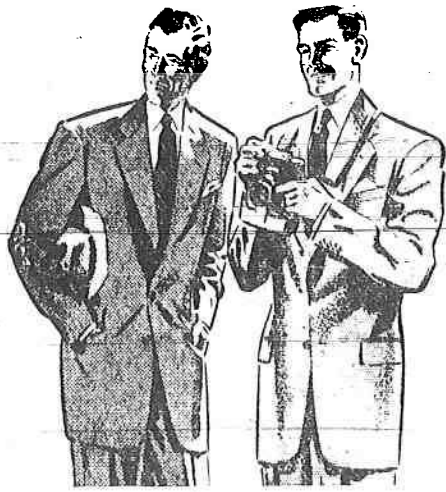




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NEW COUNCIL FOR WEST N.G. BEGINS SESSION

From SPECIAL CORRESPONDENTS AND A.A.P.-REUTER

HOLLANDIA, Wednesday. — The West New Guinea

Council, with 23 native members out of 28, began its life today.

The Council has 16 elected members—only three of them Dutch—and 12 appointed members—two Dutch.

Twenty-two of the natives are from various parts of New Guinea. The other was born in Indonesia but has been in the Administration for 20 years.

The chairman, Mr. Sollewijn Gelpke, is a Dutchman with 15 years of experience in the Administration.

The Dutch State Secretary for Home Affairs, Dr. F. Bot, asked the Council to make its wishes on self-determination known within a year.

He said in a speech to the Council that Holland would continue to give material and financial help to the Territory so it could achieve independence speedily.

Policy "Directly Influenced"

He said the development towards independence should take place against the Dutch Government's 10-year plan for the Territory.

The 10-year extent of the plan was not an arbitrary attempt to set a limit on the attainment of self-government, he said.

Dr Bot said the inauguration of the Council marked irrefutably the end, even on the highest administrative level, of a chiefly Netherlands official administration of New Guinea.

Government policy would be directly influenced by the

institution of the Council, he said.

A native member, Mr. Nicholas Jonwe, told the Governor, Dr P. J. Platteeuw, who formally opened the Council, that the people of West New Guinea must be given their own voice in the United Nations.

Mr Jonwe said he was disappointed that the United States did not send a representative to the inaugural meeting.

"Certain international political quarters regard the presence of the Dutch as a continuation of colonialism," he said.

U.S. Absence Attacked

"We Papuans now possess proof positive that this is not the case and we are pleased that other countries today are in a position to satisfy themselves of this fact."

"We hope to be in a position in the near future to personally convince the United States."

In New York today, the "New York Times" reported that the Dutch Foreign Minister, Mr. J. Luns, said that the U.S. absence from the inaugural meeting was the latest example of American disregard for the Netherlands.

Mr Luns said the United States had accepted the invitation, then withdrawn.

State Department officials in Washington said the United States had not attended "for our own good and valid reasons."

The American decision

not to be represented had nothing to do with alleged pressure from Indonesia, they said.

Delegations from Australia, New Zealand, Britain and France attended today's inaugural meeting, which was held in the Council's temporary quarters in the centre of Hollandia's business section.

The Australian delegation included:

• The President of the Senate, Sir Alister McMullin, who wore his gown and full-bottomed wig to the ceremony.

• The Minister for Territories, Mr P. M. C. Hasluck.

• The Administrator of Papua-New Guinea, Brigadier D. M. Cleland.

• Six members of the new Papua-New Guinea Legislative Council, which will be opened officially on April 10.

Crowds of chattering, gaily dressed people crowded the newly paved square opposite the Council chambers to watch delegates arrive.

In the audience, flax-haired Dutch girls mingled with dark-visaged Papuans and people of East Indian origin.

A highlight of the celebrations was a fire-walking ceremony by natives from Biak, 450 miles from Hollandia.

The natives said the fire-walking signified a young man had reached full manhood—symbolic of their country reaching representative Government.

SEVEN SMILING



These seven nurses formed a smiling group after receiving their General Certificates at a graduation ceremony at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital yesterday. Left to right are (front row) Mary Pettit, Helen Kemp and Ann Lane; (rear) Deborah Woodhouse, Leonie Millar, Lois Tasker and Helen Gray. At the ceremony 31 nurses received General Certificates and 13 Midwifery Certificates.

T.B. SURVEY

The fourth mass chest X-ray of the Ryde municipality will open on Friday.

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