

THE JOURNAL OF PACIFIC HISTORY

THE RESEARCH SCHOOL OF PACIFIC STUDIES
The Australian National University
GPO Box 4, Canberra, ACT, Australia 2601
Telegrams 7 cables NATUNI Canberra

Mr Nigel Cooper
1 Rutherglen Avenue
CHRISTCHURCH 4, New Zealand

16 August 1990

Dear Mr Cooper,

Our Board has read your paper 'The resolution of the Bougainville Copper land crisis of 1969' with care and interest, and in many ways is impressed with it. They find it well-written and documented and that it makes a serious case for the claim that MRA did have a significant impact on the resolution of one particular conflict. But before they could consider it suitable for publication in a journal of historical research such as JPH it would be necessary for any suggestion of MRA polemic to be removed. (Pages 22-24, for instance, and in particular, should be toned down and reduced.) This would of course strengthen the force of the paper as the facts may be seen to speak for themselves.

Other possible explanations for events should also be considered. As one Reader put it, regarding 'the furore which resulted in Gorton P.M. changing the rules of negotiation in the Rorovana-Arawa issue': 'MRA was certainly a catalyst but Cooper ignores the MHRs (e.g. Gordon Bryant), academics, unions, journalists who created public protest not to mention Leo Hannett and his media appearances and interviews with government ... The crucial item was that it would cost CRA/BCPL more to delay than to pay. MRA smoothed the negotiations. As for Middlemiss, he had no choice but to support Lapun ... People expected [Lapun] to find a solution. The Australian media was in a butcherly mood. Gorton was facing an election...'.

Further points made concern disquiet with the claim that the crisis was settled, given the trouble that is going on in 1990, in a more virulent form than ever. 'It is...too facile to say (p2) that the Rorovana crisis was happily settled and everything after can be left out of account. This is rather like saying that the Algeciras treaty of 1906 and the peaceful resolution of the Agadir crisis of 1911 happily resolved Entente/German tension, not noticing that there was a war in 1914.'

Another Reader: 'An article which concludes p.24 'The crisis was resolved because Lapun decided to obey God's voice...' is concerned with faith, rather than history. History needs evidence...before such an assertion could be accepted. On p.20 Mr Coulter believes he is the voice of God when he makes a simple point to Barry Middlemiss - but that is a different category. It is of interest to historians to know that Mr Coulter thought he was acting on God's instructions. So we need a revision to remove the assertions of faith.'

Further comments that may be of interest are:

p.6 Lapun was MRA, Lovering was MRA, but so too was Kim Beazley Sr, and his comment (p21) should be seen in that light.

p.22 In view of his role in the 'resistance', it is not good enough to ditch Middlemiss in this way.

pp.23-6 Hay's statement bears every mark of being solicited, and was made 10 or 12 years after the event; to whom was it written is not stated...

p.22 How does the author know that this was the first time a Third World country has secured renegotiation?

Could not Middlemiss's statement be included as well as Lapun's?

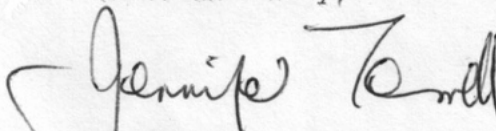
Historical context could be increased by a consideration of the work of the earlier missions in preparing the ground for MRA, in that the population were receptive to their approach.

I hope that this makes clear some of the difficulties our Board had with the paper, and indicates ways in which they could possibly be overcome. The paper is rather too long in its present form and should you consider re-submitting, total length including footnotes should be not more than about 8,000 words. Unfortunately we would not be able to publish the photographs.

A little pencilling has been done on the text to indicate passages that might be removed, toned down, or reduced.

Thank you for sending us this paper, which, as said before, and is clear from the Readers' comments, has aroused a lot of interest.

Yours sincerely,



Jennifer Terrell
for The Editors

PS A change of title is suggested: 'The resolution of the Bougainville Copper land crisis of 1969: a participant view'?

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Mr Nigel Cooper
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24 September 1990

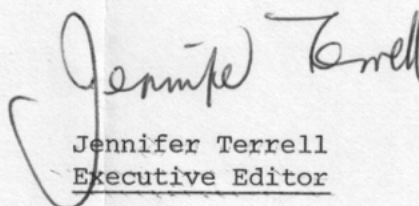
Dear Mr Cooper,

We are very pleased to hear that you are interested in re-submitting your paper, and thank you for your consideration in informing us when to expect it.

As to your specific enquiry about footnotes, the position is that when the material is sent to the printer the footnotes have to be separately at the end. If copy is sent to us with the footnotes on the pages it is necessary to transform it in some way - sometimes by photocopying and the use of scissors and paste. In any case it is not an unsurmountable problem for us. So I would say, don't worry about it.

Thank you for letting us know of your plans and programme, and we look forward to hearing from you in October.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Jennifer Terrell', is written over a printed name and title. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'J'.

Jennifer Terrell
Executive Editor

1 Rutherglen Avenue, Christchurch 4
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13 October 1990

Ms Jennifer Terrell
"The Journal of Pacific History"
The Research School of Pacific Studies
GPO Box 4
Canberra
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AUSTRALIA.

Dear Ms Terrell,

Thank you for your letter. I enclose a revised version of the paper. It is shortened and allowance is made for the readers' comments. However, I would like to express here my thoughts on those specific points which I haven't fully accepted, in the order in which you raised them in your letter of 16 August.

"MRA polemic" - Pages 22-24 contained factual assessments by a variety of people in the position to know what happened. It is not all pro-MRA. Hastings' and Middlemiss's denials of MRA's role give balance to Hay's, Whitrod's and Barnes' statements. However, in the interests of shortening the essay, these quotes are abbreviated.

The cuts you suggest on page 6 are helpful. I agree it was too detailed on explaining what is MRA.

It is true I do not assess the part played by the academics, unions, journalists, Leo Hanne, etc. The essay was criticised for its length as it was. All their parts are well known; what is not well known is the part MRA played. On the statement that "As for Middlemiss, he had no choice but to support Lapun", if that was true, then why did he oppose Lapun vehemently for two weeks after Lapun and Bele returned from Australia. I don't believe Middlemiss had no choice. He made his choice clearly - to oppose Lapun. It happened that it was after Coulter's intervention that he changed his position.

The comparison between what happened on Bougainville and the Algeiras treaty is to my mind irrelevant. The fact is that the settlement of the Rorovana land dispute did end the crisis, and mining proceeded for the next 19 years. The outbreak of violence in 1988 is a

subsequent phenomenon, not unrelated, but the original settlement story is valid on its own.

On the point of assertion of faith, the issue was resolved because these men went back to the elements of their Christian faith and acted in accordance with it. I have not over-stressed this, but quote Lapun and Coulter to show the truth of this assertion.

I do not know if Hay's statement was solicited or not. It certainly was not by me. His papers are viewable in the National Library in Canberra. He has seen this paper and stands by the quotes made of him. (So do Gorton and Whitrod.)

One reader suggests I quote all of Middlemiss's statement as well as Lapun's. I do not have a statement by Middlemiss concerning MRA. I have quoted his views from an article by Peter Hastings in the newspaper. However, again in the interests of length, I have deleted the two full statements by Hay and Lapun in the appendices, and incorporated the essential pieces in the main body of the text.

A paper of this length can not possibly include an assessment of the earlier work of the missions in preparing the ground for MRA. I mention that Lapun, like most on his island, was a Catholic.

Finally, on the suggested name change, I do not feel that adding "a participant view" is right. I was only on the edge of affairs, not a true participant. If the Board wish, an alternative could be, "The Role of Moral Re-Armament in the Resolution of the Bougainville Copper Land Crisis of 1969", or "Bougainville Reconsidered - the Role of Moral Re-Armament in the Rorovana Land Crisis of 1969". This would make it clear that I am not trying to tell the whole story of the mine problems and their resolution.

I hope these comments clarify the decisions I have made. I would like to ask you to thank the readers for their careful appraisals and helpful comments.

Yours sincerely,

Nigel Cooper

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Mr Nigel Cooper
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24 Nov. 1990

Dear Mr Cooper,

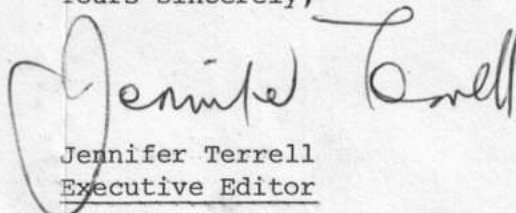
We were very pleased to receive your revised paper on the Bougainville crisis, and the Editors are now happy to accept it for publication in JPH.

It is likely that it will appear in the first issue for 1990, which I am now putting together, although the line-up has not yet been fully confirmed. In the meantime I am preparing your paper for press. Actually I can see very little to do, and you have obviously gone to some trouble to conform to our house style.

The preferred title is: Bougainville Reconsidered: the role of Moral Re-Armament in the Rorovana Land Crisis of 1969.

I may need to write to you again before publication, but if I don't, you will receive galley proofs in due course, and the opportunity to order offprints.

Yours sincerely,



Jennifer Terrell
Executive Editor