

Jada and the Phantom

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WHO SAYS you need special training at an arts school to become a cartoonist? Jada Wilson, for one, doesn't believe it. The cartoonist for Word Publishing who does all the cartoons in *The Independent* and comic strips for *Wantok* is arguably the most gifted creator.

And the nearest he has been to art school is jail more than two decades ago.

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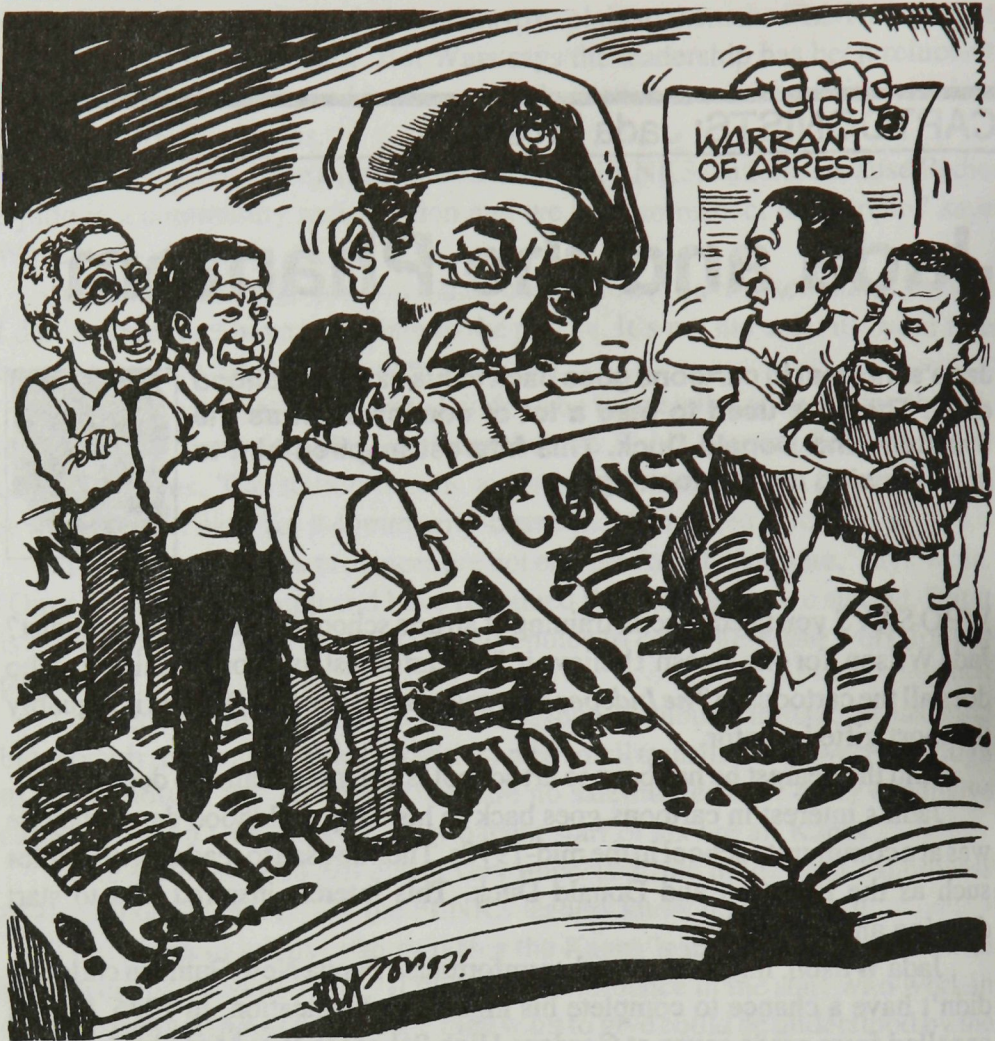
Jada Wilson, like so many other unfortunate Papua New Guinean children, didn't have a chance to complete his high school education. In 1976, he was expelled from grade seven at Gordons High School in Port Moresby for being a 'bighead'. In that year he was sent to Wewak Boys Town over a series of crimes he got involved in. But he broke out of prison several times so on his recapture he was sent to Wewak's Boram jail.

After serving a four-year term he was released in 1979. In December that year, young Jada rehabilitated himself and sought employment with *Wantok* where he worked as an illustrator.

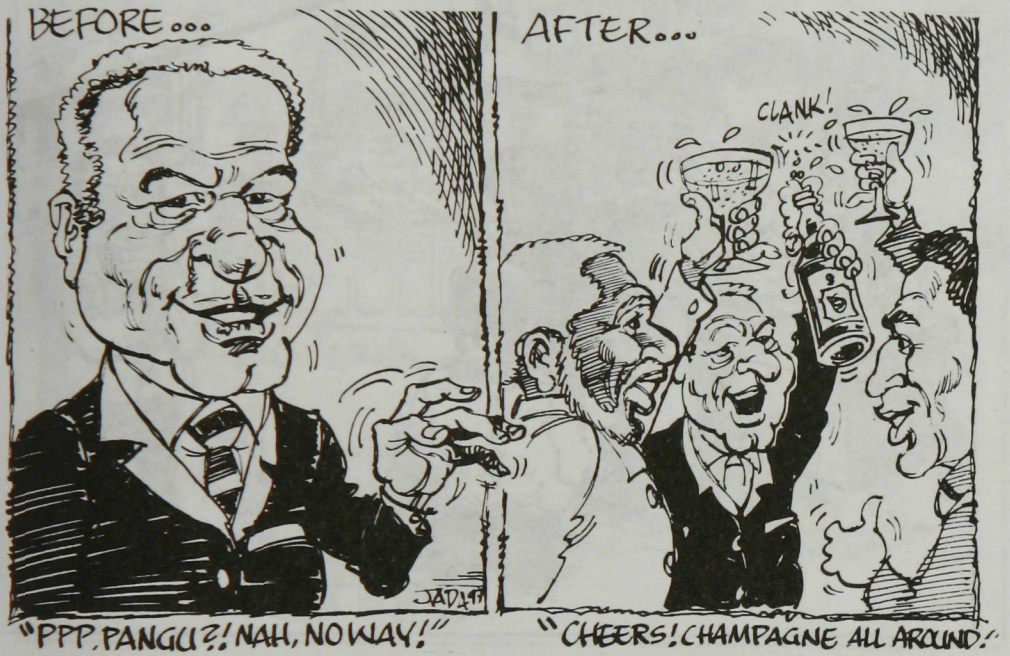
'I worked very hard to be a cartoonist,' he says, and he has been with the company for 19 years. But, he says, he also owes a lot of credit to his predecessor, Biliso Osake.

Jada, from Central province, is married with two children, a daughter (14) and a son (8).

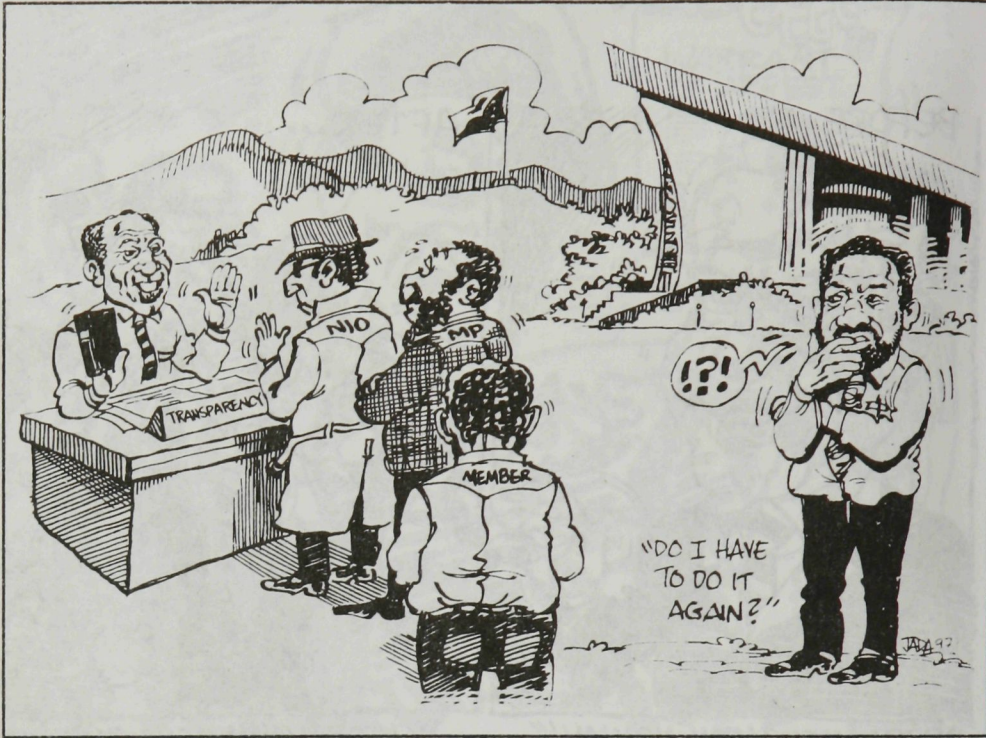
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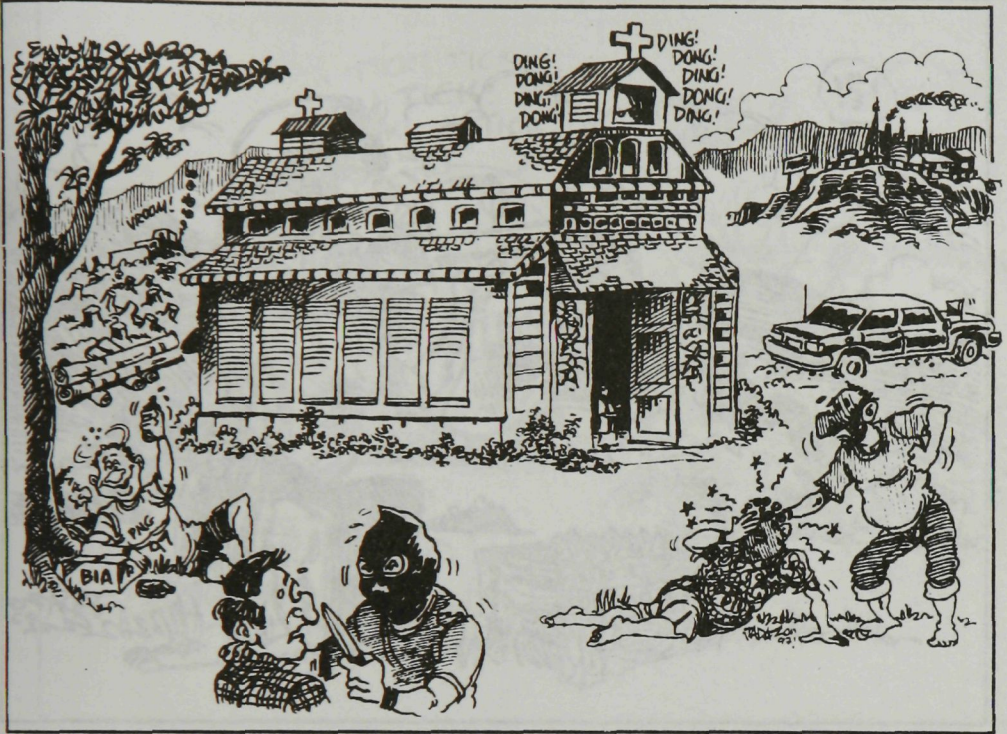
The Independent, 9 May 1997: *Where is justice?* Many people protest over a police raid into the office-cum-residential premises of three non-government organisations in Port Moresby and the arrest of four officials. All were accused of a role in public demonstrations over the Sandline mercenary affair. The police action is branded as 'politically motivated, insensitive and potentially dangerous'. An editorial says: 'The whole Sandline affair stinks, and the key people who cooked up this smell are the so-called "sidelined" Prime Minister Sir Julius Chan, his deputy Chris Haiveta and Defence Minister Mathias Ijape.'



The Independent, 25 July 1997: Were principles sacrificed for political ambitions? An editorial questions Bill Skate going in to partnership with the People's Progress Party (Chan) and Pangu (Haiveta) after he had publicly declared he would not share power with the parties of the previous discredited Government. Skate was elected Prime Minister with 71 votes after the general election while his only other rival, founding Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare, gained only 35 votes. But there were also questions on why the NGO activists elected on a platform of 'clean slate' government, such as Melsol's Peti Lafanama, supported the Skate coalition. Did they act in the interests of their country, or for their own political interests?



The Independent, 29 August 1997: How transparent is Transparency International? Trade and Tourism Minister Michael Nali argues that TI may well be making a mockery of the Constitution and oaths of office taken by elected leaders and senior bureaucrats. He also questions the legality and morality of leaders 'being coerced' into making public pledges on their integrity and honesty.

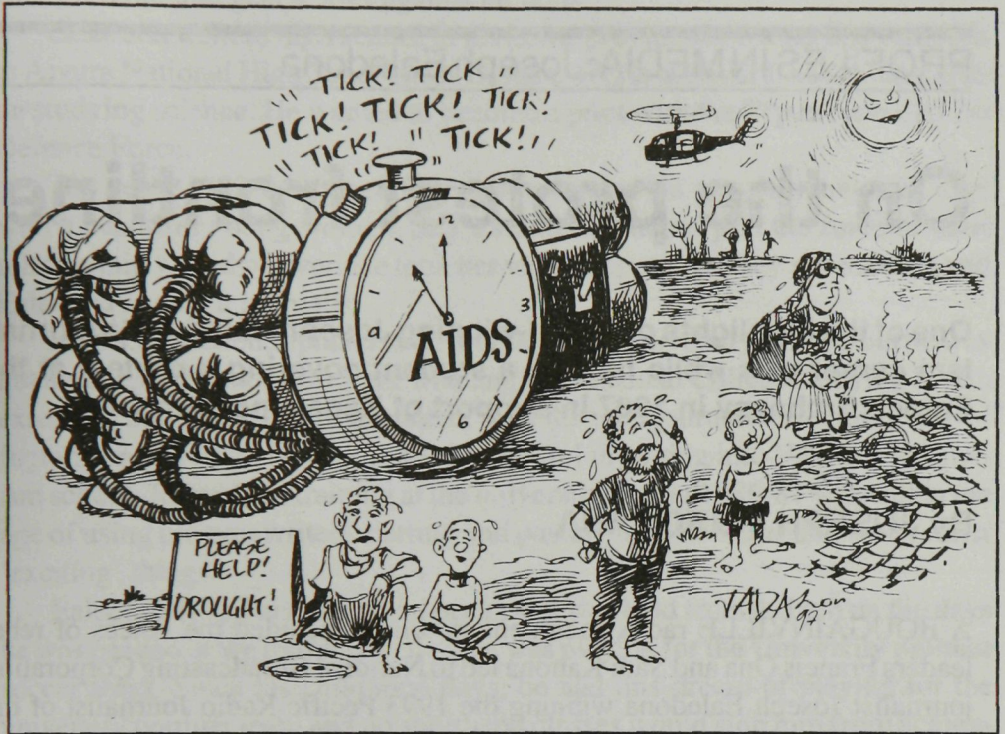


The Independent, 5 September 1997: A society in turmoil.

Much is said about Papua New Guinea being a Christian country, yet in reality it is a society in turmoil. The country is abundant with so many natural resources, such as forestry, fisheries and minerals, oil and gas, yet the community still needs programs such as easing poverty.



The Independent, 24 October 1997: Careful decision needed on 'fly-in fly-out': Lagaip Porgera MP Opis Papo proposes a private member's bill call for the banning of fly-in fly-out commuter operations for mining staff at the nation's resource development projects. The argument supporting the ban is that the money taken out of the country and spent outsideloses some K120 million. But the Government refuses to budge.



The Independent, 14 November 1995: Let us act now on AIDS before it is too late: While Papua New Guinea has on hand the worst natural disaster in living memory in the drought affecting the whole country, there are many other problems such as AIDS. As an editorial says: 'If we do not act now many Papua New Guineans will die. Let us not fool ourselves. AIDS is a deadly killer disease. Health authorities say the majority of the people infected with the AIDS virus HIV are in the age bracket of 13 to the early twenties.'