The New Hebrides

A Doubly Oppressed Colony
VIVE LA PACIFIQUE SUD

(Long live the South Pacific)

Barak Sope
Secretary General
N.H. National Party

In the past ten years exactly five territories in the South Pacific have become independent. The inhabitants of these nations witnessed their new political status with peaceful and joyful celebrations. This as the Prime Minister of Fiji said in his speech at the United Nations, would be the Pacific way of achieving independence.

In the next ten years, some of the other territories will achieve self-government and whether the Pacific way of achieving independence will continue is doubtful.

The South Pacific territory which will perhaps hit future world headlines and utilise the Pacific way of achieving independence will be the one and only Anglo-French condominium of the New Hebrides. For the New Hebrides is jointly governed by France and Great Britain and at present it is perhaps the least politically evolved country in the South Pacific and will continue to remain so, unless positive steps towards self-government are taken by Great Britain and France. Self-government is still over the horizon, but the present situation urgently calls for a very rapid political evolution - if not revolution.

Before self-government can be achieved, the question which remains to be answered is whether Great Britain and France will peacefully leave the New Hebrides at the same time. There will be an answer when the indigenous people finally demand self-government.

You can make your own predictions. By looking at the present situation one can almost rightly predict, that the French will be more reluctant than the British to leave the territory. France's contribution towards the preparation for self-government are insignificant compared with the British. For as far as the French are concerned, the New Hebrides is a province of France and is governed almost on similar lines to that of New Caledonia and Tahiti.

The reason for France's reluctance to leave the New Hebrides is because of her reputed pride and prestige in Empire Building. So far France has succeeded in turning Tahiti and New Caledonia into French provinces. In the New Hebrides, process is only delayed by the presence of the British.
The granting of independence to New Hebrides is the deciding factor which will determine either the continuation or the elimination of France's empire in the Pacific. The French know that if they leave the New Hebrides, New Caledonia and Tahiti will also demand their freedom from colonial rule.

COLONIAL HISTORY

The first European to discover the New Hebrides was the Spanish navigator de Quiros, in 1606. During the next century the French explorers de Bougainville (1768), La Perouse (1788), d'Urville (1789) and d'Entrecasteaux sighted the islands. Captain Cook spent time cruising through the New Hebrides in 1774, landing on Malekula, Erromango and Tanna, and charted the islands.

During the nineteenth century the islands suffered from the excesses of sandalwooders and blackbirders. They constituted a no-man's land between British and French spheres of penetration in the Pacific until under the Anglo-French convention of 16th November, 1887, while each Power undertook not to exercise a separate control over the Group, a Joint Naval Commission was established to protect the lives and property of British and French nationals. The Commission consisted of the captains and two officers from the two men-of-war which paid periodical visits to the New Hebrides.

By 1895 a number of British and French subjects had settled in the Group and the need was felt for some jurisdiction to deal with their disputes. An Arbitration Court was established by the colonists but vetoed by the Joint Naval Commission and the court dissolved.

In 1902 Resident Commissioners were appointed and on 20th October 1906, under the influence of the Entente Cordiale, an Anglo-French Convention was signed and subsequently proclaimed in the New Hebrides, establishing the Condominium by declaring the Group a region of joint influence and providing for its joint administration. This Convention was superseded by the Anglo-French Protocol of 1914, which was ratified in 1922, and has, with some modifications, regulated the administration of the Group ever since.

Since then the New Hebrides has been administered under the Protocol by the British and the French with the New Hebrideans having no control or power. They also have no citizenship of their own country.
GENERAL INFORMATION

The New Hebrides form an irregular chain of islands in the south-western Pacific Ocean covering an area of 5,700 square miles. At 31 December 1971, according to French Government sources, the total population of the New Hebrides was estimated at 89,795 compared with 85,446 at 31 December, 1970. Non-indigenous persons numbered 5,927 compared to 5,438 in the previous year. The majority of these are French.

Most of the New Hebrides is mountainous and heavily forested; large areas of the interior are uninhabited. Its economy is based mainly on subsistence agriculture and the production of copra, which is generally restricted to coastal plains and low plateaux. Coffee and cocoa are also produced, a cattle and meat (frozen and tinned) exporting industry is being developed and fish are frozen and exported. Tourism is also being developed.

ADMINISTRATION

Political Structure

Under the Protocol, the New Hebrides is constituted "a region of joint influence, in which the subjects and citizens of the two Signatory Powers shall enjoy equal rights of residence, personal protection and trade." Each Power "retains sovereignty over its nationals and over corporations legally constituted according to its laws" and neither Power may exercise a separate authority over the Group. Provision is made requiring nationals of third Powers residing in the Group to opt for either the British or the French legal system and to come for all practical purposes under the administrative protection and authority of the Power for whose legal system they opt. Foreign workers "introduced into the Group by or with the authority of one or other of the two Governments" are regarded as having opted for the legal system of the Government which authorised their introduction. The Protocol leaves natives of the New Hebrides without any clear national status. They cannot be dependants of either Power nor can they "acquire in the Group the status of subject or citizen" of either Power.

There is an Advisory Council for the territory, presided over by the Resident Commissioners. Since 1969 it has had, apart from the Resident Commissioners, 4 official, 10 nominated private and 14 indirectly-elected private members. Of the 24 private members 12 are New Hebridean, 6 British and 6 French. Eight of the New Hebrideans are indirectly elected by electoral colleges, of which there is one in each of the eight constituencies in the Group, while 3 British and 3 French elected members are at present elected through the Chamber of Commerce electoral system. The other private members (4 New Hebridean, 3 British and 3 French) are nominated by the Resident Commissioners jointly.
Local Government Councils, known as Local Councils, have been set up in many parts of the territory. Members of Councils are elected by rural communities varying in size from a few hundred to several thousand.

The Government of the Condominium is known as the Joint Administration, of which the joint and equal heads are, formally, the British and French High Commissioners, acting through their local representatives, the British and French Resident Commissioners, to whom they delegate their powers and to whom they give directions. The Joint Administration consists of the British National Service, the French National Service and Joint or "Condominium" Services. In addition to participating in the Joint Administration, each National Service under its Resident Commissioner deals independently with national affairs. Insofar as these are not of joint concern.

The National Services consist of administrative, clerical, accounting and technical sections including Works, Police, Marine, Information and Co-operatives. Medical and Educational sections are also included since the education and many health services, although subsidised from the Joint (Condominium) budget, are not effectively jointly controlled. In addition within the British National Administration there is a Geological Survey.

The Joint Services, created under Article 4 of the Protocol, include normal government departments such as the Treasury (including Customs and Inland Revenue), Public Works and Transport, Posts and Telephones, Radio Communications, Lands, Survey, Agriculture, Judicial, Meteorology, Mines and Establishment.

JUDICIARY

The Anglo-French Protocol of 6 August 1914 provided for the immediate introduction of three courts, namely; the Joint Court and the French and British national courts, and the subsequent formation of courts of first instance and Native courts. The Joint Court is a court of final adjudication in matters of purely condominium nature. One of the Joint Courts chief functions is that of a land court governing the registration of indefeasible titles to land. One of the two agents (administrative officers) of the district concerned sits on the native courts with two local assessors whom the agents are obliged to consult. The Native courts have jurisdiction throughout their district over offences against New Hebridean regulations and customs. British and French national courts administer their own national laws where British or French subjects are concerned, except in cases reserved for the Joint Court.

One major fault of the judiciary system is that New Hebrideans have no right of appeal, and they are judged under British or French law, as the case may be.
THE NEW HEBRIDES: CONDOMINUM

Barak Sopo

The New Hebrides is bogged down by the only condominium government in the world. Governed jointly by France and Britain the New Hebrideans are uncertain about their political future. The condominium system is the most out-dated and confused form of government that mankind has ever established on earth. It is out-dated because it does not fulfil the requirements of the present conditions of a developing country like the New Hebrides. It is confusing because nobody else understands it except for the British and French colonialists. Created in 1906 the condominium government is more of an obstacle to the economic and political 'development' of the New Hebrides than of an agent for the preparation of New Hebrideans to become rulers of their own country.

The New Hebrides group of islands are not divided into a French portion and a British one. The entire group is governed jointly by the two colonial powers, however because of their divergent colonial policies, there are in fact three governments trying to govern the place. The French colonial administration, the British colonial administration and the Joint administration. The two national governments are headed by two Resident Commissioners. These two are the twin-heads of the Condominium government and their powers and actions are relegated from the French High Commissioner in New Caledonia and the British High Commissioner in the Solomon Islands.

Because of the Anglo-French condominium government the indigenous people are constantly forced to put up with all sorts of colonial rubble and refuse. Some examples include two education systems, two health systems, two national anthems, two currencies, three systems of law and numerous courts.

What is happening in the New Hebrides depends heavily upon the colonial policies of France and Britain. In areas where the two metropolitan countries have similar colonial policies 'competition' is more eminent and 'co-operation' is a word without meaning. The key to the 'functioning' of the condominium system is 'compromise.' Without the agreement of one of the powers progress to such things as agricultural development or political development is prevented. The indigenous people of the New Hebrides are uncertain of their political future because of the divergence views and policies of the French and British on the concept of independence. It is a common factor in the Pacific that the British colonialists will grant independence to their colonies but not the French. If political development were to come to the New Hebrides what form will it take? At present the New Hebrideans do not have any say on what goes on in their own country. The only media is the Advisory Council but its function for the past fifteen years has only been advisory. It has no legislative power and its mere composition is a classic Pacific version of Rhodesia or South Africa.

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It is predominantly white. The New Hebrideans form 95% of the total population while the whites are a minority in the country with 3% of the population.

For the British colonialists the next political step in the New Hebrides is a legislative assembly (like what is happening in the Solomons now) while the French favour a territorial assembly. (The Caledonians and Tahitians have territorial assemblies). Since the two powers cannot agree on a system of government for the New Hebrides, the indigenous people are once again denied their rights for self determination and independence.

Many British educated New Hebrideans favour the legislative system because it will eventually lead to independence in a few years time. It will prepare New Hebrideans in matters of leadership and other requirements of a developing national. The proposed French system of a territorial assembly is pleasing to many people. However the question of independence is beyond the horizon.

The Tahitians and the New Caledonians have had territorial assemblies years before Western Samoa or Fiji gained their independence. The 'autonomists' of these French dependent territories have been demanding political decentralisation for years without success. A New Hebridean may look stupid to his French colonial master but not stupid enough to accept this political menu.

The issue of French nuclear testing in the South Pacific should have, by now, focussed attention on the existence of French colonialism in the South Pacific. It is vitally important that the bomb tests are seen not merely as an ecological threat but also as an aspect of a repressive system of French colonialism in the South Pacific. It goes to show that the French regard their colonised peoples as inferiors and could be exploited at their master's transgression.

In the New Hebrides, the conditions that the indigenous people have to put up with has forced them to seek liberation and self-determination. Even the conservative Churches of the Group are making declarations for independence, and seeking help from neighbouring Pacific countries as well as the United Nations. Political Parties and Movements are also struggling to make France and Britain aware of the New Hebridean aspirations: At this day and age when colonisation is condemned by many countries the colonial powers (especially the French) must be made aware that being a New Hebridean or a Tahitian is more important than just having to be labelled with a second class French citizenship.
TAX HAVEN

The statute and use of the New Hebrides as a tax haven was mainly due to the 1971, New Hebrides Companies Regulations, which were based on the 1948 United Kingdom Companies Act, as amended in 1967. In accordance with these regulations, incorporation of a company in the Territory requires the approval of the British Resident Commissioner. It is also stated that their accounts and records are not available to the public or any outside authority, thus assuring complete privacy.

The regulations provide for incorporation of three types of companies:

(a) Local companies, which are set up strictly to conduct business in the Territory;
(b) Foreign companies, with overseas owners, registered to do business in the New Hebrides;
(c) Exempt companies: those registered in the New Hebrides which conduct their business outside the Condominium.

It is the third category which use the New Hebrides solely as a tax haven.

According to reports, the New Hebrides could rival the Caribbean Territories as a tax haven mainly due to the political situation in the Caribbean. However, the political situation in the New Hebrides is rapidly changing.

One effect of the tax haven statute since 1971 have been the increase in commercial enterprise in Port Vila. Since 1971, 8 new banks have been built and a number of trust companies, solicitors offices and accountants offices have been set up. All this has been of comparably little benefit to the New Hebrideans as these types of enterprises bring with them their own staff.

A New Hebridean comment on the tax haven appeared in the March 1973 issue of 'New Hebridean Viewpoints', the magazine of the New Hebrides National Party and is written below:

"Is the Tax Haven Immoral?"

The question of whether the Tax haven is immoral is a completely different question from whether it is legal. There is no question that it is legal unless the company avoiding tax gives a false declaration, and no one is suggesting that any of the companies registered here is doing that. So, legal, yes; but moral or immoral, that is the question.
Several people have quoted a legal decision by the House of Lords, the highest English court, to the effect that avoidance of payment of income tax is perfectly legal, and they have used this to show that the idea of the tax haven is accepted by the highest court in the land. But what does this really mean? In any country which has income tax, the government grants certain allowances which you are allowed to deduct from your income before you pay tax: an allowance for your wife, children and other relations whom you are supporting from your income; an allowance for using your house or part of it for business purposes; an allowance for buying tools and books; an allowance for life insurance, etc. All these are allowed by the Government, and they expect a taxpayer to deduct all these things when he makes his tax return; so when he does so he is not only acting legally but also perfectly morally.

But the tax avoider who comes to a tax haven is doing something different. He is setting up his office and registering his company in a country where there is no income tax, while carrying on his business in a country which has income tax. He is saying to his government, "Although I do my business here, I am not earning my money here but in the New Hebrides, and so I pay you no tax." This is completely different avoidance of tax from the one mentioned above. The man who makes tax deductions for his wife, etc, is doing something which the government expressly allows and expects him to do. The man who runs to a tax haven is doing something which the government does not make provision for and does not expect him to do. He is taking advantage of a loophole in the law to get out of doing something which his country expects him to do, i.e. pay legitimate tax, and this loophole his country tries to stop. That is why we think that the tax haven, while legal, is immoral.

It is like a fishing net with holes in it. The owner of the net is the government of the big country. The tax avoiding companies are the fish that get through the holes and escape. But the owner of the net, as soon as he finds that this is happening, will mend the net to stop any more fish getting through. That is what has already begun to happen with Australia and the tax haven here, and more and more holes will be stopped up until the fish can no longer get through.

No, this kind of tax avoidance is immoral and is not a good basis for a country like ours to build on."

THE POLITICAL GROUNDSWELL IN THE NEW HEBRIDES

Kalkot Matas-Kale

While political parties have been emerging at the centre of the political stage in the Solomon Islands, they have also been playing an increasingly active role in the New Hebrides. At the present time there are no less...
than four political parties vying for the support of the population and doing
their best to influence national developments.

Of these four parties only one, which was the first to be formed, reflects
interests rather than those of the New Hebrides' foreign community. The New
Hebrides National Party was established in August 1971 and made its first
public appearance with a demonstration against land speculation. The
National Party's main aims were expressed as "the advancement of New
Hebrideans socially, educationally, economically and politically in relation
to New Hebridean culture and western civilisation." By the end of 1971
the party had the support of 1,000 Melanesian members, mainly in the towns
of Villa (on Efate) and Luganville (on Santo).

Another party which was formed in 1971 was the Union de la Population des
Nouvelles-Hebrides (UPNH) which emerged in December. Although the organi-
sers of UPNH were French colonists, some three-quarters of the estimated party
membership of two hundred were Melanesians, mainly French-educated and
including a significant number of small businessmen and taxi operators. In
contrast to the National Party, which openly seeks radical changes to the
political structures, UPNH advocated the continuation of the Condominium and
the introduction of a number of moderate reforms.

By February 1974 some influential members of UPNH, dissatisfied with the
Melanesian orientation which their party had been taking, had disassociated
themselves with the party and formed the Union des Communautés des Nouvelles-
Hebrides (UCNH). The primary interests of this newest party are openly
connected with the local and foreign communities of the New Hebrides, not
only French but including Americans, Australians and New Zealanders. The
party's aims include legal reforms and the maintenance of law and order —
but with no recognition of the need for political changes or of Melanesian
political rights. Instead UCNH hopes to gather Melanesian support through
its general aim of involving (in its own words) "all the communities in the
New Hebrides in the affairs of the archipelago."

The fourth party, also formed this year in January, is the Mouvancement Auto-
nomiste des Nouvelles-Hebrides (MANH). The party is even more clearly a
French planters' party than UCNH and its interests are directed towards the
evolution of a political system in the New Hebrides similar to that already
operating in New Caledonia and in French Polynesia. Both MANH and UCNH,
especially foreign parties, are currently canvassing for Melanesian support
in an attempt to broaden the bases of their parties.

One particularly interesting development has been the apparent friendship be-
tween some of the MANH leadership and Jimmy Stephens' Nagriamel movement.
Nagriamel emerged in the early 1960's as a rural group in Santo mainly con-
cerned about the vexing question of alienated lands. In 1972 Nagriamel had

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popular rural support in the northern islands and claimed a membership of about 15,000, all Melanesians. The present friendship between MANH and Nagriamel, and the earlier estrangement between the National Party and Nagriamel, is one of the confusing aspects of contemporary New Hebrides politics.

Nagriamel, as a rural movement, was suspicious of the urban-led National Party, and the National Party's failure to initiate a close policy of alliance with Nagriamel kept the two groups apart. French and other foreign planters have been quick to appreciate Nagriamel's political significance. By offering small concessions in land matters to Nagriamel, planters' groups including MANH have been able to establish a working relationship with Stephens' movement, a relationship which at the moment is helping to prevent the emergence of a national-wide Melanesian political movement with support from every section of the Melanesian community. This relationship has been projected by the anti-nationalists to give MANH a 'legitimate' character.

Although the National Party has had difficulty in establishing an effective alliance with Nagriamel, its impact on the political situation has continued to grow. By 1972 the party's supporters had risen to at least 4,000, not only in Vila and Luganville but also in Aoba and Pentecost to the North. Last year the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church in the New Hebrides advocated more rapid progress towards self-government and eventual independence for the country. As an institution which represents approximately half of the population of the country, the church's contribution to future political developments will be very important. The church's political role has already led to some sectarian rivalries. Not least because some of the National Party's leadership are also church leaders.

Since last August, when the National Party petitioned the United Nations for the establishment of a single system of government to replace the Condominium, the party has been increasingly active. The single most important event was a conference called by the National Party in January of this year. The conference had the overall effect of consolidating its hitherto fragmented island and district leadership. Important policy decisions which emerged from the conference included proposals to tighten the immigration laws, a call for the examination of the present elitist education system, plans for nationalising all expatriate-owned land, and further encouragement of co-operative society trading as a basis for economic development.

The significance of this conference lies not only with the National Party, being a milestone in its history, but also in that it signalled a surge in the political groundswell in the New Hebrides. Thus it is interesting to note that the UCNH emerged only a few days after the National Party
published its new lands nationalisation policy. Similarly, MANH was formed (under the popular slogan of law-and-order) only a few weeks after the Condominium authorities had agreed to consider some basic judicial reforms demanded by the National Party in December, 1973.

Thus attention is now focussed on the struggle which has emerged between the National Party and the two planter-based parties, MANH and UCNH. Although the National Party, asserting itself as the conscience of the people, is hopeful that Malagasy support for these rival parties will dwindle and that it can form an alliance with UCNH, there are few who believe that either MANH or UCNH will subside before the pressure. On the contrary it seems likely that the political interests of the foreign planter community will become even more clear in the months ahead, and that open conflict between the planters and the National Party will occur.

At the crux of the contest for political influence is the question of land and it is possible that the planters' ultimately conservative position on land reform will lead rural groups like Nagrielal back into the camp of the National Party. If and when a genuinely national alliance among Melanesian groups is formed, the political options available will be much more limited than they appear to be today. A straight fight between New Hebridean nationalists and the foreign planters would seem to offer only two long-term possibilities: the adoption of changes along the lines aspired for by the nationalists; or a severe escalation of the contest in a manner so far not experienced in the Pacific.

The events of the next few months seem likely to decide the manner and direction of political developments in years to come.

THE NEW HEBRIDES NATIONAL PARTY

This Party was formed to unite the New Hebridean people to strive for independence from the British and French Colonial Powers. In a letter of August 6, 1973 to the United Nations, the French Government and British Government, the National Party demanded independence. Part of their letter read:

"The New Hebrides National Party concerned for human life, the free development of the indigenous Hebrideans:

- assert that it is imperative to the future of the territory to have one system of Government to enable it to develop self-reliance and stability.

assert that the British and French Administrations cease their influence in the territory immediately.

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assert that the United Nations send a fact-finding mission to the New Hebrides immediately to ascertain the possibility of the establishing of one system of Government in collaboration with the New Hebrides National Party.

assert that the date of independence will be decided upon, when the new form of Government has existed and functioning under the guidance of United Nations.

SHOULD THE CHURCH PLAY POLITICS?

Rev. Walter Lini,
Chairman,
N.H. National Party.

To answer this question satisfactorily we need to be clear in our own minds what the Church is as the ordinary man understands it today. What its role has been and not only what its role is today but what its role will be in the future in the Pacific.

To answer all these questions, I must say right from the start that I believe we need in the Pacific independent thinkers in order that we can be recognised from the outside world that we have something to contribute to the world. What I shall say would be my own thoughts and I hope that they will carry their own weight.

First, what is the Church as it is understood today? Church today as many people understand is the body of all men and women, and children, united who have been baptised into one of the numerous denominations which claim to be upholding the Way, the Truth and the Life which Jesus declared himself to be. To others the Church is an institution which should not have anything to do with the Government. I would like to suggest that the Church is all the people who believe in God and His Son Jesus Christ as the Way, the Truth and the Life, and in the Holy Spirit's power which can be seen directing and inspiring men and women both in Christian denominations and in the world at large to uphold justice.

Politics is power to make right judgements and to help the people of a society, of a country, or of a nation to see what justice is and endeavour to bring it to effect by changing the structures of Government or the Church in order that justice may abound.
Should Church play politics? My answer is yes. Why? I hope I can prove to you in this talk. Church must play politics because both Church and politics are two sides of one thing—man's existence or man's life. The Church is a body which should uphold moral standards of justice. Politics is the way in which moral judgements are effected so that it tears down what is old and unjust and creates new structures through which right judgements are channelled so that every man is protected from being exploited and robbed of their human rights as a human being or as a nation amongst other nations.

May be I have so far been too general, so I must be more specific. Why should Walter Lini stir up political awareness in the New Hebrides when he is a Priest in the Church? I believe that when man becomes aware of the injustices in his society he becomes restless and should react to the structure of his society until justice is achieved. I am involved in politics because I am a man who knows the injustices we in the New Hebrides are facing. The economic structure in the past has really been evil, unjust, e.g. politically we have no voice in the running of our government.

As an Anglican Priest, I have every right to play politics at this stage in the life of the New Hebrides as an emerging nation. This is because there is injustice in the New Hebrides which has been created by man and encouraged by man to exploit man. Who can sleep when his conscience knows there is injustice engineered by man towards his fellow man. We can spend hours trying to define injustice in human society but when do we start acting or working for justice? I believe that we start now, here in this seminar, in each respective field in which we work.

I believe that Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life. And I believe this because Jesus upheld justice for all mankind and it is in His steps that I must follow. The Dives and Lazarus story shows us that the right of man is to be alive in his society, in his country and in this world. Therefore when we talk about development in the Pacific we must ask: Does the present structure of our home Governments or home Churches help the justice for man to abound; Whether the present economic structure helps to bring about justice for man; Whether the educational system helps man to live in justice in his society or in his country.

I would say the minister of the Church who is aware of the injustices in his society has every right to condemn the system and structure which brings about injustices to man either of his own society or of one another. Does the minister of the Church condemn from the pulpit? No. The right place is with the Government and the people who are the exploiters and with the people who are being exploited. As other speakers have said, it is important to work through the right channels in order that the whole community is involved and decides which way to develop.
I believe with my whole heart that the Church must play its role in politics. It must do here in the Pacific and everywhere in the world. And I would also say that for any type of development to take place here in the Pacific, we the people of the Pacific must judge whether it is development for justice or injustice for our people.

FROM THE UNITED NATIONS DECOLONISATION COMMITTEE

The United Nations Special Committee on Decolonisation adopted the following conclusions and recommendations at its 931st meeting on 6 August, 1973.

1. The Special Committee reaffirms the inalienable right of the people of the New Hebrides to self-determination in conformity with the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, contained in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December, 1960.

2. Fully aware of the problems peculiar to the Territory by virtue of its being a condominium and of other special circumstances, owing to such factors as its size, geographical location, population and limited natural resources, the Special Committee reiterates its view that these circumstances should in no way delay the speedy implementation of the Declaration contained in resolution 1514 (XV) which fully applies to the Territory. In this connection, the administering Powers concerned should seek, in consultation with the people of the Territory and the Special Committee, a constructive approach to solving the special problems of the New Hebrides.

3. The Special Committee reiterates its profound regret at the continued refusal of the administering Powers concerned, namely France and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, to co-operate with the Committee in its consideration of the question of the New Hebrides and to provide it with up-to-date and relevant information which would enable the Committee to assess the situation in the Territory and to play its proper role in helping to guide the people towards the exercise of their right to self-determination. Further, it regrets that, as a consequence, the Committee has been deprived of information essential in assisting it to formulate recommendations for the full and speedy implementation of the Declaration with respect to the Territory. The Committee accordingly urges the two Governments concerned to reconsider their attitude and to provide adequate information on the Territory.
4. The Special Committee takes note that the Government of the Territory continues to be based on the outdated Anglo-French Protocol of 1914, whereby three parallel administrations were established under the Joint Administration, namely the Joint (or condominium) Services, the French National Service and the British National Service. It reiterates its conviction that this system constitutes an obstacle to the political and economic advancement of the people and once more urges the administering Powers concerned to take the steps necessary to revise the form of government of the New Hebrides so as to transfer full governmental authority to the people of the Territory and to enable them to participate fully in the speedy implementation of resolution 1514 (XV).

5. The Special Committee is distressed that the intentions of the administering Powers with regard to the Territory's future have not yet been made clear. In this connection it recalls the desire expressed by the United Kingdom administration and by some indigenous inhabitants for the rapid transformation of the Advisory Council into a legislative assembly and for the creation of a local executive authority. It notes, however, that according to Joint Regulation No. 5 of 1973, signed by both Resident Commissioners, the Advisory Council has been prolonged for the calendar year 1973 or until a date for new elections has been set. The Committee therefore calls upon the administering Powers concerned to clarify the situation with a view to establishing at the earliest possible date, representative, executive and legislative organs of government based, inter alia, on universal adult suffrage.

6. Bearing in mind the increasing number of foreign companies which are being set up in the Territory, as well as the New Hebrides Companies Regulations which came into force in 1971 to control the establishment and operations of such companies, the Special Committee expresses the hope that the administering Powers are taking every step necessary to ensure that the local inhabitants of the New Hebrides will benefit from the revenues obtained from tax haven arrangements and the employment opportunities flowing therefrom.

7. With regard to land tenure, the Special Committee considers that the wishes of the people of the Territory to control the sale of land should be respected. It further considers that those charged with effecting land transactions should be drawn from among the indigenous population concerned.

8. The Special Committee is concerned over the state of the economy of the Territory which is based mainly on subsistence gardening and the production of copra: one has no potential growth and the other is
largely affected by the fluctuating world market. The Committee therefore urges the administering Powers to consider ways to ensure that the Territory's dependence on copra production and export is recognised by the European Economic Community (EEC) when the New Hebrides becomes an associate member in 1975. In the meantime, it urges them to take whatever steps they deem necessary to diversify the economy in the immediate future.

9. The Special Committee reiterates its regret that educational conditions continue to lag far behind the Territory's requirements. It urges the administering Powers to give due consideration to this vital field of development of the New Hebrides, thus preparing the people to take positive steps towards self-government and economic development. In this connection, the Committee would welcome more detailed information on education and educational conditions and would like to know in particular whether a political education programme exists in the Territory.

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THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF THE NEW HEBRIDES

"The Presbyterian Church of the New Hebrides, representing more than half of the population of the New Hebrides, in this its 25th General Assembly as a self-governing Church, DECLARES that it confidently looks towards the goal of responsible self-government of the New Hebrides people as a nation.

We see the British, French and Condominium administrations as partners with us as together we move towards this goal.

We now bring this Conviction to the notice of our administrations and to the attention of the South Pacific Commission and the United Nations Organisation with the urgent request that they co-operate with our New Hebrides administrations in achieving self-government without delay, without violence, and with due preparation of our people for the duties, functions, rights and responsibilities of independent government."

For more information, write to: SPAN, P.O.Box 9792, WELLINGTON.