

An Act of Free Choice: Summary

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In this book, we have followed the fortunes of the inhabitants of western New Guinea from the first exploration of their territory by the Spanish in the sixteenth century. This formed part of the voyages of discovery by means of which the maritime European nations extended their claims to authority overseas. The first chapter summarises the history up to the Second World War. The key point made is that the area was gradually drawn under the sphere of influence of the Dutch centre of power in Batavia. The interest in the capital of the Netherlands East Indies was not really commercial in nature, because New Guinea had too little to offer the world economy at that time. The reason for involvement was primarily political/strategic in nature; fixing the eastern border of the Dutch sphere of influence in Asia. An attempt was initially made to establish this under international law by supporting the vaguely defined claims to authority of the East Indian principality of Tidore, which had in turn recognised Dutch sovereignty. During the nineteenth century, with the arrival of positive international law, the emphasis was in addition increasingly placed on exercising actual deeds of authority as a reason for justifying the sovereignty of the Netherlands. From 1865 onwards, the Dutch government made it clear to the outside world that it regarded the 141st meridian as the eastern border of its sphere of power. In this way, a border was created which was subsequently accepted by the English and the Germans without discussion and thereby gained international legitimacy.

Up to the end of the nineteenth century, these European claims meant little to the local population. There was some coastal trade and in 1855, the first missionaries settled on the north coast, although initially without much success. This changed when permanent Dutch administrative centres were established in three locations around the turn of the century. These were located in Manokwari, Fakfak and Merauke. Although only limited resources were available for these centres, this did however signal the start of the reformation of the crumbled world of the Papuans of western New Guinea. Hand in hand with the work of the missions and administrative centres, there was a steady expansion of Western cultural and economic influence in the coastal areas, and the inland region was also explored and mapped out bit by bit. By the time the Second World War broke out, the conditions for the development of a new Papuan society had been created. This had a Christian orientation. This Dutch penetration had also led to closer contact between the Papuans and the population of the Indonesian archipelago, who were involved in these activities on New Guinea. Predominantly Amboinese in the north and Kai in the south, they came from the training centres established by the missionaries on their own islands. This also created a demarcation between a Protestant north and a Catholic south, even if this never became a hard and fast border.

There was a large gap between the Amboinese and Kai officials, teachers and clerics on the one hand and the Papuan population on the other. The first group looked down on the less developed Papuans and treated them accordingly. For their part, the Papuans, already suspicious of outsiders or 'amberi' who had, in earlier years, plundered their coasts as participants in the hongi tours from Ternate and Tidore, found their existing aversion deepening. This did not as a rule extend to the Europeans, who were ultimately responsible for the arrival of the Moluccan middle management, without whose help they could not have carried out their development programme for this area. This anti-amberi sentiment was the negative form of the Papuans' own sense of identity.

The development of Indonesian nationalism entirely passed the Papuans by. This was not just because of their low level of development, but also because of the related one-way communication with the rest of the Netherlands East Indies. The inhabitants of the latter visited New Guinea, but apart from some traffic with the closer islands, the Papuans did not travel to the centres of the Netherlands East Indies, which had little to offer them. In the single case where Papuans were indeed sent to Java as school pupils, they felt like fish out of water.

The Second World War and its aftermath increased this gap. The anti-amberi sentiment was strengthened because the Moluccan officials were used as enforcers of the Japanese coercive measures. In this respect, the position was similar to that in the rest of Indonesia, where comparable situations arose. This was the only point of similarity, however. New Guinea had no nationalist movement, the anti-Dutch nature of which could be encouraged by the occupiers. The disorganisation that accompanied the war did however lead to a revival of old cultural patterns in a number of locations. In Biak, this took the form of a messianic movement, which also incorporated elements of the new era. For the first time, people talked about a Papuan flag and a Papuan state, but embedded in ancient ideas. This was the Koreroi, which is discussed in chapter two.

This chapter also shows that New Guinea had, in most respects, a different occupation history than the rest of Indonesia. It was only partially occupied. The Dutch influence continued to prevail in the south and in the interior. The occupation was also shorter and the island was liberated by the American army in the middle of 1944 already. The Dutch were also involved in this, and quickly took the administration back into their own hands. As a result, the restoration of power took place well before the independent Indonesian Republic was proclaimed on Java on 17 August 1945. With a few exceptions, the Indonesian revolution passed New Guinea by. Under the firm hand of the enthusiastic Commissioner Van Eechoud, the thread of the pre-war administration was once again picked up, but with a new emphasis. As an authority on the world of the Papuans, he was fully aware of its special character. Partly in view of the revolution underway in the other parts of the Netherlands East Indies, he started creating a Papuan elite who could lead their own people during a complex period. This administrative policy was continued, with far

more resources than before, after the transfer of sovereignty in the rest of Indonesia. Chapter six follows this development until around 1958. Armed with the knowledge and experience gained in Indonesia, efforts were made to create a model colony which was, from the Dutch side, increasingly regarded as a unit which should be separate from Indonesia.

The Indonesian revolution and the ensuing transfer of sovereignty on 27 December 1949 determined the development of western New Guinea in the following decades. Chapter three outlines the policy followed by the Netherlands in respect of these historical events and discusses New Guinea's place in this in somewhat greater detail. It is argued that the concept of the right of self-determination was the key to the Dutch policy. This right was propagated at the beginning of the Second World War, particularly by the Americans, as one of the aims of the war. It was a particular instance of the older emancipation policy, which was, as far as the Netherlands was concerned, geared towards the archipelago as a whole during the first decades of the twentieth century. The different kinds of developments which occurred within the archipelago did not hamper this at the time, because the view was that the time had not yet come to take this policy to its ultimate conclusion. The wish to retain permanent relations - the Dutch variant on the theme of European imperial ambitions - also acted as a brake. After 1945, these hesitations were set aside one by one. Under the leadership of Lieutenant Governor General Van Mook, tailor-made solutions were sought, with good use being made of the right of self-determination recently included in the Charter of the United Nations. A distinction was at the time made between the right to self-determination of Indonesia as a whole and that of the constituent parts. This was not only the result of the unequal social development in the various parts of the archipelago and the divergent degrees to which the revolution had made headway in these, but was, from the Dutch point of view, also a usable tactical instrument to channel the revolution in an acceptable direction. The right of self-determination could therefore be made to serve Dutch interests and ambitions.

This led to the system of federalism, which would, within the larger relationships of a Dutch-Indonesian Union and an Indonesian federation, leave room for the right of the constituent parts to be able to decide on their own place. The outlines of this structure were laid down in the agreement of Lingadjadi between the Netherlands and the Republic of Indonesia. The draft was initialled by both parties in November 1946. This already gave the names of the federal states that would have to make up the federation, but whether these could in fact be created was still uncertain. It was therefore stipulated in article 3 that if the population of certain areas 'democratically' indicated that they did not yet want to accede to the federation, such an area would be granted a special relationship with the United States of Indonesia and the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

During the further discussion of the draft by the Dutch cabinet, it was established that separate provision would have to be made for New Guinea, since its population could not yet be regarded as capable of deciding

on their own fate. The Dutch guardianship would have to be continued for a longer period there. This immediately created a complication since, precisely because the Papuans could not be regarded as being capable of deciding on their own fate, this exceptional situation could not be brought about for them by democratic means. Article 3 had shot itself in the foot. The Dutch government and the parliament wanted to rectify this by incorporating this exceptional position directly in the agreement, but this was rejected by the Republic. The agreement of Linggadjati was therefore signed in March 1947 by both parties out of desperation without agreement having been reached on this point.

The ensuing period was one of intensive consultation between the Netherlands and the Indonesian Republic, interrupted by periods of military campaigns, which would continue until the end of 1949. What was at stake was, among other things, the organisation of the future independent Indonesia, with the Netherlands hanging onto the federal concept and the Republic, although it had agreed to this on paper, in reality not wishing to let go of the idea of a unitary state. During these discussions, the place of New Guinea always played a role in the background. The Dutch reasons for the exceptional treatment of this area were the very low level of development, the entirely different national character and the virtual absence of Indonesian nationalistic sentiment among the population. A supplementary argument was that the Indonesia-born Dutch would be able to have their own place in the tropical sun here, even after the Dutch flag had ceased to fly over the rest of the archipelago.

It was also of importance that Commissioner van Eechoud, in consultation with opposition groups in the Netherlands, saw a chance to keep attention focused on the special position of the area entrusted to him. In doing so, he was able to make skilful use of the mining opportunities offered by New Guinea. The significance of these and a number of other arguments is elaborated in chapter four. Not one argument was strong enough on its own to risk the failure of an agreement with the Republic, but in combination they proved strong enough to clinch matters. As a result, the Netherlands dug in its heels on this point during the Round Table Conference (RTC) of 1949 and New Guinea was for the time being excluded from the transfer of sovereignty. This was laid down in the Charter of the Transfer of Sovereignty. Article 1 stated that the Netherlands transferred full sovereignty over Indonesia to the United States of Indonesia, while article 2 stipulated that New Guinea was excluded from the transfer for the time being. The solution for the dispute that had arisen because of this would have to be found within a year.

The wording was ambiguous, and could be interpreted in several ways. As would become apparent, and as the experts had expected, the Netherlands had saddled itself with a multitude of problems. The initial reaction was not so pessimistic, because a solution could possibly have been found within the relationships between the Dutch-Indonesian Union and the Indonesian federation which would have made a certain distribution of tasks possible. This never got off the ground, however, because the

federation was abolished by the Indonesian parties six months after it came into existence and there was little or no inclination on their part to give more substance to the Union. Under these circumstances, it was not possible to devise a position for New Guinea which was acceptable to all parties. This course of events is discussed in chapter five. The Dutch government clung to an interpretation in terms of which the text of the RTC agreement guaranteed its right to continue exercising sovereignty. The Indonesian government took the opposite view and refused to cooperate in eliciting a ruling from the International Court of Justice. Indonesia then took up an even more fundamental position, namely that New Guinea had been included in the proclamation of the independent Indonesian Republic of 17 August 1945 and that discussion with the Netherlands was only possible on that basis. Negotiations could therefore only be held about the manner in which control would be transferred to Indonesia, not about the principle of sovereignty or the rights of the Papuans. Under these circumstances, the successive discussions came to nothing. This conclusion could in fact have been drawn in the spring of 1951 already, but the final nail in the coffin was the failure of a conference held in Geneva around the end of 1955/beginning of 1956. The story is sketched against the background of the internal developments in Indonesia and the rapidly deteriorating relationship with the Netherlands. The statement, often made by the Dutch, that New Guinea was not the reason for the conflict but was being used by the Indonesian government to drive it forward, is, in the main, endorsed here. This statement does not of course detract from the fact that New Guinea did indeed form part of the conflict. Without New Guinea, it would have lost part of its focus.

In chapter seven, the attention shifts to the developments in Indonesia and to the international situation in the second half of the fifties. The end of an uprising in the outlying areas of Indonesia against the authority of the central government in Jakarta and a failed American attempt to intervene in favour of the rebels constituted the turning point in the position of the United States. From that time onwards, Indonesia could count on more international support, which was intensified by the Cold War. All this led to an arms race on the equator, as both Russia and the United States, each supported by a number of their allies, outbid one another to provide Indonesia with weapons under favourable conditions. The pressure that built up as a result was effectively aimed at the Netherlands. Separate attention is paid to the relationship between the Netherlands and the United States, which shows that the American government was, until around 1960, still prepared to exercise considerable pressure on the Indonesian government to dissuade it from acting against its European ally. The successive American Secretaries of State, Dulles and Herter, assured their colleague Luns in fairly general terms that the Netherlands could count on America's assistance in an emergency. It is shown that these guarantees were not without significance, but that they were always worded in such a way that the American government was free to determine, when it came down to it, how far it actually wanted to go.

Nonetheless, with its simultaneous and much more extensive support for Indonesia, the State Department found itself doing the splits, a position that it could only maintain with difficulty. In Washington, there was intensive internal discussion about an alternative policy. The conflicting American actions were also raising doubts in the Netherlands, but Minister Luns was able to, more or less, reassure the Dutch cabinet by keeping them meticulously up to date about the guarantees given to him by Dulles and Herter. The cabinet did however learn the lesson that international support could only be counted on if the Netherlands also took the necessary steps itself. This led to the dispatch of the aircraft carrier *Karel Doorman* in 1960, which was required to temporarily strengthen New Guinea's defences. In addition to America's attitude, Australia's position is also discussed. As the ruler of the eastern half of New Guinea and Indonesia's closest neighbour, Australia saw itself as a party closely involved in the affairs of the Dutch part. The government in Canberra was generally on the side of the Netherlands, as can be seen from the plans developed for administrative cooperation. It was however very aware that it could not support the Netherlands if America did not unconditionally hold the same view.

Chapter eight discusses how the estrangement of Indonesia, the way in which Indonesia was arming itself and the half-hearted attitude of Washington led to uncertainty among the Dutch public. This was strengthened by the behaviour of the Dutch Reformed Church and a separate, many-hued opposition in which journalist Oltmans, businessman Rijkens and Professor Duynstee from Nijmegen set the pace. Indonesian contacts played an undeniable role in this regard. Moreover, decolonization gained momentum internationally as well because of the hasty withdrawal of the Belgians from the Congo. All these factors together weakened support in the Netherlands for the policy followed by the government up to that time. This happened at a time when the Red-Roman coalition, under the leadership of Prime Minister Drees, dropped out of the picture and was replaced by a centre-right coalition led by J. De Quay of the Roman Catholic People's Party. The Social Democratic Party disappeared into the opposition, where it could freely express the doubts existing among its members about the policy followed up to then. The new Prime Minister and some of the members of his cabinet had the same doubts, however. The aims of the policy were not abandoned, but new ways of achieving these were sought. In this regard, an important role was set aside for State Secretary Th. Bot, who had already, as an official involved in the Round Table Conference and its aftermath, played with the idea of internationalising the government of New Guinea in one way or another in 1950. In this way, he hoped to get international support for the policy pursued by the Netherlands. After taking office as State Secretary, charged with special administrative responsibility for New Guinea, he raised these ideas again, this time in discussions and in a number of policy documents from 1960. He found Prime Minister De Quay a willing listener.

Initially, this was very much contrary to what Luns wanted, but the Minister was forced to go along with this, at least partially, when it became

clear that the cabinet was not prepared to support him through thick and thin, and given that the American attitude at the time of the voyage of the Karel Doorman was anything but reassuring. Luns did not want a war either, especially not without firmer American guarantees. An uncertain factor was furthermore that the elections in the United States in November 1960 had brought a new president to power. This was the democrat John F Kennedy, and it was not certain what his attitude to the New Guinea question would be. The first cautious steps towards the possibility of a limited form of international involvement were taken in the late summer of 1960. A year later this led to the drawing up of the Luns Plan, which was submitted to the General Assembly of the United Nations. This contained the offer to place New Guinea under international rule, however on condition that Indonesia would play no part in this. This plan was however withdrawn, because it became apparent during the preliminary talks that this was a step too far for the General Assembly. The general feeling was that the Netherlands would first have to talk to Indonesia. Immediately after the end of the meeting, President Soekarno announced that an operational commando was being set up whose task was to occupy New Guinea by force of arms. This meant that the Netherlands came under pressure from a number of sides at the same time. After thorough discussion of the possibilities and objectives, the Dutch government hesitantly declared on 2 January 1962 that it was prepared to include Indonesia in the discussions on the future of New Guinea. This also meant that it would immediately be faced with the Indonesian assumption that it had had sovereignty over the area since 1945, so that all that needed to be discussed was how to arrange the transfer.

The progress of the ensuing negotiations under American pressure and the threat of Indonesian military action are sketched in chapter nine. First there was a period where the parties sounded each other out, with neither party wanting to let go of its known starting position right at the outset. Luns showed himself to be ready to talk, but subject to a large number of conditions. This was partly because he expected Indonesia to collapse either politically or militarily during the negotiations, after which he could persuade the Americans to take up a position more favourable to the Netherlands. To ensure that it was prepared for all eventualities, the Netherlands substantially strengthened the defence system on New Guinea. The matter turned out differently than Luns had wished, however. The Kennedy government proved to be of little help in strengthening the Dutch defences on New Guinea and brought political pressure to bear on the Netherlands. It also became clear that Indonesia was in fact in a position to continue its military build-up. Intelligence services reported that the country would be in a position to send a large force to New Guinea in the second half of 1962. In April, the deadlock was broken by an American proposal that had been hatched in the State Department long before. This was known as the Bunker Plan, under which New Guinea would be transferred to Indonesia after a short interim period during which it would be administered by the United Nations. The question of how to react to this divided the cabinet, but not to such an extent

as to cause a rupture. After extensive discussion, the Dutch government accepted this plan as the point of departure for the negotiations, even if they would have to try to hold onto the right of self-determination for the Papuans as far as possible.

The drama ended with the Agreement of New York of 15 August 1962, which laid down the more or less immediate transfer of power over New Guinea to the United Nations, followed some time later by a transfer of power to Indonesia. As a concession to Dutch wishes, an Act of Free Choice would take place before the end of 1969, by means of which the Papuans would be able to indicate whether they wanted to continue with Indonesia or not. This was, like all the previous agreements with Indonesia, a document that was vaguely worded on a number of essential points, to the detriment of the Netherlands. This was a reflection of the weak Dutch negotiating position. These uncertainties related in particular to the duration of the transition period and the guarantees for the implementation of an internationally acceptable referendum. The responsibility for the latter was left entirely in the hands of Indonesia, with the United Nations only having the task of lending a helping hand if Indonesia requested this. The vagueness also had its advantages, however. The Netherlands could console itself with the thought that, as matters lay, it had done its best for the Papuans. This opinion was in any event eagerly put forward by the Dutch government to the outside world. Internally, people knew better. When the agreement was signed on 15 August 1962, the Dutch Council of Ministers was disillusioned about the poor outcome of the consultations, while Luns publicly vented his spleen on the American government.

The last chapters deal mainly with the events on New Guinea. The account is, where necessary, interrupted by considerations about international developments and the reactions to these in the Netherlands. Chapter ten gives an outline of the last years of Dutch rule. After Bot took office, a great deal of effort was put into the accelerated education of the Papuans. They were now involved as a political factor. To this end, district councils were set up in the separate residencies and a New Guinea council for the entire area. From the platforms provided in this way, a small group of Papuans was able to develop new initiatives for their political future and introduce themselves to the Dutch public. How this was done is explained in chapter eleven. In doing so, they developed their own, supplementary, organisational forms. In their statements, they showed themselves to be enthusiastic advocates of the right of self-determination, but they also indicated that they hoped that the Netherlands would not abandon them just yet. Immediate independence was the last thing they wanted. Their attitude towards Indonesia was generally guarded, although there were some exceptions to this.

On the whole, this attitude reflected the policy followed by the Dutch government. This was geared towards greater independence, but developed in the context of the conflict with the aggressive Indonesia. Key points of this policy were the formation of the New Guinea Council in April 1961, followed the same year by the adoption of a flag and a national anthem.

Setting up the New Guinea Council required careful preparation in order to achieve as representative a body as possible. Adopting a flag and a national anthem went more quickly. This initiative came entirely from the Papuan side, but was taken up by the Dutch authorities and laid down in ordinances surprisingly quickly. We must remember that this took place during the period when Luns was trying, and failing, to sell his plan to the United Nations. The first hoisting of the flag on 1 December 1961 was greeted with joy everywhere. The Papuans of western New Guinea now had a widely accepted symbol of their own identity. It was also understood as such, not just in the Netherlands but also in Jakarta. Soekarno saw the raising of the flag for what it was: a direct rejection of the proclamation of 1945 and the unmistakable beginning of the formation of a Papuan state. The Trikora speech in which he announced the attack on New Guinea was therefore, in so many words, directed against this as well.

It is however also shown that this interpretation encountered objections from the Dutch side. The flag was expressly intended as a regional flag, not by definition as the flag of a new state. The final decision about this would have to be left to the Papuans themselves, via the right of self-determination. Furthermore, it was at that time becoming ever clearer that discussion with Indonesia could not be avoided, and that it was desirable to point this out to the Papuans. This did indeed play a role in the information given to the Papuans, even if the Dutch found it hard to be overly explicit, especially since the vast majority of Papuans did not like the idea. After all, Indonesia had been seen as the enemy for years, an enemy that not only made negative comments about what was going on on the island, but was also always needling them with military incursions which had to be warded off by the Dutch with the assistance of the Papuan police. From the end of 1961 onwards, Jakarta's behaviour, both in word and deed, was outright threatening. It was not easy to maintain a high degree of neutrality in these circumstances. Nevertheless, the Papuan elite finally also became aware of the need to do so. Once it had become clear on 15 August 1962 that the days of Dutch rule were at an end, there was intensive discussion among this elite about their own position. Self-determination remained the primary aim, but to achieve this it was necessary to reach a workable relationship with Indonesia. It is therefore possible to state at the end of chapter eleven that the top layer of Papuan society, albeit small and still in the initial stage of development, had a notable understanding of the reality. At the beginning of September, a hastily convened Papuan congress decided to accept the consequences of the agreement. Those present accepted the arrival of the Indonesians, but also decided to hold on to the Act of Free Choice laid down in the Agreement of New York.

In chapter twelve we discuss the transition period under the flag of the United Nations and the first years of Indonesian rule from 1962 onwards. The UN administration lacked the necessary power, the will and the expertise to bring about a truly neutral interim phase. It did however make the organised withdrawal of the Dutch administration possible as well as the transfer of its tasks to the Indonesian successors. Initially, the Pa-

puan officials and policemen took over many of these tasks, particularly at local government level. At the same time, Indonesian soldiers and officials were pouring into the country in far larger numbers than planned and quickly took control. They exerted heavy pressure on the Papuans to choose their side publicly and to give up the dream of self-determination. Furthermore, the first signs of the violent action taken by the Indonesian military, which would also characterise the new administration in the coming decades, soon appeared. Rapid impoverishment ensued, together with a substantial decline in legal certainty and a loss of civil rights across the board. This was accompanied by a systematic breaking down of everything that harked back to the Netherlands, to be replaced with the Indonesian body of ideas on planned democracy. This led to increasingly negative reactions from the Papuans. The hinterland of Manokwari, in particular, was in a permanent state of opposition from 1965 onwards, which was combated with hard-handed military action. The number of victims quickly rose into the thousands.

Initially, the most politically aware Papuans pinned their hopes on the Act of Free Choice. The Indonesians, however, showed little interest in actually implementing this. Jakarta's attitude changed when Soeharto took office as the new president of Indonesia. He found the country in a state of disorganisation and economic upheaval and urgently needed international credit. To get this, Indonesia needed international respectability. Indonesia had to show that it could keep to international treaties. Implementing the Act of Free Choice, the last part of the Agreement of New York, offered the opportunity to do just that. Nevertheless, the new president did stipulate a proviso, namely that no outcome other than a ruling in favour of Indonesia would be acceptable to him.

The process got underway in the summer of 1968 with the arrival of Ortiz Sanz, who, as the representative of the secretary-general of the United Nations, was supposed to assist Indonesia in implementing the Act of Free Choice. How this played out is discussed in chapter thirteen. Initially, Ortiz Sanz was in good spirits and hoped to be able to organise a referendum which would be credible by international standards. His expectations in this regard were strengthened by the attitude of the Indonesian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Adam Malik, who had already visited New Guinea previously and who had been forced, after his return, to admit that there had been serious mismanagement. Malik indicated that he wanted to improve matters, not just the administration as such but also the way in which the Act of Free Choice was to be implemented. The limits of this willingness were however determined by the position of the president.

The reality was accordingly a bitter disappointment to Ortiz Sanz. Indonesian pressure meant that his team was kept very small. After his arrival on New Guinea in September 1968 he was overrun with petitions from Papuans complaining about Indonesian mismanagement in all kinds of areas. He took these complaints seriously and passed them on to his Indonesian counterpart Sudjarwo Tjondronegoro, asking him to take the

required action. Sudjarwo regarded this as inappropriate interference, which meant that their relationship was on a bad footing virtually from the outset. Indonesia disregarded his advice about the form of the referendum and chose instead the system of *musyawarah*, labelled as a traditional Indonesian system. This term had only been referred to in the agreement for the interpretation of one part, but now became the leading principle for the entire referendum. Under this system, only collective decisions were possible and perfect consensus was a prerequisite.

Chapter fourteen discusses the formation of the consultative councils, as well as the ensuing execution of the Act of Free Choice. Ortiz Sanz was not allowed to play any part in putting together the electorate and was given the smallest possible role in the implementation of the referendum itself. The course of events is followed based on the reports of diplomats and journalists, who were able to be present at or observe various parts of the process. Papuans who were involved in the execution of the Act of Free Choice also have their say. The reports from the United Nations and Indonesian government are also used. In the opinion of the Western observers and the Papuans who have spoken out about this, the Act of Free Choice ended up as a sham, where a press-ganged electorate acting under a great deal of pressure appeared to have unanimously declared itself in favour of Indonesia.

The implementation of the Act of Free Choice was supervised from New York by top United Nations officials. They exerted hardly any counter-pressure against the Indonesian plans and practices, however; nor, for that matter, did The Hague or Washington. In The Hague, Minister Luns, still active as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, took the view that the Netherlands did acknowledge a moral responsibility, but did not, according to the text of the agreement, have the scope to take action itself. Dutch action remained limited to being understanding about the Indonesian behaviour without publicly endorsing this. In the meantime, the tide had turned in The Hague and all hopes were pinned on good cooperation with Indonesia. Nevertheless, the Lower House did put some pressure on the government to make an effort to support an open referendum for the Papuans. This led to a meeting between Dutch and Indonesian ministers in Rome in May 1969. In a statement made after the meeting, the Dutch ministers took cognisance of the Indonesian approach, and expressed the expectation that there would be full agreement between the Indonesian government and the secretary-general of the UN about the implementation of the referendum. Malik, Luns and Udink furthermore announced their joint intention to collaborate in the economic development of the area. The Rome declaration confirmed the basic assumption that had applied up to that point, namely that the United Nations would ultimately have to come to an understanding with Indonesia about the approach to be followed. It gave Ortiz Sanz no foothold from which he could influence the direction of events.

The final report of the secretary-general of the United Nations was entirely based on a very rosy-hued report from Ortiz Sanz on his role in the im-

plementation of the Act of Free Choice. It contained only weak criticism of the opposition from the Indonesian side. On the basis of this, U Thant could do nothing other than conclude that an Act of Free Choice had been held. He was unable to use the definite article, because the representative value of the operation had been far below the standards laid down in the Agreement of New York. Although this could be interpreted as a scathing judgement, the vagueness of the wording also made it possible, for those who wished to do so, to simply pass over it in silence.

The final round took place in October and November 1969 in the General Assembly of the United Nations, where the Netherlands and Indonesia worked together to shepherd the secretary-general's report through the meeting. The United States also lent a helping hand. Although in pragmatic terms the latter was to a large degree responsible for the course of events that had led to the Agreement of New York and therefore to the Act of Free Choice, the United States, like the Netherlands, hid behind the United Nations, which had therefore drawn the short straw. There was however strong criticism from a group of African countries which had been sympathetic to the problems of the Papuans since 1961. It was of little use. An amendment submitted by them to the effect that a new referendum should be organised in a number of years was rejected with a clear majority of votes. The result was that the council accepted the resolution jointly submitted by the Netherlands and Indonesia, in which it declared that it took cognisance of the report, with thirty abstentions but no 'nay' votes. The 'New Guinea question' had therefore been settled in accordance with the text of the agreement and could be removed from the agenda of the United Nations.

Finally, attention is paid to the concluding discussions in the Dutch parliament in 1962 and 1969. These took place after the conclusion of the agreement and the implementation of the Act of Free Choice, respectively. In both cases, the question of sovereignty came up for discussion, a question which had divided Indonesia and the Netherlands since 1950. It was not dealt with in the text of the agreement. After the Agreement of New York was concluded, all the parties took the position that the rounding off process in the United Nations would be the final phase of the transfer of sovereignty. This would then have taken place *de facto*, if not *de jure*. This was emphatically underlined by the Dutch government in both 1962 and 1969 in a number of statements before parliament. Accordingly, once the General Assembly had taken cognisance of the final report of the secretary-general about the completion of this final part of the agreement, this signalled the end of the conflict about the sovereignty of western New Guinea. This did not mean that there was no future involvement on the Dutch side. This was expressed in a pledge, signed by Indonesia and the Netherlands, to collaborate in the development of western New Guinea. The Dutch government took the view, both then and later, that the Netherlands would only be able to do something for its former subjects by collaborating effectively with Indonesia.

The above was a summary of the content and principal conclusions of this study. The end of the Act of Free Choice meant the start of an Indonesian administration that was fully accepted by the international community. The feared general rebellion of the Papuans failed to materialise, but there was nevertheless continued unrest. In 1971, the militant resistance movement OPM declared independence. This resistance was however harshly dealt with and in any case remained a marginal phenomenon. West Irian, now renamed as Irian Jaya (the victorious Irian), was declared an autonomous province which was under the responsibility of the Minister of the Interior. In reality the situation remained as it had been since 1963: an area under rather unsuccessful military rule, that continued to show all the characteristics of the preceding period. A forced cultural offensive came to nothing. Indonesia imposed its own norms on the Papuan population. Criticism or opposition was not tolerated and was harshly punished. It is difficult to estimate the number of people who fell victim to this. Figures running into the tens of thousands have been mentioned.

A legal research group linked to Yale University found, in their report from 2003, the facts which had become known to them sufficiently serious to use the ominous word genocide to describe the situation. This implied that in the group's opinion, the behaviour of the Indonesian government suggests that it was out to destroy the Papuans as such. This pronouncement was however accompanied by the requisite doubts. These doubts are, in my opinion, correct, to the extent that this group should not have come to this conclusion. Of course, the violence of the Indonesian administration pointed out by the group is a real fact. It is indeed apparent already from the account given by us of the first years of Indonesian rule. According to the statements of Papuans with a considerable knowledge of what was going on, not a day went by during the following decades when no one died or no one was seriously mistreated. Furthermore, Indonesia now started using the area, on a larger scale than before, to soak up the overflow of its own fast-growing population. The Papuans usually came off worst in this regard. During this process, they lost more and more ground, with most of the jobs also going to the immigrants. These were processes which were also apparent elsewhere in Indonesia, but were most oppressive in West Irian. The cities became replicas of the average Indonesian city: densely populated and dirty.

On the positive side, however, the previously stable and slowly growing Papuan population increased by more than 50% under Indonesian rule. Furthermore, the Indonesian government continued to support education, not just via its own bodies, but also via the existing church institutions. This meant that the education of the Papuan youth continued to progress. Furthermore, more contact with the rest of Indonesia via contact with the newcomers, via the media and by means of personal visits outside the island, ensured a broadening of the Papuans' horizons. Integrating the Papuans into the body of the state remained problematic, however. Officials educated during the period of Dutch rule usually remained in the lower ranks. The arrival of the Indonesian administration had put an end to the formal professional structure of the government organisa-

tion, where education was closely linked to career development. Now appointments were all about having the right friends and connections, and this meant that the Papuans lost out. The financing of the government machinery was shaky, which meant that the government officials had to find part of their income locally themselves. This was also the case for the army, which, it is estimated, only received thirty percent of its financing from the treasury. Added to all this was the fact that West Irian was not, and had never been, a popular post, which led to a high turnover of Indonesian officials.

It goes without saying that such a system paves the way for all kinds of abuses. The Papuans had little chance of succeeding. After the retirement of Frans Kaisiepo in 1973, Izaak Hindom became the next Papuan governor in 1982. His arrival made little difference to the balance of power. Nor did it lead to any noticeable integration of Papuans into the business world, even if the latter was flourishing. Once the Act of Free Choice had taken place, the extraction of oil once again got going and the copper already discovered in the Carsztens mountains before the war could be exploited under the more stable conditions of the Soeharto administration by the American mining company Freeport. This constituted a rich source of income for the Indonesian treasury and for the elite in Jakarta, insofar as the latter was involved in the management and central administration of the company. The positive effects on the local economy remained negligible, however; the disadvantages, in the form of pollution and land loss, were therefore all the greater. The Papuan population is one of the poorest groups in Indonesia.

The organisational and mental integration into the Indonesian state was not achieved. When the tide turned in 1998 and Soeharto's regime came to an end, this created a power vacuum during which the population of New Guinea could once again speak freely and the problems of the area became visible to the outside world for a while. One thing was clear: Indonesia had not succeeded in winning the hearts of the Papuans. Their behaviour showed that their own national consciousness had in the meantime increased sharply. By means of their own disciplined behaviour, the leading Papuans in church and society managed to prevent serious riots, and were able to bring the voice of the Papuans to the attention of the Indonesian government and the world in a dignified yet insistent manner. The result was that during a visit to Jayapura on New Year's Day 2000, the Indonesian president Abdurrachman Wahid promised to improve the government and conceded that the name Irian Jaya, which was seen as a symbol of Indonesian domination, could be replaced by the name Papua. This was a key point in the series of events with which we opened this book. Since then, the clock has to a large extent been turned back. Papua is, however, still waiting for the genuine fulfilment of the promises made about broad autonomy. This is no one-sided affair, and what the Papuans themselves have to say will have to weigh heavily in the implementation of this promise. The first condition for this is freedom of speech and movement. This immediately brings to mind the words of the Indonesian minister Adam Malik, who publicly announced, during his visit to the

area in 1996, that the army would first have to be withdrawn before Papuan society would be able to develop. Since he spoke these words, the pressure exerted by the army and police on the population has, however, only increased.

This book tells the story of the entry of the population of New Guinea into modern times. The Netherlands acted as the intermediary in this process until 1962. A great deal of attention has therefore been paid in this study to the objectives of the Dutch policy. These were initially strategic in nature: establishing the eastern border of Batavia's sphere of authority. With the creation of the first administrative centres in 1898, the Dutch went a step further. The aim was now, to use the words of Commissioner Plate, 'to turn savages into people'. The terminology chosen fitted in with the idea of guardianship prevalent at the time, which gave the colonial administration the task of educating those under its rule. Once Dutch rule had been established, the coastal population slowly but surely came under the sphere of influence of the modern world. This became much more urgent with the onset of decolonization. More explicitly and in modern language, the move towards self-determination became the main aim of the Dutch policy in respect of New Guinea from 1945 onwards. Efforts to achieve this were intensified after 1950. The exclusion from the transfer of sovereignty in 1950 resulted in an additional twelve years of Dutch rule, during which a great deal was done for the country and its population. The Papuan world of 1962 differed radically from that of 1950, let alone 1900. Broad development had taken place and a small but high calibre upper class had been formed, who would, if given the chance, be able to lead society as a whole in the long term. Under the Indonesian regime, this development continued in fits and starts, however without offering the prospect of this elite actually being able to play the leading and guiding role intended for it.

It could be argued, given the last point, that it would in fact have been better to transfer sovereignty in 1950. The society would indeed have developed more slowly, but via the influence of the missions, which were also able to continue their work elsewhere in Indonesia, the direction followed would nevertheless have been the same. Perhaps then the mistrust and enmity, which still characterises the relationship between Papuans and Indonesians today, would not have arisen. This argument is an attractive one, but does not do justice to the scope and power of the constructive work that took place between 1950 and 1962. Furthermore, it all too easily assumes that the split between the Papuans and Indonesians could then have been avoided. This is not at all certain, however. The anti-amberi sentiment was already present in full force in 1950, and the negative Indonesian attitude towards the Papuans was likewise well established. A speedy transfer would not have prevented the formation of a military regime, nor the accompanying violence. In social terms, the Papuans would, in 1950, have had much less chance to establish their own identity. As matters were, they undoubtedly found themselves in an extremely difficult position in 1963, but Papuan society was better able to defend itself than it would have been without the extended Dutch rule.

It is however also clear that the desired ultimate aim of the Dutch policy has not been achieved, nor the integration desired by Indonesia. This book was not written to speculate about what could have been, nor to say what the future should look like. The aim is to give as faithful an account as possible of the complex process of the entry of the population of western New Guinea into the world of the twentieth century. This does not mean that this story can be told or read without any emotions or feelings. Those who have become engrossed in the impossible position that the Papuans have found themselves in over the course of this history, can only hope, with the author, that their fate will take a turn for the better in the new century. The factors on which such a fate can be based can be found in the above. They lie in the possibilities of Papuan society itself, which has produced the necessary self-control, wisdom and resilience to ensure its survival. They also lie in the interest shown by the international community, which has interfered with the course of events in all kinds of ways and, in doing so, has often been the primary driving force behind change. This was most clearly expressed in the processes that led to the conclusion of the Agreement of New York and the regulations based on this. For those who are able to bear it, historical responsibility should also have significance under international law.

The possibilities for a better future for the inhabitants of western New Guinea can also be found in Indonesia's interest in the area, for Indonesia not only has a tradition of military and authoritarian rule, but also of cultured interaction and efforts to provide good government. We can only hope that the latter two aspects gain the upper hand. Finally, there is the consideration that the interests of Indonesia and the Papuans, because they are neighbours and have a shared history, are, in the main, the same. The two primary motives for establishing the administrative centres in 1898 were to secure the eastern border of the archipelago and to develop the Papuans and their country. These can still go together, by hook or by crook. A solution should be found that combines a better future for the Papuans with the proper regulation of the eastern border of Indonesia. It would, however, appear to be difficult to combine an open window onto the Pacific with a grumbling, misunderstood and maltreated population on the Indonesian side of the 141st meridian.