

New Guinea Statement Big Test For Barwick

By OUR POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE decreasing number of stout-hearted Liberal and Country Party backbenchers who still feel there is a faint hope the Government will survive another election must be waiting for the promised statement on West New Guinea by the Minister for External Affairs, Sir Garfield Barwick, with acute apprehension.

Up to date, Sir Garfield has given little indication of awareness that the fate of Dutch New Guinea is viewed by hundreds of thousands of Australians with most serious concern. At no stage has this comparatively inexperienced Minister seemed to realise that the enforced settlement of the Dutch-Indonesian dispute will result in a dangerous degree of isolation for Australia.

Indeed, the casual observer would be pardoned for believing that Sir Garfield regards the affair as one for self-congratulation, in that "an agreement has been reached which does represent a peaceful solution of this dispute." Such an attitude might be understandable in a man who appears to have brought little to Federal Cabinet as Minister for External Affairs except a colossal vanity, but what about the Prime Minister, Mr Menzies, and the other members of the Ministry?

SORRY AFFAIR

Federal Cabinet will meet this morning. The first item on the agenda must surely be Sir Garfield's promised statement to Parliament. It is doubtful if he will be ready to make it today, but if must come by tomorrow or Thursday at the latest and it will provide the last big test whether he can measure up to his responsibilities as Australia's Foreign Minister.

Not only Sir Garfield, but the whole Government will be under critical examination for Australia's part in a sorry affair.

Sir Garfield will surely expound the Government's reaction to the many problems which must arise from the enforced backdown by the Netherlands Government to Indonesian aggression. Leaving the long-term effects of the new Australian isolation out of it altogether, Sir Garfield will be expected to give firm answers to the immediate questions arising out of the transfer of West New Guinea to Indonesia after May 1.

Foremost will be the refugee problem, of natives of West New Guinea who will be looking to Australia for asylum. Probably a great number will come under the heading of the "Dutch puppets," so sneeringly referred to by President Soekarno.

Sir Garfield might also be expected to give a firm opinion on Dr Soekarno's quibbling about his agreement to hold a vote on self-determination for West New Guinea in 1969: whether such self-determination was going to be what the Indonesian President called "internal self-determination, self-determina-

tion among ourselves, not external self-determination which we reject."

In the light of what has transpired, Sir Garfield is not likely to suggest that an assurance given him by the Indonesian Foreign Minister, Dr Subandrio, last month that Indonesia had no claim or design on any Australian territory, and on East New Guinea in particular, should be treated as final.

On his return to Australia last month, Sir Garfield said he had told Dr Subandrio that this assurance might need to be formalised at a more appropriate time. Dr Subandrio agreed this was a suitable course. Since then, it has been established as "background" that Australia would not take the initiative in drafting any new treaty with Indonesia as a result of the projected handover.

Even if Sir Garfield went to Cabinet with such an idea still in his mind—it was certainly there last month—there would be a sufficient number of Ministers realistic enough to reject it.

Any suggestion of a non-aggression treaty, as envisaged by Sir Garfield last month, would appear ridiculous to Australians in the light of the repeated breaches, continuing as late as last week, of the Indonesian promise to bring about a settlement of the dispute on West New Guinea without recourse to arms.

Many members of the Federal Ministry and of the Government backbench think it would be far better for the Government if anyone but Sir Garfield were making the statement this week.

The Prime Minister's tolerance towards Sir Garfield is all the more surprising if reports are true that he is annoyed with the Minister for Defence, Mr A. G. Townley, over his recent performance in Indonesia, when he allegedly wore an Indonesian Army uniform.

However, some cynics believe that Mr Townley is in disfavour not so much for his original folly in wearing what could be mistaken for an Indonesian uniform, complete with that country's Air Force insignia and his own British Service ribbons, but for his schoolboy's performance on his return when he seemed to have great trouble in settling on a firm explanation and sticking to it.

MR MENZIES is reported to be cock-a-hoop at his own perform-

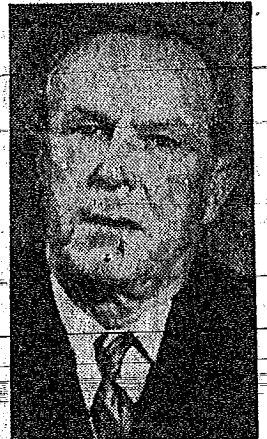
ance in Parliament last Thursday night when he spoke on the Budget. He started off with great gusto, but it soon became apparent that the Prime Minister was relying on braggadocio to cover up any worthwhile assessment of the Budget or its real effect on the economy.

However, he must have been pleased at the outset by some of the oldtime adulatory enthusiasm from his backbench. The Opposition made a mistake when leading members attempted to trade punches with the Prime Minister, but once they ceased the nerve went from his speech, and a silent and uneasy backbench heard him stumble through to a dull finish.

The Treasurer, Mr H. E. Holt, looked ill at ease while his leader was speaking, but earlier in the day he had fallen into a trap of his own making. Somewhat triumphantly he rose after question-time and assailed the Opposition Leader in the Senate, Senator N. E. McKenna, for having challenged "anybody in the Government side to find the words 'full employment' in the Budget speech."

Demanding an apology from Senator McKenna, Mr Holt read from the Hansard version of his Budget speech, quoting a passage where he did in fact use the words "our objective of full employment."

The Treasurer unfortunately forgot that this passage was not in the printed document of the speech handed to all members and read in



SIR GARFIELD BARWICK

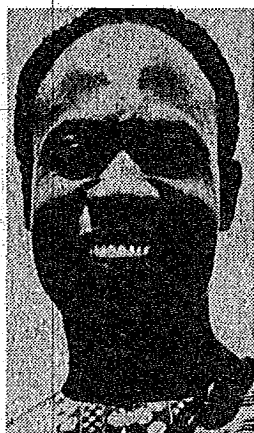
the Senate by Senator S. D. Paltridge (Lib., W.A.) at the time he himself was reading the speech to the House of Representatives. The passage quoted by Mr Holt certainly does not appear in the Senate Hansard.

This left Mr Holt open to the obvious charge that he had inserted the reference to full employment as an afterthought.

As the Acting Opposition Leader, Mr E. G. Whitlam, was quick to point out at the weekend, the document from which the vital words were missing was printed almost a week before, after several weeks of preparation.

"In all those weeks, those days and even apparently during those last hours, no attempt was made to redress the oversight," Mr Whitlam said. "As Senator McKenna later remarked: 'The very last thing the Treasurer thought of was full employment,' and that is clearly the literal truth."

Mr Whitlam thus hoisted the Treasurer with his own petard.



PRESIDENT NKRUMAH

'IMMORTAL' NKRUMAH IN CHURCH CONFLICT

PRESIDENT KWAME NKRUMAH of Ghana, whose followers sing to his immortality, has come into direct conflict with the Church. Angrily repudiating criticism, he has expelled Anglican Church leaders.

But there are problems for the Church as well as for Nkrumah in this almost inevitable clash. It was fairly certain that, sooner or later, there would have been trouble over the teaching being instilled into the young Africans of Ghana and over the chants they have been made to learn.

Marshalled into the Young Pioneer movement—officially described in Ghana as a

"national institution"—they have been singing lustily: "Nkrumah—never dies; Nkrumah does no wrong; Nkrumah is our Messiah."

Nkrumah's followers have often pleaded that a personality cult is necessary in such a young and potentially explosive country as Ghana, to give a sense of national purpose and pride. But Church leaders have been becoming more and more dismayed at the effect of the

Young Pioneer teaching on young Africans.

In April, all the leaders of Protestant Churches sent letters to the Ghana Minister of Education stating that they could not support the Young Pioneer movement in its present form. That letter was not even acknowledged.

Just over a week ago, the Anglican Bishop of Accra, the Rt. Rev. Richard Roseveare, told his synod that the Young Pioneer movement ignored the existence and claims of Almighty God in

play up the idea that Nigeria is trying to undermine the Nkrumah regime, and Nkrumah may well have been persuaded that the Church criticism smacked of "plotting" from Nigeria.

After this sermon by the Archbishop, Nkrumah agreed to the expulsion, not only of the Bishop but of the Archbishop, too. The Nkrumah State was in direct conflict with the Anglican Church.

The "Ghanaian Times" gloated that the expulsion of Bishop Roseveare was "good

From A STAFF CORRESPONDENT in London