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AN ELITE FOR A NATION? REFLECTIONS ON A MISSIONARY GROUP IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA, 1890-1986

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Charles W. Abel, who arrived in British New Guinea in 1890, two years following colonial annexation, was founder of the Kwato Mission of Papua. In recently published writings, Abel has been described as one who looked forward to the time when Papua would be governed by Papuans. Kwato, it has been said, produced an advanced Papuan elite, which would assume responsibility for their own country.

Yet Abel's career spanned the "dog days" of European empire, and his death in 1930 preceded by twenty-five years the dismantling of the first British colony in Africa, long before the "new order" in colonial affairs had caused more than a ripple in the South Pacific.

This article surveys the salient features of leadership training at the Kwato Mission in the ninety years of its existence. It asks whether the Papuans at Kwato were building for a future self-governing Papua under Abel's leadership, as has been claimed. Conversely, it asks whether the Christian Papuans at Kwato were intended to collaborate with the European settler-missionary family who presided over their fortunes in prolonging European rule over Papua New Guinea.

In 1877 two pioneer agents of the London Missionary Society (LMS) made an exploratory visit to Milne Bay at the eastern end of the New Guinea mainland. Several months later, Samarai or Dinner Island near Milne Bay was purchased by the LMS as a mission station for 2/6 d. worth of hoop iron and trinkets, and then exchanged in 1888 for an island two miles distant known as Quato. After a long delay, F. W. Walker, son of a lighter owner at Hull, and C. W. Abel (b. 1862), a for-

mer clerk in a London circulating library, were appointed to lead the first permanent European mission at the "East End" of New Guinea. Taking six children from the older mission station at Suau, Walker and Abel moved to the seventy-acre island of Quato in August 1891.

It was a cause for concern among humanitarians at the time that the change in tribal activity which accompanied the coming of the pax Britannica apparently resulted in a decline in the vigor of subject peoples and led to depopulation. Before the expansion of formal European empires in Africa and Oceania in the 1880s, most Protestant missionaries in the Pacific had confined their educational work to teaching literacy and translating the Bible. There were occasional minor "industrial" ventures such as printing, furniture making, and boat-building. Walker and Abel, however, thought there was an opportunity in eastern Papua to provide new cultural substitutes in place of the traditional arts which were apparently decaying: the solution, they believed, lay in removing the most promising boys and girls permanently from their villages and instructing a new generation of Papuans they had taken under their own roof. With Beatrice Abel (1869-1939), Charles' wife from 1892, they acquired a family of children who had chosen to leave their clans or had been mandated to the mission by the New Guinea government. It seems that no resistance was offered by elders in the hamlets to the children's going to reside at Quato. This was in contrast to the society at Mailu, 160 miles westward, where adults refused to allow offspring to move to the nearby LMS mission from their ancestors' land.

The "new generation," or *Isibaguna* as they were called, came initially from the Daui-speaking communities of Suau, twenty-five miles westward along Papua's south coast. The mission headquarters at Quato (or Kwato) lay on the border between traditional rivals: the Daui-speaking people to the west as far as Suau, and the Tavara-speaking people who predominated in Milne Bay. Thus the children who were to be forged into a progressive group of Christian Papuans came from two main language groups. "We have no difficulty in getting the best of these independ[e]nt young people to leave their villages," Abel wrote. Walker would "pick up the most promising boys and girls" and "hand them over to me."[1] The partnership with Walker ended in 1894 with Walker's appointment to the LMS Torres Straits mission. Male and female residents of Kwato numbered 30 by 1894 and three times that number by the turn of the century. By 1911 over 150 people were living on the island.[2] The mission's headquarters reached its maximum size of 250 residents before the beginning of the Pacific War in 1941.

With the passage of time, the *Isibaguna* of Kwato came to see them-

selves as separate from the unconverted people of the mainland (called the *ganamuri* or those "outside the fence") and sometimes at odds with the white society of officials and merchants growing up around them in eastern New Guinea. The influence of the Kwato group reached into those parts of Milne Bay where Abel had begun acquiring plantation lands before the First World War. These converts, or *ganara* (those "inside the fence"), numbered 880 by the time of Abel's death in 1930.[3] At the outbreak of the Pacific War in 1942 as many as 5,000 people were adherents. Most were living in the original mission district of Milne Bay and neighboring coasts, or in a sphere of influence that had been opened in 1934 near Abau, 130 miles to the west. Insofar as the aspirations of the Kwato Papuans can be discerned independently of their European mentors, they wished to raise themselves from their position as "boys" to a place within the European social and commercial establishment of Papua.

Like other nineteenth-century missions in Africa and Oceania, the object of Kwato was to provide a setting favorable to the inculcation of Protestant Christian values. Comparisons could be made with earlier Evangelical missions to the American Indians, or with the Norfolk Island headquarters of the Anglican Melanesian Mission. Abel had encountered Maori people during a stay in New Zealand (1881-1884), and apparently was familiar with Te Aute College established by the Evangelical missionary Samuel Williams for the training of Maori youths at Hawkes Bay. Like the American Indian missions, Kwato emphasized a "complete break" with the past: the eradication, as far as practicable, of links with clan loyalties and village customs. But Kwato differed radically from Norfolk Island in that students on Norfolk were expected to return to a Melanesian village milieu, while Kwato came to be developed as a group perpetuating itself through intermarriage and a lifelong link of dependence on the island.

Abel's plans were endorsed by a black American, Booker T. Washington (1856?-1915), son of a slave, who preached the ideal of "salvation by the hands" as a means of fostering economic and social improvement among American blacks. As early as 1904 Abel was having long talks with Papuan converts about Washington's Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. Aware of the depopulation that often seemed to follow white settlement, he asked his students to help him "to save the race from what looked like certain destruction."[4] He warmly concurred with Washington's maxim that property, education, and Christianity should be the black man's "cloud by day and pillar of fire by night." In turn, Washington wrote approving Abel's "sensible" industrial schemes in Papua.

The Tuskegee ideal of salvation by industry for the American black--"first the Gospel, next the helping hand"--was parallel to Abel's writings about Papuan people at the turn of the century. So was Washington's appeal to American businessmen, to give the black artisan "a man's chance in the commercial world."[5] Abel believed western influence was "devastating" village society: younger Papuans must therefore acquire new knowledge and industrious habits before their people were blottled out; only the fittest would survive. It is perhaps significant that Abel was the only LMS volunteer in New Guinea whose reading while a student had included Darwin's work *On the Origin of Species.*[6] There was an urgency of tone in his writing that was missing in the more sedate policies pursued by his LMS colleagues in the South Pacific.

The education of children at Kwato differed markedly from the methods followed by other missionary societies. Abel's belief about the severity of the racial clash and his revulsion toward traditional customs meant that his young converts were more consciously shielded from their parents' culture and absorbed into the civilization of the colonizing power. Kwato was the only mission in the colony that practiced (as nearly as possible) the complete assimilation of its inner core into the values and virtues of Europeans. Montagu Stone-Wigg, first Anglican bishop of New Guinea, noted after a visit in 1897: "Children (40) under care of station and completely isolated from surroundings in village and cut off from all contact. Taken quite young. Dressed and brought up as English. Complete control in Mr. Abel's hands."[7]

That the mission's methods remained unchanged was revealed by the government officer and anthropologist, W. E. Armstrong, twenty-five years later:

> Children brought up from birth on the Mission Station and carefully protected from contact with the native village, and especially denied the knowledge of their own language (which is very nearly the case with some of those on Mr Abel's Mission), can be made to acquire, without doubt, a totally different outlook, namely, more or less that of the white man.[8]

Geographically the East End district presented a striking contrast with the rest of southern Papua. Instead of offering vistas of long beaches stretching interminably westward, the district was curved and compact: from the 140-foot summit of Kwato island, its extremities could be embraced in the span of the extended arms. China Strait was a cosmopolitan highway, and ships plying between the Australian col-

onies and the New Guinea plantations could be seen from the Kwato verandah rounding the island's northern point of Isu Hina.[9] The panorama from the house was vividly described in Malinowski's diary in 1914 when he visited Abel:

> My eyes drank in the pleasure of the landscape. . . . The hills and the all-powerful, lovely jungle a dark green, the transparent water bright green, the sky frozen in perpetually good weather, the sea a deep azure blue. Over it the outlines of countless distant islands; closer to me, I distinguished bays, valleys, peaks. The mountains of the mainland--everything immense, complicated, and yet absolutely harmonious and beautiful. [10]

All parts of the district were easily accessible from the headstation. The villages were scattered beach hamlets, sometimes of only half a dozen houses, and considerably smaller than the substantial villages adjoining other LMS headstations at Mailu, Kerepunu, Hula, Hanuabada, and Motumotu. To such observers as William MacGregor, first British Administrator of New Guinea, and the scientist A. C. Haddon, the other districts of the LMS in New Guinea seemed to be in a moribund condition in the 1890s--"in a hopeless mess" as Beatrice Abel put it.[11] By contrast, it was predicted that in Milne Bay, the Society would have what was called a "successful mission."

Such a prediction arose from assumptions of race as well as geography. To early mission writers, New Guinea appeared to contain two races, the light-skinned "Malay" easterners and the dark-skinned "Papuan" westerners. The "Malay" race populated the long coast as far west as Cape Possession. They included the Massim people of eastern Papua, who appeared more adaptable and therefore less deficient in intellect than their darker-skinned western countrymen, who represented an "awful drop" in humanity.[12] E. Pryce Jones, a former Madagascar missionary, said that the difference between an eastern and a western Papuan was as wide as that between a Malagasy and a West African Negro. "The Kwato district people are the most docile of the New Guinea tribes," said Jones. "A woman [missionary] can carry on the work if she is capable enough."[13] The Daui- and Tavara-speaking peoples, already linked by traditional trade to other Massim people in the eastern archipelagos, appeared highly receptive to European influences reaching them from the sea lanes. At the same time, Abel considered that the fragility of village society in Milne Bay would make the impact of European penetration all the more devastating. Because of

the elan elders' lack of strongly entrenched authority and the apparent docility of the people, there was a possibility that a mission center could be established for the youths at a fixed point without attracting hostility from the elders.

This, then, was the argument raised by the founder of Kwato in appealing for a greater share of the financial resources of the LMS than was allotted to his brother missionaries: the argument that Milne Bay constituted both a special problem and a unique opportunity for the LMS in New Guinea. The diffusion of Christianity in Oceania had occurred from east to west, with the movement to the western Pacific of Polynesians from Rarotonga, Niue, and Samoa. LMS missionaries in Papua believed that Papuan agents recruited from among the more "amenable," "mild," and "loyal" eastern Massim people[14] and trained at Kwato would be able to revitalize other parts of the New Guinea mission by being moved westward. In short, it was said that the "East" should evangelize the "West" in New Guinea.[15] LMS funds, augmented by a gift in 1902 from the philanthropist J. H. Angas of South Australia for the establishing of industrial mission schools equipped with workshops, were siphoned from other districts and allotted to Kwato. In one year, for example, the disbursement of funds from the LMS mission's industrial budget showed a large imbalance: Daru £20, Vatorata £50, Hula £20, Isuleilei £100, Kwato £2,500.[16] When Abel faced financial difficulties due to overspending, other LMS districts reduced their budgets in Kwato's favor and consequently, as a colleague put it, had to "[get] on as best they could."[17] The effects were cumulative. Of the £10,000 provided by the Angas Fund for the whole of the New Guinea Mission, Kwato gained £8,366 in the fourteen years from 1902, in addition to its annual LMS grant.[18] By investing in money and materials for the eastern district, LMS missionaries were persuaded that they were investing ultimately in the future of the New Guinea Mission as a whole.

The additional funds drawn by Kwato were used for a variety of enterprises. Beginning originally with girls' needlework and boys' carpentry, Abel had within fifteen years a small ship's slipway, a steam sawmill (purchased in 1904 with £1,000 from the Angas Fund), a bakery, and a dairy herd selling milk to residents of Samarai. Following Walker's tentative beginning in copra gathering in 1897, Abel launched his workmen into coconut planting on a large scale thirteen years later. By 1914, in addition to ten branch stations, Abel was LMS agent for six flourishing plantations at Loani, Kanakope (Salaoni), Koeabule, Modewa Isu, Giligili (Lauiam), and the Wagawaga properties of Bisimaka and Manawara.[19]

Abel's vision for Kwato, and Papua as a whole, was based on a belief in discipline as a means of developing robust character, a notion widespread among Victorian educators. He intended to develop qualities of leadership. New boys and girls saw the word DISCIPLINE printed in scarlet on the classroom wall. They could expect to hear many homilies on the subject, for Abel believed it was by devotion to regular discipline that the young Papuan would be turned into an industrious and progressive citizen. A writer in 1906 noted that no fewer than five general musters took place daily on the Kwato parade ground between dawn and dusk. At five A.M. the leaders on duty marshalled the community into columns, and with a "Ri-bow-turn-mars" the 101 children turned on their heels in military fashion for a bathe in the sea. Then, having breakfasted on a hard ship's biscuit and a mug of tea, Muna the engine driver began the steam sawmill, and the workshops sprang into action.[20] It was Abel's conviction that the rhythm of the steam piston, the beating of hammers, and the rasp of the mill by themselves induced a sense of regularity; and the students agreed. "[This mill] will give us good houses and many other things it will put within our reach," wrote Dagoela Manuwera of Suau. "In our hearts we say, our father, Mr Abel, we thank you to death, you have brought us this good thing which will benefit New Guinea."[21]

The community's leaders, known as *tanuaga,* were organized by Edidai, the head girl, and a Suau youth, Josia Lebasi. Mireka was the first female teacher; Mary and Boru were two other senior girl students. Prominent among other leader-artisans were the sawmill engineer Muna and Tiebubu, described as "the best native mechanic in Papua."[22] Dagoela Manuwera, son of the head man of Savaia village near Suau, was a mission teacher and translator, while Josia's brother Biga, with Vainebagi, Mareko, and Pita, were "men of very strong influence" in Milne Bay.[23] In about 1906 Lebasi was appointed first chairman of the "Kwato Council," which administered the *laugagaeo* or mission laws. In the previous year, similar experimental village councils had been set up by the neighboring Anglican mission in northeastern Papua. Abel described the Kwato Council as a "simple form of municipal government" ruling the island community through a weekly roster duty.[24] Under Lebasi's direction the community was hedged in from the *ganamuri,* "those outside the fence," with a system of regulations designed largely to prevent sexual dalliances.[25] A version of the Native Regulations of the British New Guinea government was recited by students.[26]

In order to give unity and vigor to his educated group, as well as progeny, Abel looked to lifelong associations between Kwato boys and girls. Coming from villages where marriages were customarily arranged

by elders, students expected Charles and Beatrice to confirm their choice of partners. Some boys who applied for a girl's hand were rejected at the mission house or by the girl herself. The reason was sometimes that the girl's ability had outstripped her suitor's. "I wrote to say Dalai was not on the market" wrote Abel tartly, in response to a studen t's marriage proposal.[27] In consequence, a number of outstanding women at Kwato remained single: Dalai Kitalapu, Alice Wedega, and Elsie Joseph were among them. Kwato was the only mission in the western Pacific possessing a substantial number of women teachers. It must be remembered that women were traditional land owners in the matrilineal society of Milne Bay and, according to early observers, enjoyed a higher position than did the "downtrodden" women further west. They could inherit garden lands and coconut trees; and their rights of ownership may have been partly responsible for their independent bearing. They did not have to rely wholly on their husbands for economic support. This provided a basis for further training by Beatrice Abel, as well as her cousin Margaret Parkin (missionary 1896-1939), and later for the eldest surviving Abel daughter Phyllis ("P.D.") (1923-1955), her sister Marjorie ("Badi") (1932-1942), and cousin Mary Abel (1932-1940). These women could build upon the stronger independence that already existed among the girls who came to Kwato. Abel's own union was an unusually happy marriage that lasted thirty-seven years, and the unwavering devotion of husband to wife provided a stable model for Papuan women at Kwato. Married or single, women from Milne Bay and northeastern Papua were more assertive than were other Papuan women at that time.[28]

While molding the leaders of both sexes through a fairly exacting discipline, Abel made plans for the surplus population growing up on the island. Blocks of land originally acquired by Walker for cotton growing at Loani near Samarai were added to other parcels of property made available to Abel from 1910 by a syndicate of Abel's Sydney business friends, whose earlier commercial purchases or leases had apparently been. sanctioned by the Papuan government. These parcels of land were settled by colonies of Kwato workers, and Abel offered to clear and harvest rubber and copra for his Sydney promoters with the use of mission labor at a fee of £15 per acre.[29] Meanwhile, further west, such trainee artisans as Wadialei and Adamu took shiploads of timber sawn at Kwato and raised prefabricated buildings under Lebasi's direction on the LMS stations at Daru, Mawatta, and Mailu.[30]

All these developments were welcomed by the founder of Kwato but the progress of workshop and sawmill, dairy and plantations was

attracting a mixed reception among LMS missionaries in Papua. W. G. Lawes, the senior LMS missionary, had already helped arrange Walker's removal to the West in 1894 on the grounds that the eastern station was over-staffed while other LMS districts languished for lack of manpower. Ten years later, Lawes described as a "huge mistake" Abel's purchase of a steam sawmill. By this time there was some additional criticism of Abel's children's colony as a "hothouse system." Disquiet at the isolation of a small group from the mass of Papuan people was voiced by W. G. Lawes in 1905:

> A new word . . . "Christian settlements" are spoken of in which natives would live for years and years under Missionary control . . . this is surely unsuitable for New Guinea. We do not want "gardens walled around" in this great heathen land, but rather a stream of trained, educated Xtian men who may influence and change the native villages.[31]

But younger missionaries compared thirty years' work in the Fly River with that of a decade at Kwato. If such mission stations were called hothouses, wrote W. J. V. Saville at Mailu in 1909, greater funds should be expended to achieve hothouse results.[32] To other LMS staff in the first ten years of the century, only one of the stations along the hundreds of miles of the south coast seemed to be conducting a convincing battle against the heathen. Even with "that devilish white settlement" of Samarai nearby, the Kwato students maintained "fine Christian living" on the station.[33] "The more I see of Kwato" wrote C. F. Rich from Fife Bay forty miles west, "the more convinced am I that the settlement plan is the only one."[34]

Nevertheless, the expansion of Kwato's activities into Milne Bay increasingly brought the founder into conflict with the parent Society and its field agents in Papua, anxious that their reputation not be tarred with the brush of trade. At length, after protracted delays, a deputation of the London directors of the Society visited Papua in 1915-1916. Under instructions to retrench LMS activities where necessary, the deputation decided to limit plantations to one hundred acres per district and reduce the number of residents to sixty children on each station. Abel by 1916 had six times the limit in plantations and three times the number of dependants. The deputation decided that it was no part of the missionary's duty to trade. Moreover, the deputation endorsed Lawes' view that a missionary should not leave children permanently dependent on the mission house. Proclaiming the gospel to "the nation

of Papua" was the mission's work, and not creating "little protected communities of highly-developed Christians."[35] There did not seem to be any notion that the two ideals could be complementary.

From this clash, the idea of selecting a small segment of the population emerged as a definite distinguishing feature of Kwato. Abel's response to the deputation's ultimatum in 1916-1917 was to confront the LMS with a new kind of conflict: the education of the masses versus the education. of the few. It was the first time he had raised the *elitist* banner in public:

> What we have to deal with is a people . . . who in one generation have been rushed from savage conditions through the wood *[sic],* the stone and the iron age. . . . The only possible way . . . is for us to concentrate very special attention on a few. . . . I am convinced that the only safe plan is to do intensely and thoroughly a small piece of work and work out from that. . . . It should strengthen us to oppose the prevailing notion that you can only deal with a race like the Papuans by dealing with the whole community on equal terms. We must be prepared to combat this idea at all hazards.[36]

In 1918 the Kwato Mission seceded from the LMS, taking with it 560 members of the church in Milne Bay. Permission was won from the Society for the mission to carry on the system of plantations and industries under an agreement with the LMS by which the property and plantations would be leased for ten years to Abel's "Kwato Extension Association." Five years after the formation of the Kwato Extension Association in London, an American auxiliary known as the New Guinea Evangelisation Society, Inc. of New York (NGES) was formed to provide stronger financial support. The auxiliary was led by Delavan L. Pierson, a missionary editor and publisher. The American society, led by Conservative Evangelicals (then becoming known as "Fundamentalists"), overtook the English Association in 1928, when the properties were purchased by the Americans from the LMS on Abel's behalf.[37]

The death of the founder of Kwato in a road accident in England in 1930 led to some changes in organization and greater use of Papuan leaders, notable among whom were Tiraka Anederea, Osineru and Merari Dixon,, Alice Wedega, and Olive Lebasi, to name a few. With the introduction of Moral Re-Armament techniques by Cecil Abel, Charles' elder son (b. 1903), the mission expanded its activities from 1934 to the Kunika area behind the island of Amau, about midway

between Kwato and Port Moresby. Goroka in the Eastern Highlands became a second Moral Re-Armament base two decades later.[38]

The adoption of the methods of Moral Re-Armament (MRA), known before 1938 as the "Oxford Group," has been described elsewhere.[39] MRA was founded by Frank Buchman, an American Lutheran. Buchman had experienced a "radical conversion" at one of the Keswick Conventions of Evangelicals in England, but did not urge any new doctrines or begin a new church. However, his movement emphasized experience rather than the atonement, as did orthodox Evangelical Christianity, Buchman summed up his aims in the "Four Absolutes"--Absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness, and love. The Four Absolutes in turn bore the stamp of Keswick perfectionism (under God's grace men can live perfect lives *now*).[40] Buchman made a considerable impact on students at Oxford and at Cambridge, where Cecil Abel was a student. Abel had met Buchman at an Oxford Group "house party" in the early 1920s. Following the death of his father, Cecil Abel introduced MRA methods in 1931. The propagation of MRA in Papua was hastened by an increase in overseas staff at Kwato--mainly Australians--with a sprinkling of English and American personnel. Instead of its original purpose as a family homestead, the Kwato house became a busy educational center with some twenty foreign missionaries, including a doctor, nurses, agriculturalists, an accountant, a technical teacher, and a shipbuilder. All but two of the Kwato staff were evacuated in 1942 when the island began to provide sawmilling and laundering services for the armed forces. Later still, it became a rest and recreation station for Australian and American servicemen (including American blacks) working at the "Seabee" base in China Strait. During the period of wartime and postwar reappraisal of Australian policies in Papua and New Guinea, a small number of visiting anthropologists such as H. Ian Hogbin, Lucy Mair, and Camilla Wedgwood recognized in Kwato a model for race relations,[41] and Kwato was proclaimed the most successful mission in the South Pacific and an example for revived native society at large to imitate.

No study of Kwato can be complete without some reference to its millennial impact on the surrounding society. The popular movements in Melanesia known as millennial cults had their counterparts in Milne Bay, and it is likely that these were stimulated chiefly by the mission. Millennialism--a belief in the coming of a thousand years of peace and prosperity heralding the second coming of Christ--was a strand in Abel's theological background, and his preaching about "the future" of the Papuans may be characterized as millenarian. Certainly, if Abel

may correctly be called a millennialist, he was one of quiet and calm persuasion. Signs of cult activity abound: the well-documented Tokeriu cult of Milne Bay in 1893; the "great and searching times" at Kwato in 1911, in which hundreds of island people flocked to services and "broke down and cried bitterly"; a period of religious excitement in Wagawaga in 1926; and finally, the various manifestations of Moral Re-Armament. All displayed the intertwining of Melanesian expectations with the prophetic utterances of Kwato's founder.[42]

One link with millennialists occurred later in Abel's life. The chief supporter of the Kwato Mission in the United States after 1920, Delavan Pierson, was a son of the great late-nineteenth-century premillennialist figure Arthur T. Pierson (d. 1911). Three of Pierson's descendants spent time on Kwato, one remaining for a year as a missionary, and one of Abel's grandsons was named after Delavan Pierson. A. T, Pierson had scoffed at the idea, growing among liberal Christians, that there is a "light of Asia" as well as a Light of the World. Led by Pierson, American missionary millennialists preached their belief that God, while he intends that all shall hear the Word, intends to save only a few.[43]

The Kwato Mission seems to have come to a peak in recognition of its achievements in the 1940s, during the period of postwar reconstruction --the "New Deal" for Papua, as it was sometimes called.[44] This acclamation was somewhat belated, as the mission by then was beginning to decline, a fact made apparent in the gradual departure of many of its protégés for Port Moresby and elsewhere. It was from a handful of students originally trained on LMS mission stations, such as Hula, Port Moresby, and Kwato, that the first Papuans were appointed to junior positions in the postwar Australian administration. Osineru Dickson from Kwato was among the first Papuan government clerks. The first Papuan members of the Legislative Council of Papua and New Guinea included two from Kwato (Merari Dickson, Osineru's brother, from 1951; Alice Wedega from 1961). From Kwato came the earliest trainee nurses to enter the Papuan Medical College in 1957 and the first triple-certificated sister (Dalai Maniana Farrow).[45] Kwato-trained Papuans were among the embryonic elite of Papua New Guinea during the 1950s though they were not then particularly distinguished, by numbers or by quality, from that produced by any other organization in the territories. The appearance of a handful of students from such missions as Kwato and Hula, marked by their somewhat Anglicized manners, personal poise, and familiarity with English, was a happy minor augury for an Australian government embarrassed by evidence of tardy prog-

ress and the prospect of continued inspection by visiting delegations from the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations.

During the period of Australian decolonization in the 1960s, Kwato could claim a number of prominent Papuans among its former protégés. Dineh (Dickson) Lawrence entered the University of Queensland in 1963, the first female Papua New Guinean university student. A very small number of academics in Port Moresby married Kwato women; two of Charles Abel's own descendants also married Papuans.[46] The chief government town planner, Morris Alaluku, was raised on the island, as was Erna (Israel) Pita, onetime president of the National Council of Women. One of the first two Papua New Guinean barristers (Ilinome Frank Tarua) came from Kwato, as well as two Papua New Guinean diplomats after independence in 1975.[47] The steady trickle of trained leaders from Kwato engaged in "nation building" bore particular testimony, it was said, to the foresight of the founder, Charles W. Abel.[48]

Finally, one member of the mission staff was prominent among "advanced" political circles in the 1960s. The role of Cecil Abel is well documented in the formation of the Pangu Pati, while both Maori Kiki and Michael Somare claim to have had their political interest fostered by Cecil Abel's political science classes at the Administrative College in Port Moresby.[49] By then, the cautious, gradualist policies that had marked Australian rule in Papua and New Guinea were being eclipsed by an acceptance of rapid political development and programs in higher education. Paradoxically, the decline of the Kwato Mission occurred at a time when the elitist policies it had pursued were tardily being accepted by Australian governments in Papua New Guinea. In 1964 the remnants of the Kwato Extension Association joined the churches of the LMS to become part of the Papua Ekalesia, which in turn became a constituent member of the United Church of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands in 1968. Sections of the Kwato Mission seceded from the United Church in 1977.

Having surveyed briefly the development of Kwato, we are in a position to consider three questions arising from Kwato's special role during the past ninety-five years. First, what did Abel and the LMS intend the Kwato Papuans to achieve in relation to the rest of Papua New Guinea? Second, what distinguished the Papuans at Kwato, before and after the Second World War, from other advanced groups fostered by Christian missions in Papua New Guinea? Third, was the Kwato group engaged, essentially, in preparing for a nation, as has been claimed? In other

words, was it a nationalist elite intended to undermine a colonial order or was it a group collaborating with it? Or was it possessed of both these attributes of "collaboration" and "opposition" at different times? In short, this article seeks to analyze the views propagated about the Kwato Papuan group by members of the Kwato household itself.

Kwato: Personalities and LMS Mission Politics

Part of the answer to the first question--what was Kwato intended to achieve?--lies in Abel's early attitude toward the other embryonic Protestant Papuan groups in colonial New Guinea. In particular, it is revealed in his response to the idea of an LMS college for advanced mission students. A "national" Papuan college had been proposed some time before Abel's arrival in 1890. In 1887 W. G. Lawes, the senior New Guinea missionary, began outlining his plan for a training institution occupying a position in New Guinea analogous to that of Malua in Samoa.[50] The language of the institution at Vatorata, inland from Kapakapa thirty-five miles east of Port Moresby, would be Motuan; from Vatorata would come a trained corps of teachers promoting "friendly, peaceful intercourse between tribes."[51] As in England, wrote Lawes' colleagues at Delena, H. M. Dauncey, "the various Tribes will amalgamate and form one people and have one language. . . . if we could manage it we shall be doing very much for the future of N[ew] G[uinea]."[52]

Ever an independent[53] who desired no close relationship with his brethren, Abel maintained that Papuans should not and could not be forced to learn to speak the Motuan language or to write it. Instead, he said, Papuans should be taught in their own districts in their own dialects. Two other LMS missionaries were apparently inclined to agree with him.[54] Lawes, however, had trained several Milne Bay students before Abel and Walker's arrival in New Guinea, and in spite of Abel's claims to the contrary, he knew Milne Bay teachers could master Motuan "thoroughly and quickly."[55] The coldness at Kwato was significant to Vatorata's prospects, for if the "East" were to evangelize the "West," some students would have to come from the eastern district. It did not take Lawes long to guess at the reason for Abel's intransigence: his colleague at Kwato wanted to keep all the best young men and women under his own eye.

Abel, however, did not carry his opposition to Vatorata to an outright refusal to cooperate with his brethren of the LMS New Guinea District Committee. His stipend and annual budget, after all, depended on

LMS funds, and Lawes had already criticized him as "standing much aloof' from his LMS colleagues.[56] Instead, Abel decided that discretion was the better part of valor; in October 1899 he sent five students and their wives to Vatorata, leading others to believe his attitude was changing. "He is working more in harmony and sympathy with his brethren"[57] wrote a reassured Lawes. However, though Abel thereafter continually promised to place more students among Vatorata's annual intake, he sent no others until 1916. When the second Kwato group of five arrived, they, like their predecessors of seventeen years earlier, were found to be markedly below the educational standard required by the college, being easily outstripped by students from Fife Bay and Port Moresby. It was said that "not one" would have passed the entrance examination. On enquiry, the principal of Vatorata found that several of Abel's students had been away from Kwato for some years, and a number were "too old" to be any longer teachable.[58] In spite of early hopes among Abel's colleagues that Kwato's influence would be diffused through other parts of southern New Guinea, only a trickle of the less gifted of its students were released to the central college, to be returned to China Strait after training. Kwato sent none of its "leaders" west to share with other districts the benefits of its greater endowment in LMS funds.

These discrepancies between promise and fulfillment concealed the more personal nature of Abel's relations with his colleagues. Even within the Congregationalist ethos of the LMS, Abel's sturdy aloofness from the rest of the mission had become a matter of conversation long before his final break with the parent society in 1918. Inheritors of the Independent system and divided by distance, Abel and Walker had followed James Chalmers' reckless example in ignoring requests to come to order.[59] A visitor said that in New Guinea, unlike Samoa or Rarotonga, each LMS missionary was "a law unto himself," and the financial liberties of the mission were notorious. Kwato infringed the rules of the LMS more than other stations. Abel chafed beneath the restrictions of the LMS Green Book and the District Committee. He had moved originally from Suau to Kwato on 10 August 1891 without permission. He had engaged two hundred men to drain a swamp at Kwato and for five years haggled with R. W. Thompson, foreign secretary of the Society, over the cost.[60] In erecting the Kwato house he had presented the LMS with costs considerably higher than the £300 customarily provided for headstation buildings. He ordered stores from London without authority.[61] He twice failed to attend District Committee meetings even when elected chairman. "Our friend Abel" wrote R. W. Thompson with a

touch of nervousness, "is a splendid missionary, but he is a very unsafe adviser of matters of order and Regulation."[62] At other times the LMS foreign secretary harshly condemned Abel and Walker for "irregular, not to say lawless" violations.[63] Walker felt driven to resign from the mission in 1896, largely for spending LMS funds without sanction on the thirty-two-ton mission vessel *Olive Branch.* In 1901 the appearance of Abel's book *Savage Life in New Guinea* aroused comment from his colleagues.[64] Apart from a chapter on Chalmers, there was little reference in the book to indicate that any other LMS missionaries besides Abel were at work in New Guinea.

In retrospect, the explanation offered by the mission for the break between Kwato and the LMS was that it was caused by a philosophical conflict--concentration on the few versus teaching the many--and by finance, simply because the Society was unable to pay for Abel's schemes. But the relations between Abel and his colleagues in Papua were widely different from the cordial ones portrayed in mission publications. The opposition to Kwato, heightened by conflicts in personality, stemmed. from a belief within the Society that while teaching a useful industry was legitimate for missionaries, engaging in commerce was not. Abel declared that his commercial ventures, which gave employment to Papuan Christians, were the unfolding of "God's plan." Other members of the London Christian missions in Papua distrusted Abel's insistence as to the source of his inspiration. Far from being God's plan, they said, commercial ventures were merely a weapon in Abel's hands "[to] enable him to bring all his influence as a Missionary, and that of his Teachers, into competition with other traders."[65] In London Abel's arguments for his schemes were carried into the LMS boardroom by carefully rehearsed confederates who rose at crucial moments to throw the opposition into disarray. One of these, Abel's friend Arthur Porritt, invited the administrator of Papua to eulogize Abel's work before the Board.[66]

The marshalling of support for Kwato barely concealed the emotional currents running against Abel in the Papua District Committee. Among many field agents in Papua, Abel was regarded as arbitrary, unreliable, and incapable of working with others. He had monopolized common facilities, kept the *Olive Branch* five months at a time while other stations waited for the ship,[67] and dug deeply into the Angas industrial grant at the expense of other industrial stations. He was alienated from his colleagues J. B. Clark, W. N. Lawrence, and R. L. Turner on personal grounds. "It's all very well, Abel, but is it fair?"[68] was one colleague's grievance, which others swelled to a chorus. A pri-

vate letter from the missionary E. Pryce Jones to his English fiancée is revealing:

> The J[ohn] W[illiams] will be within three days of Sydney, with Dr and Mrs Lawes on board also Mr and Mrs Abel who are on their way home; by the bye, don't put yourself out of the way to meet these latter, as you may get snubbed they are peculiar, will explain when we meet. I don't know them personally & have not seen them but they have been grit in the eye of the mission, this is just a word of warning. . . .[69]

Quite apart from differences in principle about Papuan education, Abel had long been estranged from the majority of his colleagues when the LMS deputation arrived from London in 1915. Financial retrenchment was one reason for the deputation's decision to curtail the Kwato scheme. But Abel's aloofness toward Vatorata, hardened by personal estrangement and confirmed by his working for twenty years at variance with LMS rules, were all ingredients. Even before the LMS deputation declared its proper goal was to reach "the nation of Papua" rather than build up "little protected communities of highly-trained Christians," its secretary confided that the visit was years too late, as affairs in Papua were beyond control. For twenty-five years the greatest amount of mission wealth had been lavished on plantations in Milne Bay and on what R. L. Turner described as the "pocket-sized handkerchief' station at Kwato. Though an average of 120 youths had been permanent residents at the station from 1891, at the time of Kwato's secession not a single Papuan from Kwato was at work in any other part of Papua. As an LMS colleague wrote, the large monetary outlay upon Abel had not been justified. "The matter is purely local, and were it closed down tomorrow, it would only affect his own young people."[70]

Finally, it is worth quoting the reaction of C. F. Rich, Abel's nearest LMS neighbor, as typical of private LMS reflections on the secession of Kwato:

> The proposals are unfair to the future of LMS work in Papua, for the Society has a right to expect that from one of the oldest, and best equipped, districts in the Country there should be increasingly available a stream of young men and women who would volunteer for training at the Mission College, [for] work among the still unenlightened and poorly served Districts in the West.[71]

What, then, were the Kwato Papuans intended to achieve in relation to the rest of Papua? Between the LMS and the founder of Kwato, there was no united answer. By 1918, the missionaries of the LMS in Papua hard come to express collectively the views held privately during the preceding ten years, that some of the endowments of the richest station on the mission should be placed at the disposal of the "underprivileged" remainder of the country; that the interests of Papua as a whole should be made paramount; and that the part should be submitted to the interests of the whole. By contrast, the evidence suggests that in spite of the publicity about saving a race that flowed from Abel's pen, he was unable to sink the parochial concerns of his station in a common task. At the end of forty years in Papua, no plans existed at Kwato to share the peculiar assets of Kwato with others. Throughout Abel's career in Papua, he and his LMS colleagues were sadly at cross-purposes.

A Self-Defining Elite

Having questioned the claim that the Kwato group was intended by its leader to work for the whole of Papua, we are now in a position to answer the question, what distinguished the Papuan group at Kwato from other elites in the South Pacific at the time? The notion of an elite, as S. F. Nadel says, refers to "a stratum of the population which, for whatever reason, can claim a position of superiority and influence over the community's fate."[72] Further, Nadel held that an elite "must have some degree of corporateness, group character and exclusiveness." This description aptly applies to the small coteries of government employees along the Papuan coast, such as members of the Armed Native Constabulary. It may also be used of the families of the Papuan priests, pastors, and teachers belonging to the various missions.[73]

Superficially, Kwato might appear to belong among these coteries of partly westernized Papuans, but in essential respects it differed markedly from them. Its rationale was derived from a distinctive theology that divided it sharply from all other groups of Papuans, Christian or otherwise: it was marked by an intense concentration on a few. Concentration stemmed, in part at least, from Abel's hostile attitude toward indigenous cultures, a combination of personal revulsion and the belief that in its weakness Papuan culture could not withstand the incursions of European civilization. But concentration arose also from the doctrine of election. Abel believed without doubt that he was in direct communion with God. Allusions by Beatrice, by himself, and his supporters led by Pierson, to "the remnant," "the appointed task," "election of God,"

and "the chosen few"[74] point to the individual's personal election by God. (Elite: choice, select, flower of society.)[75] Abel himself had already had the experience of being saved, and there were other crises confirming his beliefs. The differentiation of Abel's picked Papuan group from the mass of Melanesian people was sharpened by practical reasoning: it was folly to return mission children to a heathen environment. But it arose in the first instance from Abel's religious belief: the Lord's children *were* different; they were *already* sealed for heaven. The concern of the Kwato Mission with social action was compatible with such predestinarianism, residual and partly secularized though it may have been. For the only way in which an individual could give an answer to the question, "Am I saved?" or "Am I among the elect?" was by scrutinizing his own behavior carefully to see whether he did in fact bring forth good works worthy of salvation. Nadel's definition, with its emphasis on "group character" and "exclusiveness," applies to Kwato with special force.

Undoubtedly beliefs essentially Calvinist in origin (though perhaps partly secularized) were psychologically helpful in meeting the various crises of the Kwato Mission in the 1920s. The delivery of an annual land rental of £350 to the LMS landlord from 1919[76] depended on a stable price for copra (practically the sole source of income for the mission), but there was a slump in copra prices from the end of World War I and thereafter prices were subject to the vagaries of the international commodity market. In the ten years of the lease Kwato was unable to pay the bulk of its rentals to the LMS. But during the period of intense difficulty that Abel had with the Society between 1924 and 1927, when it seemed that Kwato might lose its plantations, the leader did not betray desperation, but rather a renewed confidence--even a slight elation--which arose from a feeling of power over his enemies. "The secretary of the LMS [Lenwood] knows . . . he can no more harm [us] with all his subtle methods than Pharoah could stay the Exodus of the Ch[ildren] of Israel from Egypt" he wrote.[77] A confident sense of being "chosen" from the mass of Melanesians, a certainty of victory in the face of overwhelming setbacks, gave the Kwato leader and his followers a calmness in the face of adversity. "Faith is a grand adventure. It has no element of speculation about it," he wrote to one of his sons, "because you win every time."[78]

The doctrine of election, then, was crucial to an understanding of the difference between Kwato and other missionary groups. A small group would be saved: they would move forward in stages to the "Promised Land," a phrase often used by Abel. But Abel's residual Calvinism also

derived energy from an evolutionist outlook. Progress, in the way that Europe, and particularly Britain, had experienced it, was inexorable; only those races who adapted to its march would survive. Thus the notion permeating his writing, that savagery was disappearing before the march of civilization, and that Papuan culture was too weak to withstand European civilization, was confirmed by the belief that a special Providence guards the elect. The movement of God's children in the wilderness--an extension of Abel's own uncertain status as a library clerk desiring upward social mobility--mirrored his own personal pilgrimage. The Kwato Papuans' success, and his own, would one day be unfolded as the vindication of God's purposes for them all, as the "Kwato Family" in Papua. Thus Abel's vision for his "elite" combined theological and practical considerations, for they were not only the elect of God, but the future leaders of their countrymen.

For the present, however, the leaders needed protection from their countrymen. within the mission house. As stated earlier, the most evident sign differentiating Kwato from other elites in Papua was the intense concentration of resources upon a few Papuans led by one man and his household. Visitors noticed the affection of the Papuan people on Kwato for the founder and his children; the generally happy atmosphere of the island; the "crowds of beautiful babies and children, large numbers of men and women," and all "devoted" to the Abel family.[79] Further, they observed the sedan chairs by which Europeans were carried up the hill--eight boys to each chair. Travelers on ships were "amazed" by the hundreds of bonfires lit along several miles of coast whenever "Father," as Abel was called, returned from fund-raising tours overseas. When Father traveled after one such triumphal return, it was on a sixty-foot canoe carved in his honor by Pilipo of Barabara--his "state barge" as he jocularly called it--paddled by eighteen Tavara men.[80] He normally traveled by launch or whaleboat.

Thus the beginnings of a new Papuan group took shape under the aegis of a mission. With a leader possessing a keen eye for their eventual destiny as equals of the white man, they played cricket against Europeans in Samarai, in Port Moresby (once, in 1929), and on the home field at Kwato.[81] They possessed a more "educated demeanour" and differed sharply in appearance from the "shock-headed heathen."[82] Among them, the influence of the leader was paramount. Father introduced the orphans and other children to the island, controlled their discipline, organized their sports, conducted their services, and appointed leaders in consultation with his *tanuaga.* An American visitor who stayed a year on Kwato in 1927 observed of its founder, "He was essentially a home

man. The centre of its life, its priest, its head, its example. The prime mover in its religious life and also keen in promoting fun and good times. . . . superintending the work on many different jobs, he always reminded me of a general."[83]

Through the dependence of Papuans on Abel's guidance in economic and religious affairs, the Kwato Mission by 1930 had assumed a number of functions characteristic of a semi-independent political domain. Its Papuan officers or *tanuaga* helped organize its industries; its congregations elected their own deacons. Kwato-trained people sang their own anthem ("Father, the light has come to us") and celebrated Father's birthday (25 September) with an annual holiday.[84] Its economy was based on plantation and workshop profits augmented by an annual government subsidy for industrial schools, It depended also on heavy injections of aid from American friends, amounting to U.S.$140,000 in the nineteen years up to 1942. From the late 1920s, the Stars and Stripes fluttered at the masthead on Kwato to welcome visitors from America.[85]

Abel's personal leadership up to the time of his death, however, gave Papuan leaders limited scope to nurture their own talents. A small incident serves to illustrate the power of that leadership. Traveling home on the *Morinda* to China Strait from one fund-raising tour, Abel learned by ship's wireless that his return was affecting the Papuans at Samarai to such an extent that shipping agents could not obtain sufficient manpower to discharge the cargo. He wrote,

> It was evident that my return was affecting the labour market and I relieved the captain's mind by promising to send help as soon as my welcome was over. . . . Within half an hour of landing I was in my own boat, and twenty minutes later I landed on my own jetty amidst the deafening cheers of people . . . from all parts of the district. They had asked permission to come and see for themselves that I had really returned.[86]

Adherents of Kwato were able on occasion to thwart the servants of the government as well as those of commerce. Officers conducting a census of Milne Bay after World War I were unable to continue their work on the days fixed for the survey because so many villagers had left for Kwato.[87] During his first patrol in Milne Bay in 1919, H. O. Topal, a young Australian officer, observed that "a large number of natives here regard the mission as ahead of the government in importance"; that the mission's Papuan agents did not "help the government" as mis-

sions did elsewhere in Papua. He told the Wagawaga people that he would deal very severely with them if they attempted again to disobey their instructions.[88] The truth is that in the environs of Kwato, as in other Pacific missions, there were two sources of authority, each tending to suspect activity by the other as an incursion into its own field. Abel believed, probably rightly, that some magistrates were jealous of his influence on the Papuans.[89] Indeed, the census incidents of 1919-1922 recall earlier tensions caused by the government within the Kwato Mission, a patrol having been reported once by Abel: "A part of my district *[sic]* has been raided by government authority. . . ."[90] The tension created by the proximity of a rival source of authority at Samarai appears to have intensified the personal sway of Kwato's leader over his followers.

It is significant also that Abel was described above as a "priest" as well as "general." For, with Kwato assuming some functions characteristic of a semi-independent political domain, spiritual as well as secular control remained in his hands. The mission differed in this respect, too, from other Christian missions in the Pacific, with their embryonic ministerial elites. The Papuan leaders at Kwato were not a trained religious intelligentsia in the making. On the contrary, the ordained ministry of Papuans was dispensed with altogether at Kwato, in spite of the founder's declared aim of creating a self-supporting Papuan church. In part, this revealed the strength of Abel's disapproval of the patriarchal Polynesian pastors from Samoa who occupied the district outstations from 1892 to 1917, and whose relations with Abel were never free from tension.[91] A Nonconformist who suspected the pretensions of a clerical caste was easily persuaded to do away with a specific order of ministers altogether. Instead, his preachers were lay evangelists who did "personal work' among Papuans.

The consequence of this rejection was that the sacramental functions of the Kwato Mission were performed by the founder himself and, after his death, by his male descendants. Kwato's Papuans were regarded as capable tradesmen with reliable Christian characters, and as good women community leaders.[92] They were not trained theologically or ordained. In turn, the lay status of Kwato Papuans prevented their sharing in the prestige of European sacramental or clerical rank. This wholesale reform drew criticism from one of Abel's closest allies in the LMS, H. P. Schlencker of Kalaigolo, who remarked that all strong churches from the time of St. Paul had required an intellectually equipped leadership.[93] The sole possession of esoteric knowledge in the hands of a single European could only have been diminished the

Papuan leaders "standing as big men." There was no Louis Vangeke or Ravu Henao in eastern Papua.[94] It left a legacy: while the secular elite of Kwato in the 1950s--the nurses, lawyers, and other public servants --were becoming more specialized, the sacred elite remained primitive and untrained. (Following reunion with the United Church in 1964, Kwato began to accept trained ministers, and the Reverends Tuata Joseph and Naba Bore in 1971 became the first Kwato students to be ordained in half a century.) Since the Papuans remained at Kwato and on its outstations in Milne Bay, all areas controlled by Europeans, the question should be asked whether they were an elite at all.

Lastly, it may be asked whether the Christian group at Kwato differed from other mission elites in the quality of their educational advancement, in being more advanced intellectually. Dame Alice Wedega has echoed the claim that Kwato was "the most advanced of the mission schools in Papua."[95] There can be no doubt that Kwato nurtured a stream of talented artisans and craftsmen. By 1928 the mission had produced twenty-three trained joiners and carpenters;[96] a small team of boatbuilders who competed for commercial contracts against European slipways; and a printer, Daniel Sioni, who produced occasional issues of the mission's journal, the *Kwato Mission Tidings.*[97] Nor is there any doubt that, like other missionaries, Abel aspired to the evolving of Papuan lay leaders. A visitor to the mission in 1920 was undoubtedly echoing the ideas of his host in forseeing the day when Kwato would give "an advanced education to an English-speaking people." Abel was giving medical training to junior hospital orderlies and spoke in the 1920s of Papuan surgeons. Occasionally he launched into roseate visions: Papuans could master their lessons so well, in first aid and other skills, that he was sure they could one day "pass on, stage by stage, to a university." But, he added, he was not possessed of any "mad idea" that the Papuan could be made the equal of the white man in a generation.[98]

Aspiring to produce an intelligentsia in the distant future was one thing; performance was another and indeed it seemed to contradict Abel's views at an earlier stage. For the founder of Kwato had originally been pessimistic as to the ability of "the Papuan." This pessimism as to the Papuan intellectual capacity was a stated rationale for the early industrial ventures of the mission. In his view, purely intellectual and religious exercises, effective among sophisticated Samoans, were beyond the mental capacity of Melanesians. His beliefs were parallel in this respect to those of Sir Hubert Murray, lieutenant governor of Papua in 1909-1940. Murray's widely circulated judgment was that, while the

best Papuans were superior to the worst Europeans, as a whole Europeans seemed to have an innate intellectual superiority over Papuans. Abel's view of the Papuan intellect bears an interesting comparison. "The Papuan occupies a place so low in the scale of humanity that such a thing as ostracism for a religious belief is out of the question," Abel had said in 1903. "*It is the poverty of the material we have to work upon* in a country like this which creates the need for an industrial auxiliary to our Mission. . . . Our wish is often father to the thought, that the people amongst whom we live are more advanced than they actually are."[99] In consequence, the field of technical education was the one that Abel had long believed fitted Papuans the best, and he had always believed that Papuans were being taught wrongly by other missions.

Exploring the possibility of a government subsidy for Papuan education after World War I, the government of Papua decided that practical training with an elementary kind of literacy as was provided at Kwato was what was wanted. Sir Hubert Murray not only shared Abel's pessimism as to the Papuans' intellectual abilities, but knew of the poor prospects for Papuan or European employment in the depressed conditions of the 1920s. The idea of government support for mission schools was to make better agriculturalists and artisans out of the Papuans and provide a modicum of elementary literacy, not to produce an intelligentsia or elite. Kwato was a major beneficiary of the program. As a Kwato missionary explained it, "The girls are accomplished in all branches of domestic work. Some of them will be teachers, others nurses or seamstresses. . . . The boys will be apprenticed as boatbuilders, carpenters, blacksmiths or storekeepers."[100] Thus subsidized, Kwato continued to provide technical training, with a nod in the direction of the three R's. [101]

Because of Kwato's estrangement from the LMS, and because Abel rarely visited other parts of Papua, he was not well informed on LMS efforts in the classroom. For example, he visited the headstation at Mailu only once in nineteen years, and Vatorata once in ten years, and then "only for a few minutes."[102] In 1929, however, Abel accompanied the Kwato XI to Port Moresby to challenge a European cricket team. There some of his team visited the LMS school at Hanuabada. At the Hanuabada school Abel's elder son Cecil was able to compare the attainments of Kwato students with those of the Port Moresby students, who were taken "to the highest Government standard." Cecil Abel reflected, "If we had one big village of 2000, as they have at Hanuabada, we could concentrate and see results in a short time" in the village schools; but the scattered population in Milne Bay was the "one great

problem" of Kwato. However, they were hoping "things [would] go ahead a great deal faster" when a properly trained teacher arrived.

Abel's son concluded that, while many of the leaders at Kwato "do not show scholastic ability, they probably give evidence of gifts in other directions." If scholastic standards fell short of those at Port Moresby, at least Kwato could aim "to give these boys and girls the best all-round education that has yet been given to any Papuan."[103] The mission aimed at a broad general training, emphasizing character and craftsmanship as well as basic literacy, rather than the instilling of literacy or numeracy at an intermediate or "high school" level. At its peak, the Kwato industrial school enrolled some fifty trainees,[104] but no government inspector reported that Kwato classrooms exceeded any other Papuan schools in educational proficiency, as might have been expected in a mission whose Papuan leadership was claimed to be the "most advanced" in the country. On the contrary, Kwato seems to have lagged behind at least two other LMS schools in its formal educational standards. Taking the colony's mission schools as a whole, it appears that the performance of Kwato's protégés ranked in the middle of the range rather than at the bottom or the top.[105]

Nationalists or Collaborators?

Finally, was the Kwato Christian group under Abel engaged, essentially, in preparing the soil for a nation-state? It has been said that the founder of Kwato "looked forward to the time when Papua would be a self governing nation." And further, that "he believed the time would come when Papuans would have to . . . assume the responsibility for running their own country."[106] We may ask, however, whether the group was in fact intended to collaborate with European settlers in prolonging colonial rule rather than assume control themselves; and whether this collaboration, with Papuans as followers rather than leaders, remained long after the Second World War, ending only with the onset of Australian withdrawal from Papua New Guinea in the early 1960s. Did Kwato's founder, far from envisaging a self-governing nation, look forward to an indefinite future for Papua as a settler enclave, dominated by white advisors, and politically dependent on a metropolitan power, Australia, as proxy for Britain?

There is no satisfactory study showing what kind of understanding Papuans and New Guineans had of the concepts of "nation" and "nationalism" before self-government. The term nationalism is used here as defined by H. Seton-Watson: "an organized political move-

ment, designed to further the alleged aims and interests of nations," with the declared aim of independence or the creation of a sovereign state.[107] This, as Seton-Watson says, is largely the work of small, educated political elites.

That the founder of Kwato "looked forward to the time when Papua would be a self-governing nation" is a broad general assertion that invites scrutiny. There is no doubt that at times the founder pondered his own dominance over Papuans and wondered how some authority could be delegated to them--in itself far short of allowing them ultimate responsibility. He noted the criticism from the missiologist Roland Allen that field missionaries tended to "dig in" and keep control away from then converts. Thus, he once wrote, "Is it not time that they [Papuans at Kwato] were allowed more independence than they have had hitherto? How can we give them more, and what form should it take?"[108]

Experiments were tried from time to time with Papuan "children" or "prefects" but with scant success, in Abel's view; and this may have reinforced his paternal vigilance. For by 1918, the leaders of the *Isibaguna* or first generation, the girls' prefect Edidai and Josia Lebasi the boys' head prefect, were dead. In spite of their early promise, both had died from a form of psychosis, Josia being "a sad burden" by 1913.[109] The second generation replacing them appeared to Abel to lack the sterling qualities possessed by their elders. The three leading workmen of the second generation, Saevaru, Gogo Tukononu, and Tiraka Anederea, sometimes astonished visitors with their abilities, or alternatively "gave a lot of trouble," with their work "badly done."[110] In the circumstances, Charles and Beatrice Abel did not underestimate the time it would take for their leaders to mature. They had definite schemes for the succession of their own children to authority over the mission, but they had no plans for any succession of Papuans: they left the future vague. They liked their Papuans, but stopped short of delegating them much authority. "You would smile at the stupid muddles that they make," wrote Beatrice Abel, and she went on to voice an attitude common among white settlers in tropical colonies: "I say if there is a loophole for a mistake to occur they go carefully into it."[111] Her husband's diaries suggest that he was often chagrined by the Papuans' fumbling attempts to imitate him. "How absolutely incapable these people are of being put in charge of responsible positions," he wrote in 1924.[112]

The incident that provoked this outburst was serious: a storeman, Tariowai, had knocked a thief unconscious with a block of wood, apparently to apprehend him, before calling in the magistrate. More

often, however, it was weakness of command rather than rashness that exasperated him. Abel admitted being barely under control when the deacon Bugelei of Vasaloni complained of his people, "I've tried to speak. They will not listen." A teacher, Philip Bagi, explained that at Kwato "I blow the whistle and not one boy turns up, and so I don't call them, because they all hear . . . it is hard work."[113] There is evidence that when Abel expressed a high estimate of Papuan technical ability it was based on a few individuals like Lebasi, Saevaru, and Ou; but when he had to deal with a greater number he was inclined to be even more pessimistic than were other Europeans. The Papuan leaders' quick resort to violence in one or two cases and the weakness of others provide a clue to Abel's reluctance to place unbridled power in Papuan hands. In 1924 he came to believe that Papuans were best as middlemen rather than as leaders: "No native is equal to the job. No native has the authority to enforce laws. . . . Give us a white supervisor to every 25 and we could make a fine race of the Papuans, but it will never be accomplished in any other way.[114] His idyllic hopes for future Papuan leaders were often tempered by acute skepticism. "It will take a few generations before any Papuan will shoulder heavy responsibility," he wrote, "or exert authority even over a small boy." He had already said that traditional village elders were often weak, giving out their wishes in an apologetic tone of voice, and merely suggesting an instruction. "I trust I may live to see the day when at Kwato and [the hill station at] Duabo we have enough white help to relieve the Papuan Tanuagas of all primary oversight," he wrote. "As under-overseers they will do well, but the authority must for many years be in the hands of white leaders."[115] Like other missionaries of his time, Abel was capable of euphemisms in public about the Papuan discharge of responsibility, but in private he came close to believing that the Papuan would be a calamity as a leader. Accordingly he became a custodian who carried the idea of trusteeship over the Papuans into all his activities.

It is worth returning, briefly, to the descriptions of the Milne Bay people as "docile" or "gentle" or "mild," which appeared in visitors' accounts from the time of John Moresby's pioneering voyage in 1873.[116] Abel's casual remarks about poor leadership qualities came at a time when there was no reason for Papuan leaders to supplant Europeans. Descriptions of the Kwato Papuans before 1930 as "servants" in the private correspondence of the Abel family are as common as the retrospective claim to have been turning out "leaders"[117] To visitors in the 1920s, as shown above, Kwato gave the appearance of a well-ordered mission estate producing good mechanics and useful female assistants. As Bea-

trice Abel's father (a small English brewer who had emigrated to Australia) wrote to his daughter at Kwato, "You ought to be *truly thankful* for your native girls and boys--You could not get any servants equal to them--They do as they are told and never give you 'cheek' like the Australian servants do."[118]

Abel himself had referred to Samoan teachers as servants.[119] When asked by a correspondent whether he made a practice of eating with his converts, Abel pictured himself in the position of a Papuan, saying no distress could equal that of a Papuan attempting to eat with a European. He compared his sitting down to dine with a Papuan with the spectacle of a nineteenth-century English gentleman eating with his coachman.[120] Such illustrations of his relationships are not easily compatible with later claims to have been turning out Papuan leaders.

On Abel's death at the age of fifty-eight in 1930 and the return of his four children from England to resume childhood relationships with a "second generation" of Papuan converts, the Kwato Mission appears to have mellowed in an atmosphere of sporting and religious camaraderie. Visitors to Kwato were sometimes struck by the spirit of friendly racial inclusiveness on the island.[121] Certainly it is true that lacking a formal religious hierarchy, the mission's headquarters developed, in the decade after Abel's death, a sense of corporate identity as the "Kwato Family." But by that time the Papuans were well assimilated into European ways. As Camilla Wedgwood notes in 1947, there was a strong tendency for Kwato's Papuans to intermarry.[122] Leaders such as Tiraka Anederea as well as the Dickson and Sioni families were able to participate in close relations with the white mission staff by virtue of their lifelong cultivation of English manners.

Beyond the circle of privileged Papuans who lived on the island were the bulk of the people less affected by European influence. Village people living on mission outskirts were not excluded altogether, but they were unable to benefit properly from the knowledge and wealth that had been concentrated on the Kwato circle. Not surprisingly, one result of an intense concentration of resources upon an assimilated group at the center was to foster tension on the periphery of the district. As the anthropologist C. S. Belshaw noted after living for some months in a Kwato village in Milne Bay five years after the Pacific War,

> The Mission has been unable to avoid deep psychological and social strain, In few places in Melanesia can the cleavage between elite and villager be more pronounced, the sense of superiority over other Missions and pagans be more marked, or

> the jealousy which accompanies movements for social and individual betterment more sharp.[123]

Belshaw also observed that in the community of Ware just beyond the borders of the Kwato district, there had been time to adjust to social change; here, none of the same strains were present. The camaraderie and fraternal intimacy at the mission's headquarters (made possible because all lived in the same acknowledged milieu), seems to have been accompanied by jealousy and friction in the rest of the Kwato district.

Following World War II, the Kwato Europeans, like other missionaries and administrators, felt an anxiety over the appearance of signs of nationalism in Papua and New Guinea and the manifestation of Maasina Rule in the Solomons. Russell W. Abel, second son of the founder, was openly dismayed by the attempts of some Papuans to gain autonomy in the 1940s, writing in an official circular letter:

> Most coloured races today would appear to want to kick out the white man. . . . In the post-war reaction the "Papua for the Papuans" sentiment has been a frequent symptom. It still breaks out.

Then Abel went on:

> We have to counter this with the greater conception of the partnership of Papuan and European that we try to demonstrate in the mixed family life at Kwato.

This quotation clearly epitomizes Abel's attitude toward the Papuans--an attitude held by his father, Charles Abel, and by most Europeans as well. None of them doubted that one day Papuans would be ready for a share in the government of their country; but for the present, as Abel's father believed, it was virtually impossible for the black man to raise himself by his bootstraps without guidance from the white man.

Addressing his Papuan readers in the same postwar circular, Russell Abel declared that "in working for whites [a Papuan] could actually help his country." Indeed, he wrote, "by working well and proving yourself capable and trustworthy, you can turn your white 'Boss' into a friend of Papua." This was symptomatic of the influence of Moral Re-Armament in helping Kwato to reappraise its image. For it is clear that a fundamental change in the nature of MRA's worldwide activities occurred after World War II: its strategy was modified, and it placed

greater emphasis on "remaking the world' than on individual salvation. The political instability and the process of decolonization in Asia and Africa following the war gave MRA an opportunity which, in turn, affected Kwato. Modifying its revivalist terminology, MRA at Kwato ranged itself on the side of democratic capitalism. Russell Abel went on, Successful, economic running of a [European] plantation depends on human relations, on a co-operative willing labour line" (i.e., willing Papuan laborers). He concluded, "No one can help us forward as much as the Europeans, with their store of knowledge, who have come to love our country. . . . Papuans and Europeans working together could make this country a different place."[124]

It might be argued that this was a sound and pragmatic response to the stirrings of nationalism appropriate to the time and place. But it highlights the difference between assimilating a small group of Papuans within a European-dominated society and applying self-determination to the Papuan people *as a whole.* It is inappropriate to describe the head of any Christian mission before 1930 as "looking forward" to an independent, self-governing Papua with its own "black governor," or toward the Melanesians "assuming responsibility" for running a Papuan nation.[125] Far from looking forward to an independent nation-state, the writings of Charles and Russell Abel may be construed, without straining, as implicitly anti-nationalist.

The Kwato Mission never became a force that could be described as disposed toward Papuan self-government, even within its own organization, within a measurable time. Its founder does not seem to have foreseen any such transition: indeed, quite the opposite is the case. Abel laid no plans for the releasing of his lands to his Papuan dependants. On the contrary, he spent much time and energy in trying to guarantee an indefinite hold over the organization and its lands by himself and his family.

* * * *

Two assertions have been considered here. One, that "Kwato was the most advanced of the mission schools in Papua," appears to need major qualification. The other, that its founder "looked forward to the time when Papua would be a self-governing nation," seems dubious. As has been shown, the dominant note in Abel's activities was a parochial rather than "national" concern. His public writings about making Kwato available for the rest of Papua, or about Papuan qualities of leadership, were his most ambivalent and least detailed.

After the Pacific War, Kwato failed to hold the more independent of its Papuan converts of the third generation, who broke away entirely and joined those who had stayed in Port Moresby after the war. In the villages of Milne Bay they were an elite, a chosen few. But it would be a misnomer to describe Kwato people in Port Moresby and other towns as "the future leaders of their countrymen." They would be more accurately characterized, even in the 1950s, as only one among a number of advancing groups from several Christian missions. The very number of mission-run, post-primary training institutions gives some notion of the volume of Papuans outside Kwato receiving further education: in the Territory of New Guinea alone before World War II the missions were in charge of some seventy-nine post-primary establishments.[126] With the political or religious hindsight provided in the Kwato Mission's history, however, it is scarcely surprising that the Kwato Papuans taught by Charles W. Abel had come to think of themselves as unique. Being the Elect of God, they were an elite different, indeed, from all other groups in Papua New Guinea.

They may have been of the Elect, but in fact the few Kwato Papuans who became clerks and typists in Port Moresby before the 1960s were restricted to a relatively narrow range of occupations. Some Kwato proteges were caught up in the public service of the emerging nation: others were sought after merely as servants by the European residents of the town.[127] The rapid transition to self-government after this period inevitably favored Papuans and New Guineans from those areas such as Port Moresby, Samarai, and Rabaul with a long history of culture contact. That a few of the Kwato people in the 1960s were elevated by further education to higher positions was a result of an accident--an acceleration in the timetable of Australian decolonization.

Abel's "Promised Land" was not specifically a national, independent state. It was a house of many mansions, and could have been consistent with a seventh-state nexus between Australia and Papua. Or, because of Abel's planting interests and his desire to make his family indispensable, it could have fitted into a "settler government" as in parts of east Africa, sharing some of its power with the original inhabitants of the soil, but without the widespread exclusion from the land of the black masses as occurred in such settler governments as Rhodesia.[128] The founder of Kwato, it could be argued, was building an "empire," which created a greater dependence on him than did the labors of other missionaries who had no private property to defend.

To reiterate, the effort and ingenuity expended by Abel in order to guarantee the succession of his own family were not those of a man who

was planning for a Papuan mission functioning independently of Europeans, any more than for an independent nation, if it prejudiced his own descendants' stake in the land. Rather, his "Promised Land" was one in which his family and their assimilated Papuans shared a common inheritance. Its weakness was that self-interest seems to have determined much of Abel's planning, for the founder of Kwato was a businessman as well as a missionary.[129] Its failure was precisely the same as that of other missions in colonial Papua: its reliance on the personality of the European leader and belated trust in the value of Papuan initiative. In 1944, fifty years after the mission began, the young Papuan leader Olive Lebasi disclosed some of the results in a letter to Abel's elder daughter Phyllis:

> There are *[sic]* a lot of dependence at Kwato in the past, especially with us as Papuan Tanuagas [leaders]. This has been a weakness in the past and today we cannot grow or stand on our own feet and depend on God to guide us for any responsibility. The result is today . . . we can't do without your help.[130]

The Londoner who became the founder of the Kwato mission in Papua New Guinea. took few steps toward answering the problems posed by his life's work. For, in spite of Abel's evolutionist outlook and his half-believed optimism about Papuan ability, he seems never to have made up his mind whether he was shaping a Papuan bourgeois elite within a European-dominated society, or merely raising a group of respectful artisans who lived as tenants on a tropical manorial estate. But his mission fulfilled some of its goals: the creation of a Christian community with new aspirations, and the nurture of men and women who could survive under the conditions of the modern world.

NOTES

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1. C. W. Abel to R. W. Thompson. Kwato, 29 October 1891, Papua Letters (hereafter PL), LMS, National Library of Australia.

2. C. W. Abel to R. W. Thompson, Kwato, 1 March 1901, PL; C. W. Abel to R. W. Thompson, Kwato, 21 June 1911, PL.

3. C. W. Abel to B. Abel, London, 2 April 1930, Abel Papers (hereafter AP), University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG); Kwato Annual Report 1920, AP. The population of the district was estimated at 4,000 in 1907; the American supporters' estimate of "10,000 followers" in the Bay and at Abau, made in 1942, is certainly an exaggeration. *Kwato Mission Tidings* no. 40 (New York, 1942), 1; Edward Smith and A. N. Johnson, *Deputation to Australisia September 1907-February 1908* (London, n.d.), 43.

4. C. W. Abel, Diary (?), 17 [July] 1904, AP.

5. L. H. Fishel and B. Quarles, *The Black American: A Documentary History* (Glenview, Illinois, 1970), 342.

6. Candidates' Papers: Abel, LMS, quoted in Diane Langmore, "European Missionaries in Papua: A Group Portrait 1874-1914:" unpublished Ph.D. thesis (ANU, 1981), p. 77.

7. M. J. Stone-Wigg, Diary, 13 October 1897, New Guinea Collection, UPNG.

8. W. E. Armstrong, *Report on the Suau-Tawala Anthropology Report No. 1* (Port Moresby, 1921), 26.

9. H. L. Murray, *Territory of Papua Sailing Directions* (Port Moresby, 1930), 21.

10. Bronislaw Malinowski, *A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term* (London, 1967), 44-45.

11. B. Abel to M. Parkin, Port Moresby, 13 February 1894, AP.

12. The name "Massim," apparently a Woodlarkers' name for the people of Louisiade and D'Entrecasteaux archipelagos, seems to have been first used by the Marist missionary Carlo Salerio in 1862; it was also used in E. T. Hamy, "Etude sur les Papuas," in *Revue d'Ethnographie* 7 (1889), 504. It was used by C. G. Seligmann in 1910 to describe the Papuan island and mainland people between Cape Nelson and Orangerie Bay. C. G. Seligmann, *The Melanesians of British New Guinea, with a Chapter by F. R. Barton, C.M.G., and an Appendix by E. L. Giblin* (Cambridge, 1910); H. P. Schlencker, Urika Report for 1907, Papua Reports (hereafter PR), LMS Papers, Australian National Library.

13. E. Pryce Jones, Moru Report 1903-1904, PR; E. Pryce Jones to J. Hills, Moru, 29 December 1909, PL.

14. "Sub-Committee Report re Training Institute," in R. L. Turner to F. Lenwood, Vatorata, 17 April 1915, PL; Boku Annual Report 19-?, PR; see also David Wetherell, "The Fortunes of Charles W. Abel of Kwato 1891-1930," in *Journal of Pacific History* (hereafter *JPH*) 17, no. 4 (October 1982), 198.

15. H. P. Schlencker to R. W. Thompson, Orokolo, 24 April 1912, 16 May 1912, PL.

16. Papua District Committee Minutes (hereafter PDC) Resolution 13, 16-22 March 1912, in H. M. Dauncey to R. W. Thompson, Delena, 26 March 1912, PL.

17. W. J. V. Saville to F. Lenwood, Sydney, 19 April 1918, PL.

18. Dissent by other LMS agents from this monopoly became clear only when the loss of

Kwato by the LMS seemed imminent in 1918. F. Lenwood, "Circular on the LMS Relation to the Mission in Kwato and subsequently to the Kwato Extension Association," London, 16 December 1924, AP.

19. Of the pre-1907 plantations, Loani was held as a 235-acre freehold; Giligili and Kanakope were Angas Industrial Mission (AIM) freeholds of 72 acres and 100 acres respectively; Wagawaga was an AIM 99-year leasehold of 40 acres. See C. W. Abel to R. W. Thompson, Kwato, 4 September 1907. For details of subsequent land acquisitions of 400-500 acres, see David Wetherell, "Fortunes of Charles W. Abel," 210 n. 86.

20. *Missionary Chronicle* (London), March 1906.

21. D. Manuwera to W. B. Ward, Kwato, 27 June 1905, AP.

22. W. J. V. Saville to R. W. Thompson, Mailu, 23 October 1912, PL.

23. C. W. Abel to R. W. Thompson, Kwato, 4 April 1905, PL.

24. C. W. Abel to R. W. Thompson, Kwato, 4 April 1905, PL; C. W. Abel, Diary, 15 February 1906, AP.

25. See, for example, C. W. Abel, Diary, 24 October 1899, AP.

26. BNG *Annual Report* 1895-1896, xxiv.

27. C. W. Abel, Letter Diary (hereafter LD), 4 March 1924 (?), PL.

28. The Sacred Heart mission in Papua employed Papuan women in its order of nuns: however, few of those were teachers. An example of an outstanding woman leader from the Milne Bay Province having no connection with Kwato is Josephine Abaijah, a spokeswoman for the Papua Besena movement. Ms. Abaijah's early education was in the Anglican Mission.

29. C. W. Abel to R. W. Thompson, Sydney, 16 June 1910, PL.

30. C. W. Abel to E. B. Riley, Kwato, 27 July 1904, AP; C. W. Abel to R. W. Thompson, Kwato, 21 November 1910, PL.

31. W. G. Lawes to R. W. Thompson, Vatorata, 13 April 1905, PL.

32. W. J. V. Saville to R. W. Thompson, Millport Harbour, 4 January 1909, PL.

33. James Cullen to R. W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 23 December 1902, PL.

34. C. F. Rich to R. W. Thompson, Kwato, 5 November 1903, PL.

35. LMS, *Report of Revs. A. J. Viner, G. J. Williams, and Rev. Frank Lenwood Deputation to the South Seas and Papua June, 1915-June, 1916* (London, 1916), 216.

36. C. W. Abel to A.P.C. *(sic),* Kwato, 30 November 1916, and C. W. Abel, Notes (possibly to R. W. Abel), n.d., AP.

37. David Wetherell, "Fortunes of Charles W. Abel," 209, 215.

38. Kwato Extension Association, *Annual Report* 1960-1961, United Church Archives (hereafter UCA), University of Papua New Guinea, Box 40, file 12; David Wetherell and Charlotte Carr-Gregg, "Moral Re-Armament in Papua 1931-1942," in *Oceania* 54, no. 3 (Sydney). 177-203.

39. David Wetherell and Charlotte Carr-Gregg, "Moral Re-Armament," 177-203.

40. Horton Davies, *Christian Deviations: Essays in Defense of the Christian Faith* (London, 1956), 94-105; Owen Chadwick, *Hensley Henson: A Study in the Friction between Church and State* (Oxford 1983), 211.

41. H. Ian Hogbin, taped interview, Sydney, 14 March 1981, in writer's possession; Lucy Mair, pers. comm., London, 19 September 1981; Camilla Wedgwood, Diary III-IV, 5 July 194[4], 18 September-2 October 1944; Third Papuan Patrol diary, 9 December 1946-January 1947, International Training School, Sydney. Similar opinions about Kwato were also held by Colonel J. K. Murray, Administrator of Papua and New Guinea, 1945-1952, and G. T. Roscoe, Director of Education, 1958-1962 (G. T. Roscoe, Director of Education, 1958-1962 (G. T. Roscoe, pers. comm., 15 June 1980). Hogbin and Mair spent only a day at Kwato. Wedgwood, it should be noted, was more reserved in her views after a few days' residence, wondering whether Kwato would make its protégés unfit for any but an Australian society. "Within the mission settlement the colour bar is practically non-existent. . . . *But* the Kwato community seems to have become a community whose *roots* are in Kwato and the special conditions which seem to unfit *[sic]* the people for life outside the community, with the colour bar etc." Diary IV, 5 July 194[4].

42. David Wetherell, "Christian Missions in Eastern New Guinea: A Study of European, South Sea Islands and Papuan Influences 1877-1942," unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Canberra, 1974, pp. 234-236, 247; Peter Worsley, *The Trumpet Shall Sound: A Study of 'Cargo' Cults in Melanesia* (New York, 1968), pp. 51-54.

43. Arthur T. Pierson, *The Crisis of Missions* (New York, 1886); Delavan Leonard Pierson, *Arthur T. Pierson: A Spiritual Warrior, Mighty in the Scriptures; a Leader in the Modern Missionary Crusade* (New York, 1912), pp. 185-210.

44. A phrase from G. H. Cranswick and I. W. A. Shevill, *A New Deal for Papua* (Melbourne, 1949).

45. *Post-Courier,* Port Moresby, 23 November 1971. Merari (Bele) Dickson, son of Diki Esau, pastor at Lilihoa, served on the Legislative Council for seven years. Alice (b. 1905), daughter of Wedega Gamahari who was baptized in 1899, was a member of MRA. She was created Dame of the British Empire (D.B.E.) in 1982. Dalai Maniana attended Firbank School, Melbourne, 1953-1955; Titus Tiso, son of Tiso Kakaisina, attended Geelong Grammar School, 1955 (Aisoli Salin of New Guinea having preceded him at Geelong before 1939).

46. Cecil Abel and his nephew Christopher Abel.

47. *Post Courier,* Port Moresby, 23 November 1971. Legu Lee of Kwato was PNG consul in Brisbane, 1980--; Ilinome Tarua was Papua New Guinea High Commissioner in London, 1983--.

48. Alice Wedega, *Listen, My Country* (Sydney, 1981), 20.

49. Maori Kiki, *Ten Thousand Years in a Lifetime* (Melbourne, 1960), 126; Michael Somare, *Sana: An Autobiography of Michael Somare* (Port Moresby, 1975), 45. M. Kiki was foreign minister of PNG from 1974 to 1977; M. T. Somare was prime minister from 1975 to 1980, and since 1982. In addition, Cecil Abel was involved in the drafting of the preamble of the PNG Constitution, which was promulgated in 1975.

50. W. G. Lawes to R. W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 20 November 1890, PL. The Port Moresby College was transferred to Vatorata in 1893, and in turn moved to Fife Bay (Isuleilei) in 1924, taking the name Lawes College. It was amalgamated with other United Church theological colleges at Rarongo near Rabaul in 1968.

51. W. G. Lawes to New Guinea District Committee, Sydney, 30 August 1892, PL.

52. H. M. Dauncey to W. G. Lawes, Port Moresby, 24 February 1892, PL.

53. In the Congregational sense of Independent, that is, not depending on authority, as well as in the general sense--unwilling to be under obligation to others.

54. James Chalmers and Albert Pearse. C. W. Abel to R. W. Thompson, Kwato, 25 July 1892, PL; A. Pearse to R. W. Thompson, Port Moresby, 26 July 1892, PL.

55. W. G. Lawes to F W. Walker and C. W. Abel, Melbourne, 29 December 1891, PL.

56. W. G. Lawes to R. W. Thompson, Vatorata, 12 April 1898, PL.

57. W. G. Lawes to R. W. Thompson, Vatorata, 31 March 1899, PL.

58. R. L. Turner to F. Lenwood, Vatorata, 16 December 1916, PL. The Suau students at Vatorata, described as "most promising" and the "backbone of Vatorata," were not from Kwato but from the adjoining Isuleilei (Fife Bay) district.

59. Diane Langmore, *Tamate--A King; James Chalmers in New Guinea 1877-1901* (Melbourne, 1974), 81.

60. R. W. Thompson to F. W. Walker, London, 27 March 1896, Western Outgoing Letters (hereafter WOL), LMS papers, National Library of Australia. Estimates of the number of workers vary from 200 to 2,000.

61. C. W. Abel to R. W. Thompson, Sydney, 21 May 1895, AP; W. G. Lawes to R. W. Thompson, Vatorata, 16 September 1895, AP. As Lawes feared, the Kwato expenditure was a precedent: subsequently larger sums than before were spent on LMS houses. G. Cousins to C. W. Abel, Sydney, 6 December 1901, AP; C. W. Abel to G. Cousins, Sydney, 5 March 1902, AP.

62. R. W. Thompson to C. F Rich, London, 24 September 1903, WOL.

63. R. W. Thompson to C. W. Abel, London, 10 May 1901, WOL.

64. Secretary, New Guinea District Committee (NGDC) to Abel, n.p., 16 July 1901, PL.

65. PDC Minutes, 6-11 April 1911, PR.

66. S. Smith to C. W. Abel, Port Moresby, 2 May 1912, AP; Arthur Porritt to C. W. Abel, London, 29 September 1912, AP. M. Staniforth Smith was administrator of Papua between 1908 and 1930. Porritt held the editorship and other positions in the British Nonconformist journal *Christian World,* 1899-1936.

67. W. G. Lawes to R. W. Thompson, Vatorata, 20 October 1899, PL.

68. A. E. Hunt to C. W. Abel, Port Moresby, 4 September 1899, PL.

69. E. Pryce Jones to M. E. Page, Vatorata, 24-25 December 1899, in Pryce Jones Papers, PL.

70. E. Pryce Jones to R. W, Thompson, Moru, 15 January 1909, PL. By 1919, other LMS

districts were sending Papuan evangelists west; for example, Isuleilei youths were working at Aird Hill and Hula evangelists were at Orokolo and Namau. C. F. Rich to R. W. Thompson, Isuleilei, 5 April 1913, PL; Namau Annual Report 1917, PR; J. B. Clark to F. Lenwood, Port Moresby, 16 August 1919, PL.

71. C. F. Rich to F. Lenwood, Isuleilei, 19 February, 1918, PL. Similar views are expressed in W. J. V. Saville to F. Lenwood, Sydney, 19 April 1918, PL; E. P. Jones to F. Lenwood, Moru, 12 February 1918, PL; J. H. Holmes to P.D.C., Sydney, 7 January 1918, PL.

72. S. F. Nadel, "The Concept of Social Elites," *International Social Science Bulletin* 8 (1956), 413.

73. Nigel Oram, "The London Missionary Society Pastorate and the Emergence of an Educated Elite in Papua," in *JPH* 6 (1971), 115-132.

74. David Wetherell, "Fortunes of Charles W. Abel," 203.

75. *Oxford English Dictionary*, 1961 ed.

76. The average annual rental was $350 per annum, which was arranged on a sliding scale from $150 to $500 per annum. G. J. W[illiams] to F. J. Searle, Melbourne, 27 July 1923, AP.

77. C. W. Abel to B. Abel, n.p., 19 November 192[4?], AP.

78. C. W. Abel, Letter Diary, 17 March 1924, AP.

79. *Pastoral Review*, Melbourne, 16 December 1925. Apparently the chairs were in disuse by the time of Cecil Abel's arrival from England in 1927. Pers. comm., C. C. G. Abel.

80. C. W. Abel, Letter Diary, 24 May 1925, AP; C. W. Abel to W. R. Moody, Kwato, 18 November 1925, AP; see also *New Guinea Tidings* (hereafter *NGT)*, vol. 3, no. 8 (January 1926), 4.

81. *Papuan Courier*, Port Moresby, 28 June 1929.

82. Resident Magistrate Eastern Division, Patrol Report, 12 November 1930, Australian Archives, Commonwealth Records Series (hereafter CRS) G91. The second phrase is Abel's.

83. Anna Pierson McDougall, quoted in *NGT* 7, no. 21 (June 1930), 9.

84. *Kwato Mission Tidings* 14, no. 43 (June 1937), 12. See C. W. Abel to family, Sydney, 10 February 1928, AP, for a proposal that Beatrice Abel's birthday be observed in the Kwato district as a "sacred holiday."

85. *NGT* 8, no. 22 (October 1930), 5.

86. *NGT* 1, no. 3 (July 1924), 4.

87. Resident Magistrate Eastern Division, Patrol Report (hereafter RMED PR), 16 March 1919, CRS G91; see also RMED Official Journal, 28 March 1922, CRS G91.

88. RMED PR, 16 March 1919, CRS G91.

89. C. W. Abel to R. W. Thompson, Kwato, 12 June 1903, AP.

90. C. W. Abel to R. W. Thompson, Kwato, 23 November 1901, PL.

91. David Wetherell, "Pioneers and Patriarchs: Samoans in a Nonconformist Mission District in Papua, 1890-1917," in *JPH* 15, pt. 3 (July 1980), 130-154.

92. Ronald G. Williams, *The United Church in Papua, New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands* (Rabaul, 1972), 42.

93. H. P Schlencker, Annual Report, Vatorata, Hula, and Boku, 1918-1919, PR, LMS, National Library of Australia.

94. Bishops of the Roman Catholic and United churches respectively.

95. Alice Wedega, *Listen, My Country,* 20.

96. C. W. Abel to P. D. Abel, Kwato, 8 June 1929, AP. It should be noted that carving was a highly developed Massim art form. As with the position of women, the mission was able to build on features of Massim society that were already pronounced.

97. Usually published in New York.

98. C. W. Abel to P. D. Abel, Northfield, 29 December 1922, AP; C. W. Abel, Notes, 1929(?), AP.

99. Territory of Papua, *Annual Report* 1937-1938 (Port Moresby), p. 20; C. W. Abel, *The Aim and Scope of an Industrial Branch to the New Guinea Mission* (London, 1903), 3-4.

100. Francis West, *Hubert Murray: The Australian Pro-Consul* (Melbourne, 1968), 183. But Murray also said that "the only limit of what the Papuans will be able to do will be the limit of what Europeans could teach them." David Wetherell, ed., *The New Guinea Diaries of Philip Strong* (Melbourne, 1981), 29 October 1939, p. 14. Kwato Fellowship Letter, February 1933, United Church Archives, University of Papua New Guinea, Box 40.

101. Tony Austin, *Technical Training and Development in Papua* 1894-1941 (Canberra, 1977), 6-39.

102. W. J. V. Saville to F. Lenwood, Mailu, 30 August 1919, PL; R. L. Turner to Directors, LMS, Vatorata, 28 July 1913, PL.

103. *NGT* 6, no. 10 (October 1929), 15.

104. C. W. Abel to D. L. Pierson, Kwato, 4 July 1929, A.P.

105. The two LMS schools with higher standards were Fife Bay (including Suau) and Port Moresby. This is given further support from several sources. It is significant that the students from Suau and Lawes College, Fife Bay, rather than those from the Kwato District were the most outstanding in performance at the Central Papuan Training School, opened at Sogeri in 1944. Of the 112 students, all but one from Papuan mission schools, the Sogeri staff ranked the students' performance in the following order, from best to worst: (1) Roman Catholics from St. Patrick's Yule Island; (2) LMS students from Lawes College, Fife Bay, and environs; (3) Methodists from the Trobriands, and students from Kwato (tied); (4) Anglicans, Methodists from the D'Entrecasteaux and Unevangelised Fields Mission.; (5) LMS students west of Port Moresby; (6) Roman Catholics from Sidea Island; and (7) Seventh Day Adventists from Aroma. The estimate of Kwato students, as falling in the middle of the range, and of Suau-Fife Bay students at the top of the scale, is similar to the assessment made of the students tested at Vatorata in 1914. C. H. Wedgwood, First Field Patrol Book, 11-15 March 1944, International Training School (hereafter ITS), Sydney.

Likewise, B. Malinowski (1920) advised W. E. Armstrong, the assistant government anthropologist about to begin work in southeast Papua, to study at Suau which seemed "the best endowed in English-speaking informants" among the Massim people of eastern Papua; that is, the most highly educated people came from there rather than China Straits, including Kwato and Milne Bay. Further, A. Capell (1954) commented that "the Motu themselves are becoming perhaps the most highly educated people in Papua" after a comparative survey of Kwato, Port Moresby, and other LMS mission areas. B. Malinowski to A. C. Haddon, 20 February 1920, Haddon Papers, Cambridge University Library, Envelope 7. A. Capell, *A Linguistic Survey of the South-Western Pacific South Pacific Commission Technical Paper No. 136* (Noumea, 1962) (revised), 143. Anne Kaniku, a former Kwato student, was informed that there was a "ceiling" as to how high the indigenes at Kwato could aspire; she records the opinion that they were regarded as "servants." A. Kaniku, "Religious Confusion," *Yagl-Ampu* 4, no. 4 (1977), 266. A technical teacher at Kwato 1932-1938 had not heard of a "high school" which Cecil Abel asserts the Kwato mission began in 1938-1939. Arthur Swinfield, pers. comm. For Abel's claim, see Nigel Gram, *Colonial Town to Melanesian City Port Moresby* (Canberra: ANU Press, 1976), p. 52.

106. Alice Wedega, *Listen, My Country*, 20; Cecil Abel, "The Impact of Charles Abel," in Second Waigani Seminar, *The History of Melanesia* (Port Moresby, 1968).

107. Hugh Seton-Watson, "Nations and Nationalism," in *Nations and States: An Enquiry into the Origins of Nations and the Politics of Nationalism* (Boulder, Colorado, 1977), 1-3.

108. C. W. Abel to family, Montclair, 14 December 1929, PL; see also C. W. Abel, LD, 12 July 1926, AP.

109. C. W. Abel to Assistant Treasurer LMS, Kwato, 15 January 1914, AP, 26.

110. C. W. Abel to M. Parkin, 26 July 191[6?], AP.

111. B Abel to (?) C. C. G. Abel, Kwato, 7 August 1917, AP; see also B. Abel to C. C. G. Abel, Kwato, July 1917, AP.

112. C. W. Abel, LD, 1 September 1924, AP.

113. C. W. Abel, LD, 12 February 1924(?), AP; C. W. Abel, LD, 18 November 1922, AP.

114. C. W. Abel, LD, 28 September 1924, AP; see also C. W. Abel, Diary or LD, 16 February 1925, AP.

115. C. W. Abel, Letter Diary, 22 September 1924, AP; C. W. Abel, LD, n.d. but in 1924, AP.

116. See above, p. 7.

117. David Wetherell, "Fortunes of Charles W. Abel," p. 213, n. 96.

118. F. H. Moxon to B. Abel, Bourke, 28 July 1912, AP. Camilla Wedgwood's diary entry during the Pacific War, "Long discussion [with] the Abels re dangers of producing a NG elite" makes an interesting contrast to Anne Kaniku's record of interviews using the term "servants" (n. 105 above). Camilla Wedgwood, Diary IV, 5 July 194[4], International Training School.

119. As, for example, "Changing masters so frequently ruins the kind of servants our teachers are." C. W. Abel to R. W. Thompson, Kwato, 30 October 1895, PL.

120. C. W. Abel to --, n.d., but after 1915. Internal evidence suggests his correspondent was a contributor to the *International Review of Missions or the Missionary Review of the World.*

121. See above, n. 41.

122. Camilla Wedgwood, Notebook, 3rd Papuan Patrol (January 1947), International Training School.

123. Cyril S. Belshaw, "In Search of Wealth: A Study of the Emergence of Commercial Operations in the Melanesian Society of South-eastern Papua," in *American Anthropologist* 57, no. 1, pt. 2, Memoir No. 80 (Vancouver, 1955), 7.

124. "Newsletter from Russell Abel," Kwato, 10 June 1948, United Church Archives, UPNG, Box 40, File 13.

125. A note in the private diary of Philip Strong, Anglican bishop of New Guinea (1936-1962) expressed disquiet at a suggestion by a Kwato leader that a Papuan represent Papuans on the Legislative Council: "it seems to indicate that the Kwato influence tends to instil Nationalistic ideas into the minds of the Papuans." As Russell Abel showed, the Kwato Europeans were as disquieted about signs of nationalism as the Bishop. David Wetherell, ed., *Diaries of Philip Strong,* 24 August 1941, p. 52.

126. Territory of New Guinea, Annual Report 1939-1940, p. 127, quoted in Ian Howie-Willis, *A Thousand Graduates: Conflict in University Development in Papua New Guinea, 1961-1976,* Pacific Research Monograph no. 3 (Canberra, 1980), 15.

127. Amirah Inglis, pers. comm., 8 December 1983.

128. It is in this sense of "self-governing" that the present writer in 1973 described Abel's predictions about Papua. David Wetherell, "Monument to a Missionary: C. W. Abel and the Keveri of Papua," in *JPH* 8 (1973), 32.

129. David Wetherell, "Fortunes of Charles W. Abel," 212-217.

130. Oleva J. Lebasi to P. D. Abel, Naura, 26 September 1944, AP.