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MR F. T. CROSS

UNDEUNED IN GUADALCANAL

By THE RIGHT REVEREND R. S. DEAN, EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

MY flying visit to the South Pacific region took me first to Palmyra and then to the Diocese of Melanesia. The disease is a great deal smaller — only a mere three quarters of a million square miles in area — but its problems and challenges are no less serious and those of communications are probably even greater.

The islands in the Diocese of Melanesia for the most part are linked by air transportation while those in Melanesia depend almost entirely on ocean going transportation.

This means that in the Diocese of Melanesia there is an Anglican fleet of which we may well be proud. There is what might be called the flag ship — *The Southern Cross*, 85 ft long and displacing 110 tons — which is used for the most part by the diocesan bishop, the Right Reverend A. T. Hill, and his Melanesian suffragans, Leonard Alfalfari and Dudley Tuti — and it might be said in passing that Dudley is quickly almost every time he goes to sea.

There is the 55 ft long *Bad-dee* used for cargo, the 70 ft. motor ship called the *Farbu Toomey* and the 55 ft *Servyn* which sails round the island of New Hebrides. Quite a fleet!

For my part I sailed in the *Southern Cross* and so I am able to say that while the shore "South Pacific" may seem to be very romantic the reality is anything but that.

SOME HEROES

Work in the Diocese of Melanesia is hard, tough and demanding, and its work is not nearly as well known as it should be.

There are heroes of the Cross, unknown and unnamed in this diocese.

I think of the bishop, Alfred Hill, who owns a miner's ticket, and has worked for thirty-five years in the diocese, eleven of them as the bishop.

I think of Archbishop Harry C. F. Fox, aged eighty-eight, who has served in the diocese for more than sixty years. This "do it yourself" diocese as Howard Johnson called it in "Global Odyssey" has 124 clergy of whom 112 are Melanesians.

It also has no less than 850 Melanesian catechists who are paid up to about \$5 per year, and also 55 members of the famous Melanesian Brothers and 15 nuns in training.

CALL FOR THANKSGIVING AFTER TASHKENT

ECUMENICAL PRESS SERVICE

Bangalore, India, January 31

The Commission on International Affairs of the National Christian Council of India, in a call to thanksgiving and dedication published on January 13, offers its "sincere thanks to God Almighty for the miraculous turn of events resulting in the Tashkent declaration which has laid the foundation of peace between India and Pakistan."

"We believe that this is the work of God triumphing over what appeared to be insurmountable," they said. "We share fully the joy of the nation and of the world at large at this remarkable achievement towards peace, and about through the state-manship of a very high order."

"We also pay our humble tribute to Prime Minister Koyen and his devoted team but whose indefatigable zeal, determination for peace, and statesmanship of the Tashkent conference would not have been so successful as follows:

The price of the Tashkent agreement our nation has had to pay is greater than anyone had anticipated, namely the life of our beloved Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri.

"In his death the nation has suffered the tragic loss of a great champion of peace and justice."

There are also 50 students training to be catechists, and in the fine schools of Pawa, Alangana, I saw evidence of many other young men who no doubt one day will find their places in the service of Christ in this diocese.

I spent thirteen days in this diocese, although eight of them were in hospital on Guadalcanal where I was grounded for eight days having been attacked by a pneumonia virus.

I was not the first to discover that God often puts a man on his back in order that he may look up, and I had time to think of the New Testament that I have so far seen.

To be entirely dependent on other people is a great way of finding out exactly what kind of people they are, and certainly the European and Solomon Island doctors and nurses tested me with kindness that could not have been surpassed anywhere.

The five days during which I was mobile provided me with unforgettable experiences. The Melanesian Brotherhood, for example, is perhaps the organization closest to the pattern of the New Testament that I have so far seen.

Started in 1925 by a Melanesian — Ini Kopuria — the Brothers bind themselves by annual vows to abstain from marriage and other such commitments, and after a period of training become wandering evangelists, visiting island after island.

I visited their headquarters on Guadalcanal, and understood what Canon Fox had said to me when he had told me that for eleven years he had been a member of that Brotherhood and, as he said, owned nothing but a singlet and a loin cloth, and yet "I felt I owned the world."

CATHEDRAL NEED

It all seemed a far cry from our Western organization and our dependence on possessions. Since my vision on the building of cathedrals are apparently well-known, my critics may be surprised to read that I feel that the Diocese of Melanesia does need a new cathedral.

The present one at Honiara is in fact two wretched Quon sets huddled together, and is a totally inadequate structure for

the crowds of people who attend worship not only on Sunday but on weekdays too.

So plans are afoot for the building of a new cathedral, but the authorities have turned down an architectural scheme submitted for a cathedral costing £40,000.

The Cathedral Chapter had decided that £25,000 is the maximum that could be spent on a building! No wonder I felt as if in the joyful communion of happiness of this remarkable diocese.

Thinking about the need of a cathedral, surely there must be a number of Episcopalians G.I.s who make up the "Living great hall" of Guadalcanal who would be prepared to make a new cathedral possible.

My space is gone and I have nothing about the four European staff hospitals, the two lower colleges, the school scattered throughout the diocese, the printing press and the lifts ships which make up the means of transport in this remarkable diocese.

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