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THE DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

An Indigenous Perspective

by

Naihuwo Ahai

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The National Research Institute
THE DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

An Indigenous Perspective
CONTENTS

Acronyms v

1. Introduction 1
   The “Development Problem” Versus “Development Issues” 1
   No Interpretation Is Value Neutral 1

2. The General Development Problem 4

3. Evidence of the Development Problem 5
   Basic Indicators 5
   Low Level of Human Development 7
   Economic Growth 8
   Law and Order 9
   Agricultural Production 9

4. Factors Contributing to the Development Problem 10
   The Growth-Oriented Development Model 10
   The Hierarchical Human Spectrum 13
   The Exclusive Process of Decision Making 14
   Inadequacy of Representative Democracy 15
   Widening Polarisation between the State and the People 16
   Economic Globalisation 18
   Lack of a Coherent Long-Term Vision of Development 18
   The Eight Aims 18
   Economic Growth through Infrastructure, Agriculture and Forestry (1981-1988) 18
   Economic Growth through Resource Extraction (1989 onwards) 19
   Structural Adjustment Program (1995 onwards) 19
   Inappropriate Development Strategies 21
   Inequitable Capacity of the Public Service Delivery Mechanism 26
   Skills, Attitudes, and Values 28
   Power 29
   Flexibility 29
   Penetration of the System 29
   Confusion in Political Direction at the Provincial Level 30
   Inequitable Delivery of Services and Development 30
   Problems of Accountability 31
   Factors Contributing to Bureaucratic Corruption 32
   Political Corruption 32
   The Absence of an Effective Countervailing Force 35

5. Conclusions 39

6. Bibliography 41
Diagrams, Tables and Figures

Diagram 1: Changes in Local-Level Government (since German Days, to 1990) 3
Table 1: Social Development Indicators, 1975-1995 6
Table 2: Selected Development Indicators, 1990 7
Table 3: Human Development Index of Some South Pacific Countries, 1995 7
Table 4: Economic Growth, by Sector, 1981-1991 (annual % change) 8
Table 5: Agricultural Exports, 1985-1992 ('000 tonnes) 9
Table 6: Value of Agricultural Exports, 1985-1992 (K millions) 10
Diagram 2: National Wealth Distribution System: An Interpretation 11
Figure 1: The Government's Decision-Making Process 14
Diagram 3: Growth of the Public Service, 1975-1996 26
Table 7: Government Departments in Administration, Social and Economic Sectors 27
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACRONYMS</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIDAB</td>
<td>Australian International Development Assistance Bureau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AusAID</td>
<td>Australian Aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC</td>
<td>Australian Broadcasting Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCL</td>
<td>Bougainville Copper Limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRAC</td>
<td>Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEC</td>
<td>Department of Environment and Conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DFP</td>
<td>Department of Finance and Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPM</td>
<td>Department of Personnel Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GNP</td>
<td>Gross National Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDI</td>
<td>Human Development Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IASER</td>
<td>Institute of Applied Social and Economic Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFDA</td>
<td>International Foundation for Development Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRDP</td>
<td>Integrated Rural Development Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEC</td>
<td>National Executive Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDOE</td>
<td>National Department of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Government Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OIDA</td>
<td>Office of International Development Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMD</td>
<td>Prime Minister's Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNG</td>
<td>Papua New Guinea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIP</td>
<td>Rural Improvement Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Author

Mr. Naihuwo Ahai is an applied researcher with the Educational Research Division of the National Research Institute. He previously taught for 12 years at the University of Papua New Guinea, and was instrumental in establishing the National Tokples School program. He has also had extensive experience in various provincial, district, and village-based social and economic development activities. His areas of professional expertise include education (both formal and non-formal), literacy, rural and community development, post-war reconstruction and rehabilitation, research, and capacity building of local organisations. Naihuwo Ahai is currently on study leave at the University of New England, where he is completing his Ph.D., and can be contacted on the following address:

Mr. Naihuwo Ahai,
Department of Administration and Training,
University of New England,
Armidale. NSW. 2351
Australia

Tel: 067 - 73-33989
Fax: 067 - 73-3363
e-mail: nahai @metz.une.cdu.au
1. INTRODUCTION

The nine-year-old Bougainville crisis (which started in September 1988), the lawsuit against the Australian industrial and mining company, BHP, in 1995-1996 by the Ok Tedi landowners, the growing urban settlements, the ever-increasing law and order problems, the burgeoning street beggars, and the recent Sandline Affair, culminating in military and civilian revolt, all plainly reveal that something has seriously gone wrong in Papua New Guinea. There are widespread feelings of unease, desperation, and frustration amongst the general populace that the development efforts have not delivered positive changes across the board.

This paper discusses some of the underlying factors behind the development problem that is being experienced by Papua New Guinea. Many of the ideas that are discussed are not new, but are presented from a humanistic perspective. The paper diverges from the usual angle of analysis which is offered by various commentators on Papua New Guinea's development problem.

The "Development Problem" Versus "Development Issues"

"Development" has become such a common term that its meaning has not only become ambiguous, but is intuitively understood by people from all walks of life and in many different contexts. The notion of change from an undesired state to a desired state is commonly understood, and will be sufficient for the purposes of this paper. Therefore, no specific interpretation of the term will be attempted, except to say that it is a multifaceted endeavour, as exemplified by the multiplicity of disciplines which study development, and the numerous sectors (such as economics, commerce, mining, education, health, agriculture, forestry, community development, women's development, peace and conflict resolution, and so on) which aim at bringing about development. Development issues, therefore, are as numerous as disciplines of study and sectors of development.

However, regardless of any differences in perspectives of the various disciplines of study and objectives of the various development sectors, their fundamental goal is ultimately the same — improvement in the livelihood of the citizens. This fundamental goal becomes the core development problem around which all development issues are focused.

For this reason, this paper focuses on the "development problem" rather than "development issues". However, this does not mean that development issues are of lesser importance. On the contrary, thorough and critical analyses of development issues are central to better understanding the development problem, and informing efforts in finding solutions.

No Interpretation Is Value Neutral

The notion that scientific inquiry, knowledge, and economics are value free has been refuted strongly by many scholars, especially from the developing nations (Freire 1973; Fals-Borda and Rahman 1991). Some have even argued for the relevance of values in the construction and application of knowledge and technologies (Ekins 1992; Wignaraja 1993). Development touches the souls of all human beings, and affects the way people feel and interact with others in society. Affective judgements, which are shaped by real-
life experiences, eventually influence the degree to which, development or the lack of it, is perceived to take place. Furthermore, construction of knowledge (apart from the study of animal behaviour in laboratories) is also strongly shaped by observations of real-life situations. As such, knowledge always entails value issues, regardless of the means to make it value neutral. As knowledge and understanding are not value free, the real-life experiences which shape this interpretation should be stated at the outset.

First, this paper is one of the many possible interpretations of the development problem in Papua New Guinea. Numerous other interpretations have been offered by academics, consultants, and commentators. This particular interpretation is influenced by two specific perspectives:

(a) As an applied social scientist, my interest has been, and remains, in the development and application of policies and programs in the wider society, in a manner that addresses the many aspects of the communities' well-being. I am interested in where the "rubber hits the road", in the integral development of people, both as individuals and groups that cohabit in a particular locale, or as groups that are united by common interests. The prejudice towards "people development" stems from the sociocultural context of my rural upbringing in which human welfare and human relations are the paramount factors in the application of all knowledge systems, and in the utilisation of natural and manmade resources. The analyses of Papua New Guinea's development by various observers are also naturally influenced by the sociocultural context of their socialisation. For those observers from Western societies, their analyses are naturally influenced by Western perspectives. The holistic development of social, economic, and political concerns has been of particular interest to my work. The interpretation of the development problems that are presented here will naturally be influenced by experiences from this perspective.

(b) The social, economic, political, and environmental factors that gave rise to the Bougainville crisis, the ingenuity and resilience with which Bougainvilleans have endured the crisis, and the positive learnings that are emerging from the experiences have also influenced this interpretation. The crisis has generally made Bougainvilleans critically reflect on society and the trend of development that was taking place. For example, one of the things that has emerged strongly is the realisation of the high degree of autonomy and democracy that traditional Bougainvillean societies (and Melanesian societies, broadly) have always exercised in the regulation and conduct of their communities, through the application of social, economic, and custom systems. Decision making, either through the Council of Chiefs (as in Bougainville and the island region, and Trobriand Islands), or the big-man system in the highlands, was far more democratic, and included wider input from those affected by the decisions. The consensus process of decision making contrasts with the elitist decision making which is characteristic of representative democracy. This reference to the exercise of autonomy and democracy in traditional societies is not simply a romanticised indulgence in the past. The withdrawal of the Papua New Guinean Defence Force from Bougainville in 1990, and the subsequent withdrawal of all government services led to a total collapse of law and order, and the absence of any semblance of normal life throughout Bougainville. The chaos, confusion, fear, and violations of life which reigned during this period have been well documented elsewhere (May and Spriggs 1990; Oliver 1991; Amnesty International 1993). In the words of one woman, "It
was a period when there was no difference between night and day — everything became black. Even the flowers lost their beauty.

Diagram 1 shows the transition in forms of local-level government in Bougainville up to the time of the crisis, and during this period the Council of Chiefs re-emerged.

Diagram 1: Changes in Local-Level Government (since German Days, to 1990)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tultuls &amp; Luluais (colonial period)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Council of Chiefs (precolonial &amp; during crisis)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Government (independence)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ahai, N., 1991

What is important is the eventual resurrection of the Council of Chiefs’ system in maintaining law and order in parts of Bougainville from 1991 to 1992. When all other systems of governance failed (including the introduced systems such as community government which were in some ways smaller versions of local government councils), the people of Bougainville reverted to the one and only system in which they had faith, and which had been tried and proven over thousands of years. The resurrection of the traditional form of government and its effectiveness in maintaining law and order (until the return of the Papua New Guinean Government) legitimates its value and the need to integrate it into the modern form of government.

The attempts by various civilian movements and groups throughout Papua New Guinea, to find ways to regain autonomy through various forms of political and autonomous community development are also another perspective that influences this interpretation.

Much of the interpretation is also influenced by the experience which I have gained during my seventeen years of work with grassroots communities throughout Papua New Guinea. This work began while I was an applied linguist (with the University of Papua New Guinea), and was part of a fledgling alternative education movement which eventually led to the spread of Tokples schools throughout the provinces and the establishment of the National Literacy and Awareness program in the National Department of Education (NDOE 1991).

The second significant period began in 1991 while I was an educational researcher with the National Research Institute. This work took me into provinces and communities to witness, firsthand, the experiences in education and development at these levels. In some provinces, such as North Solomons, Enga, and East Sepik, there were innovative grassroots attempts to link education to village development.

The third significant period of interaction with grassroots communities was between 1993 and 1996 when I was actively involved with a number of non-government organisations that were (and still are) engaged in helping rural communities find
alternative and sustainable ways (socially, economically, culturally, and environmentally) to develop their own communities. My seventeen years of development experience have provided a rich exposure to the experiences, thinking, and understanding of the grassroots people themselves on the development issues that impact upon their lives. In this sense, these ideas may be regarded as an articulation of the perceptions of the silent voices (the grassroots) on the development problem.

A statement of the development problem will be followed by statistics to show its extent, and then a discussion of the factors contributing to the development problem. The conclusion will highlight areas that need to be addressed in any attempts to overcome the development problem.

2. THE GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM

Simply stated, the general development problem is:

"the lack of significant improvement in the standard of living (as measured by basic indicators) of the majority of Papua New Guineans".

The ultimate goal of any good government is to promote social, economic, and political changes that are geared towards the eventual improvement in the quality of life of its citizens. Whatever the components of this quality of life, development in all societies has three core objectives (Todaro 1997:16-19). They are to:

(a) increase the availability and widen the distribution of basic life-sustaining goods (food, shelter, health, and security);
(b) raise the level of living (income, jobs, education, and cultural and humanistic values); and
(c) expand the range of economic and social choices that are available to individuals and society by freeing them from servitude and dependence.

Papua New Guinea has been no exception in this endeavour. Since independence, in 1975, various governments have disbursed enormous resources in the pursuit of development. Some progress has been achieved, as is indicated by small increases in some indicators (see Tables 1, 2, and 3). However, on the whole, the basic problem remains unaltered.

This statement is also echoed by the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau (AusAid) Report (1994a: xi-xii) which states:

"In general, the same problems (lack of significant improvements in social indicators) exist in 1994 as existed more than a decade ago, and many have worsened. The question that really needs to be addressed is why government and the bureaucracy have not acted to implement the necessary improvements."
The existence of the development problem has been widely acknowledged by various national and international development agencies, as well as the general population of Papua New Guinea. The growing social unrest throughout the country is an expression of the frustration because of the lack of development.

3. EVIDENCE OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM

This section introduces a number of social and economic indicators, and presents evidence to support the argument that there is indeed a development problem.

Basic Indicators

The definition of development, primarily in economic terms since The Second World War, was measured by using the composite index of Gross National Product (GNP) per capita. GNP per capita should reveal the level of goods and services that are available to the average citizen, for consumption. The initial aim of development was to achieve high increases in the rate of growth of GNP per capita. By the 1970s, GNP per capita, as the sole measure of development, was discarded because of continued poverty, inequality, and unemployment, in spite of achievements in growth (Adelman and Morris 1973; Todaro 1997). The measure of GNP did not provide an accurate picture of how poor the citizens were, in reality. A detailed discussion of GNP, as a measure of development, is beyond the scope of this paper, but interested readers can refer to Anderson (1991).

The change in how development is measured coincided with changes in the goal of development. Development became oriented towards meeting basic needs and eradicating poverty (Streeten 1979; Burkey 1993), while at the same time pursuing economic growth. Therefore, there was consensus amongst development experts in favour of a broad range of indicators which would give an indication of the quality of life (Cocoyoe Declaration 1974, 1980; World Bank Report 1991). Several demographic, health, and education indicators (commonly referred to as basic indicators) have now come to supplement the GNP in measuring development.

Table 1 shows the progress in basic indicators for the period from 1970-75 to 1995 in Papua New Guinea, with the statistics revealing a general pattern of increase. Life expectancy, for example, increased from 41 years in 1970-75 to 56 years in 1995. The adult literacy rate also increased from 23 percent in 1970-75 to 48 percent in 1995. Some indicators, such as population per doctor and population per nurse, have shown unsteady growth. The percentage of students enrolling in tertiary education has also declined, probably because of an increase in population. The decline in indicators for some sectors may be the collective result of an increasing population and a decline in the provision of services.

In spite of the progress, as shown in Table 1, the majority of the population continues to live in relative poverty. The poor in Papua New Guinea, fortunately, do not die from hunger or lack of shelter, as these are provided in abundance by nature (Guy et al. 1996). However, they suffer from a serious lack of basic services, and lack adequate access to
primary health care, safe drinking water, and proper sanitation. Also, mortality and morbidity rates remain high. There is some suggestion that the gains which had been made may have been reversed in the last decade, as indicated by the following statement by the Minister for Health during the launching of the new National Health Plan:

"Unfortunately, improvements to both maternal and childhood mortality rates achieved in the 1970s and 1980s have reversed. Overall, these key indicators have proven that, despite scientific advancement and the economic progress of our nation, the notable initial progress made has not been sustained." (The Independent, 26 July 1996, p.3).

Average indicators hide the wide disparities between the rich and the poor, between the urban and the rural, between men and women, and within individual provinces and regions.

Table 1: Social Development Indicators, 1975-1995

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population Statistics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total population (million)</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av. annual growth of popln. (%)</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban population (%)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population age structure (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-14</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>41.3</td>
<td>48.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-64</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>48.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 65</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GNP per capita (kina)</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>810</td>
<td>1130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Av. annual growth of GNP (%)</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Health Statistics**        |         |      |      |      |      |
| Life expectancy at birth     | 41      | 50   | 54   | 54   | 56   |
| Population per doctor        | 11 733  | 11 800 | 13 590 | 6 070 | 12 750 |
| Population per nurse         | 1 713   | 1 900 | 960  | 880  | 1 160 |
| Infant mort. rate (per 1 000) | 134   | 159  | 97   | 61   | 67   |
| Maternal mort. rate (per 100 000) | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| Total fertility rate (number) | 6      | 6    | 5    | 5.2  | n.a. |
| Population access to safe water (%) | 20    | 20   | n.a. | n.a. | n.a. |
| Daily calorie supply per capita | 2 090 | 2 268 | 2 109 | 2 205 | n.a. |

| **Education Statistics**      |         |      |      |      |      |
| Adult literacy rate (%)       | 32      | 32   | n.a. | 45   | n.a. |
| Primary school enrollment (%) | 56      | 60   | 65   | 70   | 73   |
| Female primary enrolment (%)  | 43      | 49   | 58   | 64   | 68   |
| Secondary enrolment (no. of age group) | 12   | 12   | 13   | 12   | 12   |
| Total tertiary enrolment (%)  | 8       | 3    | 2    | 2    | 2    |

2. AIDAB Report No. 13: XII.

**Note:** n.a. = not available
Although some progress has been made, by international standards, Papua New Guinea’s development indicators remain low, and the bulk of the rural population lives below the poverty line (see Table 2).

### Table 2: Selected Development Indicators, 1990

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Pop. (mill.)</th>
<th>GNP per capita</th>
<th>Adult literacy</th>
<th>Life expect.</th>
<th>Mat. mort. rate</th>
<th>Infant mort. rate</th>
<th>HDI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>139.1</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>70.1</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>88.4</td>
<td>70.9</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0.651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>184.3</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>77.0</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNG</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>890</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>0.321</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** UNDP Development Report, 1992.

**Note:** Maternal and infant mortality rates are per 100 000 and 1 000 live births, respectively.

### Low Level of Human Development

The level of human development is measured by using the composite measure of Human Development Index (HDI) (UNDP 1990). HDI is a statistical index that is derived from three basic indicators — rate of literacy, life expectancy, and Real GDP per capita (relative buying power per capita). Although all three indicators show national averages, and, as such, conceal wide disparities in the overall population, they have been widely used as measures of human development.

### Table 3: Human Development Index for Some South Pacific Countries, 1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>HDI</th>
<th>HDI Rank</th>
<th>Real GDP per capita</th>
<th>Real GDP per capita minus HDI rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fiji</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>.860</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Samoa</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>.651</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanuatu</td>
<td>160 000</td>
<td>.541</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon Is.</td>
<td>300 000</td>
<td>.511</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNG</td>
<td>3.7 mill.</td>
<td>.508</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>-41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** UNDP Human Development Report, 1995.

Table 3 compares the Human Development Index of Papua New Guinea with that of its neighbours in the South Pacific for 1990 and 1995. Of the countries listed in Table 2, Papua New Guinea clearly has the highest GNP per capita. However, it performs poorly on all the development indicators. Countries such as Sri Lanka and China (see Table 2) have been able to improve their standards of living (as per these indicators) with a much lower GNP per capita. Papua New Guinea is ranked 116 out of 160 countries and has regressed 22 positions when compared to countries with similar GNPs (UNDP 1992). Infant mortality, although declining, still remains high, at 56 per 1 000 live births, while maternal mortality is at 700 per 100 000 live births.
The Development Problem in Papua New Guinea

In 1995 (UNDP 1995), 200 000 people in Papua New Guinea were without access to health services, 2.7 million did not have access to safe drinking water, and 3.2 million did not have access to good sanitation.

The situation is no better when Papua New Guinea is compared to its smaller South Pacific neighbours whose GNP per capita is much less (see Table 3). Papua New Guinea has the lowest HDI, when compared with its South Pacific neighbours. Clearly, Papua New Guinea is not using its scarce resources in a manner that will bring maximum benefits. Our regional neighbours in South-East Asia and the South Pacific have been able to achieve better results with a much lower GNP per capita.

Economic Growth

Table 4 shows the percentage of annual growth of the main economic sectors for the period 1981 - 1991. The table clearly shows an inconsistent pattern of growth which is marked by both positive and negative movements.

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>-7.6</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>-37.9</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>45.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>-14.5</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction &amp; Utilities</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>-5.1</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Three points should be made about economic growth:

(a) growth has generally been hard to achieve and sustain, with any level of consistency;
(b) where growth has been achieved, it has largely been through the extraction of non-renewable resources such as minerals and oil. However, the mining sector incurs high social and environmental costs which are not usually brought into the calculation of current or future costs and benefits. Therefore, current growth from non-renewable resource development may result in heavy social and environmental costs in the future, thus negating current gains and inhibiting the potential for growth many years down the line; and
(c) the fruits of growth have not resulted in any significant change in the quality of life for the majority of the population, as is shown by the basic indicators in Table 1. This is not only a result of inequitable distribution of resources but also relates to the quality of distribution. Some distributive mechanisms do achieve some form of equitability, but with little quality distribution. For example, the Electoral Development Fund is an instrument which was intended as a mechanism for promoting development in all of the 109 electorates. In practice, the management of the resources (financial, material, and equipment) that have been distributed through this avenue have either led to direct consumption or wastage, and there have been negligible long-term development benefits to the community. The message is that, although
equitable distribution is taking place through these political handouts, it is not leading to any quality development in the electorates. Instead, it appears to be helping to entrenched the handout mentality. It has also created an environment of competition between communities that are vying for the annual handouts, with hostilities arising from those communities that miss out. The hostilities have frequently resulted in the destruction of facilities that were financed through the Electoral Development Fund.

Law and Order

Although it is common knowledge that law and order incidents have become more prevalent and serious in nature over the years, there are no reliable, up-to-date statistics available. There are some statistics that were included in the Clifford Report (1984), and which confirm the rising trend. The growth in law and order problems is also reflected in the gradual increase in the budgetary allocation for this sector from K114.7 million in 1988, to K204.7 million in 1991, to K214.9 million in 1994 (AIDAB 1994: 191). The bulk of this funding has, of course, been consumed by the Bougainville operations. However, the fact remains that there has been a general increase in funding for this sector as a result of the increase in law and order problems.

Agricultural Production

The development problem is also reflected in the decline of the quantity and value of agricultural products (see Tables 5 and 6) in all the major export commodities. This decline is partly because of the effects of the Plantation Redistribution Scheme, lack of replanting of old trees (Goodman, Lepani and Morawetz 1985), law and order problems, the decline in commodity prices, the decline in infrastructure and facilities, but also as a direct result of the government’s emphasis on the non-renewable resource sector.

Table 5: Agriculture Exports, 1985 - 1992 ('000 tonnes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cocoa</th>
<th>Coffee</th>
<th>Tea</th>
<th>Copra</th>
<th>Copra Oil</th>
<th>Palm Oil</th>
<th>Rubber</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>103.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>123.8</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>61.9</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>93.0</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>129.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>64.8</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>84.1</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>97.3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>44.8</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>76.8</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>102.6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>85.0</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>131.7</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>63.3</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>142.7</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>155.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>186.3</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


There is no doubt that a development problem exists in Papua New Guinea and that it is felt in the daily lives of all citizens. The burgeoning number of street beggars in towns and cities is a stark reminder of this problem. The ever-increasing population of unemployed youths is another common manifestation of the development problem. Even those people whose jobs are confined to air-conditioned offices, and who may not come into direct contact with rural hardships, have to constantly peer through their windows every time a dog barks to see if there are any so-called ‘rascals’ lurking at the barbed wire fences.
Table 6: Value of Agricultural Exports, 1985 - 1992 (K millions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cocoa</th>
<th>Coffee</th>
<th>Tea</th>
<th>Copra</th>
<th>Copra Oil</th>
<th>Palm Oil</th>
<th>Rubber</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>117.5</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>330.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>208.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>331.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>56.2</td>
<td>134.7</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>268.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>113.5</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>255.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>140.4</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>270.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>103.3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>204.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>70.8</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>180.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>68.1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>203.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Although there is a general consensus regarding the development problem, there seems to be no consensus as to the causes behind it or what actions are required to overcome it. Numerous studies and consultancies have been (and are still being) carried out to try to better understand the problem. Some studies have recommended tougher laws, additional and more secure jails, and more firepower for the police (National Law and Order Summit 1994), while others put the blame on the traditional cultures and customs, and argue for a deeper structural transformation of society. Meanwhile, there is every indication that the problem is becoming more marked.

4. FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM

This section discusses the factors that are seen as contributing to the development problem, under eight general categories:

- the growth-oriented development model;
- the hierarchical human spectrum;
- lack of a coherent, long-term vision of development;
- inappropriate development strategies;
- inequitable capacity of the public service delivery mechanism;
- inequitable delivery of services and development;
- problems of accountability; and
- the absence of an effective countervailing force.

Where possible, examples are given to contextualise the arguments.

The Growth-Oriented Development Model

The primary focus of the growth development model is the notion of economic growth, as measured by the Gross National Product (GNP), which is a summary index of the relative well-being of all citizens. Development in this context is synonymous with the accumulation of wealth and increases in per capita income, which are to be achieved through a process of gradual social, political, cultural, and economic structural transformation, and eventually lead to development (Rostow 1960). Although a detailed
discussion of the growth model of development is beyond the scope of this paper, it will be suffice to note that arguments against this model include economic, political, cultural, and environmental perspectives (Gran 1983; Chambers 1983; Brandt Commission 1983; Brundtland Commission 1987; Korten 1990). From a humanitryan perspective, the weakness of the growth model has been the accumulation motive which has put a primary focus on national development, productivity, capital investment, and non-human entities. As a result, ‘people development’ becomes a secondary concern. People are important only of the economic productivity system.

Another weakness of the growth model is the trickle-down effect which is assumed to take place gradually, over a period of time. It is common knowledge, and has come to be accepted globally, that this has been too ambitious and unrealistic for many developing nations — a fact that has been confirmed at many international forums (Club of Rome; Cocoyoc Declaration 1974; Dag Hammarskjold Foundation 1975; IFDA 1986). Even in the most developed countries, the gap between those occupying the lower rungs and those at the top continues to widen. Yet, solutions that are recommended seem to fervently argue for more growth, on the grounds that there is insufficient growth to result in an adequate and equitable trickle-down.

The focus on GNP is based on the assumption that the government must provide development (goods and services) for, and on behalf of the people. The government argues that it cannot bring about development if it does not have the economic means. The thinking assumes that the people are incapable of taking responsibility for their own development. The thinking behind the common basket of wealth (national treasury), from which the national income is to be distributed, is generally perceived as being defective in Papua New Guinea. The system takes away (through various kinds of taxes) on the assumption that the government will distribute it equitably to all citizens. While the system is well-intentioned, its practice has not quite lived up to the rhetoric. The inadequacy of the system stems from the fact that much of what is collected from the people is not redistributed in the form of goods and services, but actually ‘leaks’ along the bureaucratic plumbing system (see Diagram 2). What is required is a development model that accords people the human dignity which they deserve, without necessarily sacrificing the economic concerns.

Diagram 2: National Wealth Distribution System: An Interpretation
The economic development model, which is based on the Marshall Plan for the reconstruction of Europe following The Second World War, was contextually inappropriate for Papua New Guinea in the form in which it was introduced, for the following reasons:

(a) European countries started with a situation where they already had some level of physical infrastructure. Even though much of the infrastructure was destroyed during the war, the basic foundation was still in place, and these countries were not really starting from scratch. The skeletal foundations of roads, and shipping and railway systems were still in existence. What was needed was a massive infusion of foreign funding to rebuild the physical infrastructure;

(b) European countries also had in place a basic social infrastructure in the form of political and bureaucratic systems, an educated population with a high-level technocratic pool, and a pool of experienced people with expertise in business. A culture of economic trading was also ingrained in their tradition, as having evolved through the Middle Ages and the Renaissance;

(c) the bulk of the population was already urban based which created a market and demand for the consumption of goods and services that were produced by the economy. The landless urban population was dependent on the surplus production from the rural sector; and

(d) a system of land ownership in which the bulk of the land was already in private ownership (landlords), and was held in economically viable quantities. This enabled the establishment of large farms and the production of a high level of surplus which provided the raw materials for the urban industries. This contrasts markedly with the situation in Papua New Guinea where 97 percent of the land is owned by clans in small quantities, and this makes it difficult to establish large mechanised farms. A small urban population also does not create the level of demand for the production of high levels of surplus.

Having endured the devastating Second World War, there was an atmosphere of misery, desperation, hunger, and poverty. However, there was a strong internal drive to better their own situation. Hence, the European countries were able to mobilise the population and resources on the scale that they did. The catalyst they needed was the external injection of funds and resources from the United States of America, under the Marshall Plan. In contrast, a common feature of Melanesian societies that prevails even today, is the comfort zone mentality, which exhibits complacency, a happy-go-lucky attitude, and taking life as it comes. Outsiders are astonished by the lengthy hours (even days) of seemingly unproductive time that are spent telling stories in men's houses or wastefully roaming around in the bush or the waters. The 'comfort zone mentality' is a result of the relative ease with which life in the villages is sustained because of the plentiful life-supporting resources from the natural environment (land, forests, river systems, and seas).

Compared to other situations in developing regions such as in Africa and Asia, Papua New Guineans do not have to struggle to the same extent for basic survival needs (food, housing, clothing, and security). The kinds of poverty, hunger, and starvation that are known and seen in other countries do not yet exist to any serious degree, apart from a few pockets of urban settlements. In Western societies, a primarily landless urban population lives to work, while Papua New Guineans only work to live. Hence, they
will only work if and when there is the need to do so. *Work, or productivity in economic jargon, does not become the all-enslaving master.* Economists have described attitudes and behaviour related to the comfort zone mentality as laziness.

Furthermore, Papua New Guinea’s political entity was not only evolving from a coalition of fragmented tribal and clan units, but was also starting as a nation which was, and still is, predominantly illiterate and rural, and without any physical and social infrastructure. Also, it did not have a culture of economic trading that was developed to the same level as the European countries up to The Second World War. Although there are anthropological accounts of trading systems in precolonial Papua New Guinea (such as the Hiri Trade, and the Kula Ring), these were primarily cultural exchanges rather than economic transactions. However, more significantly, Papua New Guinea has a totally different pattern of resource ownership, and social and cultural systems that regulate its management.

Therefore, the Western form of economic development, which is premised on the private accumulation of wealth, was contextually inappropriate when transposed onto a system of resource ownership in which resources have always been managed for the collective good of the people. The introduced form of economic development enriches individual competition when, in fact, a core ingredient which is required for that private enhancement is actually collectively controlled. Thus, there is a contradiction between the accumulationist goals of the growth model and the tribal system of resource management. It is worth noting that current attempts by the government (following advice by the World Bank) to mobilise customary land, by registration, is an attempt to remedy this contradiction between the goals of private accumulation and the institutions of custom through which communal management of resources is regulated.

**The Hierarchical Human Spectrum**

Another set of factors which contributes to the development problem in Papua New Guinea, relates to the hierarchical human spectrum that is an outcome of the system of development and governance that was transplanted to Papua New Guinea. This spectrum is one in which some quarters are deemed to be superior to others in terms of socialisation, culture, and political power, and are therefore deemed to be qualified to guide, control, and determine the development of the rest of society (Rahman 1993: 216 - 217). These superior quarters create and control existing structures in order to exercise organised domination over the others. A professional class of intellectuals and bureaucrats serves these structures by assessing reality and constructing knowledge to support and guide their policies and actions. The ordinary people do not have the responsibility for their own, and society's development.

In Papua New Guinea, this hierarchical structure manifests itself in the decision-making process in the following ways:

- the exclusive process of decision making;
- inadequacy of representative democracy;
district offices, churches, and local bodies) through which wider input could be sought, without cost being a serious constraint.

Decision making becomes an 'exclusive club', and is extremely top down. Various committees, commissions, and advisory groups that are formed from time to time, usually comprise persons from the same closed circle — be they retired or currently employed elites. As such, the decision-making process denies itself the opportunity to draw from a wider circle of experience and views. Many senior bureaucrats have moved directly from the classroom to 'headquarters' and have not had the opportunity to work in rural areas and experience the positive and negative impacts of government policy on the people. Their experience is limited to office administration in provincial and national offices, and hence they possess only an outsider's view of the realities of village life. This trend is symptomatic of newly independent nations that immediately recruit and appoint less experienced and less competent graduates to high offices (Chambers 1983). However, after some twenty-one years down the line, it is difficult to see why this situation should continue, given the pool of experienced and competent personnel that exists outside Waigani, at the universities, in the research institutions, and in the private sector.

**Inadequacy of Representative Democracy**

The hierarchical human spectrum is also evident in the system of representative democracy. Representative democracy differs markedly from the genuinely egalitarian and open process of decision making that has been enjoyed by the so-called traditional Papua New Guinean communities for thousands of years. Consultation and consensus were the essential processes through which decisions were reached. For the stakeholders concerned, it always led to a win-win situation. Consensus decision making avoided the win-lose situation that is inherent in the voting and majority decision-making processes in which some lose and some win, and whose by-products are loss of face, simmering ill feelings, the breakdown of community solidarity, and the subsequent violence displayed by those who do not poll enough votes to win.

Even in England (the mother land of democracy), questions are now being asked about some of the so-called institutions of democracy. The newly-elected labour government of Prime Minister Tony Blair has undertaken to change the membership of the House of Lords by commonly elected members (ABC, May 1997). The point here is that, if the political, social, cultural, and economic context of England has changed so much that the institutions and forms of democracy now need to be changed, how much more irrelevant and inappropriate can the current form of representative democracy be for Papua New Guinea, given the substantially different social, cultural, and political context.

There is also an extreme lack of consultation with the citizens on major issues, as leaders have usurped the right to decide under the guise of having 'the political mandate' to do so. In many cases, the validity of this political mandate is questionable, given the fact that more than 50 percent of parliamentarians are elected to Parliament with less that 20 percent of the electorates' total votes (Standish 1994); that is, more than 50 percent of national parliamentarians do not represent the large majority of voters in their respective electorates.
This raises issues on the appropriateness and relevance of 'representative democracy' in Papua New Guinea, especially when the voters' exercise of democratic rights is restricted to a five-year election cycle. As has been evident in recent years, the five-year cycle offers too much protection for leaders who are unworthy of leadership. Therefore, there is a need to improve the decision-making process by broadening its base of input, and by making leadership more accountable downwards to the people, as opposed to maintaining the current system whereby leaders are only accountable upwards to the system. The current 'upwards' system of accountability, has clearly failed to guarantee quality leadership and an adequate decision-making process.

**Widening Polarisation between the State and the People**

The foregoing discussion highlights the widening polarisation between the State and the people (Ahai 1995). The distance between the people and the leaders is growing wider, and there is an increasingly popular perception of greed and nepotism amongst the leaders.

The second reason for the widening polarisation is the increasing prominence in the thinking of national leaders — both political and bureaucratic — that what is good for the State is naturally good for the people. Events in recent years, such as the Bougainville crisis, the *Internal Securities Act*, land reform, the special battalion, the *Secrecy Act*, and the Sandline Affair, show that that is not necessarily the case.

The term 'State' is also seen to increasingly have a narrow reference amongst the grassroots communities. There is a growing sector of the population which understands that the term only refers to politicians and bureaucrats. Following this definition, 'what is good for the State', will usually mean 'what is good for the politicians and the bureaucrats'; that is, more power and privileges to this small but powerful group of people. This is not surprising as more and more of the state's decisions have the effect of distancing it from the masses. This psychological distance between the citizens and the State is quite fundamental, as it relates to issues such as identity, nationalism, and commitment to the common good. The greater the psychological distance between citizens and the State, the less the possibility of national solidarity and sacrifice for the national good.

The polarisation is also influenced by the geographical distance between Waigani and the masses. The psychological and geographical distances are particularly significant when contrasted against a traditional political culture in which there were minimal temporal and geographical distances in decision making. The council of elders made decisions within the appropriate geographical, psychological and temporal contexts, and did not need to wait for decisions from a distant authority. People clearly participated in, and witnessed, the decisions that were being reached.

This raises the issue concerning the appropriate level of government that would reduce the geographical and temporal remoteness which is being experienced under the current form of government. In what way will the centralisation of powers, through the current provincial government reform, affect this situation? Would regional or state governments, as have been suggested by various groups, be a way of bringing government closer to the people?
There is also an increasing tendency for the government to be the 'referee' and a 'major player' at the same time. In many countries, including Australia, the role of the government is to primarily establish policies and rules in order to regulate the conduct of society at large. In Papua New Guinea, however, the government is becoming more and more of a "player". The increasing exertion of political power in the routine management of development is made easier by the politicisation of the public service, particularly through the political appointment of departmental heads. As exemplified by events in recent years, politically appointed heads may not be in a position to exercise professionalism, neutrality, and objectivity in decision making. Concerns over the politicisation of the public service have been raised publicly. For example, Napoleon Liosi, President of the Public Employees Association, recently expressed the need for the incoming government to appoint departmental heads on merit, qualifications, and character (The National, 3 July 1997), rather than on political interests.

According to Dwivedi (1994:45-46), it is not surprising to see administrative power shifting from public servants to politicians, as the latter acquire supremacy in decision making. With this shift in power, politicians commonly become the brokers between business concerns and government departments, and are responsible for the interpretation and enforcement of law, and the general administration of development. Public servants are simply informed and directed to facilitate the connections that have been brokered by the politicians. Without alluding to any acts of impropriety (legal or otherwise), and according to the limited information available through the media, the manner in which the services of the Sandline International personnel were procured appears to be an example of this type of shift in power, where politicians concern themselves with the routine business of administrative management.

This trend may increasingly see the government, in its capacity both as a player and a referee, aspire to a situation where it constantly changes the rules of the game to suit its own purposes and plays against its own people, but with disastrous consequences. The Ok Tedi Eighth Supplement and the Secrecy Act clearly illustrate the situation where the government, in its capacity as the referee, is changing the rules to suit itself as a player. The central role of national parliamentarians in the new provincial government reform is a further example of the dual function and conflict of interest of the State, as a lawmaker as well as an implementor.

Apart from each regional member being also the governor of his or her province, each parliamentarian is ascribed the position of Head of the Joint District Planning and Budgeting Committee. This committee is charged with the responsibility of assessing needs, formulating district development plans, and allocating resources in accordance with this plan. There are already concerns being raised that parliamentarians are dictating the use of funds at the district level, for political purposes, without much regard for the development needs of the district (Travertz, as reported in the Post-Courier 28 May 1997). Also, there is a wide popular feeling that the politicians are exercising too much influence in too many areas, and that the government is becoming too authoritarian in order to protect its own security and political interests.

The widening polarisation between the State and the people, and the examples already cited, in which state powers are being entrenched through legislation, point to
the beginnings of a fundamental shift in the role of government, from being the guarantor and protector of people's rights and freedom into one that suppresses the rights and freedom of the people. The recent diversion of funds (The National, June 1997) from programs that would benefit the larger society (road maintenance (K5.96m), Police (K2.5m), Health (K2.5m), Education (K2m), Transport (K1.5m), and Internal Revenue (K1m)), to fund the Sandline military operation may be interpreted as an indication of a government that is becoming increasingly less concerned with the welfare of its citizens and more concerned with maintaining its power.

**Economic Globalisation**

Economic globalisation has also pressured the State into facilitating the economic operations of transnational corporations whose activities, and the consequences of their activities, are often perceived to be in direct conflict with the welfare of the people. Cultural, social, and environmental destruction by logging and mining companies are often quoted as examples. As a result, the State is not perceived to be acting in the interest of the grassroots communities.

**Lack of a Coherent, Long-Term Vision of Development**

Papua New Guinea has undergone four broad policy shifts since independence. These policy shifts are discussed, with the intention of highlighting the impacts that they have had on the development problem.

**The Eight Aims**

The development planning process in Papua New Guinea originates from the *Report on Development Strategies for Papua New Guinea* (1973) (commonly known as the Faber Report), which was prepared by a group of East Anglia academics who were hired as World Bank and United Nations consultants to design a development plan. The report, and the ensuing discussions, led to the statement of a series of social and economic objectives (the Eight Aims and the National Development Strategy) which served as the guiding principles in planning development at independence. The following Eight Aims were approved in 1972 by the National Executive Council (The National Development Strategy 1975):

- rapid increase in the proportion of the economy under the control of Papua New Guinean individuals and groups, and in the proportion of the personal and property income that goes to Papua New Guineans;
- more equal distribution of economic benefits, including movement towards equalisation of incomes among people, and towards equalisation of services for the different areas of the country;
- decentralisation of economic activity, planning, and government spending, with an emphasis on agricultural development, village industry, better internal trade, and more spending channelled to local and area bodies;
- an emphasis on small-scale artisan, service, and business activity, relying, where possible, on typically Papua New Guinean forms of business activity;
- a more self-reliant economy, which is less dependent for its needs on imported goods and services, and is better able to meet the needs of its people through local participation;
Factors Contributing to the Development Problem

- an increasing capacity for meeting government spending needs from locally raised revenue;
- a rapid increase in the equal and active participation of women in all forms of economic and social activity; and
- government control and involvement in those sectors of the economy where
control is necessary to achieve the desired kind of development.

The objectives were translated into a multitude of medium-to-long-term goals
(Dahanayake 1981; Kavanamur 1993) geared towards:

- the achievement of sustained economic growth;
- the creation of income generating opportunities in rural areas; and
- the reduction of social and economic inequality.

The focus of these goals on ‘equity and access’ has resulted in specific emphasis being
placed on spreading development to the rural areas. Education, Health, Law and Order,
and Agricultural services were expanded across most of the rural sector as part of the
government’s aim to achieve an equitable distribution of goods and services (National
Development Strategy for Nationhood 1975)’. This was supported by the growth of the
public service from 29 000 in 1975, to 51 000 in 1980 (Dwivedi and Paulius 1986).
Several programs — the Integrated Rural Development Programs; the Less Developed
Areas Program; the Special Area Programs; the Rural Improvement Program; and the
Village Economic Development Fund — were also initiated with the specific aim of
developing the less developed rural sectors.

Economic Growth through Infrastructure, Agriculture and Forestry (1981-1988)

The goals of ‘access and equity’ remained prominent up to the early 1980s.
However, with frequent changes in government, the growing influence of international
financial institutions, and the inability of national elites to translate the goals and aims
into development efforts, the development goals shifted from access and equity to pure
economic growth, through investments in agriculture and infrastructure in the 1981 to
1988 period. As a result, there was some transfer of funding from the social sectors to
the economic sectors.

Economic Growth through Resource Extraction (1989 onwards)

A number of events — in particular, the closure of the Bougainville Copper Mine as a
result of the Bougainville crisis, as well as a growing appetite by politicians for political
monies — led to the final major shift in development policy in favour of pure economic
growth, primarily through enclave resource extraction and exploitation, such as mining,
oil, and logging (Kavanamur 1993).

Structural Adjustment Program (1995 onwards)

Since 1995, Papua New Guinea has been undergoing a Structural Adjustment
Program (SAP), which has been sponsored by three major international financial
institutions — the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Asian
Development Bank — and key donor countries such as Australia. Structural Adjustment
Programs have been implemented in many developing economies since the 1980s in
order to stabilise the respective economies (IDS Bulletin 1994). The particular program in Papua New Guinea was brought about by the unsustainable deficit in the country's balance of payments. Willie (1995) describes the main elements of the Structural Adjustment Program as:

(a) *Stabilisation:* macroeconomic stability through prudent fiscal, and tight credit and monetary policies in order to control inflation and mobilise domestic capital for investment in physical as well as human capital.

(b) *Efficiency Improvement:* improving the efficiency of resource allocation in the public sector, and the withdrawal of direct government participation in economic activities by deregulation and privatisation.

(c) *Liberalisation:* lifting of prices, interest rates, foreign exchange, and foreign trade controls, all aimed at liberating the markets.

(d) *A Competitive Microeconomy:* removal of price distortions, and providing the correct signals and incentives to facilitate the channelling of resources into production and distribution of goods and services such as through the abolition of subsidies.

On the whole, the program is aimed at creating the conditions that are necessary for sustained economic growth.

A number of conclusions can be drawn from the foregoing discussion on the constant shift in policy:

(a) The shifts in development goals are not in accord with people's desires as the shifts are not based on what the people want, but on assumptions of the leaders, bureaucrats, and consultants. Only the National Goals and Directive Principles were the result of extensive consultative meetings (2,000 meetings) throughout the country (Faber Report 1973). To the best of my knowledge, the consultative decision-making process has not been repeated to the same extent in the past twenty years. The consultations by the Micah Committee on Provincial Government Reform fall far short of the standard set by the pre-independence Constitutional Review Commission in its predetermined agenda, and the form, extent, and manner of consultations undertaken. The divergence between the welfare of the people and that of the State — if no genuine efforts are made to balance the two forces — has had disastrous consequences in other countries such as Nicaragua, the Philippines, Indonesia, Chile, and Poland. Although such a scenario is most unlikely to occur in Papua New Guinea in the immediate future, or be of the same magnitude as in those named countries, there are indications which suggest that, over time, such an eventuality may not be too remote.

(b) The issue of relevance relates to the focus on Gross National Product rather than balanced human development. Apart from the Eight Aims, the goals of the subsequent policy shifts were more and more geared towards eventually increasing the national coffers, or towards increasing the economic capacity of the State. The development of the person (the human being) becomes subsumed under this overall goal. People are to be educated and trained in accordance with the needs and dictates of the economic system that is oriented towards maximising the GNP. People are not educated so that they can be in a position to decide and achieve what is good for themselves.
Quite apart from the issues of relevance, each of the major policy shifts was not given adequate time to achieve its objectives and make an impact on development. The time periods between the three major policy shifts were only six, eight, and six years, respectively, which is hardly sufficient time to educate the nation about the policies. Most significantly, this was insufficient time to prepare the various government mechanisms, mobilise resources, make any meaningful attempt at implementing the policies, and learn lessons from the implementation experience. In all of the instances of policy shifts cited here, it could be said that “the baby was thrown out with the bath water”.

Inappropriate Development Strategies

The differences in social, cultural, economic, and political contexts between Papua New Guinea and Europe have already been discussed. The psychology behind the development practice has generally been one of adopting strategies from Europe on the grounds that Western strategies have been tested and proven. Centralised planning and the input of foreign capital and technology became key features of the overall development strategy. These were supported with the use of Western expertise, on the assumption that Western knowledge was value free and relevant. While much of Western knowledge, such as medicine, has resulted in significant benefits to the Third World, economists and sociologists now argue that many of the development problems being faced by the developing nations can be directly linked to the blanket adoption of Western development strategies, without adjusting them to fit the specifics of each of the developing nations (Chambers 1983; Burk 1993; Rahman 1993).

The use of foreign knowledge systems is further promoted through foreign aid arrangements, in which the use of expertise from donor countries is an inbuilt requirement. The use of foreign consultants in the development of curriculum and teaching materials for vernacular education in elementary schools and teachers' colleges in Papua New Guinea can be used as a case in point. Vernacular education (Tokples schools) has evolved over the last three decades in rural Papua New Guinea, mainly through the initiative and commitment of adult educators in various language groups and members of the NGO sector. The national government only became a key player in 1991 with the endorsement of the National Language Policy, and the establishment of the Language and Literacy Policy (Alani and Bopp 1994). During the three decades of its evolution, a rich pool of experience and expertise has been developed at the community, district, and provincial levels. Given the historical nature of its evolution, the social and cultural content of the Tokples curriculum, and the availability of expertise within the country, there would seem to be strong justification for the mobilisation of in-country expertise in the development of curriculum learning and teaching materials. Recently (May 1997, Australian Weekend Review), as part of Australian aid, advertisements were placed for Australian consultants to develop curriculum materials for Tokples schools, in elementary education and teachers' colleges. This example illustrates some of the idiosyncrasies associated with foreign expertise and knowledge systems which help to perpetuate inappropriate development strategies.

Another general problem relating to development strategies is the continued ‘branding’ of Papua New Guinea as a supplier of raw materials to overseas industries.
This trend, which has its historical roots in the precolonial dealings in copra, sea shells, and beche-de-mer with traders, was followed with the planting of tree crops (copra, cocoa, coffee, and tea) again to supply raw materials to overseas industries, mainly in Australia. According to Good (1986:24), Papua New Guinea’s economy was developed with the intention of complementing Australia’s economy so that commodities such as sugar, bananas, and possibly rice, which would compete with Australian products, were discouraged.

The mining, oil, logging, and fishing sectors have continued the same trend. The recently expressed intention (Australian Weekend Review, 28 June 1997) by the South Pacific Pipeline Company Pty Ltd (Chevron) to export gas from Kutubu to Gladstone, Queensland, through a pipeline, suggests that the same trend is likely to continue, and that Papua New Guinea may primarily be seen as a source of raw materials for overseas industries. The lack of capital, technology, and low in-country demand have been put forward as factors inhibiting downstream processing. This pattern of economic behaviour results in Papua New Guinea foregoing opportunities which would lead to maximisation of revenue, employment creation, and development of social and physical infrastructure. The eventual result of foregoing all these opportunities is the prevalence of underdevelopment.

Kannapiran (1997) argues very strongly for the export of liquified natural gas (LNG) and liquid petroleum gas (LPG) as finished products (rather than as raw materials), citing employment creation, development of physical and social infrastructure, spin-off benefits, and the learning effect as fundamental reasons for the processing of gas products within the country.

Examples of inappropriate strategies can also be found in most development sectors. The following examples highlight this argument:

(a) **Forestry:** Much of the current resource development practice in the forestry sector is concentrated on large-scale mechanised logging and the export of raw logs. Little serious attempt has been undertaken to follow-up the rhetoric on downstream processing or the development of small-scale logging operations which have the potential to engage the masses of unemployed youths in the villages. The impact of the focus on the large-scale export of logs results in:

- the loss of current and future employment opportunities, because the denuded forests will take a long time before any logs can be harvested again;
- the loss of maximum revenue to government through various forms of taxes which could be collected from the variety of downstream industries;
- the loss of opportunities to develop social and physical infrastructure;
- environmental destruction; and
- most importantly, the cultural genocide that is inflicted upon tribal communities whose livelihood, knowledge systems, independence, and identity are enshrined in the forests, land, waters, and seas.

(b) **Agriculture:** Along with forestry, agriculture also has the potential to engage large sectors of the unemployed population. However, the bulk of agricultural activity still seems to be limited to tree crop production, knowing full well that prices are unstable and have been depressed for some years. There is little effort
being made towards downstream processing or developing new and alternative products. Also, there has not been much research and development into commodities in which Papua New Guinea may have a comparative advantage (for example, betel nut, and galip nut — *canarium indicum*). The historical link of agriculture to Australian industries (cited by Good 1986) largely remains unaltered. Under these conditions, there is little incentive to bring more land into productivity, as the government is currently proposing, through the registration of customary land.

The focus on tree crops has also led to the neglect of the cottage industries. Around the late 1950s and 1960s, South Bougainville was the main producer of the 'Buka basket'. The cooperative societies of Buin, Siwal, and Bana proliferated in the marketing of the basket. From the 1970s onwards, the introduction of cocoa (and its high revenue potential to the family, compared to the Buka basket) led to large areas of primary and secondary forest being cleared for smallholder plantings. The consequence of this was the decline in Buka basket production as the raw materials required for its production, were no longer available in the forests. Cocoa and coconut, as perennial crops, do not allow the growth of the 'koruwoi vine' on the same land.

The pottery or ceramics cottage industry provides a similar example. Many areas of Bougainville (and other areas of Papua New Guinea) have commercially viable deposits of clay. In these areas, pottery was an important, traditional, economic commodity. However, in the contemporary cash-crop economy, pottery has suffered the same fate as the Buka basket, even though there is clearly a demand for it in the market, as is illustrated by the variety of ceramic products that are sold in urban shops. The pottery cottage industry of the Bilibil from Madang is a good example of the kind of rural industries that should be encouraged instead of depending solely on tree crops.

The case of kava (*piper methysticum*) in Fiji demonstrates clearly the need for Papua New Guinea to develop products in which it may hold a comparative advantage. Kava is a plant which is found in Fiji, Vanuatu, Tonga, and Papua New Guinea. However, only Fiji has been able to develop it into an export commodity, as reported in *Pacific Island Business* (May 1997: 18-22). Fiji is now moving into a new era of kava production to meet the increasing demand for it — both as a beverage and for pharmaceutical products — in Australia, Europe, and the United States of America. The fact that kava has reached the international stage, as a commodity, is the result of many decades of research and development in farming and processing it as a product, as well as getting the world to develop a taste for kava. It has survived the early years of colonisation, during which time it was regarded as satanic, and was banned by the churches. Now it is an integral part of religious occasions (the social and health aspects of kava consumption are beyond the scope of this paper). The message is to highlight the need for Papua New Guinea to explore products which would give it a comparative advantage.

(c) Law and Order: Solutions to law and order problems, and the establishment of peace and normalcy continue to be interpreted in terms of giving more powers to courts, more arms to police, and increasing the use of soldiers in civil disturbance
all of which subsequently erode people's rights. It is predominantly not seen as a developmental issue which requires wideranging development policies and strategies. It is a view of law and order which puts the blame on the individual, rather than on the social, economic, and political systems which 'encourage' the individual to commit a crime. Because of this kind of understanding, solutions to law and order problems tend to be oriented towards giving social and psychological therapy to offending individuals (for example, isolation in prisons and psychiatric hospitals). Rarely are law and order problems seen as being rooted in unjust social, economic, and political systems. As a result, little effort is made to change the offending systems, thus leading to the continuation of the problem because the root causes remain untouched. The way in which the Bougainville crisis was handled (through the heavy-handed tactics of the police and the army) since its beginning, can be seen as an example where the blame was put on the people rather than on the inadequacies of the systems which initially gave rise to the problem. Because of this apparent misunderstanding, government efforts to solve the crisis have been largely misguided and unsuccessful.

(d) Education: Access, relevance, and standards have been identified as core problems to be overcome by education (IASER 1979; NDOE 1991). The education reform, which is currently being implemented, is designed to address the lack of equitable access to secondary education by those who enter the system. It may not help to eradicate the high proportion of school-age children who simply do not enter primary education because of a whole host of problems, including the negative attitudes of parents towards education. Solutions to this aspect of the access problem may lie outside the formal education system, and include such measures as parental education and awareness training. The issue of access is primarily interpreted in relation to the school-age population. There are very few opportunities (apart from private schools in urban centres, and the College of Distance Education) for access to education for the non-school-age population. Non-formal education, which has the potential of reaching the out-of-school population, and which can directly and meaningfully link learning to development, has been neglected altogether — the emphasis being on formal education.

The question of relevance has also been a difficult one to address, given the wider development objectives of the economic growth model which are geared towards eventual Westernisation and industrialisation of Papua New Guinea. As a result, the content of education is generally geared towards transforming the children from a rural subsistence lifestyle to an urban, working class lifestyle, where they consume goods and services that are primarily imported from overseas. The large proportion of children who are unable to gain purposeful employment have few skills that are relevant to the village life, to which they may return, or to life in the urban squatter settlements where they may seek refuge. The skills-oriented sectors of the education system (vocational and technical colleges) primarily teach skills (such as mechanics, plumbing, metal fabricating, carpentry, engineering, and so on), which are only useful for employment in the industrial sector (Weeks 1991). Skills that are based on village technology (such as boat building) have not really been successful. More research and development is needed to explore ways of making education relevant to the village setting.
(e) **Registration of Customary Land:** The proposed registration of customary land is another initiative that is heading in the wrong direction. There is no doubt that land needs to be made more productive in order to generate increased revenue for the people, as well as the State. The mere registration of customary land, however, will not make this possible. There are other factors that determine productivity, which need to be addressed, and without tampering with customary land ownership — for example, infrastructure, markets, skills development, credit and loans, local organisation and planning, and so on.

In modern economics, wealth is generated through the application of land, labour, and capital. The people of Papua New Guinea have land and labour, but they do not have the necessary capital. Therefore, what the people require are avenues through which capital can be accessed, and the development of rural based skills. However, the government's proposed registration of customary land, if it is not accompanied by relevant credit and training facilities, may eventually reduce Papua New Guineans to mere providers of unskilled labour. There is also the danger that the use of customary land as collateral for bank loans may eventually lead to communities losing the land.

(f) **Village Services Vis-a-Vis Tokples Schools:** Instead of promoting and supporting grassroots initiatives, the government, through the village services and now through the education reform, has taken over the responsibilities for Tokples schools, from the community. As a result, programs in some provinces and communities have ceased to operate.

There is fear that the same scenario may be repeated in environmental and sustainable development projects, where the government, through the Department of Environment and Conservation, may nationalise success stories of communities and non-government organisations through the Integrated Conservation and Development program.

(g) **Electoral Development Fund:** The Electoral Development Fund (alias, the Slush Fund) as a strategy for promoting rural development is quite inappropriate. Projects or activities that are funded do not go through any proper community planning exercise. As a result, there are no clear and long-term, positive development impacts on the recipient communities. In many instances, the manner of its distribution among favoured groups has eroded community harmony and solidarity. The manner in which these funds have been used helps to make wastage of resources a socially, psychologically, and morally acceptable pattern of behaviour. People have now come to expect political handouts every year, without much care about how and for what purposes they are used.

(h) **Disaster Relief:** Disaster relief such as assistance for Tari City, the Sepik floods, the Morobe earthquake, the Bougainville Care Centres, and the Rabaul volcano eruption are important for redevelopment.

The humanitarian values with which they are embarked upon are extremely honourable, and should and must continue. However, the point to be made is that with a little more planning and organisation, the relief activities could be tailored to eventually taper into development programs that will, in the long term, help the people break out of the cycle of poverty and underdevelopment.

(i) **Mining:** Mining is characterised by the enclave nature of development in which small pockets in mining provinces have very high levels of infrastructure and economic development. This situation is understandable as it is not the primary role of the mining company to promote equitable development. As has now been
The Development Problem in Papua New Guinea

Proven by the Bougainville crisis, enclave developments require the government to put some of the profit back into the mining provinces, and to also constantly promote the spread of development through special arrangements with the mining company—such as encouraging the growth of local ownership in support industries. One of the anti-BCL sentiments commonly expressed at the beginning of the Bougainville crisis was the tentacle that BCL was starting to establish through its agricultural farm at Mananau, and the wholesale enterprises that it had established in the rural areas which were providing unfair competition to small farmers and traders.

The fly-in fly-out arrangements for the Porgera and Misima mines also deny Papua New Guinea the opportunities for establishing support industries, social and economic development, and the potential broadening of the base of government revenue.

Inequitable Capacity of the Public Service Delivery Mechanism

Comprising 24 departments and approximately 62,000 personnel (The Independent, 10 May 1996: 1), the public service is the main government machinery for implementing and managing government policy (AIDAB 1994b: 82-92). This gives a public servant-population ratio of approximately 1:66, which is high by international standards. However, as already explained, the penetration of the system, and the distribution of public servants around the country is inadequate. Further, the private sector is not sufficiently developed to play the role of service provider, in the absence of a public service machinery, as is the case of other countries with low public service machinery (for example, Singapore and Korea). Churches and non-government organisations also play an important role. In some instances, such as health and education, churches play a major role.

Diagram 3: Growth of the Public Service, 1975-1996

![Diagram of Public Service Growth](image)

**Sources:**
2. The Independent, 10 May 1996.
Table 7: Government Departments in Administration, Social, and Economic Sectors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administration Sector</th>
<th>Social Sector</th>
<th>Economic Sector</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prime Minister’s Dept and the National Executive Council</td>
<td>Attorney General</td>
<td>Agriculture and Livestock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance and Planning</td>
<td>Civil Aviation</td>
<td>Energy and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel Management</td>
<td>Corrective Services</td>
<td>Environment and Conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Affairs and Trade</td>
<td>Defence</td>
<td>Fisheries and Marine Resources</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Lands and Physical Planning</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Police</td>
<td>Mining and Petroleum</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Commerce and Industry</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Information and Communication</td>
<td>Transport</td>
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<td>Labour and Employment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Village Services and Prov. Govts.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Works</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Youth, Women and Home Affairs</td>
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</table>

Source: These data were obtained from AIDAB 1994 b: 82-94.

The public service is expected to manage development by blending all the resource elements — physical, human, and financial — to achieve the agreed goals of national building and socioeconomic development. It is further expected to be professionally oriented, technically competent, and politically and ideologically neutral.

The developments — particularly those related to the transfer of political power, the desire to localise the public service, the expansion of the public service as a result of decentralisation, and the takeover by the national government of new and complex tasks in socioeconomic and industrial fields — brought unusual and urgent changes in the structure, operation, and management of the public service (Dwivedi and Paulius 1986). There were immediate and accelerated promotions of inexperienced officers, large-scale recruitment and expansion in the public service management body, and the need to equip officers with relevant skills within a short period of training.

Apart from the difficulties that organisations within the civil service usually experience, such as problems and constraints of training, lack of coordination, lack of sufficient funding, lack of qualified and experienced personnel, poor staff supervision, and lack of evaluation of relevance of programs (Paulius 1986:149-153), there were (and are) features of the public service which have a special bearing on the management of rural or community development. These are:

- skills, attitudes, and values;
- power;
- flexibility;
- penetration of the system; and
- confusion in political direction at the provincial level.
Skills, Attitudes, and Values

Prior to independence, the priority of the Australian Government was primarily to administer law and order, with little concern for economic development beyond the plantation economy (McGavin 1991). Training in the public service emphasised the bureaucratic delivery of services in order to maintain conventional law and order and administration, and not the management of social and economic development (Dwivedi and Paulius 1986). The transfer of political powers at independence, and the urgent and immediate drive for social and economic development (such as Rural Improvement Programs (RIPs) and Integrated Rural Development Programs (IRDPs)) found the public service and local-level organisations, such as local government councils, wanting in their skills in managing development (Mora 1974; McKillop 1974; Conyers 1975; Dwivedi and Paulius 1986).

The values and attitudes of public servants were often contrary to their roles as promoters of rural development. Conyers (1975) noted that the official channel through which development needs were articulated, lacked effective grassroots involvement, and hence, lacked relevance to the needs of the people. The district coordinating committees that were responsible for coordinating intersectoral development programs at the district level, at times concerned themselves more with the welfare of the public servants than with the tasks of effectively managing development (Scott 1980).

The prevalence of such attitudes and values is not surprising as training in the public service is oriented towards meeting management needs within provincial and national bureaucracies. Training is not geared towards development work at the grassroots level (Partridge 1979). Human resource development managers within the public service are trained in human resource needs, only as far as the needs of the system are concerned. Rarely is there any linkage between the human resource needs of the system and the development needs of the rural community.

Furthermore, the system survives on the belief that only it; that is, the public servants, can deliver goods and services for and on behalf of the people. Hence, it is very 'top down'. It plans in isolation from the sociocultural realities of the village, and tells the people what to do. The system is unable to build on people's ideas, with the affected people.

Inappropriate values and attitudes are also promoted through inappropriate training, for example, the Blueprint Approach (Product Oriented) versus the Process-Oriented Approach (Korten 1980).

There has been very little recognition of the potential of people's own organisations, such as clans, villages, communities, youth and women's groups, church groups and so on, in taking responsibility for improving their own livelihood. This point is further highlighted in the distribution of much needed foreign aid, particularly in relation to the environmental sector. For example, in 1994, of the AUD$44.8 million in aid, almost 50 percent was earmarked to be spent on national level activities such as the strengthening of the Department of Environment and Conservation, the Department of Forests' Human Resource Project, and so on (AIDAB 1994 c). This amount could be much higher if the national components of the province-based projects are taken into account.
Strengthening the capacity at the national level is absolutely necessary in order to safeguard the national interest, but it should not lead to a disproportionate amount of the much needed resources being expended at this level. In fact, all natural resources and environmental issues are based on land and sea that are owned by the people, not by the state departments, so it is the resource owners whose capacity should be strengthened. Meanwhile, the people's natural resources are being plundered, with the help of the politicians. They have few avenues for recourse because information, training, capital, and legal assistance are not available to them.

Power

Furthermore, as happens in most Third World countries, the administration of development through the public service is characterised by the emergence of a 'bureaucratic bourgeoisie' whose power emanates from their access to 'state powers' and the use of these powers to regulate and control the country's scarce resources (Korten 1980; Crittenden and Lea 1989). The usual tendency of the elite is to use these powers to further their own ends, and in so doing, neglect the priorities and needs of the public and the grassroots who they are supposed to serve (BRAC 1980). The fact that the growth of the public service did not lead to an equal growth in the effective delivery of services and development seems to support this trend in Papua New Guinea. Many officers remained in the comfort of their offices expecting villagers to present themselves to receive government services. This attitude confirms the view that the system was oriented towards itself, and has not been client oriented.

Flexibility

Another characteristic problem which hindered the effective management of development was the inflexible nature of the system through which development needs were identified, analysed, planned, and implemented. This involves a very lengthy process from needs assessment to implementation, following the project cycle (AIDAB 1994 b: 47-52). Field and district officers were answerable and accountable to senior management at provincial and national headquarters, and not to the villagers who they were supposed to serve. Inevitably, villagers learned to stay distant from government, because their interests conflicted with those of the bureaucracy. District and field officers became less pragmatic, tending to react to directions from higher authority, instead of responding to the situations, as they saw fit in the field.

Penetration of the System

By far, the majority of the population live in rural villages. However, the distribution of the public service seems to be the opposite, with the heaviest concentrations being in provincial and national headquarters. The furthest penetration of government officers is down to the district or subdistrict level, except for primary school teachers, as they are found in every community that has a school (Scott 1986 : 255-258). Dividing the estimated population of four million (in 1985) by the size of the public service in the same year (60,000), the ratio is one public servant to every sixty-six persons (1:66) which is quite high by international comparisons. However, the bulk of the public service is based in and provides services in urban centres. Clearly, the
system does not have adequate penetration in order to make an impact of its mandate of service. Even in areas where there was some presence of government extension workers, the methods used in extension (such as the diffusion theory (Rogers 1983) which influenced agricultural extension workers to only work with a few individual farmers on the theory that knowledge and skills will eventually trickle down to the rest of the community), did not enable wider access to knowledge and skills (McKillop 1974).

**Confusion in Political Direction at the Provincial Level**

With the introduction of provincial governments, the public service was in a state of confusion as to who their political masters should be — the national government or the provincial government (Morgan 1986 : 221). To compound matters, the management body of the whole public service (Department of Personnel Management) was based at national headquarters. This situation remained unresolved for several years until a separate administrative support system was established for the provincial governments.

On the whole, the top-down management of development, via the public service, marginalises and disempowers the people by instilling a dependency mentality. Citizens are made to expect ‘cargo’ from the government, and do not feel that they can be in a position to change their own situation.

**Inequitable Delivery of Services and Development**

The inequitable delivery of services and development manifests itself in a number of ways:

(a) At a more general level, there is inequality in the quantity and quality of services, between rural and urban areas. The best schools, hospitals, roads, communication facilities, and so on, exist in urban areas, in spite of the fact that the bulk of national revenue is generated by the rural sector. Organisations that provide economic services, such as the commercial banks, the Agriculture Bank of Papua New Guinea, the Small Business Development Corporation, and the Investment Promotion Authority are unlikely to be easily accessible to rural populations, not only because of geographic distance, but also eligibility requirements (such as collateral for loans) which disadvantage rural citizens.

(b) A second dimension of inequality is the different classes of services that exist within urban areas — there is one set of schools, health facilities, shops, and entertainment avenues for the rich and powerful, and another set for the working class and the poor. The dual systems of services, development, and socialisation make it possible for the elite to virtually exist within their own ‘circles and networks’, and have little appreciation of the struggles experienced by the masses, whose interest they (the elite) are supposed to serve.

(c) The inequality is further propagated through the government machinery, whereby the most capable officers are located at provincial and national headquarters, while relegating these less competent persons to handle the development task in the rural areas. Given their poor level of skills and inadequate level of resource support, they are eventually overwhelmed by the task. Scarce development resources, such as funds, transport, housing, and equipment are again
concentrated in urban offices, instead of being channelled to where they are most needed.

For example, the resulting wastage of resources is best illustrated by one province which had two provincial heads, one deputy head, and ten departmental heads (Assistant Secretaries). All 13 officers were each allocated an air-conditioned Toyota Hilux double cab on a twenty-four hour basis. According to my observations, the 13 vehicles were primarily used for transportation purposes by the officers concerned; that is, from home to work, from their office to other offices for meetings, to go for lunch, and from work to home. For much of any day, the vehicles would be idle in the car park. It is questionable as to what extent such use of vehicles would actually lead to meaningful development. This contrasts with the situation in districts where agricultural or health extension officers are unable to make village visitations because of lack of transport. There is a tendency by senior officers to hoard such resources, as status symbols. This anecdotal evidence points to the need to develop a system of resource allocation where both human and non-human resources are allocated to the place where they are needed most — the rural areas.

Problems of Accountability

Accountability is generally perceived to mean ‘being answerable for one’s actions or behaviour’. Dwivedi (1994: 53-57) identifies five aspects of accountability:

- **administrative accountability**, which relates to the hierarchical relationship between centres of power and sections whose tasks are to implement policies and programs;
- **legal accountability**, in which actions are judged according to legislative and judicial regulations;
- **political accountability**, which relates to the legitimising of public programs;
- **professional accountability**, which relates to various professional codes of conduct such as medical ethics for doctors; and
- **moral accountability**, in which actions are judged following certain societal moral values.

Increasingly, accountability is being narrowly defined in legal terms, neglecting the other aspects of accountability. Examples of general manifestations of the problem of accountability are the:

- increasing association of leaders with unscrupulous business partners, as evidenced by the increasing numbers of leaders being referred to the Ombudsman Commission;
- overnight business interests of leaders and bureaucrats who come from non-business backgrounds;
- unashamedly materialistic lifestyle of leaders, because of false assumptions that status and leadership will be gained through public display of material goods such as expensive Range Rover, Pajero, and Nissan Patrol vehicles;
- chain of wives and concubines all over the country, indicating the absence of moral values;
The Development Problem in Papua New Guinea

- dual education system — one for the grassroots and one for the elites and many others; and
- blatant disregard for rules, regulations, and procedures (for example, the transfer of funds to Hong Kong in the Sandline Affair).

Factors Contributing to Bureaucratic Corruption

The ways in which the lack of accountability manifests itself are common knowledge amongst the general population, and are commonly expressed by citizens through both the print and visual media. However, a more fruitful exercise is to look at the factors which contribute to corruption.

The first factor is the absence of a public service work ethic. Public service employees show a lack of a sense of purpose and commitment to their jobs, which, in turn, results in the lack of a work discipline and an attitude of disrespect for public service rules and regulations. The impact of this is not only corruption, but also underdevelopment. The government continues to pay salaries to officers whose poor level of productivity leads to a negative provision of goods and services.

The second factor relates to the poor environment of economic development which creates the ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots’. The public servants, while striving for a high status or simply trying to make ends meet, have tended to pursue corrupt practices. Many government officers (such as lawyers and police officers) live in squatter settlements which exert enormous pressure on them in the conduct of their duties. This makes it difficult for police officers, for example, to arrest criminals who live in the same settlement. Economic retardation has, therefore, forced individuals to not only tolerate corruption, but to also take advantage of it.

The third factor contributing to bureaucratic corruption is the lack of leadership and discipline that are exhibited by politicians. Administrative corruption tends to be more widespread where significant political corruption exists.

Political Corruption

Political corruption is influenced by:

(a) the very fluid nature of party politics, where party affiliations and loyalty are measured in terms of kina and toea. The fluidity of party politics is an outcome of unprincipled politics — politics based on material welfare rather than principles of good government;

(b) the high turnover rate of politicians (approximately 80%) at elections, which has also created a situation ripe for corruption. Many politicians go on a corruption spree knowing that they may not be returned at the next elections. Some commentators have likened getting elected into Parliament to winning a lottery. Lotteries are ‘once in a lifetime’ chances, and one may be extremely lucky if he or she wins twice. It is not surprising that politicians tend to ‘keep their hands in the till’ when lucky opportunities avail themselves; and

(c) high expectations of ‘cargo development’ (Ahai and Faraclas 1991) from electorates, coupled with the need for political survival have also contributed to
Factors Contributing to the Development Problem

political indiscipline. The high expectations are partly rooted in the reciprocal nature of Melanesian societies in which favours (such as votes) are expected to be repaid in some form — the ‘I scratch your back and you scratch mine’ mentality. In the case of voters, there is an expectation that their votes, which may have been given at great personal risk from rival tribes and candidates, have to be repaid in the form of schools, roads, health services, trucks, outboard motors, or even the direct handout of money. There is now almost universal expectation that parliamentarians are primarily voted into power to bring development to their voters — hence, the very volatile tribal rivalry that is witnessed during elections. The blocking of roads and bridges and the hijacking of ballot-boxes are methods by which tribes attempt to increase their chances of winning access to ‘cargo development’.

The second form of high expectations mentality relates to the organisational structures that have spearheaded change and the manner in which change has been promoted. Starting with the churches and the kiaps, development has always been seen as something that comes from outside the community. People have been led to believe that their way of life, their knowledge systems, and their resources are primitive and of inferior quality, compared to the changes brought in from outside. The loss of knowledge about traditional medicinal herbs and plants, as a result of Eurocentric church policy and practice, is a good example. Many of these plants may provide better cures than Western medicine, and are provided free by nature. Nevertheless, the loss of traditional medicine has made people dependent on Western medicine, which they cannot buy unless they have the monetary means. The social and health consequences of people’s economic inability to purchase Western medicine are evident in the low levels of basic indicators (see Tables 1, 2, and 3).

The importation of such Eurocentric attitudes and the resulting attitudes of ‘self-denial’, for example, make parents believe that quality education can only take place inside a permanent material classroom building. Hence, parents will struggle to build a permanent classroom, only to end up in despair when the majority of their children do not go on to high schools. The parents are not told that their children can have quality education in a well-constructed, local material classroom with sufficient teacher and curriculum resource support. Also, parents are not told that some teaching resource materials can be easily found or made locally. It is true that permanent material classrooms initially help in reducing maintenance demands on parents. However, it is not entirely correct when permanent material classrooms are equated with standards and quality of education. Such brainwashing results in the wastage of hard-earned cash when a well-constructed local material classroom, with sufficient teacher and curriculum resource support, can equally serve the purpose well.

Studies by UNESCO (1995 a; 1995 b) in Asian and Middle Eastern countries have shown that quality education can also be achieved in local material classrooms, provided that there is adequate teacher and curriculum material resource support. Gupta and Deklin (1992: 18) also argue a similar point when they state that, "Papua New Guinea gets too small a return from its investment in education because it has adopted developed country standards for its education institutions", without necessarily assessing how best Papua New Guinea can achieve its goals with the limited resources. The point
of this example is to highlight the dependency on outside support — both material and non-material — that is cultivated through the way development has been promoted to the people, the resultant thinking and behaviour that all good things must come from outside, the rejection of local initiatives, and the eventual pressure put on politicians to bring development from outside.

The government machinery has always determined what development should be, and how it should be achieved. As a consequence, people have become dependent on ‘cargo development’ and the handout mentality. These expectations place great pressure on politicians who feel compelled to seek all avenues available — even to the extent of circumventing the due processes.

(d) the notion of a ‘soft or weak State’ (Standish 1995; Sr. Kempe 1996) has also been used to explain political corruption. A soft State is one where social and political indiscipline leads to deficiencies in legislation, and the observance and enforcement of law. In such a situation, self-interest prevails over national interests, and in order to safeguard the self-interest of those in power, injustice becomes systematised through legislation and the manipulation of law and order in their favour. The Eighth Ok Tedi Supplement, which prohibits compensation claims by landowners, and the Secrecy Act, which limits public access to certain government decisions and documents, are cases in point. It is common knowledge that institutions such as the Ombudsman Commission and the Auditor-General’s Office, which are specifically tasked to ensure public accountability, have lacked the financial, manpower, and sometimes legal muscle to effectively carry out their respective mandates.

The existence of legal loopholes in the Leadership Code is also commonly expressed. Rabbie Namaliu MP (a former Prime Minister and Speaker of Parliament), upon being re-elected for a third term in office, expressed the need to ‘fix up the loopholes’ (The National, June 1997). The neglect, by various governments, through National Parliament, to strengthen the capacity of these institutions and instrumentalities may be perceived as a further sign of a weak State, where individual interests dominate over national good. It is said that it is not in the politicians’ interests to patch up the loopholes, as they may require an ‘escape route’ if they are found wanting.

(e) The fourth factor relates to the expanding role of the State which, in turn, results in an expanding bureaucracy with increasing discretionary powers. The more the government becomes involved in social and economic development, the greater the number of regulations and government controls over an array of goods and services. The exercise of these regulations and controls, coupled with greater discretionary powers, provides opportunities for corruption. The controls and regulations can be used as a bargaining mechanism to induce the payment of bribes. A good example is the logging industry a few years ago, where powers were vested in one individual — the Minister for Forests. The Minister was subsequently sacked for malpractice.

(f) Another factor relates to social and cultural norms. Bureaucratic corruption is not only created by attitudes and patterns of behaviour, vis-à-vis the public service rules and regulations, but is also shaped by the whole societal social fabric.
Factors Contributing to the Development Problem

Bureaucrats, for example, are faced with the choice of either adhering to public service rules and regulations, or accepting traditional patterns of behaviour. In Papua New Guinea, this manifests itself through the negative aspects of the wantok system, whereby government services are either extended or denied without subjecting the particular request for goods or services to the relevant rules and regulations.

According to Dwivedi (1994: 47):

"when such instances of political and bureaucratic unaccountability become regular features of the governing processes of a country, the moral fibre of the society declines. Consequently, everyone joins in the game of exploiting public office for private gain".

There is, again, a strong public perception that this situation exists widely in Papua New Guinea.

The Absence of an Effective Countervailing Force

The absence of a democratic countervailing force outside the formal systems of government, but with linkages to the formal system of decision making, is another factor which contributes to the lack of meaningful development in Papua New Guinea. Over the past 20 years, there has not been any serious dialogue or thinking, which offers a meaningful alternative development paradigm. The National Goals and Directive Principles (commonly referred to as the Eight Point Plan) and the notions of Melanesian Ways (Tigilai 1983; Samana 1988) fizzled out without much analysis and elaboration of the ideas behind them, and without much serious thought to the alternatives that such notions may have had to offer. The National Goals and Directive Principles may have lacked the right type of expertise to translate them into development strategies. These goals and principles espoused a kind of development that was a mixture of economic growth and people development, which was not compatible with the knowledge base of the bureaucracy at that point in time. Most bureaucrats were trained in the pure growth model of development. As a consequence, the well-meaning objectives were discarded because the public service did not have the appropriate attitudes and knowledge to operationalise them. It is only now, that the appropriate knowledge and experience is evolving in Papua New Guinea.

Universities in many parts of the world, including Latin America (Chetley 1990), have been catalysts of liberal thinking and change. The period leading up to independence and immediately after, saw vibrant debates and discussions on various political and development issues at the University of Papua New Guinea. Prominent leaders such as Sir John Kaputin, Leo Hannett, Rabbie Namaliu, John Kasaipwalova, and Renagi Lohin are immediately associated with this era. The current focus of universities on internal institutional issues such as student unrest, security issues, terms and conditions for academic staff, and concerns of organisational efficiency has generally put debates of substantial issues of national development on the backburner. There are individuals and groups in universities that are very much involved in the search for alternative development. However, on the whole, tertiary institutions have digressed from the earlier vigorous intellectual climate into a passive, and at times ad hoc and confrontationist commentary on development.
In developed Western societies, such as the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and Australia, the media is a very powerful countervailing force which brings into public scrutiny the activities of governments, as a whole, as well as the private conduct of office-holders. The Watergate scandal which brought about the downfall of President Richard Nixon in America, the public airing of the privates lives of Prince Charles and the Princess Diana in England, and the recent exposure of the abuse of parliamentary privileges by Senator Mal Colston (an Australian Federal MP) are all examples of the vigorous role of the media in keeping pressure on public office-holders.

The Papua New Guinean media is slowly evolving, but will not develop into a strong force until the professional capacity of journalists improves to a level where they are not simply reporting news but actually investigating and creating it. Their lack of in-depth knowledge of professional fields (such as law, economics, and government), and specialised fields (such as business and corporate law, environmental law, international trade, the Leadership Code, and so on) as well as the lack of investigative skills, leaves journalists at a disadvantage as they are unable to construct independent analyses of events. There is also a dependency relationship between politicians as the newsmakers, and journalists as news reporters, because both groups depend on each other and cannot afford to jeopardise their relationship. The relationship between the political and journalistic circles is, from time to time, solidified through the appointment of journalists as political advisers.

Michael Somare's 'bully-beef club' was the first unofficial national grouping to yearn for a new dawn of political and development changes. The heightened urges for self-autonomy eventually translated into self-government and independence. Two decades on (and using culinary jargon), one could say that the 'bully-beef club' has now been replaced by the 'beef-stroganoff club', bringing with it its social, cultural, economic, and political idiosyncrasies and resulting in the subsequent decline in a meaningful search for change. What is needed now is for the 'beef-stroganoff club' to be replaced by the Melanesian cuisine, 'mumu'.

The concept 'mumu' is an extremely rich one for decision making and the search for alternative development. Structurally, a muum is made up of a dugout muum hole, the outer layer of leaves (karamap), the mixture of ingredients inside the karamap (kaika, taro, banana, tapioca, chicken, pork, aibika, karakap, ginger, simbu, kumu, and so on), coconut cream, and the hot stones at the base. It is the mixture of these ingredients in coconut cream, when subjected to an appropriate heat level from the hot stones, which culminates in the special aroma and flavour that is unique to the muum. Without this mixture, it is not a muum. When there is too much heat, the muum gets burned, and becomes unpalatable. A muum is always communally prepared and consumed, and is never a one-person meal. It is rare for those who prepare the muum not to partake in its consumption — thereby guaranteeing the quality of the muum.

The concept of 'mumu' can be applied to the search for an alternative development paradigm. The whole muum represents Papua New Guinea, while the stone base represents the political foundation on which the mixture of ingredients (representing the diversity of cultures, interests, needs, and aspirations), and the karamap (meaning the organisational systems (private and public) that hold the ingredients together) are based. The coconut cream represents the appropriate policy and program frameworks that interact with the diverse society in order to bring out that special development flavour which is capable of appeasing the development hunger of the people. It is important to
Another example is related to environment and conservation, where the national government, through the Department of Environment and Conservation, has now emulated the initiative of the NGO sector in formally developing a Community Resource Conservation Division or Integrated Community and Development Office (Sekran 1995). A further example is in the area of providing small credit to villagers. Again, non-government organisations have been practising in this area for more than a decade, especially in East Sepik Province through the East Sepik Council of Women. The national government has now started a similar credit program through the Small Business Development Corporation.

On the whole, there appears to be a move towards recognising endogenous development practices, as is exemplified by the creation of the Non-Government Organisation Division in the Department of Youth, Religion, and Home Affairs. The existence of NGO facilities within the multilateral and bilateral development agencies also supports this trend. However, these arrangements focus more on the practice than on the ideological issues emanating out of endogenous development. There is, therefore, a need for Papua New Guineans to undertake the process of reflective analysis in order to articulate an alternative development paradigm.

The bureaucratisation of grassroots development initiatives, as illustrated by the examples already given, in which a grassroots idea is taken into the bureaucracy — but minus the management practices of the grassroots organisations — highlights a potential danger which may jeopardise the emergence of an alternative development paradigm. The alternative development practice at the grassroots level is producing some positive results which are drawing the attention of government. However, instead of encouraging and allowing these grassroots initiatives to flourish and be shaped by the people according to their situations, the government is taking over these ideas and disempowering the very people who invented these alternative practices. When the alternative development practice is transplanted into a top-down bureaucratic system, it is no longer an alternative development paradigm. It becomes a part of the top-down domination of the people, and loses its original spirit and identity.

Currently, there is a fledgling but highly visible non-government organisation sector in Papua New Guinea, as highlighted by the Sandline Affair. Most (if not all) of them are exploring small village-based development alternatives in line with their beliefs, principles, and levels of expertise. There is a lot of energy and positive results coming out of their practice. Unfortunately, the thinking behind their practice has not yet been channelled and articulated into a coherent and meaningful development paradigm at the higher level. Because of the NGO's advocacy and often antagonistic stand against government on many contemporary issues, the positive contributions that they would make have tended to be rejected at face value. However, as it evolves into a mature countervailing force, a more serious alternative development paradigm may emerge in the future.
note that, just as the mumu is communally prepared and consumed, so must citizens participate in defining the political, bureaucratic, policy, and programmatic aspects of the development mumu. After all, they are the ones who will enjoy the fruits of the development mumu, or suffer the negative consequences.

The search for an alternative development paradigm, and, indeed, political decision making can be likened to the mumu. Both processes should represent the variety of needs and interests of all the people of Papua New Guinea, and be facilitated by an appropriate political and bureaucratic environment in order to bring out a genuinely Papua New Guinean flavour of development. If only the ‘elite’ prepare the political and development mumu which is to be consumed by the grassroots communities, the quality of the mumu will not be guaranteed, because the elite will not eat the same mumu. The development mumu will not have the rich flavour and aroma which are capable of tantalising the nostrils and palates of the citizens of Papua New Guinea. If only the elite prescribe what should be in the mumu, the grassroots people will discard the elite mumu and cook their own — effectively creating a situation of two competing political and development mumus. Such a scenario would create fertile conditions for social and political discord, as is already beginning to happen throughout Papua New Guinea.

An alternative development paradigm needs to evolve at three levels — the practical, the ideological, and the political. All ‘practice’ in everyday life is guided by some sort of thinking, whether intuitive, well-articulated, or quite rudimentary. The thinking behind the practice embodies our prejudices, beliefs, and rationale for undertaking a particular course of action. The prejudices, beliefs, and rationale are shaped by the sociopolitical and economic contexts of our existence. This ‘thinking’ should then be subjected to a process of reflection, from which should evolve an ‘ideology or ideologies’ about alternative development paradigms, but which is indicative of its sociopolitical and economic contexts. The alternative development paradigm may well incorporate elements of conventional development, but with changes to suit the Papua New Guinean context. The alternative development paradigm cannot succeed unless it is accompanied by appropriate changes in the ‘political’ system. However, the political changes do not have to involve a total discard of the current system. In any case, the debate about models of political systems has been made redundant by the collapse of the Eastern block nations, and the failure of both the socialist and capitalist economies to achieve growth with equity. In regard to changes in the political system, one is not suggesting a complete overhaul of the current system. The type of changes that are envisaged would be such that they would improve on the current system in order to eradicate the anomalies which are currently promoting the marginalisation of the masses.

Throughout Papua New Guinea, there are several endogenous development practices which have grown steadily over the past two decades. They address a wide variety of needs, as perceived and expressed by the grassroots themselves. These endogenous development practices should be documented and analysed in order to inform the articulation of an alternative development paradigm. Some aspects of this practice have already influenced government policies and strategies. One example is the Tokples school program which was started by the NGO sector in 1979, and which eventually became a national program in 1991 (Ahai and Bopp 1995).
5. CONCLUSIONS

It is clear that the basic objectives of development have been difficult to achieve in any sustained manner because of the range of factors that have been discussed in this paper. While a subsistence lifestyle enables the provision of some basic necessities, the provision of health and security services has not only declined but has been seriously threatened by the pressures of globalisation which have entered Papua New Guinea though the economic growth model of development. Some development strategies, such as mining and logging, are threatening the very subsistence survival of fragile tribal communities, without offering meaningful alternatives.

The prospect of increasing the levels of income remains elusive, with the decline of the agricultural sector and the emphasis on the highly mechanised enclave development of the mining sector. The range of choices available to the people, and which development is supposed to broaden, has yet to become a reality for most people. It may also be argued that the level of freedom and choice is actually being reduced by the intention of the State to become involved in all aspects of the people's development, and the subsequent increase in the accompanying means of control and regulation.

Therefore, one is of the opinion that these development anomalies can only be addressed through the emergence of an alternative development paradigm which explores two broad agendas:

1. The first relates to the fundamental flaws that are inherent in the current model of the development and decision-making process. This fundamental flaw is marked by the separation of power (political, bureaucratic, knowledge, and access to development systems), as currently vested in the political and bureaucratic systems, and tribal resource ownership systems as bestowed through custom. The state's base of bureaucratic and political power arises out of the historical accident by England via Australia which led to the imposition of a foreign system, and the accompanying set of laws to legislate and police the imposed system. The tribal communities' bases of power are moral, cultural, and historical and are governed by social, economic, and political systems that have been established over thousands of years of evolutionary heritage. The search for ways of overcoming the anomalies should bear this disparity in mind and should not be the domain of an exclusive group. It should be open to input from the general citizenry.

2. The second relates to the absence of a political will, ability, and commitment to the common or national good. All of the factors that were identified and discussed in this paper, and the emergence of an alternative development paradigm, can be addressed only if an appropriate model of democracy is sustained over a sufficient period of time.

The saying that "Rome wasn't built in a day" seems appropriate to contemporary Papua New Guinea. It is also true that Rome was not built without a vision or a plan, the correct architects and builders, and an adequate level of resources, materials, and "slaves", let alone the appropriate and necessary social and political environment to
guide the conduct of its citizens. Indeed, if Rome was ever built, it is not impossible to do likewise in Papua New Guinea. What is required is a political and development model that is suited to the specific conditions of our nation.
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