

# THE OPEN DOOR



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"A wide door for effective work has been opened".

1 Cor. 16:9. (R.S.V.)

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### METHODIST CHURCH OF NEW ZEALAND

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# CALL TO PRAYER

In December, Papua New Guinea will become a self governing nation with the prospect of full independence next year. But no act of parliament can create a nation. What will weld these people of diverse cultures and speaking more than 750 different languages, into one nation? The United Church has already led the way in independence and unity.

## **Please pray for the Church and the Nation**

**For the Chief Minister**, Mr Michael Somare and members of his government, that they be given wisdom, patience and understanding.

**For all members of the House of Assembly**, that they may ever keep in mind the welfare of the whole community, as well as the welfare of their own electorates.

**For the Civil Service, for the Police and the Army**, each of which has a vital role in the day to day functioning of the nation, that they may be given integrity, and conscientiousness, and may always be concerned for people, rather than regulations.

**For people of other lands**, especially Australians, who serve within the new nation, that they may be tactfully concerned for the welfare of the people they serve, and be willing to take second place with grace and sincerity.

**For the Church**, the whole body of Christian people, who proclaim the one Lord Christ in whom there is unity, and life and peace, that they may be careful to emphasise the oneness of the Gospel, and may be given grace to proclaim the message in terms that are relevant to the listening people.

**For the Moderator, the Rev. Leslie Boseto, the Bishops, Leaders and people of the United Church** who have special responsibilities to help create a nation, yet give it an international awareness.

## **THE SOLOMON ISLANDS**

**Pray for the new Governing Council** of the Solomon Islands as it seeks the road to unity and independence.

**Pray also for the Christian people** that they be true to their calling as Christians.



**Sister Marilyn Harkness** has been engaged in nursing in the New Guinea Islands region. For most of the time she has been a tutor at Watnabara Training School for Maternal and Child Health Nurses. She is due on leave in December this year.



**Sister Bev. Baker** of Turua and **Miss Irene Fillery** of Warkworth have been nursing in the Highlands. Both are retiring this month.

## - PEOPLE -



**Mr Leicester Cheeseman** who has been serving under the Order of St Stephen in the Bougainville Region at Kekesu. He has been asked to stay on, and Synod is to consider the matter.



**Miss Jennifer Harkness** is serving with the Church in Tonga. She has been teaching at Queen Salote College.

# THE FUTURE?

ALAN LEADLEY, Principal of the Training Centre reports:

On the national front, PNG just doesn't stand still. What the future holds God alone knows. We swing between depression and optimism. There is plenty of supporting evidence for both, and if the new nation cannot meet the demands of the future, it is likely to collapse into failure like so many African ex-colonial countries. Self government is scheduled for December 1973, and Independence the following year. I think that the timing is about right, and for Australia to rule any longer could result in feelings getting pent-up and more tense than they already are. After all, up until 1945 there was almost total neglect and it was the war which awakened Australia's conscience, and led it to pour in \$1300 million of aid in 28 years.

Somare, the Chief Minister, is a man of indomitable faith and it may be the infection of this optimism that will save the country from despair and chaos. A lot of doom-laden comments (especially from Europeans) don't do much good. There are many who have left, or are ready to leave PNG. Many believe that Independence too soon could result in a catastrophe, perhaps even comparable to the Congo, or the Nigerian civil war, and chaos in other under-educated countries. If an independent PNG fails to preserve law and order, a rough rule of the jungle will prevail. There are strong secessionist movements — in Bougainville, the Gazelle, Manus, and Papua. On the Gazelle here, fractious Tolais insist, sometimes violently, that many of the white



Alan Leadley

settlers and government cheated them of their traditional lands. Over 40% of the best arable Tolai land is in the hands of non-Tolais!

The Tolais have a pressure group called the Mataungans, and they refuse to accept land ownership decisions made by tribunals.

Things are grim on the economic side—many crops which could grow here (sugar cane?) are not grown because of a fear by Australians that they will undersell Australian growers. PNG even imports (in tins) the pineapples and other tropical fruits which it grows. One of the saddest features is the Japanese "capture" of the fishing industry, as well as the flooding of the PNG market with Japanese goods and Japanese cars. Japanese extract and export raw materials such as fish, timber, and minerals, and we import them after processing. It was recently estimated that last year the Japanese caught 17,000 tons of fish in PNG waters. As an export that would have been worth \$5 million. If there had been a cannery in PNG it would have been worth about \$25 million. As it was,

# GOD KNOWS!

all these fish from our waters brought us a minimal royalty.

So too, the huge Bougainville Copper Proprietary at Panguna is an object of strong nationalistic feelings. If Bougainville tried to break away from PNG, it would not go without a bitter fight. Its wealth (nots its people, who are ethnically closer to the Solomons) keeps it tied to PNG.

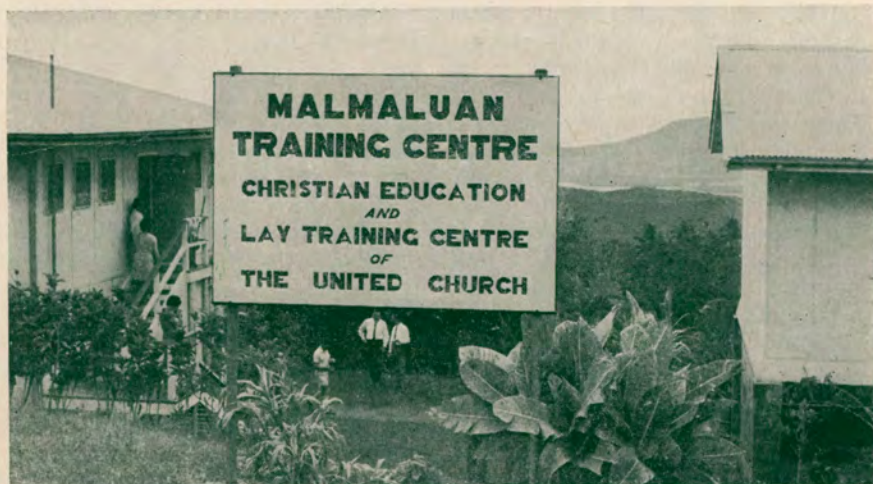
On the bright side, it may be that all the secessionist talk is only a criticism of present administra-

tion, and will diminish or disappear once independence comes. I don't think we can say the same about hostility between Highlander and Coastal, nor about the inter-tribal battles presently raging in the Highlands. The local newspaper only today reports a committee studying the fighting, "there is strong evidence that many tribal groups were making or buying weapons so that they would be in an advantageous position when Independence comes!"

REV. NEVILLE THRELFALL also writes from the Rabaul area:

Things are really quite settled here, in spite of the riots which were splashed in the overseas and local news. Our Choir Day (George Brown Day), last Saturday had a crowd of 12,000, all very happy and orderly — even though there

had been fighting at Kokopo, a few days earlier. Tribal divisions are still the problem, but I believe that these can be overcome, and in the fellowship of the Church they are being overcome.



MISS JAN ANTILL, who went out at the beginning of this year writes:

I'm very happy here at Malmaluan—the staff are tremendous to get on with and I'm learning so much from the students. Rosemary Arthern and I live together at Glen Geddes, the fibrolite house below Alan Leadley's flat and I must admit I was pleasantly surprised at the standard of accommodation and the facilities available to us — apart from having no running hot water there is very little difference to my own home. Rosemary, being a good few years older than me and knowing a lot about the Gazelle, is a great and helpful friend. We get on very well together despite our age difference and she's helping me to think a lot more deeply with regard to Christian Education in P.N.G., today and work in the Mission Field.

As Alan Leadley has no doubt told you, William To Kilala left early this year due to be appointed University Chaplain at Boroko. Don Cracknell is now our new Director and it's a real pleasure to work for him. He really has got the future of the country in mind in all that he does and by his example of concern and utmost efficiency helps us to take an active interest in the Department. He isn't at Malmaluan



**Jan Antill**

very often though, as he believes that to discover and meet the people's needs we must go to them in their villages and not expect them to come to us.

My work is a lot more involved than I anticipated and at times I seem to be struggling, yet I believe I was sent here to do the accounts work for a good reason and know that God will enable me to cope satisfactorily. In addition to keeping the books I do a lot of Don's work, simply because I'm the only person in the office able to do shorthand, I'm secretary for the P.C.E. Council — not a member though, I just take the minutes down in shorthand and stencil them off. I'm taking an elective group for two hours each Friday in basic book-keeping and have also given a couple of block lectures in book-keeping to the laymen. In addition, of course, there are the various activities and other duties which we are responsible for, so you can imagine that our weeks are rather busy. I mentioned at the beginning of this letter that I was very happy here—well I'm so happy I've decided to stay another year provided I'm able to have my permit extended of course.



**William To Kilala**

## MORE PEOPLE



**Rev. and Mrs Fred Baker and Mr and Mrs Don Bennett** will be leaving the Highlands region in November after five years of service. Don Bennett has given outstanding service as head teacher of the Tari School, and Fred Baker has been Minister in South Mendi. For a time he was acting in the place of the Bishop while Bishop Qalo was on leave.

**Mr and Mrs Des Webb** of the Whangarei Uniting Parish have gone to serve the Presbyterian Church of the New Hebrides. They are now living in Vila. Mr Webb, an ex-All Black is well known to Whangarei Methodists. Mrs Webb, formerly of Wanganui is sister to the Rev. Bruce Mackie of Christchurch Central Mission.



**Sister Lyn Sadler** will be coming on short leave at the end of the school year, from Goldie College, Solomon Islands Region.



## A MINISTRY FOR MELANESIA

The 1972 Assembly made several important decisions concerning ministerial training at Rarongo. One was to agree that a degree level course would be offered at the College commencing this year; the other was to begin a special course at Rarongo for students who had not reached form IV level but who had some maturity and Christian gifts and qualities that the Church needed in the ministry. Thus the courses offered cover a wide range of academic ability, from those capable of doing university or degree level work and now enrolled in the new degree programme, to those doing a special course in simple English. In doing this the College is deliberately trying to meet the varying needs present in our Church and to provide a training that will equip men and women to accept the wide variety of challenges that are found in our Church today. In teaching, chaplaincy, and pastoral work we need some ministers with degree ability, but we would be quite wrong to

give the impression that the church only needs people with high intellectual gifts. The Church needs men and women with a deep pastoral concern for people and their spiritual welfare; people who are prepared to go anywhere the Church may ask them wherever there is a need. In a Church the size of the United Church there is the need for a wide variety of gifts within the ministry and it is the task of the theological college to train these people so that they can do this wide variety of jobs that the Church may ask them to carry out. The gifts of these men and women vary; the tasks the Church will ask them to do will vary; but they are all ministers—all servants of the Lord and of the Church—and it is good that they all be trained together and share as much of their training as is possible. While sharing is not possible in some of the classes, there is the involvement of everyone as a total community in worship, sport, and in some of the Bible studies.



Students at Rarongo

At Rarongo we have planned our training on the assumption that what the Church required was a ministry able to meet the needs of the church and community in the Melanesian situation. Our training has a strong practical and a strong Melanesian stress. An adventurous new curriculum was begun in 1969 which is very different in approach to the old theological training; a way which has been talked about all over the world as desirable, but which few have actually put into practice. How many are beginning to copy what we have already begun! The results of this new approach which starts from the situation of our people and the problems we are facing in this area, and which does not break the course into the old traditional subjects, will not be seen for some years. The first students to begin this training spent 1972 within the circuits and although their training is far from complete (only the basic general course has been done) yet from the reports being received many have done fine work.

On Tuesday evenings all the students and their wives meet for Bible Study, but instead of this all being done in English, the college community breaks up into language groups and discussion follows in their own languages. This not only encourages theological thinking in their own languages—an absolute necessity for their future ministry, but something which cannot be assumed will easily take place—but it also means that this is one aspect of their studies that the wives can fully share with their husbands. In other respects the wives are certainly not neglected or overlooked; they have their own special lecturer, Miss Betty Willis, and have their classes and course. So fully as they

engaged in studies and other activities like Women's Fellowship, sewing, cooking, craft work, first-aid, and child-care, that they have little spare time. Nevertheless they do have their own sports afternoon just as the other students. They also share work in their gardens one afternoon a week with their husbands. Self-support is one aim of the College as it looks ahead; another is localisation of staff. Already the College has one very well qualified local man as a lecturer and in the next few years it is planned this number will grow. The College must plan for the future and look to the future, but in so doing it can never forget that it is the church she serves and the training given must always be adapting to the changing needs of the society in which its ministers will lead and serve.

As part of their training and in order that students will not become separated and detached from village life, all the students will go into the villages of the Gazelle for a week each term to assist in running Bible studies. As most will know, students now as part of their practical training go out of college in the middle of their course for a year of work in the Church before returning for their final two years. This year the first students to go out on a practical or intern year have returned to College and are much more aware of the problems they will face in the future and more aware of the type of study they want to do to equip themselves for their future ministry.

Fifteen students are doing their "intern" year this year and there are 71 students doing the full course and 37 in the wives course. Counting staff and children our community numbers over 200.

— Dr Ron Williams

# RARONGO THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

## SELF-HELP PROGRAMME

Self-help is a theme that the whole church is giving quite a lot of thought to these days. As we reach the limits of missionary giving within the supporting churches, or as these churches are even forced to reduce their giving, greater efforts must be made within the United Church to mobilise and live within our own resources. In relation to self-help, Rarongo has been doing as much as is possible with our present resources. The following is an outline of what is being done in this area.

### 1. FOOD

- (a) Students grow most of their own food, and all are required to work at least one afternoon a week on gardening.
- (b) We have about 500 to 1000 coconuts plus about 300 cocoa trees just beginning to bear. Most of the coconuts are used by the students but the rest, plus the cocoa, are now looked after by Vunakabi Plantation. The return is being used to plant more cocoa.
- (c) Fishing — The college students have their own nets and boats and provide much of their own protein diet.
- (d) Chickens — We have 500 chickens under a deep litter system. These should help to provide meat for the single men this year. Each married block has 50 chickens. These provide eggs for the families.

### 2. BUILDINGS

During the last two years the students have built three large buildings.

- (a) One large class room for the senior year.
- (b) One large class room for the wives (including cupboards).
- (c) Single men's dormitory. Last year the students were engaged in building a new single men's dormitory which houses 10 students. Not only has this been built by the students but through their concert tour in Australia, they have also paid for it.

### 3. INVESTMENT

In addition, students have raised \$3000 in the last two concert tours which has been put into a scholarship investment fund. This money has been invested in a property in Lae and should return about \$2000 a year profit, apart from repayment.

It can thus be seen that Rarongo has been doing a great deal towards self-help. I doubt if there is any College that has done as much as far as the students themselves are concerned. This should be known and recognised by the church. Hence this special report.

— Dr Ron Williams

## MORE NEWS FROM THE HIGHLANDS

REV. RON and MRS MARGARET REESON are in the Highlands where they now live at Mendi. Ron is Director of Christian Education—he wrote this paragraph:

At Easter, we were delighted to be invited to return to Nipa to help lead the studies at their Easter camp. Ron led the group in Pidgin and Margaret in local language. The studies were on "Change". For many of the group — truly grass-roots Church complete with feathers in their hair—their entire world has been turned upside down since

the arrival of white men in Nipa in 1960. "We are most afraid," every small discussion group declared, "of early independence. We are not ready, and will be abandoned by the white people who help us now. We are afraid that we will return to the old ways of constant internecine warfare and will forget God's ways. Who will help us?"



Ron and Margaret Reeson

DON and GWEN BENNETT write:

In recent days the station has been having anniversary celebrations to mark the coming of the first European missionaries into the Tari valley just 20 years ago. Traditional dancing and chants were a feature of the time. People from surrounding districts walked into the valley, some coming from as far away as Mendi, a walk of over 100 miles. Twenty years ago such

a gathering would be unheard of as most groups would be very suspicious of people from the next range of mountains. Local Hulis built long houses to cater for the influx and countless numbers of pigs and chickens were gathered unto their fathers. Services were held in the Church and translators had a busy time, "turning the talk" for the various groups. Seeing Hulis

and people from other areas linking arms and dancing together was a memorable experience.

Staff changes are looming yet again. Tomorrow the young lady who has been in charge of the small sewing "factory" we have at the station is leaving and returning to Australia, a volunteer carpenter goes to Indonesia in a few days, the minister and his wife and family go on furlough in a month and a volunteer nurse returns to England in early September. The future of the sewing factory is uncertain. It is financed by the Mustard Seed group and it gives employment to young women who have had some schooling. Clothing is sold through our trade store. At the end of the two year course, the girls are given a hand sewing machine by the group which enables them to do some work on their own. At the present moment there is no replacement in sight. The government is saying that qualified teachers only can do such work so even if there was a be willing to give some time here kindly disposed woman who would she would have to have a recognised certificate.

Miss Josephine Abyjah is the only woman member of the House of Assembly. She is a Papuan who has been vocal lately about separation by Papua from New Guinea. She has been urging members of her electorate to strive for the goal of Papuan independence. This attitude has caused much buzzing in

government circles especially as the desire of the government is for national unity. Welding these diverse groups into one nation is going to be a mammoth job which will last for decades one feels.

Localisation is still a topic of major interest. Recently the Director of Education in this country advised the teachers that his position would be localised by the end of this year and this has now been accomplished. Directors in three other government departments have made way for local men.

There has been no recurring of last year's drought conditions. We are able to get plenty of local foods as gardens are growing well. This is a big help as the cost of food from stores has risen considerably of late. There was a news item from Australia that meat costs have risen by 11% and most food by 5% in the last few months. Australia has just announced some substantial cuts in tariffs in an attempt to curb inflation.

The Christian Education worker from New Ireland was taking my classes for a religious instruction lesson and asked the children to write an answer to the question, "who is God?" One lad wrote, "God is the fella who never makes mistakes," I had been telling the children before that everyone makes mistakes, even New Zealanders, so I guess he was glad there was someone more reliable than his teacher!

# China Revisited

*The author was one of sixteen representatives of the Scotland-China Association who visited the Peoples' Republic in October, 1972.*

## **Are the people better off?**

In the communes where the majority of Chinese live we chatted freely with the villagers in their own homes. There we learned how individual members of a production unit (part of one of the production brigades into which communes are divided for effective large-scale farming) are paid on the basis of 'work points'. In their familiar phrase, they had 'enough to eat, enough to wear'. What was surprising, they usually owned their own houses, and many had savings in the commune bank, which they could draw out as they pleased—for a bicycle or a second one, a sewing machine, the expenses of a son's wedding, or for new clothes. Each family also had its bit of 'self-retained land', on which to grow vegetables for household use, and rear pigs, ducks or chickens.

## **The Young and the Old**

Despite our Western misunderstanding of the communes, they have certainly not abolished family life. Where both parents worked (as was usual) there was the production unit's creche to look after the smallest children, and primary and middle schools for the older ones. But they were still typical Chinese families, in some cases with the parents of the husband living there too. In one case there were four generations.

In the cities as well as the country, the 'problem' of old folks was not usually solved by means of old folks' homes. They were still members of the family who still had a place in society, looking after the children while the parents were at work or out with the local propaganda-education unit.

## **Old Morality — or New?**

We visited many factories and workers' homes in the cities. In one of the workers' flats I chatted with a couple about forty years old. They were very friendly and frank even when my questions were very personal. The wife worked in the factory and the husband taught in middle school. They had two children, a boy and a girl, at school. We talked about marriage and marriage-customs in the old days and now, the present trend towards later marriages, contraception and birth control as practised in China today. They thought two children were enough and didn't care whether they were girls or boys! Divorce was possible on the request of husband or wife but only if the marriage had really broken down. There were few problems of adultery or of young people having sex relations before marriage. The moral force of local community opinion was very strong.

## **The Old Religion**

I noted the absence of any religious symbols or activities in homes

we visited—no ancestral tablets (still very common in the homes of overseas Chinese in places like Singapore), no village temples, no wayside shrines to the earth spirits. In one of the communes I asked one of the leading women about religion and worship. She almost snorted at me: 'that stuff was all superstition to keep the peasants from doing anything about their miseries. We don't need it now. We can work and solve our problems for ourselves and under Chairman Mao's leadership we are on the socialist road to Communism.'

But some religious activities remain. In Peking I met representatives of the patriotic Buddhist Association in the beautiful Temple of Universal Rescue, recently re-painted and decorated. They had twenty priests there and people came to worship or study the scriptures or do research in the library.

### **The Christian Church**

Only in Peking was I able to meet with Christians, and they were official representatives of the 'Patriotic Committees' of the churches—the Catholic Church which had



**"God's Word for China".**

broken from Rome in 1958, and the 'Three Selves Committee of the Protestant Church'. They claimed that there were over 2,000,000 Catholics in China.

The following day, a Sunday. I attended a little Protestant service in the former Bible Society Building on Big Rice Market Street. I talked with sixty-two year old Pastor Yin Chi-tseng, Pastor K'an Hsueh-ching (age forty-five), and with Comrade Wang Yii-hua, the woman deputy secretary of the Peking City Christian Church Three Selves Patriotic Movement Committee. They told me that there were more than forty church workers in the city, and just over 500 Protestant Christians. The last baptisms had been about Easter 1966. They said that a survey in 1958 had revealed over 800,000 Protestant Christians. Like the Catholic workers they were able to support themselves from the offerings of the people and from their earnings in productive work in the country or in the factories.

At the service that morning Pastor Yin celebrated Holy Communion. Since the Cultural Revolution sermons have been discontinued as being 'too subjective'. The congregation was made up of an Englishman from the British Embassy, with his little son, a couple with two children from the Sierra

Leone Embassy, the younger Pastor, Comrade Wang, an old Chinese lady who played the piano, two other Chinese, a man and a woman, myself and my guide from the China Travel Service, Comrade Ku. The Pastors arrange services for members on any day that suited them, as not everyone has their day of rest on a Sunday. They do not 'visit' unless requested to visit sick people in their homes or in hospital. They spend about three days every week working in the orchards, gardens, fields or factories.

When I asked about churches in other cities. I drew a blank. Our hosts explained: 'There is no line of communication with such groups'.

Through keeping this article short I am sure it is out of balance. But I came away with two clear impressions. First, China faces a great many more problems than I have been able to mention. Second, I was confirmed in my belief that what has been happening in China in the last twenty-two years since 'liberation' has been one of the most significant social experiments anywhere in the world.

It is certainly one of our jobs in the Christian Churches in the West to understand what has been happening.

— John Fleming



# CHINA WATCHING - THE CHURCH

China's new policy of qualified openness to the world and of improving friendly relations with the U.S.A., Australia and other Western nations is leading some Christians, according to reports, to ask with eager anticipation if the church still exists there.

What will be the opportunity for Christian contact in the near future? Will there be in this drawing back of the Chinese curtain any missionary opportunities?

All the indications from those who returned from recent visits to China point to the fact that there is little hope in the short or long term future of representatives of the Western churches being free to enter and work in China as representatives of the Christian churches.

But this is not the end of the story, or of the church, or of Christian influence in China.

The church has had a checkered career in this great country. The Nestorian Christians from Asia Minor entered China 600 years ago and their work flourished for 200 years until they were all expelled together with Buddhist priests in the first century A.D. The Roman Catholics arrived in China in 1294 and Protestants in 1807, but most left after the Rebellion of 1852 and again after the Boxer Uprising of 1900. Two hundred missionaries and 2,000 Protestants, and 30,000 Catholics were killed. The remaining missionaries fled. In all these great periods the Christian church

survived without western missionaries or western money.

But what of today? We know that in 1949 when Mao Tse-tung led the great Communist Revolution, all the missionaries, regarded by the Communists as the agents of imperialism, were compelled to leave.

Some of us who were in 1959 invited to China from the churches in Australia saw the church there, met its leaders, attended its services—Catholic, Methodist, Baptist, Congregational. We knew that this was a remnant and that many had perished in the Revolution. But the remnant was there. It is true that everywhere we went in conversation with Christians the view was taken that the 19th and 20th century missionary work had been tainted with imperialism. Western missionaries had built great churches, hospitals and schools which became symbols of the power of the superior west. We listened and discussed. We saw both the truth and the error in the things the Chinese Christians said and knew the fact that there were 4,000,000 witnessing Christians in China, many ready to give their lives for their faith, was a measure of the truth that was in the Christian Movement.

Since 1959 the church has suffered greatly and during the Cultural Revolution it was branded as one of the four "Olds"—old habits, old traditions, old beliefs and old

customs. All religious organisations were suspended for an indefinite period of "struggle, criticism and transformation". Today, Professor Ross Terrill, the Australian expert on China, reports that many of the churches are boarded up, empty and marked with political slogans. Other visitors have seen churches used as stores and government offices.

There is evidence, however, that small groups of Christians meet in many parts of China for worship and fellowship. We are always in danger of thinking of **the church** as a highly organised institution with its hierarchy of ministries and its great educational, medical and serving centres. If this is the church then we can say that it has practically gone in China. But in the New Testament it was never like this. It was a body of believers great or small who had come to know Jesus Christ as Lord. There is evidence that **this** church still exists in China.

It would be a tragic mistake to think that China can be converted from Maoist Communism. The people are obviously happy under it and the country progressive with it. There are two Christian broadcasting stations—one in Korea and one in the Philippines. John Taylor, the great missionary leader of our day, says that his prayer is that these two stations will use their privileged position to offer a genuine service to the Chinese people

that is appreciative, sympathetic and very humble. For the immediate future, he says, our most telling form of witness to our Lord's power will not be the things we can say to China, but our readiness to listen to what China is saying to us.

**Lastly, more and more contacts are going to be made with China in this new day of growing openness. Visitors will go there, business men, politicians and perhaps even tourists. Christianity will be judged by what is seen and heard through these.**

**The representatives of the so-called Western Christian nations had better be very careful this time—for Christ's sake.**



**Dr Owen Eaton, who grew up in a Methodist Parsonage, was sent out by the Presbyterian Church. A New Zealander who gave his life for China in April 1939.**

# What did happen in Soe?

By Rev. John Atkinson, N.S.W. State Secretary for Methodist Overseas Missions.

**The village of Soe, in central Timor seems an unlikely place for anything extraordinary to happen. Yet a few years ago, Christians throughout the world heard reports of revival and miracles taking place in this remote, isolated area.**

**What really happened at Soe seems as difficult to arrive at, as the village itself. Perhaps too much has already been said and what is the real story, is difficult to discover, for people have written about the events of Soe from their own points of view.**

**Some of the people involved have been influenced by all the attention they have received and are unable or reluctant to tell.**

Soe is a village about 70 kilometres from Kupang and the road (if you have a good imagination you may call it a road), rises to over 2500 feet above sea level. I was surprised and relieved to find a section of tarred road running through the village. There are cement walled houses mixed with the older style places with walls of palm leaf stems and grass roofs. The Protestant church is a large building right in the main street through Soe. The bible school and day schools are further along opposite the few shops and local inn. There are crowds along the roads as this is the centre of a large and mixed group of people.

Probably the earliest inhabitants of Timor were these small, hardy people who retreated into the mountains following waves of migrations of people from Malayan Islands. Despite the influences these strangers brought, the Timorese people have maintained their own identity. The Antoni, as they are called, live in this area of central Timor in small hamlets. Their houses are

conical without any walls as such, with the grass walls right to the ground. There are no windows but a low opening which serves as a doorway.

Once inside you see an earth floor and a platform and framework on which is stored food and belongings.

The people grow corn which is stored in this roof section for use during the dry months of the year. A length of woven cotton cloth is wrapped around the body for clothing. The women spin the cotton and make patterns on simple hand looms which are still widely used. Most of the men were wearing shop-bought shirts with an extra length of Timorese cloth over the shoulder.

A visitor cannot help notice the ease with which the people ride their wiry ponies. To see a fellow gallop along the track with shoulder cloth flying behind him puts you in mind of the words about the rider from "The Man from Snowy River" whose horse was described "with a touch of Timor pony". The

horses have rope bridles but only a piece of cloth for saddle and they have no stirrups.

The way of life here seems very simple yet no one would deny that something happened to the Christian Timorese at Soe that gave them a new intensity within the local congregation and inspired teams of people to go to the people in their area to tell their story in their own way.

Timor had not been largely affected by the movements of Hinduism and Islam into South-East Asia and the people held an animistic belief in spirits. There was "Vis neno" the Lord of Heaven and "Vis pah" the Lord of the earth who influenced all of man's life. The means by which man made sure he fitted into the order of things in this life were most important, and belief in spirits, both good and evil, come naturally to the Timorese.

Although the Christian church had been in Timor before the East Coast of Australia was even discovered, it was not until this century that the Netherlands church was able to officially appoint a representative to work in the area. There was rapid growth as Christianity became accepted.

Following the independence of Indonesia, the Protestant church of Timor was in the hands of local leaders, and there are over 600,000 baptised members who are served by only 130 ministers. The indigenous church was finding its way and had the support of local people.

In many respects, however, the Indonesian motto "Unity in Diversity" was true of the church in Timor. There had been a ministry during the summer months of 1965 by evangelists from a bible school

in Bata, Java. The orders and organisation of the Dutch church still were maintained within the Protestant Church of Timor.

At a meeting of Timorese people at Soe, something came into their lives which resulted in an enthusiasm and vitality both to teach and heal. It is unfortunate that some people have used the experiences here to back up their own beliefs and now it is being said that some people have benefited from books which have been written about the miracles of water turning to wine, of dead being raised and of people walking on the water.

Rev. Daniel is still minister to the Timorese congregation at Soe. He is a gracious and humble man who shows great hospitality. Rev. Manoen is minister to the Indonesian-speaking congregation there, he speaks gently with a quiet serenity. I did not press them into conversation about the events of Soe and I felt they were reluctant at this stage to comment.

It is true that 1965 was a tremendous year in Indonesia history. The Communists and the military were manoeuvring for power and during the collapse of the Communist influence, people suspected of being Communists were being murdered, and right through Indonesia people joined churches because to be a church member meant being identified as a non-Communist. It was also against this background and at this time the great revival took place.

I don't want to join those who have spoken without enough knowledge of what happened here in Timor, but I hope one day Rev. Daniel will be free to share what things God did for his people at Soe.

# REPORT FROM AUSTRALIA

**An outstanding work of MISSION AID is being done by groups of laymen in the Australian States —Mission Liaison Groups, who are in touch with the churches overseas and continually on the look out for points of practical need where they can help.**

**As one of these groups says — “We are a focal point that a mission, regardless of denomination, can approach for help in such mat-collecting of information on pro-jecters as the purchasing of goods, or locating those ‘hard to find articles’ of no value to us here in Australia but invaluable to some particular sphere of mission work.”**

**Rodger Brown, M.O.M. State Secretary in South Australia, writes:** “A new church is planned in New Guinea. The local people must provide the finance but they have some peculiar difficulties. Who can help them with architectural or engineering expertise? A new part is wanted for a lighting plant in New Hanover — there is no local supply. Where can we get the bit that is needed? A plan is needed for the electrical wiring of a new building. Can someone help? A builder is needed for North Australia for a special three months job. Is there someone who could take time off and have a working holiday with accommodation and food provided? The State Promotions Department wants special posters made — is

there an advertising man in the house?”

“One could go on and on indicating the areas of need; business contacts, machinery parts, draft designs, all kinds of specialist information. The work of the church in all of the areas of our concern is not just a simple matter of preaching the gospel, running a Sunday school, providing a day school or a health clinic. Much of the finance involved in the many-sided work of the church must be raised locally. Income from Australia and New Zealand has remained fairly static over the last few years, with costs increased and opportunities for ministry having grown dramatically, especially in urban areas. There are whole new suburbs in Port Moresby, Lae and Honiara. Church buildings, manses, meeting centres are urgently needed to meet some of the need. Plantations have been established, a market gardening project has begun, strawberry farming is undertaken, hydro-electric schemes in the Highlands to save the tremendous costs of petrol and kerosene. We may be able to help at some point of need.”

**Another member of the group writes:** “It seems that a considerable amount of time and money is wasted by missionaries in that various pieces of technical equipment are used—generating plants, lawnmowers, typewriters, sewing machines,

radio transmitters and boat engines. I have been asked to work on some of these during a few work party trips. I am not criticising missionaries, but I do feel that there is much scope for help in this field."

He goes on to say that the ways in which laymen can help is to assist with recommendations of suitable equipment and advise on maintenance programmes, promote the idea that missionaries should be taught a few fundamental things such as how to change and patch a tyre, and change a spark plug, before they leave Australia.

Service Mission Groups of specialists could do installation and maintenance work for the churches overseas on a commercial basis, using the returns to subsidise working for missions.

**Here's another young layman who writes having been greatly**

**privileged to join with a small work party last year:** "I say without fear of contradiction that this was a highlight of personal satisfaction. New friends, new experiences and a broader outlook were only part of the deal. I look forward eagerly to being further privileged in joining similar parties."

The laymen are publishing regularly lists of equipment needed overseas, new or second-hand. Here is a sample: woodwork equipment — typewriters and motor bikes — kerosene refrigerator — garage equipment—someone to sell basketware from North Australia—duplicators, adding machines, penfriends — old Encyclopaedia Britannica — a rice thrasher—maize thrasher—windmills — basketballs — saddle — church bell — food mixer — information about dessicated coconut . . . and so the list goes on.

## REPORT FROM THE PACIFIC

### PACIFIC MUSICIANS' PRACTICUM

Thirty-five musicians and re-"new" pieces of music during the source leaders produced thirty-three 19-day Pacific Musicians Practicum in Fiji during May.

Participants came from Cook Islands, Tonga, Western Samoa, Solomons, Niue, Gilbert & Ellice Islands, Papua New Guinea, Tahiti, Hawaii, United States and Fiji to compose, harmonize, and write down both traditional and new forms of music from all the islands represented.

A most important highlight of the first week was group discussion on the subject, "what is appropriate for church music?" The distinction of sacred and secular music was seen as false in many cases. Slow, calm, dignified music is not the only way to praise God.

Yet the feeling of many was expressed by the Niuean delegate who said, "Fear is in the person. People who want to worship feel they have to behave before God. We duck our heads and go before God quietly,

carefully, or else we have his wrath."

Compositions occupied much of the second week, with each participant trying to notate at least one song or hymn. Many wrote original melodies and poetry. Others used their technical knowledge to write our well-known traditional songs, some for the first time ever. Still others concentrated on harmony and arrangement of traditional melodies for choir or group singing.

A symposium organized late in the second week and held in the Bure at the University of the South Pacific included short presentations by the resource leaders, Dr Barbara Smith from University of Hawaii, Dr Austin C. Lovelace from Dallas, Texas, and Mrs Chris Saumaiwai from Fiji. Each incorporated demonstrations by members of the Practicum group, then a selection of the new compositions and arrangements were performed. The moderator Mrs Tiresa Malietoa from U.S.P. then invited the crowd of 200 people ut "in the moon" for island informality to climax the evening.

A number of different island groups residing in Fiji performed their traditional songs and dances during the Practicum, including those from Gilbert Islands, the Banabans from Rabi, a Fijian meke written for the occasion, Cook is., and Rotuman traditional songs. A diverse group from Raiwaga Parish Church (Roman Catholic) returned twice, finally providing supper on the final night to climax the warm fellowship of the group.

What did the participants themselves have to say about the Practicum?

An evaluation by the members was taken on the second last day and the following are some of the comments made:

"The sooner we have another Practicum the better."

"This practicum has been most helpful."

"I should like to say that this practicum has been a wonderful opportunity to learn more about music, and to get to know other people and their traditional music and ways of life."



Moore Memorial Church, a Methodist Church in Shanghai. The photo was taken in 1959. (Courtesy, Missionary Review).