

Haves and Have-nots: The 2002 Elections in the Enga Province, PNG

Joseph Lakane and Philip Gibbs

Abstract:

The 2002 Papua New Guinea elections were deficient in many ways, particularly in the Highlands provinces. An outcome of this turmoil in the Enga Province is the emergence of new form of division in society, namely: "haves and have-nots" or as Engas put it: "eaters and non-eaters." This paper will look at how some candidates in the 2002 elections used language, which "fed into" the eaters/ non-eaters imagery. It will also touch on the politicisation of the public service, investigate why people voted the way they did, and ask what happened to the voting papers. Whether one is a "have" or a "have not" depends on a number of factors including the emerging political culture of violence and intimidation, voting patterns during the elections, and political choices in the post-election period.

1. Introduction

"God creates miracles with his Word, men make miracles with money." This statement is attributed to Peter Ipatas, the man known as the "action" governor of the Enga Province, Papua New Guinea.

Miracles with money in Enga may have benefited some people in the Province, but not all. During the election period young people could be heard singing: *Kiaponya bui lao, Wapali bui, nengipi nanengipi game mende pilyo lakapupa* ("Kiap's star, Wapali star [position in government], this is a game played between those who eat and those who don't eat." The expression *nengipi nanengipi* (eaters and non-eaters) is an Enga way of referring to haves and have-nots in Enga society.

Enga, with a population of 295,031 people (Census 2000), is one of 20 provinces in the nation of Papua New Guinea. In this highlands province, during the recent 2002 national parliamentary elections, there were 17 candidates for the Enga provincial seat covering the entire province, and 137 candidates for seats in the five open elec-

torates in Enga. There were also 2,180 candidates for the 327 local level council wards. The elections were marred by violence and intimidation, and following the elections there were court challenges in all electorates. Most of the challenges were dropped or dismissed. However, as of August 2003, over a year after the elections, the court challenge for the Wapenamanda seat is continuing, and the challenge by the former sitting member Daniel Kapi against Samuel Tei Abel over the Wabag seat has been upheld, and the dispute is still unresolved.

This paper will look at how three key candidates for the Provincial seat in the 2002 elections used language, which “fed into” the eaters/non-eaters imagery. It will also investigate what happened to the votes, with the consequent situation of haves and have-nots in the post-election period.

2. Pre-voting Campaign Speeches

There were 17 candidates standing for the Enga Provincial seat¹. Three principal players, who between them received over 75% of the vote for the Provincial seat were: Jeffrey Balakau, John Pundari and the Enga Governor, Peter Ipatas.

Jeffrey Balakau

Jeffrey Balakau argued that the Enga governor seat was his because it was bought by his brother Malipu's blood.² (His brother Malipu Balakau, the Regional Member for Enga, was assassinated on 30 June 1989.) He claimed that Malipu never lost the seat to anyone but was killed while still in office, so, symbolically, his blood spilled over the seat. Jeffrey Balakau says that according to Enga tradition he as Malipu's blood brother should have the right to that seat. One of the songs composed by his supporters goes as follows: *Keapanya bui loo wapali bui, taiyokome sambapae o wane mana lato lakapupa* (The Kiap's star [position] in Wabag, bought by blood, the children will be taught about it.)

Jeffrey Balakau sometimes used “feeding” language in his infrequent speeches. At Wapenamanda on 12 June 2002 he said:

You cannot eat the Green House. That is money for Enga, the roads, feeder roads, hospitals, bridges, coffee factories and all these. Where did the money go? All of you look hungry. Where is the money? Where did it go? ... When they removed me from office, this Enga, about 300,000 people, were all mourning as in a funeral. So now, this government, or those who are

in TAA's, that's their government. Those who have false certificates, photocopy certificates, and who are working in the Green House, working in long neckties, this is their government. Those smaller people, you have been forgotten. You don't have any name in there. ... Tomorrow some vehicles are coming with bribery. Eat that bribery. That's your finish pay.³

Jeffrey Balakau's examples and imagery require some explanation. The "Green House" is the newly built government office in Wabag. It is controversial because some claim that the price of the house was inflated by some government leaders, since an almost identical house had been built for a much lower sum in Port Moresby. In 1996 Jeffrey Balakau was prosecuted by the leadership tribunal on charges of misconduct in office, and dismissed from office as MP and Governor, hence the reference to the funeral (Ombudsman Commission, 2000:77, 92). The TAA's are the 50 Toyota Landcruisers bought by the government after the 1997 elections and distributed to private owners around the Province. They bore number plates beginning with TAA. Jeffrey Balakau is telling people that they are have-nots, or little people without a name, because of corruption in the government, and that any money they can obtain, even through bribery, is "finish pay"-the pay that one receives when being put off work (in this case he is signalling a change of government).

John Pundari

John Pundari, member for Kompiam-Ambum and former Speaker of the National Parliament often used "eating" imagery in comparing the resources available to the Governor in Wabag and those available to the elected representative of an electorate like Kompiam-Ambum. At Kompiam Station on 31 May 2002, John Pundari said:

I have been distributing the little meat from a possum in this electorate. "*Saanya lyoo mende palenge*"? (Do you find much meat in a possum?) *Mena kenge yale* (The big pork) does not only have K4m for school fees. If Pundari becomes the governor, about K10-K15m will be allocated to school fees. "*Moko kondeme iki pyakalapo lakanja*" (I will do that with my toes). "*Saa lyoo pyao katenge dokome mena kenge minju doko Kompiam pitu konjemabana lao lelyama kanja*" (The man who distributes meat from a possum will cut and distribute from the big pork here in Kompiam).

In other words, he is claiming that he should hold the knife that cuts the "pork" (financial resources accessible in the Provincial capital).

Pundari continued:

I wanted to build a road there (at Par) but he (Ipatas) is stopping it. He did that to let the frogs and snake eaters live out of government services. The man who distributes meat from possum sweated and reddened his eyes to get the money for my roads but he (Ipatas) delayed the money. ... Now I am telling the truth to you the people of Kompiam Ambum electorate. There is not even a single toea for this electorate from the big pork, only the bits and pieces from the possum meat. You will never see a piece of pork in our electorate. We have been neglected because we are frogs and snake eaters. ... The people of Kompiam Ambum must take the governor's seat. We will sit here and distribute from here the big pork so that we will see if other Engans get the real satisfaction. ... If we are unwise in our five seconds decision (voting), not even a single toea will come to Kompiam Ambum. We will live like we have lived in the past. If not, we will see how God will bless Pundari's hands to cut and distribute the big pork from here in Kompiam-Ambum.

In Yalesa, on 25 April, 2002 Pundari had spoken on a similar theme.

I have already hunted the possum, the blessing of God, but the dog keeps carrying it away before we could even eat it. ... You say that you eat but yet you do not eat, so now I will make sure that you eat. We complain that there is nothing in our stomachs but now we will really have something for our stomachs. Under God's light, you will realise the difference.

John Pundari's imagery and examples require some further explanation. From the perspective of those who live around Wabag in the Central Enga, those living in Kompiam are "snake-eaters." The term usually carries a negative connotation referring to people ignorant about modern ways. To this image Pundari often includes the symbol of a frog which is elusive and hard to catch. The reference to pork and possum meat is illustrative of the large amounts of fat on the carcass of a healthy pig as compared to the minimal amount of fat on a possum carcass. He is telling people that as the member for Kompiam-Ambum he was not able to access the "fat" of the Government finances, hence their experience of being have-nots. But if elected (as Provincial member and hence Governor) he says that he is capable of holding the knife for cutting the "pork" in his hands, while at the same time caring for the people of his old electorate with his "toes."

Peter Ipatas

Governor Ipatas is an experienced politician. He tends not to use the “eating” imagery, which has been used against him by other candidates. However, he does appeal to people’s sense of being have-nots, missing out on benefits and services. On the 28 April 2002, Governor Ipatas went to Takawasa road junction to compensate Siki Pyaroe for his injuries at the hand of some of the Governor’s supporters. The day had begun fine but as soon as the Governor and his supporters arrived, heavy rain started. The Governor knew that people would interpret the weather as a sign of the Governor weeping after losing his seat. So he responded, “I know that the rain is heavy but I am under the canvas and I am fine. I am sorry to see you wet because most of you do not have umbrellas.” People were quick to pick up the underlying meaning. He was implying that even if he lost, he would still be safe and have the resources to live happily. Those with “umbrellas” were people who could afford to cope with the hard times like being able to pay school fees for their children. But he was sorry for those without umbrellas-the poor ones who could not even afford basic services.

At Yampu on that same day Peter Ipatas signalled the development of a personality cult.

You poor people, I was very sorry for you and paid your children’s school fees, so you have to think of Peter Ipatas. If I pay medical fees for the very poor people, those poor people should think of Peter Ipatas. Let the well off people make their own decisions. ... As for myself, they removed my power but it returned and it is with me. They said they would put me into prison but they didn’t. People had planned well to take my seat during this time by first suspending my powers. They tried me in court in order to send me to prison. The reason why they cannot execute their plans was because *Akali Andakeme namba dake dii* (God Almighty had given this [power] to me).

Later, in Wabag town on 25 May 2002, he said:

God chose men in the Old Testament times according to their good leadership qualities. He did not count their wives. Most of them had more than one wife. I am sure that God really chose me and blesses my governorship in the province and with His help the province is prospering. I don’t make empty promises to my beloved people of Enga. What I say is done on the same day or the following day. For instance, if the Ambum Kompiam road

maintenance does not start before the polling starts, you can call me a liar. If it starts before that date, it will give you confidence in me. All politicians are liars except me. ... The only leader in Enga you can trust is your action governor Peter Ipatas. I do things straight away. You can see my fingerprints in each district. ... I am the only *tambuaka*. I am not like Mr. Pundari who was given the Women's Ministry to look after women. [Women are generally considered as having a lower status than men in Enga society, so this was a put down for John Pundari.]

Thus Governor Ipatas claims to be the "action" governor — champion of the have-nots, paying children's school fees and subsidising health services. He is well known for giving handouts for projects and is known as the governor who "writes cheques on the ground" (*yuu kaina seke pingi*). In other words, he doesn't even have to have a cheque book with him, but will simply tell a group of people to come and pick up their cheque in Wabag the following week. He supports his claims by reference to his occupying the Governor's seat by divine right and by alluding to his masculine powers. He has five wives and slights John Pundari who has one wife. A *tambuaka* is a reddish brown coloured pig with the highest value in Enga pig exchanges. It is also said to be hard to kill. Symbolically it refers to a strong male leader. Some of the Governor's supporters were heard to say that anyone to successfully challenge him would need to have four testicles.

The clash between the candidates was not just a war of words, but also a power struggle. In 2001 Pundari invited Prime Minister Mekere Morauta to the Yumbilyama vocational school in his Ambum-Kompam electorate. Near the end of the ceremony he distributed pigs to the guests. The biggest one was given to the Prime Minister and others to the Ministers and other Members of parliament present. The last pig to be distributed was a blind pig smaller than the rest. Pundari is reputed to have called out, "My brother Ipatas, if you are there, come and get this pig. I have nearly forgotten you." Peter Ipatas later gave the blind pig to a poor person present. From this action, people presumed that the suspension of Ipatas' powers was directly or indirectly influenced by John Pundari. The struggle between the two continued right up to the 2002 elections when Pundari decided not to contest his Ambum-Kompam Open seat, but to challenge Ipatas for the Provincial seat and the Governorship of the Province.

3. Eaters and non-eaters (*Nenge nanengipi*)

The term *nenge nanengipi* (eaters and non-eaters) could be heard following the 1997 elections after Governor Ipatas secured a bank loan to buy 50 Landcruisers. He distributed the cars throughout the province to people who would pay a deposit and who were prepared to repay the loan by allowing the Provincial Government to hire the cars. Obviously these Landcruisers did not go to people who had opposed the Governor during the elections. The cars were fitted with number plates beginning with "TAA" and became known as the "TA" cars. Those receiving the cars and their close friends were indeed fortunate; however, the act of beneficence by the Governor created a lot of resentment among those who felt they had not benefited. The latter group became part of the *nanengipi*/non-eaters. These little people saw rallies and shows organised by wealthy people for Ipatas so they composed the following song:

*Katapala silino o soo silinu,
silinu lao kandelyona Pundari kenge laa lakapupa*
(You are standing firm, you are organising shows
I can see that too, but call Pundari's name.)

The expression *nenge nanengipi* came into common usage through the public servants, particularly those who found themselves unemployed after the elections. Public servants have an important role in the domestic economy, helping in compensation payments, school fees, bride wealth payments, funerary payments, etc and are regular customers at the many trade stores. Public servants are influential in clan voting patterns because members of the clan want a public servant from their clan employed so that they can be part of the *nenge*/eater group.

Supporters of Governor Ipatas point to the free education policy in Enga, the building of the Provincial Government building (Green House), the Enga Mioks Rugby League club to engage the school leavers and the unemployed men in sports, the TAA cars for certain people under his guarantee, the establishment of the Kandep wheat project, the improvement of the Enga show, and the sealing of the Wapenamanda to Wabag highway. However, many ordinary people claim that they have never benefited from these projects. They allege that Peter Ipatas' supporters get wealthy overnight and "eat rice" (rice = money) while they struggle to survive with few services provided for them.

Some Public Servants employed in Wabag made statements

like “*nato nao kalyo*” (I am eating and continue to eat). That kind of announcement makes ordinary people upset because they take it as being made by people who do not deserve to hold such positions. Some ordinary people recognise that the Governor has accomplished a good deal, but resent some of his supporters who speak with such arrogance. Thus in speaking about the *nenge nanengepil* eaters and non-eaters, they hope the situation will change and that the arrogant supporters will be brought down to a level where they can no longer boast about the privileges they enjoy.

The politicisation of the public service, with politicians determining public servants’ career prospects, is also a factor in becoming a “have” or a “have-not.” On 17 May 2002 teachers from the various schools in Enga gathered in the Wabag primary school ground to receive their second quarter payment from the teacher’s incentive scheme funded by the Provincial Government. For the first quarter all teachers had received their share. But for the second quarter those teachers who were known to support the “wrong” candidates received nothing. This served as a warning as to who would be in the *nanenge/* non-eater category if they did not support the “right” candidates. Also, Governor Ipatas bought a number of new cars which he distributed to hospitals, health centres and schools. This time they did not have TAA plates, so were harder to identify. Since the election most of these cars have been recovered and sold.⁴ After the election and Ipatas’ victory a number of public servants have been terminated or demoted allegedly because they had been “involved in politics” (supporting other candidates). “Abstaining from politics” (that is, politics not in the interest of the present government) is now a condition for holding a job with the government, and remaining in the *nenge/eaters* group (*Independent* 26 Sept. 2002, p.10).

By 6 December 2002 there were 656 public servants on the payroll in the Department of Enga. Of these 157 were un-attached officers. Some in this latter category were those who had lost their jobs and become *nanenge/non-eaters* in politically related demotions or terminations. People see it as a “five year plan.” If you or your candidate wins you will eat rice and see the colour (or face) of money. If you lose or support a losing candidate, you will get a five-year contract at home. Your diploma will rust and you will live on sweet potatoes.

4. Choosing to Vote

With so much at stake, voting becomes a matter of survival.

Decision-making appears to take place more at a family or even the individual level, based on three principal questions:

- What is my advantage in voting for N?
- What will be the cost of not voting for N?
- How can we as a clan vote for several candidates as insurance for the future?

Behind these questions lie several issues. What happens if someone gets sick? Who will come to our aid in the case of a tribal fight? Who will help us with school fees? Who will give a paying job to members of my family? Who will help me with transportation if I need it? How can I travel safely through enemy territory? In the best of cases the group of individuals living within clan boundaries will realise that strength lies in numbers and cooperate in finding the most practical solution to questions such as those above. In the worst case someone simply points a gun or a knife at the electoral officials and directs them how to fill in the voting papers.

In an attempt to understand why people chose to vote for candidates, we administered two questionnaires, one (A) several weeks before the polling, and the other (B) during the week following the polling. We tried to locate a cross-section of the population in the Lower Ambum Valley.⁵ All the respondents were from the Ambum-Kompam electorate, except one who was enrolled in the Wabag electorate.

Below are responses received in Questionnaire A to the question, *"Have you decided who you will vote for? If so who, why?"*

A. Some were deciding because of clan ties

"N, because he is my uncle."

"N, because he is from my own clan."

"N is my nephew and M is my cousin. I will vote for whoever seems to have most support."

"N, because he is my clansman."

"N because he is from my clan. But if I hear that he does not have enough support then I will vote for M."

"N, because it is an investment in the future, in case later someone from my clan happens to contest in future elections."

"N is the best leader for Ambum-Kompam, but I will vote for M because most of my clansmen are voting for him."

"Despite my negative criticisms the clan is thinking of voting for him in order to get (political) power into our area."

"N because in the past the b clan brought the refugees from c (the speaker's clan) back to their land, so we feel grateful and want to return the favour with our vote."

"N, because it is an opportunity to mend relationships with our former enemies."

B. Some said they were deciding for material benefit or personal gain

"N, because of policies on free education and free medicine."

"N because he pays school fees."

"N, because I want (political) power to be close to my village."

"He tells us to work and gives us money."

"He favours the small people more than the big people."

"N, because he has already done so much for Enga. I have to think of my younger brothers in school. If it wasn't for him it would be hard for my parents to pay their school fees."

C. Some were looking at the personal qualities of the candidate

"I'm convinced he is a man whose soul can be turned wrong side outwards without ever discovering a blemish."

"N, because he has potential to form the next government, and because he quotes Kennedy: 'Ask what you can do for the country, not what the country can do for you'."

"N has the qualities the Catholic awareness campaign described."

"He is mature and experienced and seems to have a concern for his people."

"N because of his confidence, and he is not scared of anyone."

"N, because he is a mature man."

"Because his grandfather was a leader and his father, uncle, and cousins too were leaders."

D. Some were deciding for religious reasons

"I'm praying and seeking God's guidance to help me in identifying the

right candidate who has the heart for the people of this land.”

“I am still praying and I’m waiting for someone to really convince me. I think God will show me the best candidate.”

“He is a good Christian man.”

“I will vote for N because he is endorsed by M who is an SDA.”
(speaker is an SDA)

“Because N is a Christian from his childhood and still is after many years as an MP.”

E. One stated, “I will decide on polling day”

In Questionnaire B, administered to people within the same Lower Ambum population after the election, people were asked, “*What attracted you to that person so that you voted for him/her?*” The responses can be summarised as follows:

Personal friends/relative. (11)

Their powerful speech and their maturity. (9)

Supporters of the candidate gave us money. (6)

Because of attitudes and personality. (4)

Well educated. (3)

They followed their family/clan’s decision. (3)

Because he is “young”. (2)

Single comments in Questionnaire B include the following:

“Because of kindness, like giving free rides on his car.”

“I was forced to vote for them.”

“His sister is my best friend.”

“They have concern for small people so I will benefit.”

“They bribed me with money.”

“I know that I will get some kind of benefit.”

“My son who is in the university said they were the right candidates so I voted for them.”

“I just promised to vote for the first person who asked for my vote.”

“He has good leadership qualities.”

"Their speech, but I was given money too."

"He is a man of action."

"He is experienced in politics."

"We have seen his previous commitment in development and services."

"Actually it was other people's words and bribery."

"N has a wonderful personality and M because he gave a job to my brother."

"I get financial benefit from N, and M is my cousin."

"He is a strong Christian." ⁶

In the responses to both questionnaires, there appear to be four principal reasons for choosing a candidate:⁷

- Clan, marriage or other personal ties
- Desire for material benefit or personal gain
- Personal qualities
- Religious reasons

The desire for material benefit or personal gain is obviously motivated by a need to be in the *nenge*/eaters group. However clan, marriage and other personal ties feed into the same desire. In fact, modern politics is redefining relationships in Enga. Traditionally clan ties would be reinforced through sharing food at compensation, pig exchange, or marriage ceremonies. Now supporters of a particular candidate share food, thus creating a new set of alliances in Enga society.⁸ The purpose of these alliances is to establish unity and strength so as to ensure that they will be eaters rather than non-eaters—"haves" rather than "have-nots".

5. Voting

The plan for the Enga Province was to have "one day" voting on Tuesday, 25 June 2002. This did not happen due to various factors, including the non-availability of ballot papers. Eventually the elections began a week later and were drawn out for two weeks in a drama involving hijacked ballot boxes, the bombing of voting papers in containers beside the Wabag Police station, and fatal shootings at one polling place (*National* July 12-14, 2002: 1-2; *Independent* August 1, 2002: 2).

Guns (including those held by candidates themselves) were part of the scene and police were intimidated. Even with a police escort, ballot boxes could be taken to sites other than those assigned to them. There was little or no secrecy in the manner of voting and many people did not feel free to vote as they would have liked. This was particularly so for women who felt obliged to vote with their husband's clan. In many cases, women and girls would be present around the polling area but when their names were called, their sons or one of their immediate male relatives rushed to the polling booth to collect and mark the papers. Thus male relatives were marking the papers, which would determine whether these women would be "eaters" or "non-eaters" over the next five years. Multiple voting was quite possible since names were on the common roll used in different polling places and applying an ink mark to the voter's finger was not practised in most parts of Enga.

There were 405,804 persons on the common roll for the Enga province. The Electoral Office in Wabag received 473,000 voting papers and 406,831 papers were sent out to voting officials in the five electoral districts.⁹ According to the official National Electoral Commission reports available on the Commission's website, there were 317,213 papers "allowed" (= counted) for the provincial seat in the national parliamentary elections in the Enga province, and a total of 317,602 papers allowed for the open seats. The approximately 89,000 difference between number of papers supposed to be sent out according to the number on the common roll, and the numbers of papers actually returned to be counted is, for the major part, due to the destruction and loss of ballot papers or ballot boxes.

However, according to the official final figures from the PNG year 2000 census, there are 295,031 persons in the Enga Province. The legal voting age is 18, so, according to census data, about 55% of the population, or 162,300 people would have been eligible to vote in 2000, and possibly 172,000 by June 2002.¹⁰ The huge difference between those eligible to vote according to the census figures and the votes actually cast were noted in an article by Daniel Korimbao in the *National* entitled, "More ballots in Enga than total population."

In a province where thousands of ballot papers were firebombed, and where candidates complained of some of their people not voting at all due to the shortness of the voting period (one day polling), this is an amazing result. 317,213 ballot papers were counted for the provincial seat, in a province which, according to the 2000 census figures has a total population of 295,031 peo-

ple: men, women and children (*National*, 30 July, 2002:2).

These results raise a number of questions. How could there be 150% more names on the common roll than the estimate of eligible voters? How could there be 95% more votes counted in the Provincial election than the estimate of eligible voters? It appears that the election results were predetermined to a large extent by the number of ballot papers distributed rather than the actual number of people eligible to vote. The common people have become the victims of a process that is neither free nor fair.

A number of people did not feel free to vote simply because they were afraid. These people were afraid of the consequences of voting for an unsuccessful candidate, thus casting them into the non-eater group. They had to consider who would be affected if their candidate lost. Would it result in members of their clan who work in the government sector losing their jobs? Would the consequences be simply a denial of services or might it escalate into tribal warfare? In the face of such fears a number of people in Enga decided not to vote, or to let others vote in their place. It was better not to vote at all than to be seen voting for the loser.

At Par, near Wabag there was a struggle between two candidates contesting the Ambum- Kompiam seat. They were both from the same Laekini subclan of the Sambeoko clan. One of the candidates was able to get the support of the neighbouring Laita clan who had been former enemies. After a ritual in which they killed a pig for the men from both sides who had died in a fight ten years previously, the two former enemy clans came together to campaign, sleep in one house, and eat together. However this split the Sambeoko clan and its allies. On polling day the tension erupted into fighting with three people killed. The fight continued for several months with 16 people dead, many wounded, hundreds of houses burned, and the Sambeoko territory left looking like a desert. A year afterwards the situation is still tense. Candidates contributed money and weapons that fueled the fight, and the nameless ordinary people were killed or have been scattered as refugees. The tribal fight at Par is one of several fights with direct links to the election. The common people, particularly the refugees crowded into the homes of friends and relatives, are the true losers-the *nanenge*/non-eaters in the present situation.

6. Unjust Processes

The experience of the 2002 elections shows a political culture developing in Enga, which is neither just nor democratic. It is a culture

of violence and intimidation, with links to traditional means of waging war and establishing alliances, but with new kinds of tribalism and a new type of leader who has access to guns and the ability to open or obstruct access to money and resources. The stakes are high with large discretionary "electoral development funds" available to members of parliament, and access by governors to Provincial Government funds. Elections are a form of investment, with successful candidates rewarding their supporters and disregarding others.

The common people were disadvantaged because in many cases they did not even have a chance to vote, and if they did there was no guarantee that their vote would be counted. The tables below detail what became of the ballot papers from the five Open electorates in the Enga province.

As can be seen from the accompanying table, 15,483 papers did not even get to the voters, and 82,814 or 20% of the papers were not counted. Even if such hurdles could be overcome, one must still consider whether democracy can be maintained in the clash between liberal individual (Western) values (one person, one vote) and the system of patronage that is mutating from the traditional communal values? The gulf between individual rights and the political realities of "gunpoint democracy" (Standish 1996) is something that requires urgent debate before the next elections.

What became of the Ballot Papers in Enga?

Ambum Kompam	Number of ballot papers assigned	73,991
	Number of ballot papers counted	34,937
	Papers destroyed at polling	5,070
	Papers unable to be sent out to destination	12,775
	Papers not counted because hijacked	16,371
	Papers not returned after polling	4,823
Kandep	Number of ballot papers assigned	48,647
	Number of ballot papers counted	37,639
	Papers destroyed at polling	2,174
	Papers destroyed at Wabag police station	8,834
Lagaip Porgera	Number of ballot papers assigned	134,015
	Number of ballot papers counted	130,051
	Papers destroyed at Wabag Police station	1,084
	Papers unable to be sent out to destination	2,708

Wapena manda	Number of ballot papers assigned	81,129
	Number of ballot papers counted	69,528
	Papers destroyed at polling	78
	Papers disputed, not counted	5,478
Wabag	Number of ballot papers assigned	67,832
	Number of ballot papers counted	50,645
	Papers destroyed at polling	4,178
	Papers destroyed at Wabag police station	7,693
	Papers disputed, not counted	5,023

7. Post Election Realities

The results announced by the Electoral Commission after the 2002 elections are as follows:

Enga Provincial	Peter Ipatas	PDM	123,313	38.9%
Wabag Open	Samuel Tei Abal	PDM	11,413	24.7%
Wapenamanda Open	Yangakun Miki Kaeok	PLP	16,381	23.6%
Kompiani-Ambum Open	Dickson Masa Maki	Indep.	7,178	23.3%
Kandep Open	Don Pomb Pullie Poly	NA	13,599	36.4%
Lagaip-Porgera open	Yarka Kappa	Indep.	12,720	9.5%

The fact that all the previous members of parliament except Governor Ipatas lost their seats is an indication of the people's dissatisfaction with the performance of the previous government. Hopefully the new members of parliament will take note and look for ways to perform better than their predecessors. One may note that no candidate gained more than 39% of the vote, which means that at least 61% of the people did not vote for a successful candidate at the provincial level and thus are potentially *nanenge*/non-eaters. In Lagaip-Porgera, over 90% of the people did not vote for the successful candidate. It should be noted that the "haves" and "have nots" category is situational and dependent on who wins an election, illustrating the fluidity of political behaviour in Enga. People will often find a way to show their allegiance to those now in power, as they say in Enga, *Tuku yandanyapi manda nyilya okaitaka kondo pingi* (When boys play at war throwing grass stalks at each other, a clever boy joins the group on the uphill side).

Election results for all seats have been challenged in the court of disputed returns. Over a year after the elections two of the cases are still before the courts. People in at least one electorate (Wabag) are not represented in parliament, and they face the prospect of a possible by-election using a new preferential voting system. However, before any further elections can take place, electoral officials still have to pay the outstanding bills for the 2002 election. As of 1 May 2003, the electoral office still had 600,000 Kina (US\$ 150,000) in outstanding debts.¹¹

8. Conclusion

In this paper we have provided examples of an “eating” metaphor commonly used in Enga political discourse. The metaphor, associated with elections, refers to the division of Enga society into haves and have-nots. Popular opinion maintains that supporters of politicians in power form a privileged elite, while they, the “non-eaters” struggle to survive. During the elections some felt that it was wiser not to vote than to be seen voting for the a losing candidate. In the post-election period, abstaining from political involvement that is not in the interest of the present government seems to be a condition for holding a public service job.

The 2002 election in Enga was discriminatory since over 15,000 papers did not reach the polling places, there was little confidentiality, often there was no freedom of choice particularly for women voters, and over 20% of the completed voting papers were not counted. Moreover, the political culture during and after the elections is unjust because it tends to divide society into haves and have-nots.

To what degree have the essential dimensions of political democracy been present in the Enga elections? In response one needs to look at three related questions:

- To what extent was there a healthy *competition* between candidates, unaccompanied by force and fear?
- In practice, could eligible voters *participate* in the selection of their representatives in government?
- To what extent was there *freedom* sufficient to ensure healthy competition and fair participation?

This paper has shown that the conditions for a strong democracy have been compromised. Not only did many candidates “lose” the election but their supporters also have lost the freedom to participate in decision making and its benefits. Electoral studies have focused on

the national and provincial level politics. In our opinion, in the interim between elections, local level politics warrants attention with studies on local level leadership and instances of "grassroots" democracy emerging at the level of local civil and church communities.

Enga people are creative and resilient, and within their communities will surely find ways to cope as they have done in the past. Nevertheless many common people are tired and angry at the situation declaring that they won't vote in another election. Counting the cost of the last election, in money, soured relationships, and lives lost, people say that elections as experienced in 2002 are just not worth the trouble. For them, particularly the have-nots, it is not a question of money and miracles, but of poverty and a feeling of powerlessness.

ENDNOTES:

- 1 Other candidates who scored more than 1% of the vote were Enda Kathy Kakaraya (7.1%), Mathew Parep (5.8%), Henry James Tamala (5.3%), Kundapen Talyaga (3%), and David Lambu (1.7%).
- 2 Speech in Wabag on 14th June, 2002, in the Enga language and transcribed and translated from tape recording.
- 3 All quotations from the campaign speeches of Jeffrey Balakau, John Pundari and Peter Ipatas are transcribed and translated from tape recordings.
- 4 Pundari supporters had insisted that the TAA cars would get no contracts from any of the departments in Enga after the elections. Ipatas supporters responded saying that private vehicles used by Pundari supporters would have to become public motor vehicles (PMV's).
- 5 Most of the work for the questionnaire was done by Joseph Lakane. The questions on paper were in English (see Appendix), but the Enga language was used in administering the questionnaire.

The profile for the respondents to Questionnaire A is as follows:

N = 34 (18 males and 16 females). In age, 5 were "youth," 18 "mature" and 11 "old"; 14 had no formal education, 8 had a primary education, 12 had high school education including several with further education such as teachers' training college. Those married numbered 25, with 9 single. Religious affiliation was: Catholic 24, SDA 4, Lutheran 3, Apostolic 1, Assemblies of God 1

The profile for respondents to Questionnaire B is as follows:

N = 56 (26 male and 30 female). In age 10 were "youth," 34 "mature", and 11 "old"; 17 had no formal education, 31 had primary education and 8 high school education. Those married numbered 43, with 13 not married. Religious affiliation was: Catholic 40, Lutheran 4, CAF 3, One Way 3, SDA 1, and 4 not stated.

- 6 In the responses to Question #6 in Questionnaire B, exactly half (28/56) of the respond-

- ents claimed that there were religious reasons behind their choice of vote.)
- 7 None of the respondents mentioned party membership. Generally in Enga people show little positive interest in parties. Some made comments such as "I don't trust any party," or "I have no interest in parties." Many were critical of the People's Democratic Movement (PDM), seeing it as the cause of the present economic hardship.
 - 8 A particular case here is the *Kyangapu tata* centered at Yampu. This "clan" group taking its name from a woman Kyangapu, and proliferating through women, cuts across the typical Enga kinship system of agnatic ties. During the election they voted as a block for the same candidates.
 - 9 Personal Communication, Provincial Returning Officer, Electoral Commission Office, Wabag, 26.11.02
 - 10 This is calculated by applying an average population growth rate of 2.7%. The report of the AusAid-funded Review Team (Appendix C) gives an estimate of 178,293 eligible voters in Enga in 2002.
 - 11 During elections, Presiding Officers are to receive K120/day; Assistant Presiding Officers, K90/day; Polling Clerks, K80/day. Those counting the votes are to receive K4.08/hr. Cars are hired at K200/day, and helicopters cost K3,000/hr.

Appendix

Questionnaire A (During the Campaign Period)

No.....

Name:

Gender: a) male b) female

Age: a) youth b) mature c) old.

Place/Clan:

Education: a) 0 b) Gr. 6 c) Gr. 10

Religious Affiliation:

Status: a) single b) married

Electorate:

1. Have you listened to some political speeches? Y / N
(If Y, then continue)
2. Did you find them interesting? Y / N
If Yes, what did you find interesting? If no, why was it not interesting?
3. Did you find them convincing/persuasive? Y / N
If Y, what was convincing/persuasive? If N, why?
4. Did you hear any symbolic speech (*tok bokis/kongali*) that were interesting? Y / N.
If Y, what was the *kongali* and what do you think it meant?
5. Have you decided who you will vote for? Y / N
Who? Why?

6. Does the party membership of the candidate influence you?
Y / N.

If yes, how does it influence you?

Questionnaire B (After the Election)

No

Name:

Gender: a) male b) female

Age: a) youth b) mature c) old.

Place/Clan

Education: a) 0 b) Gr. 6 c) Gr. 10

Religious Affiliation:

Status: a) single b) married

Electorate:

1. Who did you vote for?
 2. What attracted you to that person so that you voted for him/her?
 3. Did you change your mind many times about who to vote for, or was it always clear for you? (Explain.)
 4. Did you hear any speeches given by the person you voted for?
Y / N
If Y, do you think the speech was important in convincing you to vote for him/her, or was the speech not really important for you?
a) Important b) Not important c) Don't know
(Explain)
 5. What were the positive qualities that you saw in the person that you voted for?
 6. Were there religious reasons behind your voting for that person? Y / N
If yes, explain.
 7. How many times did you vote? 1 2 3 4 more
.....)
- If more than once, was it for the same candidate or different ones? a) same b) different

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