs* of Nimboran, the *éram* of *Kasitemo* often presiding at the discussions, not as a leader, but as the senior *éram*.

Summarizing the relations which previously existed in Nimboran we come to the following conclusions:

Although the nuclear family was left mainly to its own resources as far as its subsistence was concerned, and in its every-day life it was, therefore, leading a more or less isolated existence, the comparative isolation was broken by the many obligations which existed towards others inside, as well as, outside the *tang*.

Marriage, and the ever-lasting quest for *harta*, brought people together and caused many-sided relations to grow between the members of different *tangs*.

The relation between elder and younger brothers (sisters), fathers and sons and their obligations towards each other bound the members of a *tang* closely together.

The *éram*, although he was not an active leader of his people in daily life, definitely had authority in the *tang*. His people owed him strict obedience and had many obligations towards him which they could not very well shirk. If someone failed to fulfil his obligations towards others he would not go unpunished. The failure of observance of one's duties towards the *éram* would stain the latter's honour, and might easily lead to severe retribution, in some instances even death. The failure of observance of one's obligations towards outsiders would likewise lead to counter-measures, and possible death.

The close relations between the different *tangs* found expression in *éram*-

1) from Malay *alalang-alang* = Lat. *Imperata*.

2) Hunting animals by setting fire to *alalang*-grass. The animals which found shelter in the grass would then be driven out to be caught by the hunters who had taken up their position all around the fire.

*be-kabi* and warfare, and in a lesser degree also in the occasional fire-hunts, while these events also called for co-operative effort from the side of the Nimborans, and occasionally brought the people together to share equally in the advantages of these forms of collective effort.

The mutual relations in traditional Nimboran society also found expression in the rules of land tenure. Although no detailed information is as yet available concerning these rules, some aspects are known and should, therefore, be given the attention which they certainly deserve.

#### 11. *Some aspects of land tenure in Nimboran*

Each *tang* occupied its own territory which was well defined. The combined territories of all the *tangs*, however, did not cover the whole of Nimboran. There were several places which were said to be communal land (the Malay words "t a n a h u m u m" were always used in this context, which literally means communal land), which was then explained from the fact that this land used to belong to the first people who lived there and who were the common ancestors of all Nimboran. The main stretch of communal land was located close to Genjem, the present-day centre of Administration and Mission in Nimboran. Another stretch was said to lie between Ombrop and the Japsi-tribe. According to the belief in Ombrop, that was the site of the village of the first people.

Mention has already been made of the fact that the *éram* of the *tang Jewi* in Kasitemo was considered the one who had authority over this land. However, his authority was not of an absolute character. It would be best to take this as that of a guardian whose primary task it was to see that nobody intruded upon this land without the general consent of Nimboran.

In present-day Nimboran this communal land has no specific destination, nor does a special ban seem to be in force on putting it to use one way or the other. As far as is known, the establishment of the Administration-settlement on this very land seems never to have caused opposition from the population.

Apart from the communal land there were also stretches of land belonging to one *tang* or the other on which Nimboran, as a whole, had the specific right of fire-hunting. This land was said to have been wooded country formerly, which changed to a *lan g*-land from intensive gardening.

Several of such stretches of a *lan g*-grass exist in Nimboran. This land is still considered territory of the *tangs* which of old exercised rights on it. Only, the *tangs* are not at liberty any longer to use it for their own purposes. That right was forfeited when the land started to be overgrown with a *lan g*-grass and added to similar adjoining stretches, thus making a total acreage of a *lan g*-grass which was considered exceptionally well suited for fire-hunting.

As has been said before, the *éram* of *Jewi* also functioned as the leading authority in this case.

It is not known how this institution came into being. Although it is claimed that the *tang* which originally exercised sole authority over the land which has become fire-hunting territory, now has no rights whatsoever, such is to be doubted. While it is not illogical to find a ban on the arbitrary burning of the a *lan g*-grass as this would also set fire to the adjoining stretches of grass, disturb the animals in that area, and cause the fire-hunters to profit from what should be considered not rightfully theirs, it is less likely to find also a ban on

gardening in the same area. Probably the question had never actually risen in former times because a l a n g-land was never used for gardening-purposes. New conditions in Nimboran, however, have caused doubts to arise about this matter. The using of a l a n g-land for mechanised farming, a new feature in Nimboran society, set people thinking.

That Nimboran society, as such, exercised rights on a l a n g-land for fire-hunting does coincide with the opinion which was voiced by some, that formerly all the land belonged to the one and only nucleus of people who lived in Nimboran, and that it was gradually portioned off to the different people separating from the nucleus, and founding a new village (*tang*) elsewhere in Nimboran.

The territory of a *tang* was divided between the adult (male) members of the *tang*, the land of a man being divided amongst his sons when they married and after his death. Thus, each nuclear family had the disposal of an area of wooded land for gardening, and of marshy land (sometimes artificially created) for sago planting. The family had an unalienable right to the use of that land. Even an *éram* was not at liberty to encroach upon these rights at will. On the other hand, a man was not free to allow occupation of his land without the consent of the *tang* (i.e. the *éram*). If, for instance, somebody wanted to make a garden in another place than his own, he needed not only the consent of the man on whose land he was to make his garden, but also the consent of the *éram*. Furthermore, he had to make a payment (formerly a stone axe) to the *éram*. He then had the use of the land allotted to him, but only for as long as it was actually occupied by him. When he left he forfeited his former rights.

Usually in this case no perennial crops were planted, but there are instances where settlement took on a more permanent character and perennial crops were planted. According to customary rules a title to the fruits of the crops was kept by the man who planted them. In several cases though, conflicts originated from such planting. The people who had the original rights of use of the land claimed also a right to the perennial crops on it. In most cases the cause proved to be a disagreement on the question whether a payment or sufficient payment had been made by the temporary occupant of the land. A disagreement between the Mission and the *éram* of Jambe Japdi in Genjem Besar concerning the right to the fruits of a number of coconut-trees on the premises of the girls school, formerly site of the Administration, was suspected of springing from the fact that no payment was made by the Administration at the time it occupied that particular land.

A man, leaving his village to stay elsewhere, did not forfeit his right to the use of his part of the territory of the *tang*, no matter for how long he would stay away. His gardens would be left untended, nobody having a right to appropriate those.

Mention has been made of the possibility of acquiring land for a son when he married, in cases where the father's land was not sufficiently extensive to provide for all the sons. In that case the bride might bring land along with her, provided that payment was made for it. The new occupant of the land had no more rights to it though than any other outsider as in the case described above (the land remained with the *tang* of the woman). According to Elmberg, land which was brought by the woman in marriage, passed to her daughters, either when they married or when the mother died. In case there were no daughters to inherit, the land was returned to the *tang* of the woman. The man



and his sons never had a right to that land, other than the use of it as long as the wife was with them.

In the case of land inherited in the female line, conflicts were bound to arise in the third generation. The disposition of the land had then become questionable, and was likely to become a cause of conflicts. Settlement of such a conflict was possible through payment by the man to the *tang* which originally had rights to it. In case of no payment, hostilities were likely to arise.

The right to hunt was limited to the *tang's* own territory. A quarry might be followed on another *tang's* land only when the hunt started on one's own territory. Hunting on other people's territory often was a cause for severe conflicts as mostly it could not be proved that the dogs, bringing a boar or cassowary to bay, had not found their quarry on strange territory to begin with.

## PART II

### *Contact with a culture of an entirely different nature*

#### CHAPTER II

##### The penetration of Mission and Administration into Nimboran

###### 1. *Contacts, previous to the arrival of Mission and Administration*

Before the Wichmann expedition in 1903, no mention was made of Nimboran in any published report. Our knowledge concerning the contacts which the Nimborans had with bird-hunters and possibly other traders previous to that time is almost negligible. Actually, we can do no more than deduce from some remarks in Lorentz's and van der Sande's written reports on the said expedition that the Nimborans had maintained such contacts for some time, for Lorentz established that the people knew a few words of Malay, the intermediary language of the bird-hunters, while one of the Nimboran "chiefs" was introduced to the party as "k o r a n o of the Nimburans" <sup>1)</sup>, which title undoubtedly must have been introduced by the bird-hunters.

The Wichmann expedition was the first party of Europeans ever to penetrate into the "land of the Nimburans". The attitude of the population towards the expedition was friendly but reserved. The people were proud, and when one of the members of the expedition fell ill they even inspired a little sense of discomfort among the visitors by refusing further contact, and urging the strangers to return to the coast. It was with a sense of relief that the party took leave of the Nimborans <sup>2)</sup>.

The visit of the expedition to the area was too brief to have yielded much valuable information. A number of ethnographical curiosities were collected, and some casual — mutually unrelated — facts were written down.

From 1903 until 1910 no contact was made with Nimboran. Then, in September 1910, a military detachment, on exploration-patrol from Tanahmerah Bay to the unknown south, got as far as the upper reaches of the Grime (or Korime) River. At this point the patrol turned back, navigating down the river until the coast was reached. In the reports no mention is made of contact with the population <sup>3)</sup>. A third visit was paid to the Nimboran area a little over a month later by a second patrol which started from Hollandia, crossed Lake Sentani, and marched as far as the village of Benjom. Contact is bound to have been made with the population, but no mention is made of it either.

In April 1911, another visit was paid to Nimboran. This time by Captain Sachse who followed the same route as Professor Wichmann did in 1903 <sup>4)</sup>.

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1) Mr. H. A. Lorentz: *op. cit.* pp. 165 etc.

G. A. J. van der Sande: *op. cit.*

The word *k o r a n o* originates from the islands in Geelvink Bay. Later it became the official title for the appointed village chiefs in northern N.G.

2) Mr. H. A. Lorentz: *ibid.*

3) "Verslag van de Militaire Exploiratie van Nederlandsch Nieuw Guinee 1907—1915": p. 56 Expedition under command of Lt. Scheffer.

4) "Verslag van de Militaire Exploiratie van Nederlandsch Nieuw Guinee 1907—1915": p. 57 Expedition under command of Capt. Sachse.

In 1915, the Missionary J. Bijkerk of the "Utrechtsche Zendings Vereeniging" arrived in Hollandia. At that time the Protestant Mission was already working along the north coast of New Guinea between Hollandia and Sarmi. Jakari was a main centre of missionary activity. According to Bijkerk, contact between Nimboran and the coastal villages was then already becoming lively. Many Nimborans used to come down to the coast to trade goods in order to acquire salt, fish, and, probably, some cheap trinkets which took their fancy since they saw them in the hands of the bird-hunters, who often used to buy the bird-skins with beads, hardware, and calico.

The frequent visits of Nimborans to the coast must eventually have led to a growing contact between them and the Administrative Assistant at Demta, causing the latter to visit Nimboran and patrol the area. Going by information received from former Administrative Assistants, and some old-timers in Nimboran, the official incorporation of Nimboran into the "Onderafdeling Hollandia" as a sub-division of the District of Demta occurred some time around 1917<sup>1)</sup>. When Bijkerk visited Nimboran in 1924, the "pacification" of the area apparently had made good progress, for a large part of the population had been concentrated in the villages at the foot of the southern Nimboran hills, while each village had its own *korano*, and the habit to use clothing and to show a sense of shame at being seen naked by strangers was developing. Furthermore, no singing and dancing or feasting was practised any longer. Only the *ibue-meseing-kabi* occasionally took place.

According to Bijkerk, frequent requests were made by the population for the Protestant Mission to come to Nimboran. These requests still are a common occurrence in present day New Guinea. The Papuans of the interior who have had more or less regular contact with the people of the pacified areas, and who have witnessed the relative security under which these people live and the increased material prosperity which seems to be their share, at one time or another are bound to come forward with the request for a teacher to be sent to their village. A growing sense of inferiority felt towards the Papuans under Mission- or Government influence is always noticeable. The attitude which the Papuans of the pacified areas adopt towards the ones from the interior may be held partly responsible for this. They feel themselves superior, and love to make the others ridiculous, while often they are even cruelly disparaging, and sometimes downright coarse. Especially in the cases where formerly an intense feeling of fear and respect existed after the appearance of Government and Mission this is now often replaced by an attitude of inflated courage and contempt. I have seen visiting Papuans belonging to interior tribes cutting off their customary hairdo, risking the ridicule of their own people rather than be subjected to the scorching contempt of their hosts.

The frequent visits of Nimborans to the coast must have given rise to a

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<sup>1)</sup> A District in Netherlands New Guinea is not the same as a district in the British and Australian possessions. The whole of Netherlands New Guinea is divided into a number of Afdelingen which are headed by a Resident. These are subdivided into Onderafdelingen, headed by an Assistent Resident or Controleur. Each Onderafdeling is again subdivided into a number of districts (Districten), which formerly were headed by Indonesian Administrative Assistants (Bestuurs Assistent or B.A.) and since some twenty-five years sometimes by Papuan Administrative Assistants. Since the last war and the separation of Neth. New Guinea in 1949, the number of Papuan Bestuurs Assistenten has vastly increased.

similar attitude being adopted by the coastal Papuans towards the Nimborans<sup>1)</sup>. The old fears that were felt for Nimboran had disappeared and made room for the described feelings of superiority. This superiority gradually became an accepted fact for the Nimborans.

In their relative security of Mission-attention and Government-protection, the coastal population had become less open to displays of force from the side of Nimboran. Their lives had started to move along different lines. They removed themselves from the old connections, no matter whether these were hostile or peaceful. The Nimborans, from of old acquainted with the people from Tarfia and Muris owing to their trade-relations, witnessed and experienced this change, and must have felt left behind. A desire for similar evolution, as was experienced by the people along the coast, must have taken hold of Nimboran, resulting in an ever more frequently repeated request for teachers to be sent to Nimboran.

It is rather to be regretted that nothing could be unearthed about the early reaction of Nimboran on the establishment of Netherland-Indies authority in the area. The picture which is presented, does not suggest of any violence having been committed by the Administration in pacifying Nimboran. The opposite can be surmised from the fact that hardly anything of that period is remembered by the population who, in other cases, have given proof of a sharp memory for events which at the time have shocked them. It is quite certain that no European Administrative Officer was directly involved nor a large police force employed in the pacification of Nimboran. When in 1925 Nimboran was made a separate District with its own *Bestuurs-Assistent* and moderate police force, it was considered as such a matter of course that Halie, at that time the Administrative Officer in Hollandia, did not even make mention of it in his *Memorie van Overgave* in 1930.

## 2. *The Protestant Mission in Nimboran*

In the autumn of 1924, the two Missionaries Bijkerk and Schneider, accompanied by their colleague from Sarmi, de Neef, went to Nimboran to select a site for the new Mission station in the area. Bijkerk returned to Nimboran to stay on June 11th 1925.

The beginning of the Protestant Mission in Nimboran was most unassuming. A house was built for the Missionary's family which had to do service for a long time. The first contact with the population was made through the children who were taken into the house as boarders, receiving tuition, board, and lodging in exchange for some odd jobs done around the house. These children, who came voluntarily, after permission to do so had been given by the parents, formed the first link with the Nimboran people. Through them the parents were reached, and through the parents the others in the village. Church services were held on the veranda of the house, as was also the daily dispensing of medicaments to the sick and wounded. The Missionary was assisted by two Christian Papuans of Roon-island who lived in the village of Genjem-Besar with their respective families. It was hoped that the example, set by these Christians,

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<sup>1)</sup> The coastal population still tries to make out the Nimborans as a backward people. The opinions which are voiced by them, are also an indication of their attitude towards Nimboran some 30 years ago.

and the daily contact ensuing from the fact that they lived in the village, would dispose the population favourably towards the ends pursued by the Mission.

Friendly relations have always prevailed in Nimboran since the coming of the Mission. Garden-products were eagerly sold at the station, the frequent contact thus made with the Missionary gradually leading to church-going. At first, only the relatives of the pupil-boarders showed some interest, but eventually more came, and at the end of 1926, a church building — not more than a hut of larger proportions — was erected on the station grounds.

Next year the first schoolteacher (Ambonese) arrived in Genjem, and a school was opened. Two years later the first three Nimborans (from Genjem) were baptized, soon to be followed by the whole village.

The second teacher was stationed at Berap, a village on the road between Genjem and Demta, often serving as a night stop for travellers who were Nimboran bound. Then followed Benjom in 1930, the next big village on the road to Genjem. The Mission expected to be able to station a teacher in the hill settlements of Ombrop and Imeno in 1930, but it was not before 1934 that Ombrop at last got its teacher in the person of Jacob Dani, the first Nimboran to fill such a capacity.

Between 1930 and 1931, a large number of Nimborans was baptized. Mostly the baptizing was done village by village, old people and young, almost all of them being present at the ceremony. Yet, not all Nimborans took to the Christian Religion simultaneously. Imeno, for instance, got its first Christians as late as 1936, when on the 16th of February 164 villagers were baptized, almost eleven years after the arrival of the first Missionary in Nimboran.

From the start the Mission's first and major aim was the christianization of the people. As a second aim the instruction of the Nimboran population was taken in hand, primarily as a means of furthering the education of the Nimboran in the Christian way of life.

Apart from religious teaching, the curriculum of the schools included reading, writing and arithmetic. The schools had three grades, school-hours were fixed, and the language used was Malay. The teachers, one to each school, usually were unqualified. Only much later, sufficient trained teachers were available. The first class usually was doubled because of the difficulties experienced by the pupils in learning the Malay language.

The Mission, being in need of financial aid for its schools, turned to the Government for support. Conditions, to be complied with before a school was entitled to a grant-in-aid, were limited to a fixed minimum number of children attending school (25). Once a school was grant-aided by the Government, the curriculum had to comply with the rules laid down by the Government Educational Department.

The Government School Inspection Service, which had just started to function properly at the time Nimboran received its first schools, contributed considerably to a speedy development of the educational programme in Nimboran although not to the satisfaction of the Mission, for school instruction took a course which it did not wholly approve of. However, at the time no further steps were taken. Apparently the results which were achieved were considered sufficiently satisfactory to continue the same policy, despite the criticism to which it was often subjected.

According to Bijkerk the older generation fully co-operated in sending their children to school. They actually were keen on the young receiving this

education. At first, the older children were sent to school. Consequently, in the third grade children of between twelve and fourteen years of age were to be found. Only gradually did the average age of the pupils decrease. In contemporary Nimboran, children usually start attending school at the age of six or seven years. They now finish school when they are ten or eleven. Compulsory education was never introduced, only persuasion was used by Administration and Mission to promote satisfactory school attendance.

Apart from the more general shortcomings of the applied system of school instruction, no mention is made anywhere of difficulties met with in Nimboran. On the contrary, until the war the Mission seems to have been quite satisfied with the co-operation received from the population.

That the results of the applied system of school instruction are often criticized is to be blamed on the fact that the curriculum was never really adapted to life after school in the village. The object of school instruction at the time — as stated by Bijkerk — was to teach the Papuans to read so that they could expand their (religious) knowledge with the aid of the printed word, and thus reach a higher degree of intellectual maturity. Religious literature was provided, and the people were prompted to read it.

### *3. The approach by the Administration*

In order to be able to exercise authority properly it is necessary that the people who are to be governed are easily reached. The first likely action to be taken by the Administration, therefore, would be the concentration of the population in villages easily reached by Government-patrol. It was not to be expected of the *Bestuurs-Assistent* in 1917 to give any thought to possible after-effects of this measure. To him it only mattered that the people lived in peace, did not practise any (to outsiders) offensive ritual, and respected law and order as prescribed by the Netherlands Government.

Another measure which was soon taken was the appointment of *korano*s.

At that time it had already become common practice to appoint a chief in each village. As the language barrier formed a major obstacle, contact with the people was usually achieved through persons who had more or less mastered the Malay language, who were understood by the Administrative Officers, and who managed to make the Administrative Officers understood by the people.

These "contacts" between the Administration and the population were indispensable in the first years when Malay was only understood by very few, and the customs and institutions of the Papuan were virtually yet unknown. Very often these "contacts" started to call themselves *korano*, which self-appointment may, or may not, have been accepted by the Administration. Actually, it did not matter much in the first stages of getting acquainted. However, as soon as the Administration started to get active in arranging matters of indigenous life, the situation became different, and a more permanent and officially recognized village-authority was needed. The customary chiefs were not considered the indicated representatives of indigenous society to represent the Government locally. Probably the *Bestuurs-Assistent* was led by a prejudice, conceived earlier in another part of the *Onderafdeling*, where the appointment of an *ondoafi*<sup>1)</sup> as *korano* was

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1) = generally used name for a customary chief.

considered an impossibility. Whatever the reason may have been, *kora no*s were appointed as soon as the Administration set to work in Nimboran. At first, the *kora no* was the local contact and agent of the Administration. He had to make sure that regulations, imposed on the population, were observed. He was responsible for cleanliness in the village, and for the supply of carriers and labourers if demanded by the Administration.

At first, no remuneration was received by him for this work, but when statute labour and levying of taxes became effective in Nimboran (after 1925), a fixed low percentage of the collected tax-money was paid to the *kora no*, who was responsible for the timely collection of these taxes<sup>1</sup>). The *kora no* did not exercise any formal authority in the village. His personal prestige and authority had to suffice. He was backed by the Administration as long as his actions were conformable to his function. Corporal punishment, inflicted by a *kora no* (floggings with a rattan cane) appears to have been tolerated by the Administration before the war, as long as punishment was justified. The *éram* seems to have been completely ignored by the Administration. Dancing and feasting were forbidden, and thus the *éram-be-kabi*, from then on, had become a thing of the past. With the prohibition of *éram-be-kabi* the *éram*-function was doomed to extinction, something which had not been foreseen.

A few months after the establishment of the Mission station on Mentie hill, Nimboran became a separate District in the Onderafdeling Hollandia, and an Administrative Assistant was stationed in Genjem. He was accompanied by a small detachment of police-boys. The task of this police force was to maintain law and order, make regular patrols, and enforce measures taken by the Administration<sup>2</sup>).

The District Officer in Hollandia, who was the authority immediately responsible for the administration of the area, at that time happened to be a very active man who made his influence felt in Nimboran until he left in 1930. Many measures were taken, and new ideas introduced in the course of those five years, which did not fail to leave their mark on Nimboran society. In 1926, a survey was made of the state of the terrain between Demta and Genjem. Plans to build a road were developed; a road which was to stretch from Hollandia via Sentani, Nimboran and Demta to Sarmi. In Nimboran, roads were planned from Demta to Genjem, from Genjem to Imeno, and from Genjem, via Kwantsu, to Ifar<sup>3</sup>). A large-scale scheme for the penetration into the interior seems to have been at the bottom of all this planning. Halie reports plans to station an Administrative Officer at Nimboran. In 1930, the idea of a Government station at Imeno, a village at the cross-roads of tracks leading into the interior, was changed for a station at Genjem.

The roads to be constructed were planned as horse-tracks which could be easily made into (unmetalled) roads, suitable for light motor traffic.

1) A similar remuneration for the work of appointed chiefs was introduced by the German Administration in the German territory of New Guinea in 1897. S. W. Reed: "The making of modern New Guinea" pp. 140—141.

2) The police-forces at the District stations were so-called *Landschapspolitie*. They did not belong to the regular Netherlands-Indies police forces, but were locally recruited and trained. The *Landschapspolitie* was an important tool in recruiting labourers for the different projects to be executed.

3) N. Halie: "Memorie van Overgave 1926—1930, Onderafdeling Hollandia, Nieuw Guinea".

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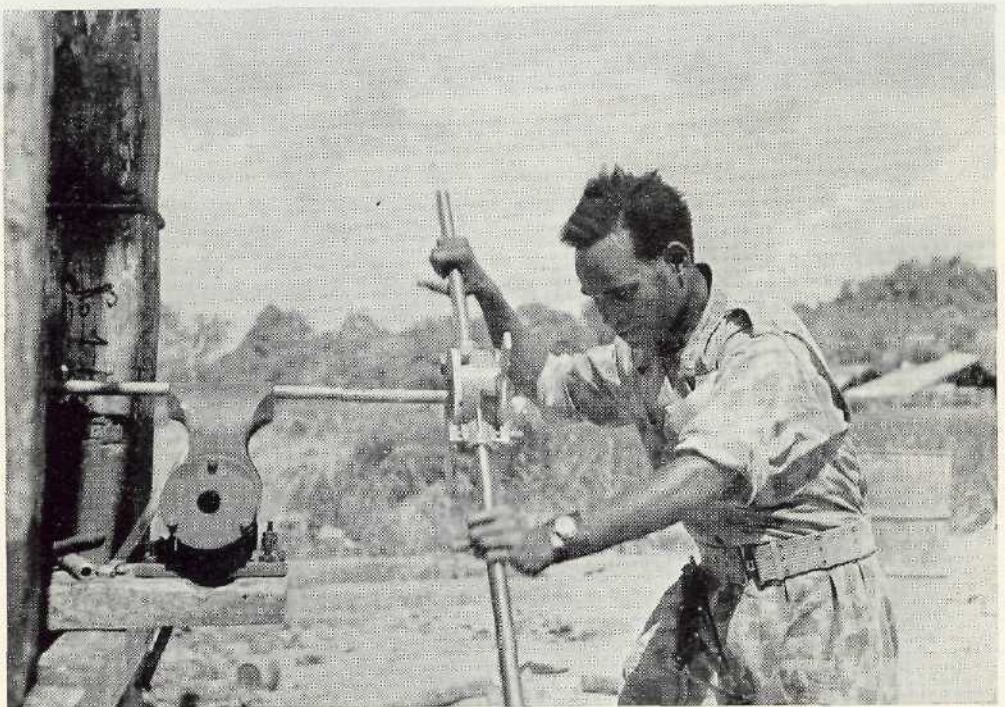
(Photo Government Information Service)

Plate 1. *The house of the korano of Genjem Ketjil. The style is typical of contemporary Nimboran houses.*





Plate 2. *The east-wing of the new hospital under construction. Two Nimboran chief-carpenters are discussing some details.*



(Photo Government Information Service)

Plate 3. *The laying on of water in the new hospital is also taken care of by Nimboran workmen.*

The expected transfer of the District Officer from Hollandia to Nimboran caused Halie to set most of the villagers in the Districts of Demta and Nimboran to work on constructing the road connecting Genjem with Demta 1).

As early as 1926 the so-called *Herendiensten* regulations 2) were for the first time enforced in Nimboran. "Until my coming into office, statute labour had never been enforced", Halie writes in his *Memorie van Overgave* 3), and during five years the Nimboran population, together with those of Gressie, worked on the road-construction project. In 1928, the Gressie people revolted. Some put the blame on the Pamai-movement which started in Sentani and, according to Halie, spread to Gressie 4). Others (*Bijkerk*) say that the pressure exerted on the population by compulsory labour was too heavy, leading to an attempt to escape from these duties by refusing to work and retreating into the jungle. The Nimboran population did not take part in this revolt, even though their available man-power must have been just as heavily taxed as that of Gressie.

In 1928, the track from Jakonde (Lake Sentani) to Bonggerang was finished, and, in 1930, the horse-track between Demta and Genjem was completed.

Apart from these road-building duties the young men were often required to act as carriers. All the goods, needed in Genjem, had to be carried over land from Demta, and with the growing of the settlement the amount to be moved increased accordingly.

Later, labour was required for work at Ransiki (Geelvink Bay) where an experimental rubber-plantation was laid out. The Nimboran labourer was much sought after as he was considered honest and diligent.

The demand for labour, therefore, started soon after the establishment of the Administration in Genjem and has persisted ever since, increasing to unprecedented heights after the second World War and the transfer of Netherlands sovereignty over the Netherlands Indies in 1949 to Indonesia 5).

A fourth element, introduced by the Administration, was the cultivation of new crops. The two most important were coffee and cotton. Both were brought to Nimboran soon after 1926. According to old reports, coffee was introduced in 1927 6). Some persuasion apparently was used, because, apart from the planting at Warombaim which had been badly neglected, no coffee was seen anymore after the war. The same must be said of the cultivation of cotton which was started some time later, but was strongly stimulated by the Administration, especially after 1934. Special *mantriss* 7) were appointed by the Government to propagate and advance the cultivation of cotton 8). Hand-operated mills for the initial processing of the hand-picked cotton were

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1) N. Halie: op. cit. p. 10.

2) Statute labour, enforced by the Government. The ordinance regulating this subject was withdrawn shortly before the second World War. After the war *Herendiensten* were never again demanded.

3) op. cit. translated.

4) Pamai, who originated from Ormu on the north coast, close to Hollandia, started a new religious movement in Sentani.

5) The Netherlands part of New Guinea was not included in the transfer of sovereignty.

6) N. Halie: op. cit.

7) = trained assistants. Many Govt. services make use of these assistants. They are also found in the medical- as well as in the agricultural branch of Govt.

8) Mr W. J. Gerretsen: "Memorie van Overgave Onderafdeling Hollandia 1937".

sent to Nimboran. In 1937, the area under cultivation with cotton was extended by some 200 acres, making a total of 400 acres.

Much was expected of this cultivation, "but", stated controleur Gerretsen in 1937, "native cotton-growing is still in a stage demanding guidance and assistance of the Administration. The population has as yet not sufficient energy to maintain or to extend this cultivation single-handed. It is very likely, therefore, that the achieved results will be lost again when attention from the Administration decreases" 1).

Apart from coffee and cotton, also fruit-trees and annual crops were introduced by the Administration, but these did not receive the same attention as was given to the two former crops.

After 1930, a decline of Government activities in Nimboran is noticeable. The large-scale schemes of Governor van Sandick to create an extensive web of communications were forgotten. The road-building projects were not extended any further, apart from a horse-track which was made between Kwantsu and Berap by Philipsen around 1933 2). The great depression of the thirties which also demanded retrenchment in expenditure by the Government may be partly blamed, but other factors, like the quick succession of different Administrative Officers in the years after 1930, and the dependence of administration policy to a large extent on the personal preferences of the acting Administrative Officer may also be held responsible.

#### 4. *The second World War and the post-war years*

The peaceful incorporation of Nimboran into the territory under regular Government authority, and the following gradual transformation of Nimboran society was suddenly interrupted by the war in 1942.

At first little was actually noticed of the war. Occasionally, Nimboran received visits from the Japanese garrison at Hollandia, but the population was more directly concerned with the Japanese Civil Administration. Indonesian teachers and Government officials were kept in office as much as possible. This was also the case in Genjem, hence the people did not feel the Japanese occupation as an acute discomfort. Only gradually did the fact that a different people had come into authority penetrate in Nimboran.

The Japanese — it appears — did not maltreat the Nimboran population. Never was there any mention made of cruelties committed by the Japanese occupational forces. The only serious offence was the frequent killing of pigs in the villages to feed passing military patrols.

Labour duties had to be performed for the Japanese forces. Nothing is known about the number of labourers employed and the duration of employment. Therefore, no conclusion can be formed about the influence of labour on Nimboran society during the Japanese occupation.

The attitude of the population towards the Japanese Civil Administration and the Japanese forces has mostly been an attitude of indifference. There had never been any reason to feel especially grateful towards the Dutch Government, so one can hardly expect a loyal attitude to have been taken by the population. Neither did the Japanese give any real cause for strong antagonistic feelings to rise amongst the Nimboran people.

1) op. cit. p. 15 translated.

2) J. G. H. Kramps: "Memorie van Overgave Onderafdeling Hollandia 8 October 1936".

The attitude of the Nimboran population taken towards the occupation by the Japanese did not differ from that of the majority of the population in the different parts of occupied New Guinea, be it the Australian half or the Dutch half. Hogbin and Read report a similar attitude to have prevailed in different parts of Australian New Guinea<sup>1</sup>).

The occupation by the Japanese forces seems to have left few marks on Nimboran society. Of much more influence has been the impact of actual war, and the hectic years of American occupation and post-war disorganization. The actual fighting — short lived, but of considerable intensity, also in Nimboran — started a process of disorganizing Nimboran life which proved to be very difficult to stop. Hollandia, the formerly small and quiet residency of the District Officer for this region, was entirely blasted from the earth by naval- and air-bombardment in 1944. The remains of what once was a well-ordered settlement, were changed into a tremendous war-base almost overnight. Thousands of white- and of negro soldiers, and equipment in undreamt of quantities, were unloaded from numerous ships and aircraft. Large camps, power-stations, roads, vehicles, earth-moving equipment, ships, and much more with which the Papuan was confronted, made an unforgettable impression on his mind. The Japanese forces, once considered of such great power, melted away before the onslaught of the American forces.

A large part of the young male population, irresistibly attracted by the glamour of the American forces, followed the soldiers on their patrols and into the camps where they did all kinds of odd jobs. They were given sweets and cigarettes. Even clothing, cots, mosquito-nets, and other equipment were generously distributed by the American soldier.

Not much later, when Hollandia and the surrounding Districts had been cleared of the main Japanese fighting units, the allied troops were withdrawn from Nimboran. The demand for labour in Hollandia grew to tremendous proportions and the Netherlands Administration had to resort to the introduction of compulsory civilian service (*Burgerdienstpflicht*) to meet this demand. By decree of (Netherlands) military authority all effective males were declared liable to compulsory service, and had to obey the summons for labour duties. In order not to disrupt community life entirely, it was made a common practice to enrol only one third of the male population of each village at the same time. After a fixed period (one month or three months) they were relieved by a second third-part.

Thus a rotation scheme was developed which worked nearly to perfection. The main task of the Administration during those years was to arrange for a proper registration of the male population, regular payment of wages, and the proper functioning of the rotation scheme.

Thus a continuous moving back and forth between Nimboran and Hollandia

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<sup>1</sup>) H. Ian Hogbin: "Transformation scene", p. 8.

K. E. Read: "Effects of the Pacific War in the Markham Valley New Guinea".  
*Oceania* Vol XVIII No. 2 Dec. 1947 pp. 101—102.

The anti-Japanese sentiments which were evident in Nimboran in later years, were more a consequence of the allied occupation of Nimboran and Hollandia between 1944 and 1946. It was probably the glamour of allied power which accompanied the return of Netherlands authority, and the free license given to hunt down Japanese fugitive soldiers which is to be held responsible for the sudden aversion felt towards the Japanese after the liberation of the area, and for the acceptance of the return of the Dutch Government with some relief.

took place. The returning labourers were heavily loaded with military equipment and domestic utensils which they had bought or exchanged, or which had been given to them, or which they had scrounged from dumps and camping grounds, while the outgoing workers had the prospect of accumulating goods to bring home at a later date.

The tremendous influx of goods during the American occupation has strongly influenced the attitude of the population in later years. Primarily, towards the Dutch Government after the American troops had left the area, and secondly, towards life in the village. The manifestation of the technical superiority of Western culture, so convincingly proved by the superior, modern equipment of the American army, left an ineffaceable impression on the Papuans who came in direct contact with it. It opened a new world to them and put into motion a train of thought which cannot possibly be halted.

The attitude of the Nimboran seemed to be so thoroughly changed after the few years of allied occupation that it was not surprising to find many of them being drawn to Hollandia when — after 1948 — the demand for voluntary labour was on the increase again after the Japanese prisoners of war, who were made to work during the period of their internment, had left for their native country, and, especially, when Netherlands New Guinea became a separate Government, and a construction-programme of large proportions was started upon in Hollandia.

But not only was the population indirectly affected by the changing circumstances after the war. Purposeful and direct measures were taken which led to a change in indigenous living. The educational programme was extended and improved, expert guidance in agricultural matters was organized. Medical care was given to the population on a scale, unheard of before. All these measures were little co-ordinated at first, and often were considered experimental and inadequate. But one should not forget that before, nothing, or hardly anything, had been done in that field. Education was limited to the village-school. The school for advanced education at Miei (Geelvink Bay) was something quite unattainable for the average, or even the above-average Nimboran. Medical care was limited to dispensing done by the Missionary, while the little hospital in Hollandia — hardly within reachable distance — was badly equipped as compared to the hospitals of today. Guidance in technical matters (agriculture, carpentry) was limited to an occasional visit by a *m a n t r i*. Furthermore, cultivation of crops which took the fancy of the Administrative Officer in office was forced on the population. In post-war years more attention was given to the individual gardening done by the population.

Better connections in the Hollandia area and across Lake Sentani, caused more frequent visits to Nimboran by a *great many officials of different departments*, which eventually led to Nimboran being taken up in the general planning for the co-ordinated development of the population in the Hollandia region.

It was to be expected that these different plans and measures did not pass unnoticed by the population. A certain restlessness started to take hold of the Nimborans as early as 1946-1947. This restlessness was fanned by the vain attempts to start a 50-acre farm near Besum in 1946, meant to be the beginning of a large-scale project of cash-crop farming for the Hollandia market. A project for the construction of a motor-road, launched in the spring of 1947, and which had to be temporarily abandoned a year later, also caused expectations to run high.

## CHAPTER III

### Nimboran under Administration and Mission

#### 1. *Changes in the people's habitat, the establishment of an alien centre*

One of the first things which was undertaken by the Administration was the moving of the people from their hardly accessible hill-top settlements down to the foot of the hills, where they were gathered in villages on the banks of the many little rivers cutting through the southern hills.

The people were not only more easily reached that way, but — as was frequently pointed out to them — they would also be much happier living close to water and not having to climb up and down hill several times a day to get their water for cooking and drinking. The reason for building their dwellings on top of these hills was good and understandable before the Government appeared in Nimboran, as the people had to fear enemy attacks, but from now on — they were told — no enemy would dare to invade Government-controlled Nimboran, so that put an end to the necessity to live so far removed from each other.

The results of this measure were not long in showing themselves. The creation of these new villages, in most cases, led to the people living still further removed from their — often already distant — gardens and sago-grounds. The increased safety, guaranteed by the presence of the Administration with its police force, made it possible for the people to stay in their gardens for longer periods. So, when the distance between home and garden grew, many people preferred to live more permanently in their gardens where quite habitable houses were built. Yet, this phenomenon was not the only result of the increased distance, even though it was often advanced as an excuse when people were asked why they spent more time in the garden than in the village. Of course it was a good excuse, and very hard to dispute, but it is not likely to have been the only reason. Artificial village creation in itself has undoubtedly acted as a stimulant in driving the people into seclusion, something to which the Papuan from of old has been very much attracted: "Somehow the papuan is an individualist, always ready to withdraw with his family into the loneliness of his vast country, because he often prefers an often boring and uneventful life to the obligations which accompany the, in itself, appreciated cheer and activity, possible in a bigger social centre" <sup>1</sup>). To some extent this statement of van Baal also holds true for Nimboran. It has been shown how the Nimboran family from of old was left to its own resources as far as its common daily life was concerned, and that it was primarily dependent on the industry of the members of the household and on their devotion to the tasks allotted to them. It is not surprising, therefore, that with the abolition of war, the prohibition of feasting, and the artificial creation of villages with a new kind of authority, there was less reason to remain in the village, while the urge to remove oneself from these residential localities and seek isolation in the garden started to grow accordingly.

At times most of the villagers were to be found in the village only on Saturdays and Sundays, when many had to go to church, and others went to

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<sup>1</sup>) Jan van Baal: "Educating the New Guinea village".

hear whether the *k o r a n o* had something to tell them. The remaining part of the week was spent in the gardens and sago-areas.

In that way the village was reduced to a place of "rendez-vous," and did not function as a community centre any more. The houses were built according to the wishes of the Administration, the premises and the village road were kept clean, as was demanded, but the village, as such, was only a facade, an empty shell, while life was being enacted somewhere else.

Naturally this was not appreciated by the Mission, nor by the Administration, as living in the gardens threatened to interfere with the scholastic and educational programme, while it was also contrary to the intention of creating population centres, easy to reach and easy to supervise. Therefore, everything within the power of Administration and Mission was done to make the people live in their villages and not in the gardens.

The villages nearer to the Administration centre, being under closer scrutiny, proved to be more inclined to act according to the wishes which were voiced from that centre. The tendency to vacate the village in order to live an isolated but undisturbed life in the garden is not so prominent any more in Nimboran in contrast to Gressie, where the *Bestuurs Assistent* is still often driven to desperation by the continuous absence of his charges from their official habitat.

In the newly created villages a distinction between the different *tangs* and parts of *tangs* has been painstakingly retained through the years as is shown by the village plans given in the figures 1-3. Each *tang* still forms a separate whole in the village. Government authority brought the people together and gave them communal tasks (cleaning and maintenance of the village road, of the tracks leading to the village, and of bridges). Proper performance of these tasks was supervised by the *k o r a n o*. But the existence of a common task and a common chief did not contribute much to the growing of a sense of

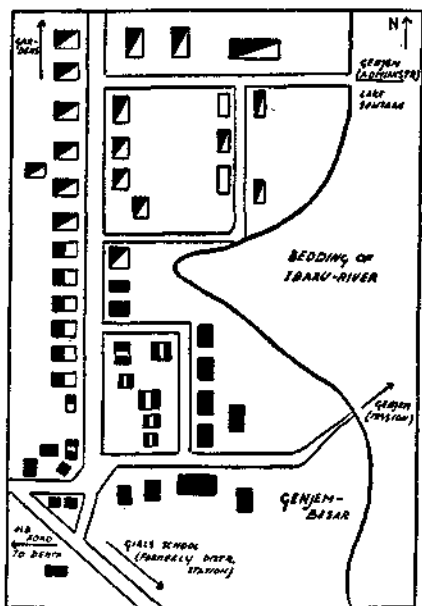


Figure 1.

Schematic outline of the village-plan of Genjem Besar, showing the grouping of the different *tangs*.

- = Mentie (Jambe Japdi)
  - ▨ = Waritju
  - ▩ = Griapon
  - ▧ = Janowaring
  - = House of teacher (top) and medical assistant.
- } originated from Jambe Japdi.

The village of Genjem Besar was made after the coming of the Administration. The different *tangs*, which formerly lived separately, now dwell together on territory of the *tang* Bano (Benjom).

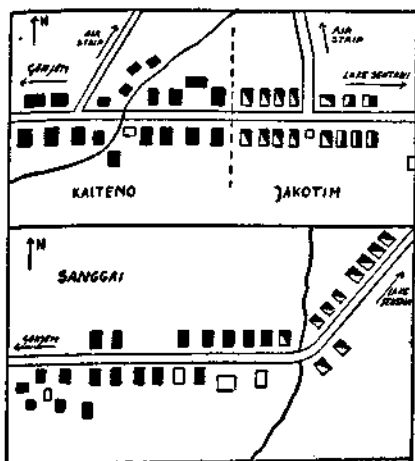


Figure 2.

Schematic outline of the village-plans of Kaitemo-Jakotim and Sanggai, showing the grouping of the different *tangs*.

*Kaitemo-Jakosim:*

- = Waitjang I
- ▤ = Waitjang II (*tekai*)
- ▨ = Masa (*eram*)
- = Government resthouse.

*Sanggai:*

- = Sem (*tekai*)
- ▤ = Hamong (*eram*)
- = from left to right:  
restaurant, Gvt. resthouse, church,  
teacher's house.

*Origin of Kaitemo, as related by the villagers.* Village of origin is *Wapombang*. *Wari Jeri* separated from *Wapombang* and made a village in *Wambukemo*. From *Wambukemo* two brothers separated and each made his own village. *Bene* went to *Kamtuk* and made a village which is now called *Merem-Kaitemo*(?). *Jaong* went to make another village which is now called *Meju* (*Nimboran*). From *Wambukemo* the village moved to a place called *Tebeti*. From *Tebeti* the village divided into three parts: *Itukru*, who was the first *eram* of Kaitemo, moved to *Besum* (*Nimboran*) and made his village there. *Kapim* went to a place called *Anggai* and made a village which is now called *Sanggai*. *Unie* moved to his garden, named *Usumalojap*. Soon afterwards he joined the people of *Jakotim*. His younger step-brother stayed in *Tebeti* and so did the step-brother's offspring. When the Administration came, they were told to move to *Kabo* where they made a new village, which is now called Kaitemo.

*Origin of Jakotim, as related by the villagers.* The common ancestor was *Masa Prokate* (*Masa* = a name; *Prokate* = a bundle of arrows) who owed his name to the fact that he always went around with a big bundle of arrows. He moved from *Wapombang* to a cave named *Sue-dekong*. He had two sons, one named *Tare* and a younger one named *Tenggu*. *Tenggu* left to make a village in *Hamonggerang* (*Nimboran*), while *Tare* went to stay near the sago swamps, close to *Jakotim*, where his offspring lived until the coming of the Administration. Then they moved to their present site, where *Silas Masa* is now *eram* (*dekening?*). The offspring of *Unie* (see Kaitemo), who went to live with *Masa's* people, now form the *tekai* group (Waitjang II).

*Origin of Sanggai, as related by the villagers.* *Sanggai* originates from Kaitemo; thus the story is: People from *Braso* (*Kamtuk*) had a tame pig. But that turned wild, disappeared into the forest and finally, came to *Nimboran* in the forest which is called *Kwaibu*. One day, the people from *Kuimeno* decided to hunt for wild boar in *Kwaibu*-forest. Out came the pig from *Braso*, which was then shot by a man named *Geiang*. *Geiang* was a dwarf. The pig was dead. After having had a conference, the people decided to bring the pig to the people of Kaitemo<sup>1</sup>). But the *eram* of Kaitemo refused the pig, and so the people brought it to the house of *Kapim* and *Janghong*. There the pig was slaughtered and divided. *Kapim* and *Janghong* received a hind-leg. When they went to fetch a grindstone they were exhilarated. Because of that the people of Kaitemo took offence and *Kapim* and *Janghong* were told to make their own village. They were given their own rights (made independent, which was usually symbolised by the presentation of a stone axe — *K*) after which they left and made their own village in *Sanggai*.

Once upon a time the father of *Bukuap* left for a place called *Kekri*, where he joined a man of *Irapi* who was called *Makli*, who lived there. He left his offspring in *Sanggai*. Thus they separated of their own free will. The *tang* of the father is called *Hamong*

<sup>1</sup>) A tame pig is always marked. Therefore, the people could tell that it was a tame pig which they had killed.



(also the name for the stone armlet, *éram's* heirloom), the *tang* of his offspring is called *Sem*. When the Administration came, the two were united again and told to live in *Imokaéro* which is now called Sanggai.

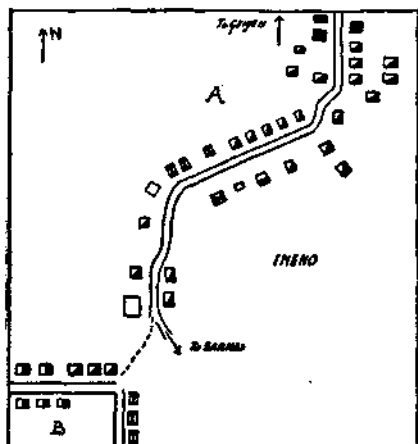


Figure 3.

Schematic outline of the village-plan of Imeno, showing the grouping of the different *tangs*.

- = Hamong.
- ▨ = Giat.
- ▩ = Irap.
- ▧ = Hembring.
- ⊕ = church (lower side, west of the road), teacher's house (middle, west of the road), Gvt. resthouse (east of the road).

The site B (bottom left) is a new site, higher up the hill and a short distance from the old village. All the people of Irap — but one, who is of unsound mind — have already moved.

#### *Origin of Imeno.*

The original people of Imeno are those of the *tang Hamong* (also the name for the stone armlet, *éram's* heirloom). They were joined later by people from the surroundings of the Berap Lakes (related to the people of Muris on the Pacific coast) who now call themselves *Giat*. People from *Sawé* (south-west of Nimboran), who feared a war with their own people, fled from their village which was called *Bafi* to live in Nimboran. They form the *tang Irap*. The *tang Hembring* originates from Japsi. When the Japsis killed a crocodile in Sermowai River, these people did not receive a share. They took fright and fled to Nimboran. Later, these different groups were brought together by the Administration in the village of Imeno. Imeno, therefore, is a conglomerate of several groups of people who found refuge in the southern Nimboran hills. They have lived there for many generations.

solidarity between the different *tangs*. Conflicts between the different groups, not uncommon in the Nimboran village, were not seldom caused by the fact that the *korano*, a member of one of the several *tangs* in the village, issued an order which did not find approval with the village population as a whole. The fact that he was of a different *tang* offered a chance to the others to renounce his authority, oppose his orders, or cause other trouble.

Also in this respect, therefore, the modern Nimboran village remained an artificial institution which failed to become a part of the people.

The site of the Government and Mission stations in the heart of populated Nimboran was well chosen, and it did not fail to be of influence on the relations which formerly existed in Nimboran.

Apart from the close contact which must have grown between the alien settlement and the surrounding villages which was stronger and probably more many-sided between Genjem and the closely lying villages, and which grew weaker the further the villages were removed from Genjem, there was a clear

shift in the mutual relations between the Nimboran villages lying within close proximity of the alien centre and those further away.

In the paragraph dealing with some aspects of the origin of Nimboran society (pp. 37 etc.) it has been suggested that from of old there has existed a dissimilarity between several parts of Nimboran society. The impression is given that the intervention of Mission and Government has magnified this dissimilarity rather than stimulated towards a better cohesion. The sequence in which schools were established clearly shows the preference given to those villages which were within easy reach of the centre, while the baptizing of Imeno villagers as late as 1936 — seven years after the first people of Genjem — might be an indication of the concentration of the Mission's attention to the villages in the immediate vicinity in the first place. The fact is the more striking when one considers that Bijkerk tells that among the Nimboran youths who stayed with him there always had been a number of children from Imeno.

The rapid increase of the number of Christians in the few villages which had frequent contact with the Mission station due to their favourable locality is almost undeniable proof of the difference of intensity of influence in the different villages.

A dissimilarity in outlook upon life and attitude towards changing conditions was still discernable in the central and periphery villages of Nimboran in 1951. The villages towards the periphery of Nimboran showed a much more independent character than those close to Genjem, the seat of Administration and Mission, which was especially manifest in a lesser degree of co-operation in matters of Government interference in the daily routine of life, and in a higher degree of traditionalism which offered some resistance to the introduction of new ideas. The evidence of a higher degree of material prosperity which might well be the outcome of acceptance of these ideas — as was shown in other places — did not leave the people of these villages entirely indifferent. Yet, those who had less intensive intercourse with the new nucleus of stimulation kept more rigidly to their old traditions, thus setting themselves more or less apart from the rest of Nimboran. A certain degree of antagonism between these two parts of Nimboran society became apparent, while it grew more marked in the course of time, and even culminated, in 1954, in an endeavour to found an independent co-operative society for the southern Nimboran villages.

But not only within Nimboran society were the mutual relations between the different groups subjected to changes, for gradually Nimboran also set itself apart from the surrounding peoples, especially from the Gressies with which it had previously maintained close relations. The presence of the actual nucleus of stimulation in the heart of Nimboran probably was the immediate cause of this estrangement.

Evidently the Mission and Administration settlements in Nimboran have from the start influenced Nimboran in a peculiar way. Not only did they affect the mutual relations between the different groups due to their locality and limited sphere of influence, but — owing to the different character of these two agents of stimulation — they also assisted the change of attitude of the people towards traditional institutions which was evoked by the different measures taken by them.

At first (from 1925 until the war) Genjem consisted of two separate nuclei. One was formed by the Administration settlement, built on a small plateau on the eastern shore of the Ibaru River, which formed a natural borderline between the village of Genjem Besar and the Government station. The other nucleus was the Protestant Mission complex, also built on the eastern shore of Ibaru River, but some distance away from the Administration complex northward. Little is known about the relations between these two authorities as all written evidence had been destroyed during the war. The impression is given that both more or less lived their own lives, thus exerting their influence on Nimboran society more or less independently. At times they were bound to take notice of each other, but although some contact did exist, apparently little direct co-operation and co-ordination of effort was attempted.

It is only logical that, through the years, the Nimboran people have tried to take advantage of this situation by playing one against the other. They must have been sufficiently successful in their efforts, because they were still at it in 1951. The lack of co-operation and co-ordination between Mission and Administration in those years must have caused an atmosphere of doubt which even now is noticeable throughout the area.

During the first few months of the stay of the European Administrative Officer in Nimboran in 1951, people came with complaints concerning measures taken by the Missionary or his subordinates, hoping that the District Officer would find fault with these and support the people complaining, thus giving them a chance to oppose the Missionary, his subordinates, or his measures, or all of them simultaneously. Undoubtedly, similar complaints about the District Officer were brought to the Missionary.

This attitude of seeking justification for a behaviour which was often known to be intolerable as people realized that certain rules had been trespassed against, was a phenomenon occurring quite frequently in Nimboran. This attitude of the people was born out of the circumstances. While the whole process of readjustment was under way, Mission as well as Administration usually acknowledged the reality of existing customs, but they often differed widely in opinion about the degree in which they might allow these customs to be practised by the population.

This difference of policy between the two gave the Nimboran individual ample opportunity to arrange matters so that they suited him best. Instead of the one and only complex of — usually strict — rules, set by his own society, the possibility now existed of making a choice between several alternatives. In that way people got the opportunity too often to escape rules of moral and common decency as set forth by either the Christian religion, or by their own society, which resulted in a high degree of licentiousness appearing in Nimboran society. Once this behaviour had taken root it proved very difficult to be fought against. While the rules of conduct, set forth by the Christian religion, had not been adopted yet, the effectiveness of old customs had become uncertain under the changing circumstances. What had been customary law in past times could well be in conflict with public decency or public opinion of contemporary Nimboran society. The result was own judgement or no judgement. The absence of true indigenous authority to uphold customary law and practice added considerably to the tendency towards arbitrariness looming in Nimboran society.

Clearly, the strain existing between the two nuclei of stimulation did not fail to influence the people under their authority.

Summarizing the above we come to the following conclusions:

The measures taken by the Administration in the first years after the initial pacification have caused tensions to grow within Nimboran society which helped to disrupt the original harmony which was mainly made possible by leaving each other undisturbed in general, and only maintaining close co-operation in events of special importance like war, *kabi*, marriage and the like. The new forms of social interaction, forced on Nimboran society by village creation, did not find approval with the population, and led to an attempt to escape from village-life.

Later, the presence of an alien centre in the heart of Nimboran caused further changes which in the first place affected the relations between the different villages, and between Nimboran and its neighbours.

The fact that the alien centre in Genjem actually consisted of two nuclei which often carried opposed views in relation to the problems with which they were confronted was not favourable for a harmonious development of Nimboran society, and in some respects even aided in stressing the conflicts which arose within indigenous society due to changing conditions.

Genjem could not be considered a centre of Nimboran society as there was no social interaction between the centre and the people. Only a one-sided flow of authority went out from the centre, authority which was stubborn in its principles and which was determined to make the people change their mode of life.

## 2. The effect on Nimboran political organization

The prohibition of feasting, which made the celebration of *éram-be-kabi* impossible, has, unwittingly, caused a train of injurious effects on Nimboran society.

*Éram-be-kabi* was an essential element in the whole process of investiture of the chief of a *tang*. Without *éram-be-kabi* a *dekening* could not be elevated to the state of *éram*, and with the prospect of never again being able to celebrate *éram-be-kabi*, the authority of *dekening*, which was based on the presumption that a *dekening* was bound to become an *éram* some day, soon declined. At first many *érams* were still living, but gradually their number grew less, and more *dekenings* took their place.

With the dying of the old *érams*, *tang*-authority gradually disappeared without being replaced by a new kind of authority. The Administration had stepped in, and the population never made an effort to consider a fitting replacement of the old institution of *tang* chiefs. Village authority had become a matter of Government policy, and the population had no say in the matter <sup>1)</sup>.

The only representative of the people recognized by the Government was the *ko r a n o*, appointed by the District Officer.

We do not know what the attitude of the population towards the *ko r a n o*s was like in the beginning. As they were not unfamiliar with the existence of

<sup>1)</sup> A similar case is made mention of by Hogbin who tells of the Busama that since 1906, when the last initiation took place, no headmen were initiated anymore because no occasion for a feast presented itself, and consequently the institution of headmanship gradually disappeared. Ian Hogbin: "Transformation Scene" p. 135.

this institution, and because on the appointment of *k o r a n o s* the Administration was most probably led by the preference given to some Nimborans who had already assisted the Administration in its contact with the population for some time (as interpreter etc.), the final appointment of real *k o r a n o s* probably passed as a mere formality at first. However, this new authority did not fail to make its presence felt in a society which until then had only known its own indigenous authority.

Bijkerk did not make mention of friction existing between the village population and the *k o r a n o s*. Neither do the *Memories van Overgave* of the respective District Officers of pre-war Hollandia refer anywhere to conflicts or difficulties between *k o r a n o s* and villagers as a continuously re-occurring phenomenon in Nimboran or anywhere else.

The post-war situation proved to be quite different. Apart from the unsatisfactory situation in Nimboran, disagreement was also more generally voiced in regard to the institution of appointed chiefs elsewhere in New Guinea <sup>1</sup>).

The institution of appointed chiefs, common enough in many other dependent territories, has been subjected to increased criticism in recent years, and in some instances — like in Nimboran — been condemned as unsuitable. The competencies and duties of the appointed chiefs have more or less been the same everywhere (maintenance of discipline and control in the village, the repair of village roads and bridges, collection of taxes, and sometimes limited judicial authority were their responsibility <sup>2</sup> ). What has been said about the institution of appointed chiefs in other countries is often also applicable to Nimboran.

In the Government apparatus in pre-war New Guinea there was no room for traditional indigenous authority. The people under administration were to be guided properly, and the indigenous political organization could not be considered fit to exercise authority according to the demands of modern government. Moreover, the principles of exercise of authority which were held by the population were so completely at odds with the Government principles on this subject that to introduce the indigenous political organization was considered an impossibility as it might even endanger law and order in the community.

This may be considered the main reason for imposing a new kind of authority on indigenous society. However, the solution was not a very fortunate one as it led to the gradual decline of indigenous political institutions which were greatly handicapped in functioning properly without their recognition by the Government.

The new kind of authority which Nimboran society was confronted with did not prove equal to the task of fully replacing indigenous authority, but in the initial stages this did not matter so much as the old institutions did not cease functioning immediately, and old values were still respected. Moreover, a number of laws and rules, and the backing of *k o r a n o* authority by the

<sup>1</sup>) A similar reaction was noted in the Mandated Territory of New Guinea in regard to the institution of the *luluai* (appointed chief), which was introduced by the German Administration in 1897, and continued by the succeeding Australian Administration. Ian Hogbin: "Transformation Scene" p. 164; J. K. Murray: "The Provisional Administration of the Territory of Papua and New Guinea" pp. 60—61; S. W. Reed: "The Making of Modern New Guinea" pp. 140—141.

<sup>2</sup>) T. R. Batten: "Problems of African Development" part II pp. 115—123.  
Lord Hailey: "An African Survey" pp. 345—545.

Administration enabled the appointed chiefs to enforce law and order in their villages.

Many *koranos* gradually began to exceed their authority, especially in the cases where the lack of traditional authority began to tell on the community, and the people lost their bearings. In order to make the people obey them, the *koranos* resorted to measures which were readiest to hand, often proceeding with undue severity against transgressors.

Outwardly, a semblance to a well-ordered community was maintained in that way, but internally a process of deterioration had set in. This was not immediately noticed, and only came to light much later in the years preceding the war and, especially, after the war.

The statute labour regulations were repealed shortly before the war, and later the regulations limiting the freedom of movement of the population by requiring travellers passports for journeys outside their district were also abolished. Furthermore, a strict check was kept on the activities of the *koranos*, reducing their position to that of merely an agent of the Administration, which, in fact, they had been meant to be from the start. The little authority which the *koranos* had been able to acquire in the villages soon dwindled, since they could no longer uphold their position of power by means of the methods to which they were used and which were now condemned.

*The shortcomings of the old system were not slow in showing themselves.*

The institution of *korano* had contributed to the estrangement between the people and their community. From the beginning it had been imposed authority which had no roots in indigenous society. It was accepted in the same manner as taxation and statute labour were accepted, but the people never made the institution something of their own. It remained alien to them. Both, the *korano* and the modern village, contributed little to the improvement of social intercourse, on the contrary, by the concentration of Government attention to these new institutions, the real predicament in which the population found itself had escaped notice, and the situation had gradually become worse.

It proved not to be easy to undo the results of a system which had been applied for several decades. Most outspoken was the need for real indigenous authority which would be accepted by the population — not because it was feared by them, but out of respect for the rules of indigenous customs to be upheld by that authority.

The basic causes of the shortcomings mentioned above were the underrating of the value of the complex of rules and customs which were to safeguard the harmony within the community, and the overrating of the part which was actually played in that community by an appointed chief.

The outcome of the above mentioned change in Government policy, and the acknowledgement of the rights to which the Papuan subjects were equally entitled as others were, helped to stress the urgently felt need for efficient indigenous authority in the villages, which need was made more urgent by the aims of the Government which wanted the emancipation of the population, while the Papuan was expected to contribute actively to the general effort for his own development.

However, it was not only the Government which realized this need. It was felt even more keenly by the people themselves. In some instances they actually felt themselves forsaken by the Administration, and even went as far as to

request the reassignment of the authority to the appointed chiefs of which these had been deprived.

A solution for this problem was not easily found. The population was no longer familiar with the principle of conducting its own affairs owing to the lack of real village authority during some three decades, and the functioning of an imposed alien authority which took all responsibility during all those years.

The people had become so very much used to submitting themselves to the guidance of others in matters concerning the community and the village that they never even thought of suggesting a solution themselves. When asked what they considered best, the answer usually was a forlorn look, or the already mentioned request for restoration of power to the *k o r a n o* was given as the only solution to the problem they could think of. But it was never doubted that the Administration would find a solution. They had absolute faith in being looked after, and were quite at peace with not having to worry about matters which for a long time had been withdrawn from their competency. The people had grown so fully dependent on the Administration in these matters that, at first, more general interest in the problem could hardly be raised. Mostly people were quite indifferent and were content to leave the worrying to the Administration, as long as something was done about it.

Initiative, at least in matters aiming at the improvement of conditions of village life, had mostly disappeared and had become an unknown quantity to the Nimboran people, even in those cases where the people themselves also felt something to be wrong.

### 3. *Religion and education*

As the Missionary was left a rather wide margin in which he was allowed to decide for himself which policy to adopt in christianizing the population, much depended on the qualities of the Missionaries who first brought the Christian religion to Nimboran. A definite approach did not exist, and very often the results which were obtained were not expected by the Missionaries.

Of Nimboran it has been said that christianization proceeded satisfactorily right from the beginning. 1930 may well be noted down as a second turning point in the history of Nimboran, the first lying somewhere between 1917 and 1924, when the Administration took up the pacification of Nimboran. From 1930 onwards, Christian religion was becoming a major factor in Nimboran society.

Mention has already been made of the method of baptizing all the inhabitants of a whole village simultaneously. This seems to have had its effect on the character of Christian religion in the area. Being a Christian was not so much individually experienced as it was a matter of feeling oneself Christian together with the others. Religion and the village-church were closely interrelated. It often happened that a Nimboran did not go to church when he was not in his own village, although the practice of having communal church services once every month, in which the whole of Nimboran church-community took part, and which were held in three different villages alternatively, contributed much to break down this peculiar tendency towards isolationism of the village-church.

Nevertheless, there were cases where a woman, as long as it was not too far away, went to church in her own (paternal) village, especially when her husband was not too regular a churchgoer.

Little is known about church-service attendance by Nimborans in Hollandia, but the impression is given that only a fraction of the Nimborans in Hollandia did show up in church regularly.

Sometimes the complaint was voiced by the Mission that the Nimboran showed such a lack of (Christian) religious zeal. This was then blamed on two causes: the laziness of the Nimboran, and his divided loyalty which partly stayed with his old religion.

In a discourse on the value of baptism, one of the Missionaries has given an interesting analysis of the conception of baptism among the peoples in the Hollandia area. An analysis which touches on some aspects which are worth further consideration: According to that Missionary, baptism, which was in great demand in the Tanahmerah Bay villages, was considered by the coastal population as a means to partake in salvation. The instruction, preparatory to baptism, and the act of baptizing itself, were considered a substitute for the old institution of initiation. As in Nimboran, in the villages of Tanahmerah Bay a noticeable decrease in church attendance set in after people had been baptized, which was considered proof of the abovementioned supposition. Similar reactions on baptism were reported from Serui (Geelvink Bay).

In Nimboran, one of the former (Ambonese) B. A. s. used to go into the village very early on Sunday mornings to drive the population to church while sentries were posted on the outskirts of the village to send back everyone who tried to go to his garden. After that Assistant had left, no beatings were given any longer. It then became difficult to exhort the congregation to zeal in spiritual matters. This attitude of the people was blamed on the too speedy baptism of the Nimborans who — not having yet sufficiently mastered the Malay language — only partly understood the meaning of Christianity when they were considered ready to enter the Christian church. It was considered necessary that at least ten years should pass after the initial contact between Mission and population before the first people might be baptized.

An analysis of Christianity in Nimboran is also given by J. P. Kabel <sup>1)</sup>, who was a Missionary in Nimboran from 1948 until 1952. He discusses the sacraments, and comes to the following conclusions:

To the Nimboran, baptism is essentially a rite de passage. Who has been baptized belongs to the Christian congregation and who has not, just does not belong. The unbaptized children of Christian parents are considered heathens. Some people withdraw themselves from baptism, even if a whole clan changes to Christianity.

In some cases these people prove to be hunters who expect to loose their special hunting magic if they turn to Christianity. Still, they do come to church and often even regularly (and they do not show any sign of opposition when their wives and children become Christians).

The celebration of the Holy Communion is considered *pharmakon a thanasias*. Young Christians are found to stay away after having attended several Holy Communions, explaining that they have attended enough of these celebrations. The elements of bread and wine are considered of great magical power. Kabel sees an acknowledgement of this in the efforts of the participants in a Holy Communion to painstakingly live up to the ritual. For instance, the bread has to be accepted with the right hand, while those who have no

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<sup>1)</sup> J. P. Kabel: "De Kèsjèp-beweging in Nimboran". De Heerbaan 1953, pp. 106 etc.



money for the offering will not come. Only when the rite is observed in the proper manner will it result in the gaining of eternal life.

In the typical way in which the Christian religion has been adopted by the Nimboran, Kabel sees a conviction that Christianity is a means to conquer death, the main crisis in the existence of the Papuan. Christianity is seen by the Nimboran as another new means to gain this result. He believes that the European (synonymous with the Christian) has the key to the secret of life and death, which opinion is frequently voiced by young Christian Papuans who are dissatisfied because "they do not know the secret yet". Prayer is also considered the realization of what is prayed for. Praying for life is realization of life. Thus a deacon in a village, who had prayed at a death-bed was accused of having caused the death of the sick person, the accusation being that the man had prayed for the death of the sick person. The intention of the person praying is seen as of primary importance, not the prayer itself (the Lord's Prayer or even the Confession of Faith and the Ten Commandments) which is only of secondary importance.

It is clear that Christianity has in more than one way complicated life for the Nimboran.

The first generation of Christians in Nimboran has been kept at a disadvantage, especially those people who were already partly educated according to the concepts of their own culture, and who were then driven by circumstances to adopt a different religion. A religion, which was only partly understood, and for which no room had yet been made in indigenous culture. It became less difficult for the young people who started to attend school and religious classes at an age which is considered normal for that. They received part of their education from the Mission schools, while a part of the traditional education had to be omitted owing to the changing conditions which had also altered the possibilities for an education of the younger generation according to indigenous standards.

The younger generation were also baptized at an earlier age, and as long as they attended school, the prayers at school and the classes in religious teaching kept them on the subject. The lack of instruction in indigenous beliefs gave them a less prejudiced attitude towards the Christian religion.

With an education, which differed essentially from the education which was received by their parents, it was to be expected that the younger generation would grow beyond their parents, and gradually, traditional crafts and old religion and lore were forgotten.

It seems that with the coming of Mission and Administration the need for many old customs had started to disappear, and, as a consequence, the older generation did not feel an urge any longer to transmit all their knowledge <sup>1)</sup>.

In a foregoing chapter it was told how in traditional Nimboran culture the education of the younger generation was for a great part determined by the conduct of the young people towards their elders. It is understandable that with the estrangement between the two generations, friction grew more frequent, and the willingness of the older people to introduce their children

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<sup>1)</sup> Pitt Rivers, after having paid a visit to a Maori village in 1925, writes: "The older generation, the majority of whom could not speak English, were purely retrospective in their outlook; for them the Maori world had come to an end". "The young men knew nothing of the old Maori religion and lore, and it was curious to see some of them

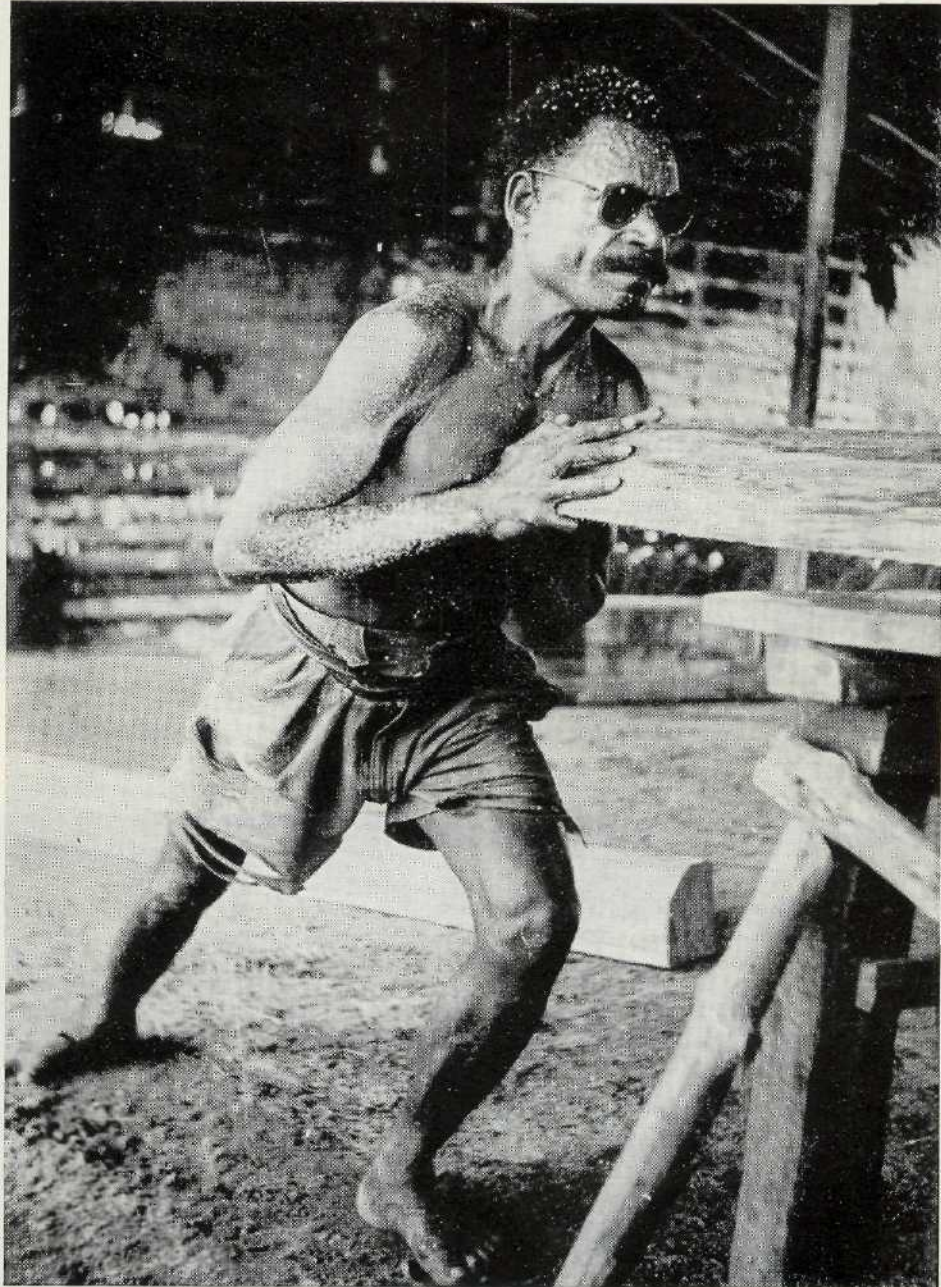


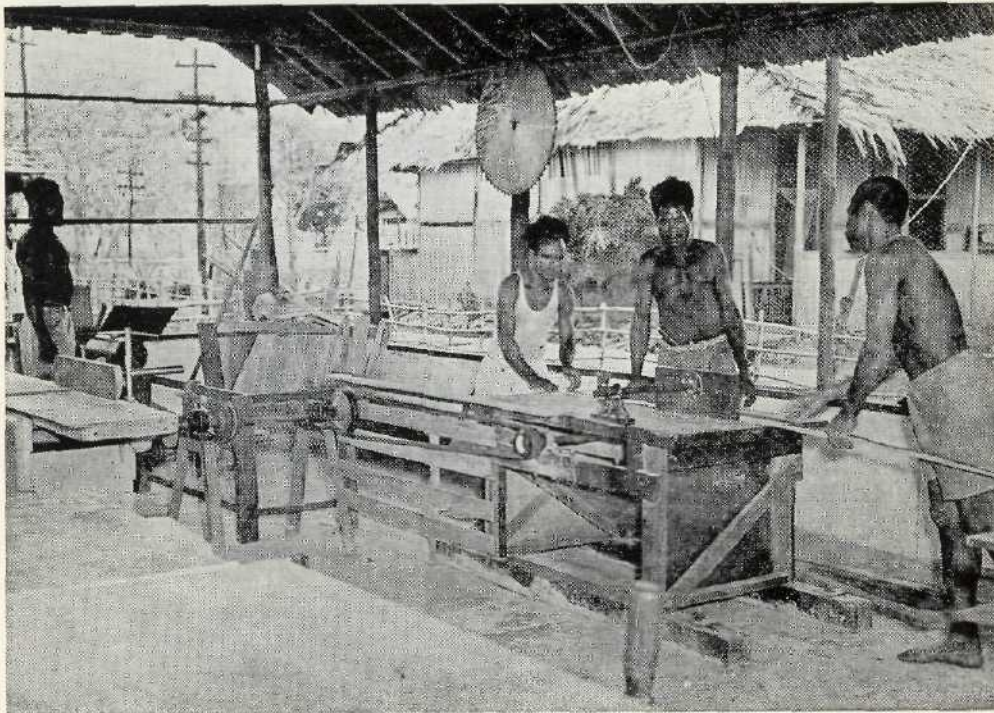
Plate 4. *Samuel Demotekai, owner-manager of the pit-sawing enterprise, at work on the large circular saw.*



Plate 5. Daniel Demotekai who established a carpentry workshop.



Plate 6. One of Daniel's apprentices operating the circular saw.



(Photo Government Information Service)

Plate 7. The new carpentry workshop of Daniel Demotekai.

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The acceptance, therefore, of a new, partly understood religion, has aided considerably in causing estrangement to grow between the older generation and their offspring, and the gap, thus created, grew wider with the years.

As early as 1929 — only two years after the first school was established in Nimboran — criticism on the policy of the School Inspection Service towards the village schools was already voiced. The School Inspection Service apparently wanted to raise the standard of the schools by demanding more stress to be laid on the usual subjects (arithmetic etc.), while provisions made for the subjects aiming at the adaptation of instruction to village life were wholly inadequate. The Mission then pleaded for shorter school hours in order to give the pupils a better opportunity to accompany their parents to the gardens later in the day, or to work in a school garden of considerable size under supervision of the teacher. Apparently nothing was done about it, for six years later the complaint was heard that school instruction had become so intensive that no time was left for the task of evangelization.

School instruction — it seems — was introduced in Nimboran with some vigour. As was said before, the local Missionary had little say in the programme of instruction which even then was already considered badly adapted to the actual needs of the population. Nevertheless, school attendance is reported to have been highly satisfactory until the second World War, to some extent also owing to the efforts of the Administration, which had to guarantee regular attendance by the children, for which the parents were held responsible. But there must have been yet another reason for the interest which the population at first showed for school instruction.

The outward reaction of the Papuan to the completely unfamiliar world with which he is confronted by the whole of Western culture has been often described. People usually are astounded at the way in which our technical wonders are mostly taken for granted by the Papuans. More often than not, mention was made of the fact that the Papuan, after having shown a rather shortlived awe at these wonders, accepted them, very frequently appreciated their use, and adopted them for his own purpose, and, in some cases, even learned to operate intricate machinery and handle it with perfect ability. Yet, this is in itself not so astonishing. Once, the technical advantage of Western culture over their own culture was acknowledged by the Papuan, he did not show much surprise anymore at new proofs of our technical ability. At most, some interest and some curiosity. But he did commence to wonder how we came by this technical skill, which particular supernatural power, knowledge, or practice was at the back of it, and closely guarded by us. We might consider it a major shortcoming that it was never seriously explained to him how the people, bringing Government and Christianity, came by their enormous technical advantage over indigenous culture, and this was never fully realized. Usually the people were

crowd around Mr. Best, a foreigner, belonging to a different people, to ply him with questions about their own race and traditions" (G. H. L. Pitt-Rivers: "Culture clash in a Maori village" in "The clash of culture and Contact of Races" pp. 225, 230).

It is curious to note that the latter could also be applicable to Nimboran youth, for when in the course of my stay in Nimboran the older people were asked to explain old customs or to show their skill in old indigenous handiwork, the young men showed the same eager interest as did the Maoris, Pitt Rivers was telling about.

left in the dark, and they had to resort to their own — very limited — knowledge to try to find an answer. They had to explain all this from their own outlook upon life. It was not understood that this — the unbelievable material prosperity of the West, its causes and its sources — would raise a question to which the Papuan simply had to find an answer, which, if it was not given to him, would be looked for in the Papuan's own philosophy of life <sup>1</sup>).

Thus, it was not strange that people did expect more from school instruction than was really there. The promise, used to coax the parents to send their children to school, that school instruction would open the gates to advancement, a promise given in good faith and with honest purpose, aided considerably in raising unjustified expectations.

Not at first, but gradually, it began to dawn upon the people that the instruction which was received at school did not give the graduates that specific something which would make them capable of doing the things other people could do. A very few, it is true, were sent to a school for advanced education (*Vervolgschool* or continuation-school) in some other place, and came back, some years later, as teachers or carpenters, but that was all, and it did not satisfy the people. The others all went back to their village after having finished school, equipped with the newly acquired knowledge, only to forget it again slowly and to become almost as ignorant as the "un-educated" older people. In some ways they were even more ignorant because they lacked many of the qualities and the wisdom of their ancestors: those things that had been abolished because they were forbidden, or because they had become useless and did not fit into the pattern of the life the pupils were meant to lead in future.

The young children, who had finished school and came to live their daily life in the village sphere, did not realize this at first, but when they had grown older and had become adults and married people, it slowly began to dawn upon them that they had become very different from their elders. The feeling of being — someway or other — a displaced element in indigenous society must have started to take hold of them by that time, because the first signs of escape from village life became evident: several joined the native police forces, others started to depart for Ransiki around 1939, where indigenous labour was urgently needed.

The demand for continuous labour in the Hollandia-region itself was not so active yet in those years, so it was a not too large part of the people who did actually leave Nimboran for a while <sup>2</sup>).

After the war, school attendance started to become unsatisfactory and it has stayed like that all along. Sometimes attendance became better for a while

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1) The question of the origin of our material advantages was often closely linked with the question of eternal life, the answer to which the Missionary was suspected of concealing.

2) In 1939, for the first time 433 labourers were sent for six months to Ransiki. They were mainly from Sentani and Nimboran District. In 1940, 374 labourers went to a Japanese enterprise in Sarmi for six months, and 87 went to Ransiki for nine months. People proved to be rather eager to go, and in order not to incapacitate the villages too much, no more than 20% of the effective males of one village were allowed to go. The wages, paid in Ransiki, varied from 15 to 20 cents a day.

J. Hoogland: "Aanvullende Memorie van Overgave van Gezaghebber J. Hoogland betreffende de Onderafdeling Hollandia (periode 31 Januari 1938 tot 9 Augustus 1940)" p. 15.

— probably because the *korano* had suddenly become active after having been reminded of his task by the Administration — but eventually the number of absent pupils would gradually increase again.

The school did not fill the same place any more that it had done. Faith in the usefulness of school instruction had dwindled, and could not be rekindled again. At least, not as long as school instruction kept to the same lines as was done before the war.

It is, of course, not right to blame this wholly on the school-system and the educational programme of pre-war years. After all, the war certainly had its share in changing the attitude of the population. In addition to that, the war, and especially post-war conditions in Hollandia offered an opportunity to the younger generation to seek other ways towards advancement. The cause of the fact that opportunity to work in Hollandia was grasped with both hands by the majority of the young people, must be looked for in the first place in Nimboran society itself. The most outstanding feature of Nimboran mentality after 1946, was dissatisfaction. People were thoroughly dissatisfied with village-life because the village did not offer sufficient diversions, and the people missed the intellectual capacity to attack the problems on their own initiative. They did not know what was wrong with village life, and they did not bother to find out. They were neither told nor urged to reflect on such things. They had drifted with the current, and they had passively accepted christianization and school instruction.

Probably there has seldom been such a high percentage of literate people who never were able to apply their knowledge, and, consequently, gradually became illiterate, or partly illiterate again, as has been the case in Nimboran. And it is not only because the people were not given printed matter to read. It was much more because they did not need the knowledge of reading and writing that made them neglect this knowledge and forget. It probably would have happened even if they had got sufficient and appropriate reading matter.

People may object to this statement by saying, like Batten does, that "the power to read the printed word opens the way to further knowledge, not only at school but during the whole of life" <sup>1)</sup>, and that all that is needed is a regular supply of reading matter of a kind that will enable the people to understand and solve the problems that arise in their own community.

The Nimborans never attached the same value to the knowledge of reading as we do. We consider reading necessary and useful because we have learned to improve on our knowledge by reading, and we have become used to it now. But the Papuan is not familiar with that function of reading. It has to be taught to him — not only reading, but also the method of gathering knowledge through reading. However, one will not succeed if there does not exist a craving for more knowledge, or, at least, consciousness of the need of knowledge to be able to progress.

The knowledge which the Papuan expected to gain from school instruction has been more like a power which — once possessed — would enable him to do as the white man does. But what I mean with craving for knowledge is the realization that there does exist a wide field of known facts with which one has to become familiar before one can hope to undertake anything in the way of progress with a fair chance of ultimate success.

<sup>1)</sup> *op. cit.* Part II pp. 64—65.

This urge for more knowledge did not exist in Nimboran, mainly because the Nimboran was never taught what was meant by knowledge, what it was needed for, and how, and where, one had to look for it. People contented themselves with the idea that as long as the Nimboran knew how to read and write he was on the road to progress. The fallacy of this reasoning is apparent.

We may conclude, therefore, that the fact that the Nimboran showed no sign of having any need for an ability to read and write, and that his whole school instruction appeared to have been partly wasted, is to be blamed on the faith which is generally put in literacy as a means to develop the people, without the realization that mere literacy is not sufficient, but that the people also have to be brought to realize that a wide range of known facts does exist which, once he is acquainted with them, will enable man to gain access to the road to progress, and that this knowledge can be acquired partly through reading.

Apart from this negative result of school-instruction the schools have caused other changes in Nimboran society which are of a somewhat different nature:

Batten, talking about education 1) in Africa, says that "while it is still at an early stage of development, education is bound to cause social strains and tensions between those it educates and their environment" 2) owing to the introduction of the child into a world, quite new and uncomprehended by him or by his parents. The child will gradually become familiar with the things which are taught to him and thus he will grow different from his elders. Hence the tensions which grow between the different generations.

Partly this also holds true for Nimboran. According to the reports of the different Missionaries, school attendance was satisfactory, and no pressure out of the ordinary had to be exercised to make the parents send their children to school. The older generations in some cases even actively co-operated, which is proved by the number of young children who boarded with the Missionaries to receive extra education. Things were really expected from school instruction.

But the children were taught things which had no direct relation to village life, and which were of hardly any use to them. Apart from that, they were told over and over again by the Indonesian teachers that their way of life was inferior, that they were stupid and ignorant.

So, on the one side, the children were told that their way of life was worthless, and, on the other side, they were taught to do things which were of no practical value in daily life. Strains, therefore, did grow, not only between the young and the older people who were now being held responsible by the young for the backwardness of the community, but also within the younger generation itself. They did believe that their traditional culture was backward and ignorant. They did know how to read and write, sing hymns and lay out a model garden; may be they even remembered from the instructive pictures in the class room which kinds of food contain proteins, and which starch. But they did not know how to go about improving conditions. Dissatisfaction grew within the younger generation, and dissatisfaction grew towards the younger generation. In the eyes of the older generation the young people had become arrogant good-for-nothings.

The initial enthusiasm for school instruction decreased when expectations

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1) The word education is used by him in the more limited sense of school instruction.

2) op. cit. Part. II p. 42.

were not fulfilled, and since nothing was done about a change of programme and a different approach to the education of the population, the school was accepted as a necessary burden, and its significance in indigenous society started to decrease also.

In 1951, the school in Nimboran life had become an accepted, though little valued institution. It contributed little to the development of Nimboran society, for hardly any interest was taken in it anymore by the Nimboran population. The power which was expected to be gained from school instruction had failed to appear. The most that a school meant to Nimboran, as yet, was social prestige. The presence of a teacher in a village and the existence of a school distinguished the village from the others; but not even the closing of a school, which was sometimes done as a punitive measure to the village because of continuous slackness in school attendance, or the refusal to assist in replacing the dilapidated dwelling of the teacher by a decent new house, did cause much of a shock to the villagers. They did not like this to happen because it would set them off unfavourably against other villages which kept their school.

It was not only the fact that the school was not able any longer to rouse the interest of the population which made it of little consequence for the development of Nimboran. The little use which people had in daily life for the subjects learned at school was also cause of the powerlessness of the village school to improve indigenous life to a large extent.

#### 4. *The abandonment of h a r t a*

One of the typical aspects of Nimboran society of today is the fact that *h a r t a* are not used any longer for marriage-gifts and settling other social obligations. Instead of *h a r t a*, money is now used for that purpose. This is the more surprising when it is taken into consideration that all the surrounding people, even those of Lake Sentani and the more sophisticated villages of Humboldt- and Jautefa Bay, are still rigidly keeping to the use of these traditional valuables in carrying out transactions which lie in the field of social obligations. Those people too have learned the worth of money and have been using it daily. Only, they never allowed money to penetrate into the sphere where *h a r t a* were used. In those areas the quest for *h a r t a* is still very strong, the acquisition of *h a r t a* of major importance. Not thus in Nimboran where money has taken over the function of beads and stone axes, although a new tradition has formed, so that now we may speak of a compromise between old customs and new influences.

The consequences of the abandonment of *h a r t a* have been of far reaching significance for Nimboran, but before discussing the consequences a brief survey of the circumstances which caused the abandonment is worthwhile.

In March 1936, a discussion was held in Genjem concerning the subject of the possibility of abandonment of *h a r t a*. This discussion was attended by representatives of all the villages of Nimboran, and had been arranged by the Missionary after similar discussions had been held at Sentani and in the coastal villages. The results of the former discussions had been far from satisfactory:

Along the coast people did not want to abandon the old valuables yet. The representatives of tradition were the chiefs of Tablasoefa and Tablanoesoe, where — according to the Mission — paganism still maintained a strong influence in spite of the large number of baptized people. People were willing



to relinquish their attributes of sorcery, but not the old items with exchange value for the Papuan.

The discussions in Genjem had quite a different outcome. The Mission stipulated beforehand that it would not force the people to abandon the old *harta*, but left things for the population to decide for themselves. If they did decide for abandonment such was then to be done on a voluntary basis. Many people took the floor during the discussions. Especially the representatives from the villages of Benjom and Imeno<sup>1)</sup> urged the need of abandonment of *harta*. They considered it an unavoidable consequence of having taken to the Christian religion.

In every church in Nimboran a box was going to be placed in which the people could freely deposit their *harta*, or wherefrom they could remove them again if they regretted the deed.

The reason — given by the Mission — for the unanimous abandonment of *harta* in Nimboran was the promise, given earlier in Sentani, that the people would abandon *harta* in that area. It was thought that Nimboran only followed suit. However, such is to be doubted. If we compare the situation in the three different areas then and now, things will become more clear. Around 1936, the Mission apparently made propaganda for the abandonment of *harta*, using persuasion rather than coercion to achieve its purpose. It is not made clear why the Mission wished the *harta* to disappear. The Missionary at the time drew some mistaken parallels between *harta* values and our common exchange values, and thus reached a wrong conclusion in relation to the function and the dispensability of *harta* in indigenous economics and in indigenous society. The main reason which was advanced by the Mission for the abandonment of old valuables was that the older people who were in possession of *harta* thus kept a strong hold over the younger generation. This was said to lead to the abuse of their position by old men who married young girls at will, thus reducing the chances of the young men to marry early to girls of their own age. However, these conclusions were wrong and cannot have been based on facts<sup>2)</sup>. Consequently, the arguments on which the striving for abandonment of *harta* were founded were erroneous.

The Nimboran people, when asked why they did away with their *harta*, would answer that it was because the use of *harta* was a heathen practice, and had been condemned continuously and profoundly by the teachers in the villages. It had often been made clear to the people that, as long as they clung to their old valuables which only caused abuse to arise in their community, no one from Nimboran was to expect salvation.

The people in Sentani and along the coast still use *harta*. The discussions in Tablanoesoe and Tablasoeffa were a failure as the Missionary himself pointed out. The people of Sentani promised that they would eventually do away with the old valuables, but they never did. It seems that they never intended to do so, but could not muster courage to oppose the Missionaries openly. When one

1) Imeno was the village where only one month previously the first 164 people were baptized. Nowadays it is one of the few villages where *harta* are sometimes secretly used for settlement of obligations.

2) A man was in a position to withhold his contribution to a marriage-gift for a son if the latter did not live up to his obligations, and thus obstruct marriage, but if he should want another wife for himself he was in his turn dependent on his relatives for their contribution to a marriage-gift, and these were not likely to part with their valuable *harta* for the sake of a man wanting another wife without sufficient reason.

has watched the very great care with which these old *harta* are handled by the people, and the great pleasure everyone concerned gets out of bartering for one more bead of a special colour to be handed over, if one only gets a glimpse of the ceremony with which *harta* transactions are carried out in Sentani, and if one understands only a part of the great importance of the function of *harta* in indigenous society, then one will not judge so lightly about the abolition of this institution. The fact that the Missionaries were completely taken in by the promise of eventual abolition given in Sentani, can only be explained by their ignorance of the function of *harta*.

The impression is given that the "spontaneous" relinquishment of the old valuables in Nimboran was the result of considerable pressure which — assumedly unobserved by the Missionary — was exercised by the teachers in the villages. We simply must see it as a consequence of the christianization of Nimboran. The boxes in the churches, which were to function as receptacles for the "rejected" old articles, are an indication of the influence of the church on the decision of the people, as is the fanaticism which was displayed by Imeno village. But most convincing of all is the honest belief of contemporary Nimborans that they did this on the instigation of the teachers as a token of their absolute conversion to the Christian religion.

Let us now make a survey of the effect of the abolition of the *harta* in Nimboran society.

The major consequence of the abolition was the immediately increasing demand for money which was to take the place of the old axes and beads. Silver coins of high nominal value (*ringgit* (Malay) = two and a half guilder coin, and *rupiah* (Malay) = one guilder coin) replaced the more valuable items like axes and the black beads, while small coins replaced the other — less valuable — beads. The interesting feature of this change over from *harta* to money is that a specific category of old *harta* items was replaced, as it were, by specific coins. Objects, which were credited with supernatural value next to the exchange value which they possessed, were replaced by objects which only had exchange value, and a rather high one at that, because they were hard to come by. Wages were low (see p. 66 footnote) and the amount of employment available was limited.

The change over from *harta* to money has had far-reaching consequences, especially in the case of marriage-gifts. The married people, from of old the possessors of *harta*, and, consequently, having a major say in marriage arrangements, saw their power abruptly ended. The young people, who originally had not been in a position to have any influence on the accumulation of objects composing a marriage-gift, from now on began to be of account. Their efforts were needed to acquire the money for a marriage-gift. Money was becoming of increasing importance now, and people had to find ways to earn some.

Before 1936, money was needed mostly to pay taxes. But taxes were low, and there was an active demand for cotton, copra, and forest products, and people usually managed to raise enough to pay their taxes. Money was wanted also to buy goods in the shop of Lie A Boen, a Chinaman, who settled in Nimboran after having roamed the area for several years in quest of birds. The goods, offered in his shop were not many. Calico, matches, knives, garden-tools, and other hard-ware, all of it of a cheap variety, were sold in

very small quantities. Lie A Boen also bought copra from the people. His shop, therefore, actually was the trade-centre of Nimboran. The volume of trade was limited. Copra production was of little importance and yielded only very little profit.

Money was scarce in Nimboran, and since the need for it had suddenly increased, people had to find ways to raise it in order to live up to their obligations. Around 1939, young men started to leave for Ransiki. We do not know whether or not the quest for money to help to compose a marriage-gift was one of the reasons at the back of this, but it certainly would not be surprising as the same phenomenon was observed later after the war, and the need for marriage-money — as it is often called by the young people — was then advanced by the people themselves as one of the reasons.

The marriage-gift, during the years between 1936 and the outbreak of the war, was not high. A sum of 40 to 60 guilders is said to have been normal. Considering that a whole *tang* used to contribute to a marriage-gift, the sum of money which each member had to contribute can only have been small. Nothing is further reported on this subject until after the war. The thorough changes which took place as a result of the war did not fail to affect Nimboran.

One of the consequences of the war was the abolition of the silver coins of high nominal value. These were taken out of circulation and replaced by paper money. The effect of this measure on Nimboran has been curious: instead of turning also to paper money for marriage-gifts and other customary obligations, the *ringgit* and *rupiah* were retained for these contributions. So now Nimboran again possessed a kind of *liarta*, which gradually came into the hands of the older generation, for it was the older generation which was the recipient of the larger part of the marriage-gift. In a way the old situation was restored. But there was a difference. The idea of using money to form a marriage-gift had not disappeared altogether. So, apart from the now "traditional" silver coins, part of the marriage-gift had to be paid with valid currency. The amount which was asked increased rapidly during the last ten years. Sums of 600 to 1000 guilders were not uncommon anymore in 1951. Another new feature of the marriage-gift was that marriage, before the whole gift had been made, became a most common occurrence. On page 25 mention has already been made of this fact in connection with the *ibue-meseing-kabi*.

The situation after the war became thus, that the marriage-gift now had to be raised by both generations. The old generation would supply the silver coins (usually in sums, not differing much from the pre-war total of the marriage-gift) while the younger generation was usually held responsible for supplying the valid currency.

The articles which were demanded by the bride's relatives on the actual day of the wedding were replaced by imported commodities which were preferred to products of home-craft. As compared with the previous practice, the amount of articles which was demanded had also vastly increased in relation to the marriage-gift, while the value, per item, often was considerably high. During the American occupation of Hollandia-region, and in the years directly after, much U.S. army equipment was exchanged in that way, mostly clothing, containers, mess-kits, cots and the like. Later, most of these goods had to be bought in the shops. These were then — until 1952 — not to be found in Nimboran. To buy these things, valid currency was needed, and opportunities to earn money in Nimboran were limited. Trade had come to a stand-still

because of the war. The production of copra had been stopped as there were no buyers anymore, while the cotton plantations had been left untended for too long, and no effort was made to take up cotton growing seriously again. The only alternative was labour, and the demand for labour, which was very small in Nimboran, was rapidly increasing in Hollandia, and by 1950 had become nearly inappeasable.

Of the composite parts of the marriage-gift, antiquated money, valid currency, and imported goods, the first part was supplied by the older generation, the second part by the money-earning members of the *tang*, therefore, mainly the younger generation, the group of tax-payers, and the third part which had to be bought item for item during a considerable period was usually provided by the groom to be. He had to earn money for this, and no better opportunity was offered than in Hollandia where he could also buy the needed articles. The original abolition of *harta* before the war, threatened to cause an irreparable breach between the older and the younger generation. In former times the older generation held all the trumps. Without *harta* no marriage was possible, and a boy who was disobedient or showed himself indifferent towards his father risked the wrath of his father, which would inevitably lead to holding back the *harta* so the marriage would be postponed. All this was changed by the decision to abandon *harta*. It is regrettable that nothing is known about the people who attended the meeting in 1936. One wonders whether the older people, the keepers of *harta*, were present, and whether they unanimously agreed with the decision which was then taken. Whatever the case may have been, the fact stands that *harta* disappeared out of circulation in Nimboran, and money was actually used instead. But now the older people had grown dependent on the younger working generation for raising the marriage-gift. The situation had not become such that a young man, wanting to get married, from now on had it in his own hands to arrange everything for the wedding. The old people still had their say in the affair, and — being the ones who did the bargaining about the size of the sum which eventually had to be handed over — could not be missed. But the young people, now having come into a position in which their voices did carry weight, also grew bolder. They soon learned that their voices were no longer completely ignored, that they had a weapon against the arbitrary behaviour of their elders. Antagonism between the generations started to grow also on this point, and added to the general feeling of dissatisfaction which was already spreading. It is not wholly unlikely that the decision which was taken in the presence of the Missionaries, and which was probably voiced by the younger generation, had been inspired by the already existing general feeling of dissatisfaction with conditions in indigenous life. It is likely to have actually been a manifestation of the growing antagonism between the generations, while it also served to add fuel to the conflict.

The sudden stop which was put to the steady flow of silver money into Nimboran, again changed the balance between the generations. The older generation recovered a little of its former influence, and it became possible again to remind the younger generation of their duties towards their elders. But the hold which the older people used to have over the unmarried, and which the fathers had over their sons who had their share in the *harta* possessions of the family still coming to them, had been reduced considerably.

The institution of marriage in Nimboran found a new equilibrium which

may be considered an improvement on the old one, and better adapted to changing conditions. The retainment of the old coins as an important and indispensable part of the marriage-gift may appear queer and needless, especially as it has no direct bearing on traditional Nimboran culture, but it is an essential element of the marriage-gift as it guarantees a continuation of the relations between the two generations, especially in matrimonial affairs. The maintenance of good relations between the two generations, whenever possible, will certainly add to a favourable emancipation of indigenous society.

The abandonment of *harta* has not only been of far-reaching influence on the relations within Nimboran society, it has also made itself felt in the sphere of relations between Nimboran and the surrounding tribes, especially Gressie.

We know from what has been related to us by the Nimborans and Gressies that the two groups in olden times must have maintained rather close relations with each other. Connections between Nimboran and Gressie still exist, especially in the villages in east-Nimboran. While taking the census in 1952, a Nimboran man was found occasionally to have married a Gressie woman, and sometimes a Nimboran woman was found to be married in Gressie. But these cases were encountered so seldom that it would be wrong to speak of a common occurrence. It is better to consider it an indication that marriage between the two groups is — and was — not an impossibility. It is even likely to have happened rather frequently in past times. The relations between the villages of Sarmai and Demakao, for instance, were still rather close in 1952. Waru Jewi, the old korano of Sarmai who was never baptized, and who was considered to be one of the few people still thoroughly conversant with traditional Nimboran culture, was often invited to come to Gressie when difficulties had arisen which were not easily solved. He was well acquainted with internal matters of the clans in west-Gressie, and had several relatives living there. His not being a Christian apparently discharged him of the obligation to abandon his *harta*. He owned both now, silver coins and old valuables <sup>1)</sup>.

But Waru, being indeed the most conspicuous one amongst them, was not the only Nimboran who kept relations with Gressie. There were others who still travelled backwards and forwards. Marriages between Nimboran and Gressie have not taken place since a number of years.

As no mention has been made of connections between Nimboran and the surrounding tribes in any of the reports available, it may be going a bit too far to take for granted that an extensive relationship did exist between the two groups. Nevertheless, the old myths of both, Nimboran and Gressie, the attitude of the Nimboran people towards Gressie, the occurrence of marriages between the two peoples, and the relations which still existed in several cases between people from Gressie and Nimboran, all these established facts justify the assumption that past relations between Nimboran and Gressie have been closer than they are nowadays.

The abandonment of *harta* in Nimboran, which example was not followed in Gressie, had not been conducive to the continuation of the existing mutual relationship between the two peoples. Nimboran had more or less

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1) This was the only person who openly admitted to have retained possession of his *harta*.

isolated itself socially and economically by this measure. The means of exchange, which was used also to settle social obligations, was not the same anymore, and exchange had, consequently, become an impossibility. By the decision to abandon *h a r t a*, Nimboran had distinctly set itself apart from the other people in the same region, and started to steer its own course. The estrangement which had already set in because of the settlement of Administration and Mission in Genjem was precipitated by the abandonment of *h a r t a*.

### 5. *The kasiep-movement* <sup>1)</sup>

Since the coming of Mission and Administration in Nimboran mention has been made several times of the occurrence of a specific kind of general movements among the Nimboran population which later became known as *kasiep-movements*.

At first these movements seem only to have occurred at wide intervals, but in later years, especially after the war, mention was made of them more often.

In traditional Nimboran culture *kasiep* denoted a state of trance which was induced in the event of hunts or war parties. Elmberg describes it in connection with war magic: "It was a trancelike state when the person in question first grew cold and got spasms in his arms and was shaking all over his body. Then he saw like in a dream — but it was no dream, it was pointed out — the place where they were to find the enemy, and also how many persons were to be killed. And like it had been seen in the *ketjep* it always happened in the reality afterwards, it is assured" <sup>2)</sup>.

The present meaning of *kasiep* is somewhat obscure. It still is the word denoting the "trancelike" state, but in addition to that it is also given to secretly held sessions in which people are trying to communicate with the world of the dead ancestors. These sessions are mostly — but not necessarily — held on the burial sites of the village. Apart from that, the word *Kasiep* was heard more than once to signify an apparition which was seen in some guise or another (a serpent, or a fire, or sometimes that of a fair-skinned man) or a being who was to accomplish something. The proper Nimboran word for such a being, however, is *nap* <sup>3)</sup>.

In the event of a *kasiep-movement* in Nimboran the people usually talked of "making *kasiep*". Usually such a movement reared its head in Nimboran when someone was overcome by *kasiep* unexpectedly, usually at night when he was asleep. A vision had been seen (some say that *Kasiep* showed it to the person in his dreams) or a voice had been heard. In most cases, the person overcome by *kasiep* was told to do things, for "the time had come". The person who had *kasiep* was usually taken as the intermediary between *Kasiep* (others

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<sup>1)</sup> An interesting analysis of the *kasiep-movement* in Nimboran is given by J. P. Kabel (op. cit.). In the following, extensive use has also been made of his article, while written and verbal information, received from J. E. Elmberg, and personal experience during my stay in Nimboran from 1951 until 1955, which partly coincided with the stay of J. P. Kabel in Nimboran, is used in supplying additional data, and in corroboration of the facts which are supplied by Kabel. Use has also been made of the findings of Dr J. van Baal ("The Nimboran Community Development Project").

<sup>2)</sup> op cit. p. 17.

<sup>3)</sup> I will here use the word *Kasiep* (with a capital K) instead of *nap* as it was also used by my informants.

said the world of the dead) and the people. After the intermediary had had his first vision he would — secretly — start telling others about it, people who were to help him with the preparations. Usually more contact followed with *Kasiep*, mostly after the intermediary had brought himself into a state of trance. Gradually more people would join him and his first followers, and a general movement would start to grow. More secret sessions were held, usually at night and in odd places, preferably on the burial sites of the village, but at times also elsewhere. The people gathered to dance and sing, several of them forcing themselves into a state of trance. They would then start talking in many "languages" ending up completely exhausted. On one of these sessions the release of all the greatly desired goods — even whole factories — and the coming of eternal leisure for all were expected to take place.

Each *kasiep*-movement had its own typical features. No *kasiep*-movement was identical with a previous one or with one which was bound to come the next time. As an illustration the *kasiep*-movement of 1951—1952, will be given here<sup>1</sup>).

To Johannes Gai of Imeno village, who lived alternatively in his own village, or in Kuimeno with his mother's relatives, a vision appeared. First, on the road when he was walking with his brother Obed, later again to Johannes alone in his house. The "apparition" was seen several times again after that, either in the guise of a white man, or as a Papuan. This vision, which Johannes called *Kasiep*, had with him a wooden chest painted in many colours. The chest was brought by *Kasiep* himself to Kuimeno where wrist-watches, money, and cloth were transferred from *Kasiep's* multicoloured chest to an ordinary chest of Johannes. The latter chest was brought to Imeno, Johannes' paternal village, and kept in his house. Then Johannes had a dream (trance?) in which his father (long dead) appeared to him and ordered a house to be built on the burial ground of Imeno. Measurements and ground-plan of the house were specified. The house should be kept locked until, at a later date, it would have been visited by *Kasiep* and be filled with riches.

Many people of Imeno joined in the frequent sessions which were held on the same burial ground. It has never become known what was actually done during these sessions. The movement suddenly collapsed when another Johannes who was an orderly at the office of the District Officer in Hollandia came to visit his relatives. He heard about the chest which was kept by Johannes Gai and became angry with the people in the village who had been believing in this "humbug". He managed to gain access to the chest, which was duly opened and found to contain stones. Johannes Gai later explained this away by stating that the premature opening of the chest (before the time appointed by his dead father) caused *Kasiep* to change the contents into stones. The villager's faith in this explanation was shattered, however, when later the stones disappeared from the table where the *dekening* of Gai, who was a fervent believer in Johannes' *Kasiep*, had deposited them.

Although, after this incident, Johannes Gai was regarded with some suspicion by the people, he had new successes, and a great number of supporters when he told of an encounter which he had had with *Kasiep* (in the guise of a Papuan) in a deserted rubber-nursery. He was not able to approach the

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1) The following is mostly derived from van Baal's notes on the Nimboran Community Development Project (op. cit.) and my personal experience.

apparition because of *Ormo-bene*, a mythical serpent, who prevented an encounter. Johannes explained that if the people could "call his name" ("sebut dia punja nama" (Malay) Johannes told me later), *Kasiep* would be able to break the power of the serpent and bring to the people all that they desired. Nightly sessions were held on the spot where the encounter had taken place. The people sitting on a fallen tree, singing, and inducing trance-like reactions. They would throw themselves down and begin to chatter in "many different tongues". The purpose of these sessions was to become acquainted with the secret name. Similar sessions were held in Berap village.

During the time of these happenings — as an additional feature to the movement — a "hospital" was opened in Pobaim by the supporters of Johannes, staffed with doctors and nurses. A patient was mysteriously delivered of a stone after which he was full of vitality again.

The arrival of *Kasiep* was set for January 5th (1952).

"The flag of New Guinea which he would carry (the official red, white and blue flag) was to be presented to the District Officer at a special ceremony to which he had been invited. During the ceremony the people were to receive all kinds of gifts, and were also to see a few sample products of their own factory, scheduled to rise up from the earth, equipped to turn out every conceivable article. Everything was arranged, and the people of Nimboran were already being summoned to be present on January 5th, when the District Officer intervened. There was ample reason for this. Owing to a certain Carlos Griapon and his followers the affair had taken on a political significance..."<sup>1)</sup>

*Kasiep* was again heard of in September and October of 1954. This time the instigator was a man from Ibut, a village in western Gressie. He succeeded in securing nearly all the villagers of eastern and southern Nimboran as his followers. This time the quest was for money which would be supplied by *Kasiep*. The Ibut-man travelled to most of the Nimboran villages, where he held secret sessions. A self-invented money game was then played. At night people would assemble in a house and sit in a close circle on a mat. All the fires in the house were extinguished, only the man from Ibut holding a flash-light. The people, taking part in the game, were then told one by one to put some money on the mat. The flash-light was turned on the money. Then, all of a sudden, the flash-light was switched off and in the total darkness of the house, noises were heard. After a couple of minutes the flashlight was turned on again, and the money was then found to have disappeared mysteriously. The people, gathered in the house, were told that *Kasiep* had descended during the spell of darkness and had taken the money away. Hence the noises that were heard. Everyone of those present was duly impressed, and more money was supplied. After such a session the people were told to empty their chests or suitcases in their houses and lock them. After a period of time these chests were to be opened and then people would find them full of money. Thus, in every house, chests were prepared. Many were set aside in a room, especially emptied for the purpose. In the houses where no rooms existed, a partition was often made with blankets behind which the chest(s) was (were) placed. Many people seriously believed in this new *kasiep*. There was none who suspected the man from Ibut of deceit. When he was appre-

<sup>1)</sup> Dr J. van Baal: op. cit. p. 14.



hended in October he denied having deceived the people, but persisted in his story that it was *Kasiep* who had taken the money away and not himself. The villagers opened their chests to find nothing changed, and although they began to suspect the man from Ibus of appropriating their money during the secret sessions, no ill was spoken of him. People were not absolutely sure of his deceit.

An additional feature of this *kasiep*-movement was the typical Nimboran touch which was given to it in the village of Sanggai, the main centre of this (until 1955) last *kasiep*-movement in Nimboran:

The (Papuan) Bestuurs Assistent tried to get more definite information concerning the *kasiep* by insinuating that he believed in it, and wanted to take part. He was told by the assistant of the man from Ibus, who had a representative in each village, to come to Sanggai on a certain night.

The B. A. did so. He was told to take off his shirt and follow a couple of men. They went to the burial grounds of Sanggai and there a dinner-service was found on a cot which was placed over the grave of the father of the assistant. It was presented to the B. A. with the promise that more was to come as this was only an example which was sent by *Kasiep* through the assistant's dead ancestors. During the walk to the grave, and on the discovery of the dinner-service, the people accompanying the B. A. were talking in "Chinese". They also showed letters to the B. A. which they were supposed to have received from *Kasiep*, or had written themselves when they had *kasiep*. The characters which were used were only imitated Chinese.

Several times the B. A. was taken down to the burial grounds, and presents similar to the first ones were "discovered" on each occasion. But he was never admitted to a money-game, which caused him to suspect a diversionary move to have been taken by the people. However, when the people were confronted with the evidence later on (the dinner-service proved to originate from the assistant's house; he had borrowed it from a relative in Imsetum after he had said that he had accidentally broken all his own), they maintained to have acted in good faith and denied having put the articles on the grave. When asked to explain how the dinner-service, which was set in evidence, had suddenly disappeared from the house and reappeared again on the grave, they answered that *Kasiep* must have done that.

As was said, *kasiep*-movements have occurred rather frequently in recent years. People tried hard to keep it a secret from the Administration and the Mission as long as possible but they did not always succeed. Mostly a *kasiep* movement was to be found under way around the end of the year. The beginning often coincided with the coming of the rainy season, while it had its peak around Christmas and New-Year. At first it was thought that a connection should be looked for as Christmas, the feast of the birth of Christ, the coming of the Messiah, was held as a major celebration by the Mission. It fitted with the idea that *kasiep* was a recent phenomenon, essentially, and, solely, a reaction on the culture contact of the last years. Van Baal sees the *kasiep*-movements of the last years specifically as a reaction on the American occupation: "If the new wealth (the riches the people have now learned to appreciate) is hard to come by, it is no comfort to reflect that there is not enough to go round anyway, as the papuan remembers the horn of plenty, which he saw overflowing at the time of the American occupation. The flow has stopped as mysteriously as it began and this, in conjunction with the new

atmosphere of hunger for visible riches, has led to the so called "cargo-cult" of which we have had two instances in the last two years" <sup>1)</sup>).

Van Baal makes a definite distinction between the *kasiep*-movement of today and *kasiep* as it was understood in traditional Nimboran culture. However, it is to be doubted whether we are justified in making such a sharp distinction. The idea of lost riches, and the authority of the dead ancestors over these riches may well be elements of the *Warikreng* myth, and the *kabi* given a new meaning. *Warikreng*, the great hunter, possessed strong medicine for hunting. Boar were easy to get in his time. He took this medicine away. In the reunion with the dead during a *kabi*, the people mainly found strength and psychological satisfaction, while good fortune in hunts, profitable transactions and the like were expected to be the share of those who partook in a *kabi*.

The idea of returning prosperity which is supposed to be the outcome of a *kasiep*-movement, and expected to come from the world of the ancestors, is suspected by Elmberg to be a new interpretation inspired by the Messiah message in the Christian religion (the regaining of Paradise).

In traditional Nimboran culture the opening up of the earth was a power assigned to especially clever people. Elmberg never inquired how this feat was actually accomplished.

That the *kasiep*-movement goes deeper than was thought at first is also corroborated by the fact that mention is made of a *kasiep*-like movement in 1928 <sup>2)</sup>. The people then came to Bijkerk to ask for kerosene because they had to retire to the hills as the earth was expected to split, and darkness and floods were prophesied to come as a forerunner of great changes which were to be brought about by a white person (*Warikreng*?). Kamma <sup>3)</sup> tells about this movement that valuables were expected to come out of the underworld. These valuables had a special meaning, and were placed close to sick people so that they would be cured. In this case, stone axes, beads, and the bird of paradise must have been meant, those being the acknowledged articles of great supernatural (also healing) strength. Although in the case of a *kabi* no actual opening up of the underworld was expected, great similarity does exist between the expectations during this movement and the *éram-be-kabi* in traditional Nimboran culture. One wonders whether the expected calamity of 1928 should not be seen in connection with the prohibition of the *kabi*, which had only been in force for a relatively short time.

Thus we find that most of the elements of the *kasiep*-movement — the trance-like emotions, contact with the dead, the opening of the earth, the loss of valuable things — are to be found also in traditional Nimboran culture. The object of the contact with the dead ancestors in the *kabi* has found new meaning in the contact with the dead in the *kasiep*-movements of today, which is the acquisition of wealth. But the motivation for this contact, which is essential in both cases, is the strength and power of the dead people.

The *kasiep*-movement, therefore, proves to be full of features which can be traced back to traditional Nimboran culture. It may be seen as a compromise

<sup>1)</sup> Dr J. van Baal: op. cit. p. 12.

<sup>2)</sup> J. Bijkerk: personal communication. Kamma says 1925, but he does not mention the source of his information. F. C. Kamma: "De Messiaanse Koreri-bewegingen in het Biaks-Noemfoorse cultuurgebied" p. 236.

<sup>3)</sup> F. C. Kamma: *ibid.*

between old Nimboran culture and the changed situation, of which the Christian religion and the suppression of old beliefs are two major aspects. It definitely has its roots in traditional Nimboran culture and is a typical expression of the tensions between the old beliefs and the changes to which Nimboran has been subjected. In the *kasiep*-movement the people hope to find a relief from these tensions which are expected to come as a release of all the powers which are now held back by the dead. The white man is considered to be in league with the dead ancestors. Our presence in Nimboran certainly has a function in the whole pattern of convictions which are expressed in the *kasiep*-movements. The frequent reproaches that the Missionaries refuse to tell the secret of eternal life to the people, the part which the District Officer was to play in the 1952 *kasiep*-movement (proof was to be given of the final release of the "secret"), are all indications of that.

A *kasiep*-movement usually caused a stir in the major part of Nimboran. But it is also known to have excited only a couple of villages. We do not know for certain whether the movement occurred more frequently during the last years. The fact that since 1948 *kasiep* was met with five times in close succession, against a few, widely spread, incidences of *kasiep* which were reported before the war, may also be due to the closer observation of Nimboran society which was a result of the keener interest shown in Nimboran by Government and Mission. But it may also be that *kasiep*-movements occurred more frequently as a consequence of the increased post-war interest which the Government showed in Nimboran, and which did not pass unnoticed by the population.

There most certainly is reason to believe the latter. The last incidence of *kasiep* recorded in Nimboran was definitely connected with the newly introduced idea of co-operation. The introduction of the hospital element in the *kasiep*-movement of 1951, is also clearly a reaction on Government management of affairs. To the Nimboran, the coming of a small medical staff was promised around 1950, on the condition that a building which was to serve as a hospital was built by the population. Preparations for building the hospital were made, but the people never did get much further in carrying out the project. Yet, a hospital was badly wanted by the population. In the 1951 movement this generally felt need found expression in the *kasiep* hospital.

The *kasiep*-movements which are on record have always fallen flat after a shorter or longer period. In some cases the breaking up of a movement was due to interference by the Administration, but in others people gradually lost interest because the promised release of wealth and prosperity did not come. In one case (1938), the movement expired because of the death of the instigator, a man named Waru from the village of Genjem Ketjil. *Kasiep* is a thing, seriously believed in by the people of Nimboran. Van Baal, telling about his personal experience in the matter, tells that when he was discussing *kasiep* in Imeno at a meeting with about twenty men (Johannes Giai was also present), he "was struck by the feeling of uneasiness that suddenly came over the previously cheerful meeting. Something was at stake in which they really believed, and that they did not want to discuss". Van Baal "was particularly struck on this occasion by Johannes' grim, fanatical face" 1).

After a *kasiep*-movement had expired, a relaxation in the attitude of the

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1) Dr J. van Baal: op. cit. p. 14.

Nimboran people was usually evident. The people showed themselves more willing to make an effort at less attractive work while they even joked about the past movement. It is obvious that tension, previously felt, had (for the time being) found relief in the movement.

An element of deceit has been present in the last two *kasiep*-movements, which is especially clear in the last one. A curious phenomenon is that those who committed themselves not only never acknowledged their deceit, but even showed themselves offended when such a thing was hinted at. Even the deceiving party had "made *kasiep*" in the profound conviction of its reality.

Finally, mention should be made of a new feature which only recently penetrated into Nimboran, namely, the Pentacost movement. It was brought in 1954 by a truck-driver (Semuel Janowaring) who came from Hollandia and who took up his residence again in Nimboran where he accepted a job as a driver for the District Officer. Semuel was a convinced supporter of the Pentacost movement. He worked openly and conscientiously, avoiding conflict with the Mission at all costs. His flock of supporters was limited to a few people who became acquainted with the Pentacost movement during a previous stay in Hollandia. However, another Nimboran man came back to Nimboran shortly after Semuel. He arranged meetings in Sanggai, his paternal village, inviting as many people as possible, telling that he would explain the Pentacost movement. To the astonishment of the true supporters of the Pentacost movement who were also present, and to the wonder of the public, the man explained that the idea of the Pentacost movement was similar to *kasiep*. The *Roch Kudus* (Malay = Holy Spirit) and *Roch babi*<sup>1)</sup> were said to be essentially the same. His success in Nimboran was short-lived. Semuel openly defied the man's theories and more or less forced him to return to Hollandia.

Nevertheless, with the Pentacost movement a new idea had been introduced into Nimboran. The time has been too short to be able to say anything about the possible effects.

#### 6. *The influence of the war and of post-war conditions in Hollandia region on changing Nimboran*

The most striking feature of post-war Nimboran society was the trend amongst the younger generation to leave their village and seek employment elsewhere, mostly in Hollandia. This migratory trend has taken on immense proportions, and has led to the rising of real concern about the future of the rural Nimboran population. The Government began to realize that continuation of this process of migration, which stripped Nimboran society of its man-power, and threatened to leave only the old and physically unfit to fend for an existence, was unjustifiable, and something should be done about it. The Community Development Project, launched later in 1952, was also an effort to find a solution to this pressing problem.

No survey of the scope of migration between Nimboran and Hollandia has been made previous to 1953. The census, taken in January 1952, and the following registration of changes in the composition of the population have shown clearly that no important increase of migration took place after 1951.

<sup>1)</sup> Malay: *Roch* = Spirit (like in Holy Spirit); *babi* = pig, boar. See also p. 75 (*kasiep* as a means to find out the hiding places of game).

The data, collected in 1953 and 1954, concerning the population movement between Nimboran and Hollandia may, therefore, be considered sufficiently representative to be also used here as an indication of the scope of the drain on the population which was caused by Hollandia.

Although in previous paragraphs something has already been said about the "export of labour" from Nimboran, it will be useful to relate, in short, the historical background of the performance of labour by Nimborans outside their own environment. Although no figures can be supplied, some insight into the scope of what has passed may be gained.

Export of labour from Nimboran started before the second World War, when many men signed on for work at Ransiki and in Sarmi. According to information which was received from the population, labour was also recruited in Nimboran during the period of Japanese occupation. People were sent to Sarmi where they were employed on construction projects.

However, the most spectacular drain of man-power took place during the American occupation when all the effective males were required to perform work for the allied forces, and one third of the effective male population was constantly absent from home, working in Hollandia.

After the state of siege for Netherlands New Guinea had been declared at an end on July 1st of 1946, the regulations concerning compulsory labour for all effective males were automatically repealed. Almost all of the remaining Nimboran males who were at that time working in Hollandia, returned to their villages. They were not many, as the majority had already returned some time previously, after the American forces had departed, and the demand for indigenous labour had decreased since the arrival of Japanese prisoners of war who were employed by the Government.

Only after the departure of the Japanese P.O.W.s did the demand for indigenous labour again start to grow. It increased shortly before and directly after the transfer of sovereignty in December 1949, owing to the increased activities displayed by the Government, the forces, and private business in Hollandia. Nimboran males who had returned home after the years of compulsory service for the allied forces started to leave for Hollandia again. Only now, the "trek" to Hollandia was of quite a different nature. Formerly, people went to work in these strange surroundings because they were either forced to do so because of existing regulations or conditions, or because they were gently urged to sign up for labour in some remote part of New Guinea.

Now they all went of their own free will to look for work, adventure, and a change of surroundings. This mass-migration of young males in 1949-1950, is symptomatic of the spirit of the time in Nimboran. Dissatisfaction with conditions of village life, unrest, and an urge to escape from the threatening envelopment by the general apathy of indigenous society were major incentives, next to the quest for marriage-money.

For many of the Nimboran people the stay in Hollandia became more permanent, and took on the quality of true migration, which was acknowledged some time later by the increased moving of the women from Nimboran to Hollandia. Many of these went to live with their husbands who had left some time previously, but others went in quest of work and money, driven by the same impulses as their contemporaries of the opposite sex.

The influence of these migrations on Nimboran society cannot be denied, less so, when the following figures are taken into consideration:

255 males between 14 and 40 years of age were away from Nimboran on December 31st 1954. Of those, 176 were unmarried. The total number of males staying in Hollandia and other places outside Nimboran amounted to 317. Of those, 62 were boys who had come away with their parents. Of these 317 males, 208 (18-45 years of age) were considered effective males, although boys of 14-17 years of age also did unskilled jobs in Hollandia, a thing which was not required of them in Nimboran.

The number of 208 is high when it is compared with the total strength of the population of Nimboran. It comprises 30% of the total number of effective males which is 673 (See also table 1 and figure 4).

Compared to the number of males, absent from their villages, the number of women who lived outside Nimboran was relatively low. Altogether 135 women left their villages of which 93 were over 13 years of age, and had left of their own accord. Of these, some 69 were married. The married women mostly left to join their husbands who, at long last, had succeeded in securing permanent employment and a place to live in.

Of the 79 married males who stayed in Hollandia, apparently only a few left their women behind (some 12½%). While in 1951, only a few women stayed with their husbands in Hollandia, the situation had considerably improved by the end of 1954. Apparently there had — during the last years — been a tendency amongst married women to follow their men to the place of their employment. They would be better provided for, since they no longer had to fend for themselves without the support of their husbands.

The figures, given in table 2 concerning the frequency of travel between Nimboran and Hollandia during the year 1954, are an indication that this reunion of separated families was still in progress during that year. The low percentage of married men who were still separated from their families (12½%) means that the process of reunion would probably be completed in the near future, that is, as long as no increased migration would take place unexpectedly. This would inevitably lead to a renewed upsetting of the equilibrium which was gradually being reached.

In 1954, 328 women travelled to Hollandia, while 314 women returned to Nimboran. Of these, 235 and 228 respectively, were married, or of marriageable age. The surplus of migration from Nimboran to Hollandia (7) was on the low side, but still striking, especially when it is taken into consideration that permanent migration to strange surroundings was a decision which was not lightly taken by a woman who had to give up her garden and sago-area, her home, and her relatives, in order to stay with her husband who might at any conceivable moment cast her off again in favour of another woman.

The figures, concerning the frequency of travel of the male population between Nimboran and Hollandia, offer a different picture:

354 men travelled to Nimboran against 341 who travelled from Nimboran. Of these, 254 and 243 respectively, were married or of a marriageable age. There was, therefore, a surplus of 11 men who came back to Nimboran during 1954. With due care we may state that by the end of 1954, the process of migration from Nimboran to Hollandia seems to have been reduced to normal proportions. There was no longer mention of a superfluous drainage of Nimboran, and if it seemed that many young people still left Nimboran to stay in Hollandia, the surplus of returning males balanced this loss.

TABLE 1. PERCENTAGE OF NIMBORAN MALES, RESIDING OUTSIDE NIMBORAN ON DECEMBER 31st 1954

Age group	single	married	total.	Age group	single	married	total.
14-15	13.5	—	13.5	30-31	100	13.3	18.8
15-16	33.3	—	33.3	31-32	66.7	20.8	25.9
16-17	44.1	—	44.1	32-33	—	13.6	13.6
17-18	50	—	50	33-34	—	23	23
18-19	72	0	64.3	34-35	0	17.9	16.7
19-20	46.2	37.5	44.1	35-36	0	0	0
20-21	95.2	0	74.1	36-37	—	0	0
21-22	78.3	0	66.7	37-38	—	0	0
22-23	90	26.3	48.3	38-39	—	5.3	5.3
23-24	83.3	40	63.6	39-40	—	10.6	10.6
24-25	76	36	56	40-41	0	12.5	12.5
25-26	100	30.8	68	41-42	—	0	0
26-27	71.4	31.8	41.1	42-43	0	15.7	15.7
27-28	100	30.4	36	43-44	—	0	0
28-29	100	21.1	34.8	44-45	—	0	0
29-30	50	25	28.6				

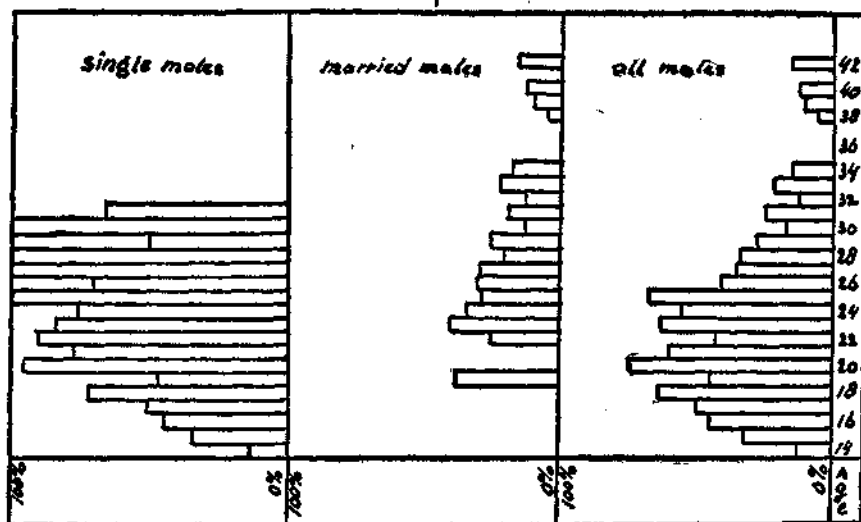


Figure 4

The fact that more women followed their husbands to stay in Hollandia also points to a stabilization of the migratory process, and to a lessening of the uncontrolled rush to Hollandia as took place in 1949-1950.

The Pacific War, and next, the transfer of sovereignty have had far reaching consequences for Hollandia which developed from an insignificant Government station into a town of some proportions which exerted considerable influence on the surrounding population. We have already tried to describe the influence of Hollandia on Nimboran as a centre of employment of labour, but apart from that some more attention should be given to the influence of Hollandia on Nimboran as that of an urban centre on its rural surroundings.

Table 2 FREQUENCY OF TRAVELLING (NIMBORANS) DURING 1954

NIMBORAN — HOLLANDIA

HOLLANDIA — NIMBORAN

TO HOLLANDIA										
PERIOD	MALES				FEMALES				Gen. Total	
	0-16 years	16-45 years	46- older	Total	0-16 years	16-40 years	41- older	Total		
1st QUARTER 1954	13	55	11	79	6	62	17	85	164	
2nd QUARTER 1954	7	48	7	62	7	60	8	75	137	
3rd QUARTER 1954	32	78	14	124	12	63	21	96	220	
4th QUARTER 1954	6	62	8	76	7	50	15	72	148	
TOTAL	58	243	40	341	32	235	61	328	669	

FROM HOLLANDIA										
PERIOD	MALES				FEMALES				Gen. Total	
	0-16 years	16-45 years	46- older	Total	0-16 years	16-40 years	41- older	Total		
1st QUARTER 1954	9	45	9	63	6	49	10	65	128	
2nd QUARTER 1954	13	51	7	71	5	60	10	75	146	
3rd QUARTER 1954	28	84	13	125	13	73	21	107	232	
4th QUARTER 1954	8	74	13	95	3	46	18	67	162	
TOTAL	58	254	42	354	27	228	59	314	668	

A direct influence of the town Hollandia on Nimboran as a rural society is hardly to be expected because of the distance (55 miles), and the still inadequate connection between these two places. On the other hand, Hollandia offered the only opportunity to those who wanted to get ahead and had no patience to wait for a chance which might be offered to them in Nimboran in the future. Also the attraction of the town with its shops, high wages, stir and bustle of people and traffic, and the fascination of having cut oneself loose from the routine of village life and of moving in quite different surroundings, caused many to drift to Hollandia. Some came back, but many others stayed although they did not show any aspiration for more education in order to achieve a better position. They were quite content with the wages which were paid for unskilled labour. Through practice they might achieve some skill which would give them a chance to find work of a more permanent character. In that case the chances for a future return to Nimboran became even less.

Those who lived and worked in Hollandia still maintained contact with their village, and it was mainly through them and the ones who came and went between Hollandia and Nimboran that the influence of Hollandia was noticeable in Nimboran society. This influence was marked by a growing tendency amongst the people to leave their villages and village routine. Their attention was turned away from the village towards the town, and many of the young



and unmarried could not resist this and went away in quest of more promising possibilities than those which were offered by life at home.

Apart from the repercussions on Nimboran society which were caused by this drain of young men at working age, the direct influence of Hollandia on Nimboran was negligible, which was in very sharp contrast with the villages more closely situated to Hollandia. The main cause for this contrast may be looked for in the difference of distance from Hollandia. The villages, more closely situated to Hollandia, and thus more easily accessible from this town, were strongly influenced by the town and its active demand for cheap labour. In these villages too, many looked for work in town but they could — if not daily, at least more frequently — return to their villages after work<sup>1</sup>). Thus they maintained far stronger ties with their village, which in its turn was strongly influenced by the growing group of people who found their sphere of work in Hollandia, but kept to the village as their regular place of abode.

Although subjected to strong changes, these villages were — in size and quality — much more maintained as communities. In these instances one can speak of urbanization of the population, and the inception of characteristics belonging to a town border. It is to be regretted that so little research in the field of social change in these villages has, as yet, been undertaken.

The great distance made it impossible for those from Nimboran to return to their villages without giving up their dwellings, and may be, their jobs in Hollandia. Thus, non-residence in Hollandia was impossible for them and, therefore, they could be considered as (temporarily) lost to their community. On the other hand, the distance between Nimboran and Hollandia was too small to form a serious obstacle for those who wanted to make the journey to Hollandia, which caused the abovementioned drain of people to such an alarming degree.

While the villages closer to Hollandia were subjected to a change of internal organization, without the community, as such, running an immediate risk of deterioration, the influence of Hollandia added to the disintegration of the Nimboran village-community, while the internal organization of the community hardly changed at all.

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1) K. W. Galis: "Papua's van de Humboldt Baai" p. 220.

## CHAPTER IV

### The problems of changing Nimboran society

In the previous chapters a survey was given of some aspects of the contact between Mission and Administration on the one side, and the Nimboran population on the other. Attention was thereby given to a number of measures which typified the approach adopted by the two authorities, the reaction of Nimboran society to these measures, and to the culture contact in general. These descriptions have shown clearly that traditional Nimboran culture has been subjected to fundamental changes due to this contact, which has not failed to set its mark on the character of Nimboran society in later years.

When reviewing the situation in Nimboran as it was around 1951, and making a comparison with the traditional culture of these people as it was described in the first part of this study, there are a number of marked differences.

These differences were to be found in the social sphere of Nimboran life as well as in the economic sphere. One of the consequences of the contact with Western culture was the introduction of money and commodities which could only be bought with money. Thus, the Nimboran was forced to look for ways to acquire money, and, hence, he was driven to activities which stood in no direct relation to his traditional subsistence economy.

In his quest for money the Nimboran was compelled to be active outside the sphere he was accustomed to. It brought him in intimate contact with new working methods, an entirely different form of discipline from that with which he was familiar, and with a completely different view about work. His labour became a marketable commodity which he could sell for money.

The economic consequences of the contact with Western culture were far-reaching, and were often found to be at the base of changes which occurred in indigenous society. In this chapter a few aspects of the economic problems will, therefore, be given special attention.

#### 1. *The social aspect of the Nimboran problems*

*Changes in the life of the family.* Since the pacification of Nimboran there has been a marked decrease in social intercourse between the different members of society. We have seen how the family became a more isolated unit due to the changed circumstances. The lack of technical improvements in their method of subsistence compelled them to rely on the traditional forms of agriculture and other means of subsistence, and it is, therefore, not surprising that little had changed in that respect. The routine of farming virgin forest for the procurement of the necessary tubers and vegetables, the gathering of sago, the hunting for small and big game, and fishing, was all continued according to the same pattern as in traditional Nimboran culture. Yet, although the major activities which were the share of each household, and in which they led a more or less independent existence had remained almost unchanged, the relations within these small units had altered, and in some instances had led to tensions, and sometimes to open conflict.

This was mostly due to the effect which the changing conditions had on the position of the man in society, and which did not fail to affect the relations between him and his wife and his offspring. The major task of the man in

Table 3 DIVISION OF LABOUR

Activity	allocation of task	
	formerly	present
<i>Home building and repairs</i>		
cutting timber	man	man
" rattan	man	man
" planks	man	man
" sago-leaves	man	both
building	man	man
covering	both	both
sewing atap <sup>1)</sup>	—	man
fencing	man	man
repairs	man	man
<i>Tasks in and around the house<sup>2)</sup></i>		
cleaning house	both	both
cleaning garden	both	both
washing clothes	—	both
bathing children	both	both
fetching water	both	both
tending fire	woman	woman
carrying	both	both
collecting fuel	both	both
tending children	both	both
tending the sick	both	both
admin. medicine	both	both
tending tobacco	man	man
drying tobacco	both	both
making string bags	woman	woman
building cages	man	man
tending pigs	both	both
tending poultry	—	both
<i>Cooking</i>		
for family	woman	woman
killing pig	man	man
cooking pork	man	man
roasting pig	man	man
killing poultry	—	both
cooking poultry	—	both
cooking birds	both	both
cooking opossum	both	both
cooking kangaroo	man	man
dividing food for family	both	both
cooking for <i>kabi</i>	woman	woman
dividing food for <i>kabi</i>	man	man

## BETWEEN THE SEXES

Activity	allocation of task	
	formerly	present
<i>Gardening</i>		
cutting timber	man	both
stacking timber	man	both
burning	both	both
digging	both	both
planting	both	both
building huts	man	man
fencing	man	man
tending garden	woman	woman
harvesting	woman	woman
selecting site	man	man
planting coconuts	man	man
<i>Sago gathering</i>		
selecting palms	man	both
felling palms	man	both
splitting palms	man	both
pounding pith	man	both
making troughs	woman	woman
washing pith	woman	woman
carrying sago to village	woman	woman <sup>3)</sup>
<i>Gathering of forest products, hunting, fishing</i>		
rattan	man	man
pandanus leaves	—	both
matoa (fruits)	both	both
vegetables	both	both
big game	man	man
small game	man	man
poisoning fishing waters	man	man
fishing for shrimps	both	both
<i>Trade</i>		
selling garden produce	both	both
buying in the shop	—	both
bartering marriage-gift	both	both

1) Roof-covering made of sago leaves. Introduced by strangers after the coming of Mission and Administration.

2) Mostly these tasks fall to the woman, but the man is allowed to take part. He is bound to, when there is no woman to look after him.

3) The man may help her

former days had been to safeguard his family, do the more strenuous work, and provide meat for the different mouths which had to be fed. Since the pacification of the area the first task of the man had become needless. The introduction of iron tools had often made his other tasks far less strenuous and, consequently, the man was left with more time to kill. The prohibition of feasting and the abolition of initiation caused less opportunity to exist to keep the man occupied for a time, while the ban on warring expeditions made an important occupation of the men, war making, and, especially, the preparations and training for war, impossible.

However, other possibilities to keep the men occupied gradually presented themselves. Statute labour compelled a man to work for the Government at regular intervals. Taxes, and later, the need for silver money, which had taken the place of the old *harta*, forced him to earn money. The carriage of goods for the people in Genjem, and the gathering of products to sell to the Chinese trader, at first were the main possibilities. Later, indentured labour in remote parts of New Guinea and, after the war, the increasing demand for indigenous labour which was exercised in Hollandia, offered additional chances to earn money and to find diversion.

The diminution of the share which the man had in the routine of family- and village life, and the ever increasing pressure from outside on the manpower which thus became available in indigenous society, forced the man to occupy himself with things outside the sphere of his traditional existence. Meanwhile, for the woman little had changed. Her major task had been the care for the family, and the attention which this task demanded continued unabated. Yet, the man did not take over a part of the woman's tasks to restore the balance of labour division which was upset by the changed circumstances. This was not to be expected. Van Baal, writing about this phenomenon which is a typical aspect of the contact between Papuan society and Western culture, gives an explanation for it. The absence of change in the structure of indigenous society despite the penetration of Western influences did not make it attractive for the Papuan to rearrange the division of labour between the sexes. In case of such a rearrangement the men would lay themselves open to ridicule, the women would be upbraided with laziness <sup>1)</sup>.

The situation became worse after the war when Hollandia offered the opportunity for many men to earn more money for marriage-money, and to satisfy the also increased need for imported commodities. Life in the village offered no reason for the men to remain with their people. On the contrary, life at home had become dreary. The excitement which in former times was supplied by war and elaborate festivities, the preparation for such events which had kept the men occupied and provided the necessary diversion from the routine of daily life, had disappeared. New possibilities for diversion were offered in great abundance in Hollandia, and so, many men left their villages and often their families, thus escaping the flat and uninteresting existence full of conflicting situations which seemed to the Nimboran all that his community could offer.

The departure of the men took on such large proportions that it threatened to affect the whole economic order of Nimboran. Many families were deserted

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1) Dr J. van Baal: "Algemene sociaal-culturele beschouwingen" Nieuw Guinea, Vol. I p. 237.

by one or more of their young male members, and often, even by the head of the family. The result was that the women were faced with tasks that could hardly be accomplished without the aid of the men. Many jobs which were usually done by men, now had to be taken care of by the women in order to have sufficient to live on. A shift in the division of labour did at last occur, but in the opposite direction. Instead of being relieved of some of their traditional tasks, the women were now encumbered with some of the work which should have been done by the men.

The (relative) encumbrance of the task of the woman in providing for the family was not minded as long as it was the result of the abolition of war, and the introduction of better tools, but it was no longer endured without objection when it was the result of the departure of young males who did not live up to their obligations and failed in their task to provide for the family. Also in the eyes of the population a too heavy task fell to the women in that way 1). A solution to this problem was partly offered in those cases where the married woman followed her husband to Hollandia. But a solution for the families which had to do without their young unmarried male members was not found yet.

The shift in the division of labour between the sexes, which is illustrated in table 3 on pages 88-89, was one of the symptoms of the process of disintegration to which Nimboran society had fallen victim, and which threatened to disrupt life in the area, leading to a life of distress for those who were left behind.

*Estrangement between the generations.* It was not only tensions between the two sexes which were the outcome of the changing conditions in Nimboran, for also the relations between the older and younger generations were affected.

The tragic side of cultural change in Nimboran is the fact that the generation which welcomed the arrival of the Administration and the Mission to bring progress to the people, has been the party most injured by the process of acculturation which followed. Something similar is noted by Kamma for Biak: "Those, who originally took the initiative, lost it again during the further course of development" 2). According to Kamma they mostly lost it to strangers (Mission) who took control.

The situation was not identical in Nimboran because control was not lost to the Mission or to anybody else for that matter. If it had been, there would have been a greater chance of surviving the disintegrating tendencies which were bound to set in. Because, as long as the situation would have been under control, these tendencies could have been fought. The mere fact that an advanced degree of disintegration of Nimboran society was established, points to the absence of sufficient control over society. Neither the Mission nor the Administration has ever been in a position to fully control indigenous society. At best, a part of it was brought under control either by force or by persuasion, just as the political aspect of Nimboran society was easily controlled by the Administration after the prohibition of feasting and the ignoring of customary authority. Only, the control which was then exercised usually did not conform

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1) In many cases families had to refrain from making a new garden, and had to stay in the old one because there were no men to help.

2) F. C. Kamma: op. cit. pp. 204—205 translated.

to indigenous views, which was hardly surprising as neither the Mission nor the Administration had sufficiently acquainted themselves with those views.

So in Nimboran, like in Biak, the generation which at first took the initiative, lost it during the course of further development. Only, here there was nothing and no one to take over control. They lost their grip on society because indigenous culture developed in such a manner that people no longer mastered the situation. At that time neither Administration nor Mission realized that indigenous society had fallen victim to a process of disintegration. Although symptoms of this process were mentioned often enough, they were not recognized as such, but considered rather as peculiar traits of Nimboran mentality which threatened to waylay the plans of the Administration or of the Mission. They carried on along the course which had been originally planned, seeing things only in one way, and never realizing that within the indigenous communities old connections gradually came loose, causing irreparable damage to Nimboran society, which it was their intention to help in its quest for progress.

A typical outcome of the ebbing away of control over society has been the growth of tension between the generations, which has been brought previously to attention (p. 65).

This tension between the generations has — partly — resulted in a rupture in Nimboran society which became fully evident after the war, when dozens of young people turned away from their villages and left for elsewhere. Estrangement grew where formerly solidarity existed, when the old people were the wise and knowing ones, willing to direct the young generation, and the young people regarded the older generation with due respect, acknowledged its wisdom, and submitted themselves to the severe rules of custom which were enforced by the elder people and their *éram*.

No Nimboran was happy any longer in his own environment. The older generation, realizing the futility of trying to oppose the course which things had taken, found escape in an attitude of retrospection. By them the past was glorified, and a growing contempt was shown for the young people who thought the attitude of their elders ridiculous. The younger generation found no satisfaction any longer in the village, especially after the war, when a new vista had been opened to them, full of undreamt of possibilities.

The rupture has now become permanent. The denial of responsibility for the younger generation, which the refusal to transmit accepted values did actually imply, was so fundamental that it is hard to believe that a return, even partly, to the old institutions could ever be possible. There is no road back anymore. The older generation has unwittingly closed the door on an escape in that direction. Only a new course may bring a solution. To expect close co-operation of the older generation in seeking this new course would be very naive. Perhaps it would be just as naive to expect it of the younger men.

While the estrangement between the generations grew, tension between the young generation and life in the village gradually increased. With the acknowledgement of a breach between the older generation and the younger one came the realization that the older generation also represented traditional Nimboran culture and, therefore, old customs which they tried to enforce in village life. What formerly had been accepted without question was now too readily declared a part of the "antiquated" beliefs, superstitions, and institutions without which a happier life was possible. The deeper sense of community mindedness has escaped the younger generation. They never were acquainted

with the intrinsic value of a community in the real sense of the word. Their outlook upon life was inspired by the influence of the Mission, the Administration, and the surrounding changing world which concentrated too much on the individual, and neglected too often to consider the individual as a member of a community with obligations towards the other members.

The material advantage of Western culture over Papuan culture has definitely not escaped the younger generation, and the desire to attract material prosperity is something one can do very little about. Even we ourselves fell a victim to it, and, may be, we fell harder than anybody else. One cannot expect the Papuan who had more frequent contact with Western culture to show any amount of interest in his disintegrating community, far less condemn him for lack of initiative to make readjustments, or for showing no "zealousness in spiritual matters".

The younger Nimboran generation looked for the fulfilment of the urge to a different and fuller life, but did not expect to find it in its own surroundings.

This attitude of the younger generation towards customary life was never fully realized by the people who were in authority. Unconsciously it was even encouraged in some instances by the differing attitudes which were taken towards customary law by the Mission and the Administration. That many took advantage of the possibilities thus offered, is not surprising. The absence of true indigenous authority, which was not made good by the presence of non-native authority, and the lack of a co-ordinated approach by the Mission and Administration helped to increase the tension between the young generation and village life.

*The decline of solidarity.* In view of the changes which took place in Nimboran due to the influence of Mission and Administration, attention should be finally drawn to a disquieting feature of the process of change, namely, the conspicuous decrease of solidarity which was a typical aspect of traditional Nimboran society.

The effects of pacification, the moving of villages, and the appointment of *koranos* on the solidarity of the larger groups in Nimboran (*tangs*) has already been discussed. The family tended to withdraw into seclusion, preferring a prolonged stay in the garden to life in a village where they had to submit themselves to the authority of the *korano* and were told too often how they should live and what they should do. We have already shown how the village did not have to function any longer as a means of protection against hostile neighbours. The abolition of old usages which formerly obliged the people to assemble in their village at frequent intervals (*kabi*, initiation, preparation for war, etc.) made their return to the village less urgent, and hence, intercourse between the members of different households and *tangs* decreased accordingly.

The estrangement between the older generation and the generation which grew to adulthood in the new surroundings, gradually tending towards a complete rupture, was not conducive to the maintenance of that degree of solidarity which still managed to persist.

The disappearance of the necessity for social intercourse between the different groups which we witnessed on the one side — leading to an estrangement between these groups (family, *tang*, village) — was added to, on the other



side, by tensions and estrangement growing between the two sexes, and between the older and younger generations. Nimboran society was gradually falling apart into different interest-groups which were alien to traditional culture. New relations grew with opposed, instead of general interests. The older generation stood opposite the younger generation. The women were discontented with their position in society, and upbraided the men with slackness and neglect of their wives and offspring. The *koranos* and teachers, representing the interests of the outside world, added to the spirit of general discontentment with life in the village. Solidarity gradually made room for antagonism. Only the nuclear family more or less maintained the same position that it had taken in traditional culture. The fact that other relations had fallen victim to changing conditions, put still more stress on the family as a group which led a relatively isolated existence.

Owing to marriage relations, occasional collective hunts, and, in a lesser degree, also to the relations which were induced by the village church, some cohesion was maintained between the individual members of indigenous society. The abandonment of *harta* had — for a while — threatened to become an additional stimulus for the breaking up of relations between the generations, but owing to a (fortunate) turn of events the situation was — for the time being — saved. However, the post-war developments and, especially, the large scale migrations to Hollandia have proved that the process of disintegration of old relations in Nimboran could yet proceed further, and lead to still more serious repercussions in indigenous society. New opportunities were supplied for the young people who were not inclined to live up to their parent's demands, to escape the latter's domination in these matters, and to pursue their own ends outside their native area without having to account for their activities to their senior kinsfolk.

The effects of the post-war migrations on the institution of marriage are a good illustration of the effect of the new situation in Nimboran. Staying in Hollandia and the consequent weakening of the customary rules on marriage (also caused by the newly found increased material independency from relatives) added to the licentiousness amongst the younger generation which has already been made mention of, and which in some cases bordered on immorality. This licentiousness was not met with in such a degree in Nimboran proper where the individual members of the *tang* were still dependent on one another. Nevertheless, the influence which Hollandia had on the Nimborans who were staying there could not be ignored, for the Nimboran discovered possibilities there which were not offered in his own community.

The new possibilities created by post-war conditions precipitated the process of disintegration, and also offered an outlet for feelings and actions which had been repressed before.

A final word should be said about the curious phenomenon that the process of disintegration which had already set in previous to the war, escaped the notice of the people who were then in authority. It may be that it was observed how old institutions fell into disuse, but in that case, clearly, no serious after-effects were expected.

The fact that this process escaped notice may be explained by two factors: the temporary continued influence of traditional culture, and the outlet for stored up grievances which was offered by post-war conditions.

It is to be expected, in the first place that, during the first period after the abolition of old customs — although apparently the abolition was complete and instantaneous — on the one side these old customs kept offering support because people had been used to them for so long, while on the other side the authority of these old customs over society did not suddenly disappear because of their age-long influence on society, even though the outer appearances of these customs may have been done away with.

For how long these old values will in such a case keep on influencing changing society for a considerable part depends on the speed of cultural change, which again partly depends on the presence of substitutes for these old values. A certain longing for the old *kabi* was still noticeable in Nimboran, especially amongst the older people, while the occasionally occurring *kasiap* movement may also be considered a symptom of a yet unsatisfied need for new values. Both are an indication that the replacement of the values which were lost with the breaking of the harmony in the old community, has been neglected. This neglect was also due to the fact that the authority of an alien Government apparatus, replacing these institutions, was distrusted, and intervention by that authority was avoided whenever possible, which resulted in Government authority never having had a chance of really penetrating into all the details of indigenous life, and, therefore, never having been able to fully replace traditional authority.

A second explanation of the fact that the disintegration of Nimboran communities only became fully evident after the war, may be derived from the fact that the sudden intensification of contact with Western culture made people see, or suspect, new ways which were not offered by their own society. The proximity of Hollandia must have acted as a challenge to the imagination of the Nimboran. People went to Hollandia with a feeling of anticipation, but also out of curiosity. No check was put on this migration by Nimboran society itself, a phenomenon which caused anxiety to arise about the final outcome of this process, especially when it became evident that life in town actually did satisfy needs which could not be satisfied in the village, and which led to the permanent migration, cited previously.

## 2. *Economic aspect of the Nimboran problems*

In Nimboran, money was of little importance at first as there were hardly any possibilities to earn money. What was needed of imported goods was bought at the shop of Lie A Boen in Genjem, and in later years in Hollandia, while the money which was needed for buying, was either borrowed from relatives, or earned by selling products (cotton, copra, vegetables) or by working during a short time (carrier duties). The latter means of earning money, however, did not yield much as long as the people stayed in Nimboran, and before wage labour was needed on a large scale.

Before money started to play a major role in Nimboran, possession of imported goods, which were for ever coming more into demand, was most commonly acquired by means of the old institution of calling upon relatives to surrender especially desired goods which they had in their possession, and which were displayed openly.

Such a request could not be ignored. Even if someone only showed special interest in an article which was owned by a relative, the latter was socially

compelled to part with his possession in favour of the first. "He was so attracted by it", people used to tell, "that I could not very well refuse". Thus, a large quantity of goods circulated amongst the Nimborean people, and an article might be seen in the possession of a number of people alternatively in a short time. It might even happen that someone, who travelled back from Hollandia, had to part with several of his possessions before he reached his destination.

However, there was a way to withdraw from circulation those articles with which one did not intend to part. In order to do that, one had to keep his possessions away from others. One had to put them away, so that nobody would see them. Of a major function, therefore, had become the chest which was to be found in every house, and which usually was securely locked. In this chest were kept all the things which the original owner wanted to keep for himself, or which he had purchased for a specific purpose, and which, therefore, he could not allow to be claimed by his relatives. The major part of these goods were those which would have to serve as a contribution to the marriage-gift and the like.

Personally, I am strongly inclined to believe that, in principle, a distinction was made between goods which were accumulated with a specific purpose, and goods which were meant to be used in daily life. Only the latter were liable to be claimed by relatives, while the new owner could not withdraw them from further circulation by locking them in his chest. Also exempt from claims by relatives were goods which were considered the stock-in-trade of a person.

This implied that articles which were to serve a specific purpose were to be acquired by the person directly concerned himself, either by buying, or by trading. The acquisition of these goods, therefore, necessitated economic effort.

It was mainly the marriage-gift for which accumulation of goods of such a nature took place. In a previous chapter the changed usages in the contribution to a marriage-gift, and the stress which is now laid on imported goods, were explained.

Of particular importance seems to be the fact that the old silver coins apparently did not fully take the place of the old *harta*, which is almost certain to be blamed on the fact that the special power which was attached to the old *harta* was absent in the silver coins. From an economic standpoint this is important as it drove the people to accumulate additional goods which now have to serve to round off the marriage-gift.

After a marriage-gift had been made, an additional gift of less valuable goods was expected by the bride's relatives on the day of the wedding. In former times, this gift consisted of products of homecraft and garden produce. Nowadays, increased use is made of the above mentioned goods of lower value for this purpose. It has also been pointed out how these changes in the customs of marriage-gifts have affected the mutual relations within Nimborean society. The younger generation was no longer fully dependent on the older generation. On the contrary, they were now appealed to, to aid in accumulating a marriage-gift, which has become an additional motivation for the departure of many young Nimborean males to Hollandia.

This leads us directly to the repercussions on indigenous economic life which were caused by the increased post-war migrations. In a previous chapter figures have been given which showed that mostly the group of young males from 15—29 years of age suffered from excessive migration to Hollandia (especially

in the group of unmarried males the percentage is high). This means that this group was not sufficiently represented in Nimboran.

It cannot be denied that the group of young, unmarried or recently married males, constituted an essential part of the man-power of Nimboran. The absence of a larger part of this man-power, therefore, was a serious handicap for the development of Nimboran society. In cases of community development, stress is usually laid on community-effort. This usually means that the group of young males will be relatively more heavily taxed for the well-being of the community. A relative shortage of available young males, therefore, constitutes an impediment to the development of the community.

From the foregoing it may be concluded that the rise in the demand for imported goods, which was caused by many factors, has led to the rise of so many consequences which, together, constitute an important part of the Nimboran problem.

Mention has been made of the *kasiep*-movements in Nimboran. The last one, which took place in the second half of 1954, was of a slightly different nature, as the main desire was for money. It may be an indication that the events of the last few years have served to make the Nimboran money-wise, and have gradually convinced the people that modern machinery does not relieve them from the necessity to work in order to acquire the necessary goods.

In this context it is useful to say some more about money, and the gradually increased need for money in Nimboran, as this has proved to be an important factor in selecting an approach towards the development of Nimboran society. Nimboran may be considered as already having been economically independent for a considerable time, previous to its contact with Mission and Administration <sup>1)</sup>. The family was the smallest, but also the most important, economic unit which led a more or less independent existence. Owing to the extensive sago areas, the plentiful harvests from the fields, and the favourable supply of game, the family seldom found cause to turn to others for its subsistence. The providing of the family with other necessities for daily life, was also little complicated owing to the limited needs. Most of these were made at home, other things might occasionally be traded for sago (Tarfia). Collective farming was not practised as a means of subsistence by the members of a *tang*. Collective hunting was occasionally done, especially in the cases of hunting bigger game, but mostly on special occasions which mainly stressed the social side of indigenous life. Apart from the exchange of goods in cases of marriage-gift, trade was limited and of secondary importance. Nimboran had no special skill to boast of, while — excluding Tarfia — the surrounding tribes had no great need for surplus products of the soil.

The exchange of goods in cases of marriage-gifts mostly concerned *harta*, while the additional payment was not too difficult to accumulate in the *tang's*

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<sup>1)</sup> Nothing is known any more about the way in which Nimboran acquired its *harta*. For the larger part these must have been traded a very long time ago with the Mungge and Kamtuk villages. These villages got the stone axes from the Sentani people who procured their stone axes from Ormu, a village on the coast, where they were made.

According to some narrators in Nimboran and Gressie, stone axes were made in Gressie a long time ago, but the man who made them was deceived by his son, and he moved to the coast. The clan in Ormu which has the sole right to make the stone axes, is said to trace its descent to this man. The antique beads are believed to come from a tree which grew near Bring, a Gressie village.

own surroundings. The acquisition of *harta* never demanded special economic effort, while the goods, constituting the additional gift, were made or collected gradually in the course of many months. The coming of strangers to Nimboran hardly affected the subsistence economy of the family. True, the new goods which were now introduced created a demand for these goods, but, fundamentally, the family was not touched in its economic effort. Of more influence has been the levying of taxes for which a small sum of money was needed each year. The sale of vegetables and cotton, and the occasional carrier-services, yielded sufficient money to cover this need, leaving even a surplus to buy the necessary imported goods (hardware and cloth).

The abandonment of *harta* was the first major change in Nimboran culture which did affect the economic effort of the family, and forced people to consider the problem of earning money more seriously. The situation was further changed by the war and post-war years. The tremendous influx of the riches of the West caused a sharp rise in the demand for these goods, which especially took shape in an increased demand for money and imported goods, as in the case of the marriage-gift, which for many was the obvious way to come by the things they wanted so badly. As the money which had to be attracted from outside in return for services rendered and products sold, was mainly used for buying these imported commodities, a large part usually was immediately disposed of again to the outside. Another part was also disposed of as tax-money, while only a small part (the money for the marriage-gift) was actually absorbed by the community. However, even that lasted only a short while, as the money would be used soon enough for buying imported commodities.

Money, therefore, became highly desirable because it was indispensable in the search for material gain. It was also seen solely as a means to acquire goods. It was not valued (yet) as capital, and hardly as a medium of exchange. Up to the time the community development project was introduced in 1952, money had no function to speak of as yet in the economic sphere of indigenous life. It was only used in the contact between indigenous demand and Western supply.

As was stated, the need for money drove the men outside their village to "sell" their labour. Marketable labour was a new asset of the Nimboran which hitherto had been unknown. It was also seen solely as something which had a function in the economic contact between indigenous society and the outside (non-Papuan) world. In order to satisfy his demand for money — needed to purchase imported commodities — the Nimboran offered his labour for which a growing demand existed.

Money and labour, therefore, met each other outside the indigenous sphere, and, for a major part, remained outside that sphere. However, this contact was of tremendous importance as we have seen, and it has stirred Nimboran society to the depths of its being.

The interrelation of the social and economic factors which together constituted the Nimboran problem, and the way they were mutually affected by each other, make it impossible to point out one aspect, and decide that that was the fundamental cause of the problem, the solution of which would put a stop to the further disintegration of Nimboran society, and enable an attempt at reconstruction on a new level.

We may state, in general, that Nimboran was subjected to a disintegration of old ties and a devaluation of old values, which process was precipitated and intensified by the changing and increasing material needs, the satisfaction of which was keeping the people for ever more occupied, and constituted a source of recurring conflict with old institutions.

## PART III

### *The introduction of a project for the development of Nimboran society*

#### CHAPTER V

#### The inception of a project

The developments in Netherlands New Guinea and especially in Hollandia since the second World War, have had far-reaching consequences for the Papuan population. After the American forces had left the area, Hollandia was maintained as the seat of the Netherlands-Indies Government for New Guinea. The population of the town increased gradually owing to the growth of the Government apparatus. The allied forces which had been supplied from abroad were replaced by more permanent residents, and a more or less normal urban community came into being.

It was realized by the Government that the growth of Hollandia into an urban centre would not leave the surrounding Papuan population entirely unaffected. Moreover, it was also understood that the town would soon draw on the available man-power of the closeby villages, and that provisions were to be made in order not to let the population suffer the disadvantages of the economic superiority of the town over its rural surroundings.

In 1947, an outline for a co-ordinated approach towards the development of the population in the Hollandia area, and the adaptation of the need for indigenous labour of the town to the interests of the Papuan population in the surrounding villages, was drafted.

Nimboran was also involved in this project. As early as 1946, the Government had already undertaken a survey of the possibilities of production for the Hollandia market — especially in the field of agriculture — which Nimboran offered. After these had been found to be promising, in the spring of 1947 a beginning was made with the construction of a road from Lake Sentani to Nimboran, along which the products were to be carried. Nimboran was planned to become a major source for the food-supply of Hollandia. The relative density of the population in Nimboran was considered an added advantage for the introduction of cash crop cultivation in that region.

In 1949, a survey of the possibilities for the agricultural development of Nimboran was made by Ir de Haan, then Head of the Bureau for *L a n d i n r i c h t i n g i n M a k a s s a r*<sup>1)</sup>.

In May of that same year, at the first session of the Social Development Committee of the South Pacific Research Council in Noumea (New

<sup>1)</sup> Ir J. de Haan: "Reisrapport No. 19 naar Hollandia en omgeving (Nieuw Guinea) van 20 April tot 4 Mei 1949".

The object of his visit was the drafting of a plan for the agricultural development of Nimboran. The targets of the "Nimboran regional development plan", as stated by de Haan, were: increased and improved agricultural production, a. for the population itself, b. for the non-agricultural living-centres (Hollandia, Kota Baru), and c. for the growing of cash crops in order to strengthen the financial position of New Guinea as a whole (op. cit. p. 1).

Caledonia), a proposal was made to the Netherlands Representative to introduce in Netherlands New Guinea a project, similar to the one that was intended to be undertaken by the Government of Fiji on the Island of Moturiki <sup>1)</sup>).

The project was to be supported by the South Pacific Commission and conducted by the Administration of Netherlands New Guinea. The latter accepted the responsibility for the detailed planning and carrying out of the project. However, due to other more pressing internal problems with which the Government was at that time confronted, it was not before 1951, that an actual attempt was made at the launching of the project, and a preliminary survey, as was required by the South Pacific Commission, could actually be made.

In June of that year, a European Administrative Officer was stationed in Genjem, and entrusted with the task of making a survey of the situation in the area, and of the possibilities which were offered. In March of the following year, a draft was made for a Pilot Project for the development of Nimboran by the Bureau of Native Affairs, which was duly submitted to the South Pacific Research Council. In this draft, which was later published by the South Pacific Commission as Technical Paper No. 45, the views of the Government of Netherlands New Guinea on the proposed development of Nimboran were set forth.

The preliminary survey, made in 1951, had yielded valuable information which served as a basis for the plans which were later drafted. It was realized that the situation in the area at that time — which was described in the previous chapters — necessitated a special approach to attain a solution of the problems which Nimboran society was confronted with.

According to the Government, an answer to these problems was first to be found in the economic sphere. It was hoped that the stimulation of the economic effort of the Nimboran population would lead to trade with the outside world. The subsequent increase of monetary income of the population would create sufficient opportunity for them to purchase the much needed commodities. The creation of opportunities to earn cash and to spend it again locally, were seen as the basic needs of the people which demanded satisfaction in the first place.

The fact that the economic and the social aspects of the Nimboran problem were closely interrelated, led to the expectation of a favourable influencing of the social aspect of the Nimboran problem by measures in the economic sector. It was not expected, however, that economic development only, would cause Nimboran society to regain its balance. The interrelation between the social and the economic aspects of the Nimboran problem meant, on the one hand, that, without also paying attention to the purely social problems, no satisfactory solution would be found for the economic problems, while on the other hand, it meant that measures which only concerned the purely economic side of the problem would not aid in solving all the social problems.

Another argument which favoured the "economic approach" was the fact that the need for money and goods was much more acutely felt by the

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<sup>1)</sup> Dr J. van Baal: "The Nimboran Community Development Project". p. III; also: Howard Hayden: "Moturiki, a pilot project in Community Development".



population than the need for social reconstruction of society. This made it more desirable to satisfy that need first, as it was expected to cause a favourable atmosphere for the ultimately desired general stabilization of society. After the most urgent need for material betterment had been satisfied, the necessity of social reconstruction would become more prominent, and demand the increased attention of the population. Increased attention to the purely social problems, and the urge to take action, which would eventually ensue from this attention, was considered essential if actual reconstruction of indigenous society was to be aimed at. The development of Nimboran Society was expected to lead to ultimate success only, if it really had its roots within the community itself, and an incentive towards social reform — which is something essentially different from the barren feeling of discontent which already had been observed for a long time — emanated from the community.

All this did not mean that the non-economic aspect of the development of Nimboran society was to be neglected altogether.

Next to measures aiming at economic development of Nimboran society, attention was to be paid also to the social aspect of the project. Detailed planning, however, was considered less desirable, as the incentives towards social reconstruction of society should emanate from the society itself, and coercion had to be avoided at all costs.

As the need for increased material prosperity strongly prevailed over the need for the social rehabilitation of society, which is a not uncommon feature in Papuan society which came in contact with Western culture, it was not surprising that true incentives towards social reconstruction failed to show themselves. The circumstances were considered unfavourable for a policy which would force measures on the population, aiming directly at this social reconstruction. Nevertheless, some initiative could be taken by the Government, only it had to be limited to measures which fell within the scope of normal Government care for the population.

In the draft for the Nimboran project these considerations also found expression, while a wide margin was left for the adaptation of the chosen policy to the actual conditions met with, as it was expected that during the course of the project a more profound insight into the problems with which the Government was confronted would be gained, which might easily lead to a change of policy.

After a description of the geographical location of the project area, and a brief discourse on the qualities of the soil, the draft gave a review of some aspects of contemporary Nimboran society, its social and economic structure, and the existing problems.

It was stipulated that an answer to the existing problems had first to be found in the economic sphere. The necessary money and goods had to be earned in the area. The second stage would be "to use these earnings for the stimulation of social life, partly by finding a way to revive the *eram-kabi* in a modernized and restricted form, partly by educational evenings, drama (religious plays have become established round about Christmas) and other modern forms of entertainment (football, *krontjong*, music and singing)" <sup>1)</sup>. At the same time there had to be an improvement in public health.

1) Dr J. van Baal: "The Nimboran Community Development Project" pp. 18—19.

In the draft the development plan was further divided into two parts: the "Economic Side" and the "Social Aspects."

The economic side contained an elaborate discourse on the introduction of a mechanised farming project, the possibilities of which had been investigated by the Agricultural Department. Apart from that, the definite establishment was proposed of a store, and of a buying centre for locally produced goods. Both had already begun to operate some months previously under the guidance of the Administrative Officer, and were considered to form a suitable framework for a permanent enterprise. The buying centre and store were to be the cork on which indigenous industry, which was also to be stimulated, was to float. They would supply a market for the products of this industry, and also a means for spending the money thus earned.

A co-operative society was to be established which would consist of two undertakings, the mechanised farm, and the store-buying-agency. The necessary tools and credits were to be issued to the society as a loan, on the condition that it followed the directions of the District Officer, consulted him as to its proposals, and gave him access to everything in its charge. This was thought to open the way to making the co-operative society independent, when it succeeded in freeing itself from its debts<sup>1)</sup>.

Under the heading "Social Aspects"<sup>2)</sup>, a rough outline was given of the possible ways in which the Government might take an active part in improving instruction and public health, in stimulating the community's own social life, and in encouraging a certain amount of entertainment. The latter two were considered a task of far greater difficulty than the first two, for those could be organized.

The improvement of instruction and public health were to be found in visual instruction, while the presence of a continuation school for girls which was opened in January 1952, was considered to be a lucky circumstance because of "the example afforded by the better-educated girl who, returning to her village full of new ideas, is apt more than anyone else to contribute to a change in the way of life"<sup>3)</sup>.

In the highest class of the school, infant welfare and infant hygiene were to be treated. This was hoped to open the way to letting the girls take part in child-welfare.

Apart from that, a European maternity nurse was to be stationed in Genjem after the simple hospital which had been provided for in the budget had been completed.

The plans for the stimulation of the community's own social life and the encouragement of entertainment were less clearly defined. It was stipulated that it was not simply the creation of forms of amusement that counted. "Amusement in itself is more a flight from reality than a means to mould reality into something that matters. It only finds its real function when it is linked with essential values"<sup>4)</sup>.

The paper then pointed to the old feasts in which such a link was achieved. In the *éram-be-kabi*, it said, "entertainment (was made a) part of a serious

1) op. cit. p. 23.

2) op. cit. p. 26.

3) op. cit. p. 26.

4) op. cit. p. 27.

social event and gave the community a focus of interest" 1). It was doubted, however, whether the revival of such feasts would offer a solution to the problem. It was, therefore, considered the first task for those who were to give guidance in the area to look for a new approach. The draft could give no more than general rules in this matter, as plans "should grow in co-operation with the people themselves" 2). Much faith was put in the proposed co-operative society, for it might be expected to be able to help in financing the purchase of necessary equipment and musical instruments.

Small and simple pleasures like association football — a very popular sport in indigenous society — small orchestras, and the like, might "perhaps achieve more in animating village life than the large spectacular feasts, because their simplicity gives village life a touch of conviviality that has emotional value" 3).

Under the heading "Ends and Means", the principles of the Government in relation to the project were set forth:

The target of the development plan was: „a society that will be able to enter into communication with the modern world without further aid from outside and without damage to itself, a society that will feel at home in this situation and that will react rationally to the inevitable demands of the time" 4).

The question was advanced whether the course taken, implying development in which the official authorities would take an active part, was the right course: "The question is important, since a different course has been taken in development projects elsewhere, namely the practice of employing teams of natives including a specialist for each part of the project" 5). After a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of the employment of a team, and deciding that "The state of affairs in Nimboran (was such) that at present, and for some time to come, there (would) not be a sufficiently large staff of a high enough standard available to concentrate simply on fostering spontaneous activity amongst the people and directing it along the right channels" 6), the paper advanced the suggestion of the Government to charge the District Officer with the execution of the project. The draft concluded by outlining the policy which was to be adopted by the District Officer. "It is essential for him to keep in mind from the beginning that everything now organized from above, especially in the economic sphere, is meant to lead its own independent existence at some stage, even though it is intended to co-ordinate it all with the existing plans for a general development fund.

The District Officer should, therefore, avoid too much personal control, and it is a good thing that he has also other duties. He should always take care that the co-operation of the population remains voluntary. It is difficult for a papuan to believe that the Government suggests anything without it being obligatory for him. This also explains his own tendency to stimulate voluntary co-operation by coercive methods whenever he holds a position

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1) op. cit. p. 27.

2) op. cit. p. 27.

3) op. cit. p. 28.

4) op. cit. p. 28.

5) op. cit. p. 28.

6) op. cit. p. 29.

himself. It is possible for the District Officer to avoid this pitfall, if he always keeps in mind that it is activity on the part of the local population that matters, and that imperfect achievements by the people themselves are better than the most perfect achievements by the District Officer" 1).

As an additional observation the remark was made that in view of the approach adopted, a fixed time schedule of further development could not be given 2).

Summarizing the above, we may conclude that the attitude of the authorities towards the project was governed by six major considerations:

a. A special approach was considered necessary, which demanded the attention of at least one person of a "high enough standard". The District Officer (University trained) was selected for this purpose.

b. The co-operation of the population was to remain on a voluntary basis, and, therefore,

c. the District Officer was to avoid too much personal control, and had to rely on

d. help from the population in promoting the proposed improvements and introduction of new activities.

e. No coercive methods were to be used. The social development of Nimboran should be in agreement with existing institutions, thus making it less revolutionary, but rather in line with the existing trend of development.

f. The approach which was adopted towards the development of Nimboran made the drafting of a fixed time schedule less advisable. Developments in Nimboran were to indicate the further course of action.

By the Nimboran project the Government also hoped to be able to explore the possibility of undertaking community development within the scope of normal Government care for the population, i.e. the employment of the existing Government Services, which were urged to assist fully — each in its own field — in the execution of the project. Thus the problems of a more technical nature could be surveyed by the different Departments which had a staff of specialists at their disposal, and which could be employed whenever it proved necessary.

In order to reach an efficient co-ordination of planning, all the different Departments immediately concerned were represented in a Supervisory Council which was presided over by the Resident of Hollandia.

The Administrative Officer who was assigned to take up his station in Genjem, and who was to be entrusted with the actual execution of the project, was instructed to act in accordance with the suggestions advanced by the Supervisory Council 3). He was to be aided in his management of affairs by the regional representatives of the different Departments concerned.

### *Communications and social setting*

Before proceeding to a discussion of the execution of the Nimboran project, it will be worth while to give a brief sketch of the approaches to

1) op. cit. p. 29.

2) op. cit. p. 29.

3) Gouvernements Besluit July 8th 1952, No. 134.

the area, and of the social setting in which the project was to be introduced, as these proved to be of some consequence for later developments.

*Approaches.* In the draft for the project, stress was laid on the necessity of completing the road from Borowai to Genjem, in order not to be handicapped in the carrying out of the project by inadequate connections.

The road which had been built before the war by the Administration, and which had come into a bad state of disrepair due to the lack of attention for many years, could not be used for any kind of wheeled traffic, and measures had to be taken to make the road serviceable for light motor traffic. The establishment of the experimental cash crop garden in Besum in 1947 led to the first steps being taken towards the construction of such a road. A couple of bulldozers and other equipment were ferried across Lake Sentani, and in the spring of 1947, the building of a road to Genjem was taken in hand.

Insufficient planning and inadequacy of funds, equipment, and staff caused the project to be temporarily abandoned after the first year. The second start was made in 1949, which likewise led to abandonment a year later.

In 1951, at the time a European Administrative Officer was sent to take up his station in Genjem, an amount of some 90,000 guilders had been spent on road construction, and only half of the road had been sufficiently prepared to be passable for light motor traffic.

The urgency of a good road connection in view of the Nimboran Community Development Project was again stressed, and duly led to the provision of more funds, but now equipment could not be spared, and the construction work had to be carried on with hired labour.

In September 1952, a temporary jeep connection with Genjem was established, due to the fact that the first tractor for the mechanised farming enterprise had to be driven to Genjem.

Owing to the enthusiasm of the Nimboran population who worked with unrelenting effort, the connection was made in time<sup>1)</sup>. Since the day the tractor passed through, the road was kept serviceable at the cost of much inconvenience to the population who had to supply the necessary labour.

Being an unmetalled road it often suffered too much from rain and floods, which caused heavy damage and, consequently, led to periodic closing of the road for all kinds of traffic, thus continuously stagnating the supply to Genjem and the shipment of produce from Nimboran. Shortage of labour and the absence of suitable equipment made it impossible to construct a dependable all-weather road.

Thus the connection of Nimboran with Hollandia formed a persistent "bottleneck" in the process of developing Nimboran society. A solution was sought for in the construction of an air-strip, suitable for twin-engined transport aircraft, which was taken in hand in the spring of 1954. The air-strip was expected to be serviceable by the middle of 1955.

*Distribution of Population.* In 1951, Nimboran counted 23 villages, all

<sup>1)</sup> W. J. H. Kouwenhoven: "A tractor goes to Sarmi Kerang" Quarterly Bulletin S.P.C. October 1952.

except two, closely grouped within a radius of 5 kilometres off Sarmai Kerang, later the site of the farming project.

Thus, 21 villages, counting a population of some 2480, were spread over an area of 80 square kilometres. Most of the villages were located along the main road, which was built under the Herendienst-ordinance. All these villages had their coconut palms and fruit trees which reached full growth many years ago, and had been bearing fruit just as long. The people had become used to their new villages, and would not easily be moved to another place, not even to their original dwelling sites in the hills.

Of the 23 villages, 5 were located in the southern hills, some three quarters of an hour walking from Genjem, the centre of Nimboran. Eleven were located along the main track at the foot of the southern hills, and one — also on the old road — was located in the plain. Three villages were located in the plain more eastward, and three others in the northern hills. The ratio between the number of inhabitants of these villages in the hills, along the old track, in the plain, and in the northern hills was 30 %, 50 %, 9 %, and 11 % respectively.

The diagram in Appendix I (fig. 5), which gives a clear picture of the distribution of the population in Nimboran as it was in December 1954, is also representative for 1951.

The concentration of population along the old track from Lake Sentani to Demta is very prominent. Just as clearly is shown that the new road only connected Nimboran with the outside world, but did not interconnect the populated localities in Nimboran. The road improvements of 1954 which transformed the old horse-track into a jeep-road contributed a little to better connections within the area.

The size of the villages varied from some 25 to some 330 inhabitants, with an average of 116 per village for December 1951, and 125 three years later. The Nimboran houses were one-family dwellings. The appearance of the houses had also changed. Mostly the houses were of the new type which had been introduced by Administration and Mission. They were all built on piles, had higher walls with windows and doors, and were much more spacious than the traditional dwellings. Since the war many houses were renewed.

Usually the houses were built closely together, leaving little room for a garden of considerable size. The system used in laying out a village was such (all houses on either side of the village road, facing each other) that in nine out of ten cases extension of gardens at the back of the houses was possible. Very often large areas of good land were available that way in the villages. Of course such was not the case in the villages located in the hills.

*Population trends.* A most convenient way to indicate the direction in which the population of an area as a whole is developing, is supplied by the figures concerning the trend of population in that area. It was because of this consideration that early in 1952, a detailed registration was made of the population which was kept up to date during the following years.

The figures which were thus supplied, afforded the authorities who were responsible for the development of Nimboran a clear picture of the population situation in the area at any conceivable moment, while the

results of the yearly survey of the number of population supplied the necessary data which were needed for further planning.

There appeared to be a number of irregularities in the composition of the population which probably were due to different factors: diseases of an epidemic nature, temporary excessive employment of labour, migrations, and the like. Unfortunately, no detailed population figures were available of the years previous to 1952, while no exhaustive data about the occurrence of diseases, the employment of labour etc. in previous years existed about Nimboran.

The most marked "shortages" were established in the age groups of 1-2 years, 6-10 years, and 20-21 years, while, due to the migrations to Hollandia, there was a conspicuous lack of young effective males. This lack of men promised to be detrimental to the productive capacity of the area.

The trend of population from 1952-1954, which probably may also be considered representative for the few preceding years, was not unfavourable. There was a steady increase of population. General natality was high (around 52 per 1000), while general mortality gave no cause for undue anxiety (around 27 per 1000). Infant mortality averaged 18 % which in itself seems to be a high figure, but which, according to New Guinea standards, is on the low side<sup>1)</sup>.

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<sup>1)</sup> A more detailed discussion of the results of the population counts from January 1952 until December 1954 is given in Appendix I. Special attention has thereby been paid to the trends of population during that period, and to the influence of the migrations to Hollandia on the number of population.

## CHAPTER VI

### The economic development of Nimboran

The programme which was drafted for the economic development of the area may be divided into three major parts:

a. Realization of the desired increase of material prosperity of the population by the creation of possibilities to earn money in order to increase the purchasing power of the population, and the creation also of an outlet for the increased purchasing power.

b. The increase of purchasing power was to be achieved by methods which would also lead to an increase of indigenous production, and of indigenous effort which was to be directed primarily at the economic reconstruction of indigenous society.

c. A sound financial foundation had to be given to the economic development of the area by the creation of a nuclear project, which not only aimed at showing to the population which possibilities were offered in Nimboran in the field of economic enterprise, but also at forming a foundation for the future economic orientation of Nimboran society in its effort to participate in the economic effort of New Guinea as a whole.

The appointment of a European Administrative Officer to Nimboran, due to the development project, and the subsequent increase of activities which compelled the Government to start a construction programme of roads and houses for which labour was procured locally, also meant the immediate injection of money into Nimboran.

The problem of finding means for the population to earn money, therefore, was made less pressing soon after the first steps towards the development of Nimboran had been taken. During the first stages of the project, therefore, the supply of goods which could be purchased with the earned money was more important. Apart from that, the competitive demand for labour which was exercised by the Government had to be taken into consideration as a new factor which had not been foreseen.

After a survey of the possibilities which were offered in the sphere of indigenous production had been made, and it had been decided that the best results were to be expected from indigenous agriculture, lumbering, carpentry, and a number of branches of local industry, an attempt was made at forming an organization which was to serve as an intermediary between the producer and the — yet unknown — market. With the aid of a free loan of f 1500.—<sup>1)</sup> which was supplied out of a local fund by the Mission, an organization, called "Purchasing and selling centre for the co-operating Nimboran society", was established (hereafter referred to as "Trade Centre"). The object of this organization was the purchasing of indigenous products, and the supply of imported goods which were bought by the organization in Hollandia.

From the descriptions in the previous parts of this book it may be concluded that Nimboran offered few indigenous crafts which could serve as a starting point for the further development of the area.

<sup>1)</sup> 1500 guilders. Rate of exchange on January 1st 1955: £S. 1.— = f 10,60.



One of the most promising features of Nimboran was the favourable condition of its soil. A survey of the soil which was made by F. A. Wentholt before the war, showed that the Nimboran- and Grime plains offered exceptionally favourable perspectives for agricultural development<sup>1)</sup>. In one of his final conclusions, Wentholt stated that the second terrace of the extensive plain which covers most of Nimboran consisted of some 3500 acres of good soil which could be used without preliminary drainage.

Apart from the favourable quality of the soil and the favourable geographic conditions, the relative density of population and the pre-deliction of the Nimboran for agricultural activities were factors, favouring plans which aimed at the agricultural development of the area. The question remained, however, how this development was to be taken in hand. The main problem was the form which was to be adopted in case of agricultural enterprise. Closely related to this was the difficulty of the technical possibilities and impossibilities which are inherent to a specific approach, while the market for products of agriculture remained a question-mark for a long time.

Less promising was the state of local industry. All industry in Nimboran was primarily household-industry, serving to keep the family supplied with the common utensils for cooking, gardening, hunting, and the like. No surplus-production which is worth mentioning took place, and, consequently, trading was of minor importance. Many of the old utensils which were normally used, lost their function when cheap imported articles which could do the same work just as easily, and often better, in a fraction of the time that was needed previously, became available. The influx, therefore, of trade commodities caused many of the old crafts to be forgotten. They were rendered needless, and so nobody cared about them very much. The already limited local production of household utensils was yet more suppressed by the influence of increasing trade. Yet, on the other hand, nature offered a large variety and a great abundance of raw material which might easily be processed into usable commodities. The vicinity of Hollandia with its numbers of people who formerly lived in Indonesia and who had been used to many kinds of household utensils made out of wood, bamboo, pandanus, or otherwise, and the active demand which existed for these articles, were additional factors which might make the stimulation of local industry worth while.

There appeared to be different possibilities, therefore, to stimulate the economic effort of Nimboran society. It was clear from the beginning that stress was to be laid on agriculture as a major means of livelihood for the population, while native industry was to remain of only secondary importance. However, the planning of the agricultural development of the area demanded a more thorough survey of soil- and other conditions, and the drafting of a more detailed plan. An earlier start was, therefore, made with the stimulation of indigenous industry.

#### 1. *The stimulation of indigenous industry*

The major obstacles in stimulating indigenous industry were the general lack of skill and, consequently, the absence of people who could instruct

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<sup>1)</sup> F. A. Wentholt: "Verslag van het bodemkundig onderzoek van de Grime- en Sekolievlakten".

the others in the manufacturing of household commodities. Although Nimboran had the disposal of an abundance of raw material for village industry, the lack of instructors in the indigenous as well as in the governmental sphere, made a thorough approach impossible. Therefore, when village industry had to be stimulated, a start was to be made with the stimulation of crafts already present in Nimboran, but still undeveloped, and usually aiming only at the satisfaction of private needs. As the products of village industry were intended for sale and not for private use, care was to be taken that the articles which were made were also in demand — either in Nimboran itself, or otherwise, in Hollandia. This limited the scope of possibilities down to a few.

The only known crafts in Nimboran which might form a basis for the future development of indigenous industry were woodworking, elementary basket-making and mat-plaiting, and the making of coconut-oil and sago-cakes. All these crafts had been acquired since the coming of the Mission and the Administration. Some were taught at school (mat-plaiting and basket-making), others had been acquired through working for alien people.

As additional activities, the making of charcoal and simple pottery were selected. Both were not too difficult to learn, while a few men who had learned the method of charcoal burning while serving their sentence in the Hollandia jail, were available.

Charcoal burning, however, had to be abandoned soon after it had been started, as no sufficient demand existed in Hollandia, and the prices of charcoal produced in the Hollandia jail were too low to enable the Nimboran producers to maintain competitive prices.

The making of pottery, although it was continued, never grew into an enterprise of importance. The lack of technical skill and insufficient means to improve on it were the main obstacles.

The choice of enterprise and the plan of organization were left to be decided by those who had agreed upon taking up a trade after having consulted the District Officer.

We may distinguish between three types of productive organization:

- a. Production as an enterprise with an employer and employed, and prearranged wages.
- b. Production by collective effort with shared wages.
- c. Individual production.

The first method of production was found in the woodworking industry, to which belonged a pit-sawing enterprise and a carpentry workshop. The second method was found in the enterprises making sago-cakes and coconut-oil, and in the mat-plaiting industry of Pobaim village, while the third method concerned the making of baskets and also plaited mats.

Intervention with indigenous industry was avoided as much as possible, as it was meant to develop in the indigenous sphere, and the population was considered the most able to decide which productive organization suited it best.

It was a common phenomenon to find gardens with a variety of crops scattered through the forest where the pit-sawing enterprise had settled. The people who worked there were too much occupied with their new trade to be able to attend to their gardens properly, so they found a

solution in growing a part of their crops near their place of employment. The same happened in other places. Usually a well-tended garden of food crops and cash crops was to be found bordering on the workshop. The people — working in their own sphere — had given a specific character to their enterprise which conformed to their own ideas of what an enterprise should look like under the given circumstances, and which made these little enterprises rather popular. It was not surprising when the mat-plaiting industry of Pobaim sent ground-nuts to be sold to the trading agency of the Co-operative Society, or when the sago-cake producers were seen selling vegetables in Genjem.

The only interference with these indigenous enterprises concerned matters like the regular payment of wages to employees or participants, checking the quality of the products, and the improvement of methods of production which was done by means of enlightenment of the producers, and, in case no method could be decided upon off-hand, by trial and error. The lack of expert guidance in these matters, and the limited knowledge of the District Officer and his staff, made it impossible to do more in this field of activities.

Owing to the interest which was shown by the South Pacific Commission and by a number of outsiders who visited Nimboran, especially for the carpentry workshop, something more could be done to improve the skill of the carpenters with the aid of literature on fundamental woodwork which had been supplied by the interested parties.

In Appendix II a description is given of the organization and the operation of a number of the indigenous enterprises.

## *2. Set-up of the agricultural development*

Although Nimboran had a population which was relatively dense according to New Guinea standards, the migrations to Hollandia deprived Nimboran of such an important part of its man-power, that it would not be justified to expect much of an approach which stressed the individual effort of the Nimboran farmer. Family subsistence had already suffered so severely from the drain of effective young males, that a further burdening of the family with additional tasks would not only be irresponsible, but even quite impossible.

In addition to that, indigenous agriculture, which was characterized as shifting cultivation with a one time occupation of the field, did not lend itself particularly well to further development along more modern lines, especially when such a development aimed at an increased cash-income, which would mean the cultivation of cash crops, whether they be annual or perennial crops.

Several restrictions were, therefore, set against the desirability of agricultural development and the possibilities which Nimboran itself offered, restrictions which were decisive for the approach which was to be taken with the agricultural development of Nimboran.

It was to be decided in the first place in which direction indigenous agriculture was to be developed, while a main consideration had to be the increase of cash-income.

The possibilities for the cultivation of perennial cash crops were very

limited. The success of the cultivation of various of these crops is for a great deal dependent on the position of the world market for these products, while, on the other hand, the climatic conditions in New Guinea are not so favourable that a wide choice remains. Moreover, the crop which was to be selected had to be suitable for indigenous cultivation on a large scale, without the backing of Western enterprise which could take care of the further processing of the products. A crop had to be found, therefore, which needed no complicated processing before it would be suitable for export. The only possibilities, thus far, seemed to be cocoa and/or coffee

Coffee seemed less attractive as it could count at best on a ready — but limited — market at home which would soon be over-supplied. As a cash crop, cocoa offered more attractive prospects as there existed an active demand for this product. Many of the islands in the South Pacific have devoted themselves to the growing of cocoa, especially since the last war<sup>1</sup>). The fact that cocoa has been cultivated successfully by the population in Africa as well as in the South Pacific, also justified the expectation of favourable results for Netherlands New Guinea. However, cocoa was virtually unknown to the population as a cash crop, and no market for cocoa did exist yet in these parts. Moreover, the cultivation of cocoa in Netherlands New Guinea had not yet passed the experimental stage, which meant that no satisfactory method for the growing of cocoa by the population had been found. It should also be kept in mind that, as long as the production of cocoa remains below the minimum which has to be reached in order to be able to export, there is a danger that the harvest cannot be marketed unless the Government buys at its own risk.

The fact that the cultivation of cocoa still was in an experimental stage, implicated that no large-scale cultivation of cocoa by the population was advisable. This meant that only a limited output could be expected in the initial stages, which would call for Government protection.

The difficulties with which the plans for the cultivation of cocoa were still struggling, made it less attractive to launch a large-scale cocoa project as a major means towards the economic development of Nimboran. It was decidedly better to look for another approach.

The choice was thereby limited to the field of cultivation of annual crops, at least during the initial stages of the agricultural development of Nimboran. There still remained another problem though, which had to be solved before an actual start could be made, and that was the problem of finding sufficient labour in Nimboran to embark upon a large scale farming project.

A solution was looked for in:

- a. increasing the average labour efficiency of each individual by introducing collective labour.
- b. mechanization in order to economize on manual labour.

The solution also gave an answer to the question in which way the cultivation of cash crops was to be taken in hand. The introduction of mechanised farming seemed to be the indicated approach. In that way the

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<sup>1</sup>) See also the publications of the South Pacific Commission by D. H. Urquhart B. Sc. (Agric), Technical papers No. 31, 36, 37, 39, and 40, on cocoa growing in the South Pacific islands.

labour factor could be made dependent on the degree of mechanization. The introduction of collective mechanised farming and the cultivation of cash crops caused several other questions to arise:

In the first place, a way had to be found for the introduction of collective mechanised farming, which would not only lead to increased cash-income for the area, but also to the stimulation of social- and economic intercourse in Nimborean society. Then, there was the question of the choice of a suitable crop. Climatic- and soil conditions were of course decisive, but also the suitability of various crops for mechanised cultivation, and a market for these products had still to be found.

The Agricultural Department decided on the cultivation of ground-nuts, corn, and soya-beans, while rice and legumen, other than soya-beans, were also to be tried.

Little was known yet about the market for these products, which made the prospects rather vague.

### 3. *Mechanised farming and the social-economic development of Nimborean*

Once mechanised farming had been decided upon as an initial approach towards the development of Nimborean, a choice had to be made between several possibilities:

Three, principally different, forms had to be recognised: Mechanised farming in one collective enterprise; mechanised farming undertaken by individuals or small groups (family or *tang*) who thereby rely on a co-operatively owned equipment-pool; and finally, a combination of the two, i.e. a collective nuclear mechanised farm, next to which a number of smaller farms exist which rely on the nuclear farm for mechanical assistance <sup>1</sup>).

*The mechanised farming enterprise.* At the beginning of the execution of the Nimborean project, people were not sufficiently familiar yet with the possible outcome of mechanised farming in indigenous enterprise to have a clearly defined opinion of it. Most rational seemed to be to the Government the creation of a nuclear farm, which not only promised to offer a solution for the difficulties which were caused by the labour problem, but also offered a unique opportunity to study the long list of unanswered questions in relation to indigenous mechanised farming in the tropics.

Apart from that, the creation of a nuclear project of some scope was seen as the indicated way towards the concentration of the attention and effort of the population on one central object, which was needed to instil into the population an interest in their own society, for it was considered that the lack of such interest was a main cause for the disintegration of indigenous society, while, on the other hand, it was also intensified by this process of disintegration.

In 1951, discussions were held with the population concerning the possibility of establishing a nuclear farm in the area. The idea was to make the introduction of this project conform as much as possible to the attitude

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<sup>1</sup>) When in the following the words "individual farm (farmers, farming)" are used the communal enterprises run by a small group (*tang* or village) are also included.

of the people towards such an undertaking, and, especially, to the existing rules of land tenure. If possible, no village or *tang* was to be seriously handicapped by the reservation of land for the farm. However, it seemed that no difficulties were to be met with, for the tract of land which had been selected because of its favourable location and promising soil qualities proved to be a *lan g*-land which belonged to three villages, and which had been destined for fire-hunting. The people who were immediately concerned were at once found willing to put the land at the disposal of the farm. Yet, they were not the only ones who could decide the matter, for others who usually derived benefit from this land, due to the fire-hunts, also had a say in the matter <sup>1)</sup>). However, all Nimboran proved to be very pleased with the idea of mechanised farming, and as the project was to be of benefit to the whole of Nimboran society, everyone was quite willing to give up the fire-hunts on this particular land in favour of the entirely new idea of a communal farm with machinery to do part of the work for them.

Thus, a farm of 37.5 acres was laid out, close to the village of Sarmakerang, after a survey of the soil of that particular tract of land had yielded favourable results. The introduction of the mechanised farming enterprise did not exclude the possibility of agricultural development along different lines.

The initial set-up was kept as unpretentious as possible. A 28-H.P. Fordson tractor was purchased, together with a limited amount of additional equipment. A part of the expense was covered by a grant-in-aid which had been supplied by the South Pacific Commission.

It was not intended to embark upon full mechanization immediately. From the beginning the intention had been to let the population also take an active part in the enterprise:

„It is obviously not intended in this project to resort to a system of fully mechanised farming. This would almost eliminate the activity of the people themselves — and therewith the share of the population in increased production” <sup>2)</sup>).

The problems which are connected with the subject of mechanised farming in the tropics, and especially in New Guinea, made it very difficult to find a solution for the conflicting interests, which on the one side were of a technical nature, and on the other side, of a purely economical nature, i.e. the earning-power of the enterprise. The farm was not meant to be primarily an experimental station, but rather an earning enterprise. From the very beginning the enterprise had to aim at securing a profit, in order to achieve its ultimate purpose: the forming of a solid foundation on which the further development of regional economic life could be built.

Finally, there was the question of how labour could be best fitted into the project in order to attain the acceptance of the farm as a Nimboran-owned enterprise, and not as a Government-sponsored undertaking which employed Nimboran labour.

At first this was thought possible to be achieved by postponing payment of wages until after the sale of the products. This policy was expected to

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1) See p. 39 Part I.

2) Dr J. van Baal: op. cit. p. 30.

make the people feel co-responsible for the undertaking, and thus tie them more closely to the farm. In order not to have to send the workers back empty-handed after having performed their tasks, an advance was allowed to be made on payment of wages by distributing tobacco, or something similar, amongst the people who worked on the farm.

*The marketing of products.* Special attention had to be paid to the marketing of the products of the farm. As a regular market for products of indigenous agriculture was completely lacking, provisions had to be made in time, and before the project was actually launched. Originally it had been planned that the Government (Agricultural Department) would act as the sole purchaser of the products of the mechanised farming enterprise. The farm or the (later established) Co-operative Society would then not be concerned with the actual marketing. This system was to be continued until — at some future date — a market for home-grown crops had been established, after which the Government would withdraw from the scene, and leave the marketing in the hands of the Co-operative Society.

This system, by which the Government was to guarantee the off-take of all the products of the farm, was all the more needed as the Agricultural Department, to which had been assigned the task of advising which crops were to be cultivated, could not guarantee favourable results. Through lack of experience the Department was not at all certain about the final outcome of the recommended crops, while it was as little certain about the possibilities for marketing these products.

A request was made for the allocation of funds to the Agricultural Department to be used for the purpose of buying the products of the farm. However, the request was not granted and, consequently, the Agricultural Department could do nothing but act as an intermediary, when, finally, it came to marketing the products.

*Financing the enterprise.* The working-expenses were expected to be high during the first years, owing to the initial investments which had to be made for the purchasing of machinery, the reclamation of land, the construction of sheds and a workshop, etc. Profits were not expected to be high because of the technical difficulties which were anticipated, and because of the marketing problem.

As it was considered undesirable to burden regional economy with the probability of loss in the initial stages of its development, the defrayal of the expenses for the enterprise was to be a Government responsibility at first. The possibility of loss was very real in view of the special risks which are inherent to the introduction of mechanised farming in Netherlands New Guinea. The expenses which were to be made by the Government were expected to be refunded out of the trading receipts. In the end these trading receipts were to become of benefit to Nimboran only.

*The course of the enterprise.* On this basis it was possible to launch the enterprise without having to look first for all the answers to the questions which have already been mentioned. It was considered best to try to learn the answer from practical experience, while it would then also be possible

to learn something about other possibilities which might exist in relation to the development of indigenous agriculture on a semi-mechanised basis.

In the following paragraphs a brief summary will be given of the course of the mechanised farming enterprise, and of the planning which was done for the development of individual farming.

*Further planning.* During the first two years of its existence a few changes were made in the management of the mechanised farm, and more advanced planning was done with regard to the agricultural development of the population. Later, more stress was also laid on the promotion of individual farming in order to induce more generally felt interest in cash crop farming, which was expected to add considerably to the total social- and economic revival of Nimboran.

After a visit by the *Agrarische Commissie* to Nimboran in September 1953 <sup>1)</sup>, more detailed plans with regard to the development of cash crop farming in general were made.

It was considered necessary to extend the mechanised farming enterprise to such a size that it would be profitable to employ at least two tractors. The risk of a break-down when using one tractor only on an isolated farm like the one in Nimboran, where no adequate repairshop had been established, was considered too serious, as it would inevitably incapacitate the whole undertaking. A second tractor was to be bought for the mechanised farming enterprise as soon as possible. The Agricultural Department was to decide which type of tractor, and which additional equipment were best suited for the purpose.

After the second tractor had arrived, the extension of the cultivated area was to be proceeded with. Due regard was to be paid to the earning efficiency of the enterprise, and, therefore, it was considered necessary to avoid the conducting of experiments in drainage and soil improvements as much as possible. As Nimboran had the disposal of plenty of good land which was relatively easy to reclaim, it was thought better to put this area into use for the farm instead of first trying to improve the less fertile tracts of land. Therefore, the Agricultural Department was to arrange for the abandonment of the less suitable tracts of land which had been cultivated, and for the reclamation of new land which was more suitable for the purpose. A more extensive survey of the soil was to be made in order to be able to decide which parts of land were to be added to the farm.

Better provisions were to be made for the maintenance and repair of the mechanical equipment of the farm. An additional issue of tools would be arranged for. The Agricultural Department was already arranging for the appointment of a second mechanic to the agricultural experimental station at Kota Nica (Hollandia). This mechanic was to be employed as a travelling expert, to whom would be also assigned the task of supervising the maintenance of equipment belonging to the mechanised farming enterprise in Nimboran.

The adopted system of wage-labour on the farm was considered to

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<sup>1)</sup> A committee of agricultural experts, which paid an extensive visit to New Guinea in the summer of 1953.



be less desirable<sup>1</sup>). The pay-system was to be made to conform to the idea of participation in the farm, instead of employment by the Co-operative Society. As the need for ready cash was still acute amongst the Nimboran people, it was considered unwise to resort fully to a system of deferred payment. Instead, partial payment of wages should be made immediately after work, while the remainder of the wages was to be paid as a gratuity after the products had been marketed. This pay-system had already been adopted for female labour, and was now to be extended to the males also. The initial (part-)payment of wages was to be decreased slowly in favour of a gradual increase of the gratuity. The rate of decrease of wages was to conform to the need for ready cash, and the increasing supply of cash through other activities.

The marketing of products was to be entrusted to the Co-operative Society, while the Agricultural Department was to act as an intermediary. The suggestions which were to be made in this respect by the District Officer after consultation with the Agricultural Department, were, for the time being, to be considered as of binding force to the Co-operative Society.

Several times the suggestion was advanced by different authorities to investigate the possibilities of introducing individual farming enterprises next to the nuclear farm. For instance, by means of co-operative farms, whereby individual farmers (family) or small groups (*tang* or village) would cultivate their own land with the aid of machines which were co-operatively owned, and which each member was to hire at a fixed rate.

A survey of the possibilities in this field was made by the District Officer, but the conclusion was reached that the conditions for a large-scale introduction of individually conducted (semi-)mechanised farms on a co-operative basis were not too favourable yet. A major obstacle was formed by the rules of land tenure in Nimboran:

The only land which was suitable for mechanised farming was to be found in the plain. As land tenure was still bound by tradition, it is clear that the better parts of the Nimboran plain belonged to only a fraction of the population, as most of the villages originated from the southern Nimboran hills, where they also had their land. Of this land in the plain, only a fraction, which was at the disposal of no more than six villages, was suitable for farming on a bigger scale without the need of extensive preliminary deforestation.

There was a choice of two possibilities. Either the traditional rights to the land would be maintained, and only the six villages would be involved, each on its own land, or all Nimborans would be allowed to participate, which implicated infringement of the traditional rights which were exercised by the concerned *tangs*. This infringement of traditional rights, which had to be supported by the Government, would inevitably lead to measures which were disadvantageous to the traditional landowners who either would receive an indemnification or — in case of redistribution of land — land in the hills.

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<sup>1</sup>) Contrary to the initial plans concerning the payment of labour for the farm (see pp. 115-116), the men were paid full wages as they proved not to be inclined to work without immediate payment of cash money.

Both systems had their disadvantages. The first solution would lead to a degree of development of the six villages in the plain which was disproportionate to that of the remainder of Nimboran. The second solution, which would be a drastic infringement of traditional rights, might easily lead to conflicts within Nimboran society, especially after joint consultation between the people who were concerned had proved unprofitable, which was likely to be the case.

This meant that both solutions threatened to disrupt the harmony which existed within Nimboran society.

A third solution was thought to lie in the maintenance of a mechanised farming enterprise of the Co-operative Society next to these individual or small group farms.

This would lead to the following three possibilities:

a. The establishment of an independent co-operative society of farmers, which enveloped the six villages which were mentioned above.

b. The establishment of a special equipment-pool as a branch of the existing Co-operative Society, which would serve the individual farmers who were members of this Society.

c. The employment of the mechanised farming enterprise also for individual farmers. In that case the equipment of the mechanised farming enterprise had to be supplemented with additional equipment.

The proposed middle course had the advantage over other solutions that, through the mechanised farming enterprise, the villages which were less favourably supplied with land would share also in the advantages of mechanised farming, while the road to the development of individually owned cash crop farms would be left open for those who had suitable land at their disposal.

The question remained however, whether the six plains-villages had the disposal of sufficient man-power to cultivate an area of considerable size (in semi-mechanised indigenous agriculture manual labour is still an important factor). This was not likely to be the case, which caused yet another question to arise. Would it be considered reasonable then, to make the other Nimboran villages supply the labour for these individual farmers? Such was hardly likely, at least not without a reasonable "quid pro quo". Nimboran society formed a whole, and the objective of the development project made it necessary that this point be stressed. To make a part of Nimboran subservient to another — smaller — part of the society, just because the latter had the benefit of a more advantageous position, was not considered right. It would be necessary that those who would use labour from other villages could offer something in return for the services rendered, other than just the wages which were to be paid (This also conformed to the attitude which people were expected to take according to traditional customs). An adequate "quid pro quo" would be the allotment of the use of land in the plain, which would eventually lead to the people of the other villages also being offered the possibility of taking up individual farming <sup>1)</sup>.

<sup>1)</sup> This solution seems to be also possible in the first two cases, mentioned on page 118. However, the middle-course had the advantage that Nimboran society, as a whole, would be kept interested in mechanised farming through the co-operative enterprise, and the people would, therefore, be more likely to co-operate with those who

The proposed solution contained several elements which might lead to a satisfactory development of indigenous cash crop farming. The size of the total area which would be cultivated by individual farmers would then not only depend on the labour capacity of the six villages which were immediately concerned, but also on their need for hired labour, for the apportioning of land to people from the other villages would depend on this need. Yet, the total area which would be cultivated that way, would remain limited.

It was not likely that the proposed system would have a cumulative effect, or in other words, that it would ultimately lead to the employment of all Nimborans in individually owned farms. Only if one favoured the existence of a few large farms (those of the six plains-villages) next to a large number of small farms (those of the hill-villagers who were also doing part-time work on the big farms), would this be theoretically possible. But the possibility to extend individual farming, also depended on the equipment which would be available. From an economic point of view it would be more advisable to work with a limited number of average-sized farms which were easily reached, than with a large number of small enterprises which would most probably be scattered all over the area.

But there were also disadvantages attached to this solution. The main one, which had already been confirmed by practical experience, was, that the people who had their own cash crop farm were liable to refuse to work for the Co-operative farming enterprise. This, of course, meant that an additional burden would be laid on the people who did not work a cash crop garden of their own, which would lead to conflict within Nimboran society.

The (Co-operative) mechanised farming enterprise was considered the property of Nimboran society, and everyone was bound to share in the efforts for this enterprise. If one postponed his sago-pounding in order to work on the farm, another one should — at least for a while — also leave his work for the same purpose. It would be quite different if the farm was a real co-operative enterprise, because then, those who did not work would not share in the profits. But the Nimborans considered the farm more than a co-operative enterprise only. The enterprise had been established in the interest of the whole of Nimboran society, and those who refused to work for it evaded their duty towards society.

It seemed, therefore, that the last solution might also tend to disrupt the harmony within Nimboran society. But — in the case of a combination of the mechanised farming enterprise with an equipment-pool for the individual farmers — the Co-operative Society might more or less force the individual farmers to observe their duties towards society by withholding the needed equipment in case of insufficient co-operation.

Summarizing the above, we may state that because of the lack of sufficient practical experience, too little was known yet about the practical consequences of the different possibilities. The only road which was left

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would take up individual farming. Next to a general orientation towards mechanised farming as a means of earning cash, there would be specialization in this field by a part of the population.

to take was the road of trial and error. This was also a reason for the Government to decide on at least trying an experiment.

In order to be able to conduct such an experiment in semi-mechanised individual cash crop farming (as has been discussed above), an area of some ten acres, on the western side of the main road, opposite the mechanised farming enterprise, was to be abandoned by the farm in favour of the *tang* entitled to it, after which the members of this *tang* (Krang of the village of Sarmai-kerang) would use this land for the cultivation of cash crops.

Two additional purposes were also served by this measure:

a. The mechanised farming enterprise would be rid of a source of much concern (this part of the farm had already caused many problems as it was too much cut up by drainage-trenches to be suitable for extensive farming).

b. Cultivation of food crops which were to be sold to the girls school in Genjem, was now possible. A request to that end had already been made previously by the local Missionary, but the Agricultural Department considered the cultivation of food crops on the mechanised farm unsuitable, since the products of these crops were needed in limited quantities, and, therefore, no efficient employment of mechanical equipment would be possible. The cultivation of food crops by manual labour only, could not be carried out on a scale, sufficiently large to meet the demand of the girls school.

The experiment in individually conducted semi-mechanised farming was to be supervised by the District Officer of Nimboran in close co-operation with the Agricultural Department, the latter of which was also concerned with the provision of mechanical equipment for that purpose (questions of priority and earning-capacity).

The exchange of views on the matters discussed above was primarily concerned with the principles of future development of agriculture in Nimboran, and, therefore, no figures had been mentioned yet in this connection.

No decision was made concerning the scope of the extension of the mechanised farming enterprise which had been planned for the coming year (1953-1954), as this also depended on the difficulties which were to be encountered when taking up the reclamation of new land, and on the amount of labour which would be needed, which was again dependent on the capacity of the mechanical equipment which was to be employed and the nature of the work which could be done mechanically. Neither were decisions made concerning the level of wages, the percentage which was to be reserved as a gratuity, or the prices for the products. These were to be considered in view of practical experience, and were to be adapted to local conditions.

*Deviation from the lines of guidance.* Most of the above mentioned lines of guidance could be maintained in actual practice. Only the chosen policy of wages proved to be inadequate, and demanded reconsideration.

The system of partially deferred payment was abandoned in favour of immediate full payment. This change in wages-policy threatened to hinder

the plans of letting the undertaking become a true part of Nimboran society by the principle of sharing in the risks of the enterprise. The change from partially deferred payment to immediate and full payment tended towards the origin of a form of impersonal enterprise, which might endanger the adoption of the undertaking by the Nimboran population as an economic institution which was closely interrelated with society, and which would guide the people in their collective effort towards progress.

In view of these considerations the system of partially deferred payment was maintained as long as possible, but the attitude of the people towards this new idea of co-operation proved to be so completely devoid of understanding, that it was not justified to count on their collaboration.

Moreover, the actual presence of the mechanised farming enterprise as a branch of the Co-operative Society, and the influence which proceeded from the Co-operative Society as such, already created such strong ties between the people, the Co-operative Society, and the farming enterprise that estrangement between the three was not to be easily feared, even if the farming enterprise would tend to become a more impersonal sort of enterprise. Both, the Co-operative Society and the Mechanised farming enterprise, afforded the Nimborans so much satisfaction that the people would not lightly do away with either of them. In addition to that, the two proved to be a major provisioner of cash for the whole area and for many individual Nimborans. Both institutions had proved their value to Nimboran and promised to contribute to a better integration of Nimboran society. Therefore, it was finally decided to refrain from further attempts to make the people familiar with the idea of modern co-operation by indirect coercive methods, as this would seriously endanger the earning capacity and the efficient management of the undertaking.

The cash crop farm of Sarmai-kerang village proved to be a failure in many respects. The main short-coming was the lack of sufficient labour, in spite of the fact that the tillage of the land was done mechanically. Weeding and harvesting had to be done by hand, and demanded frequent and relatively extensive employment of labour. The man-power of the *tang* Krang was limited to some ten adults, and they were not able to cope fully with the ten acres of land. One should not forget that the cultivation of cash crops was carried out in addition to the normal domestic chores which were necessary for the subsistence of the different families. There were also the food crop gardens which had to be looked after, as there was also the need for a regular supply of sago, fire-wood, and other necessities. The attraction of people from other villages to work on the cash crop farm yielded very meagre results, and the help which was secured that way proved to be wholly inadequate. When the time came for harvesting, the pupils from the girls school went out to assist, as the bulk of the output was to be bought by the school. But the enterprise was still left with a considerable quantity of unharvested crops, so, finally, the people who wanted to buy the products, were told to go into the garden and fetch for themselves whatever they required. The products which were not immediately sold, either to the girls school or to private buyers, were bought by the Co-operative Society, so after a considerable

time everything had been sold. But a part of the harvest had to be destroyed as it had already been spoilt.

Difficulties were also encountered with the hiring of equipment from the mechanised farming enterprise. In several cases, the tractors, when needed for the Sarmai-kerang enterprise, were employed on the co-operative farm and could not be spared. Sometimes the weather proved to be unfavourable on days that equipment was to be hired out, and another opportunity had to be waited for. It was not possible any longer to work the farm regularly, and the crop rotation-scheme which had been drafted by the Agricultural Department was soon abandoned to be replaced by haphazard cultivation of crops on those parts of the farm which happened to be available at the moment.

Finally, the equipment of the co-operative farm proved not to be adapted to the cultivation of small tracts of farm-land. The tractors and their accessories were too bulky to work efficiently on land where they had to turn frequently. The relative loss of working-hours was great, and caused a considerable increase of costs.

The cash-crop farm at Sarmai-kerang was still struggling for an existence by the end of 1954, but little hope existed for the chances of its survival.

*Further lines of guidance in relation to the agricultural development of Nimboran, set out in 1954.* In sequence of the discussions which were held in 1953 with regard to the agricultural development of Nimboran, more advanced planning was done in 1954 concerning the introduction of individual cash crop farming in Nimboran.

The following course of action was decided upon:

The further agricultural development of Nimboran was to be undertaken by means of the gradual introduction of individually conducted farming enterprises next to the existing mechanised farming enterprise. Each farm was to be about 12½ acres (5 hectare) in size. A part of the farm was to be used for the cultivation of perennial cash crops, while the remainder was to be used for the cultivation of annual food- and cash crops. The choice of a suitable perennial crop fell on cocoa.

Before individual farming would be introduced on a larger scale, three experimental undertakings were to be established close to the co-operative farm. The mechanical equipment of that farm was to be employed also on these three experimental farms.

The experiment primarily served to throw more light on the approach which would have to be taken when introducing this kind of enterprise on a wider scale. Apart from a satisfactory working-basis for these enterprises, a solution had to be found for the problems which were raised by the traditional rules of land tenure, which conflicted with the need of free land for individual farming. In order to keep open the possibility of further development of individual farming, suitable land was to be reserved for this project as soon as possible.

The mechanised farming enterprise of the Co-operative Society was to be maintained in its present form. Each year 12½ acres of new land were to be reclaimed and added to the enterprise. The head of the Department of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, and Fisheries considered an ultimate

size of 100 acres (40 hectare) most suitable as this would guarantee the most efficient employment of a mechanised farming-unit.

The mechanised farming enterprise of the Co-operative Society was to grow into a nuclear enterprise, around which the individual farms were to be organized. The individual farmers were to lean on the co-operative farm in conducting their enterprise. It was also the intention to introduce on the individually owned farms only those crops which had been proved, on the co-operative farm, to offer the best results.

The element of risk, which would consequently remain high for the co-operative farm, would be considerably reduced for the individually owned farms. In order not to let the Co-operative Society suffer any financial losses due to the change of character of the mechanised farming enterprise from an earning enterprise into the combination of an earning enterprise and that of an agricultural experimental station, all the experiments which were to be taken on the mechanised farm were to be charged to a Government account. The promise was also given that loss of profit which was bound to result from the appropriation of good farm-land for experimental purposes, would be calculated and refunded by the Government to the Co-operative Society.

The individually owned farms would be dependent on the Co-operative Society for the processing of their products (if needed), and for the marketing of their products. The mechanised farming enterprise was to supply the necessary equipment which would be required for the tillage of the land and for the cultivation of crops, while the available equipment for other purposes should also be used for the products of the individual farmers. The trading agency of the Co-operative Society was to look after the marketing of products.

The initial expenses for the individually owned farms were to be paid by the Government. A special fund would be created for this purpose, which was to be paid into the account of the Co-operative Society. The debt, thus created towards the Government, would have to be redeemed gradually by the individual farmers out of the profit for their sold products.

The practical side of these plans was more fully looked into in the beginning of 1955, and a working-plan was drafted for the first year. An area was selected for the purpose, and so were three families which were to be the first to undertake individual farming <sup>1)</sup>.

The financial position of the mechanised farming enterprise was also to be altered. The new arrangement was to mature on January 1st of 1955.

The system of payment of expenses for the co-operative farm out of a Government account would be abandoned, and was to be replaced by a system of granting of credits by the Government to the Co-operative Society. The total of credit to be granted was to equal the difference between the estimated expenses for the coming year, and the bank- and cash-balances of the mechanised farming enterprise on the 31st of December of the preceding year. The debt of the Co-operative Society to

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<sup>1)</sup> As the execution of the individual farms project was started later in the year, no data are available yet, concerning the final set-up.

the Government on the 1st of January 1955, would, therefore, equal the sum of the debt which existed on December 31st of 1954, and the additional credit which was to be supplied by the Government for 1955. Eventually, the total of the additional credit would be reduced to nil, after which repayment of the debt to the Government might be arranged for<sup>1)</sup>.

#### 4. *Communal farming*

A different sector of Nimboran agriculture which was strongly influenced by the economic development of the area was the cultivation of cash crops which had been taken up on the private initiative of the population. A shift from individual cultivation of cash crops to organized communal cash crop farming (*tang* or village) was thereby clearly noticeable. The stimulus towards the undertaking primarily originated with the activities which were unfolded on a higher level. The possibility to sell the products of indigenous agriculture which was thus created, had been the major incentive towards the development of indigenous cash crop farming.

The total surface area of these communal gardens was not large, due to the fact that people had to depend entirely on manual labour. No more than some 25 acres of land were cultivated in that way. Several villages which were closely situated to the main road made a request to the Co-operative Society to put the mechanical equipment of the mechanised farming enterprise also at the disposal of those villages which had undertaken communal cash crop farming. Money was collected for the purpose of hiring a tractor from the co-operative farm. Very often the profit from sold products was used for this purpose. The Co-operative Society supported these undertakings whenever, and wherever, possible.

This tendency to grow cash crops on communal farms held a promise for the future cultivation of cocoa which was likely to develop also into communal enterprise.

#### 5. *The form of organization for the economic developments of Nimboran*

**The Trade Centre.** In a previous paragraph, the establishment of a Trade Centre, comprising a store and a buying-agency for locally produced goods, and aiming at the supply of Nimboran with goods and means to earn money with which to buy these goods, was made mention of.

As an organization the Trade Centre was very small at first. It consisted of one Nimboran clerk, who had been trained in the office of the District Officer. His task was to keep a — very elementary — cashbook and a register of the stock of purchased goods. The sums of money which were handled by the clerk were very small, which was also owing to the fact that only payment in cash was allowed, and that the initial capital was limited.

Another factor which had to be taken into account from the outset,

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1) The debt of the Co-operative Society (m.f.e.) to the Government, on December 31st 1954, amounted to f 47.726,62. The bank- and cash-balances added up to f 24.315,38 while f 27.354,90 was the total of unpaid expenses during 1954. The estimate of the expenses of the mechanised farming enterprise for 1955, amounted to f 45.300,—. Hence, a credit of around f 48.500,— was to be granted by the Government for 1955 (f 27.354,90 — f 24.315,38 + f 45.300,—).



was the ignorance of the Papuan of any form of book-keeping, while the knowledge which the average villager who attended the village school had of reading, writing, and counting, was decidedly insufficient to be used in practical clerical work. This was mostly to be blamed on the little practice people usually had outside school due to the absence of the need to read or write.

Because of the limitation of the transactions of the Trade Centre, a complicated administration proved to be unnecessary and could be avoided. With the growing of trade, transactions became more frequent and of a wider scope. The clerk, therefore, had to adapt himself gradually to the increase of trade. Book-keeping and administration gradually became more complicated, but the fact that the clerk was taught to do all the book-keeping himself right from the start, soon acquainted him with the more intricate details of his work. He grew up, together with the Trade Centre. The actual handling of money, and the practical examples which he had before him, constantly offered a unique means of instruction.

The increase of trade meant an increase of work for the clerk which, after some time, he was no longer able to deal with alone. An assistant had to be appointed. Someone was soon found willing to take this job. The clerk who actually belonged to the staff of the District Officer did not receive additional payment for his work at the Trade Centre. The new employee was the first one to receive regular wages which were paid from the trade-return.

The Trade Centre had now achieved a more independent status, although it could not be called an independent indigenous enterprise yet. The new man was employed as store-keeper, while the clerk was charged with keeping the accounts of both, the store and the purchasing branch, and also saw to the buying and marketing of indigenous products and the purchasing of imported goods which were to be sold in the store.

In November 1952, an annual credit of *f* 5000,— was advanced by the Government. This enabled the Trade Centre to extend its business. A greater variety of goods and a larger stock could be kept in the store. Meanwhile, indigenous industry had also been extended.

Production was on the increase and, consequently, the management of affairs of the Trade Centre became more voluminous. Looking after the buying of products, and at the same time keeping the accounts of the Trade Centre, could no longer be done satisfactorily by one man alone. A third one was selected to take over the product-buying branch of the centre. What had been started as a small enterprise had grown into a body of considerable size which kept three people fully occupied.

**The Co-operative Society.** In the draft for the Nimboran Community Development Project, plans had already been made for the creation of a co-operative society in Nimboran. In October 1952, discussions were started with a number of prominent members of Nimboran society, which aimed at the realization of the plans for the establishment of such a society.

The people proved very eager to have a co-operative society although they did not grasp the full meaning of the proposals which were made to them by the Government. The discussions were faithfully attended by all

the founder-members of the future Co-operative Society, and they did their best to understand all that was explained to them.

The statutes of the Society had to be in accordance with the rules laid down in New Guinea legislature, and it proved to be an almost impossible task to make the founders familiar with all the technical details involved in the drafting of the Articles of Association. The final draft for the statutes was, therefore, made by the District Officer.

Late in October, the Memorandum of Association for the Co-operative Society JAWA DATUM had been completed. The draft was sent to the Supervisory Council for the Nimboran Community Development Project and to the Registrar for the Co-operative Societies. On December 8th it was submitted to a preliminary examination by the Supervisory Council.

A few amendments were proposed, which did not affect the character of the proposed society. On December 20th and 21st, discussions were held in Genjem by the chairman of the Supervisory Council, the Registrar for Co-operative Societies, a financial expert (member of the Supervisory Council), and a representative of the Department of Internal Affairs. A final decision was reached, and the final text of the Memorandum of Association was made.

It was submitted to the founders of the Co-operative Society, and accepted without amendment.

On December 29th, the Memorandum of Association was submitted to the Registrar, after which it was duly entered into the Register of Co-operative Societies.

The Co-operative Society JAWA DATUM was established in accordance with the lines of guidance of the *Regeling Cooperatieve Verenigingen 1949*<sup>1)</sup>.

The Memorandum of Association was drafted in the Malay language<sup>2)</sup>.

The form which was chosen for the Co-operative Society was that of a multiple purpose society which was a combination of a marketing society, a production society, and a consumers society.

Its purposes and set up were defined as follows:

*Object:* The Object of the Society was the promotion of general prosperity in Nimboran, and especially the promotion of the prosperity of its members. In order to achieve this, the Society would:

- a. Provide for a sound financial basis by charging an entrance-fee to new members, the issue of debentures, and the attraction of loans,
- b. establish a mechanised farming enterprise,
- c. buy, grade, and transport products of agriculture and of native industry,
- d. purchase and sell to members and non-members current articles of good quality, weight, and dimensions,

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1) N. I. Staatsblad 1949 No. 179. Regulation concerning indigenous Co-operative Societies, drafted in 1949.

2) Lines of guidance for the establishment of a co-operative society and examples of a Memorandum of Association for different forms of co-operative societies were issued by the Department of Internal Affairs.

The Department was clearly guided by W.K.H. Campbell's "Practical Co-operation in Asia and Africa".

- e. purchase these articles at the lowest price possible,
- f. if needed, hire, purchase, or loan for use, land intended for the erection of buildings which were needed for its enterprises,
- g. erect these buildings or arrange for their construction,
- h. purchase or hire means of transport,
- i. make loans, free of interest, to members on security of the products which were to be delivered,
- j. purchase tools and implements, artificial manure, sowing-seed, and seedlings for the purpose of improving agriculture and local industry,
- k. issue the abovementioned tools and implements etc. to the members on deferred payment terms or on cash payment terms,
- l. arrange for packing materials,
- m. furthermore, arrange all that might prove necessary to promote co-operation in accordance with the abovementioned purposes.

*Membership rules.* Apart from the founder-members, membership was possible only for males and females who were Nimborans, and who resided in Nimboran. Originally an age-limit was decided on (18 years), but at the suggestion of Professor J. H. Boeke of Leiden University, who visited Nimboran in 1954, the members of the Co-operative Society decided to omit the age-limit from the article dealing with membership rules. After that, children could also be admitted, which had the advantage of the possibility of making people familiar with the idea of co-operation from childhood onwards.

People who wanted to become members of the Co-operative Society would have to pay an entrance-fee in advance, which money was not to be refunded after the termination of membership. The entrance-fee, therefore, was something quite different from the shares which are usually found in a co-operative society. The purpose of this arrangement was, in the first place, to guarantee a fixed capital basis which was not subjected to fluctuations, and, therefore, the extent to which the resources of the Society were to be kept in a liquid state, would not have to be increased in order to meet a possible large-scale resignation of membership.

On December 31st 1954, the Co-operative Society counted 358 male members and 459 female members. A total sum of f 4138,— had been received from entrance-fees.

*Debentures.* The Society might attract loans from its members and from Nimboran non-members by way of the issue of debentures of f 5,— each. The interest on debentures was 6%. Debentures might be resold to other Nimborans (members and non-members) only through the Executive Committee of the Society.

The purpose of the issue of debentures was to provide the Society with adequate means to undertake special projects for which capital was consumed (loans for the construction of buildings which could be fully redeemed only after the buildings had been written off) without affecting the working-capital of the Society.

The issue of debentures was bound by a limit, and was only possible after the Registrar had given his consent.

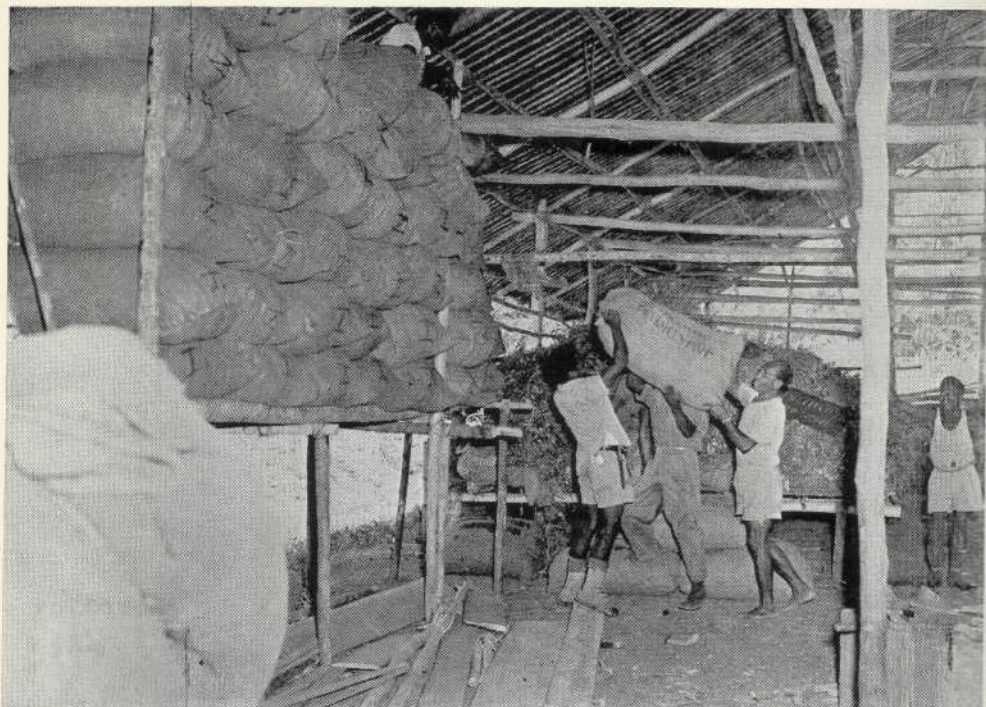


(Photo Government Information Service)

Plate 8. *Women carrying the ground-nuts harvest of the mechanised farming enterprise to the storage shed.*



Plate 9. *Male labour on the mechanised farming enterprise. Sowing corn.*



(Photo Government Information Service)

Plate 10. *The storing of ground-nuts in the main storage shed of the mechanised farming enterprise.*



(Photo Government Information Service)

Plate 11. *The Fordson tractor, purchased with the South Pacific Commission's grant-in-aid, at work on the mechanised farming enterprise.*

The total sum received on debentures amounted to f 2.295,— on December 31st 1954.

*Capital.* The capital of the Society was to consist of:

- a. entrance fees,
- b. debenture loans,
- c. loans and deposits,
- d. undivided profit,
- e. reserve fund.

*Executive Committee.* The Executive Committee of the Co-operative Society consisted of 6 members: a chairman, a secretary-treasurer and four members; or a chairman, a secretary, a treasurer and three members. The Executive Committee was selected by the General Meeting of members for one year, after which a new election was to take place. Committee members were eligible for re-election. The change of Committee should coincide with the close of the accounting period and the submission of the accounts of receipts and expenditure to the General Meeting of members.

The executive powers were vested in the Executive Committee. The routine work and the management of affairs might be entrusted to one or more members of the Executive Committee (i.e. the secretary-treasurer). The Executive Committee was to meet at least once every fortnight.

*General Meeting of members.* The General Meeting of members was the supreme power in the Co-operative Society. The members met at least once a year for the approval of the profit and loss accounts, and the distribution of profit (no later than three months after the close of the accounting period). Meetings might also be called by the Registrar, the chairman, the Executive Committee, or at the request of at least 25 members.

Calls for a General Meeting of members were to be sent no later than one week in advance of the date of the meeting.

A meeting was only statutory valid if at least one third part of the members was present, and also the Registrar, or someone duly authorized by him.

Decisions were to be preferably carried by acclamations, and in case this was not possible, by majority of votes.

In a case of equal votes the decision was left to the chairman. Each member carried one vote.

The decisions of the General Meeting of members were entered into a special register. All members had the right to inspect this register, as well as the other books which were kept by the Society.

*Minutes.* Minutes were made of all the meetings of the Executive Committee and of the General Meeting of members.

*Chairman.* The chairman of the Executive Committee was also chairman of the General Meeting of members. He was the legal representative of the Society.

*Enterprises of the Society.* The Society owned three enterprises:

- a. The store.
- b. The trading agency.
- c. The mechanised farming enterprise.

The executive management of these enterprises and the responsibility for them was to be assigned to a different manager for each enterprise. The manager of an enterprise was appointed by the General Meeting of members after a motion had been made by the Executive Committee that a manager be appointed. The candidates for the position of manager were nominated by the Executive Committee.

The managers of these enterprises, and possible assistants, were paid by the Co-operative Society.

*Participation in profits and reserve fund.* The reserve fund would have reached its limit when it equalled one fourth of the assets of the Society. At least one fourth part of the net operating profit which was made at each accounting period was to be of benefit to the reserve fund. After the reserve fund had reached its limit, the reservations for this fund would be equal to the amount which was needed to cover the deficit.

The part of the profits which was not added to the reserve fund would be used for:

- a. the payment of a share of profits to members,
- b. the payment of interest on debentures which should not exceed 6 %,
- c. the payment of a bonus to those members who, according to the unanimous opinion of the members, had made themselves especially useful to the Society and its members. The size of the bonus was to be in keeping with the scope of that usefulness.

*Issue of tools and implements to members.* In case of issue of tools and implements by the Society to members who needed them for their enterprise, prime cost would be charged. Members of the Society might procure tools and implements through the Society on easy terms.

The organization of the activities of the Society was done in accordance with these rules.

The number of members grew rapidly, and it was not long before almost all the adult Nimborans had joined the Society. Yet, only a few were active members, in fact, only the managers and the employees of the different branches of the Society — all together some twelve men — were fully active all the time. These people were chosen, either because of their special training (tractor drivers, Secretary etc.) or because they were considered best suited for their tasks.

The management of the Society and its enterprises soon grew into an "internal" affair with which only the people directly involved concerned themselves, and to a lesser degree, the Executive Committee. Little practical influence was exerted by the General Meeting of members which did not assemble more often than about once every three or four months.

The lack of interest of the members for the management of their Society, which phenomenon did not escape Professor Boeke, led him to suggest the abolition of the age-limit for membership, while he also suggested that co-operative organization should be taught in the schools in order to make the young familiar with the idea of co-operative organization from childhood onwards.

The new membership arrangement came into effect only shortly before

the termination of the project, and, therefore, nothing can be said here yet about its outcome.

With the establishment of the Co-operative Society, the Trade Centre was incorporated into the Society as two different branches: a store and an agency for the buying and marketing of local products (hereafter referred to as "trading agency"). The accounts of the two separate branches were kept centrally by the administration of the Society. As a third enterprise the farm was also incorporated into the Co-operative Society, although the financial and technical responsibilities — for the time being — stayed with the Government, as the Co-operative Society was not considered capable yet of attending to these matters successfully.

The people who were employed by the Trade Centre and by the mechanised farming enterprise became employees of the Society.

The administrator of the Trade Centre, who was one of the founder members of the Co-operative Society, was elected by the General Meeting of members to become Secretary Treasurer of the Society. To his original task — the keeping of the books for the store and the buying of indigenous products — was now added the administration of the Society.

In Appendix III, a detailed account is given of the management of the Co-operative Society in practice.



## CHAPTER VII

### The promotion of social welfare

The task which the Government had set itself for the improvement of general welfare amongst the Nimboran population included the intensification of the services which may be considered to be a normal Government responsibility, i.e. public health, school instruction, and the like.

Although numerous discussions were held concerning the application of visual education as a means to promote the general development of the Nimboran population, and despite the fact that the need for such education was also stressed in the draft for the project, no effect was given to these plans due to the initial difficulties which made realization of the plans — at least for the time being — impossible.

In the following paragraphs a survey will be given of the activities which were unfolded by the Government with regard to the promotion of public health, and the improvement of indigenous school instruction. Apart from that, attention will also be given to the role which was played by the Co-operative Society in stimulating recreational activities for the population.

#### 1. *Public health*

*General care.* Since 1946, a dispensary of the Department of Public Health had been established in Nimboran, which was supervised by an Ambonese medical assistant. Later, a patrolling assistant and three medical attendants were added to the staff.

At first, patients were only treated on the appointed days for dispensing, while more serious cases were sent to Hollandia. But the distance between Genjem and Hollandia was such a handicap that the need for a local hospital or, at least, sufficient provisions for the admittance of patients for longer periods, became more pressing. In 1950, plans were made for a local clinic, which had to be built by the people themselves. However, these plans were never realized, owing to the lack of co-operation which was displayed by the population. At last, in 1952, the situation became too critical, and the old Government resthouse was made into a temporary clinic. It then became possible to admit people who had to undergo a longer treatment, without being immediately forced to send them to Hollandia, or — what had been the case more often — to send them back to the village. The more serious cases were sent to Hollandia. In the beginning, transportation of patients took at least two days, later, it was possible to manage it within 12 hours.

A plan was drafted for the construction of a properly equipped hospital. The construction was taken in hand in the middle of 1954.

The draft for the new hospital provided accommodation for forty patients (20 men and 20 women) in two wards. Each ward was to have a separate room for the isolation of contagious cases, while adequate sanitary provisions (running water, shower-bath rooms and flush-toilets) were made. Furthermore, there was to be a dispensary, a laboratory, an office, a treatment room, a small examination room, a delivery room, and a wash-room. All of these were to be located in the central building, while a kitchen, a linen-room, a medical store-room, and a laundry were to be located in a separate building.

The whole complex would consist of four buildings, which would be

connected by covered walks. The surface-area of the building would cover 800 square metres. The construction was to be carried out in stone with a roof of sheets of asbestos cement. The hospital was to be built by Nimboran craftsmen and labourers. It was expected that the whole complex would be finished in 1956, while a part of the building was to be taken into use around June 1955.

A Government physician was to be stationed in Genjem by the time a part of the hospital would be ready and more intensive medical treatment had become possible.

Table 4 gives a review of the medical assistance which was given in the dispensary in 1953-1954.

TABLE 4 MEDICAL ASSISTANCE 1953-1954

	Polyclinic		Admission	
	number of consultations	number of nursing days	number of patients	number of nursing days
<b>1953</b>				
January	615	1519	85	808
February	603	1440	106	962
March	720	1461	102	840
April	588	1321	57	763
May	584	1233	50	520
June	638	1288	54	480
July	614	1473	53	474
August	538	1350	53	612
September	677	1731	52	515
October	616	1454	60	584
November	598	1577	39	448
December	576	1474	33	391
<b>Total</b>	<b>7367</b>	<b>17321</b>	<b>744</b>	<b>7397</b>
<b>1954</b>				
January	737	2061	58	591
February	628	1910	77	846
March	549	1848	65	753
April	531	1567	54	664
May	711	2047	83	699
June	558	1460	60	562
July	521	1292	38	448
August	581	1552	35	423
September	577	1444	31	358
October	601	1690	32	231
November	553	1661	34	241
December	566	1468	39	417
<b>Total</b>	<b>7113</b>	<b>20000</b>	<b>606</b>	<b>6233</b>

The decrease in the number of patients admitted in 1954, was due, on the one hand, to the fact that cases were more readily sent to Hollandia (different policy of nurses in charge), and on the other hand, to the fact that limited accommodation facilities forced the medical assistant to send more cases back to the village to be treated on the appointed policlinic days. The increased number of nursing days for the policlinic also points in that direction.

*Care for mother and child.* In April 1953, a qualified nurse (also midwife) was stationed at Genjem, to promote better care for infants and expecting mothers. A consultation centre for pregnant women and for babies was established. The object of this consultation centre was to try to decrease the infant mortality rate by means of practical control of infant welfare and ante-natal care, and also by propagating better care for infants and children in the villages.

In addition to this consultation centre, the nurse organized a course for mothers. Those who were interested could attend this course. The course aimed at the instruction of Nimboran women in elementary knowledge about pregnancy and infant welfare.

The interest of the people was mainly for the infant consultation centre, and although not all babies had been registered by the centre, the number of infants which actually was brought for examination, was highly satisfactory. A remarkable feature was, that the women of the closest villages were not the most frequent visitors of the consultation centre. Apart from those villages which were at a great travelling distance from Genjem, visits were paid regularly by women from almost all of the villages in Nimboran. At times, an increase of visits from one special village was noticeable, which, after a time, would be reduced to normal again.

The interest of women for the maternity-course remained limited. In most cases, the women who were attracted to it, already showed an interest in improving conditions of infant welfare previous to the starting of the course.

Least interest was shown yet in ante-natal care. Only the wives of the more sophisticated Nimborans were likely to submit themselves to an examination by the nurse, but often they did not appear regularly after a first examination, and only in exceptional cases did they call for the nurse at the time of confinement. In cases where an aberration was feared, the expectant mother sometimes proved more willing to have herself examined by the nurse. In serious cases, the woman was then sent to Hollandia.

No coercion whatsoever was used with the introduction of the consultation centre. People were left as free to come as they pleased. The nurse paid regular visits to the different villages, and looked up all the women who had children. Confidence in her good intentions grew and women began to appear more frequently and in larger numbers at the consultation centre each week (see also figures table 5).

In cases where additional nutrition was needed for infants, the formulas were prepared at the clinic and taken home to the village without charge. As in most cases the women were not able to pay in any case, the free issue of additional nutrition to some infants was made a general rule. The consultation centre had been established on a practical and rational basis.

The population figures (Appendix I) do not suggest that an improvement had set in, due to the promotion of infant welfare and ante-natal care. However, if one observes the number of deaths amongst infants who visited the con-

sultation-centre regularly, a different view is presented: This figure is exceptionally low. Of all the infants that were registered at the consultation centre and were subjected to regular examinations, only six died, or about 4 %. The general death-rate amongst infants, according to table 16 Appendix I, was 17 %, which is considerably higher.

A review of the visits to the consultation centre is given in table 5:

TABLE 5 ACTIVITIES OF THE CONSULTATION CENTRE 1953-1954

	number of days the c.c. was open	Admission	
		number of consultations	number of patients
<b>1953</b>			
April	2	22	—
May	4	47	9
June	4	55	13
July	4	70	27
August	4	115	43
September	4	130	52
October	5	215	65
November	4	203	79
December	3	163	91
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>1023</b>	
<b>1954</b>			
January	5	273	106
February	4	237	115
March	2	126	118
April	—	—	—
May	2	92	61
June	2	140	94
July	5	133	71
August	4	201	97
September	4	225	95
October	5	225	117
November	3	176	92
December	3	166	98
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>1994</b>	

The only infants who were admitted to the consultation centre were those from birth to 1 year of age. A comparison with the population figures of table 10 (pp. 204-205) shows that a large part of the infants was actually brought to the clinic for examination. The decrease in consultations from March until July 1954 was caused by the departure of the first nurse in March, while her successor, who was frequently ill, was not always able to attend to her work. In August 1954, she was replaced by a new nurse.

The irregular opening of the consultation centre was also the cause of the decrease in consultations in July 1954 (133, despite the fact that the consultation centre was open 5 times).

The consultation centre was only intended for the very young children. Consequently, insufficient attention was given to older children. This, of course, does not imply that no attention was given to these children at all, but only that it was not possible to give them the attention which was due to them.

In the first place, it is hardly possible to make all the smaller children visit a clinic or consultation centre regularly. But apart from that, the care for such children who have already been weaned <sup>1)</sup> is of a different nature altogether, and, therefore, requires quite different provisions to be made. An occasional visit to a village is not sufficient to make the nurse familiar with the shortcomings of the indigenous system of bringing up children. She has to be present in the village much more frequently to be able to attempt a more careful preparation of food of sufficient nutritional value, improvement of hygienic conditions, and the like. It is a task of such an immense scope, that one nurse alone would not be able to deal with it.

The Department of Public Health was one of the first to acknowledge the need for provisions in this field, and for some time had been contemplating possible solutions for this difficulty. An attempt was made towards a solution, by instructing girls to become so-called village-welfare workers. Graduates of the girls school were considered the most suitable for this kind of work. It was the intention to station these girls in the different villages after they had successfully finished their preliminary training. Two of such girls were meant to be stationed in Nimboran as village-welfare workers. At the end of 1954, they had not yet finished their training.

Apart from these activities, which were of immediate interest for the local population, Nimboran was also selected by the Department of Public Health as a suitable area for the conducting of more general experiments. Within the scope of general application of new methods for curing and preventing framboesia (yaws), and of malaria control, several of such experiments were conducted during the course of 1953-1954.

*The fight against framboesia.* In 1954, a Government physician was entrusted with the development of a programme for the systematic fight against yaws in Netherlands New Guinea. Use was to be made of a new preparation which was expected to yield very favourable results. An experimental area was needed, in order to be able to draft a programme for a large-scale fight against the disease.

The physician selected Nimboran for this purpose because of three reasons:

In the first place, Nimboran constituted an ideal unit for such an experiment. Secondly, the fact that, due to the Nimboran Development Project, increased activity had been displayed in the area for a while, which drew increased attention to the area, was a good reason to conduct the experiment in Nimboran. Finally, Nimboran was about the only area of which a detailed population registration existed, which was to be of considerable advantage to the physician in charge.

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<sup>1)</sup> In Nimboran weaning usually takes place at a much later age than with us.

A beginning with the campaign was made in December 1954, which lasted three weeks. The population co-operated willingly to make the experiment a success.

The initial results of this first experiment were expected to become known some time later in 1955.

*Malaria control.* The sub-department for Malaria Control of the Department of Public Health has been conducting an anti-malaria experiment in the villages on Lake Sentani for a considerable time. By spraying the walls of the dwellings on the inside with a D.D.T. solution it was expected that the spreading of malaria by infected mosquitoes could be prevented.

Originally, the possibility had been considered to conduct the experiment in Nimboran because of the same reasons as were given above. However, the distance from Hollandia, and the fact that spraying had to be done frequently, to which should be added the fact that the experiment demanded intensive and frequent checks to be made by the staff of the sub-department of Malaria Control, finally caused Sentani to be selected as the experimental area. Nimboran was then made one of the main areas of comparison, and intensive surveys of the occurrence of malaria in Nimboran were made. The conclusion was drawn that Nimboran was a highly infected area.

The outcome of the experiment on Lake Sentani proved to be very satisfactory, and plans were made for the general introduction of the method which had been developed in Sentani. Nimboran was to be one of the first areas to profit by this new method of malaria control. The first steps were to be taken about the middle of 1955.

## 2. *School instruction*

The drafting of a programme for the better adaptation of village school instruction to the actual needs of the population, which had been planned in the early stages of the project, met with too many practical difficulties to be seriously attempted. The main source of difficulty was the lack of sufficient, and sufficiently qualified, teachers, due to the changed conditions in New Guinea 1).

For Nimboran the question arose, whether the development project was sufficient cause for a deviation from the accepted system of school instruction, and whether an anticipation of the universal introduction of more advanced methods, which were in preparation, was justified. An argument which was in favour of an exception to be made in the case of Nimboran, was the fact that school instruction is an integrating part of social-economic development of the people. Moreover, the Nimboran project was a pilot project, and intended to explore new possibilities.

However, this would mean that for six — later seven — village schools, a modified and better adapted curriculum had to be drafted. It would also mean that the qualifications of the teaching profession of Nimboran had to be

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1) Previous to 1949, many non-Papuan teachers worked in New Guinea. Since the transfer of sovereignty, New Guinea was left to its own resources and an increased effort was made to train a sufficient number of teachers. The demand for new schools and more teachers grew more persistent, but less of the Papuan boys who were being educated in the Mission schools for advanced education, showed ambition to become school teachers, preferring other vocations.

judged anew and, possibly, that additional teachers would have to be appointed in the different schools.

In view of the difficulties with which the Educational Department was confronted, it was not to be expected that steps would soon be taken.

However, in May 1954, the Director of the Department of Cultural Affairs decided that an experiment was to be made. A fourth form was to be established in the village school of Genjem Besar.

A meeting was held in Genjem, which was attended by the District Officer, the Missionary, and the members of the Executive Committee of the Co-operative Society. A preliminary curriculum for the fourth form of the village school was drafted.

Its primary purpose was to be the adaptation of the knowledge gained in the village school to every day village life. In addition to that, the pupils were to be interested in the possibility of taking up a trade after having returned to the village (carpenter, basketmaker, seamstress etc.). The curriculum for the fourth form offered an opportunity for the pupils to choose from several possibilities, either of which would offer a chance of taking up a trade or other activity in the village after leaving school. Thus it was hoped that the young people — by having found a well defined purpose to live for — would become more settled members of their community, and thus add to the ultimately desired stabilization of indigenous society.

The fourth form of the village school in Genjem was established on September 1st 1954. A provisional class-room had been built by the population. Owing to the lack of educational equipment it was not possible to launch the whole curriculum immediately, but gradually improvement set in. The time of existence of the fourth form has been too short yet to judge of its practical value.

Apart from the village schools, mention has been made several times of the existence of a continuation school for girls in Nimboran.

To this school were admitted graduates of the village schools in the whole of north-eastern Netherlands New Guinea.

Although this school was very often mentioned in connection with the Nimboran Community Development Project, it had no immediate function in the programme for local development. Moreover, the majority of the pupils was drawn from schools outside Nimboran, and not even 10 % of its pupils were Nimboran girls. The curriculum of the school did not differ from the normal curriculum for such schools. Most of the Nimboran girls proved not to be able to keep up with their classes <sup>1)</sup>.

The curriculum did not aim, in the first place, at preparing the pupils for village life, but rather for yet more advanced instruction, and for vocational training (nurses, chemists, teachers etc.).

Nimboran did indeed also offer a few future opportunities for girls in the sphere of social care for the population (orphanage, nurses for the hospital which was under construction, infant welfare), for which vocations the graduates of the continuation school seemed to be most suitable, but a greater need was felt for a curriculum which prepared the pupils for life in the village.

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<sup>1)</sup> The cause of the Nimboran girls dropping behind has not been satisfactorily explained yet. A similar phenomenon was observed for the Nimboran boys in the continuation school at Joka (Hollandia).

### 3. *The role of the Co-operative Society*

In order to stimulate social intercourse in Nimboran society, the Co-operative Society undertook the organization of several activities for the recreation of the people, and, with the aid of the District Officer, drafted a few plans which aimed at an increase of mutual interest between the individual members of Nimboran society.

The stimulation of mutual interest between the individuals and increased social intercourse within Nimboran society were considered urgently needed in view of the growing tendency towards disintegration of indigenous society. By the growth of mutual contact it was hoped that a better sense of responsibility would develop, and an urge towards social reform would show itself as a result of the re-awakening of the people's interest in their own society.

The organization of activities for the recreation of the people by the Co-operative Society, though not always successful, contributed considerably to bringing the people closer together again.

Several out-door festivities were organized which led to the revival of old *kabi* usages. These festivities were mostly given to celebrate special occurrences like the Queen's birthday, the yearly commemoration of the establishment of the Co-operative Society, the arrival of new mechanical equipment for the farm (the second tractor and the rice-huller), harvest feasts etc.

Apart from these feasts, recreation evenings were organized at which stage performances, community singing, musical performances and a refreshment bar were usually the main attractions. The stage-plays which were enacted were of a various nature. Most common were old Nimboran myths and tales, but very often own interpretations of recent happenings were made into a play<sup>1)</sup>. The Nimboran language was used, and afterwards an interpretation was usually given in Malay for the benefit of those who did not understand Nimboran.

Apart from these festivities and recreation evenings, the Co-operative Society also organized other activities, like out-door and in-door games, choir-singing, and musical gatherings.

The most popular out-door games were association football and volley-ball. An attempt was made at establishing a sports-association of the Co-operative Society, but up to now these attempts have failed because of the lack of organizing talents. The Co-operative Society planned to engage the teacher of the fourth form of the village school in Genjem for the establishment of a football-club. But before more definite steps were to be taken in that direction,

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<sup>1)</sup> One play deserves special mention. It was conceived by a Nimboran truckdriver who had just returned from Hollandia after a prolonged absence from his native village. The play dealt with the last war, and the way in which the allied powers conceded to combine their forces in order to defeat the common enemy. The play was full of contrasts, and gave evidence of serious reflection on the past events by the "playwriter". The spectator was led from very solemn conferences of Prime-Ministers to the most bloody battles imaginable, and finally back to the conference room again where the Prime Ministers assembled in a final session to settle the debts which had arisen due to the war and the assistance which the allied nations had given each other.

Although the driver had not grasped all the implications of the war and had made some peculiar mistakes, he had shown by his play that he had been reflecting on the war (which he had only witnessed as a spectator) and its repercussions on human relations, and that he had formed himself a — not altogether unlikely — picture of its course. The experiences which the driver had outside his native area have had an unmistakable effect on the play.



the new play-grounds which had been planned for Genjem, were to be ready. A choir was established which gave some excellent performances, but after the departure of the teacher (of the continuation school for girls) who organized the choir, choir-practice was no longer held.

Of these recreational activities, the feasts and some of the stage performances brought a revival of old usages in Nimboran. However, they never were more than a rendering of how it used to be.

The people went to great trouble preparing their multicoloured and elaborate adornments, and many weeks before the feast or performance, the men and women would start practising the old dances. The old men usually were the ones who taught the young people the intricate dance-steps, which lessons would be accompanied by the taunting of the young with their inability to perform them properly. A profusion of food would be prepared by the women, which was to be consumed by all who came to the feast.

Although there was no *jao*, and although there was no longer communication with the world of the ancestors at such feasts, the mere pleasure which one derived from dancing and flaunting the beautiful array of flowers, feathers, and birds of paradise before a multitude of spectators, and the profusion of good food which one could consume on such an occasion — all of which was done in grand style and according to the traditional pattern of behaviour on such occasions — afforded the Nimborans much satisfaction. The Mission — at first a little doubtful about the outcome of the revival of indigenous feasts, for it might tend to a revival also of the beliefs with which these feasts were associated — soon realized that its fears were unfounded, and that the several *kabi* which were given went no further than an exhibition of the splendor of the traditional feasts. That the people had broken with their old taboos, and did not attach the same value any longer to their traditional convictions, was clearly shown when during one of these feasts the sacred water-flutes *imo* were blown in the open, and in the presence of many women, by two elderly men.

The feasts became a popular means of diversion from daily routine, and they helped to increase the efforts of the Nimborans to improve conditions in the area. They gave colour to life in general, and stimulated another form of mutual contact between the people besides the contact which was afforded by working on larger projects.

Yet, more possibilities were seen for the improvement of social intercourse in Nimboran, and for the stimulation of a feeling of co-responsibility for the welfare of society.

Several plans were drafted to that purpose by the Co-operative Society in close co-operation with the District Officer, like the promotion of welfare for the young people, the stimulation of interest of the parents for their children and their progress in school, the creation of a fund for the further education of children, the creation of a policlinic fund, the introduction of collective insurances against fire, crop damage etc. (the Co-operative Society could act as an intermediary for this purpose), care for orphans and old people etc.

However, none of these plans had been realized yet by the end of 1954. The time had been too short for that, and besides, the Society was still too much preoccupied with its task of managing the different enterprises to be able to take up many additional responsibilities yet.

## PART IV

### *Some changes in Nimboran society under the influence of the development project*

#### CHAPTER VIII

##### The attitude of the Nimboran population towards the project

In the final part of this study we will try to analyse some aspects of the changes in Nimboran society which have been due to the development project.

The plans which were made by the Government in relation to the development of Nimboran and which — as we have seen — dated from as early as 1947, demanded a number of preliminary surveys of the area, which did not pass unnoticed by the population.

The beginning of the construction of a new road to Genjem in 1947, the experimental farm in Besum, and the survey by Ir de Haan in 1949, are only a few examples of the Government activities in Nimboran previous to the project.

Naturally, the gist of the plans which the Government had related to the population, and, therefore, the final introduction of the Pilot Project did not come as a surprise.

On the contrary, the people themselves had already formed an opinion about it all.

Before proceeding to a discussion of the project's influence on the different sections of indigenous life, attention will, therefore, be given to the attitude which the population adopted towards the project in general, and how this attitude changed during the course of the project.

The Nimborans, having been used for almost three decades to the guidance of Administration and Mission, and having gradually become less inclined to take initiative into their own hands, received the news about the plans which the Government had made in regard to Nimboran with much reserve. They were eager to see conditions changed in their own surroundings, but they did not show themselves much inclined to take the initiative in undertaking new things. Yet, it was not only the fact that indigenous initiative had begun to decrease owing to non-indigenous influence over society, which caused this apparent lack of enthusiasm of the people during the initial stages of the project. In order to get an insight into the causes of this attitude of the Nimborans, we should look more closely into the outlook upon life which had been formed during the years of contact with non-Papuan culture previous to 1951.

An outstanding feature of changing Nimboran society has been the *kasiap* movement, and it may be that the motives which led to that movement will supply an answer to our question, for the *kasiap*-movements gave expression to the deeply seated motives for the amelioration of conditions, and to the way this might possibly be achieved.

From the first time that the Nimborans were confronted with Western culture onwards, there had grown a desire to partake in the advantages of Western civilization. It has been discussed how the people ascribed the advantages which our civilization has over Papuan culture to a secret

knowledge over which they had no command, and which — once the Europeans were willing to share their knowledge with them — would enable them to become as happy and prosperous as the white people are considered to be. It has been shown how in traditional Nimboran culture the dead (or disappeared) ancestors were considered to have power over strong medicine which caused profitable hunting and successful warfare. The *kabi* was a major event at which the living people and the dead were united, and from which people returned with favourable prospects for hunting and warfare, and fertile gardens.

The confrontation with the material advantages of the Western world caused the Nimborans to ascribe yet more power to their ancestors, for, what the white man brought to New Guinea, surely must also be known to their ancestors. They went even further, and decided that what the white people brought, they had acquired from these ancestors.

Many modifications of old myths were heard; some telling about the conflict between the two brothers, leading to the younger one separating from his elder brother, taking good things with him, and leaving for the country which is now the native soil of the white people.

The white people were the descendants of this younger brother, and what they had, rightfully belonged to the descendants of the elder brother.

The white man was considered to be in league with the ancestral (under) world, and if he showed himself unwilling to release the secret, then — may be — they might mollify their ancestors to surrender their riches also to the Nimborans.

The coming of a European Administrative Officer, and the news that Nimboran had been selected as the site of a project for community development, were readily interpreted as the coming of the long awaited time of general prosperity.

One may even suspect the two *kasiép*-movements of 1951—1952, to be an expression of the expectation that very soon the ancestors would release their secrets. It is even highly probable that the European Administrative Officer was considered by many to have had contact with the ancestors.

He undoubtedly had a function in the whole idea of *kasiép*. It was not purely accident that Dr van Baal (then head of the Bureau of Native Affairs) and the *contrôleur* were directed towards the house which had been built for *Kasiép* on the burial grounds of Imeno in 1951, previous to the coming of the Administrative Officer. Later, developments in neighbouring Gressie, confirmed the opinion that the idea of community development was somehow associated with the *kasiép* motive (see pp. 192 etc.).

The *kasiép*-movement of 1954 (p. 77), was an indication that sentiments in Gressie and Nimboran moved parallel to each other and — as in the latter instance — at times might find expression in a general movement.

This means, that the development project for Nimboran was understood by the majority of the population in a way which is very different from our concept of development, and it may easily be understood that the attitude of the people was often at odds with the commonly advanced ideas of how a community development project should be introduced, and the part which the population is supposed to play.

However, there were also a number of Nimborans who — mostly due to a wider experience and a closer contact with non-Papuan culture — had broken

with their old beliefs. These proved to be the most likely to show a great effort in undertaking new things. These people were also most likely to come into conflict with the other Nimborans. Having become convinced that the old concepts of their own people were but superstition and not based on true knowledge, it was only a short step to condemn everyone who appealed to traditional institutions or old beliefs, when being confronted with the changing conditions, and finally condemning everything that was — even remotely — connected with traditional culture.

These people became true revolutionaries in their own society, and although they contributed considerably to breaking through the apathy of the Nimboran, their attitude was also dangerous as it threatened to lead not only to conflict between different people, but also to conflict between traditional institutions and a completely different concept of life, which might mean the destruction of even the last remnants of harmony and community spirit. Guidance was urgently needed, and careful consideration before introducing new ideas became essential.

The revolutionary attitude often was less constructive than it tended to be destructive. This was mainly due to the minority which was formed by those adhering to the idea that everything which was connected with traditional culture was condemnable, and to the strong opposition with which they were confronted <sup>1)</sup>.

Yet, these people were the first ones to show initiative when the project was launched, and gradually more people followed their example and began to take part in the different activities.

Another factor which influenced the attitude which the Nimborans took towards the development project was their distrust of the good intentions of the Government. They pictured the Government mostly as an authority which had come to Nimboran to make certain that the people behaved themselves. They also knew from former experience that the Government did undertake things to improve the people's lives, to promote their health, and to improve their agriculture, but these were all secondary matters as compared to (former) statute labour, tax levying, labour conscription in war time, and the appointment of *koranos*; arrangements, which affected Nimboran society to the depths of its being. The sudden interest, therefore, which the Administration showed for Nimboran could not be easily explained from former experience. The people, therefore, reserved their opinion, and awaited the things which were to come. On the other hand, there was the urgent need for money and goods, and once the people grasped the meaning of newly introduced ideas, they did not wait long to make an attempt at it themselves.

<sup>1)</sup> One should make a distinction between the attitude of these people and the negativistic attitude of the younger generation in general, as described in a previous chapter. The few people who are under discussion had an outspoken idea of how the contemporary Nimboran should behave. Often these people were driven by religious zeal, like for instance a man from Kaitemo who threw a valuable drum, said to be the first one stolen from the Nimbonton people, into a fire which was caused by a burning house, declaring that everything connected with traditional culture should be destroyed, since people were supposed to be Christians now, having broken with their heathen beliefs. The attitude of the younger generation as a whole was different. They did not condemn old institutions in the conviction that those were wrong, but mostly because they had no use for them and more often considered them an obstacle to their freedom. But these people were always ready to appeal to traditional customs when accused of unchristian behaviour (in the case of marriage), and often were the first ones to join a *kastep*-movement.

The Nimboran was also sufficiently a man of enterprise to try his skill at new possibilities which he did understand. But he was also easily discouraged by reverses, and he then tended to relapse into an attitude of inactivity and increased distrust as long as he found no satisfactory explanation for his failure.

We may state, therefore, in general, that from the outset the attitude of the Nimboran towards the Nimboran project, which was characterised by a lack of initiative and sometimes inactivity, was conditioned by three major factors:

1. The suppression of own initiative, owing to the influence of Administration and Mission, which placed a ban on several old institutions, thus making the proper functioning of others impossible or pointless, while all the initiative to introduce new things was usually taken by the Administration and Mission.

2. The expectation, expressed in the *kasiep*-movement, that a release from the poor and unsatisfactory conditions of life, and the coming of prosperity for all, could only be attained with the co-operation of the ancestors. Initiative was to come from the world of the dead, and the part which was to be played by the living people was only limited to preparations for the great event.

3. The lack of faith which the people had in the intentions of the Government, and their ignorance of the meaning of the proposed arrangements for the benefit of their society.

However, all this did not prevent the people from gradually becoming active in many ways. The spirit of enterprise and the desire for material gain were too strong for that. Only, the Nimboran was not yet aware of the connection which existed between the activities of the individual Nimboran and the possibilities of developing Nimboran society as a whole. He had adapted himself too much to individual gain, and too little to the need of co-ordinated and collective effort to help society regain its feet. He was as little awake to the fact that he would also personally benefit more by combining his effort with that of others.

So, despite the initial attitude of waiting which was typical of the average Nimboran, after some time a change was noticeable from inactivity to active participation in the things which were undertaken. Encouragement by the District Officer, and the fact that some of the more active Nimborans had embarked upon different kinds of enterprise, gradually moved others, who wanted to earn money too, to partake in indigenous enterprise. Women were also seen to take a more active part in different kinds of work which kept them supplied with cash.

There was more keen interest for work in indigenous enterprise than for work for the Government. The mechanised farming enterprise, although it was initially seen as a Government undertaking, did also rouse the interest of the people, because it was something new, and the idea of mechanised farming was especially attractive to the agriculturally minded Nimboran 1).

1) One should not underestimate the value which is generally attached by the Papuan to modern machinery. To him it is the key to progress, witnessed by the superiority of the modern world. Especially the second World War has brought the Nimborans in close contact with the technical perfections of our time, and it has convinced the people that who has the disposal of such things as machines and factories holds power and wealth (The Japanese were defeated by a technically superior army and the commodities which were sold in the stores were factory made), and may live in luxury. The expectation in the different *kasiep*-movements, of factories to rise up, and unlimited quantities of money to purchase machinery with (pp. 77, 192) are a clear indication of the people's expectations in this respect.



Plate 12. *The Secretary Treasurer of the Co-operative Society Jawa Datum: checking the accounts.*



Plate 13. *Members of the Co-operative Society assemble for a General Meeting in the church (school) of Genjem.*



Plate 14. The arrival of the District Officer's jeep in Nimooran, September 1952.

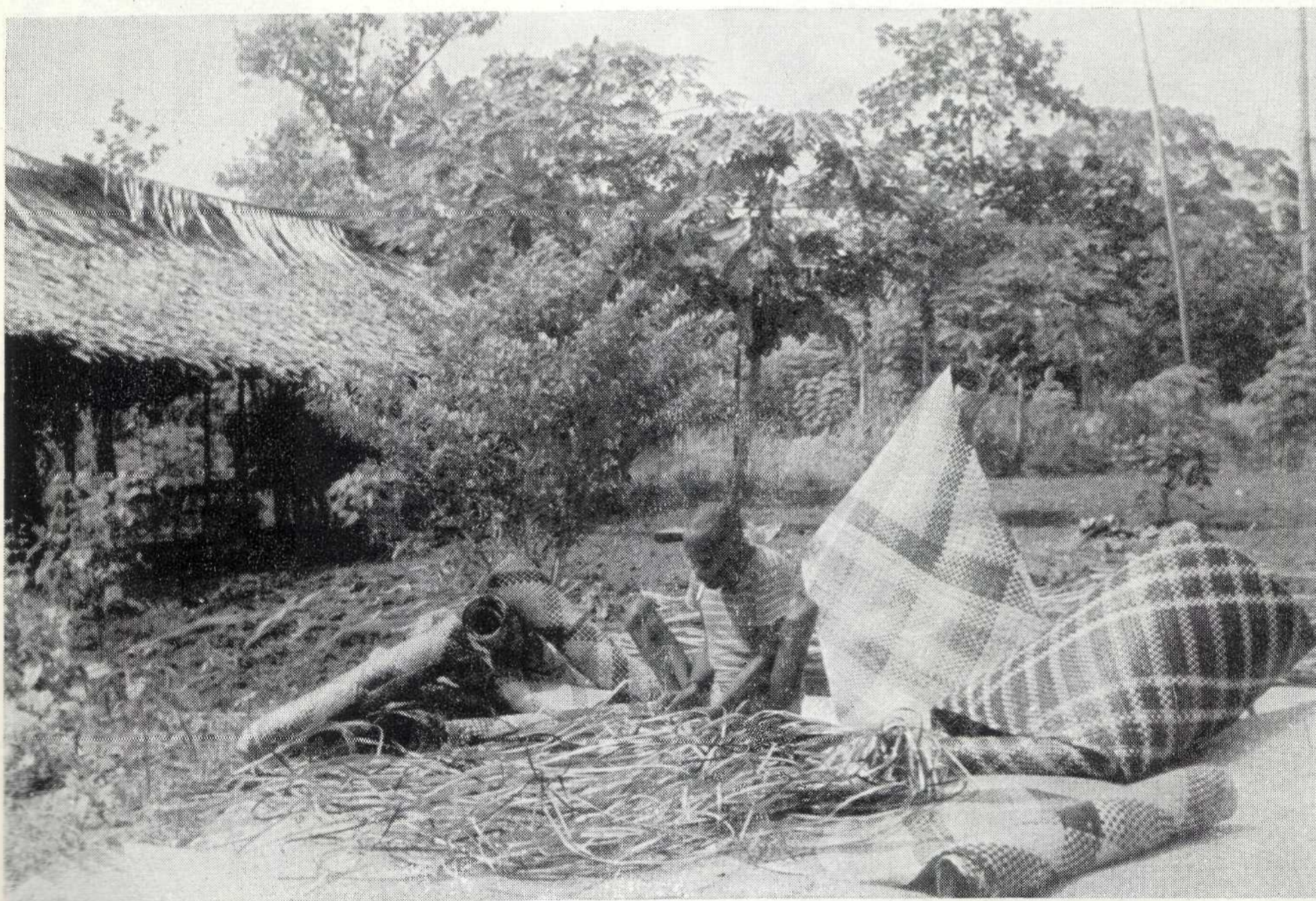


Plate 15. Ciaunus Jewi, a victim of infantile paralysis, found a means of earning money in mat-plaiting.

The labour supply for the farm, therefore, was very satisfactory at first. We should understand, however, that the increasing willingness to take part in these enterprises did not result from an urge to do constructive work or from consciousness of having to make an effort together with others in order to develop their native area. The attractive features of indigenous enterprise, which moved the people to exert themselves, were mainly the possibilities of earning money in the indigenous sphere, which was something quite new to them. Furthermore, they were then less likely to be employed by the Administration for work on the road (the first people, liable to be appealed to by the Administration, were those who were not employed in indigenous enterprise). The people working in private undertakings considered themselves privileged, and in fact they were, because they were left to their own resources and could decide for themselves when and where they should work. The ones working for the Government were bound by time-schedules, and worked under close supervision of a Government appointed overseer. Even the relatively better wages which were received in Government employment did not immediately lead to increased seeking of employment with the Government.

After a while, the novelty of indigenous enterprise wore off. In addition to that, the Government made more frequent and stronger appeals to the population to work on the road, which — owing to increased production and increased needs in Genjem — was more frequently used, and demanded ever increasing attention.

Indigenous enterprise, although it kept offering the special satisfaction of making the people feel independent, yielded too little cash income to be able to satisfy the people fully, and gradually more people were employed on the Government projects.

The *kasiep*-movement, which had subsided after the beginning of 1952, was not forgotten, and people took much interest in what was happening in Gressie in 1953. The idea, that the development of Nimboran was somehow connected with *kasiep*, persisted, and, in 1954, led to the new movement.

Yet, no signs were seen of the people's expectations coming true. They were encouraged to work more and — although a noticeable improvement of material conditions had set in — people were not fully satisfied. The results of the people's efforts were different from what they had expected. For them — it seemed — the rate of change was too slow and demanded unusual sacrifices of time and effort.

Interest for the development of their own society began to diminish. The Nimboran people in Hollandia had a much easier time according to the people at home, and in many ways they were considered to be better off. The

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The use of machines in indigenous enterprise, and also by the Government to carry the goods from Borowai to Genjem and vice versa, therefore, was the realization of a wish of long standing: from now on, the people would also have the disposal of their own machines. At last they would be made to share in the advantages of the modern world. That tremendous importance was attached to the fact that machines had come to Nimboran is also illustrated by a seemingly unimportant incident which happened some time later. An old jeep of the District Officer, which had been the first one ever to cross the Grime river and arrive in Nimboran, was sent to Hollandia to be salvaged. When the people heard of this, a request was made to the Administration to claim the vehicle back in order to have it put in a special place which was to be erected for the purpose, and where it was to remain for ever as "a token of the progress which had come to Nimboran". The tractor was to join the jeep when the time for it had arrived to be salvaged.



unfulfilled promise, that soon the Government would employ mechanical equipment to build a good road, and the increased employment of Nimborans on road construction, finally turned the scales, and people began to desert work on the road and left for Hollandia. Yet, their number remained low, and owing to the return of some others to Nimboran, the balance of migration remained stationary. But all the same, the tendency to turn one's back on Nimboran was there. The situation had become unstabilized again, and not much was needed to upset the balance, causing people to loose interest and move to Hollandia.

This situation had grown more pronounced in 1954, and different measures were taken by the District Officer to restore the people's faith in the development of their society. Yet, it was not easy to find a satisfactory solution. Most essential was the providing of a satisfactory arrangement for wage-labour, while indigenous enterprise was given increased attention. As was stated in a previous chapter (p. 112), the lack of expert guidance prevented the full development of village industry, keeping production limited, and prices low. Clearly, the initial stimulus had worked itself out. Doubt had again replaced interest in matters. A deadlock had been reached, and new stimuli were essential to keep things going. The people still had too little understanding of what was expected of them. They never understood that their efforts today, which were an essential part of the general endeavour to develop Nimboran, aimed at a gradual improvement of economic and social conditions, which would only give full satisfaction in the — yet far removed — future.

For them the future remained unknown, even the future possibilities which the actual project had in stock never were a reality. They lived in the world of today and had no real interest for what tomorrow would bring. They never felt compelled to think in terms of the future; they did not understand it, and they had no comparative examples which would make them conversant with the many possible results of their undertakings.

This attitude of the Nimboran (which is not surprising to those who are conversant with the mental attitude of the Papuans) was a thing which should be reckoned with.

We are used to think in terms of the future, even the very distant future, and in our society it is common practice to make an effort in order to satisfy future needs, even if these efforts now mean a sacrifice. But when we abstract the future satisfaction of needs from the effort of today, the sacrifice has no meaning, is absolutely useless. Thus it is with the Papuan whom one tries to advance. He will be found willing to sacrifice, even eager to make an effort, as long as the satisfaction of needs for which the sacrifice is made, is close at hand and can be fully grasped. The Nimboran, having been confronted during three years with a project of development, has contributed his effort — not because he knew that ultimately this would lead to a better Nimboran to live in — but because he found that by making an effort, he would find satisfaction of different needs, of which money and goods were the most important ones, but also non-material needs, like a satisfactory social position, increased skill etc. He did not worry himself about the future, partly because he was not immediately concerned with it, but partly also because deep within himself the old beliefs which supplied an answer to many questions were still alive.

But then it is also understandable that when the effort which was demanded of the Nimboran exceeded that which was required for the satisfaction of his

needs for the present, even though it did conform with our idea of working for future needs, it was taken no longer as a voluntary contribution to the development of his society, but rather as coercion by either the leading authorities (Administration, Co-operative Society) or the force of circumstances.

The attitude of the people in Nimboran was also apparent in those Nimborans who had left their native area in search of more attractive living conditions. That part of the Nimboran population which had found employment in Hollandia previous to the introduction of the development project, showed a keen interest in the happenings at home, but they showed no inclination to go back. The factors, determining the attitude of the Nimborans towards the project, as discussed above, together with the individualistic approach which the Nimboran tended to take towards progress, did not favour a sudden, large-scale return of people from Hollandia to Nimboran. Those who had already secured a job in Hollandia found too little reason to change their life in town for a — yet uncertain — future in their village. The others adopted the same attitude of passively awaiting events which their fellows had adopted in Nimboran, and as they had sufficient opportunity of finding individual employment in Hollandia, there was no immediate cause for their return to Nimboran either.

However, the interest for what was to come was sufficiently strong to keep people in Nimboran — at least for a while — from leaving for Hollandia. A check was, therefore, recorded on migrations to Hollandia. The situation remained more or less stationary during all the three years that the project was under way.

## CHAPTER IX

### The changing aspect of Nimboran society

The influence of the Nimboran Project on the situation in Nimboran society as it was described in the foregoing, has in some respects caused a noticeable change of conditions. In this chapter we will make a survey of a few aspects of the changes in indigenous living due to the project, while attention will also be drawn to the tendencies towards further change which became evident while the project proceeded.

In part III of this book a survey was given of the approach by the Government towards the development of indigenous society. We may here stress the fact that — apart from the numerous ways in which the Government interfered with indigenous living — the mere arrival of the District Officer and his staff did not fail to leave its mark on society, while the sudden increase of money traffic, which was for a large part due to the large scale employment of labour for Government construction projects, also contributed a great deal to a change of conditions.

#### 1. *The transformation of Genjem into a centre of regional activity*

The assignment of a European Administrative Officer to Genjem in view of the proposed development of Nimboran, and the subsequent changes in the administrative provisions for the area, next to the increase of activities due to the project, have had great influence on the mutual relations within the new *Onderafdeling* which was created.

One of the first measures which was taken by the Administration, was the reorganization of the area of the new *Onderafdeling* in order to make the administrative subdivision conform with the major purpose of the stay of a *controleur* in Genjem, i.e. the launching of a Community Development Project.

Nimboran became a separate District, which was headed by a Papuan *Bestuurs-Assistent*, who also resided in Genjem and worked under close supervision of the District Officer. Kamtuk and Gressie, which formerly formed one District together with Nimboran, became one separate District with its own B. A.

The preliminary survey of Nimboran, which was requested by the South Pacific Commission, demanded all the attention of the District Officer soon after his arrival in Genjem, and kept him occupied for a considerable time. Numerous and extensive inquiries were made into conditions in Nimboran. Traditional institutions which had for a long time left the Administration little concerned, and for which interest — so the people thought — was completely lacking, were frequently and widely discussed; a complete registration was made of the population, including the life-history of each family that lived in Nimboran.

The sudden increase of interest which the Government showed in Nimboran, and which was yet to continue for several years, was only a prelude to the far-reaching changes which Nimboran society was to undergo. In contrast with the course of events in Nimboran, the neighbouring peoples were not immediately affected by the administrative reorganization, apart from the fact that their *Bestuurs Assistent* was no longer residing in Genjem, but

now lived in one of their own villages. However, they were soon to notice some difference too, for the Administration did not wait long before embarking upon a programme of large scale recruiting of indigenous labour for the construction of the road to Nimboran.

The estrangement between Nimboran and the surrounding peoples, especially Gressie and Kamtuk, which had already set in previous to 1951, due to the settling of Administration and Mission in Genjem, was given a new and strong stimulus which soon manifested itself in an increased competitive — if not antagonistic — attitude between Nimboran and its neighbours.

The division of the original District-centre into two separate offices, one for Nimboran and one for Kamtuk and Gressie, must have been a clear indication for the population that each was destined to go a different way.

Genjem, although it was the centre of Administration for the whole *Onderafdeling*, came to the fore as a centre of activities for the community development project.

Apart from that, the establishment of the girls school in Genjem, and the ensuing care for the pupils, the construction of classrooms, dormitories, a house for the teachers, and the like demanded most of the attention of the Missionary. Therefore, in this case also the focus of attention had shifted in favour of Genjem.

Later, in 1953, the Nimboran Co-operative Society was established, and Genjem was selected as its head-quarters.

The presence of the Co-operative centre in Genjem was favourable for the growing of a close contact between the Society representing purely indigenous interests, the Administration representing the Government, and the Mission representing the Church. The co-operation between those three was of special benefit to Nimboran, and whereas their attention was in the first place focussed on Nimboran, Genjem became yet more of a centre of that specific area than it had previously been. This was especially stressed by the growing in Genjem of a market for indigenous products, the establishment of a co-operative store, and the recreation activities and festivities which were all held in Genjem.

There were also other factors which were inducive for a growing of the estrangement between Nimboran and the neighbouring peoples. Highest priority had been given by the Government to the completion of the road from Lake Sentani to Genjem. Much attention was, therefore, also paid to this project by the Administration, and a connection was soon established. Although the road led through several Kamtuk villages, it was evident to the population that it served primarily to connect Genjem with Hollandia. The increasing traffic along the road was mostly headed for Genjem, and although the villages which were close to the road did not fail to take advantage of this fact by transporting their products to Borowai or Genjem whenever possible, they felt that they derived less immediate benefit from the road than did Nimboran where it ended, and which usually was the destination of the incoming goods.

The road also brought Hollandia closer to Genjem, but not so much yet that it facilitated the increase of contact between the two centres. Travelling between Genjem and Hollandia remained a troublesome undertaking, taking nearly a whole day, and necessitating the change from a motor-vehicle to the ferry, and then to another vehicle again. Moreover, the number of vehicles in Genjem was limited, and many had to walk to Borowai if they wanted to travel

to Hollandia. But, where formerly nearly everybody who travelled between Hollandia and Genjem spent a night in one of the Kamtuk villages (Mamda, later Meikari), now people usually passed through these villages without interrupting their journey<sup>1</sup>).

Thus the increase of non-indigenous influence in Nimboran, and the growth of direct contact between Genjem and Hollandia, due to the presence of a European Administrative Officer in Genjem, the growing trade of the Co-operative Society with Hollandia, and the improved connections, which facilitated an increase of the supply of imported commodities to Genjem, caused stronger ties to grow between Genjem and Hollandia. Apart from that, the better connections between Genjem and Hollandia made the people travelling between the two centres less dependent on those living by the road. These factors, together with the creation of a new administrative centre for Kamtuk and Gressie, led to a growing estrangement between Genjem and the non-Nimboran people living in the *Onderafdeling*.

Nimboran, being the focus of interest of those residing in Genjem, was drawn along in the process of general estrangement between Nimboran with Genjem as its centre, and the surrounding peoples. Yet, the breach could not be complete, as Genjem remained also the centre of administration of the *Onderafdeling*, and the increased importance of Genjem as trade centre did not fail to stimulate production in the surrounding areas, while increased money income, due to the labour which was performed for the Government, led to its being spent in the store in Genjem. Thus in some respects, contact did increase between Genjem and the surrounding area, but this contact was of quite a different nature.

Despite the increasing importance of Genjem as a regional centre, it remained sparsely populated. Genjem, although it became of growing importance for Nimboran, did not become a large settlement. Apart from the carpenter's workshop and the few people who were concerned with the enterprises of the Co-operative Society, no increased settlement of Nimborans in, or close to, Genjem took place. Demographically the situation in Nimboran remained unchanged.

Despite the greater attractiveness of Genjem, due to increased trade, recreation activities, and festivities, it never did appeal to the people as a place to live in like Hollandia did. The location of Genjem, in the heart of Nimboran, was convenient for the Nimboran, and in daytime numerous people were usually seen in Genjem, some selling their merchandise, or buying at the store, others working on different construction-projects, or performing other tasks, and some just loitering and gossiping with others who had drifted to Genjem, or were waiting to receive their wages. But after sunset the place would be deserted, everybody having gone home to the village; even those who had found permanent employment in Genjem.

Genjem remained primarily a providing centre for Nimboran. In some respects it still was the alien enclave which it had been from the beginning, but

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<sup>1</sup>) The airfield which was still under construction in 1954 is bound to lead to a decrease of traffic along the road and subsequently to a further decrease of contact with the Kamtuk villages, especially when no measures are taken to make an all-weather road of it, and bulk consignments will also have to be freighted by air. The higher cost of air transport may put a check to the change from road-traffic to air-traffic, unless special rates are going to be charged.

in other respects it had become a part of Nimboran with which the people could no longer dispense. Genjem had grown from a purely administrative centre into a regional centre, no longer only exercising authority over the area, but also providing for the needs of the — predominantly agricultural — surrounding population. A mutual relationship had grown between Genjem and Nimboran, which had not previously existed.

Genjem had a function in the whole context of Nimboran effort towards emancipation. Through the Co-operative Society and the regional market, which had its centre in Genjem, the Nimboran population asserted itself in the nucleus of regional activity, necessitating those who carried authority to take notice and arrange matters to conform with the changing situation.

Genjem had changed — and still was changing — together with Nimboran society, and had come closer to the population in the process. We do not know whether it will grow into a rural nucleus altogether. There were indications which pointed to a different development, like the tendency towards decentralization which showed especially in the economic sphere.

The Nimboran-village was still the main dwelling place of the people, and although cash crop farming was growing in importance and kept people more and more occupied, there was no indication yet of the forming of homesteads which were scattered through the area, even though from of old the Nimboran family has favoured an independent existence in the garden. In cases where the family had laid out a large garden where it spent most of its time, the village with its church and school, and its function of central place of gathering bound the families more strongly than Genjem had been able to do. The village, although it had lost much of its meaning, was still more important for the people than Genjem. It is not surprising, therefore, that — after the Co-operative store in Genjem had become firmly established, and a more or less continuous supply of goods was guaranteed — requests were made for the establishment of branch-stores in the different villages. The endeavour to establish a separate Co-operative Society altogether in the village of Imeno at the end of 1954, is also an indication of a tendency towards decentralization which became apparent during the later stages of the Nimboran project, although in this case there was more to it than only the urge to arrange matters in such a way that it would be more convenient for the people. The establishment of village workshops, and of eating-houses in two villages (see Appendix II) may also be seen as an indication that the village had not altogether lost its value, and that Genjem rated second as a community centre.

Genjem was still marked as an alien centre, superimposed upon Nimboran society, and its main value lay in the fact that it contributed greatly to the forming of ties between the different groups which together constituted Nimboran society. The situation of Genjem, in the heart of Nimboran, proved to be a favourable factor for the development of Genjem into a regional nucleus, as it was no great distance to travel for any of the Nimborans from their village to Genjem. However, it was to be expected that if the economic development of Nimboran was to proceed on the same scale, and more products of the population were to be marketed more frequently, even the relatively short distance between the periphery villages and Genjem would become a real obstacle, as the people would have to limit production in order to be able to carry all their products to Genjem.

It was in view of this consideration that steps were taken to provide for sufficient means of transportation within the area.

In the beginning of 1955, a truck was purchased by the Government, which the Co-operative Society hoped to take over within a few months. The villages between Imsetum on the Nimbu river and Genjem, improved the old track (constructed under statute labour in 1929) between these two places in order to make it serviceable for light motor traffic. No payment was demanded for this work. The people considered it an urgent necessity, and resolved to take it into their own hands to provide a usable connection.

Reviewing the situation in Nimboran as it presented itself at the end of 1954, we may come to the following conclusion:

Nimboran had removed itself still further from its neighbours, and had begun to lead a different and more independent existence. Genjem, the former administrative centre of the area, had in some respects become estranged from the surrounding non-Nimboran peoples over which formerly it also had direct authoritative influence as a District centre, while now it exercised authority more indirectly through the new District centre in Meikari. On the other hand, Genjem became more closely interrelated with Nimboran, of which it became the nucleus of development activities.

The Nimborans considered Genjem the centre of their activities, which stimulated their efforts, and to which they could turn in order to find satisfaction of their need for guidance, procurement of goods, and for the marketing of their products.

The Nimboran village had acquired increased significance due to the fact that the people found an increased need for collective (village-) enterprise in order to be able to produce better and more. The condition of connections in Nimboran, together with the need for increased production, proved to be a decisive factor for the further development of the village. It was very likely, that with improved connections between Genjem and the surrounding Nimboran villages, the latter would grow into different nuclei of activity with Genjem as the main centre, where contact between the different villages would take place through the Co-operative Society, where they would sell their products, procure the necessary goods, and receive guidance in technical matters.

## *2. The economic activities of the Nimborans and their influence on the relations between the sexes.*

We have seen how in traditional Nimboran the main area of activity was agriculture, and that it has remained the same also through the years of contact with Western culture. It has also been described how — due to changing conditions — the man gradually had less to do while the task of the woman remained the same. Relatively, her task had become more cumbersome. Then, after the war, many young men began to move to Hollandia looking for new possibilities, and the women had still to do more work. To provide for the family became more difficult due to the absence of too many men. New gardens were less frequently made, sago less regularly collected. An increased effort was demanded from the women, and also from the men who stayed behind, but people were not able to maintain the former level of subsistence.

The development project again changed the situation. In addition to the effort which was demanded of the people for their own subsistence, stress was

now laid also on other necessities, part of which were of interest to society, and part of which were purely Government interests. The people were encouraged to make a greater effort. All the men were almost continuously employed, while many women were also encouraged to contribute to the effort.

Next to the traditional economic activities which aimed in the first place at the procurement of sufficient food for the family, a new feature had been added: the earning of money. Although the people were sufficiently acquainted with the possibility of earning cash, the scale on which they were now offered a chance to gain access to more money to buy with, was so large that it could not fail to affect the population.

It was the need for money which made the people accept employment outside the family sphere in the first place. Next to that, cash crops were cultivated on an increasing scale, the products of which were sold at the Co-operative Society.

A typical feature of the increased activities aiming at cash-earnings was, that it existed next to and independent of subsistence farming. This was an interesting development, and worth some further elucidation.

We may distinguish between two means of earning cash: the employment by the Government and by indigenous enterprise (mainly wage labour), and the development of private activities in order to earn money (mostly cash crop farming and, in some cases, cottage-industry).

It soon became evident that people were more inclined to work in indigenous enterprise than for the Government, for in the latter case they would be subjected to a discipline which was not appreciated. Not because people were lazy, as is often thought, but because of the different pace, and the completely different atmosphere under which work had to be carried out. The Papuan does not mind work, and he can keep on at a task with back-breaking energy as long as he feels content with the work. He abhors monotony in work, especially when the work itself gives him no immediate satisfaction. He dislikes, even more, to work at the command of others, and under supervision of an overseer. Work on projects like the road, and even the mechanised farming enterprise, was, therefore, far less attractive than working in indigenous enterprises, where people could set their own pace and were not subjected to strict discipline. Working in indigenous enterprises gave satisfaction to the people. It was work they liked and wanted to do, and which allowed a large degree of freedom to the participants to decide how, and how often, they would work. The other work was different. The people were given a specific kind of work to do; they had to keep at it, whether they wanted to or not, during a fixed time. They were not free in choosing the time at which work would start, and neither were they free to leave work to do something else. As long as they worked for the Government, they hardly had any opportunity to see to their gardens, or to go out hunting when they felt like it.

The major differences between work in the indigenous sphere, and work for the Government and the mechanised farming enterprise were, freedom to arrange work to one's own liking, and the possibility to attend to other matters as soon as they cropped up in the indigenous sphere, against continuity of a task once it had been taken up, and supervision in the Government sphere.

It is logical, therefore, that regular supervised wage labour had no attraction but the fact that one was certain of his wages which would be received at the close of the month. It was this last feature which made people willing to work



for the Government, but without gentle persuasion by the Government, only a few would have made the effort.

Such a situation may be considered not to be conducive to the economic development of an area in such a way that the population would take an active part in the general national economy, for then it becomes essential that the Papuan turns from pure subsistence economy to market-economy. He has to produce regularly, and in sufficient quantity. He has also to work regularly, and with sufficient zest. The limitation of possibilities of production, caused by climatic and soil conditions, the limited skill of the Papuan, his relatively inferior labour efficiency, and the low density of population makes uniformity of production in a relatively small area like Nimboran unavoidable, although it may seem less attractive to the population.

That the Nimboran failed to adapt his traditional (subsistence) economy to the changing situation is also clearly shown by the fact that he still made a sharp distinction between his food-providing activities — which were continued according to the traditional pattern — and production for a market which brought him into economic contact with a much larger world. The food crop garden remained fully in the traditional sphere. The cash crop garden was a different thing altogether. It was most interesting to see a perfect planting of ground-nuts and green peas, for instance, laid out according to the rules of modern farming, bordering a typical Nimboran garden where a jumble of crops was met with. One might even find ground-nuts growing in the food crop garden, but then they were hardly ever planted in neat rows but rather in small clusters, scattered through the garden according to the traditional gardening pattern.

Another expression of the division which the Nimboran made between providing for his own living and partaking in more general economic activities was to be found in the working hours. All indigenous enterprises and even the communal cash crop gardens usually were deserted in the afternoon. People worked in the morning, preferably until 2 p.m., and then left, either to remain idle for the rest of the day or to occupy themselves with small tasks close to their home. The working hours were copied from the Government. But when people worked in their own gardens, they usually were busy from early dawn until sunset, never bothering about the time.

The Nimboran, in some respects, was living in two different worlds: the world of his own, which was determined by tradition, and the new world, which he was eager to be a part of. He had not been able yet to combine the two and make them one; a world in which old, but still respected values exist in harmony with new values.

As long as no synthesis has been reached between the two worlds, and the Nimboran holds on to the traditional way of providing for his family, all additional economic effort is an extra burden which may soon become too heavy to carry. The Nimboran might then become a frustrated man, not being able to find peace and security in his own surroundings. He will live next door to failure and disillusionment, out of which situation no other escape seems to exist but to try his luck in Hollandia.

The changing economic situation has also affected the relations between the two sexes. We have seen that from of old these relations have not been wholly void of, at least, outward antagonism. The division of tasks between

men and women was carried sufficiently far to give cause for this antagonistic attitude. We have also seen that when the men became more idle, due to changing conditions, the women had cause for increased opposition, which was further stimulated when young males left for Hollandia, and thus robbed the women of even the little assistance on which they still depended.

The increased employment of men in many kinds of strenuous labour, due to the increase of activities in Nimboran, was a source of much delight for the women. This was proved many a time at General Meetings of the Co-operative Society, when the difficulties of procuring sufficient labour for special projects were discussed. Very often the women, unanimously, and with secret malicious pleasure, decided that a certain project should be undertaken by the men. The reaction of the male members upon such outbursts of female venom directed at them, usually was an attitude of subdued indignation. They clearly were not able to stand up to such large-scale onslaughts by the opposite sex. But mostly they did what was demanded of them.

On the other hand, the women did not relapse into an attitude of increased idleness. On the contrary, they became even more active than they had originally been. Despite the increased effort which they had to make to sustain the family, they took up many additional activities in order to earn some cash. We will see later, how female labour exceeded male labour in the mechanised farming enterprise (see table 9 p. 189). The communal gardens also employed far more women than men. The main reason of this increased activity was that it made them less dependent of the men in acquiring money to purchase things they wanted for themselves.

The Co-operative Society, which through the General Meeting of members offered an ideal opportunity for the women to give vent to the grievances which they felt as one sex against the other, and the opportunity to come by money independent of the male members of the family, caused a decided change of relations between the two sexes, which was undoubtedly in favour of the women. One should not think, however, that this caused the men to begrudge the women this advantage. Apart from the occasional discomfort which they experienced at General Meetings, when they were attacked by their female opponents, and which attacks they usually took in good grace, they often showed themselves even pleased that the women took such an interest in matters, and in many cases praised the women for it.

The fact that the women were actively engaged in many of the new activities, while the men were also more occupied, definitely led to an improvement of the relations between the two sexes in general. That antagonism between the two sexes was more of a kind-hearted nature than hostile, may also be proved from the fact that in several enterprises and in many activities, active co-operation between members of the opposite sex remained possible.

In the family sphere, of course, there remained sufficient occasion for disagreement to occur between the man and the woman, sometimes leading to open conflict and maltreatment. However, the impression was not gained that these disagreements occurred more frequently than had been the case formerly.

### 3. *The mutual relations within Nimboran society*

In traditional Nimboran culture the mutual relations between the different members of society were decided by numerous obligations which were created between the different families and *tangs*. Marriage, *kabi*, warfare, and to a

lesser degree, collective fire-hunts were the major occasions at which these relations became evident. In its daily life the family formed a relatively isolated unit.

We have seen that since the arrival of non-indigenous authority in Nimboran, old ties were gradually disintegrating, which process was later strongly stimulated by the possibility to leave Nimboran and seek new opportunities in Hollandia.

The question is now whether the development project has aided in relieving the tensions which grew within Nimboran society, and whether it has been able to counteract the tendencies of disintegration which have been observed.

Attention has already been given to changes which were gradually becoming more evident in the relations between the different groups which together formed Nimboran society, while the attitude of the Nimboran towards the project has been elucidated in a general way. We have yet to find out whether the mutual relations between the individual Nimborans and their attitude towards their own society have also changed due to the project. As a major cause for the tensions which began to grow between the people and their environment, and between the individuals amongst themselves, has been given the disintegration of traditional authority in its widest sense. The authority of the old chiefs, the authority of custom and of the older generation were all gradually dissolving, causing an atmosphere of antagonism to exist where formerly the people recognized the existing institutions, tolerated each other because they depended on each other, and lived in harmony and in the realization of a historically developed common fate and a common destination.

Has the development project been able to contribute to the retrieval of lost solidarity?

As things stood, the answer should be in the negative, simply because the time has been too short to justify the expectation of such a result. We cannot expect the recovery of indigenous society to happen in only a few years.

A new generation, which had grown to adulthood in the tempestuous years of first contact with the new culture, was now assuming control in Nimboran, and they could not be expected to cast aside their doubts and prejudices overnight.

It was even more probable that they would never fully get rid of their present attitude, and would only adjust themselves under the force of circumstances; and even that would take time and unrelenting patience from the side of the Government. Not before the people have succeeded to create in Nimboran a society which functions according to principles of co-operation and solidarity, even if these principles are partly of an artificial nature and not only resulting from the conviction that things are as they should be, will the atmosphere be favourable to infuse into the younger generation which is growing up in that society, sufficient understanding for the advantages of such a society.

They will feel more at home in it than their elders do, and probably they will also be able to make it something of their own, giving life to society rather than being mere passive members, once they have grown into adulthood.

The project has been mainly concerned with activities which did not bear immediately on the problem of the Nimboran having become more or less a displaced person in his own society. Yet, the activities helped to set a purpose for those who lived in Nimboran; a purpose which gave them in the first

place a better chance to provide for their material needs, but which also would keep them occupied, and possibly, might bring them to change their view on life in their own society.

There were some indications which pointed to a favourable turn of events. The communal gardens and the increased interest in collective economic effort, even though it had as yet been limited to the village-sphere only, were an indication that things were improving. It seems that the tension between the family and the village, in some respects, was slackening. Another indication of this was the growing consciousness of the need of true authority in the village. More grumbling was heard about people who did not do as others in their village did, while some reproached their *korano* for not keeping the people at their tasks. There definitely was a growing interest for the problem of indigenous authority. A clear symptom of this was the fact that gradually a tendency was growing to turn to the Executive Committee of the Co-operative Society for support or advice in matters which were not even remotely connected with its actual task. In such cases the Co-operative Society — or to be more precise, the Executive Committee — was seen as a form of indigenous authority to which people could turn in the event of difficulties having arisen.

This growing consciousness of the need of indigenous authority was not surprising. When it became clearer to the population that, due to the emigration of many young men to Hollandia, they had been robbed of a considerable part of their man-power, which threatened to endanger the success of the project, and that nowhere in indigenous society there existed an authority which could effectively call on the departed people to return to the village, or even keep others from going, they began to realize the necessity of some form of authority to help them out of their predicament. Apart from that, the managers of indigenous enterprises also began to feel the lack of some form of regular authority in the villages. They discovered that they could not fully count on their "employees" to appear for work regularly. The inclination of the Nimboran to do as he pleased, and hardly ever having to account for his behaviour to others, began to tell also on indigenous enterprise.

The first — most logical — reaction of the population after this fact had begun to dawn upon them, was to turn to the Administration for help. The Administration was expected to arrange things and make certain that people who left the village were punished, and they would compel the people who had agreed to work in an enterprise to stand by their obligations. However, it was soon proved to them that such was not the case. In some instances the people then turned to the Co-operative Society for help, which it tried to give by acting as an arbitrator in conflicts between employer and employees. Yet, the power of the Society was limited and it was almost entirely helpless against the migrations to Hollandia.

The people then tried to effect the reinstallation of their traditional chiefs, the *érams*, to their former positions of authority. With the assistance of the Administration the *érams* and *dekenings* were called upon to avail themselves of this task. This attempt also failed. With the exception of a few, all the *érams* and *dekenings* did not feel competent anymore to exercise authority in the village. The reasons are quite obvious:

In the first place the *éram*-function in traditional Nimboran society has not been such that the carrying of sole authority in the village — or over the

*tang* — was now to be considered in accordance with their traditional function. Apart from that they had lost so much prestige already that it could hardly be expected of them to carry real authority again. And in the third place the *évams* and *dekenings* — whose *raison d'être* lay in the past, and who kept appealing to the past in order to enjoy at least some respect — were often viewed by the younger generation as being obsolete ornaments of the *tang*.

There seemed to be no other way than to find an altogether new form of indigenous authority, which would be able to cope with the difficulties mentioned above.

However, such was a matter which had to be decided by the Government, which was the supreme authority. Although lengthy discussions were held about the different possibilities, and the merits and demerits of several solutions were carefully weighed, no decision had been made yet by the end of 1954. Locally, preference was given to the creation of village councils for each village or group of villages, and a district-council covering all of those.

We do not know for certain whether the mere introduction of a properly functioning authority in the village would contribute to a relief of the tensions which have been mentioned.

The tension between the generations would not be solved by the establishment of authority over the *tang*. But it is very likely that once there was an authoritative body which concerned itself with internal conflicts within the group, controversies might become less acute, and reconciliation become possible. It is undoubtedly also true that relations between the generations would never be the same as in traditional Nimboran society, but it is not unlikely that the antagonistic attitude which existed between the two would wear off. This could only be possible if a new atmosphere of mutual respect and confidence was created, and if people recognized the authority which had been established over society for their own good, and to which they could entrust their difficulties in order to have them satisfactorily solved. It is very likely that the breach which came between the generations that witnessed the coming of Administration and Mission, and the next generation which grew up in an emotional time of conflicting interests, will never be fully repaired. But if the two opposed parties can be made to meet each other in a council where they are compelled to take notice of each other's views and interests, the result may be the growing of an atmosphere which is less charged with conflicting emotions, and which would be far more favourable for the generation which is growing into adulthood.

#### 4. *Collective effort in the economic sphere*

Although we cannot say that the community development project, as such, has actually improved conditions in Nimboran, there were unmistakable indications that a reorientation was taking place which held promises for the future.

In the economic sphere a few tendencies towards more collaboration and collective effort had become evident, although they were as yet limited to the village sphere, and hardly affected Nimboran society as a whole.

However, the mere presence of the Co-operative Society, the mechanised farming enterprise, and the like gave rise to a sense of unity which — although it was latent, and did not result in overt action yet — might develop into a new form of solidarity.

We have seen that in traditional Nimborean society collective economic effort was scarce and only limited to special occasions. The individual families sustained themselves without the co-operation or support of others. This system persisted also at the time of the development project.

Urged by the Administration, and under its close supervision, communal village gardens had been laid out at times previous to 1951, but they seldom lasted long, and were abandoned because of the lack of co-operation by the villagers. Partly this has been due to the minimum returns which were received for the sale of products, as no regular market did exist. The crops, cultivated in these gardens, were seldom of a kind usually consumed by the population, and, therefore, when they proved to be unmarketable, the cultivation was abandoned.

When the development project was launched, the people showed no ambition for collective enterprise either. The undertakings which were established were organized differently; most commonly the relation of employer-employed was met with. Some of the enterprises were a village affair, with only people of one village participating. Others employed people from a number of villages. The most heterogenous group of employees was that of the pit-sawing enterprise. For a while even people of Gressie were employed by the saw-mill. However, when it came to dividing the tasks, parties were usually formed of people of the same village, or closely related villages. There was an evident preference for working with people with whom one had a close relationship.

At first, a similar situation was met with in the agrarian sector: cash crops, which were grown in increasing abundance, were most commonly cultivated by the Nimboreans individually, often close to, or even in the village, but hardly ever in the actual garden. It was only at a later stage, after people had become familiar with large-scale cultivation of cash crops through the Co-operative farming enterprise, and had learned to appreciate the fact that the Co-operative Society bought any amount of marketable products, that more interest was shown for large-scale cash crop cultivation in the village.

Once the people had begun to see its advantages, collective cultivation of cash crops was spontaneously taken up, and soon became a common feature in Nimborean. But the people were not satisfied yet. They had also learned to appreciate the value of mechanical equipment, and more frequent requests were made to the Co-operative Society to put its machines at the disposal of the villages. A request, which was not easy to comply with as the equipment was intensively used on the Co-operative farm.

The people had begun to see possibilities in collective effort in combination with the application of machines in order to increase production. However, this new fancy which was taken towards collective effort remained limited to the village. The difficulties which were met with in the mechanised farming enterprise were an indication that matters did not proceed so smoothly once the people had to work outside their daily surroundings, and to work close together with others from different villages. It was not that the people disliked each other, or were distrustful, but rather that they were not inclined to set aside their self esteem by working under the supervision of a Nimborean from another village. A slight tendency towards antagonism between the people of different villages was noticeable, which was not conducive to the efficiency of their work. Where it seemed possible to induce into the people a spirit of

collectivism when the interest of one *tang* and sometimes of one village were concerned, attempts to induce a similar spirit in the interest of the whole of Nimboran mostly failed. The interests of *tang* or village always prevailed over the interests of Nimboran as a whole. Work on the mechanised farming enterprise was never undertaken spontaneously and without gentle urging by the leaders of the Co-operative Society and the Administration. The manager of the farming enterprise (who was also the chairman of the Co-operative Society), who himself was well aware of the necessity of co-ordinated and co-operative effort on the part of the whole population in order to achieve progress for all, often could not restrain himself, and gave the people tongue-lashings if they threatened to obstruct work because of their antagonistic attitude. Also at General Meetings of the Society he reproached the people with lack of co-operative spirit in none too gentle terms. He was respected by the population, but people also felt a secret aversion towards his severe criticism of their attitude.

Yet, his voice carried weight, and he gained considerable influence in Nimboran. But he was not liked, and once he was even attacked by someone of his own village after he had tried the man too far with his reproaches. After that incident, Johannes — the man in question — grew even more unbending in his attitude towards the people. Respect for him also increased, because people admired a man who dared his adversaries, even when his life was threatened. However, it was to be doubted whether he would be kept on as a chairman of the Society, for he intruded too much upon the sanctity of the private life of the people which they were reluctant to change. The retaining of his function as a chairman depended on whether this aversion which the people had towards him would conquer the respect which was felt for him later.

In contemporary Nimboran the people seemed to be not very much inclined to favour collective effort outside their own village or *tang*. However, the fact that — on the other hand — they felt strongly connected with other Nimborans, tended to ensure that they did not shy from collective effort occasionally, and as long as it did not encroach upon their individual independency.

This attitude of the people did not make it easier to achieve a satisfactory execution of the project, especially since the labour situation proved to give rise to new problems. The establishment of the nuclear farming enterprise called for increased effort by the population, even though machines were used. The form chosen was decided upon because of several reasons. One of these reasons was of an economic nature (a guarantee of sufficient labour because the enterprise could now draw people from all over Nimboran), but another major consideration was that such an enterprise might stimulate latent collective sentiments, and thus promote a higher degree of solidarity in Nimboran society and collective effort in general. In some ways the farm did indeed contribute to an increase of solidarity and to the awakening of interest for the new forms of collective enterprise. However, it had not quite succeeded yet.

Next to the farming enterprise, a similar function was intended by the Government for the Co-operative Society. The "co-operative approach" towards the development in Nimboran had been chosen because it was hoped that it would be conducive to the growth of new ties which would help the people to regain the solidarity which had been lost during the years of contact with non-indigenous culture, be it that this new solidarity would be based on new principles which were different from the traditional ones.

## CHAPTER X

### Co-operative organization as an approach towards the development of Nimboran society <sup>1)</sup>

Before discussing the implications of a co-operative approach towards the development of Nimboran society, more should be said about co-operative organization as it is familiar to us, in relation to Nimboran society.

Strictly speaking, a co-operative society aims at promoting the material interests of its members. Co-operative organization had already grown to considerable proportions in non-Western countries before the last war. Also in the Netherlands East Indies, indigenous co-operation was actively organized. A regulation was drafted in 1927 (*Regeling Cooperatieve Verenigingen*), which was later slightly amended (1949) <sup>2)</sup>.

As the Regulations which were in force in the former Netherlands East Indies remained in force in Netherlands New Guinea, unless they were expressly declared to have no effect any longer, or were replaced by a new Regulation, the R.C.V. 1949 remained effective for Netherlands New Guinea.

The R.C.V. 1949 was drafted primarily for the purpose of "encouraging and strengthening the own economic organization of the indigenous population" of the Netherlands East Indies <sup>3)</sup>. The object of these Regulations, therefore, was, in the first place, the encouragement of indigenous enterprise (it should rid itself of the domination by non-indigenous intermediary trade, which domination often was accepted out of sheer indolence) and, secondly, the strengthening of activities already undertaken, but which needed additional adequate organization. The Legislature expressly stated that the given rules deviated from customary law (*adat law*) as no connection was possible.

In New Guinea, however, the situation was slightly different and has always been different. Apart from the few larger non-indigenous settlements, non-indigenous intermediary trade was almost non-existent. This was fully the case in Nimboran. Moreover, the economic organization of Nimboran (family subsistence) did not have any need for intermediary trade. Economic activities practically had their beginning and their end within the area. There was no indigenous enterprise in Nimboran which needed additional organization, and — in this respect most important of all— money traffic in Nimboran was almost entirely lacking. Rather than speak of indigenous economic enterprise which needed support and organization, we should say that a vacuum existed in Nimboran.

When we see co-operative organization primarily as a means of encouraging and developing already existing economic enterprise based on money traffic, then it would be of little value to Nimboran which had yet to take its first steps onto the road of money traffic.

However, co-operative organization may also be used as a means to acquaint the people with more modern forms of economic enterprise. But then it should

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1) The words co-operation, co-operative, etc. will be repeatedly used in this chapter. In the context of the following discussion, the words should be understood especially to signify the form of economic organization which has become known in Western countries as co-operative organization.

2) These Regulations will be further referred to as R.C.V. 1949.

3) Preamble of said Regulations. *Staatsblad van Nederlands Indië* 1927.



be introduced gradually, for it would mean that by way of co-operative enterprise, the people are to be taught new ways and new principles of economic activity. A co-operative society then becomes more like a training institution for people who are to take an active part in modern trade. And — like in an ordinary school — a curriculum should be drafted which leads the "pupils" from simple facts to more complicated matters.

It is clear, that co-operative organization which aims at the latter should be essentially different from co-operative organization which, primarily, aims at facilitating matters for those who are already engaged in different kinds of enterprise, or — in the case of consumers societies — who are looking for ways to purchase more economically.

It is also clear that the second form of co-operative organization not only aims at something different, but also offers a wide scope of possibilities which are not included in the case of a more conservative concept of co-operative organization.

There are people who want to see co-operative enterprise limited to the — narrow — field of satisfying the material needs of the people<sup>1)</sup>. They want to keep it pure, and as little contaminated with non-economic motives as possible. Others, on the other hand, see in co-operative organization the most ideal means of community development in a much wider sense, and they are not at all biased against contamination by non-economic motives; on the contrary, they consider it impossible to keep away from such contamination as economic and social motives are often too closely interrelated to force an artificial separation between the two.

It is only logical that in the case of a comprehensive approach towards co-operative organization, one tends towards the establishment of more-sided co-operative societies, either multi-purpose societies or — in extreme cases — comprehensive co-operative societies. The latter is a far way from the single-purpose society which is preferred by those who consider it contrary to the accepted principles of co-operation to let non-economic motives play a role.

The case which was offered in Nimboran did not justify the introduction of co-operative societies based on the principle of single-purpose societies. On the other hand, it offered a unique chance for a comprehensive approach towards co-operative organization. However, there was one difficulty: In order to make the Co-operative Society in Nimboran a legal one, it had to be established in accordance with the rules of the R.C.V. 1949. Consequently, the Co-operative Society which came into being in Nimboran was rather an ambiguous one. Legally, it conformed to the principles of pure co-operative organization, but in actual practice, non-economic motives penetrated, which by the look of it, were there to stay.

The result was that the actual Co-operative Society became different from what it pretended to be on paper. But there were other, more fundamental, dissimilarities between the formal Co-operative Society and its practical outcome.

Although the Papuan talks about "co-operation" frequently, and in many cases so-called co-operative societies were established in the past, there were only a very few instances where the people's own creations bore a semblance to real co-operative organization. The word "K o p r a s i e" (= co-operative society)

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<sup>1)</sup> Like W. K. H. Campbell. See Dr J. H. Boeke: "Social aspects of Co-operation in the Tropics" in "Le Mouvement Coopératif en Territoires Tropicaux Arriérés", p. 196.

has become known to the people since the war. This word, the meaning of which was never fully explained, or if it was, was never really understood by people who had only just become familiar with money and non-indigenous trade, stood for own enterprise in the first place. Co-operation was synonymous with a store, run by a Papuan, or with the buying of products for further marketing — also by Papuans. Co-operation was also a means to make profits, the more the better. Nobody realized that collective and co-ordinated effort and some self-denial were also principles of co-operation. Many of these so-called co-operative societies have appeared and rapidly disappeared since the war. Often a store (which was the most frequently occurring form) was begun by a man who had returned to the village with money which had been earned in town. A small assortment of commodities for which an active demand existed in the village, was bought by the man, and he would offer these for sale at the most extravagant prices. The population, not aware of the high prices or — if they were — not caring very much how much they had to pay as long as they could purchase the much needed commodities, would come and buy. The capital of the initiator of such a store would increase rapidly, which added to this evil (more goods would be bought, sales would also increase).

Another form of such "wild" co-operative organization occurred where no one had sufficient capital to start a business. Money would then be contributed by many people who were interested in the venture. This money was to be the initial capital of the enterprise. Usually this kind of enterprise very soon collapsed. No books were kept, and often the sum of money which was paid by each "participant" was not even noted. In most cases, the storekeeper would start to use the money for private purposes. The participants, who would soon catch on to his practices, then claimed their shares, which usually caused long-lasting conflicts which were hardly ever solved, while the whole business was terminated.

Two such ventures were undertaken in Nimboran previous to the project. One, a store, run by the *kora no* of Genjem, was still operating in 1951. The other one had not even begun to operate when people started to claim their shares.

The establishment of the Trade Centre, and later, of the Co-operative Society, meant a considerable improvement on the people's own previous ventures, and was of great convenience to them. But it was no more than that. The co-operative enterprises were definitely not seen as a creation of their own, but rather as something which had been inspired by the Government, and which was run by a number of Nimborans who had to keep the books, do the purchasing, and look after marketing. As a functioning enterprise the Society was something not understood, an alien business venture, run by Nimborans and supervised by the Government. The people had no other part in it than the advantages of getting rid of their products, and being able to procure goods. They could not bring themselves to inquire into the way the co-operative enterprises were run, and no one ever demanded to be shown the books of the Society.

The business side of the Society was treated by the people as a convenience on which they did not think of exerting any influence. They did not feel a part of it. It was recognized as a part of the Co-operative Society, but located at the opposite end of it.

The Co-operative Society was something which stretched from the people's

own world into the incomprehensible new world of which the people hoped to become a part, thus forming a link between the two worlds. The members of the Co-operative Society were on the one side of it, and the business side of the Society was across the borderline in the realm of the incomprehensible new world.

Membership of the Co-operative Society was something highly desirable, even a necessity. Everyone who respected himself, tried to become a member and "bought" his membership at the office of the Society. For, membership meant admission to the sphere in which their own world communicated with the new world. Even though no one did know this sphere yet, it was understood that only by being a part of it, one would eventually be able to cross that borderline which separated the new, desirable world from the present state people lived in.

However, there was an additional complication: the initiative which made this communication between old and new possible, originated from the new world. The population was only a spectator, might become a participant, but never was an active element in the process. The people had to wait until their time came. The efforts in Gressie, to obtain a co-operative society with the aid of *kasiep* (see p. 192), clearly underline this attitude of inactive expectation. According to the *kasiep*-belief, the world of the dead and the uncomprehended world of the white people were one, or at least closely interrelated. By calling on the dead, therefore, initiative on the other side of the borderline might be stimulated, and a co-operative society would come forth, reaching from this desired world into the known world of the Papuan. Via this co-operative society, entrance into the new world would become possible.

The possession of a membership-certificate was all-important. It was a passport to progress and usually kept very carefully, together with the certificate of baptism and the tax-demand.

Attendance of General Meetings was very active in the beginning, but it soon dwindled, and sometimes the quorum was not even reached. The attitude of the people in this case was very similar to the attitude which was adopted towards baptism: once the certificate had been obtained, the possessor shared in its advantages, and whether he attended church (or General Meetings) or not, did not make much difference. The only difference was, that a certificate of membership could be bought with money, while a certificate of baptism could not.

Of course this attitude towards the Co-operative Society, assigning mystic value to its membership, was not shared by all. But it undoubtedly was the more general attitude taken towards it. Those who had an idea of what the Co-operative Society stood for were the ones most frequently attending General Meetings, although only a few dared to speak their minds on such occasions. Mostly the people just sat and listened, and subjected themselves to the decisions of the Executive Committee. In fact, the members of the Executive Committee were the most conversant with the object of co-operation, and, probably, the only ones who saw the Co-operative Society for what it was worth.

Clearly the people made a distinction between the enterprises of the Co-operative Society and membership. That is to say, membership of the Co-operative Society was something which one was personally concerned with, but the running of the enterprises of the Society was something outside the

individual's concern. The enterprises were there, they were a part of the Co-operative Society, they belonged to the same category as the one to which that Society belonged, and the people worried as little about becoming acquainted with them as they did about trying to understand the Government's motives for the introduction of co-operative organization. There was a conspicuous lack of the individual warming to the modern idea of co-operation, or of endeavouring to fathom what it was all about. The Co-operative Society was accepted as something belonging to the other world of which the Papuan so badly wanted to become a part. By buying a membership certificate the Nimboran bought himself admittance to this world and he would be able to share in its benefits. Seldom were the people conscious of the fact that an active contribution, other than money, was demanded of the individual members.

This attitude may seem ludicrous to us, and one may doubt whether the interpretation which has been given is the right one. However, from the standpoint of the Nimboran it was the only logical reaction. It fitted in with his concept of life, and with his interpretation of Western culture. It also conformed with the attitude which was taken towards the sacraments, and which has been explained to us by Kabel.

This does not mean that there was a complete lack of sense of realism in the people's attitude towards the changing situation. On the contrary, the activities which have been spontaneously undertaken in Nimboran are an indication of even a well developed degree of sense of realism. But the latter does not necessarily exclude the former, which was so clearly proved by the last *kasiap*-movement on record.

One must understand that the ideals of co-operative organization, the motivations which lead us Westerners to favour this kind of organization, are just so many abstractions to the Papuan, which he does not grasp because they do not connect with what he is familiar with in his own traditional culture.

It is clear that with such an attitude the merits of introducing a co-operative organization as a means of developing the area become rather doubtful, especially when one does not want to deviate from the principle of co-operation in its strict-sense (see p. 162).

However, this does not imply that co-operative organization as a possible approach is unthinkable. As long as one recognizes the attitude of the population for what it is worth, and one realizes that it will be a long time yet before real co-operation becomes possible, co-operative organization may be a very valuable means of assistance. But a comprehensive approach is then most desirable as it will be far more likely to connect with reality. In that case, the co-operative society must be primarily a training institution aiming, in the first place, at gradually making the people familiar with the demands of the outside world, and protecting them from harm as they will be extremely vulnerable, especially in the initial stages of prevailing unbounded enthusiasm and enterprising spirit. I doubt whether it is necessary to begin immediately with establishing a legal co-operative society. It is even highly inadvisable when a legal co-operative society is only possible in the form of a society of strict co-operative principles with complicated statutes which are doomed to be incomprehensible to the people, for, in that case, the organizational side of co-operation is already too far ahead of the, as yet limited, intellectual capacities of the people to expect them to adapt the idea of co-operation to actual

indigenous life. Co-operative organization should begin on the same level as the one on which indigenous society finds itself. It should be fully understood by the people from its inception onwards. The development of the idea of co-operation can then keep pace with the development of society, and it is very likely that the co-operative society, ultimately achieved, will be very different from a single-purpose society, satisfying only purely material needs of the population.

It is also most advisable to aim at drawing all the people into the co-operative activities, because the more the whole community is concerned, the better will be the prospects of reintegration of society.

It is also because of this consideration that Prof. Boeke advised leaving open the possibility of children also becoming members. Apart from that, the children especially, should be taught the principles of co-operation. In the first place, because it is possible to do it when they are still at school and a unique possibility to teach them is offered that way, and in the second place, because they will be the ones who — in the future — will be immediately concerned. The more they understand the idea of co-operation then, the better are the chances of co-operation becoming an integral feature of indigenous living.

The Co-operative Society in Nimboran was established after the idea of co-operation had already been introduced, although it had not taken root yet. The course which had been adopted for Nimboran does conform more or less, to the principles which were advanced above. However, the establishment of the legal Co-operative Society Jawa Datum did not fit into the set-up. Being bound by the R.C.V. 1949, the Society had to have its statutes, and had to stay by the rules which were set forth by the R.C.V. Actually all these matters should then have been attended to by the Executive Committee independently, but the members of this body were, by a long way, not able to arrange all that by themselves. In fact, their work was limited to the daily routine. The Secretary Treasurer kept the accounts, and all other more complicated matters were either done under the supervision of the District Officer, or by the District Officer himself. In itself such a procedure is quite logical. When enterprises are run — more or less according to the rules of modern economics — accounts should be kept and profit-and-loss accounts be made at fixed times.

The District Officer was the most likely person to take the responsibility for this, also if no co-operative society had been established. Only, in the latter case the situation would have been different in so far that the more intricate accounting, which aims in the first place at getting an insight into the running of the enterprises and supplying information for the further course of action which will be taken, could have been done without immediately involving the people.

As things stood, the work which formally should have been done by the Executive Committee was taken out of its hands because its members were incompetent. Psychologically this was a mistake.

The typical attitude of the Nimboran population towards the Co-operative Society may well be seen as having been partly encouraged by the too complicated form of organization which had been dictated from above, and which placed the Co-operative Society as an organization outside the field of the comprehensible.

All this does not mean that the introduction of a legal co-operative society

in Nimboran should be considered a grave mistake. At the time, a choice was only possible between the establishment of a co-operative society — which then was to be a legal one — or no co-operative society at all. And although the disadvantages of a legal society were understood, no harm was expected to come of establishing one, and in fact, no immediate harm was actually done, but it proved to be a disillusion for those who expected to witness real co-operation in Nimboran.

From the attitude which was taken by the population towards the Co-operative Society, several conclusions may be drawn concerning the merits of the co-operative approach towards the development of a community, as in the case of Nimboran.

The circumstances in Nimboran were undoubtedly of a special nature. The Nimborans are a people which, thirty years ago, still lived in a state of almost untouched Papuan culture. Their economy was primitive as compared to the money-economy of our world. Trade was almost non-existent, money was not known. The people's intellectual development was determined by their cultural environment, the social organization of society was conditioned by the then prevalent conditions of life.

The years that Administration and Mission worked in the area and a war swept through the country have greatly affected conditions in Nimboran, and much has changed. But the time which lies between the period when Nimboran was yet hardly touched by outside influences and now, has been too short to rub out all the old convictions and beliefs which formerly existed.

The attitude of the Nimborans towards the project was determined by their whole outlook upon life as it had changed during the past thirty years. We have already described this attitude in the past chapters. It has many striking features of which a few are of importance in view of the co-operative approach which was adopted. They may be summed up as follows:

- a. Initiative towards the development of the area was expected to come from outside.
- b. This development would lead to the participation of the population in the world of the white people whose ways of life and whose knowledge they envied and wanted to make their own.
- c. As the people were at a loss as to what should be the proper thing to do, they trusted themselves to the guidance of the Government.

Evidently the factor *initiative* was almost fully absent. The creation of several enterprises proves that own initiative was not altogether lacking, but this form of initiative was of a slightly different scope. In the first place it usually was displayed only after suggestions had been made by the Administration, while it followed the pattern of other enterprises which had already been established. In the second place, these enterprises showed no tendency to develop themselves (with the exception of a few). It has already been discussed how this was mainly caused by the lack of sufficient technical guidance — which again shows the dependency of indigenous enterprise on support from outside — but it was also due to the lack of perseverance on the part of the initiators.

One of the main factors which is essential in achieving successful co-operation is initiative, coming from those who are to be the co-operators. Initiative is also often mentioned as an essential condition for successful community development. But when initiative is lacking, should one then refrain from

introducing co-operative societies and, for that matter, also community development? Of course not. The lack of indigenous initiative should be made good by provisions, made by the authorities responsible for the development. The measures which are then taken should aim at making the people conscious of the need of their own initiative in order to achieve progress. But it is clear that the first initiative in that case has to come from outside, while it must be continued as long as indigenous initiative is still latent and not yet fully developed. The people will have to be roused from their state of inactive expectation, and that will only be achieved when they have become conscious of the necessity of action and unfailing initiative, therefore, not before they have come to understand what efforts are demanded of them.

Stimulation of initiative can only proceed gradually. The initiative which is displayed will depend on the people understanding where initiative will lead to. One cannot expect to find initiative when no knowledge exists about the possible outcome of it, because then it would be like expecting the people to be active without there being a preconceived aim at which their activity is directed.

In our culture initiative is a highly valued quality. But then, there are so many possibilities which we are conversant with, and which we may be able to realize in a rational way, conditions which are absent in Papuan society.

All this does not mean that the Nimborans lacked ambition; on the contrary, they were even very ambitious in some respects, for they wanted to become similar to the white people, and they had definitely been doing something about it. Only, their initiative was wholly inadequate, for it originated from a misapprehension. Later, in Nimboran the realization gradually began to dawn upon the people that another kind of initiative was now demanded of them. Only, they were dependent on the guidance of the Government to enable them to develop this initiative and lead it into constructive channels.

Under conditions similar to the ones in Nimboran, what chances exist for a co-operative approach being successful? The answer — of course — depends on the kind of approach which is taken, which again depends on the concept of co-operation which is held. Most likely to succeed seems to be a comprehensive approach which is fully adapted to local conditions and — most important of all — the intellectual faculties of the population. Apart from that, outside guidance — not just supervision — is essential, during the initial stages even to a very high degree. One should not shy from the idea of beginning co-operative organization as a kind of training institution, because that is what it is bound to be at first; for co-operative organization in its strict sense, is an impossibility under the circumstances.

There can be hardly any doubt that the development of Nimboran according to co-operative principles, and the instruction of the people in co-operation, offers a good chance of inducing into the people a preference for co-operative organization over any other form of organization, thus leading to the origin of true co-operation in the area. Unfortunately, not all of the conditions which have been mentioned could be complied with, mostly, because of the impossibility of adapting the co-operative organization to the intellectual faculties of the population, due to the legal complications.

The success of co-operative organization in Nimboran has, thereby, become mainly dependent on the intensity with which, and the time during which, it will be possible to provide expert guidance for the Co-operative Society.

## CHAPTER XI

### The contribution of the project to the economic development of Nimboran

As the Nimboran project was primarily directed at the economic development of the area, and the measures which were taken by the Government in the first place aimed at enabling Nimboran society to enter into communication with the modern world without doing damage to itself, and to react rationally to the inevitable demands of time, a survey of the development of the economic situation in Nimboran in general will be expedient. Special attention will, thereby, be given to the economic position of Nimboran in relation to the modern world with which it has entered into more intensive communication.

A good indication of the scope of the economic changes may be derived from the increased money circulation in Nimboran. However, one should understand that increased money income does not necessarily mean economic development. After a discussion, therefore, of the changes in this field, some attention will be given to the value which may be attached to these changes as an indication of progress.

As the development of economic enterprise in Nimboran was primarily dependent on the possibilities of marketing the products, the question of marketing was of first importance and needs further elucidation.

Apart from that, attention will be given to the prospects of spontaneously undertaken indigenous enterprise as a means to contribute to the total economic development of the area.

Finally, the reverse side of the picture — the signs of stagnation in the economic development of Nimboran which became evident during the last year of the project, and their possible causes — demands our attention.

#### 1. *The increased circulation of money*

The economic development of Nimboran, which, on the one hand, was made possible because of the willingness of the population to make an effort in order to achieve the satisfaction of their needs for imported commodities which only could be bought with money, on the other hand, was forced in a direction which stressed the satisfaction of these needs. We see, therefore, that despite the increased money injections of the last years, there was no noticeable increase of money traffic in the indigenous sphere. In that respect, the situation had — in principle — not changed at all, but remained similar to the situation previous to the project. Money was still used consumptively, and mostly for the purpose of procuring imported commodities.

One of the reasons for the continued lack of village money <sup>1)</sup> (excluding marriage money) was the fact that family subsistence had been left almost untouched by the economic changes in Nimboran. There were only a few cases where the effort which was made by the people, outside the field of family subsistence, kept them so much occupied that they lacked sufficient time to take care also of gardens and regular sago-gathering, and that — consequently — money was brought into circulation within the village in order to provide for the needs of the family. This can only refer to those cases where a greater effort was made than was necessary to satisfy the need for

<sup>1)</sup> Money, circulating within the village community. Prof. Dr J. H. Boeke: "Economics and Economic Policy of Dual Societies". p. 68.



commodities. This means that only those people who found in their specific occupation a satisfaction which surpassed their immediate economic needs, were causing this circulation of money within the village; therefore, the more ambitious ones.

These people formed the point of contact between old and new. Their influence, which they undoubtedly had, did not remain limited to the economic side of life, but also made itself felt in the social sphere. On the one hand, these people became more dependent on the goodwill of the villagers, but, on the other hand, they were the bearers of new values, mainly because of their ambition. These people were of eminent importance for the further development of Nimboran society.

Money, for the greater part being employed for the purchase of commodities, retained a limited function in Nimboran society. Saving, therefore, was an almost unknown institution in Nimboran. Even for a marriage-gift little money was saved; much rather did one buy goods for this money, which were to form a part of the marriage-gift.

Money, therefore, was never owned for a long time, and, therefore, there was a constant demand for new money which led to several consequences, of which the main one was the distaste for work which did not immediately pay, or which involved the risk of reduced return, even if the making of additional profit was more likely to occur. This attitude has led to the failure of the system of deferred payment in the mechanised farming enterprise <sup>1)</sup>, while it has also been the cause of the people's preference for daily wages in the case of the pit-sawing enterprise <sup>2)</sup>. For the owner of the enterprise, shared wages would have led to an increased risk of lagging interest in case of reduced returns.

Of importance has also been the role of the Co-operative Society in increasing money-traffic in Nimboran. From the outset, the main function of this Society had been the supply of money and of trade commodities to the population. The supply of trade commodities was, thereby, especially stressed. The Co-operative Society — although formally it was an indigenous corporate body — had, in fact, remained outside the village sphere, and mainly acted as an intermediary between village economy and Western economy. The Co-operative Society bought the products of indigenous enterprise and looked after the further marketing of these products outside the village and the area. In addition to that, the Society purchased the commodities which were needed by the population from outside, and offered them for sale to the population. In this function the Co-operative Society became indispensable to the population and acquired a position of power in Nimboran.

The following table is a review of the cash-income of the Nimboran population from labour and sale of products during 1953 and 1954. Although the table does not pretend to be exhaustive, it provides sufficient data to get an insight into the distribution of employment provided by the non-indigenous institutions, the Co-operative Society, and indigenous enterprise.

The most striking feature is the importance of the Government as a provider

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<sup>1)</sup> see pp. 121 and 187 etc.

<sup>2)</sup> see p. 213 (Appendix II).

TABLE 6. CASH INCOME OF THE NIMBORAN POPULATION IN 1953 AND 1954 IN GUILDERS  
(money, paid by the most important employers of indigenous labour in Nimboran and by the purchasers of indigenous products)

Employer/Purchaser	Payment for services		Purchase of products		Total	
	1953	1954	1953	1954	1953	1954
<i>Government</i>	34.116,50	48.413,22	2.070,12	3.067,43	36.186,62	51.480,65
<i>Agricultural Department</i>	980,87	1.235,84	—	—	980,87	1.235,84
<i>Mission</i>	2.582,30	2.686,—	566,—	1.070,—	3.148,30	3.756,—
<i>Cont. School for Girls</i>	277,—	420,—	4.095,—	5.750,—	4.372,—	6.170,—
<i>Co-operative Society</i>						
<i>Mech. Farming Enterpr.</i>	12.752,23	11.368,—	—	—	12.752,23	11.368,—
<i>Office of the Society</i>	1.093,45	1.104,50	—	—	1.093,45	1.104,50
<i>Trading Agency</i>						
purchases from:						
<i>woodworking ind.</i>			6.838,53	6.296,30	6.838,53	6.296,30
<i>other indig. industr.</i>			3.433,06	1.767,15	3.433,06	1.767,15
<i>Communal gardens</i>			1.989,35	3.258,45	1.989,35	3.258,45
<i>Private people</i>	1.500,—	2.000,— <sup>1)</sup>	3.000,—	± 5.000,— <sup>2)</sup>	4.500,—	7.000,—
<i>Carrier duties</i>	500,—	—	—	—	500,—	—
<i>Police</i>	—	156,22	—	920,—	—	1.076,22
<b>Total</b>	<b>53.802,35</b>	<b>67.383,78</b>	<b>21.992,06</b>	<b>27.129,33</b>	<b>75.794,41</b>	<b>94.513,11</b>

1) Wages of servants.

2) An inquiry which did not include minor office-personnel, yielded a sum of f 4.740,—.

of cash for the population. In 1953, f 36.186,62 was paid, and in 1954, f 51.480,65. Also of much importance is the amount of cash which was received by the population from non-indigenous private persons and organizations. The income out of sale of products and services rendered, amounted to f 13.001,17 in 1953, and f 19.238,06 in 1954.

The cash, which was provided through the Co-operative Society had slightly decreased in 1954: from f 26.106,62 (1953) to f 23.794,40 (1954). However, this did not diminish the importance of the role of the Co-operative Society in this respect. Less so, if one takes into account that the increased withdrawal of labour from indigenous society by the Government and other non-indigenous private organizations caused a serious set-back to indigenous enterprise, which led to a decrease from 24,181 mendays, performed in the indigenous sphere during 1953, to 16,253 in 1954 (against this decrease in mendays an increase was recorded for female labour from 7,337 to 10,635<sup>1)</sup>).

Another important feature was the decrease in cash-earnings as well as in labour efficiency in indigenous enterprise. On the one hand, this decrease has been due to the increased demand for labour by the Government, but, on the other hand, also to a shift of interest among the population from industry to agriculture. This is also shown by the figures, which record an increase of returns from f 9.084,35 (1953) to f 14.928,45 (1954)<sup>2)</sup>.

The main cause for this shift of interest probably lies in the limited cash-earnings in village industry in proportion to the effort which was given. In

1) See table 9 (Employment of Labour) on p. 189.

2) for 1953: f 4.095,— + f 1.989,35 + f 3.000,—; for 1954: f 5.750,— + f 3.258,45 + f 5.000,— + f 920,—.

indigenous agriculture the ratio was much more favourable. Apart from that, the increased extent to which employment was later offered to the Nimborans, facilitated a much quicker satisfaction of the need for cash by seeking employment outside the village.

The first factor led to women being more attracted to the cultivation of cash crops, while the latter moved many men to desert indigenous enterprise.

An exception was made by the woodworking industries which, according to the records, had a more or less steady low income.

A comparison between table 6 and table 9 (p. 189, employment of labour) offers yet another important aspect, namely, that the volume of indigenous production has, for a larger part, been owing to the efforts of the women. The men were mostly wage labourers. This may have far-reaching consequences in the future, for it means that when the Government is going to reduce employment of Nimboran labour, which is bound to happen some time in the future, a considerable amount of man-power will be released for which no immediate employment in other activities has been provided. The only solution is the organization of indigenous enterprise in such a way that released labour may be immediately absorbed by these enterprises without causing a danger of over-employment, for it is of the utmost importance that the cash-income of the population at least remains stable, as a decrease of cash-earnings will undoubtedly lead to disappointment, and most probably to renewed migration to Hollandia. A warning example is provided by what happened in Purari Delta after the people's initial effort to create a new kind of life for themselves failed, and many departed for Port Moresby <sup>1</sup>).

This was also a reason for the continuation of indigenous enterprise, although this enterprise had not developed into a spectacular population undertaking yet, and still operated on a moderate scale.

In the woodworking industry especially, there still existed ample opportunity for employment. Also in the field of agriculture there were many possibilities of employment for the population. As has been shown in a previous chapter, plans had already been drafted for the intensification of Nimboran agriculture.

We find, therefore, that the employment of labour by the Government, on the one hand, obstructed the full development of indigenous enterprise, but that, on the other hand, due to the large proportions which employment by the Government had assumed, and the stress which had consequently been laid on this source of cash for the population, a too speedy contraction of employment would threaten to cause the collapse of indigenous effort.

The total cash-income of Nimboran, including the money which was earned in Hollandia or received from relatives in Hollandia, and the money which was received from teachers and minor officials for the sale of products, may safely be estimated at f 100,000,— for 1954. This sum is considerably larger than the sum of about f 80,000,— which was received in 1953.

An estimate of the cash-income, previous to the introduction of the Nimboran project is difficult to make. If we take into account that previously hardly any income was derived from trade due to the lack of a market in Nimboran, while no construction projects of any importance were undertaken (excepting the peak-years of 1947 and 1949 (roadbuilding) no more than f 3000,— per year), the local cash-earnings of the population may safely be estimated at

<sup>1</sup>) Rev. L. W. Allen. "The Purari Delta" Social Development Notes No. 7 S.P.C.

f 5,000,— per year, which is considerably less than the sums of  $\pm$  f 76,000,— for 1953 and  $\pm$  f 95,000,— for 1954.

The gaining of an insight into the spending of the money by Nimborans is no easy matter. The following known figures concern the spending of money outside the village. The figures give an insight into the extent to which money which was earned by the people was again disposed of almost immediately.

TABLE 7

	1953		1954	
Taxes paid	f	4,770,71	f	9,905,99
Sales Co-operative Store	„	46,146,81	„	42,365,53
Sales Chinese Store	„ $\pm$	12,000,—	„ $\pm$	36,000,—
Entrance fees Co-operative Soc.	„	4,389,—	„	10,—
Debentures Co-operative Soc. (excluding deb. sold in Hla)	„	1,480,—	„	380,—
Travelling expenses	„ $\pm$	6,000,—	„ $\pm$	6,000,—
Auctions	„	—	„	1,373,45
Total	f	74,786,52	f	96,034,97

It should be noted that the figures for sales of the Co-operative and the Chinese stores include sales to non-Nimborans. However, money was also spent by Nimborans who travelled to Hollandia to do their shopping in that town. The cost of travel to Hollandia has been estimated with the aid of the table of frequency of travelling between Nimboran and Hollandia (table 2 page 85). The return-fare of the ferry was f 9,90, while a one-way ticket cost f 5,50. 668 return-fares amount to f 6,613,20, while 1337 one-way tickets will cost f 7,353,50. A (minor) part of the fares was paid with money which had been earned in Hollandia, but the bulk of money which was used for travelling, came from Nimboran, f 6,000,—, therefore, is a reasonable estimate.

The figures of table 7 are, therefore, sufficient indication that the bulk of the money which was earned, was soon disposed of again by indigenous society, a phenomenon which has already been discussed.

Another conclusion which may be drawn from the above is the fact that saving of money hardly occurred. Apparently the increased provision of Nimboran with cash had not led to the population becoming satiated with cash. This implies that the optimum had not been reached yet: there still was an unsatisfied need for cash, which must have ensued from an unsatisfied need for commodities. This means that — at least theoretically — the process of economic production could be further intensified.

It will be interesting to see how, and to which purpose, money was spent by the individual Nimboran. As money had — as yet — no other function than to satisfy the need for trade-commodities, and to facilitate the observance of social obligations (marriage-gift, church contributions etc.) it is impossible to give an average survey of the way money was spent in Nimboran. Each individual had his own private needs and obligations which varied widely through the years. At one time he might need much money for a marriage-gift, at another time he might have earned so much that he could make a splash to his heart's content. A few would be in constant need of money in order to be able to buy sufficient food for their families as there was no time to work in the garden, others again would have little need for money as they did not

Table 8

Income and expenses  
January-

Nature of expenses	A. Appointed village-chief m-w-1c			B. Common villager m-w-3c			C1. Overseer road-constr. m-w-2c		
	Total sum spent gld.	perc.	perc.	Total sum spent gld.	perc.	perc.	Total sum spent gld.	perc.	perc.
1. Purch. ind. products	43.50	28.6	16.4	17.50	53.5	15	14.25	6.8	3.5
2. Assist. to relatives	82.50	54.4	31.2	4.50	13.8	3.9	2.—	0.9	0.5
3. Marriage gift	10.—	6.7	3.9	—	0	0	138.—	65.6	34
4. Miscellaneous	15.75	10.3	5.9	10.70	32.7	9.1	48.20	22.9	11.8
5. Debt settlements	—	0	0	—	0	0	8.—	3.8	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>151.75</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>57.4</b>	<b>32.70</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>210.45</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>51.8</b>
6. Taxes	—	0	0	20.—	53.9	17	20.—	44.4	4.9
7. Church	6.—	33.3	2.3	5.11	13.8	4.3	—	0	0
8. Debentures Co-op.	—	0	0	—	0	0	—	0	0
9. Entrance fee Co-op.	10.—	55.6	3.8	10.—	26.9	8.5	—	0	0
10. Other subscriptions and fines	2.—	11.1	0.7	2.—	5.4	1.7	25.—	55.6	6.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18.—</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>37.11</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>31.5</b>	<b>45.—</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>11.1</b>
11. Food commodities	44.42	47.1	16.9	20.50	42.6	25.8	38.60	25.6	9.5
12. Kerosene	4.—	4.2	1.5	2.25	4.6	2.8	1.20	0.8	0.3
13. Tobacco and sweets	1.—	1	0.4	1.44	3	1.8	5.28	3.5	1.3
14. Small wares	22.45	23.8	8.5	19.68	40.9	24.7	14.09	9.3	3.4
15. Textile goods	8.—	8.5	3	4.25	8.9	5.4	48.—	31.9	11.8
16. Tools	14.50	15.4	5.5	—	0	0	7.50	5	1.9
17. Travelling expenses	—	0	0	—	0	0	36.—	23.9	8.9
18. Debt settlements	—	0	0	—	0	0	—	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>94.37</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>35.8</b>	<b>48.12</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>60.5</b>	<b>150.67</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>37.1</b>
<b>GENERAL TOTAL</b>	<b>264.12</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>117.93</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>406.12</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>100</b>

Nature of receipts	Total sum rec.	Percentage	Total sum rec.	Percentage	Total sum rec.	Percentage
1. Wages	408.14	64.9	46.47	39.2	239.93	89.6
2. Assist. from relat.	140.—	22.3	31.80	26.9	17.50	6.5
3. Marriage gift	40.—	6.4	—	0	7.—	2.6
4. Sale of products	40.—	6.4	40.11	33.9	3.50	1.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>628.14</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>118.38</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>267.93</b>	<b>100</b>

of five Nimboran families  
December 1953

C2. Same as C1			D. Artisan m-w-1c			E. Carpenter ( <i>bram</i> ) m-w-4c			
Total sum spent gld.	perc.	perc.	Total sum spent gld.	perc.	perc.	Total sum spent gld.	perc.	perc.	
14.25	19.7	5.3	3.25	52	4.3	24.55	50.6	5.9	Circulation of money within the indigenous sphere
2.—	2.7	0.7	3.—	48	3.9	2.—	4.1	0.5	
—	—	—	—	0	0	10.—	20.6	2.4	
48.20	66.5	18	—	0	0	1.50	3.1	0.4	
8.—	11	3	—	0	0	10.50	21.6	2.5	
72.45	100	27	6.25	100	8.2	48.55	100	11.7	
20.—	44.4	7.5	10.—	37.4	13.1	—	—	—	Obligations outside the village-sphere
—	0	0	9.—	33.7	11.8	19.35	15.6	4.7	
—	0	0	—	0	0	100.—	80.4	24.1	
—	0	0	7.75	28.9	10.2	5.—	4	1.2	
25.—	55.6	9.3	—	0	0	—	0	0	
45.—	100	16.8	26.75	100	35.1	124.35	100	30	Money disposed of to the outside
38.60	25.6	14.4	21.35	49	27.8	96.67	40	23.3	
1.20	0.8	0.5	1.50	3.4	1.9	18.75	7.8	4.5	
5.28	3.5	2	0.20	0.5	0.3	6.04	2.5	1.5	
14.09	9.3	5.2	11.05	25.3	14.4	4.06	1.7	1	
48.—	31.9	17.9	—	0	0	72.—	29.8	17.4	Purchase of commodities, travel and debt
7.50	5	2.8	9.50	21.8	12.3	3.61	1.5	0.9	
36.—	23.9	13.4	—	0	0	11.15	4.6	2.7	
—	0	0	—	0	0	29.25	12.1	7	
150.67	100	56.2	43.60	100	56.7	241.53	100	58.3	
268.12	—	100	76.60	—	100	414.43	—	100	
Total sum rec.	Percentage		Total sum rec.	Percentage		Total sum rec.	Percentage		Receipts
239.93	89.6		13.75	5.4		233.92	54.8		
17.50	6.5		—	0		75.50	17.7		
7.—	2.6		—	0		112.50	26.3		
3.50	1.3		241.22	94.6		5.—	1.2		
267.93	100		254.97	100		426.92	100		

require many commodities, other than those they had always been used to (mostly the older people). Recreation hardly cost any money at all (no pictures or games for which an entrance fee was charged). Food was usually produced in the people's own gardens. They had no rent to pay for house or land, therefore, there were no fixed expenses which had to be met with regularly, and money could be — and was — spent at random.

Nevertheless, a closer inquiry into the spending of money by the individual Nimborean is instructive, also because it gives an insight into the function which was assigned by the Nimborean to money.

Table 8 (on pp. 174-175) represents a number of budgets which were made in the course of 1952—1954.

Of forty budgets only ten proved to have been kept sufficiently up to date to be usable for the purpose. Of these, five have been selected from people who each had a different occupation. The period which is covered by each budget is one year (Jan.—Dec. 1953).

The division which has been made (circulation of money in the indigenous sphere, obligations outside the indigenous sphere, and purchases outside the village sphere) serves to give an insight into the circulation of money in Nimborean. The fact that most of the earned money was disposed of again to the outside, shows clearly in three of the five cases (B, D and E), and also in the case of C, if the marriage-gift is excluded from consideration (C2). The higher percentage of expenses in the village, in the cases A and C, is due to assistance rendered to relatives (A) and contribution to a marriage-gift (C). In the case of A, the money was most probably used, either to buy trade commodities with, or to help in forming a marriage-gift. The high percentage of the marriage-gift in the case of C, a man of means according to Nimborean standards, shows that the marriage-gifts were tremendously high in comparison with the actual earnings of the average Nimborean. The marriage-gift was an obligation which weighed heavily on the budget of each Nimborean. A second calculation of percentages has been made for the budget of C, omitting the marriage-gift (C2), in order to facilitate a better comparison with the other budgets. The difference is striking.

The tax on property (house, gardens, perennial crops, animals) was heaviest for the ordinary villager who had no special occupation, and for the artisan. The percentage of money, spent in the purchase of food (local and imported) is different for all five people. However, in all cases the purchase of food, textiles, and small wares dominated other purchases.

Another interesting feature is supplied by making a comparison between income and expenditure of the five different people. The village chief, who also received a considerable sum from relatives, spent far less than he had been receiving. Most probably he had to save money for a marriage-gift. The ordinary villager (B), the carpenter (E), and — if we again exclude the marriage-gift in his case — the overseer (C2) too, have spent almost as much as they have received. The difference between the income and expenditure (C1) of the overseer is equal to the sum which was paid for the marriage-gift.

Most probably the money for that gift had already been saved previous to 1953. The earnings of the artisan also exceeded his expenses. However, he owed a considerable sum to the people whom he worked with (money which he received for their products which was kept by him, and which was to be paid to his fellow-workers on demand).

In four of the five cases the assistance rendered by relatives exceeded the assistance which was given to relatives. It was, indeed, a common feature in Nimboran that people often owed more to their different relatives that they could claim from them. Money was just as likely to be demanded by relatives as articles to which they had taken a fancy. The whole system of debts and claims has become so complicated that it is almost impossible to unravel it.

The people themselves seldom attempted to get a clear picture of their own debts and claims. They were satisfied with the knowledge that, whenever they needed money, they could appeal to their relatives, which was of great convenience to them. Usually the sum of money which thus passed hands was small and immediately spent. It might happen for instance, that someone making his purchases at the store felt extremely attracted by some other article in the store and wanted to buy it. If he did not have sufficient money himself and a relative was close at hand, he would most likely call on this relative to help him to supply the balance which was needed to pay for his purchase. At a future opportunity the roles of helper and helped might be reversed. The payment of taxes usually called for money changing hands in order to be of assistance to relatives who were short of cash, especially later in the year when the Administration began to urge the people more persistently to meet their obligations.

By the end of 1954, Nimboran had only begun to be more familiar with the use of money. The fact that all imported commodities could be procured in no other way than by buying them with current money, made money an urgent necessity. And, actually, that was the only value which was attached by the Nimborans to money. No other function of money was known yet, and often one would meet with people who were handling money but who were not able to count it properly, and to whom the different coins and bills were no more than so many different items which had a different value according to size and colour. There were cases when people did not understand that each coin and each bill might be replaced by a number of coins or bills of another denomination without it affecting the value which it represented. Many of the older people often refused paper money, even if only copper coins could be given instead.

Of course the majority of the people have learned by now to handle money, but they have much to learn yet about the comparative value of money in relation to other things. In the beginning, the prices which were asked for garden products and fire-wood, for instance, differed widely, and ranged from ten cents to several guilders for a similar commodity. People would start with asking ten or twenty-five guilders for a quantity of kapok, appear very much surprised when they were told that the price was ridiculous, and depart quite content with three dimes for their merchandise.

It may be understood from this that the people were wide open to deception by anyone who knew how to take advantage of their ignorance. It was a fortunate circumstance that no one had been in a position to take advantage of the situation. Trade was almost non-existent when the project started, and had to be built up from the very bottom.

With the growth of trade, and the increased influx of trade commodities, people began to have more understanding of the value of things and of what money could buy. But it remained very difficult for them to estimate the value of their own products, and usually the prices which were fixed for them by the



Administration and, later, by the Secretary of the Co-operative Society were accepted without opposition. After a list had been published with prices of the most common garden products, which was meant to be used only in case of sales to inhabitants of Genjem, the same prices were used when people traded with each other, and at no reduced prices as had been expected.

In Nimboran, Boeke's formula C - M - C' (Commodity sold — Money — Commodity bought), which represents "a separate activity that has penetrated from the outside into the selfsustaining, exchangeless economy of the subject", was fully applicable <sup>1)</sup>. Money had only a passing function and was, therefore, never kept long. The possession of money was of little value to the people if there were no goods which they could buy with it. We cannot speak of money economy having penetrated into Nimboran society, at best, of money traffic having become a feature of present day Nimboran economic effort <sup>2)</sup>.

The function which was ascribed to money, that is was no more than a necessary facility to be able to procure goods, also accounted for the phenomenon that people were seldom impressed by the expensiveness of some commodities. At best they might be found to be disappointed that they had not sufficient money themselves to buy it. It also led them to pay the most extravagant prices for things which we consider of no or of hardly any value, or which they might procure at an ordinary price somewhere else. It was no exception to find that people bought a large quantity of salt or kerosene at the Co-operative store to sell it little by little, at a price sometimes five to ten times as high, in their own village which might only be one or two miles distant from Genjem <sup>3)</sup>. Finally, when these practices occurred more frequently, the Co-operative Society had to take measures and limit the sale of much demanded commodities to a pre-arranged ration for each individual buyer. Exceptions were made only for distant villages, and when supervision by a trustworthy Nimboran was guaranteed.

Nimboran has a long way to go yet, before we can speak of money-economy. The indigenous enterprises, the Co-operative Society, and the 12½ acre family holdings which were planned for the near future are the only intermediaries through which the people might learn to use money to their better advantage. Especially in those enterprises in which considerable sums of money had been invested for the purchasing of equipment and the reclamation of land (wood-working industries, mechanised farming enterprise, individual farms), the receipts and expenses had to be accounted for properly, and a minimum of business administration was, therefore, imperative. The people working in

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1) Prof. Dr J. H. Boeke: op. cit. p. 67.

2) In money-traffic "the use of money is consumptive; it is employed to make payments, to settle obligations; money is "bought" with commodities, labour or land and in so far it is needed for these purposes". Boeke: op. cit. p. 67. "Money economy means that the whole economic system is based on money; that money, mainly productive, is employed as capital, as the foundation and the point of departure for profit-making". *ibid.* See also Margaret Mead: "Cultural Patterns and Technical Change" p. 256: If money "is used to create more money or to found a fortune, or to make the individual independent of the family" and the earnings of money are not "incidental to living", but an end, we can speak of money economy.

3) These trading Nimborans had already proceeded a step further in the process of becoming money-wise. Their activities, using money to buy commodities in order to sell them again with a profit, were more typical of money-economy than of money-traffic. However, the number of these people who took advantage of the innocence of the majority of the Nimboran people was limited.

these enterprises were likely to be the first ones to get a better understanding of money economy. But they were — at least for the time being — only a few as compared to the mass of the Nimboran population. Nimboran, therefore, will be economically vulnerable for a long time to come. The people may be deemed fortunate not to have become a victim of those who know how to take advantage of their vulnerability; fortunate also, because they have not yet experienced the indebtedness to which the rural population in many other countries has fallen victim, forcing them to make ever increasing sacrifices to keep themselves going, or to sell their products too early and even before they have properly ripened, so that the quality is bad and no full price is received <sup>1)</sup>). Money-lenders were unknown in Nimboran. Of this kind of credit and interest the people were fully ignorant.

The Co-operative Society had been made the centre-point around which the economic effort of Nimboran revolved. Indigenous enterprise had been linked with the society as much as was possible, without encroaching upon the freedom of enterprise. This had been done on purpose: as long as the small enterprises were dependent on the Society for the marketing of their products and the procurement of tools, raw materials, and equipment the Society could look after their interests and step in when the enterprises threatened to embark upon ventures of a dubious nature. The society, being kept under close supervision by the Registrar and the District Officer, could with some effort be kept on a straight course, which would then also guarantee the proper running of indigenous enterprise.

## 2. *The marketing of Nimboran products*

A dependable market for the products of Nimboran agriculture did not yet exist. Indigenous agricultural production had never been of much consequence, and — apart from fresh fruit and vegetables — Hollandia depended almost fully on import from abroad. All food-stuffs were imported from outside, and trade in Hollandia had organized itself accordingly. Also food-commodities which under normal conditions could easily have been produced in New Guinea were purchased abroad because production was completely lacking in New Guinea.

When Nimboran started to produce a — very limited — variety of food commodities, the market in Hollandia showed very little interest. The amount of products which was offered by Nimboran was small, and the market sometimes already overstocked with imported products of the same kind, which in some cases were of even better quality. Hollandia is — after all — a small town with only several thousand inhabitants, and, consequently, not much was needed to overstock the market. The small consignments of agricultural products which Nimboran offered, with long spells of no supply at all in between, were of too little consequence to be bothered with by the importers and wholesale traders, and, besides, they usually did not need the products, for either they were expecting a consignment of the same products from abroad, or retail trade was already loaded down with the same imported commodity which had to be sold at a high price. In the latter case an effort to

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<sup>1)</sup> A. J. F. Köbben: "Zwarte Planters": In Côte d'Ivoire the *saison creuse*, the time just before the crops are harvested, usually is marked by general shortage of money. In order to meet their obligations people often sell their products too early.

get on the market by means of competition was out of the question, for neither the importer nor the retail trade were inclined to buy before they had got rid of the higher priced consignment.

One has to keep in mind that with only one major firm of importers (NIGIMY) the market in Hollandia was of a peculiar uniformity. The majority of the stores were run by Chinese traders who almost all bought their commodities from the NIGIMY. The commodities which were offered for sale in the stores, therefore, were mostly of a similar kind and brand, and if, for instance, ground-nuts had been imported, most stores would offer ground-nuts for sale, and only a few might be found willing to order a small consignment from Nimboran. Together they would not be able to take more than only a fraction of what was offered.

Marketing of Nimboran products elsewhere in New Guinea was also almost impossible as everything had to be carried by ship. About the only firm which had wide-spread trade-connections with other places in New Guinea, was again the NIGIMY. Therefore, there was little chance that Nimboran products could be sold elsewhere if Hollandia did not take them. Moreover, the importers were not sufficiently interested to take too much trouble.

The marketing of products through the Agricultural Department, therefore, was the only solution which at the time remained. The Agricultural Department had connections in- and outside Hollandia, and was usually sufficiently informed to know where there might be a possible market for Nimboran products, but in most cases they could only dispose of the products in small quantities, as the only buyers in the case of an already overstocked market were the few traders who had not purchased from the NIGIMY because they did not dispose of sufficient capital to keep large stocks and, therefore, had to limit their purchases.

It is clear that the Government was bound to come to the rescue. It was the Government which propagated the stimulation of indigenous production in the first place. But such production can only increase gradually, and the supply of indigenous products, therefore, will begin in moderate quantities, to increase only if a ready market for these products does exist. The market in Hollandia, on which Nimboran was mainly dependent, had already proved to have no sufficient interest in indigenous products which were offered irregularly and in varying quantities.

However, it is to be expected that when production has increased, and a regular supply of products at a price, sufficiently low to come into consideration for export, is offered, the market in Hollandia will become actively interested and commence buying.

The gap between the introduction of indigenous cash crop cultivation and the time that the market will become interested in these products of indigenous agriculture, had to be bridged. The Government also began to realize this and took the first steps to meet the difficulty. It was the intention that products of sufficiently good quality, for which a demand existed but which were kept off the market by private trade, in future would be bought by the Government which would look after the further marketing. The creation of a Government fund for this purpose and for the equalization of prices of products which are subjected to fluctuations on the export-market, was also considered by the Government.

With this Government protection, indigenous agriculture was given a chance

to develop itself, and may indeed assume large proportions in the future.

The level of prices for products of agriculture was for a large part dependent on the cost of freight, which generally was high. In the case of Nimboran, the primitive connections had an unfavourable influence on the level of prices, especially for products which were relatively cheap but light in weight and bulky. Because of the bad road only light vehicles could be used which could not carry much bulk. The freight-charges per kilogram, therefore, were high as compared to the cost of production.

The Government had been weighing the different possibilities of improving connections, and, finally, decided on giving priority to the construction of an airfield and the establishment of a regular air-connection between Genjem and Hollandia. However, it is to be doubted whether the cost of air-freight will not greatly exceed the cost of over-land freight, even under the primitive conditions of today. At the time it was not known yet whether a special rate would be charged to the Government. If not, it would probably become necessary that the transportation of products from Nimboran should be grant-aided by the Government.

The solution which has been found may be satisfactory as long as production in Nimboran remains low, and does not greatly exceed its present level. However, in the not very distant future, when production increases, a cheaper means of carriage of products should be found, and a good road suitable for heavier transport can no longer be dispensed with. As long as market prices remain on the same level, high costs of freight can be met with, but it is likely that with increased production and production for export, prices will drop, and then the freight charges should be reduced to a minimum.

### 3. *The prospects of the spontaneously undertaken indigenous enterprises (communal cash crop farms and indigenous industry)*

The increasing interest of the population for communal cash crop farming may be seen as an indication that the Nimborans felt themselves attracted to this kind of undertaking. However, up to 1955, the farms which were established by the people had been struggling with labour difficulties due to inefficient organization and irregular attendance of the workers. If these undertakings could be supported with mechanical equipment, there might be a possibility of considerably extending cash crop farming. This form of organization has the advantage that — especially in larger villages and *tangs* — the problem of getting sufficient labour to work in the gardens is not so acute. It will be acute however in smaller *tangs* (like Krang of Sarmai-Kerang see pp. 122-123) and in the one family holdings which have been planned for the future. The only way to meet this shortage of labour will be intensified mechanization; the trouble of semi-mechanization being that a larger area has to be cultivated in order to make efficient use of the equipment, which leads to a relative increase of manual labour which is then needed on the farm. From practical experience it has been learned that the advantage of mechanised tillage of the land only, is outweighed by the increase of manual labour needed for the future tending of the extended plantings. Weeding, especially, demands a tremendous effort, as weeds often grow faster than the crops in New Guinea's tropical climate. Harvesting also needs many hands because rain may fall any day, and continuously threatens to damage the ripened crops in the field.

The development of manufacturing in Nimboran was yet too much hampered by lack of skill to warrant large-scale stimulation and collective organization. The set-up of the individual enterprises and the relation between employer and employed have given no cause, as yet, for a change of policy towards this kind of enterprise. It will probably prove necessary though to stimulate indigenous manufacturing whenever possible.

Although Nimboran, with a plentiful reserve of farm-land, can definitely not be classified as an over-populated area — usually the primary reason for stimulating manufacturing — there are other considerations which weigh heavily:

Although the initial technical progress in agriculture in Nimboran led to an increased demand for labour, which is contrary to the generally accepted rules, eventually, when the situation has become stabilized, further mechanization may lead to the displacement of labour, which — says Hazlewood — makes it necessary to create openings for non-agricultural development<sup>1</sup>). In a previous chapter we have already discussed the conflicting interests of the plains-people and those living in the hills. For the latter, large-scale farming still seems a remote possibility. They may — eventually — be employed on farms in the plains, but even if that is the case they will always run a risk of becoming unemployed in cases of intensified mechanization.

For these people, and for many who are now employed by the Government, but who will some day be left to their own resources again, manufacturing seems to offer the most promising possibilities.

The existence of sound village industry will also counterbalance the disadvantages which are attached to one-sided agricultural development, with its lean months when the crop is ripening, and available cash has dwindled to almost nothing (which offers a unique chance for money-lenders, and which may lead to hasty selling for too low prices), and with the threat of steep drops in prices when export crops are concerned. The example which is set by the Côte d'Ivoire with its *traite* and *saison creuse* and its growing greed for territory due to the extensive cultivation of perennial crops<sup>2</sup>) may serve as a warning.

#### 4. *The reverse side of the picture: stagnation of economic enterprise due to non-economic factors*

The economic development of Nimboran and the economic effort of the people gathered momentum soon enough during the initial stages of the project, but gradually it lost way and threatened to come to a standstill. This was partly owing to purely economic conditions (market, labour), but it was also due to intellectual and social defects.

We must realize that the degree of material development which may be reached in a society like Nimboran, is closely connected with the degree of intellectual development which has been reached. The teaching of technical crafts, therefore, without more general education, aiming at the proper adaptation of the newly acquired crafts to the general pattern of behaviour, would cause a serious threat to the harmony within indigenous society.

1) A. Hazlewood: "The Economic background" in "Approaches to Community Development" edited by Ph. Ruopp p. 127.

2) A. J. F. Köbben: *op. cit.*

In numerous matters occurring in every day life one could see an indication of the tensions which had grown in Nimboran, due to the lag of intellectual development behind technical progress.

The contact with Western culture had opened new perspectives for the population, which led to an increasing — seemingly insatiable — urge to participate in the modern world. The increasing demand for improvement of material conditions and the wish to learn new crafts and new trades were an indication of the lag between changing environment and the adaptation of indigenous society to these conditions. Previous to the community development project, the people really felt backward. It was not difficult, therefore, to introduce new ideas and new possibilities into Nimboran during the project. A gap was being filled, but it was also soon filled, and the people were too readily convinced that they needed to do no more to improve their skill.

A deadlock had been reached. The improvement of material welfare had soon caught up with the need for material development, while almost all of the knowledge of the population, which they had acquired during the time of contact with Western culture, had been employed. But the adaptation of the Nimboran could not be considered sufficient. It should be more complete and better integrated with the demands of the modern world. The intellectual faculties of the people needed to be further advanced in order to make them capable of achieving the further perfection of the changes of a technical nature which had been introduced. The technical improvements which were introduced needed power of growth, and by making the people understand that what they had was only a beginning which should be considered a foundation for the actual economic development of the area, would there remain a possibility for further development. Only the consciousness of the imperfection of what had been achieved, and some knowledge of what might yet be achieved, were likely to create the necessary urge towards further development and increased effort, which is an essential condition for the total rehabilitation of indigenous society. The further technical development is attempted without attention being also paid to the intellectual development of the population, the greater will be the possibility of disturbances within indigenous society.

The stagnation of the further economic development of Nimboran reacted on the attitude of the people towards the development of their society. We have already seen that people began to loose interest, and tended to turn their backs on Nimboran and leave for Hollandia. It was this lag of the intellectual development of the Nimboran population behind the technical progress induced by the project which gave the people a distorted view on the whole process of development, and which also gave rise to uneasiness and, in some cases, dissatisfaction.

## CHAPTER XII

### The labour problem

One of the factors which was also responsible for the stagnation of the economic development of Nimboran was the labour problem, although it cannot be considered its primary cause.

Several times mention has been made in this book of the difficulties which were encountered in relation to a satisfactory distribution of the available man-power. These difficulties gradually grew into a new major problem which threatened to interfere with the planned process of step by step development of indigenous enterprise.

Community development demands the making of an increased effort by those who are participating in the project. Therefore, it is necessary that — before a project is introduced — one can be certain that the people dispose of a reasonable reserve of energy to meet the demands of increased effort.

The excessive migrations to Hollandia already caused much concern to the Government before the initial plans for the development of Nimboran were drafted. It proved to be necessary to reckon with these migrations when planning a course of action for the economic development of the area. For, if the agricultural and the industrial development of Nimboran were to depend on the available man-power only, possibilities would be considerably limited.

This was one of the main reasons which caused the local Administration to advance the suggestion of using mechanical equipment whenever possible. This did not only concern the activities within the scope of the project itself, but also — and possibly to a larger extent — the activities which were unfolded by the Government due to the facts that Genjem had become the station of a European Administrative Officer, that more Government personnel was stationed at Genjem, and — consequently — that constructional work (roads and buildings) was to be undertaken.

When introducing mechanical appliances in indigenous enterprise, one has to account for the fact that — at least in a case like in Nimboran, which had remained almost untouched by Western technique — these enterprises will not have the disposal of qualified technicians, able to keep modern machines running without outside assistance. The introduction, therefore, of modern machinery in indigenous enterprise should take place slowly, at a rate which is equal to the development of the technical abilities of the people in that enterprise. This means that in indigenous enterprise, at first, there will be an active demand for manual labour which cannot be immediately met by introducing machinery. However, it is advisable — once it has been decided to mechanise such an enterprise — to start with the gradual introduction of machines as soon as possible in order to be able to release man-power, which then will become available for other work. The tying of too many people to a few enterprises with an output which is limited due to the lack of mechanical appliances, will reduce the scope of possibilities to only a few, especially when available man-power is scarce.

In view of these considerations, the collective farming enterprise was planned to be equipped with mechanical appliances, as it was destined to become the foundation of the agricultural development of the area.

The unfamiliarity of the Nimborans with machinery was one of the reasons

for limited mechanization in the first stages. However, further mechanization was to follow as soon as possible.

The communal character was given to the enterprise because of several reasons, one of which was the fact that collective labour would be more profitable. Also in the case of the woodworking industry the possibility of gradual mechanization was considered in order to conquer the difficulties which were caused by the employment of manual labour only, which led to a limited output, and excessive use of valuable man-power to meet the increasing demand for timber which was exercised by Genjem.

Next to these activities within the scope of the development project, there was the increased activity of the Government. The major Government project was the improvement of the 37 kilometres of road which connected Nimboran with the outside. A road, leading through rather heavy terrain, and being ever more frequently used.

The construction of premises in Genjem and the increased population of the Government settlement, necessitated the transportation of many goods to Genjem, which — at first — had to be done by carriers because of the lack of motor-vehicles and the fact that a serviceable road-connection with Genjem had not been yet achieved.

Almost immediately after the arrival of the District Officer, an active demand for labour was exercised by the Government, which was hardly in keeping with the introduction of the development project which demanded the reservation of a surplus of man-power for indigenous activities in the first place.

Right from the beginning, therefore, the central Government in Hollandia was appealed to, to put adequate road-construction equipment at the disposal of the Government-projects in Nimboran, in order to remove the additional burden which was laid on the area's population by these projects. In this case, the limitation which counted for indigenous enterprise, that lack of technical ability necessitated the introduction of only a minimum of modern machinery in the initial stages, did not apply. Unfortunately, it was not possible to meet this difficulty fully, so that the pressure, which was exerted on the population by the Government projects, could not be relieved.

From the figures which will be given concerning the labour efficiency of Nimboran, the seriousness of this problem may be clearly understood, but before proceeding to a close inspection of these figures, some more should be said of the employment of labour within the scope of the community development project in general, and the Co-operative Society and the private indigenous enterprises in particular.

It has already been stated that the initial phase of the Nimboran project consisted of the creation of possibilities for the marketing of indigenous products, and of the possibility to spend the money thus earned, by creating opportunities for the purchase of imported commodities for which an active demand did exist.

This implies that — as far as the employment of labour was concerned — a part of the population would find a way to increase its cash income (for the time being on a moderate scale) and thus would find employment in the indigenous sphere. To give the population a chance to develop as much activity as they wanted, no additional labour was demanded for work in the indigenous sphere. However, as soon as the Trade Centre had been established, the



situation began to change, and — though on a moderate scale — labour was attracted for odd jobs which had to be done for the Trade Centre.

Almost simultaneously the labour reserve of Nimboran was broken into by the indigenous enterprises which came into being, and which needed labour to carry them on. The support which was given to indigenous enterprise by the Government, and the (yet modest) technical guidance which could be supplied, enabled these enterprises to tackle their work in earnest almost immediately. Therefore, the demand for labour grew fast.

Only by means of limiting the withdrawal of Nimboran labour for Government projects, and looking for substitute labour for these projects — which were also urgent — in the neighbouring areas, was it possible to facilitate the free development of indigenous enterprise as much as possible. Apart from that, the Administration tried — with little success — to get the Nimborans staying in Hollandia to return to their native villages.

The situation became more difficult when, with the introduction of the mechanised farming enterprise, the demand for labour increased considerably. As has been said before, the mechanical appliances introduced on the farm were limited to a minimum, and, therefore, the amount of labour which was needed was considerable.

A part of the work on the farm could be carried out by female labour; a solution which was not at odds with the task of the woman in traditional society. However, in that case, one was also bound to make certain that no more than the tasks which were commonly allotted to women were to be made their share also on the farm (sowing, weeding, harvesting, and further treatment of the harvest like drying, cleaning, grading etc.).

Yet, there remained an important task for male labour, namely, the reclamation of land, which had to be done by manual labour in cases where the available mechanical equipment proved to be inadequate for the purpose. It was a serious disappointment, when after a short time the digging of an extensive network of drainage trenches, and in a few cases, even ground levelling, proved to be necessary.

During the initial stages of the farming project, the supply of labour was satisfactory, but soon the Co-operative Society, which looked after the regular supply of sufficient labour, was not always able to meet the demand. The result was that the Government had to cut down its demand for local labour in order not to obstruct activities in the indigenous sphere.

This experience was of great importance in view of the theory, mentioned before, that the introduction of mechanical appliances in indigenous enterprise should proceed gradually.

In the case of the mechanised farming enterprise, however, a solution would not have been hard to find: the initial reclamation of land and the putting of the farm into working condition could have been done with the aid of mechanical equipment supplied from the outside, either in the form of Government- or semi-Government reclamation of land, or by hiring heavy equipment for this specific purpose.

This solution would have been justified as it concerned activities which were a part of the initial investment-phase of the project and (as in the case of the Nimboran farm) as the capital which is needed for such projects is usually supplied by the Government in the form of a loan. As the costs of such a set-up can be calculated in advance, there is no question of an additional risk.

However, when the mechanised farming enterprise in Nimboran was confronted with these problems, such a solution was not yet possible.

A second aspect of the labour problem was formed by the terms of payment on which labour was performed. Normally labour was performed in Nimboran after wages had been previously arranged. Deviations from this rule were met with in several of the indigenous enterprises as well as in the mechanised farming enterprise.

From the outset it had been decided to leave the arrangement of the terms of labour and wages to be decided by the employers and their employees themselves. The Administration only took care that no injustice was done to the employed.

Four different possibilities came into being that way:

1. Fixed wages (mostly daily, amounting to at least f 1,— which was equal to the wages paid by the Government for unskilled labour, or monthly wages of f 25,— or more).
2. Shared wages. Everyone employed in an enterprise claimed a share of the return of sales, equal to the amount of work which had been contributed.
3. Task wages.
4. Deferred payment of wages.

The wages-system most commonly met with, was the one mentioned under 1, especially in those enterprises where production was organized collectively (woodworking industries, manufacturing of sago-cakes). In other branches of indigenous industry (mat-plaiting, manufacturing of coconut oil) the system of shared wages was more common. The products were sold in bulk, and each participant received a share of the returns which was equal to his contribution to the production of the enterprise.

Deferred payment of wages was at first applied to the mechanised farming enterprise. This sort of payment had not been invented by the people themselves, but had been imposed by the Government. The principles which moved the Government to adopt this system of payment have already been discussed. However, there were a few shortcomings in the reasoning underlying this policy. Two factors had not been taken into account:

In the first place, the fact that collective effort of the kind which was now propagated by the Government was entirely different from the traditional forms of collective behaviour, like in the case of *kabi*, warfare, hunting, and the like. The attractiveness of collective effort, as it had been propagated by the Government, therefore, did not appeal to the population. Apart from that, no account was taken of the fact that there was a general need for cash in Nimboran. As the mechanised farming enterprise was not the only organization which provided employment for the people, and a competitive demand for labour was exercised by the Government and private indigenous enterprises, the supply of labour for the mechanised farming enterprise remained insufficient.

The system of partially delayed payment of wages had been introduced only in the mechanised farming enterprise. At first it was applied only in cases of normal farm work, like weeding etc. It was, therefore, mainly women to whom the arrangement applied. Later, the male workers also received partial payment immediately after the work had been done.

Two thirds of the wages were paid immediately after work, and one third after the harvest had been sold.

Difficulties with the marketing of products often caused a considerable delay in the payment on the second part of the wages (gratuity), which led to decreased enthusiasm for work on the farm. This lack of enthusiasm, and the fact that mechanization remained limited at first, caused a continuous demand for labour to persist because the routine work was carried out too slowly.

The only solution — apart from further mechanization — was seen in the limitation of work on the farm to fixed short periods (sowing, harvesting and occasional weeding), which would only be possible if sufficient people could be interested, which again depended on the enthusiasm which could be roused amongst the population for work on the farm.

The practical measures, which were to effect this solution were:

1. The abandonment of the principle of deferred payment.
2. The introduction of task-work, which should — if possible — envelop all the routine work which had to be done.
3. The immediate payment of task-wages after the task had been completed (no deferment until the end of the month).

This meant that the conduct of the enterprise had to be rearranged in order to facilitate the carrying out of routine work in single tasks, while the work had to be arranged in such a way that between periods of much work on the farm there remained a sufficiently long period when no labour was needed by the enterprise. The results of the first experiments which were tried with the new system were extremely satisfactory. The number of people who were willing to work on the farm increased considerably, which caused the different tasks to be completed in a very short time. The expenses of the farm were also considerably reduced owing to the increased effort of the workers. The earning capacity of the farm was also expected to increase due to the reduction of costs, while interest in the enterprise was stimulated.

A co-ordinated approach towards the difficulties in the field of indigenous labour by Government and Co-operative Society contributed considerably to the lessening of the strain which was generally felt. Yet as long as no increased use was made of mechanical appliances, especially by the Government in its construction projects, the pressure on the population could hardly be expected to lighten.

It has already been discussed how the drainage of labour, caused by the Government projects, caused a serious threat to the development of indigenous enterprise.

In table 9, figures are given concerning the amount of labour which was performed during 1953—1954, by Nimborsans only.

The figures only concern organized enterprise and, therefore, do not refer to additional labour which was performed under the so-called "village duties" 1), or to work which was performed for sustaining the family, repairs for the house, fences etc. Neither has the labour which was performed in the communal gardens been recorded here.

1) Each villager was in duty bound to work a few days each month in the village, doing repair-work on the village-road, bridges, government resthouses etc.

TABLE 9. EMPLOYMENT OF NIMBORAN LABOUR IN 1953 AND 1954

Sort of work	Mendays		Womendays		Percentage			
	1953	1954	1953	1954	men		women	
					1953	1954	1953	1954
1. Miscellaneous (Gvt)	1,032	1,140	—	—	1.7	1.8	—	—
2. Road constr. (Gvt)	21,156	27,357	—	—	34.9	43.7	—	—
3. Constr. of houses (Gvt)	12,719	13,609	—	—	21	21.7	—	—
4. Constr. airfield (Gvt)	—	3,142	—	—	—	5	—	—
5. Maintenance of roads and buildings (Gvt)	1,512	1,057	—	—	2.5	1.7	—	—
6. Mech. Farm. Ent. (Co-op)	5,532	4,985	5,477	7,310	9.1	8	74.7	68.7
7. Co-op. Soc. and its enterprises (Co-op)	1,008	1,350	—	—	1.7	2.2	—	—
8. Indig. enterpr. (priv)	17,641	9,918	1,727	1,427	29.1	15.9	23.5	13.4
9. Indig. private contractor (priv)	—	—	133	1,898	—	—	1.8	17.9
Total	60,600	62,558	7,337	10,635	100	100	100	100

The outcome of the increased employment of labour under the development project was even less favourable than had been anticipated:

Previous to the Nimboran project, Nimboran offered a surplus of labour. A superficial survey of the amount of labour which was required for the subsistence of the family, house-building, repairs, and the like showed that the maximum number of working days, spent in the field, amounted to about sixty full days, which, however, were spread over the whole year. Most of these days were concentrated in the months following the rainy season, when people would begin to make their new gardens. Apart from that there were the days, allotted for "village duties", hunting parties, and similar activities. Altogether the Nimboran was estimated to be occupied not more than half of the time, including Sundays and other holidays. The size of the labour reserve in Nimboran, therefore, was not considered to be unsatisfactory, despite the drainage of young people by Hollandia. However, it was realized that the shortage of young males was a serious set-back, as too much would have to depend on the effort of the older people and the married men who were still in Nimboran.

The figures of the previous table show clearly that this fear was not unfounded, as the labour capacity of Nimboran threatened to be greatly overtaxed.

The total labour capacity of Nimboran amounted to 465 effective males (18—45 years of age) who were then present in Nimboran. A part of this group had been discharged of the (social) obligation to work because of their special status or occupation, like *koranos*, *érams*, deacons etc. This did not prevent them, however, from seeking employment whenever they felt like it. Many *koranos* accepted employment outside their village in order to be able to earn some additional money.

The total number of active workers may, therefore, be safely estimated at 400. This means that in 1954, the average number of days that each Nimboran was kept occupied by the abovementioned activities, amounted to 155, while the average for 1953 amounted to 150 days. If we take into consideration, not only the occupations in the indigenous sphere, but also a validity of some 60 % <sup>1)</sup>, it is clear that the working year of the Nimboran was filled to capacity. It is to be doubted whether one may count on future increase of the number of working days which the Nimboran population will be able to realize.

It was the rigidity of the labour supply, due to overtaxing of the available man-power, which gave rise to anxiety about the outcome of it all. It was realized that the finding of a solution was essential in order to restart the economic development of the area after it had lost momentum and had almost come to a standstill. However, no definite course of action had been adopted yet when the project was terminated in December 1954.

<sup>1)</sup> An estimate, which according to many physicians was on the high side, also because of the fact that Nimboran has been qualified as a hyper-endemic malaria area by the Head of the sub-department for Malaria Control of the Department of Public Health.

## CHAPTER XIII

### The effect of the Nimboran project on the surrounding population

Finally, we should cast a glance at the situation in the neighbouring areas in order to see what the influence of the project has been on the population in these areas, for it is only logical that what happened in Nimboran was also of influence on the people who were not involved with the project, but who maintained relations with Genjem and Nimboran which were sufficiently close to leave them not entirely unaffected.

Although there were unmistakable indications that Nimboran's neighbours, especially Kamtuk and Gressie, tried to follow the example which was given in Nimboran, on the whole, the results have been disappointing.

The most outstanding effort was made in nearby Kamtuk, where a few men arranged for the laying out of a sizable cash crop garden. Apart from that, an attempt was made at establishing a co-operative store. Both ventures were mutually connected. The return for the sale of products was for a large part used again to purchase commodities in Hollandia, which were sold at the store. The cash crop garden was started with quite a display of energy. However, interest, especially from the side of the men, soon dwindled. The initiators then resorted to female labour in order to continue their project. Each Kamtuk village was told to send its women at regular intervals. Even the tillage of land was attended to by women, and often one would see a long row of women, clumsily handling their hoes, doing their best to prepare the land for sowing.

After two or three harvests, the size of the garden was reduced to only a few patches, which were gradually left to waste until hardly anything remained of the enterprise. An attempt was made by the Agricultural Department to give new life to the undertaking by hiring out a tractor to the Kamtuk people, but even that did not help to resurrect the collapsed enterprise.

The products of this cash crop garden were sold to the Co-operative Society in Genjem, but because of the worsening of the quality of the product, which was to be blamed on the refusal of the people to apply crop-rotation and to use better sowing seed, the Co-operative Society finally had to refuse their products. Moreover, it became rather inopportune to buy from Kamtuk after the difficulties which were experienced with marketing the products of Nimboran began to increase.

All these factors: the decrease of interest of the men, the worsening of the quality of products and the decreasing yields due to insufficient care of the garden, and finally, the refusal of the Co-operative Society in Genjem to buy these products, while no other purchaser could be found, caused the undertaking, which had been so enthusiastically launched by the population, to be abandoned.

The Kamtuk store had a somewhat longer life, although it never seemed to be able to expand. When the Kamtuk people requested permission to open a store in Meikari, one of their villages, the Administration suggested that a Kamtuk man be appointed to run the store. This man could then work with the Co-operative Society in Genjem for a while, in order to acquaint himself with the methods of running a store, keeping the accounts, and similar matters. The suggestion was accepted, and a young man, who had already passed through the village school, was sent to Genjem to become an articled clerk in the office

of the Co-operative Society in Genjem. He went back to his village almost a year later in order to run the store which had already been started on a small scale. The Co-operative Society in Genjem offered assistance in the purchasing of commodities for the Kamtuk store together with their own, in order to enable the others to procure their goods at cheaper prices.

Apart from these undertakings there was also some individual initiative. Many people in Kamtuk began to cultivate cash crops, the products of which were sold to the trading agency of the Co-operative Society in Genjem. The products of these individual cultivators usually were of a better quality than those of the collective enterprise in Meikari. For a short while a pit-sawing enterprise also operated in Kamtuk, but the distance between the saw-mill and Genjem, where the timber was to be sold, proved to be a handicap.

The people refused to carry the timber (although it could easily have been done) as they had decided that it should be transported by means of a motor vehicle, which was an impossibility. Consequently, the saw-mill not being able to market its products ceased to function.

In Gressie, the course of events was somewhat different. At first, the Gressies also expressed their wish to establish a store in one of their villages, which request was duly granted by the Administration. The store in Gressie was run along similar lines as the one in Kamtuk, and although it did meet an urgent necessity, it never seemed able to expand either.

However, the Gressies were not satisfied with only the store. They also wanted the other things which the Nimborans had, and they took action to achieve the desired end.

In 1953, rumours reached the District Officer in Genjem that a *kasiep* movement was underway in Gressie. The instigators were called to Genjem. Among them was one *k o r a n o*. They acknowledged the fact that the major part of Gressie was involved in this movement. After having been reprimanded, and having had it explained to them that they would gain nothing by "making *kasiep*" they were sent home and told to put a stop to the movement. Instead, the *k o r a n o* told his people that he had talked to the *c o n t r o l e u r* and permission had been given to continue with *kasiep*. The people were elated, and the movement gained in force, finally compelling the *c o n t r o l e u r* to go to Gressie himself and end the whole thing. The people were more hurt and disappointed than they were conscious of guilt or of having done something wrong, for they had been making *kasiep* — they said — in order to get a co-operative society, and the Government surely could have no objection to that.

Despite the long talks which were given to the people then and afterwards, the Gressie-people persisted in their attitude.

The Nimboran project demanded a thorough preliminary survey of traditional Nimboran culture, and many inquiries were made into conditions in Nimboran previous to the coming of the white people. Old myths, *kabi*, origin of villages etc. were widely discussed, and much information was given by the people.

Later in 1953, many people from Gressie and Kamtuk started to come to Genjem, preferably at night-time, for a visit to the *c o n t r o l e u r*. When asked what they came for, they would answer that they wanted to "tell the story" or to "release the names". The visitors were very secretive about their business and used to make quite certain that no unwanted people were around.

The telling of stories or names mostly consisted of mentioning names of

ancestors, long dead, the first one of which usually was said to have disappeared, not died. Sometimes a slip of paper was handed over, on which these names had been written. In some cases, elaborate drawings were presented which proved to be immensely difficult to explain. Attempts, to get more coherent stories always proved fruitless, and after long sessions the people usually went home, being very much satisfied themselves, but leaving a frustrated *controlleur* behind.

It took a long time before these secret missions could be explained. Things became more clear later, when a few representatives of the western Gressie-villages were in Genjem to talk about different matters concerning Gressie. One of these matters concerned a few youngsters who intended to take up gardening and thus establish a communal cash crop farming enterprise. The products were to be sold and the money divided amongst the participants in the undertaking. However, it was also explained that a part of the money which was received for these enterprises was to be saved. When asked to which purpose people intended to save the money, the explanation was given that the money was to be used for buying a tractor, after which large-scale farming and accumulation of riches would take place. The next question was how long the people thought it would take to accumulate sufficient money for the purpose. The answer was promptly given. The money was to be put in a chest which was to be locked. After a certain time, the chest was to be opened and it would be found to be brimfull of money; the money needed to make all their wishes come true. The money was to come from the dead ancestors, about whom — they said — the *controlleur* already knew everything. They would get their Co-operative Society and everything else which Nimboran had already got. The disclosure of these facts was given with complete faith in ultimate success.

It showed that the whole course of events in Gressie was aimed at that one purpose: the partaking in the same advantages as had been bestowed upon Nimboran. The *controlleur* was the appointed intermediary, who had the sole power over these matters. It is very likely that the interest which was shown by him and by Dr van Baal in what the Nimboran ancestors did and how they lived, their interest in old myths, the *kabi*, and *kasiép* (an interest which the people had not previously experienced from the Administration), made the people suspect that a connection did actually exist between the inquirers, the inquiries about the people's past, and the development project. After their *kasiép*-movement in 1953 had failed to produce the anticipated results, the Gressies had embarked upon a different course of action: the disclosure of the (secret) names of their mythical ancestors.

Yet, this did not mean that they were altogether inactive. The store was continued and, for a while, also the cash crop garden. However, the bulk of Gressie products came from individual effort. The amount of products which was offered for sale in Genjem was indeed considerable, and, at times, even exceeded the output of Nimboran itself.

In both, Kamtuk and Gressie, native production also suffered from the enormous drain on man-power by Government constructional projects. Although the percentage of males which had left for Hollandia was not as large as in Nimboran, it still caused an additional shortage.

Although in these areas people often gave vent to their deeply felt desire to have a co-operative society and also a mechanised farming enterprise like Nimboran had, there was not the slightest indication that people understood



the meaning of a Co-operative society, and neither were they conversant with the difficulties of mechanised farming, especially in Gressie, which mostly consists of mountainous country. Clearly their conception of a co-operative society was similar to that of the Nimboran people.

The whole process of enthusiastic attempts at copying what had been seen in Nimboran and subsequent failure of most of what had been undertaken, has been very instructive for those who were in charge of the community development project in Nimboran. Despite the attention which was given also to undertakings in Kamtuk and Gressie but which could not be as intensive as it was in Nimboran because the distance was too large to make frequent contact possible, no undertaking of sound and permanent character seemed to be possible. Because of the more limited contact with Kamtuk and Gressie, the people in authority in Genjem were less conversant with the fundamental problems in these areas. The daily contact which could be maintained with the people in Nimboran led to a more thorough understanding of the daily life of the people in that area than could — under the circumstances — be hoped for in the case of Kamtuk and Gressie.

The satisfactory conduct of the business of the Co-operative Society in Nimboran was also largely owing to the fact that it had its residency in Genjem, almost on the doorstep of the District Officer's office. Intensive contact was maintained that way, and the Secretary Treasurer had become used to rely on the support and guidance of the Administration. When one sees the results of far less supervision which was exercised over the accounts of the store in Meikari (from once to twice a month) which had a far smaller turnover to account for than the store in Genjem, and which usually were found not to have been kept properly — if they had been kept at all — despite the fact that the man who ran the store had learned his trade at the Co-operative Society in Genjem, where he did his work well, one begins to understand a little of the almost impossible which is demanded of the people if the standpoint is maintained that the development of the community must be based on selfhelp and own initiative.

The course of events in Kamtuk and Gressie has already proved that the people could not do without intensive support from outside. Support, not only in setting out a course of action which could be adopted by the people, but often, even support in carrying out the minutest details of what had to be done. The more simple facts were soon understood by the people, and some manipulations could be carried out by them independently, but one has to realize also that the manipulations which the people learned to carry out by themselves often were done disconnected from the whole of which they were a part.

It usually takes far longer to make people understand the relation between their own efforts or their own manipulations and the whole of which these are an integrating part, than to make them familiar with a number of — even intricate — techniques. Yet, in order to achieve true progress, the relation between all the different activities should be kept in sight, and as long as the people cannot get a comprehensive view of the situation themselves, someone ~~else~~ has to take that responsibility; in the case of Nimboran, the authority responsible for the development project. Without such supervision and guidance, all the acts of the people will remain disconnected from each other, and there can be little hope for all these different parts one day falling into

place by themselves. On the contrary, we have seen in Kamtuk and Gressie that these efforts of the people were more of a waste than an advantage. The only result was disillusionment because of the failure, and under adverse circumstances it may even lead to distrust and an aversion from new attempts in the same direction.

When we apply the knowledge which has been gained from the failures in Kamtuk and Gressie to Nimboran, one thing becomes especially clear: What has been achieved in Nimboran is for a very large part owing to the intensive supervision and the extensive guidance which Nimboran received from the Government. It is very difficult to say, where Government influence over what was being carried out in Nimboran ends, and indigenous control over matters — made possible because of the understanding of the relation between actual activities and the whole of which these activities were an integrating part — begins.

## CHAPTER XIV

### The Nimboran project as an experiment in social-economic development

We have arrived at the point where more attention to a few aspects of the Nimboran Project has become expedient in order to be able to form an opinion as to its significance for both, the Government as well as for changing Nimboran society.

We will first consider the merits of the project as an experiment in social-economic development of indigenous society, and its contribution to the insight of the Government into the technique of so-called "community development".

After that, the actual contribution of the project to the progress of Nimboran society will be subjected to a brief survey.

In Chapter V, a survey was given of the motives of the Government for the particular approach which was adopted towards the development of Nimboran society.

When casting a glance at the actual happenings in Nimboran it becomes evident that the authorities did in some instances deviate from the planned course. Apparently the ideal approach proved not to be practicable in all its details.

At the time the final draft for the development project was issued, a beginning had already been made with the development of Nimboran society. Several indigenous enterprises had begun to operate, while the Trade Centre, buying native products and offering imported commodities for sale, had already developed into an undertaking of some consequence.

From what has been said in Part III it may be surmized that the set-up of these small enterprises was quite in accordance with the ideas which were later advanced by the Government in the paper quoted above.

However, the situation was soon to change, for, with the introduction of the mechanised farming enterprise, an undertaking of considerable scope when seen in relation to the enterprises which were started on the village level, a new element was introduced which demanded interference with indigenous society which went much further than in the case of village industry. Although the latter had been stimulated by the Government, fundamentally it was true indigenous enterprise, the continuation of which was wholly dependent on the industry and the enthusiasm of the Nimborans.

The mechanised farming enterprise was an undertaking which was essentially non-indigenous in its set-up. This was mainly due to the fact that — apart from its function as a stimulating agent for the creation of collective interests — it was to become the corner stone of Nimboran's agricultural development. It had to supply capital for the development of the area, and it was to become able to lift the risks of financial loss off the shoulders of the future individual farmers.

In addition to that, the mechanised farming enterprise was chiefly dependent on production for the market outside Nimboran, either the national, or the international market.

The conduct of the enterprise also cost considerable sums of money. In order to make the farm independent of Government (financial) support as

soon as possible, it was, therefore, necessary to aim at increased earning capacity. This demanded a policy of the Government which was rational and did conform to (Western) economic demands.

The financial side of the enterprise, and the fact that production was directed at the market outside Nimboran, put the enterprise at once beyond the realm of true indigenous enterprise. There was the ever looming threat of the mechanised farm becoming a non-indigenous enterprise employing Nimboran labour.

The policy of deferred payment of wages which was at first adopted to make the people understand that it was, in the first place, a Nimboran-enterprise, did not find approval with them. Yet it was considered worth while to continue. This policy has already been termed an indirect coercive method which did not conform to the attitude which was at first taken by the Government. But the solution which was later found for this problem, the introduction of task-work and task-wages, was just as little based on the principle of fostering spontaneous activity, although by the new method a stimulus was given to indigenous effort. However, one should distinguish this kind of effort, which is primarily based on the need for immediate cash, from the kind of effort which is based on a sense of collective responsibility for the enterprise, and which the deferred payment of wages aimed at in the first place.

An additional complication was the fact that the Agricultural Department which was primarily concerned with the mechanised farming enterprise and which was held responsible for the technical perfection of the undertaking, was seriously handicapped by its lack of experience in this field of indigenous agriculture, and met with great difficulties in trying to make the two opposed interests (earning capacity, and experimenting with new crops and machinery to find the most suitable combination under prevailing local conditions) agree with each other.

The mechanised farming enterprise, an essential part of the development project, had turned out to be an undertaking which demanded intensive Government interference.

It is not at all surprising that the population did not even suspect all these implications, and it would not have been strange if — under the circumstances — they had actually considered the whole undertaking a Government enterprise which supplied them with a means of earning money. It is only owing to the continued effort of the Government to involve the population in matters pertaining to the enterprise at all times, and to letting the responsibility for the daily management of the farm rest with the small staff of Nimborans who had been selected for this purpose, that the people began to consider the enterprise as something belonging to them, even though it remained, together with the other enterprises of the Co-operative Society, at the other end of the bridge which connected their world with the one they hoped to become a part of.

A similar development may be noticed in the case of the Co-operative Society. This Society was established, not because it was indicated by the trend of developments within Nimboran society, but rather because it was considered an adequate means to organize indigenous enterprise and — above all — because it was thought to become a stimulant of collective behaviour in Nimboran. Unfortunately, little attention was at the time paid to the implications of this measure.

A more elaborate discussion of the part which was played by the Society, and

the attitude which the Nimborans adopted towards it, has already been given in Chapter X. In this case too, the conduct of the enterprise — which a co-operative society decidedly may be considered to be — remained on a level which was beyond the understanding of the average Nimboran.

Here too, non-indigenous economic standards prevailed, which was the more stressed by the fact that the Society was a legal one and had to conform to the demands of the Legislature, for this necessitated the keeping of accounts by the Society's administrator which he could not possibly attend to without support from outside.

The attitude of the Nimborans towards the project formed an additional complication.

This attitude has already been discussed and may be summarized as follows:

a. From the outset the attitude of the Nimboran had been one of inactive expectation, which was especially pronounced in the case of those who had migrated to Hollandia. In Nimboran this attitude was less pronounced due to:

1. the possibility to satisfy urgently felt needs and,
2. persuasion by the Co-operative Society (the executives) and the Government to make an effort.

b. Self interest of the individual Nimboran was the major incentive towards activity.

c. The interest which was shown for newly introduced ideas aiming at the stimulation of collective effort in general, proved to be of an entirely different nature than had been expected. A typical example is the attitude which was taken towards the Co-operative Society. Instead of an organization, the character of which was to be determined by the collective will of the members, this Society was sooner seen in connection with the uncomprehended new world of which it was an exponent exerting its own influence. By becoming a member one was supposed to enter into its sphere of influence, and thus be able to participate in its advantages.

Indigenous initiative, therefore, soon proved to need active stimulation by the Government. It seemed that not only had all the implications of the measures which were to be taken been underestimated at first, but also the population's own possible contribution to its development was overestimated. This was partly due to the fact that the deeply seated convictions of the population had not been sufficiently taken into account, which led to a too optimistic diagnosis of the dilemma in which Nimboran society found itself before the project was launched.

A deviation from the course which had been planned originally could hardly be avoided.

When considering the course which the development of Nimboran has taken, one thing becomes especially clear: as the plans which had been drafted by the Government were realized, the need for attention and expert guidance increased accordingly. Especially in the cases where comparatively new ideas were introduced (mechanised farming enterprise, Co-operative Society) the Government was compelled to take more control than had been planned for originally. The attention of the District Officer, which should have been divided between the project and his other duties, was drawn away by the development project which kept him almost fully occupied, an occurrence which had not been foreseen by the Government, and far less intended.

What was the situation like in Nimboran when the development project

came to a close? Summarizing what has been said in the previous chapters, we come to the following conclusions:

a. A number of leading personalities had come to the fore in Nimboran who were amenable to new ideas but who experienced a strong opposition from the Nimboran (on the whole <sup>1)</sup>), which was due to the fact that

b. the population had not altogether abandoned its first reaction to the project, which was characterised by an attitude of inactive expectation and the persistence of their secret belief in *kasiep*, and that

c. self interest was still the motivating force for economic effort.

d. A tendency appeared to turn one's back on Nimboran if no satisfaction was derived from one's efforts in Nimboran (unfulfilled expectations and too persisting demands for wage labour, leaving little room for independent activities).

e. A tendency had become apparent towards the forming of more or less independent nuclei of activity (the villages or groups of villages) around Genjem which itself grew into a nucleus of regional activity (Co-operative Society, Government, market, stores, recreation, educational activities, health centre).

f. The attitude towards the Co-operative Society persisted. The failure of the fulfilment of the high hopes which were cherished by the population concerning the introduction of the development project, and which was more or less expected to come with the acceptance of membership of the Society, resulted in sharp disappointment to which the ever increasing demand for labour which was exercised by the Government added considerably.

g. Changes in the economic sphere had only partly been able to influence the social side of Nimboran life. The intellectual emancipation of the Nimboran and his adaptation to changing conditions had hardly started yet.

h. Dualism in the economic effort of the Nimboran (production for private needs, strictly separated from production for the market) shows that the new economic activities had not been yet assimilated. They existed independent of, and in addition to, the traditional forms of subsistence economy. The same is also shown by money traffic in Nimboran.

i. The employment of labour by the Government had led to new problems. The Nimboran was mostly employed outside the indigenous sphere and had, consequently, become economically dependent on this form of employment which did not connect with the possible forms of employment in indigenous society.

The situation in Nimboran was clearly far from stabilized yet. Unfavourable influencing of any of the abovementioned factors would be likely to lead to serious repercussions within Nimboran society. Stabilization of the situation was not to be expected before the changes which were inspired by the development project had become fully assimilated by Nimboran society. As long as the recently introduced changes only adhered to the customary pattern of behaviour due to the guidance and attention which was contributed from outside, they would be likely to pass out of existence again if the intensity of outside assistance decreased, leaving many sore spots within Nimboran society which would be extremely difficult to heal.

In this context special attention may be drawn to the fact that after the high

<sup>1)</sup> see page 142-143.

hopes which had been cherished by the population had found no fulfilment, the population relapsed into an attitude of disappointment, bordering on disillusionment. With the people being in such a state, little would be needed to upset the balance and lead to the spreading of general disillusionment, causing those who favoured an attitude of inactive expectation above active participation, to become convinced that it was all a grave mistake. One can easily understand that a renewed attempt at development after that, would undoubtedly meet with serious difficulties.

Although, undoubtedly, there were tendencies which pointed to an improvement of conditions which justified a moderate confidence in the future development of Nimboran, the situation had reached the critical stage which it had been heading for all along. For there was to come a time when the people would be confronted with the choice of persisting in their attitude which had been adopted from the very beginning, or break with their prejudices and become active participants. In Chapter XI stress has already been laid on the need for general education as an indispensable element in the development of Nimboran. When too much stress is laid on material development and the organization of economic activities, while the intellectual development of the people does not receive the attention which it deserves, tension is bound to break forth.

The case which was presented in Nimboran is a good illustration of this presumption. It is, therefore, not at all improbable that an actual crisis might have been prevented if attention to the need for general education could have been given sooner, and on a wider scale.

When summarizing the above, the following conclusions may be drawn in relation to the Nimboran Community Development Project:

a. At the time of drafting a scheme for the development, the implications of the measures to be taken were not sufficiently understood, which led to an underrating of the guidance which was demanded.

b. With the execution of the project, therefore, the Government was compelled to deviate in some respects from the original plans, and

c. far more attention was demanded from the Government than had been expected.

d. In relation to the stress which was laid on the material development and the introduction of new activities, too little attention was paid to the lag which was thus caused between the material and the intellectual development of the Nimboran, and hence

e. tension grew within Nimboran society which tended towards a crisis.

f. The situation in Nimboran, at the end of 1954, was unstable and might easily — but not necessarily — lead to serious repercussions within Nimboran society.

The conclusions which have been drawn above are far from reassuring. Yet, it would be going too far to decide that the development of Nimboran has become a failure. It is undoubtedly true that many errors were made, but that is something which is — after all — inherent to a pilot project. If the Government had known beforehand all the answers to the questions which have been discussed in this book, there would have been no need for a pilot project.

The major contribution of the Nimboran project to our knowledge of community development is that it has shown beyond doubt that a total approach

towards the development of a society, as was attempted in Nimboran, demands the undivided attention of the Government which undertakes such an attempt, for the intricateness of the problems with which indigenous society confronts the Government goes so deep and takes such a long time to become actually evident, that it is almost unthinkable that the Government will be fully familiar with them beforehand, and will thus be able to draft a water-tight scheme for development which can be carried out according to plan.

The Nimboran project has also shown that a total approach is most likely to succeed, as it is — by its nature — compelled to take notice of all the implications of the measures which are taken, and offers the best possibilities of guiding the process of social change into a preconceived direction. The project has also confirmed the opinion that the development of Papuan society cannot be accomplished within a short span of time, but rather that it is a process which will stretch over many years. It has also shown that much more is needed than only a stimulus which sets a process of change in motion, after which the population may be expected to continue its own development without intensive attention from outside. The role of the authority responsible for this development cannot be considered terminated before indigenous society has actually regained its balance on a new level of existence, and the seeds for further emancipation — independent of outside assistance — are to be found actually present within society.



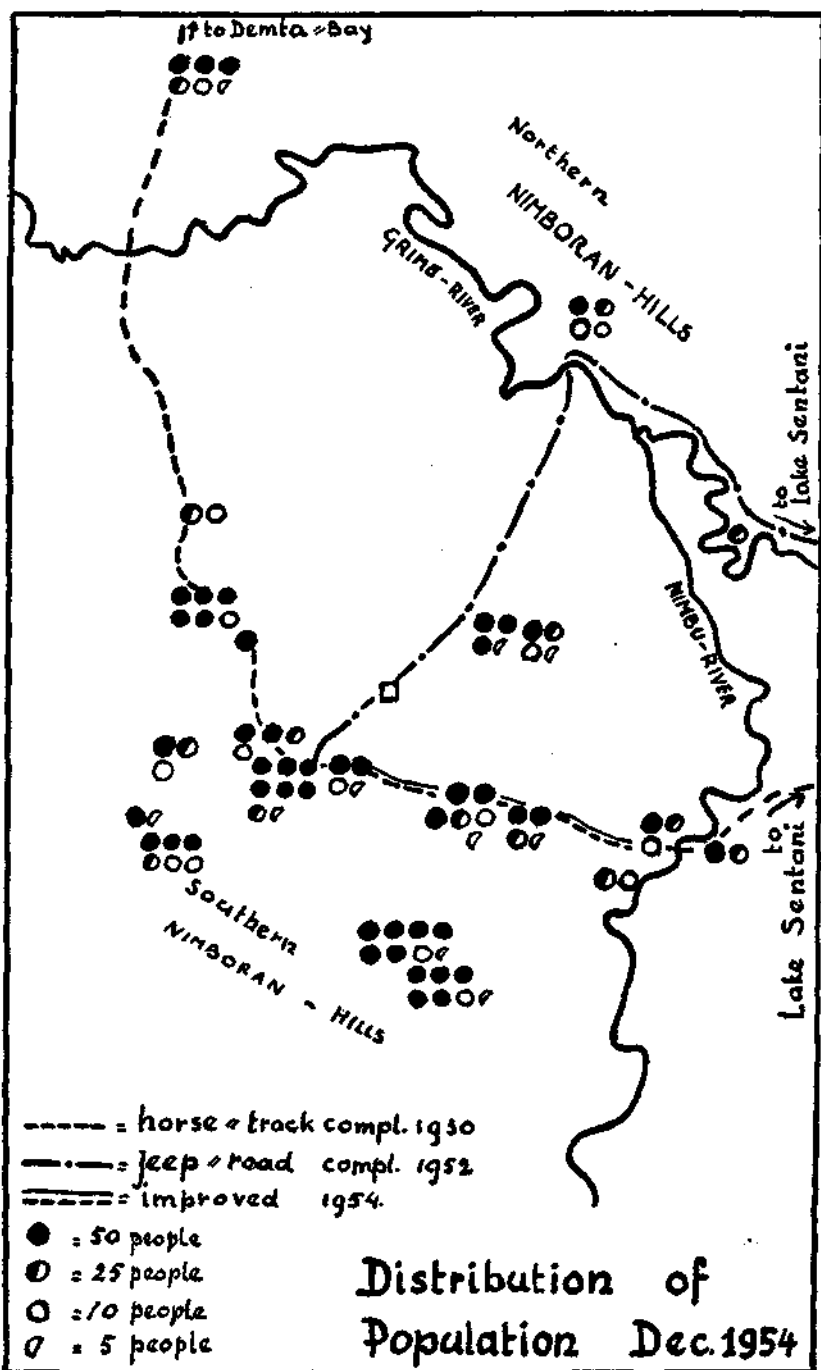


Figure 5

## APPENDIX I

### The population of Nimboran 1952-1954 <sup>1)</sup>

Before attempting an analysis of the figures given below, it should be emphasized that these figures have been derived from a small group (not quite 3,000 people, the *total population strength of Nimboran*) and — although they represent the actual situation in Nimboran — are likely to show too pronounced differences over the three years to which they refer. The trends of population, therefore, tend to be too exaggerated, and will, consequently, be dealt with carefully.

In figure 5 a diagram is given of the distribution of the population over the Nimboran area, representing the situation on December 31st 1954. Table 10 gives a near accurate account of the composition of the Nimboran population according to sex and the different age groups at four different intervals of time. With the aid of the figures for December 31st 1954, a diagram (population pyramid) has been made to present a picture of the buildup of the population at that time (figure 6).

A marked deviation from the average is to be noted in the age-group of 4-5 years. This concerns, therefore, the children born in 1950. There can be two causes: either the birth-rate for 1950 was unusually low, or infant mortality was unusually high in 1950-1951. The latter is partly true. In 1951 a total of 34 infants (23 boys and 11 girls) died, due to an epidemic of hooping-cough which raged in Nimboran during the spring of 1951.

But even when accounting for this epidemic, the age-group remains relatively badly represented, which cannot but indicate a low birth-rate for 1950. This might be explained from the fact that between 1949 and 1950, a large number of young Nimboran men, many of whom were married, went to Hollandia, leaving their families behind. A part of the married men returned to Nimboran soon afterwards to be replaced by others who were yet to go. At a later period, most of the women who were left in Nimboran followed their husbands, thus more or less restoring the balance within the area.

The ill-fated migration to Hollandia of 1949-1950, may, therefore, have been a factor, contributing to the decrease in the birth-rate in 1950.

A second group which is badly represented is the age-group of 9-13 years. The group therefore, composed of those who were born in the years of the second World War (1941-1945). Although it cannot be proved, it may safely be assumed that a relative increase of the mortality-rate partly resulted from the sudden withdrawal of medical care for the population which previously had been provided for by the Mission.

The main reason for this "shortage" in the population pyramid should be looked for in the peculiar circumstances of war-time New Guinea. Although the usual cause for a drop in the birth-rate in wartime (armed forces

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<sup>1)</sup> As the Nimborans who were residing in Hollandia at the time of the population counts were not considered as having moved permanently yet (their return to Nimboran — though not likely — was a possibility which had to be reckoned with) and because those people still considered themselves as actually belonging in Nimboran, they were included in the counts.

Table 10

POPUL-

AGE	M E N								W O M			
	UNMARRIED				MARRIED				UNMARRIED			
	Dec 31 1951	Dec 31 1952	Dec 31 1953	Dec 31 1954	Dec 31 1951	Dec 31 1952	Dec 31 1953	Dec 31 1954	Dec 31 1951	Dec 31 1952	Dec 31 1953	Dec 31 1954
0- 1	70	64	67	59					58	65	62	62
1- 2	38	66	53	64					33	54	58	55
2- 3	45	35	62	53					51	33	53	57
3- 4	41	43	34	60					46	49	30	50
4- 5	50	40	43	34					42	46	48	30
5- 6	43	49	40	43					37	42	46	47
6- 7	28	42	46	40					47	37	42	46
7- 8	23	28	42	46					24	47	36	42
8- 9	30	23	28	42					31	24	47	36
9-10	22	30	23	28					28	31	24	46
10-11	23	21	30	23					25	28	31	24
11-12	37	23	21	30					24	24	28	30
12-13	36	37	23	21					33	24	24	28
13-14	36	36	37	23					31	33	24	24
14-15	30	36	36	37					23	30	31	24
15-16	27	30	35	36	1				16	21	29	29
16-17	35	27	30	34	—	1			22	14	18	27
17-18	26	32	26	30	—	2	2		8	19	14	17
18-19	24	26	30	25	3	1	4	3	19	7	17	11
19-20	18	24	22	26	11	3	5	8	4	15	5	13
20-21	10	18	23	21	1	11	4	6	5	4	8	1
21-22	39	8	14	23	12	3	15	4	8	4	4	5
22-23	13	34	7	10	23	16	4	19	1	6	3	3
23-24	12	10	27	6	18	25	23	5	—	1	1	1
24-25	5	10	10	25	23	20	25	25	4	—	1	—
25-26	6	5	7	9	18	22	23	26	—	4	—	—
26-27	9	6	4	7	20	18	23	22	—	—	2	—
27-28	1	7	5	2	16	21	19	23	4	—	—	2
28-29	3	1	6	4	24	15	22	19	—	4	—	—
29-30	—	3	1	4	46	24	15	24	—	—	—	—
30-31	—	—	3	1	16	45	24	15	—	—	—	2
31-32	3	—	—	3	29	15	45	24	1	—	—	—
32-33	2	3	—	—	30	28	15	44	1	1	—	—
33-34	—	2	3	—	19	29	2	13	1	1	1	—
34-35	—	—	2	2	10	18	29	28	—	1	1	1
35-36	—	—	—	1	19	10	18	30	—	—	1	1
36-37	—	—	—	—	39	19	10	18	1	—	—	1
37-38	1	—	—	—	17	39	19	10	—	1	—	—
38-39	—	1	—	—	9	17	38	19	—	—	—	—
39-40	1	—	1	—	19	9	17	38	—	—	—	—
40-41	—	1	—	1	6	18	8	16	—	—	—	—
41-42	—	—	1	—	30	6	18	8	—	—	—	—
42-43	—	—	—	1	5	30	6	18	—	—	—	—
Total unmarried	787	821	842	874					628	670	691	715

LATION

E N				A G E	M E N				W O M E N			
MARRIED					MARRIED				MARRIED			
Dc 31 1951	Dc 31 1952	Dc 31 1953	Dc 31 1954		Dc 31 1951	Dc 31 1952	Dc 31 1953	Dc 31 1954	Dc 31 1951	Dc 31 1952	Dc 31 1953	Dc 31 1954
				43-44	7	5	29	6	11	6	27	6
				44-45	18	6	5	28	17	11	5	27
				45-46	5	18	6	5	4	17	10	5
				46-47	27	4	18	6	21	4	16	9
				47-48	5	27	4	18	2	21	4	13
				48-49	4	4	26	4	4	2	21	4
				49-50	3	3	4	25	17	4	2	19
				50-51	1	3	3	2	—	17	4	1
				51-52	8	1	3	3	6	—	17	4
				52-53	2	8	1	3	6	6	—	16
				53-54	5	2	8	1	1	6	6	—
				54-55	1	5	2	8	5	1	6	5
				55-56	2	1	5	2	5	5	1	5
1				56-57	6	2	1	5	4	5	4	1
2	2	1		57-58	1	5	1	1	—	4	4	4
3	3	2	1	58-59	1	1	5	1	3	—	4	4
6	4	5	4	59-60	5	1	1	5	10	3	—	4
9	9	3	6	60-61	—	5	1	1	—	8	3	—
19	10	9	5	older	24	21	22	20	17	17	23	25
17	23	12	11									
5	17	28	15									
20	6	17	31	Total (Married)	589	587	604	609	675	681	684	687
29	22	7	18	Unmarried	787	821	842	874	628	670	691	715
18	29	26	9									
31	17	29	27	General total	1376	1408	1446	1483	1303	1351	1375	1402
20	31	17	30									
29	20	32	17									
17	29	19	32									
22	16	29	19									
33	22	17	29									
8	32	22	17									
34	8	31	22									
20	34	8	31									
15	19	32	8									
24	15	19	32									
17	24	15	19									
48	17	23	14									
18	47	17	23									
5	18	47	17									
31	5	18	46									
7	31	5	18									
28	6	31	5									
6	28	6	29									

POPULATION				Dc 31 1951	Dc 31 1952	Dc 31 1953	Dc 31 1954
Men				1376	1408	1446	1483
Women				1303	1351	1375	1402
Total				2679	2759	2821	2885

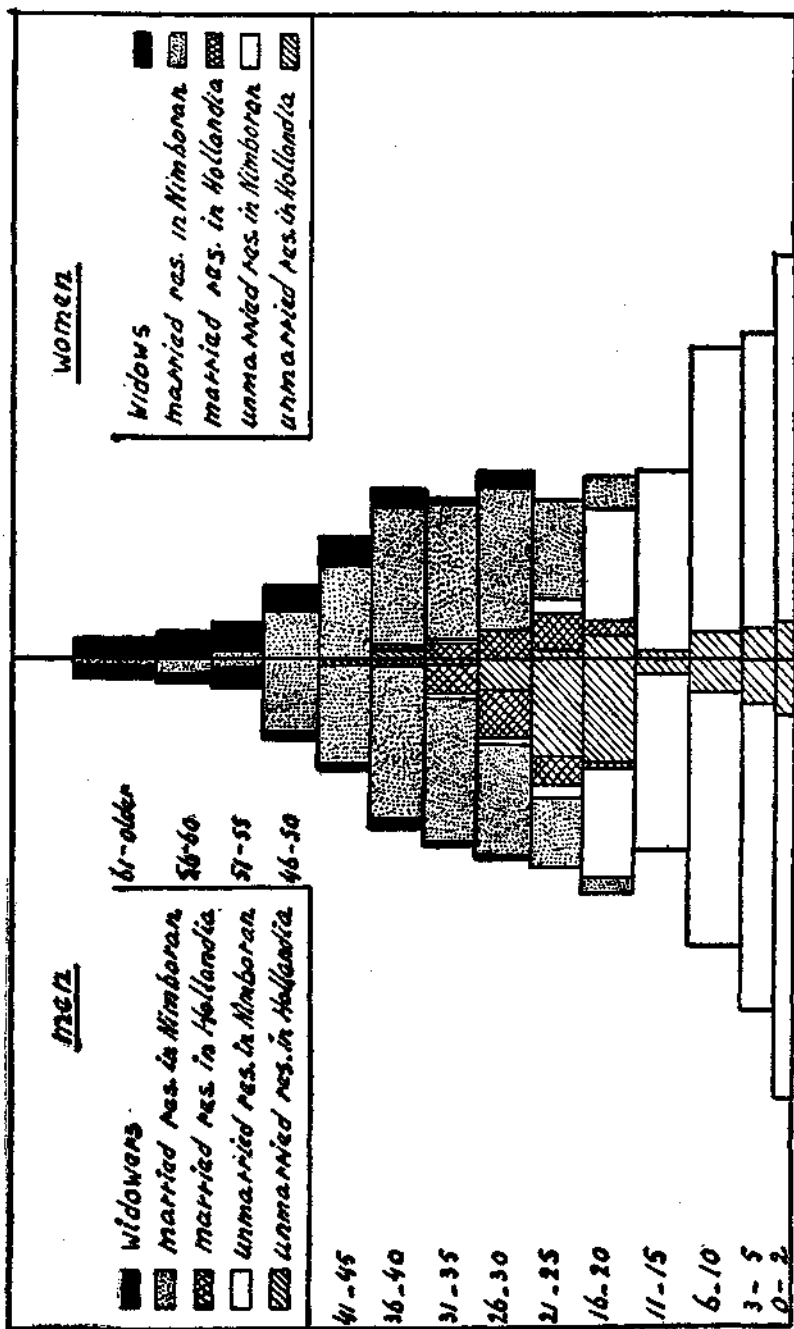


Figure 6. Population pyramid Nimboran. Dec. 31st. 1954.

service) did not apply to the Nimboran population, there had been excessive drainage of young men for compulsory labour during the Japanese occupation and under the *Bürgerdienstpflicht*-ordinance during the allied military occupation.

The fact that the 1949-1950 migrations appear to have been less telling on the increase of population than the years of war, may be explained by the fact that more unmarried men were concerned with the migration to Hollandia, while compulsory labour, imposed on the male population during the war, did not discriminate between married and unmarried men.

The third marked "shortage" is to be found in the age-group of 23-24 years, those born in 1931. The only possible explanation which can be given for this is the epidemic of infantile paralysis which struck Nimboran between 1931 and 1933, and which made many victims, especially under the younger generation.

It is clear from this that little is needed to upset the balance in a community of the size of Nimboran. Causes like illness, the withdrawal of labour at a forced pace, and excessive migration do not fail to leave their marks on society.

Especially the influence of the migrations to Hollandia is of great importance. This is clearly shown by the figures, relating to that part of the population which was away from Nimboran on December 31st 1954. Especially the groups of unmarried men from 16-25 years of age, and married men from 26-30 years of age appears to have been considerably thinned because of the migrations to Hollandia. It is beyond doubt that such excessive migration affects the productive capacity of an area unfavourably, which is clearly shown when a comparison is made between the following table and the tables 1 and 10 (pp. 84 and 204-205).

TABLE 11. CLASSIFICATION OF POPULATION ACCORDING TO PRODUCTIVITY DEC. 31 1954<sup>1)</sup>

	non-productive	half-productive	full-productive
men	41.5 %	13 %	45.5 %
women	42.3 %	16 %	41.7 %

The young, unmarried Nimboran male hardly took an active part in village life anymore, and it was mainly the married males from 25 years and upwards who carried the load of economic effort.

The figures, given in table 12 are not unfavourable:

A steady population increase during the years from 1951 until 1954 is noticeable. It is not certain whether this increase was a phenomenon of the last few years, as no reliable counts were available of the preceding years.

The density of population was high for New Guinea, and seems to have been on the increase. If it were not for the decrease of population owing to the migrations to Hollandia, conditions might be called very favourable.

<sup>1)</sup> The following age-groups were taken:

	<i>non-productive</i>	<i>half-productive</i>	<i>full-productive</i>
men	0—13 and 51-older	14—17 and 46—50	18—45
women	0—11 and 51-older	12—15 and 41—50	16—40

TABLE 12. RESULTS OF THE POPULATION COUNTS

Time of count	Total of population	Increase of population		number of women per 1000 men	Number of inhabitants per square kilometre
		1951=100	annual increase in %		
Dec. 31					
1951	2,679	100	—	947	16.2
1952	2,759	103	3	960	16.7
1953	2,821	105.3	2.25	951	17.1
1954	2,885	107.7	2.27	945	17.5

A typical phenomenon is the ratio of the total number of women to the total number of men in Nimboran.

In the lower age-groups, the number of women is slightly less than that of men. This difference is more pronounced in the age-groups of 11-35 years, while the higher age-groups count more women than men. An explanation for this phenomenon is not easy to find. It was a known fact that the care for girls during the first years of their life was inadequate, especially when the mother died during or shortly after giving birth to the child. The motherless children were then entrusted to the care of relatives. In most cases a good home was soon found for boys, but it was no exception when a girl was moved from one house to the other, which did little good to the child.

The greater number of women in the higher age-groups may be explained by the fact that the duration of life of women was usually longer than that of men, or in other words, that the rate of mortality was higher among the men belonging to the age-groups of 35 years and older, than that of the women belonging to the same age-group. However, when consulting the mortality rate of the last three years, no proof is found for this presumption, which again does not imply that it is altogether false.

At any rate, the figures do suggest a deviation in the composition of the population which deserves attention as it may be of influence on the further development of Nimboran society. For instance, it is not wholly unlikely that a tendency will develop to let girls marry at an earlier age (look at these figures also in relation to the number of married and unmarried men and women in the age-group of 16-30 years), something which will not be of benefit to the young people, especially the girls, for when girls are likely to marry sooner, the parents will become less willing to leave their girls at school at a higher age, which — for instance — would make it almost impossible for a girl to attend a continuation school.

Another, not less likely, result could be the increased departure of young males to other places where they are more likely to succeed in finding a wife.

**The trend of population (1952—1954).** After what has been said in the preceding paragraph, little has to be added.

*Births.* Table 13 gives the birth rate for the years 1952, 1953, and 1954, the ratio between the number of girls and the number of boys which were

TABLE 13. BIRTHS

	boys	girls	total	boys per 100 girls	general natality*)
1952	74	69	143	107	52.6
1953	78	74	152	105	54.5
1954	70	69	139	101	48.7

\*) per 1000 average population.

born alive, and the general natality for these years.

The figures are not unfavourable. General natality was high, also in 1954. A typical feature is that the — in Western countries — generally accepted rule that more boys are born than girls, is also applicable to Nimboran. This causes even more emphasis to be put on the inapplicability of the subsequent rule that in the lower age-groups the mortality-rate among boys is relatively higher than that among girls, which causes a surplus of women over men in the higher age-groups. This may be an indication that there is some truth in the explanation which was given above (less care for girls in their first years).

*Marriage.* The number of marriages in Nimboran during 1952—1954, may be considered normal. In the following table the number of men and women who married in Nimboran in 1952-1954 for the first time is given.

TABLE 14. MARRIAGES

year of birth	MEN			WOMEN			TOTAL		
	1952	1953	1954	1952	1953	1954	1952	1953	1954
1939	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	1	1
1938	—	—	—	1	—	2	1	—	2
1937	—	—	—	1	2	1	1	2	1
1936	—	1	1	1	—	3	1	1	4
1935	2	2	4	3	2	3	5	4	7
1934	—	4	1	1	2	3	1	6	4
1933	—	1	—	4	7	3	4	8	3
1932	—	4	4	—	—	1	—	4	5
1931	2	1	1	1	1	2	3	2	3
1930	5	7	2	2	5	1	7	12	3
1929	3	—	1	—	—	1	3	—	2
1928	2	3	—	—	—	—	2	3	—
1927	—	1	1	—	2	—	—	3	1
1926	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
1925	1	1	2	—	—	—	1	1	2
1924	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	—
elder	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	2
Total	15	26	19	14	23	21	29	49	40
	General Nuptiality *)						10.7	17.6	14

\*) Number of people marrying per 1000 average population.



A typical feature is that despite increased nuptiality for 1953, no corresponding increase of natality has been recorded for 1954; on the contrary, the birth-rate for 1954 shows a conspicuous drop. A reason for this retrogression cannot be given.

*Mortality.* In table 15 figures are given concerning the rate of mortality in Nimboran during 1952, 1953 and 1954.

TABLE 15. MORTALITY<sup>1)</sup>

age group (years)	MEN						WOMEN						TOTAL					
	1952		1953		1954		1952		1953		1954		1952		1953		1954	
	um	m	um	m	um	m	um	m	um	m	um	m	um	m	um	m	um	m
0- 1	10	—	11	—	11	—	4	—	12	—	7	—	14	—	23	—	18	—
1- 2	4	—	11	—	3	—	4	—	7	—	7	—	8	—	18	—	10	—
2- 3	3	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	3	—	5	—	1	—
3- 4	2	—	1	—	2	—	2	—	3	—	3	—	4	—	4	—	5	—
4- 6	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	2	—	1	—	1	—
6-10	1	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	1	—	4	—	1	—
10-15	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	1	—	2	—	1	—	1	—
15-25	2	2	1	—	1	—	2	1	2	6	3	3	4	3	3	6	4	3
25-35	1	7	—	—	2	6	—	3	1	5	—	—	1	10	1	5	2	6
35-45	—	2	—	3	—	2	—	2	1	3	—	4	—	4	1	6	—	6
45-50	—	3	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	2	—	6	—	3	—	3	—	7
50-older	—	2	—	5	—	5	—	2	—	4	—	5	—	4	—	9	—	10
Total	26	16	31	9	19	14	13	8	30	20	24	18	39	24	61	29	43	32
Tot. um+m	42		40		33		21		50		42		63		90		75	
General mortality*)													23.2		32.3		26.3	

um = unmarried, m = married.

\*) per 1000 average population.

These figures also offer a — for New Guinea — normal picture. The infant mortality rate has remained high during the past three years. Unfortunately, figures are lacking concerning the infant mortality-rate during the previous years, so that one cannot state with certainty that the care for mother and child, which started in April 1953, has already booked favourable results. It would probably be expecting too much at any rate, to hope for a decline in the death-rate so soon.

1) The mortality table does not give a true picture of the infant mortality rate. The group 0—1 years only represents the children which were born in 1952, 1953 and 1954, and which died in the same year. The group 1—2 years represents the children which were born in 1951, 1952, and 1953, and which died in 1952, 1953, and 1954, respectively etc.

Table 16 supplies a general picture of the trend of population during the years 1952-1954.

TABLE 16. THE TREND OF POPULATION IN NIMBORAN

	General natality *)	General mortality *)	General nuptiality o)	Infant mortality ==)	Increase of population *)
1952	52.6	23.2	10.7	15.4 %	29.4
1953	54.5	32.3	17.6	21.7 %	22.2
1954	48.7	26.3	14	17.3 %	22.4

\*) per 1000 average population.

o) see note to table 14.

==) Infants of 0—1 year of age.

Number of deceased infants per 100 born alive.

An explanation of these figures is almost superfluous. It may be pointed out, however, that the fluctuations in the figures are of little meaning because the group of people to whom these figures refer is too small to justify the drawing of conclusions from such fluctuations. However, the annual figures are sufficiently close to each other to supply an average which is also truly representative for conditions in Nimboran.

## APPENDIX II

### Village industry in Nimboran

#### *Woodworking industry*

*The pit-sawing enterprise of Semuel Demotekai.* One of the first enterprises to be established was a pit-sawing enterprise which was organized by a Nimboran by the name of Semuel Demotekai. Timber being available in Nimboran in relative abundance, the production of building timber and carpentering timber offered attractive possibilities. The demand for timber which was exercised by the Mission and Administration in Genjem guaranteed a ready market for the output of the enterprise.

The initiator of the pit-sawing enterprise, who later became the proprietor, had previously worked in a saw-mill belonging to a colonist in Hollandia. He may, therefore, be considered to have become more or less skilled in this trade.

The enterprise began its work in the spring of 1952. With three old two-handed saws and twenty men the business was started. The site selected for the enterprise was situated half-way between the villages of Pobaim and Warombaim. Timber was available in abundance in that area and the choice of the site coincided with the plans for leading the main-road from Genjem to Borowai through that particular tract of forest.

At first, work only progressed at a slow rate owing to the imperfect tools which had to be relied on. Production was limited during the first four months (the total output of timber in that period yielded no more than f 905,75 in cash). After ten new saws had been procured, work was extended, which led to a corresponding increase in output. Production during the second half of 1952 yielded f 2.105,25 in cash, while the total output of 1953, amounted to 32.02 cubic metres <sup>1)</sup> of sawn timber with a total cash value of f 6.126,25.

The enormous pressure which was exerted on Nimboran man-power during 1954, owing to the heavy repairwork which had to be done on the road, strongly affected the output of the saw-mill during that year. Increased transportation along the road, also during the time that the road was soaked with water from continuous rain, was made necessary as the supply of food for the girls school, the extended building-programme, and an increased output of products by the mechanised farming enterprise called for more frequent transportation. Consequently, the unmetalled road suffered badly and was in urgent need of repair. More labour had to be attracted and the saw-mill was forced by circumstances to close down for two months owing to shortage of labour.

It was only with great difficulty that — after these two months — the enterprise started to function again. Labour was still scarce, and an additional handicap was the fact that delayed production led to delayed returns, and so the payment of wages had to be postponed. People were less inclined to work at the saw-mill.

In October 1954, action was taken by the District Officer, and new life was put into the undertaking. A 32" circular saw, which had been

<sup>1)</sup> 1 metre is approximately 39.4 inches. 1 cubic metre (m<sup>3</sup>) = 1.308 cubic yards.

previously purchased and which was to be driven by the tractor of the mechanised farming enterprise (hired from the farm by the saw-mill for that purpose), offered a possibility for an additional increase of the output of the mill.

The workmen were divided into three teams. One team was charged with felling and sawing the so-called Iron wood (*Intsia*) which was too hard to be sawn mechanically. A second team felled the less hard trees and prepared the logs for the mechanical saw. The third team, which was headed by Semuel Demotekai himself, operated the mechanical saw.

The daily wages were increased by f 0,50 after the workmen had voted for continued payment of daily wages instead of the proposed sharing in the actual return for the output of the mill.

Production of the saw-mill increased considerably during the last two months of 1954, while the increased wages gave full satisfaction to the workmen without causing the proprietor to lose money. Work was done with more gusto again, and the proprietor, who also supervised the work of the teams which were stationed in the forest, was accumulating a nice capital which he intended to use for buying better equipment and — if possible — additional machinery.

The enterprise still needed close attention and expert guidance. The recent extension of work, and the fact that the enterprise was scattered over a wider area made supervision less easy, although not less necessary.

The off-take of sawn timber was fully guaranteed by the Co-operative Society, which — after consultation with the Administration — fixed a price (per cubic metre) for different kinds and sizes of timber. The timber was sold by the Co-operative Society to the Administration (for building purposes), to the Mission, and to the carpentry workshop. A profit of 10 percent was made on the sales to the first two. The carpentry workshop, as an indigenous enterprise of which the proprietor was a member of the Co-operative Society, purchased at prime cost.

*The carpentry workshop of Daniel Demotekai.* The most spectacular development took place in the enterprise which had been initiated by Daniel Demotekai. Previously he had been a carpenter in the employment of the local Administration in Genjem. He never received a vocational training, unless one wants to consider the time that he was a journeyman carpenter with the Mission as such.

As a carpenter Daniel showed outstanding ability. He was devoted to his work and showed a remarkable skill which was seldom met with.

When it was suggested to him to employ his skill in an enterprise of his own he consented, but at the same time he requested to be guided in organizing and running his future enterprise. Apart from that he expressed a wish for further training. He felt that in his vocation there was much to learn yet.

Thus in the spring of 1952, Daniel started to work as a private carpenter. Two apprentices were signed on to work with him. They were paid a daily wage of f 1.— In the beginning the output of the saw-mill of Semuel Demotekai (a relative) was too small to supply Daniel with the necessary timber, so he was forced to go into the forest himself with his two apprentices to get his own timber. The workshop was as yet badly equipped. The

tools with which they had to work were primitive and inadequate. Yet, Daniel started to turn out furniture. Drawings were not available, but with the aid of a book on interior architecture working-drawings were made. Old pre-war furniture also served as examples. Through unrelenting industry, and owing to the native capability of the chief carpenter, the enterprise was carried through its first difficult stages. The money which was received for old furniture was saved, and after a few months there was enough to buy a complete set of modern carpentry tools.

More men were employed, and owing to the increased output of the saw-mill more time could be spent on actual carpenter's work.

Daniel strictly kept to the principle of spending as little money as possible on his own private needs in order to build up sufficient capital for the purchase of a mechanical saw. As an additional means of cash income he grew cash crops on a few acres of ground, the use of which he had acquired from one of his apprentices (his own garden area was too far away from his workshop). There he also grew food crops which he needed for his family. He used to work in his garden late in the afternoon and, with full moon, in the evening as well. The rest of the day he was to be found in his workshop.

In June of 1953, a circular saw and a 5-H.P. diesel-engine were purchased. Apart from his own capital, additional money was supplied by a few of his relatives, and a small sum was borrowed from the Co-operative Society (this debt was fully repaid afterwards). A new workshop was built and the machinery installed. Work was continued on the same basis as before. Wages were regularly paid, and the money which was left was mostly saved up for the future purchase of additional equipment.

Owing to the interest which was shown in his workshop, Daniel started to receive literature on carpentry. Although he knew how to read and write, the books were too complicated for him. But there were others who could now help him — with the aid of that literature — to improve his knowledge and skill. Another chance was offered when Daniel was invited to visit the junior technical school of the Protestant Mission in Hollandia. He stayed for two weeks and was able to add to his knowledge.

A year after the purchasing of the circular-saw a new item could be added to the equipment of the workshop. A bench-planer was purchased, which had to come from Holland, and which was installed in September 1954. After that, plans were made for additional purchases in the future.

The carpentry workshop grew into a business which had vitality, which was a cause for great satisfaction to the owner and to his employees. Work was continued with great energy and plans were made with full confidence — even though they were not likely to mature before some time had passed.

From an economic point of view the carpentry workshop was a healthy enterprise. The market for the products of this workshop, the only one in Nimboran, was almost unlimited, especially when it is taken into consideration that an increasing demand for simple and durable furniture was exercised by the Nimboran population.

As long as the saw-mill kept functioning there would be no need to fear a shortage of timber, and as long as the mill continued on the course on which it had started just before the end of 1954, the sound co-operation between the two woodworking enterprises would not be difficult to continue.

The prices which were asked for the finished products of the carpentry workshop were still on the low side. As the quality of the products had gradually improved since the initial price-setting, a slight increase of the price for furniture of good quality would have been within reason.

There seemed to be little cause for worry about the further development of the enterprise. The people were sufficiently skilled to continue work, and the circumstances were not unfavourable.

#### *Other industries*

*The manufacture of sago-cakes.* Sago-cakes are made by baking dried sago in earthen moulds over an open fire. There existed an active demand for this product as it lasts a long time and may be taken on travels in large quantities because of its lightness. It is mostly consumed after soaking the cakes in hot water or in tea or coffee. The method of production is relatively easy and the Nimboran was familiar with it.

The main handicap which delays production is the elaborate method applied for the procurement of the sago-pith. At first an attempt was made to procure sufficient sago by buying (through the Trade Centre) from the population, but the supply of raw sago was too irregular and often too insufficient to be fully depended on. The sago-cake makers, therefore, decided to obtain the necessary raw sago by working their own palms. Of course this led to a considerable decrease in production, but it had this advantage that the enterprise had it in its own hands to be continuously active.

The sago-cake enterprise was started in 1952 by the korano of Jakotim, who brought together a number of young males (10) from the adjacent villages who felt attracted to this kind of work. Their earnings consisted of a share in the profit for sago-cakes, sold at the Trade-Centre (later Co-operative Society), which was equal to the amount of labour which each had put into the production.

A shed was built to store the raw sago, to which was added a house where the cakes were to be baked. A platform was built of planks, on which the raw sago was to be dried previous to the baking process. The whole output of the enterprise was sold to the Co-operative Society, which bought for a price previously agreed upon. This Society took further care of the marketing of the product.

Although the enterprise never grew into an undertaking of great importance with a large capital involved, it has been producing regularly during the three years of its existence. Only from June until September 1954, production stagnated because of a long-lasting drought which caused the sago areas to dry up, and no sago could be obtained.

The organization and the set-up of the enterprise were left to be decided by the participants. The result was a set-up which is rather unusual in our eyes, but which gave great satisfaction to those who were concerned. Around the buildings which were erected for the enterprise, a neat cash crop garden was laid out which was tended by the people who were working in the sago business. The products of the garden were sold — often together with sago-cakes — mostly to the Co-operative Society in Genjem. The people worked alternatively in the cash crop garden and in the sago-cake branch of their enterprise, as they felt inclined. The

whole set-up had its own typical character, and proved to be highly satisfying to those who worked there. The return in cash was small, but it is to be doubted whether that should be considered a disadvantage. The workers had it in their own hands to increase production, and they would not have failed to do so if they had felt a need for it. This was also shown by the fact that, at times, a larger quantity of sago-cakes was offered for sale at the Co-operative Society.

Altogether the enterprise made a favourable impression. The outcome of the development of this enterprise was also very instructive as it shows that it is not imperative that an undertaking should develop along lines of rational Western conceptions of the activity of private enterprise. In many cases such a set-up might not even yield any success.

It seems that — also in the case of introducing private industry in indigenous society — one should not too readily resort to the acknowledged rationalised Western forms of productive organization. Careful planning remains necessary — even if purely economical factors promise exceptionally favourable results.

*The mat-plaiting industry in Pobaim.* One of the crafts which was acquired by the people in later years was the plaiting of mats of pandanus leaf. This craft was sometimes taught by teachers to their pupils at school, and there were still several people who became expert in this and who were interested in it. One of those was a man who was struck by infantile paralysis some twenty-five years ago: Claudius Jewi, who saw in the mat-plaiting business a way to earn money, which — until then — had been quite out of the question.

Thus, in 1952, Claudius started to undertake mat-plaiting seriously. He managed to interest a few people, mostly young men and women, for this enterprise (Claudius was dependent on the co-operation of others as he was not able to obtain the necessary raw material himself).

A typical feature of this enterprise was the fact that the people took the initiative to improve upon the skill which they had acquired at school. Experiments were made in dyeing the leaves previous to plaiting, while the use of narrower strips of leaf was introduced in order to get a finer quality of mats which were also more durable.

The demand for mats soon became so active that the output of the mat-plaiting industry was not sufficient to supply all of it. Furthermore, the collecting of pandanus leaves became more difficult, and took more time as the people had to go further into the forest to obtain them. The Trade Centre proved to be able to assist in this matter by buying pandanus leaf in other villages, and selling it to the mat-plaiters in Pobaim at prime cost.

Like in the sago-cake industry in Pobaim, here the people also added to their enterprise with a cash crop garden. But apart from that, a village eating-house was established in the workshop. The ingredients which were needed to keep the "restaurant" going were mostly obtained from the garden, but they were also bought with the money, earned by mat-plaiting, in the store of the Co-operative Society in Genjem. Thus, apart from the return profit from the sale of mats, money was also earned by selling garden produce and running an eating-house.

Of the mat-plaiting enterprise the same may be said as of the sago-cake enterprise in Jakotim. Here also, the people found a way of their own to develop the enterprise by which it became fully adapted to the environment in which the people lived, which was further stressed by the establishment of an eating-house. The mat-plaiting enterprise, like its fellow undertaking in Jakotim, never grew into a business of great scope, which is not surprising as the procurement of raw material remained difficult, and the payment which was received in return for the amount of work which had been done was relatively low. However, the fact that this enterprise kept on working steadily, is sufficient proof of the satisfaction which the people who were employed in it derived from their creation.

*The production of coconut oil.* In 1953, a number of people in Imeno village took the initiative to commence the production of coconut oil as a means to earn cash.

The Co-operative Society bought the finished product, and also supplied empty bottles to contain the oil.

This undertaking was started on the initiative of the people of Imeno, and it produced oil regularly, be it in limited quantities.

At one of the General Meetings of members of the Co-operative Society, the manager of the enterprise requested permission to increase the price of his product (f 1,— for 700 c.c.) as he considered the low price to be a check on the eagerness of the people working in the undertaking. It was decided that the Executive Committee of the Co-operative Society should make an inquiry into the cost of production of coconut oil. The Meeting refrained from immediate action as coconut oil was a commodity for which an active demand existed in Nimboran, and because the people would be best served by low prices. On the other hand, it was also realized that the producers of coconut oil should receive a reasonable price for their product.

### *Individual production.*

*Cottage-industry.* Apart from the branches of indigenous industry which were mentioned above, a considerable amount of products of cottage-industry were regularly sold to the Co-operative Society. The most common articles were mats, baskets, brushes, combs, spoons, and the like.

Cottage-industry was practised on an increasing scale throughout Nimboran, but most commonly in the villages of Ombrop, Benjom, and Berap, which had even gone as far as specializing in the manufacture of certain articles. Thus the village of Ombrop supplied mostly large baskets, made of bamboo or rattan, while Benjom had taken on the manufacture of pandanus- and rattan mats, and small bamboo-plaited commodities for use in the kitchen. Berap specialized in the manufacture of baskets of very thin rattan and — in later years — even in the manufacture of hats, also of rattan, for which an increasing demand started to grow.

The volume of production fluctuated according to the time which the people had left for this kind of work. This implied that production remained low owing to the tremendous drain of man-power, which had increased especially during the last year.



The regular acceptance of the output of cottage-industry by the Co-operative Society, however, incited the people to keep on producing while occasional large orders, which were mostly placed with the Co-operative Society from outside, also led to increased production now and again.

In cottage-industry the same difficulty was met with as has been mentioned for the carpentry workshop: Not much could be done yet to improve the skill of the people. This was the more disappointing in view of the eagerness with which some people tried to improve the quality of their products and kept trying to invent better methods and new models, up to 1954, however, with little results. An added difficulty was that the people could make little use of drawings or pictures of models, as they were not capable of understanding those properly.

## APPENDIX III

### The Co-operative Society in practice

#### *The administration of the Society.*

The accounts of the Society and its different enterprises were kept centrally by the Secretary Treasurer. No money had, therefore, to be handled by the different enterprises, except by the store.

For instance, if someone sold products of cottage-industry at the trading agency, a voucher was made out, stating the articles sold and the price which had to be paid. This voucher had to be handed over to the cashier of the Society where it was turned into cash.

All payments for the mechanised farming enterprise were made at the cash-register of the Society. The accounts for the store were also kept in such a way that no duplicate accounting had to be done. The return for sales was paid daily to the cashier of the Co-operative Society.

Until July of 1953, the daily management of the Society was conducted by the Secretary Treasurer of the Society single-handed. He did his work with much care and devotion, but, finally, he was not able any longer to cope with the increasing amount of work which had to be done. Wages were not paid in time, and there was hardly time to keep a check on the stocks at regular intervals.

The Executive Committee of the Society, therefore, put a motion to the General Meeting of members for the appointment of someone who could assist the Secretary by doing clerical work.

In July 1953, a man was employed as an articled clerk. Three months later he was given a permanent appointment. His wages were paid by the Society. In February 1954, the number of transactions of the Co-operative Society had increased to such an extent that a more suitable arrangement had to be found. As a large part of the transactions was conducted in Hollandia and large sums of money had to be sent to and fro, it was considered better to start a bank account. In March of 1954, an account was started at the *Nederlandsche Handel Maatschappij N.V.*, the only bankers in Hollandia. A sum of f 15.193,45 was paid into this account.

The opening of this account relieved the Secretary of the Society of much work, while no large sums of money were required to be kept in Genjem any longer, thus reducing the risk of theft or fire. In addition to that, payments in Hollandia could be made more promptly, while it also became easier for the buyers of products of the Society who lived in Hollandia to remit money to the Society.

The administration of the Co-operative Society included the following tasks:

1. doing the correspondence of the Society.
2. keeping the register of memberships.
3. issue of membership certificates.
4. collection of entrance-fees, and accounting for it.
5. issue of debentures and accounting for it.
6. resale of debentures.
7. keeping the accounts of the Society and its enterprises.

8. accounting for the carriage of goods to and from the Society.  
(writing out of notes of charges and delivery vouchers, the care for transport between Hollandia and Genjem, storage of goods in Borowai etc.)
9. ordering and purchasing of goods from importers and retail stores in Hollandia for the Co-operative store in Genjem (this task compelled the Secretary to travel to Hollandia about once every month).
10. marketing of products.
11. arranging for the supply of the individual enterprises with necessary equipment and tools, after a request to that purpose had been granted by the Executive Committee.
12. pay out money for the mechanised farming enterprise (until December 31st 1954, these payments were made from Government funds and, therefore, were not a part of the Society's own accounting).
13. keeping the minutes of meetings.
14. keeping the register of decisions of the General Meeting of members.
15. preparation of General Meeting of members and meetings of the Executive Committee.

The days, appointed for cash transactions were Wednesdays and Saturdays. After the cashier had closed the accounts, they were immediately checked. The available cash was specified, item for item, in a special register. A checking-slip was made out which stated the total of the different columns of the cash-book and the balances.

The keeping of a register, specifying cash-items, was introduced in order to promote the orderly keeping of cash, after it had been proved several times that the cashier tended to put the money away at random, and envelopes and boxes containing cash-money were found scattered through the office. As an added advantage, the checking of cash accounts was made easier in that way.

#### *The store of the Co-operative Society*

The accounting which had to be done by the store was uncomplicated. Articles which were delivered by the central storage room to the store were entered on stock-lists, stating the sort of article, the date of delivery, cost-price, and selling-price. The commodities were bought by the Society, after which they were stored in a central storage room. Delivery to the store took place in accordance with the needs of the store.

Vouchers were used for each sale made by the store. Each buyer had to state to the sales-assistant which articles he wanted to purchase. The sales-assistant then made out a voucher in duplicate. Both copies were taken by the buyer to the store's cashier where he paid the sum stated on the voucher after the cashier had checked its correctness. The voucher was then numbered, and the number and the total sum entered into a sales-book. Meanwhile, the buyer took one copy of the voucher which had been marked for payment to the sales assistant and received his articles.

At the end of each day of sale the cashier added the total sum received for sales of that day. The return for sales was paid to the cashier of the Society the following day. The Secretary-Treasurer then signed the sales-

FIGURE 7. CHECKING-SLIP JUNE 30th 1953

Totals balance	Cash		Society		Store		Trading Agency		M. F. E.	
		8478.71	2579.66	674.74	515.58	5325.91	766.41	2403.06	1297.67	75.—
		5899.05		159.16		4559.50		1105.39		
	8478.71	8478.71	674.74	674.74	5325.91	5325.91	2403.06	2403.06	75.—	75.—

Specification of cash-items

25	gld	13	f	325,—
10	gld	78	"	780,—
5	gld	600	"	3.000,—
21½	gld	309	"	772,50
1	gld	574	"	574,—
¼	gld	745	"	186,25
1/10	gld	657	"	65,70
1/20	gld	3877	"	193,85
1/100	gld	757	"	7,57

Balance of cash according

to cash-book	f	5.899,05
Total sum of cash counted	"	5.904,87
Surplus of cash	f	5,82

Genjem, June 30th 1953

The Secretary Treasurer

signed Ph. W. Jambe Japdi

f 5.904,87

book, acknowledging the receipt of the sum stated, and entered the receipt in his accounts.

In this way the accumulation of large sums in the store was prevented, and the liability of the manager of the store was limited to the correct calculation of purchases, the receipt of the correct sum of money from the buyers, the correct accounting for the sales of each day separately, and the payment of the money received by the Society's cashier.

Table 17 gives the figures for sales in 1953 and 1954.

The gross profit on sales in 1953 was f 1.827,41 to which should be added a sum of f 86,01 for sales on credit, which makes a total gross profit of f 1.913,42. The gross profit for 1954 amounted to f 3.756,66 + f 109,70 for sales on credit, which makes f 3.866,36 1).

The commodities, most frequently sold at the store were:

basins (enamel)	chewing gum	rice
batiks	cigarettes	salt
batteries (storage)	crocery	shag
calico	fish (salted)	sugar
candles	flour	tea
canned goods	kerosene	tobacco
condensed milk	knives	tools
evaporated milk	lemonade	towels
meat	margarine	

1) Owing to the fact that a number of bills had not been received yet by the Co-operative Society at the time of the closing of this survey of the Nimboran project, the net profit could not be calculated.

TABLE 17. SALES 1953 AND 1954

	cost-price of articles sold	number of sales	daily average		receipts for cash- sales	average sum paid per sale
January 1953		799	31	f	1.152,67	f 1,44
February		1.555	65	"	2.536,51	" 1,63
March		1.118	45	"	1.905,66	" 1,70
April		983	41	"	2.922,67	" 2,97
May		1.367	53	"	3.785,84	" 2,76
June		1.608	62	"	4.302,16	" 2,67
July		1.636	61	"	4.217,—	" 2,58
August		1.726	66	"	3.746,61	" 2,17
September		1.681	65	"	5.352,86	" 3,18
October		865	41	"	6.045,24	" 7,—
November		1.077	45	"	3.430,29	" 3,19
December		884	38	"	6.740,30	" 7,62
Total	f 44.310,40	15.299	51	f	46.137,81	f 3,02
January 1954		712	31	f	4.083,78	" 5,74
February		521	22	"	2.157,90	" 4,14
March		1.393	54	"	4.895,29	" 3,52
April		860	36	"	2.295,89	" 2,56
May		1.637	68	"	6.904,18	" 4,22
June		401	40	"	2.573,20	" 6,42
July		481	23	"	2.114,17	" 4,31
August		792	36	"	3.789,41	" 4,78
September		922	37	"	2.778,33	" 3,01
October		704	32	"	3.258,85	" 4,63
November		1.151	46	"	4.358,94	" 3,71
December		627	26	"	2.734,97	" 4,36
Total	f 38.188,25	10.201	38	f	41.944,91	" 4,11

About 150 different sorts of commodities were sold at the store in the past two years.

Although the store did not make large profits, it was an enterprise of major importance, as it supplied Nimboran with a variety of goods which could be purchased with the money which was earned by the people.

Apart from the Chinese store, it was the only place where imported goods could be procured.

#### *The trading agency*

Products of agriculture and indigenous industry were bought by the Co-operative Society's trading agency. The manager of this enterprise received the goods which were offered for sale. He did the counting, weighing, and grading, returning those goods which did not conform to standard demands. A voucher was made out, on which the sort of goods, amount, and price were stated. With this voucher, the seller went to the

cashier of the Society, who paid the sum which was due to the seller. An entry was made by the manager of the trading agency in his stock register concerning the nature and the amount of goods which were bought. The Secretary of the Society charged the sum paid for the goods to the account of the trading agency.

The goods which were first stored in the storage room of the trading agency were either sold through the store of the Society (the different accounts were then made to conform with the moving of goods from the trading agency to the store), or directly to purchasers in Hollandia.

The sale of products to buyers in Hollandia had been arranged for by the Co-operative Society without assistance from outside.

The total sum paid for purchases from the population in 1953, amounted to f 19,262,30. In 1954, the sum was f 13,403,32. The return for the sale of indigenous products was f 21,560,76 in 1953, and f 14,801,90 in 1954.

From these figures it may be concluded that trade was decidedly more profitable in 1953. The cause for the decline in trade may be sought in the excessive employment of labour by the Government, which caused a serious drain on indigenous man-power and which created a shortage of labour in indigenous enterprises.

The gross profit on the sale of goods by the trading agency amounted to f 2,326,04 for 1953, and f 1,555,88 for 1954.

The trading agency lost some money, due to the decay of a consignment of ground-nuts for which there were no buyers. The marketing problem caused a considerable risk for this enterprise, like it did also in the case of the mechanised farming enterprise, as will be shown later. Sometimes even products for which a good market usually existed, could not be sold. The Co-operative Society, therefore, had to be rather strict in the selection of products which it was willing to buy, and often had to refuse the products of those who did not belong to Nimboran, in order to protect the interests of Nimboran itself.

Table 18 on page 224 provides a tabular summary of the buying of indigenous products by the Co-operative Society during 1953 and 1954.

### *The mechanised farming enterprise*

*Organization of the mechanised farming enterprise.* By the Co-operative Society were employed for this enterprise: 1 manager (Nimboran), 2 tractor-drivers (Nimboran), 1 technical assistant (Biak), 1 driver's assistant (Nimboran) and 1 overseer (Nimboran). An additional tractor-driver (Nimboran) was appointed in October 1954, after he had received a preliminary training at the agricultural experimental station at Kota Nica (Hollandia), and after a second tractor (Lanz) had been added to the equipment-pool of the enterprise.

At first sight, the staff seems to be rather large. But it had been proved by practical experience that the enterprise could not do with less.

A manager, two drivers, and a technical assistant were needed to run the tractor, organize the work which was to be done, lead activities, and carry responsibility. The large extent to which manual labour was needed — especially during the initial period of reclamation of land — called for the permanent employment of over twenty labourers during at least three

Table 18 Sorts and quantities of products bought by the trading agency

PRODUCTS	unit	1954																									
		Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Tot.													
1. Rattan and bamboo articles	pc	202	230	18	40	—	4	56	93	3	79	45	22	792	45	183	25	14	—	—	70	44	6	—	395		
2. Drying mats	pc	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		
3. Plated mats	pc	28	32	31	59	—	37	14	27	—	17	24	19	288	10	19	29	10	40	20	48	60	40	20	10	306	
4. Pottery	pc	23	—	56	5	—	20	—	—	—	—	18	122	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	17	—	—	—	30	47	
5. Furniture	pc	15	—	—	—	—	—	11	14	—	—	—	18	58	3	—	1	8	6	1	2	13	—	—	12	46	
6. Timber	m <sup>3</sup>	2.97	—	—	—	—	—	2.66	4.37	2.33	2.10	4.27	5.72	1.67	—	—	7.02	2.17	2.18	1.86	—	3.25	—	—	—	9.35	26.33
7. Coconut oil	lt.	70	—	51	22	—	44	43	42	38	—	25	335	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	20	125	
8. Sago cakes	kg	48	332	184	258	113	78	314	200	248	128	136	211	2250	175	270	227	125	248	74	132	50	30	—	82	1415	
9. Sago	kg	4008	5156	3381	690	—	—	—	571	140	98	—	—	13926	—	48	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	64	697
10. Cassava	kg	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	127	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
11. Sweet potatoes	kg	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	127	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
12. Ground-nuts	kg	135	134	504	111	124	253	99	149	137	132	236	355	2369	878	92	—	—	—	—	577	250	—	223	43	5225	
13. Green peas	kg	78	84	136	32	212	78	229	23	196	69	111	396	1644	272	684	6	58	409	404	102	24	205	—	366	153	2683
14. Green peas (red var.)	kg	44	35	—	48	5	—	121	32	58	59	53	132	587	524	150	—	5	69	57	37	—	—	23	324	125	1314
15. Husked corn	kg	96	17	20	—	—	—	23	—	—	—	—	3	159	168	13	—	19	—	—	12	—	—	—	—	212	
16. Corn (cobs)	kg	—	7	30	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	37	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	180	
17. Dried meat	kg	85	97	60	—	—	107	19	89	10	23	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	23	8	—	—	—	—	
18. Fresh meat	kg	—	—	—	—	—	30	—	—	—	—	36	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10	10	—	—	—	103	

(m<sup>3</sup> = cubic metre = 38.21 cub. ft.; lt = litre = 0.2220 emp. gallon; kg = kilogram = 2.205 lbs.)

N.B. Other products of indigenous agriculture and industry, which were sold in small quantities, were smoked mussels, kapok, coffee, wooden spoons and forks, wooden combs, string-bags, bows and arrows, brooms and brushes, eggs, onions etc.

The buying of peas (red variety) was temporarily abandoned because there existed no demand for it in Hollandia. Late in 1954, buying was started again due to an increased demand in Genjem. The buying of ground-nuts had to be abandoned from March until July 1954, due to the unfavourable market position in Hollandia. The decrease in production of sago-cakes after June 1954, has been caused by the drought, which made sago-pounding impossible. The slight increase in August may be explained by the fact that the construction of the air-strip made the cutting down of many hundreds of sago-palms necessary. Due to the drought and the consequent lack of water, sago could be extracted from only a few palms. The others were left to decay.

months. These people had been employed to level the ground which had been rooted up by boars, to fell trees, and to remove the trunks and stumps, to dig drainage-trenches, and construct sheds.

Every month the manager of the enterprise had to submit a report of the work which had been done on the farm to the Co-operative Society. At first the tractor-drivers were to make a daily report about the employment of their tractor, but eventually this task was assigned to the manager of the farm, as it proved to be too difficult for the drivers. The new arrangement had the added advantage that the manager was forced to check up every day on the work which was done by the tractor-drivers so that he was always well informed about the proceedings on the enterprise. Next to the daily tractor-report a repair and maintenance list was kept of the tractors. The technical assistant was responsible for the correct keeping of the list, and he had to see to it that all the repair and maintenance jobs were entered on the list. A guidance for the maintenance of the equipment was made out by the Agricultural Department.

Apart from these forms, lists of employed labour and wages were kept, while there was also a review of the crops which were being cultivated (sowing-seed used, area cultivated, yield). For the storage-shed a system of accounting for the receipt and clearance outwards of products was introduced, which facilitated the supervision over the handling of products.

The system of accounting for the enterprise had been kept as uncomplicated as possible. The major considerations when selecting the people who were to work for the enterprise were their capability to organize work on the enterprise and their interest in the whole undertaking, and not their clerical capacities. The manager was the only one employed who was not wholly unfamiliar with the basic principles of clerical work.

It was in view of these considerations that the accounting for the enterprise was mostly limited to the keeping of a few lists. Once the people had caught on to the routine of keeping these records, they did not need much time to keep them in order. The Secretary of the Co-operative Society, who had to check the records of the mechanised farming enterprise and who did all the calculations, also benefitted by this system.

*The financial accounting for the mechanised farming enterprise.* Until the end of 1954, expenses for the mechanised farming enterprise were charged to a Government account and, therefore, were not accounted for in the books of the Co-operative Society. The District Officer was entrusted with the financial management of the enterprise. The actual payment of wages was done by the Secretary of the Co-operative Society, after the lists of work and wages had been submitted to the District Officer and the required sum of money had been remitted to the Co-operative Society.

Payments for purchases of seed, tools, equipment etc. were made directly by the District Officer.

The return from the sale of products was paid into the account of the Co-operative Society (later at the Bank in Hollandia). Settling of the accounts between the Government and the Co-operative Society was postponed until a later date, after an agreement would have been reached concerning the further management of the accounts of the farming enterprise. The new arrangement, which provided for an annual grant of credits



by the Government to the Co-operative Society, was planned to mature on Januari 1st 1955.

*The cultivation of crops during 1952-1954 and the results of the farm. Profit and Loss accounts.* In the first supplement to this appendix a review is given of the sequence of cultivation of different crops, the area planted, and the yields. In the second supplement the accounts of profit and loss for 1953 and 1954 are given. The figures which are supplied in the two supplements do not seem to be too favourable, especially for 1954.

After the initial small profit which was made in 1952-1953 (f 859,74) — despite the unfavourable results of the first (corn) planting, and mainly due to the exceptionally high price which was paid for the subsequent yield of ground-nuts (f 1,25 per kg) — 1954 brought a loss of f 2.179,28.

The question arises, whether this loss was due to the lack of vitality of the enterprise or to other causes. A survey of the figures concerning the yields of the farm during the last two years, produces a number of striking facts:

a. The ground-nut yield of 1953 was exceptionally good (a yield of over 2 tons of dry pods per hectare <sup>1)</sup>), while the yield of 1954 was considerably less (a little over 1.5 tons per hectare) although not unfavourable.

The decrease in yield was most probably caused by a period of drought in the middle of 1954, which was especially severe shortly after sowing. This caused the crop to come up irregularly, while many seeds were eaten by crickets and other insects.

Apparently the decrease was a case of common risk, due to climatic conditions.

b. The corn-yield of 1954 was very satisfactory, in contrast with that of the previous year. The cause for this improvement is likely to have been the fact that a different variety (native) was planted the second time, while climatic conditions were also more favourable. It seems that the period from July until October would be more favourable for the growing of corn than the period from October-March (1952-'53). In this case the improvement was due to practical experience.

c. Soya-beans failed to yield a good harvest.

The 1953-planting yielded a little over 1/2 ton, while the 1954 planting was a complete failure. The expenses which were made for this planting were totally lost. This loss should be considered an abnormal risk caused by the conducting of experiments.

d. K e t a n (a variety of rice) yielded an average harvest. However, the quality of the sowing seed which had been supplied by the Agricultural Department had been bad (about 40 % k e t a n and 60 % other varieties), and, consequently, the quality of the product was so inferior that a good price could not be bargained for.

The yield of one field (4 hectare) was very unsatisfactory. This is most likely to have been mainly due to the fact that previous to the sowing of the crop, the ground had been levelled. The fertile top-layer of soil was thereby removed and covered with poor sub-soil.

A poor quality of sowing-seed and untimely levelling of the ground,

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1) 1 ton = 1000 kilograms; 1 hectare = 2.471 acres.

therefore, caused an abnormal risk for the enterprise also in this case.

e. *Gogo* (a variety of rice, especially suitable for dry cultivation) yielded a harvest which was not unfavourable. However, after the paddy had been hulled, the net yield proved to be very disappointing. In this case too the quality proved to be inferior (admixture of *ketan* and other varieties).

Although we cannot state conclusively that this was also a case of abnormal risk, better results would probably have been achieved if a better variety had been used 1).

The prices which were paid for the products have also to be taken into account.

1. *Ground-nuts*. The price which was paid for ground-nuts in 1953 was f 1,25 per kg. (dry pods) excluding packing, and including freight to Hollandia. The product was sold by the Co-operative Society, the Agricultural Department acting as an intermediary. In 1954, the price for ground-nuts started to decrease, and had been reduced to f 1,10 per kg. by the time the ground-nuts were harvested in Nimboran. The Agricultural Department again acted as an intermediary, but large orders were not placed anymore. Apart from the fact that large shipments of ground-nuts from other parts of New Guinea and also from Singapore had to be marketed before new purchases could be made, the room needed for the storage of ground-nuts proved to be a handicap when it came to marketing the consignment from Nimboran. Retail traders in Hollandia were not at all eager to buy. Finally an offer was made by the NIGIMY, one of the largest import and export firms in Hollandia, to buy up the whole consignment of ground-nuts from Nimboran at a price of f 0,80 per kg. including freight to Hollandia. This offer was not accepted immediately, but not much later, the Agricultural Department advised the acceptance. However, the NIGIMY proved less eager to buy. The Government then decided that the Agricultural Department should buy up the whole consignment for the same price as had been offered by the NIGIMY.

2. *Maize* (corn). The price of maize was subjected to little fluctuation (f 0,50 per kg. in Nimboran). The product was mostly bought by poultry farmers.

3. *Rice*. Paddy had a steady low market value (f 0,50 per kg.) but no active demand existed for this product. In order to increase the marketing possibilities for this product, a rice-huller was purchased.

The net yield of rice from *gogo* paddy (40%) proved to be very disappointing. The local price of this variety of rice varied between f 0,85, and f 0,95 per kg, which was equal to the price of (higher grade) imported rice. But the fact that it was a product of their own soil, made the people eager to buy. In some cases it was even suggested to increase the price to f 1,25 or more, as this would be of benefit to the Society, and would not make the people less eager to buy their own rice.

The net yield of rice from *ketan* paddy was more favourable (55%) which resulted in some profit. *Dedek*, a by-product consisting of crushed husks and rice-grindings, was also sold, as it was in demand amongst

1) Both rice-plantings suffered from a disease which could not be determined immediately (rusty spots on the leaves, and in some cases the dying off of the whole plant). However, the 1954 planting was less affected.

poultry farmers. K e t a n rice had a high market value in Hollandia (f 1.39 per kg), but the inferior quality of the Nimboran product made it unsuitable to compete with imported k e t a n. It was sold locally for f 1,— per kg, finding an eager market.

The expenses which balanced the receipts for products of the farm were generally high, and pressed heavily on the enterprise:

I. *Permanent staff.* The staffing of the enterprise was extensive for a farm of 37½ acres. However, from previous considerations it may be concluded that reduction of the staff was not possible.

The overhead costs were expected to be less pressing once the farm had reached its maximum size, which would be somewhere between 100 and 150 acres. A 100 acre farm would not require a larger staff than the present farm has (1954).

II. *Depreciation of equipment etc.* The writing-off costs of reclamation, premises, and equipment were heavy, especially for machinery. At the outset it was considered good policy to account for a high rate of depreciation of equipment. However, practical experience proved that the Agricultural Department had been too careful. The balance of the value of the Fordson tractor was f 2.675,— (purchasing price f 15.000,—) on December 31st 1954, while it was still in perfect working condition.

The quality of the premises was such that a writing-off period of five years was justified. The cost of reclamation of land was to be written off in ten years. This period was taken at random and seems to be on the short side, and is, therefore, disputable.

III. *Wages.* The sum of the wages which were paid (excluding the permanent staff) was high in comparison with the efficiency of labour. This resulted partly from the decrease in interest for work on the farm, due to the policy of wages which was adopted, and partly from the fact that the people were unaccustomed to the work which had to be done. By means of a change in the policy of wages this difficulty was tried to be met with. Another way to reduce the high cost of labour would be the rationalization of production by means of more intensive mechanization.

*Conclusions.* We may conclude that the loss which was suffered by the mechanised farming enterprise during 1954 was due to the following causes:

1. *Common risk.* i.e. the climatic conditions during 1954,
2. *Abnormal risk.* i.e. the experiments with soya-beans, and premature levelling of the ground.
3. *Bad quality of sowing-seed.* The bad quality of seed yielded a product of inferior quality, affecting the price adversely, and preventing marketing outside Nimboran.
4. *Market value of ground-nuts.* The price for ground-nuts was reduced to sub-normal due to the lack of distributive trade for products of indigenous agriculture in Hollandia, and the absence of competitive demand.
5. *High costs of the enterprise.* These could be reduced by: a. extending the farm to its optimal size (overhead cost), and b. rationalization, a revision of the policy of wages (cost of hired labour), and recalculation of the rate of depreciation on a rational basis.

### *The yearly settling of accounts of the Society*

In accordance with the 31st article of association of the Co-operative Society, the reserve fund was to equal the value of  $\frac{1}{4}$  part of the assets of the Society. By the articles of association it was further directed that at least  $\frac{1}{4}$  part of the net profits made during the accounting period should be paid into the reserve fund until it had reached its prescribed limit.

The figures for 1953 were as follows:

The net capital of the Society on December 31st 1953 amounted to f 24,420,64. The limit of the reserve fund was, therefore, f 6,105,16. The net profit for 1953 amounted to f 3,155,19 (equal to the increase of capital from which are subtracted the entrance-fees received in 1953). A sum of f 788,80, therefore, was to be paid into the reserve fund. The remainder of the profit: f 2,366,39, was available for participation in profits. Allowance had to be made for the following payments:

- a. payment of 6 % interest on debentures.
- b. payment of a bonus to the following members:
  - 3 women from Benjom village who showed exceptional diligence while working on the farm.
  - 1 men from Ombrop for the same reason.
  - 2 members of the Executive Committee who frequently performed voluntary tasks for the Society.
  - 1 man from Genjem Besar who, by his unrelenting efforts, contributed much to the success of the feasts of the Society, without ever claiming payment for his work.

The Secretary Treasurer of the Society because of the large amount of overwork which had been done by him without receiving payment for it. Total sum to be spent: f 100,—.

- c. an equal share in the profits of the Society for each member.

The interest which was to be paid on debentures amounted to f 58,34. The total sum which was to be paid to the members sharing in the profits, therefore, amounted to f 2,208,05 (f 2,366,39 — f 158,34).

The General Meeting of members decided to leave this money with the Co-operative Society in order that they might use it for the construction of a new building for the store, trading agency, and office of the Society.

At the close of the survey of the Nimboran project in January 1955, no data were available yet concerning the settling of accounts for 1954, other than those of the mechanised farming enterprise. It was planned to arrange for the distribution of profits in the same manner as for 1953.

Supplement 1

Mechanised Farming Enterprise

Sequence of Cultivation of different crops, the area planted, and yields 1).

First Period. September 1952—March 1953

<i>Tillage</i>			
September	1952	first reclamation	15.6 hectare
December	1952	reclamation	4 "
<i>Sown</i>			
October	1952	corn (maize)	382 are
November	1952 (1st half)	corn	709 "
November	1952 (2nd half)	corn	477.6 "
January	1953	ground-nuts	150 "
		k e t a n rice	50 "
		green peas	50 "
		sweet potatoes	50 "
<i>Harvested</i>			
January	1953	corn	382 are
February	1953	corn	709 "
March	1953	corn	477.6 "
April	1953	green peas	50 "
May	1953	ground-nuts	150 "
		k e t a n rice	50 "
June	1953	sweet potatoes	50 "
<i>Yield</i>			
Corn		1,500 kg. (husked)	
Green peas		185 kg. (husked)	
Ground-nuts		1.436 kg. (dry pods)	
Ketan rice (paddy)		535 kg.	
Sweet potatoes		4,940 kg.	

Second Period. April 1953—November 1953

<i>Tillage</i>			
April—June	1953	Preparing for cultivation	420 are
			350 "
			330 "
			400 "
June	1953	id.	250 "
<i>Sown</i>			
May	1953	soya-beans	350 are (failure)
June	1953	ground-nuts	330 "
		ground-nuts	420 "
		green peas	200 "
July	1953	ground-nuts	150 "
		ground-nuts	200 "
		green peas (red variety)	50 "
		corn	50 "
August	1953	corn	200 "
<i>Harvested</i>			
September	1953	green peas	200 are
		green peas (red variety)	50 "
		soya-beans	80 "
		ground-nuts	420 "
		ground-nuts	330 "

1) 1 hectare = 2.471 acres; 1 are = 1/100 hectare = 119.6 sq. yards.  
1 kilogram = 2.205 lbs.

October	1953	ground-nuts	150 "
		ground-nuts	200 "
		corn	50 "
November	1953	corn	200 "
<i>Yield</i>			
Ground-nuts		18,680 kg.	(dry pods)
Green peas		225 kg.	(husked)
Green peas (red var.)		166 kg.	(husked)
Soya beans		583 kg.	(husked)
Corn		1,321.5 kg.	(husked)

*Third Period. September 1953—June 1954*

<i>Tillage</i>			
September—December	1953	Preparing for cultivation	420 are
			350 "
			330 "
			400 "

<i>Sown</i>			
October	1953	ketan rice	420 are
November	1953	gogo rice	330 "
January	1954	ketan rice	300 "
		ketan rice	350 "
		ground-nuts	50 " (for seed)

<i>Harvested</i>			
March—April	1954	ketan rice	420 are
April	1954	ground-nuts	50 "
April—May	1954	gogo rice	330 "
May—June	1954	ketan rice	350 "
June	1954	ketan rice	300 "

<i>Yield</i>			
Ground-nuts		no data	
Ketan rice	(paddy)	9,180 kg.	
Gogo rice	(paddy)	5,520 kg.	
		Of 5,520 kg. gogo paddy, 4,425 kg. were hulled, yielding 1,753 kg. rice	
		Of 9,180 kg. ketan paddy, 9,000 kg. were hulled, yielding 4,993 kg. rice	
		residual product: 1,000 kg. dedek	

*Fourth Period. April 1954—October 1954*

<i>Tillage</i>			
April—May	1954	Preparing for cultivation	420 are
May—June	1954		330 "
June—July	1954		400 "
			300 "

<i>Sown</i>			
April	1954	ground-nuts	420 are
June	1954	ground-nuts	330 "
July	1954	soya-beans	400 "
		corn	350 "

<i>Harvested</i>			
August	1954	ground-nuts	420 are
September	1954	ground-nuts	330 "
October	1954	corn	350 "
November	1954	soya-beans	150 " (250 are ploughed in because of total failure)

<i>Yield</i>			
Ground-nuts		11,800 kg.	(dry pods)
Corn		4,300 kg.	(husked)
Soya-beans		Written off	

*Fifth Period. September 1954—*

*Tillage*

September	1954	Preparing for cultivation	420 are
October	1954		350 "
October	1954		330 "
October	1954		250 "
October—December	1954	Reclamation of new Land	600 "
November	1954	Preparing for cultivation	150 "
November	1954	Ploughing in green manure	
		and preparing for cultivation	420 "
December	1954	id.	350 "

*Sown*

October	1954	green manure	420 are
		green manure	400 "
		g o g o padi	330 "
		k e t a n pady	250 "
December	1954	g o g o padi	420 "

*Total figures:*

in cultivation on December 31st 1954	15 hectare
being reclaimed on December 31st 1954	6 hectare

*Yields*

<i>ground-nuts</i>	1953	1.5 hectare	1,436 kg.
	1953	9 hectare	18,680 kg.
	1954	7.5 hectare	11,800 kg.
	Total	18 hectare	31,916 kg.
<i>corn</i>	1952/1953	15 hectare	1,500 kg.
	1953	2.5 hectare	1,321.5 kg.
	1954	3.5 hectare	4,300 kg.
	Total	21 hectare	7,121.5 kg.
<i>Soya-beans</i>	1953	3.5 hectare	583 kg.
	1954	4 hectare	— kg.
	Total	7.5 hectare	583 kg.
<i>Green peas</i>	1953	0.5 hectare	185 kg.
	1953	2 hectare	255 kg.
	Total	2.5 hectare	440 kg.
<i>Green peas (red variety)</i>	1953	0.5 hectare	166 kg.
	Total	0.5 hectare	166 kg.
<i>Sweet potatoes</i>	1953	0.5 hectare	4,940 kg.
	Total	0.5 hectare	4,940 kg.
<i>K e t a n rice</i>	1953	0.5 hectare	535 kg.
	1954	10.7 hectare	9,180 kg.
	Total	11.2 hectare	9,715 kg. paddy
<i>G o g o rice</i>			9,000 kg. hulled yielded 4,993 kg. rice
	1954	3.3 hectare	5,520 kg.
	Total	3.3 hectare	5,520 kg. paddy
			4,425 kg. hulled yielded 1,753 kg. rice

Supplement 2

Mechanised Farming Enterprise

Profit and Loss account 1953

Loss		Profit	
<i>Depreciation</i>		<i>Gross profit on products</i>	f 24,953,53
tractor	f 8,250,—	<i>Capital invested</i>	
inventory		in 1953	
storage shed	" 1,144,—	balance of value on 31/12	
small implements	" 240,17	premises	" 1,920,—
tools and accessories	" 16,45	soil improvement	" 5,923,80
sowing seed	" 947,41	new planting	" 4,680,25
<i>Wages</i>		<i>Special receipts</i>	
permanent staff	" 5,525,50	renting out of equipment	" 336,75
hired labour	" 11,127,65		<u>f 37,814,33</u>
<i>Cost of freight</i>			
products and supplies	" 1,578,75		
<i>General expenses</i>			
repairs, purchase			
of new parts etc.	" 945,89		
<i>Fuel</i>	" 7,152,57		
<i>Bank charges</i>	" 26,20		
<i>Profit balance</i>	" 859,74		
	<u>f 37,814,33</u>		

Balance sheet December 31st 1953

Cash balance	f 2,468,03	Debt to the Government	f 24,151,36
Stock of products	" 3,886,—	Unpaid wages	" 2,137,—
Claims on purchasers		Creditors	" 5,905,05
of products	" 18,653,75	Balance	<u>" 15,859,74</u>
Inventory	" 1,783,93		<u>f 48,053,15</u>
Equipment, tools and			
spare parts	" 6,750,—		
Fuel and lubricants	" 1,732,39		
Premises	" 1,920,—		
Planting	" 4,680,25		
Reclaimed land	" 5,923,80		
Claims arising from			
services rendered	" 255,—		
	<u>f 48,053,15</u>		



Profit and Loss account 1954

Loss		Profit	
<i>Wages</i>	f 11.429,30	<i>Gross profit on products</i>	f 18.090,25
<i>Depreciation</i>		<i>New planting</i>	„ 2.696,63
equipment, implements		<i>Receipts from renting</i>	
and spare parts	„ 4.864,86	<i>out of equipment</i>	„ 2.119,—
premises	„ 480,—	<i>Receipts from sold</i>	
reclamation	„ 785,15	<i>surplus inventory</i>	„ 60,—
planting 1953	„ 4.680,25	<i>Gross profit reclamation</i>	
inventory	„ 1.127,02	<i>of new land</i>	„ 3.138,50
<i>Used</i>		<i>Loss balance</i>	„ 2.179,28
sowing seed	„ 14,49		<u>f 28.283,66</u>
fuel and lubricants	„ 3.976,40		
<i>Expenses</i>			
freight of products	„ 316,25		
repair of equipment	„ 310,69		
maintenance grounds			
and premises	„ 282,50		
<i>Miscellaneous</i>	„ 16,75		
	<u>f 28.283,66</u>		

Balance sheet December 31st 1954

Cash balance	f 954,05	Debt to the Government	f 47.726,62
Bank balance	„ 23.311,33	Unpaid wages	„ 1.052,30
Stock of products	„ 10.007,—	Creditors	„ 25.442,86
Claims on purchasers		Unpaid profit 1953	„ 859,74
of products	„ 9.168,90	Balance	„ 12.820,72
Inventory	„ 883,93		<u>f 87.902,24</u>
Equipment, implements,			
tools, and spare parts	„ 26.901,—		
Fuel and lubricants	„ 1.852,15		
Premises	„ 1.539,—		
Planting	„ 2.696,63		
Reclaimed land	„ 8.277,15		
Claims arising from			
services rendered	„ 2.006,50		
Various claims	„ 304,60		
	<u>f 87.902,24</u>		

## LIST OF NIMBORAN WORDS

The following list contains all the Nimboran words which have been used in this book. They have been put in the sequence of their appearance in the book.

Dr J. Anceaux, a Dutch linguist who, at present, is studying the Nimboran language, has been found willing to advise me in the spelling of the different Nimboran words.

There was one word (*éram-be-pro*) with which he was not familiar and which also seemed to be unknown to the young Nimborans staying in Hollandia. However, Elmsberg, who recorded this word whilst staying in Nimboran, persists that it did exist. The word was generally used by the old men to denote the war-lord, who nowadays is commonly referred to as *Kepaia Perang* (Malay = war-lord). Anceaux suggests that the Nimboran word for war-lord is *pro-inggambu*. However, this is not likely to be the case as undoubtedly there were more than one *pro-inggambu* in a *tang*, mostly older men who were skilled warriors. According to Anceaux, a "war-*éram*" in the Nimboran language should have been called "pro-*éram*" or "prode-*éram*", *éram-be-pro* decidedly being un-Nimboran. However, as this word does not seem to exist, I have used *éram-be-pro* as it is the only word which so far has been recorded to denote the war-lord in traditional Nimboran society.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><i>tang</i> = Nimboran clan<br/> <i>kesië</i> = spirit of the dead<br/> <i>kabi</i> = feast<br/> <i>éram-be-kabi</i> = the feast of investiture of an <i>éram</i><br/> <i>éram</i> = head of a <i>tang</i><br/> <i>bamong</i> = stone armband (<i>éram</i>'s heirloom)<br/> <i>remaku</i> = blue-black antique bead<br/> <i>undo kua nendi</i> = large stone axe (ceremonial)<br/> <i>wo-benang</i> = <i>éram</i>'s heirlooms<br/> <i>undo kaimaning</i> = (cerem.) stone axe<br/> <i>undo dabu kopsking</i> = id.<br/> <i>tano</i> = green antique bead<br/> <i>natu</i> = yellow antique bead<br/> <i>sajam</i> = white antique bead<br/> <i>mendu</i> = ceremonial gift of <i>harta</i> in the event of birth of a first child<br/> <i>undo buki</i> = stone axe with translucent edge (ceremonial)<br/> <i>ibue-meseing-kabi</i> = the feast of presenting a pig<br/> <i>tekai</i> = the helper of the <i>éram</i><br/> <i>dekening</i> = lit. "the first" or "number one". Chief of a <i>tang</i> who has not yet had an <i>éram-be-kabi</i>.<br/> <i>Indjo</i> = female supernatural being<br/> <i>wap</i> = crayfish<br/> <i>imo</i> = bamboo, bamboo (water)flutes</p> | <p><i>indjo-jamo</i> = lit. the house of <i>Indjo</i>, initiation house<br/> <i>unggu</i> = drum<br/> <i>jao</i> = house, built for celebrating <i>éram-be-kabi</i><br/> <i>Semèn</i> = underworld<br/> <i>hngari</i> = bird of paradise (yellow)<br/> <i>indjo-ku</i> = lit. the time of <i>Indjo</i>, also used to denote the rainy season<br/> <i>sajanggu</i> = rainy season<br/> <i>saj</i> = rain<br/> <i>junggu</i> = season<br/> <i>Warikreng</i> = mythical being<br/> <i>Bawakreng</i> = id. (mother of <i>Warikreng</i>)<br/> <i>kesië-tenggu</i> = lit. the smell of <i>kesië</i><br/> <i>éram-be-pro</i> = war-lord<br/> <i>pro</i> = crow<br/> <i>indja-jap</i> (Gressie) = <i>indjo-jamo</i><br/> <i>pro-inggambu</i> = skilled warrior<br/> <i>Nggi</i> = name of old settlement<br/> <i>Hno</i> = id.<br/> <i>Wapombang</i> = id.<br/> <i>kasiep</i> = state of trance; also sessions in which people try to communicate with the world of the dead ancestors; also (<i>Kasiep</i>) apparition seen by someone who has <i>kasiep</i><br/> <i>nap</i> = apparition</p> |
|---|--|

## LIST OF MALAY AND DUTCH WORDS

(in the sequence of their appearance in the book)

- gaba* (M) = main rib of the sago-palm leaf  
*harta* (M) = old valuables  
*alang-alang* (M) = a kind of grass (Lat. *Imperata*)  
*korano* = official title for an appointed chief; the word originates from Geelvink Bay  
*Onderafdeling* (D) = lit. subdivision; administrative area  
*District* (D) = part of an *Onderafdeling*  
*Bestuurs Assistent* (B.A.) (D) = administrative assistant (mostly Ambonese or Papuan)

**Memorie van Overgave (D)** = notes of the District Officer concerning his region, drafted at the time of transfer of his authority to his successor  
**ondoafi (Hollandia)** = name, generally used for a customary chief  
**Landschapspolitie (D)** = locally recruited Papuan police forces (pre-war)  
**Herendiensten (D)** = statute labour (pre-war)  
**mantri (M)** = assistant  
**controleur (D)** = rank in Dutch Civil Administration  
**burgerdienstplicht (D)** = compulsory civilian service (war-time)  
**ringgit (M)** = two and a half guilder coin  
**rupiah (M)** = one guilder coin  
**Regeling Cooperatieve Verenigingen (R. C. V.) (D)** = regulations concerning indigenous co-operative societies.

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