

THE OPEN DOOR



THE UNITED CHURCH

*in Papua, New Guinea and the
Solomon Islands*

MARCH, 1969

"A wide door for effective work has opened."
1 Cor. 16.9 (R.S.V.).

Contents of this Issue . . .

□	
Editorial: "LET US ALL BE ONE IN THIS UNITED CHURCH"	3
THE FIRST ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED CHURCH — The Rev. John Key	4
GLIMPSES OF THE FIRST ASSEMBLY — General Secretary	6
DID YOU KNOW THAT . . . (United Church statistics)	9
IN OTHER ACTION	10
DID YOU KNOW	11
AN AXE AND A BISHOP — The Rev. R. D. Reeson	12
PERSONAL GLIMPSES	14
MADANG — A Town in the Urban Region — The Rev. Morea Igo	15
NOTES FROM THE SOLOMONS — General Secretary	17
OUR MISSIONARIES WITHIN THE UNITED CHURCH	20
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"Let Us All Be One

IN THIS UNITED CHURCH"

With these telling words, Bishop Ravu Henao summed up the feeling of the members of the first Assembly of the United Church in Papua, New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. To at least one observer this was the dominant note of that gathering, a clear expressing of the strong sense of oneness that has been growing with the area of what is now the United Church since the very first discussions were held on church union five years ago.

If I Corinthians 3 is right and division is a sign of immaturity, may it not be true that this young church, a year old, is more mature than we "older churches" for whom our divisions have an all too weighty a significance. Surely we are challenged in our divisions by the faith which sees all men as one family in the one church. It is true of course that we have heavy burdens of history and sentiment to lay aside. It may also be true that we feel we have a more complicated understanding of the faith to guard. But if Christian witness in Melanesia demands a high degree of visible church unity as the United Church clearly believes it does, does Christian witness in New Zealand demand any less?

For the sake of the United Church the three denominations in New Zealand (Presbyterian, Congregational, Methodist) that are in partnership with it will be increasingly called to a high degree of co-operative effort in this land. Should we not seek then to make this opportunity given to us, not just a matter of expediency, but a God-given opportunity for deepening our understanding of one another and for growing together in Christ?

It is with this in mind that we hope to place copies of the Open Door in the hands of the ministers of each of the Presbyterian and Congregational churches in this country, so that they may know a little of the United Church as we see it.

G. G. Carter, Editor.

The First Assembly of the United Church

(Some impressions of an "observer", the Reverend John Key, Secretary of the Melanesian Council of Churches.)

Outwardly, this was an Assembly for "getting organised". Here was a young church putting its own house in order. Hard work, my goodness! Committees at 6.00 a.m., in the lunch-hour, late at night. Five full sessions a day for two weeks. Departments, regions, institutions, staff, finance — all to be "organised".

Love

But underneath all the talk and all the paper, this was a community being built up in love. This was evident in the loving and warm welcome extended to visitors and observers. We were **in** the fellowship. We came to know the delegates of the United Church as men and women who loved their fellow-members, loved the people they served, loved the Lord they followed.

This was my first deep impression. Love before organisation. And love at the root of the organisation.

Authority

As for the organisation, what interested me most was to observe a church struggling with the meaning and basis and exercise of "authority". Where does authority lie in the United Church, under the Holy Spirit?

The Assembly . . . the Regional Synods . . . the Moderator . . . the Departments of the Church . . . the Bishops of the Regions . . .

Where is authority? How is it to be exercised? What are the dangers and the safeguards? What is the relationship between different authorities in the church?

As an episcopalian (Anglican) myself, I was eager to discover the status and function of the Bishops in the United Church. The Constitution lays it down that the bishop is to exercise a "pastoral" ministry. He is to be pastor of the pastors, not a prelate of the church, nor an administrative wizard.

New Testament Bishops

The bishops had been nominated by the six regional synods and they were confirmed in office by the Assembly. I was tremendously impressed by the outstanding quality and profound spirituality of these Christian men. It is my personal, private hunch that the United Church has got itself bishops in a big way! From the Holy Spirit!

True, there are limitations and safeguards and committees and democratic procedures to keep these bishops in line. But I believe that these men of God will, more and more, exercise great spiritual leadership and authority in the church — and wider, in the life of the nation. They will be bishops of the Church of God, in the New Testament sense and exercising a true New Testament "episcopate".

Whatever the intention, whatever

the form, Methodists and Congregationalists watch out! The United Church in Papua, New Guinea and the Solomon Islands is episcopal, according to the biblical understanding of that ministry.

The Holy Spirit is already solving the struggles of the United Church with the question of "authority". Just my personal, private hunch, remember!

Together In Service

Christians throughout these islands, member churches of the Melanesian Council of Churches and others, rejoice and give praise to God for the birth and growth and strength of the United Church. We are glad to share in its fellowship. We hope to co-operate closely in the loving service of God's people here. Together we shall continue to work and pray for the coming of God's Kingdom.



"A Bench of Bishops."

Bishops Ravu Henao, Saimon Gaius, Brian Sides, Leslie Boseto, Robert Budiara, Graham Smith, Frank Butler, with the Moderator, the Rev. Jack Sharp (on right) and the Secretary, the Rev. Bill Bache (at rear).

Glimpses

of the **FIRST ASSEMBLY**

The following extracts from the General Secretary's Report to the Board will give some glimpses of that very important and inspiring occasion.

INTRODUCTION: The Assembly met from the 3rd to 16th December inclusive at Malmaluan, near Rabaul. Malmaluan, headquarters of the Department of Christian Education, is a training centre some 11 miles from Rabaul and 1,400 feet above sea level overlooking Rabaul harbour. Its exhilarating climate was beneficial. Rev. John Mavor (the Director of the D.C.E.) and Mrs Mavor were gracious hosts and together with their staff and students contributed greatly to the success of the gathering.

OFFICERS: During the course of the Assembly the following were elected:

Moderator: Rev. J. Sharp
Secretary: Rev. W. G. Bache
Bishops: Ravu Henao (Papua Mainland), Frank Butler (Urban), Robert Budiara (Papuan Islands), Graham Smith (Highlands), Saimon Gaius (New Guinea Islands), Leslie Boseto (Solomon Islands) with Brian Sides as Assistant Bishop with special responsibilities for Bougainville and Buka in the Solomon Islands Region.

The Moderator was inducted on Sunday 15th December at Matupit Church in the presence of a great company of people including the

Administrator of the Territory, Mr D. O. Hay. The service was conducted by Bishops Saimon Gaius and Leslie Boseto, the prayers were led by Rev. Reatau Mea, Vice Chairman of the Interim Committee, and the charge was delivered by the Rev. Setareki A. Tuilovoni. It was a colourful ceremony, brief but impressive, a fitting occasion. Notable among the company were Bishop Meredith of the Anglican Church, Frs Reitchal and Franke of the Roman Catholic Church and Mr Epineri Titimur, M.H.A.

MAJOR IMPRESSIONS: As the first Chairman of the Methodist United Synod and as one who has for two decades been intimately associated with the life of the Church in the area, I was most impressed by the maturity of the local leadership. Thoughtful, strong and vocal Melanesian leaders are clearly able to take their place with anyone in the councils of the church or nation. This was seen when one of the white skinned members began to fret about the racial composition of the Executive. He was sternly rebuked by Bishop Ravu Henao, who said, "We rejected the name of the United Church in Melanesia because we did not want a church for one race. This is a



The church at Matupit Island where the Moderator was inducted on Sunday, 15th December, 1968.

united Church irrespective of race and we do not want to count up the number of Europeans or Papuans or New Guineans. Let us all be one in this United Church."

In the discussion on the Assembly budget when the gap between estimated income and expenditure seemed irreconcilable, the Highlands representatives spoke with their bishop and said "Of course our people will help by carrying the costs of their own students (at Assembly institutions)". This was typical of the willingness to

squarely face the problems of this day and age. A suggestion that they appeal to the Boards was rejected almost without discussion. Clearly this was not the way through.

There were touches of humour too. When one member desiring to draw attention to the lack of machinery for replacing members of the Executive between Assemblies asked, "What if one man dies, what do we do?" A voice came back as quick as a thought "Bury him!", and the Assembly dissolved in laughter.

My other major impression was the sense of brotherliness and unity that was apparent from the beginning. It came out most strongly in the weary debate over the proposed division of the Solomon Islands Region into two. This problem has its roots deep in history, and reason was at times overlaid by emotion. As the representatives from the region argued their case and as alternative suggestions were canvassed, one became aware of the ready willingness to understand, the deep sympathy, and the concern to find a solution that would be fair to the Solomons and to the whole Church. A solution was not made easier because political moves to make Bougainville an independent state had been in recent headlines. The Church



The Rev. Aminiasi Qalo, of Fiji, serving in the Highlands Region.



The Rev. Urika Saifoloi, of Samoa, Chairman of the Papuan Mainland Region.

could not act without appearing to side with one group or the other. In the end the Assembly confirmed the existing administrative separation and set aside an Assistant Bishop for the northern area within the one region. Though it was a halfway position, it was reached not as a last resort but as the way through which the Holy Spirit was able to show the Church because of its deep compassion. Though this matter seemed to occupy an inordinate amount of time, it was, I believe, the catalyst which drew out and developed the sense of concern, and fellowship that was so marked. Gone was the unsympathetic rejections of earlier days, gone the impatience with other kinds of people — in their place a sense of family that speaks well for the future.

It was inevitable that the machinery of the new church should be found wanting at some points but it was good to find little tendency to tinker with it, or on the other hand to be rigidly bound by it. Tolerance and flexibility carried the Assembly through and in two years' time they will be ready to make needed changes in the light of experience.

PROBLEMS: It would be wrong to suggest they have no problems. First among these is the problem of communication. Circuits, Regions and Executive, Institutions and Committees all must keep each other informed as fully as possible, and be prepared to make allowances for the false impressions that the written word all too easily conveys. Money, boats, aeroplanes and inadequate public services all enter into the problem but basically it is one of people. Bishops who visit their people, visitors from one region to another, a Moderator who symbolises the unity of the Church, all can do much to maintain and extend the understanding that now exists.

Money may be "the root of all kinds of evil" but it is necessary and the United Church, in common with most of us, has not got enough. It has to learn to cut its suit out of the cloth supplied. The leaders have not yet come to a clear understanding of their priorities or learnt how to balance the needs of institutions against the needs of the regions. But there was plenty of evidence that they were prepared to grapple with the problems and seek to come to a satisfactory way through.

In the last three years I have spoken a lot about the need of the Church for leadership. It is now very clear that the leadership is there, but the need is to equip more of the leaders and to provide the conditions under which they can best find themselves. It is good to see that the blatant paternalism which marked an earlier era is going, and that the one or two efforts to bulldoze the Assembly into decisions provoked their own reaction. Independent thinking is a mark of the new generation of leaders and at the Assembly men like

(continued on p.9)

The Open Door

Did you know that....

in the United Church there are:
72,322 adult members and 22,858
seekers after membership?

180 ordained local ministers, and
81 on probation, with 57 overseas
ministers?

9 local deaconesses and 8 over-
seas deaconesses?

3,235 local preachers?

13,861 women in 488 women's
fellowships groups?

25,735 students in 590 schools
taught by 500 trained and 325
untrained teachers?

4 doctors, 42 overseas nurses, 37
local staff nurses and 255 other
medical workers including trainees,
working in 27 hospitals,

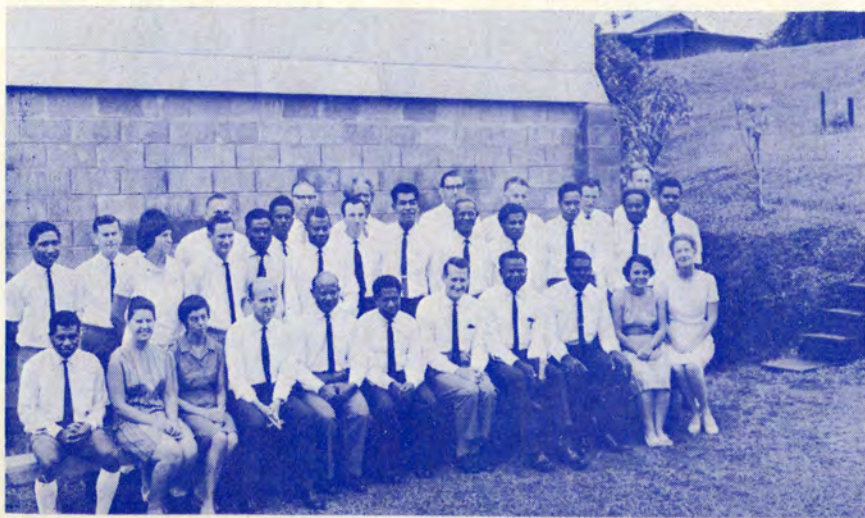
41 aid posts and 210 clinics?



**The Rev. Martyn Carr, of Britain, serv-
ing in the Mainland Region.**

(continued from p.8)

Bishops Ravu, Saimon and Leslie,
Rev. Morea Igo and Mr Mesulam
Aisoli showed no tendency at all to
be overawed, or impressed with vol-
ume of noise.



The Assembly Members.

IN OTHER ACTION

The Assembly

- proclaimed its continuing need of, and desire for, workers from overseas.
- deferred amalgamation of its two teachers' colleges for a further two years, so that the maximum output of teachers consistent with the highest quality can be maintained.
- stated that it believed the United Church had a continuing place as an educating authority, and that it would for many years to come train teachers and run schools at all levels.
- adopted an emblem for a badge, a flag and for letterheads, which was a green map of the area on a white ground surmounted by a black cross, the whole enclosed within a black circular border.
- appointed a team of four, the Moderator, the Secretary and Bishops Saimon and Ravu, to visit Australia in February and discuss many things with the representatives of the co-operating churches. These include problems of overseas workers' stipends and conditions of service, communications, financial relationships, recruitment and appointment of staff, publicity and deputation.



Classrooms at Gaulim Teacher's College.

- studied ways in which it could deepen and strengthen its ties with other churches in the area, and with ecumenical bodies.
- appointed chaplains in collaboration with other churches to the police force, the army, the university and to school and colleges.
- discussed and prepared to take action on industrial chaplaincy work especially in Bougainville.
- sought ways and means of deepening the people's sense of stewardship and also sought other means of gaining an income from within the country, so as to lessen their dependence on outside funds.

Did you know

- that Bishops of the United Church wear white gowns and full length purple scarves for official occasions?
- that the correct way to address a Bishop of the United Church is "Bishop" plus the name by which he is usually called in the custom of his country, e.g. Bishop Ravu (Henao), Bishop Smith, etc?
- that the United Church amalgamated all its training for the ministry into one institution from the date of union. This is Rarongo College, near Rabaul, under the principalship of Dr Ron G. Williams?
- that Rarongo is training ministers for the Christian church of the Caroline Islands?
- that Lit-Lit, stands for Literacy—Literature (New Guinea), and is an interchurch group concerned to provide the means for people to learn and to read and then give them suitable literature to read?
- that the United Church has told its partner churches that it is anxious to join them in some joint action for mission outside their own borders?

an AXE and a BISHOP

An axe and a bishop! A rather strange and unexpected combination as bishops are usually more peaceful than warlike. However this combination is easy to picture if you live in the New Guinea Highlands. In fact it was an important key in a most historic event.

The occasion was the Induction of the first bishop of the Highlands Region of the United Church at Tari on 5th January 1969. The Rev. A. Graham Smith, previously Chairman, had been elected by the recent Assembly of the United Church to the position. He also had the double honour of being the first Australian Methodist to become a bishop.

Three plane loads of visitors, mainly missionaries from the other circuits arrived early in the morning. The Southern Highlands District Commissioner was also present with other Government personnel and most churches in the area represented. One eye was kept on the sky as the visitors had to depart soon after midday because afternoons often bring unflyable weather conditions.

Long before the service began Huli people were already seated in the large local materials church, men on one side and women and children on the other. Colourful flowers were tastefully scattered in the pitpit walls and behind the pulpit. Fourteen hundred people were present when the service began.

The Rev. A. Qalo, the Fijian minister from Margarima, led the people in some Huli chants and responses as we praised God. After prayers the

District Commissioner read the Scriptures, John 21:15-17 and 1 Timothy 6:11-16.

Then the inducting bishop, Frank Butler, from the Urban Region stood and said,

"Led by the Holy Spirit the Church appoints Bishops to the pastoral care and guidance of the Church and brother ministers. The Bishop expresses God's concern for all people. With the whole Church he will try by word and example to strengthen Christ's people in faith, love and unity. We have come together to set apart the Rev. A. G. Smith for this work. We do this in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ."

Mr Smith stepped forward and affirmed his faith and loyalty to Christ and His Church. The congregation in its turn voiced its acceptance of him as their new Bishop.

Then, as he knelt, hands of varying colours, both European and indigenous, were laid upon his head. Bishop Butler said,

"We now receive you as our Bishop. Care for the people of the Highlands Region. Strengthen your fellow ministers. Feed God's people and be one with them in His Church. God's grace will be with you at all times".

The charge to the new Bishop was given by the Tari minister the Rev. Stan Kirby, in the Huli language. After expressing how privileged he and his people felt in sharing in the service, he went on to say —

"In years now past, when we Huli people had a grievance against another, we made war against them. We would gather together and under the direction of a fight leader, would go to battle. Often the inspiration and initiative for our fight would come from this one man. Our fight leaders were usually proven warriors. They were strong and brave, they were men whom we felt we could trust.

Today we have finished with this fighting, yet we still have a battle on our hands. In many ways this new battle is more difficult than before. Now, as Christians, we fight like Christ against ignorance, sickness, and the powers that separate men and women from their heavenly Father.

As a Church in the Southern High-

lands, we need someone as a fight leader to join us together as one powerful army for Christ."

Then Dabagua, a local pastor, who for the occasion was dressed in all his Huli finery, unveiled a brand new fighting axe. Draped across the axe was a small woven banner with a large red cross marked on it. The old fight leaders used to wear this hanging down their back, minus of course, the cross.

Then, in a most moving and unexpected moment, he presented these to the new Bishop.

"You, Bishop Smith", he said, "are our new fight leader. We will be loyal to you and work with you. Fight to the glory of God."

An axe and a Bishop! It was a most appropriate combination.

by Rev. R. D. Reeson



Bishop Graham Smith with Mr Dabagua and the gifts.

(Photograph: D. Hatcher)

PERSONAL GLIMPSSES

On leave in New Zealand are **David and Betty Buchan** and their family. They will be returning to take charge of Kihili Plantation as **Mr Oviini Baleidaveta** who has worked in south Bougainville for 20 years retires in June. Mrs Baleidaveta and her family have already returned to Fiji.

Sister Muriel McCormack is on leave in New Zealand, also. She will be returning to Choiseul where she is nursing Sister at Sasamuqa.

The Rev. & Mrs Robert Stringer completed a very successful supply ministry in Honiara from November 1968 to February 1969. During that time Mr Stringer officiated at the 40th anniversary celebrations of Methodist work at Aola (Guadalcanal).

Dr Peter and Dr Lyn Calvert have been on leave in New Zealand with their family, but are impatient to return to their very important work at the isolated Kapuna Hospital (Mainland Region).

British Congregationalism supplies many missionaries to the United

Church. **The Rev. Donald Horsfield** was in New Zealand in March on his way back to Britain for leave, and Mr and Mrs Johnston Nicholl and their two children will likewise be here in June, as their ship, the Akaroa, will be some days on the New Zealand coast.

New missionaries who left New Zealand during January for the United Church include:

Rev. & Mrs Max Bruce and the **Rev. Geoff Tucker** who are at All Saints College, Sydney, till June. Mrs Tucker will join her husband with young Craig and brand new daughter Deborah, late in March.

The Rev. & Mrs Fred Baker have gone to Mendi, **Mr and Mrs Don Bennett** and **Miss Diana Thornley** (all teachers) to Tari. **Mrs Julie Brown**, and Order of St. Stephen teacher, went to Bougainville with **Mr Alistair Munro** (builder) and **Mr & Mrs Eion Field** (teachers), while another pair of teachers under the Order of St. Stephen, **Mr & Mrs Warren Vaughan**, have gone to Mangai High School on New Ireland (New Guinea Islands Region).



Rarongo Theological College

MADANG

a town in the urban region

The story of the Madang United Church begins with the brief history of the growth of the town and its development in all fields.

Visitors from all parts of the world who have been to Madang have expressed their satisfaction at seeing, what is considered to be, the most attractive town in the Territory. In size and importance it is the country's fourth largest and, in natural beauty, it possesses the full advantages of tropical surroundings, of a spacious attractive harbour, a necklet of coral islands and bordering frame work of high jungle clad mountains.

Within this district live 153,000 native people in a diversity of tribes and dialects. Socially they range from those who still live in their age-old primitive customs to the urbanised, younger, educated folk who have adopted Western ways and are taking their places in modern society.

Madang is situated five and a half degrees below the equator, and is the commercial focal point of an area of mainland New Guinea which includes, apart from the Madang District the neighbouring Eastern, Western and Southern Highlands Districts, which are serviced through the town.

The importance and strategic advantages of Madang as a centre of supply and distribution for the four districts, whose combined population

exceeds one million, is being increased by the rapid national development which is now proceeding in the area. It is thus one of the Territory's pre-eminent bases of supply and communication. A fact which the recent establishment of a main centre for the Overseas Telecommunications Commission has emphasised. This station three miles from town, forms part of the SEACOM cable system linking Australia with Guam and on to Singapore as part of a world-wide network in telecommunications.

The Christian Churches and Missions play a vital part in the development of the district and the expansion and growth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the whole area. Education in past years was the missions' responsibility. The growth of education and the tremendous social changes taking place in the district is bringing people from all over the Territory. Expatriates from other countries are moving in to exercise their skills and share their knowledge and wisdom.

The Rev. Morea Igo is the minister in Madang. He comes from the Papuan side of the country, and was ordained as a minister of the former Papua Ekalesia.

Madang is very much a Lutheran influenced district and the Lutheran Church is the main church on the New Guinea mainland. Therefore the Methodist and the Papua Ekalesia members who were here became part of the Lutheran Church congregation in the town. This was discontinued when the leaders of the Lutheran Church asked them to find themselves a place for worship and for meeting together. The Department of Education was kind enough to lend them a classroom at Kusbau Primary 'T' School to use for worship every Sunday, until such time as they had put up a building of their own. The highlight of the building programme was the grant of a loan of \$3,000 towards the church building by the Methodist Church of Australia. We thank God for that loan.

The Madang local United Church still has a loan with an outstanding debt of \$2,000. Principal payments of \$150 plus interest are made six monthly with the next one due on February 1969. The fear is that the church will be unable to pay this next one on February because the balance showing in the church's account up to date is \$170.

This church has a mixed congregation with indigenous and expatriates alike from all protestant denominational churches participating and worshipping together. When the act of church union was still on the way there was already a united church in Madang. Thus it stood as a challenge for the rest of the old churches.

There has been no steady work among the youths in Madang especially on the religious background. The leadership has been poor due to lack of training and transfer of the able part time leaders. The pressure of town life is coming too much involved in the lives of young people and this will lead them to lose their interest

in the church life. In spite of all these happenings I will try my best to help them with my limited experience this year. But the need for youth work is greater here in this town.

Women's work is growing steadily and smoothly in the church. The result of their work is the feeling of unity and oneness among the European and the indigenous women which is recognised. Of course the women are always looked upon as the framework of the church. The vital part of their work is Bible study, sewing, Sunday School teachers and organizing other activities. Some of the European women are engaged in the leadership beside my wife. We praise God for their good in the church.

The State of the Church

The scattered nature of the population in large numbers of small settlements in the areas, I have been tied down to considerable time spent in teaching Sunday School and counselling the Gospel house to house. But the disadvantage of this is lack of transport. I am happy to say that there is a great amount of co-operation between congregation, deacons, leaders and church committee in the church and always ready to accept any advice that I find necessary to give to them. An invitation was extended to the General Secretary of the Society Encouraging Voluntary Abstinence. Because I believe that there is an excessive drinking going on in the town that prevention is better than cure, and the educational work done by Mr Maskelyne from SEVA will do much to maintain good record among Church members. I feel that the future work of the church in the town is bright but it can be dimmed by the members transferring to other towns.

Rev. Morea Igo,
Minister

The Open Door

Notes from the Solomons

Brief glimpses from the report of the General Secretary after a few days spent in the Solomon Islands Region in late November 1968. Mr Carter was then on his way to the Assembly.

HONIARA

DEVELOPMENT: It is quite astonishing how the town has grown since February! Many new buildings, more sealed roads, more vehicles — in this town whose population is variously estimated at from 8-12,000 these signs of growth are everywhere. A whole new suburb up the Matanikau river, consisting of 78 houses, recreation hall and school will be complete by Christmas. These low cost houses will allow men already in Honiara to bring their families to the town. Another detached suburb of about 158 houses will be built next year. In each case people will be encouraged to own their houses and make Honiara their permanent residence. Because of the fragmented nature of the town, the problems of pastoral care are going to grow tremendously. Here surely is a field for S.I.C.A. but one is fearful that the churches are not yet ready for such a move.

The addition of more schools also raises problems of religious instruction and of teaching staff. The only way the schools can be staffed is by taking from existing church schools in other places.

GENERAL: I was more than ever impressed with the **needs** of Honiara. There is much evidence of the need for vigorous development. The Board will recall the Rev. J. D. Grocott spoke of this and the need for an experienced man. I am sure this is true but the greater need is for someone who can lead youth.

SOCIAL WELFARE: The Government has appointed a Mr J. Riley (a Methodist) as Social Welfare Officer. There is a tremendous need in many fields — rehabilitation of discharged prisoners, marriage guidance, industrial relations, etc. The Church ought to be in the vanguard here, but its hands are tied by its heavy involvement in education. Therefore we should rejoice that Government has taken this initiative and support them in every way.

MUNDA

Most of my time at Munda was involved with a Regional Executive Meeting which covered much ground and was very interesting. Most impressive was Mr Boseto's handling of the meeting. He is a good Chairman and is able to select from the mass of verbiage the relevant points.

EDUCATION: Educational progress continues to be outstanding. Eighty six passes out of ninety-five entries, 35 with credit, in the Senior Certificate Exam, suggests a very high standard of teaching. On the other hand, 96 applicants for Goldie College High School, when they can only take 60, gives a measure of the increasing demands being made on our facilities at all levels.

Whatever has been achieved in the past, the growing demand will continue to pose problems, and the temptation to reduce the quality of the work to cover more children. The decision to relieve Goldie College Principal, Mr K. J. S. Munro, of full-time teaching, so that he can give more time to administration, planning, development and supervision is a very wise one.

SPIRITUAL AFFAIRS: In this section the outstanding matters were:

- (a) The designation of Mr Matthew Hapa for the Highlands. Mr Hapa is a teacher who had a year in N.Z. in 1966. He is to marry Sister Mavis Qopu of Choiseul. While they will be a big loss to the Solomons, they should be outstanding missionaries in the Highlands.
- (b) The acceptance of two candidates for the deaconess order, one Miss Evelyn Pivo of Vella and the other Mrs Evelyn Beti of Roviana. Mrs Beti is a widow with a family of school-age children. She is quite outstanding and since her parents (Mr and Mrs J. Zini Hite) will assist in the care of the family, she will be able to meet the demands of study and service.
- (c) **RIQI COVE:** A new town is growing up at this place on Koloba-



**A Solomon Islands Deaconess,
Sister Iula.**

**There are 8 overseas and 9 local
Deaconesses in the United Church.**

ngara Island. It is centred round the timber activities of Levers Pacific Timbers Ltd. This is a challenging situation — just as much an industrial post as the large task in Kieta. It is hoped that S.I.C.A. will be able to get the firm to construct a chapel for all faiths to use. A high proportion of the workers at present are connected with the United Church.

BOUGAINVILLE

At Hutjena the major public event was the opening of the United Church Chapel on Saturday, 30th November at 11 a.m. by the Rev. L. Boseto. It was a well attended gathering and was followed by the traditional feast. However, much time was spent in consultations. Messrs Boseto, Cropp, Harney and Paia had come from Munda with me and Mr Bongbong joined us there. This with Mr Sides, made up the representation to the Assembly. Consultations were beamed at preparing for Assembly business though this was handicapped by the lack of agenda. Rev. A. K. Taylor was also with us briefly and we were able to discuss local and personal matters. Mrs Taylor's confinement is due in mid-January and suitable arrangements were discussed. The family hopes to travel to Munda.

TEOP CIRCUIT: With Mr W. Paia, M.B.E., I spent Sunday here. This was possible because M.A.F. took us down in 15 minutes on Saturday afternoon and took us back in the same time on Monday. One thought of the five hour journey by sea that used to be the minimum and was grateful.

Sister Esther Watson and Miss Dianne Bellamy (Order of St. Stephen) work in well together, and they have a happy relationship with the Superintendent, Rev. M. Mosusu. Mr Mosusu attended the Banz Translators' Institute arranged by the Bible Society



The Missionary Aviation Fellowship provide the lifeline of the Highlands and the Bougainville regions.

and this has been a help and stimulus to him. Miss Bellamy, a trained nurse, did not seek a nursing post. She is happily and effectively teaching school and putting her hand to whatever needs to be done. Sister Esther continues to give of herself without stint. Among other things she is caring for a motherless babe from the Rotokas who weighed 2 lb 7 oz when brought in but is now progressing well.

The new Hospital buildings are well on the way and I was asked to take prayers for the building. A Papuan Carpenter is in charge, but Mr Mc

Kerras was due to visit the following week to attend to the next stages of construction. The people are looking forward to their new minister whoever he may be.

The highlight of the weekend was the Confirmation service at which 28 young people made their stand and were received by the Church. I am grateful to the Chairman and Mr Mosusu for the opportunity to take part. Many of the young people I had known as babies, and their parents were my friends so it was of very personal interest.



Teacher and students at Kihili Girls' School.

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1st February, 1969

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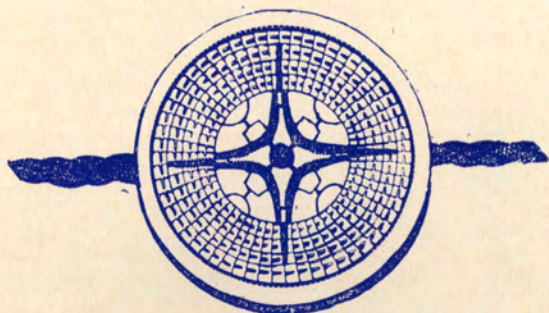
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