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RADIO TALK BY THE HON. DON DUNSTAN, Q.C., M.P., LEADER OF OPPOSITION,
5-K.A., WEDNESDAY, 14/1/70.

GOOD EVENING :

THE LAST FEW DAYS OF REPORTING OF MR. WHITLAM'S TRIP TO NEW GUINEA, AND NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS ON IT, HAVE EXPOSED THE GRAVE DANGERS WHICH AUSTRALIA FACES. AUSTRALIA IS THE LAST MAJOR COLONIAL POWER IN THIS REGION. WE HAVE BEEN A COLONIAL POWER IN THE AREA AS LONG AS ANYBODY EXCEPT THE DUTCH WHO HAVE NOW BEEN FORCED TO LEAVE. OUR COLONIAL HISTORY IN PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA IS A POOR ONE. WE HAVE TAKEN MONEY OUT OF PAPUA AND NEW GUINEA. WE HAVE DONE AN INADEQUATE JOB IN DEVELOPING THE AREA FOR WHICH WE ARE RESPONSIBLE. THE DEVELOPING NATIONS OF UNITED NATIONS LOOK VERY JEALOUSLY AT REMAINING COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION, AND AUSTRALIA IS REQUIRED TO JUSTIFY ITS ACTIONS IN THE WORLD ARENA. WE ARE NOT MASTERS IN OUR OWN LITTLE AREA ISOLATED FROM THE REST OF WORLD OPINION, BUT THE HARSH LIGHT OF WORLD OPINION HAS NOW FOR LONG BEEN TURNED UPON OUR ADMINISTRATION IN PAPUA, NEW GUINEA, AND PEOPLE ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD HAVE LEARNT MORE ABOUT OUR INADEQUACIES IN THIS AREA THAN WE OURSELVES ARE TOLD. IT WOULD BE UTTERLY DISASTROUS FOR AUSTRALIA WERE WE TO BE HELD UP BEFORE THE BAR OF WORLD OPINION AS THE LAST REMAINING POWER PREPARED TO EXPLOIT INDIGENOUS PEOPLE FOR OUR OWN WEALTH AND TO REFUSE TO THEM AN ADEQUATE SAY IN THEIR OWN FUTURE DEVELOPMENT.

LET ME NOW TURN TO THE EVENTS OF THE LAST WEEK.

MR. WHITLAM WHO HAS HAD A LONG INTEREST IN NEW GUINEA, WHO HAS VISITED IT ON MANY OCCASIONS, MADE A TRIP TO NEW GUINEA. AS HE ARRIVED THERE, REPORTERS' UNDERSTANDINGS OF HIS VIEW AS TO TARGET DATES OF HOME RULE AND COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE WERE PUBLISHED IN NEW GUINEA AND AUSTRALIA, NONE OF WHICH QUOTED MR. WHITLAM HIMSELF IN ANY AUTHORIZED PUBLIC STATEMENT. MR. WHITLAM WENT TO THE GAZELLE PENINSULA WHERE THERE HAD BEEN CONSIDERABLE LOCAL TROUBLES. THERE ARE TWO FORMS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION IN NEW GUINEA, ONE IS A NATIVE COUNCIL WHICH CONSISTS ONLY OF REPRESENTATIVES

OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND THE OTHER IS A MULTI-RACIAL COUNCIL WHICH INCLUDES REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER GROUPS IN THE COMMUNITY, AND THE EX-PATRIATE GROUPS WHICH MAY BE REPRESENTED IN MULTI-RACIAL COUNCILS ARE, OF COURSE, MUCH BETTER OFF COMMERCIALY AND FINANCIALLY THAN THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE. THE GAZELLE PENINSULA LOCAL COUNCIL VOTED TO BECOME A MULTI-RACIAL COUNCIL AND A PROCLAMATION WAS MADE. HOWEVER, THERE WAS AN IMMEDIATE OUTCRY AMONGST THE TOLAIS PEOPLE IN THE AREA, A VERY LARGE BODY OF WHOM OBJECTED TO THE SETTING UP OF A MULTI-RACIAL COUNCIL. THE REASONS FOR THIS WERE TWOFOLD. THE FIRST WAS THAT THEY WERE SUSPICIOUS THAT A MULTI-RACIAL COUNCIL CONTAINING REPRESENTATIVES OF BETTER-OFF EX-PATRIATE PEOPLE MIGHT MAKE IT EASIER FOR LAND IN THE AREA TO BE TAKEN AWAY FROM THE TOLAIS AND THEY WERE VERY DISTURBED AS A RESULT OF THE ACTIONS OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AT BOUGAINVILLE IN COMPULSORILY ACQUIRING LAND FROM THE PEOPLE THERE. SECONDLY, A BILL HAD PASSED THE TERRITORY HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY WHICH MADE IT EASIER TO ESTABLISH 'ALIENATION' OF LAND FROM THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE BY SIMPLY PROVING OCCUPANCY OF THE LAND OVER A PERIOD. THERE WERE ON THE GAZELLE PENINSULA, A NUMBER OF DISPUTES ABOUT LAND RIGHTS OF EX-PATRIATE PEOPLE AND THE LOCALS FELT THAT THESE DISPUTES WOULD BE PREJUDICED AGAINST THEM BY ANY ACTION SETTING UP A LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY WITH INFLUENCE FROM PEOPLE WHO WERE NOT NEW GUINEANS OR PAPUANS. AT ITS LAST MEETING, THE ORIGINAL LOCAL COUNCIL ASKED THAT THE DECISION TO CHANGE TO A MULTI-RACIAL COUNCIL BE RESCINDED, BUT THE GOVERNMENT REFUSED. THE MULTI-RACIAL COUNCIL WAS SET UP AND THE MATAUNGAN ASSOCIATION WHICH HAD BEEN FORMED TO OPPOSE IT, ADVOCATED THAT THE TOLAIS BOYCOTT THE ELECTION. THERE WAS ONLY A 20% POLL. THE MULTI-RACIAL COUNCIL, IN CONSEQUENCE, HAD THE FORM OF LEGALITY, BUT CERTAINLY COULD NOT CLAIM THE MAJORITY SUPPORT AMONGST THE PEOPLE IN THE AREA. THE THOUSANDS OF SUPPORTERS

OF THE MATAUNGAN ASSOCIATION THEN PAID THEIR TAXES TO THE ASSOCIATION RATHER THAN TO THE NEWLY-CONSTITUTED COUNCIL BECAUSE THEY CONSIDERED THAT THE COUNCIL HAD NO MERIT AND HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED BY MERE LEGAL TECHNICALITY.

MR. GORTON HAS STATED THAT MR. WHITLAM ENCOURAGED THE MATAUNGAN ASSOCIATION, WHICH HE SAID (THAT IS MR. GORTON SAID) WAS OPPOSED TO A GENERAL REFERENDUM ON THE ISSUE AND HAD STATED IT WOULD/ABIDE BY IT. IN FACT A MEASURE BEFORE THE TERRITORY HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY TO PROVIDE FOR A REFERENDUM ON THE ISSUE WAS VOTED AGAINST BY THE MINISTERIAL MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY AND VOTED FOR BY THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY MEMBER FOR THE AREA WHO IS ELECTED BY THE LOCAL PEOPLE AND IS THE PATRON OF THE MATAUNGAN ASSOCIATION.

MR. WHITLAM, IN HIS SPEECH TO THE MATAUNGAN ASSOCIATION, APPLAUDED THE AIMS OF THE ASSOCIATION EFFECTIVELY TO REPRESENT PEOPLE IN THE AREA BUT COUNSELLED THEM SOLIDLY TO AVOID VIOLENCE OR ILLEGAL MEANS TO /ACHIEVE THEIR AIMS OF REPRESENTING THE PEOPLE IN THE AREA. IT IS UPON THIS BACKGROUND THAT MR. WHITLAM HAS NOW BEEN CONDEMNED IN TERMS OF THE GROSSEST ABUSE BY PAPERS INCLUDING THE ADELAIDE "NEWS", FOR IRRESPONSIBILITY AND IMPROPRIETY. IT IS CLEAR THAT THE PAPERS OF AUSTRALIA ARE JOINING WITH MR. GORTON IN ENDEAVOURING UTTERLY TO MISREPRESENT THE SITUATION AND TO ENDEAVOUR TO FOIST UPON MR. WHITLAM THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR UNREST IN NEW GUINEA, WHICH IF IT OCCURS, WILL DERIVE FROM THEIR REFUSAL TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE RIGHTS OF LOCAL PEOPLE TO AN EFFECTIVE VOICE IN THEIR OWN FUTURE. IT IS CLEAR THAT WE IN AUSTRALIA HAVE COLONIALISTS WHOSE ATTITUDE TO AUSTRALIA'S COLONIAL RESPONSIBILITY IS AS IDIOTIC AS THAT OF GEORGE III TOWARDS AMERICAN COLONIES. IF AUSTRALIA DOES NOT LEARN THE LESSONS OF THE PAST CENTURIES, THEN WE WILL DESERVE THE OBLOQUY OF THE WORLD WHICH WE WILL CERTAINLY REAP.