

THE ANGLICAN CHURCH AND THE VANUATU INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT: SOLIDARITY AND AMBIGUITY

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Introduction

The involvement of the three major New Hebrides churches (the Presbyterian Church of the New Hebrides, the [Anglican] Diocese of Melanesia and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Port Vila) in the New Hebrides independence movement (1970-80), through their leaders and members (and to a lesser extent as institutions), which resulted in the independence of the Republic of Vanuatu on 30 July 1980 is well known but apparently not systematically documented. The Secretary General of the Vanua'aku Pati and, of course, first prime minister of the Republic of Vanuatu was Fr. Walter Lini, an Anglican priest (not a "onetime Anglican priest" as some have described him¹, as he continued to be licensed to function as a priest by the bishop while engaged fulltime in politics) whose formation in Anglican schools and theological colleges in the New Hebrides, Solomon Islands and New Zealand greatly shaped his thinking. Other prominent Anglicans in the independence movement included Fr. John Bennett Bani (later president of Vanuatu), Grace Mera-Molisa, Aiden Garae, George Worek and Hanson Lini, most trained by the church in New Zealand.

Likewise, the Presbyterian Church of the New Hebrides (PCNH), always a stronger institutional supporter of independence than the Anglicans, produced key leaders in the independence movement, such as George Sokomanu (first president of the Republic of Vanuatu) Fred Timakata (a PCNH pastor and later president of Vanuatu), George Kalsakau (first chief minister before independence), Sethy Regenvanu (another PCNH pastor), Donald Kalpokas (twice Prime Minister), Barak Sope (PCNH pastor and prime minister) and Kalkot Matas Kelekele (Vanua'ku Pati secretary and until recently, president of Vanuatu). Roman Catholic priest Fr. Gerard Leymang became chief minister in the Government of National Unity (with Fr. Walter Lini) in 1978, smoothing the way to independence, alienating his French backers in the process. Overseas church partners also backed the independence movement -- for example, the Pacific Conference of Churches, the World Council of Churches, the Presbyterian Church of Australia, the General Synod of the Church of Melanesia, the Australian Council of Churches and others.

Of course, there were other influences but to ignore the churches in the history of the Vanuatu independence movement would be a serious error. While political opponents and the international press sometimes concentrated on apparently Marxist elements of the movement (for example, the use of the term "commissar" for Vanua'aku Pati local officials) and links with other Third World socialist liberation movements such as that of Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, the initial formation of all of the Vanuatu independence movement leaders was Christian (often encouraged in this direction by their missionary teachers or colleagues, or applying Christian solutions to the situations of injustice in which they found themselves) and the movement's general lack of violence reflects these roots. A second

¹ John Besant, *The Santo Rebellion: An Imperial Reckoning*, Richmond: Heinemann Publishers Australia and Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1984, inside front dustcover.

influence must also be mentioned, often intensified by education and travel to church events in other parts of the Pacific: the awareness that political independence was coming to other colonies in the Pacific -- Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands -- and the question, when was it coming to the New Hebrides?

Because I know this history better and have begun to do some work on the archives in both Honiara and Santo, in this paper I shall concentrate on the relation between the Vanuatu independence movement and the Anglican church in the New Hebrides (first as the archdeaconry of the New Hebrides within the Diocese of Melanesia, then, after 26 January 1975, as the diocese of the New Hebrides in the Church of the Province of Melanesia).² However, the issues and questions which I shall raise about the Anglicans apply to all the churches and need to be discussed in relation to them.

I have ten points on this subject that I shall discuss:

1. Traditional Presbyterian and Anglican opposition to the Condominium Government.

Before I plunge into the late 1960's, I wish to give a bit of background of the relations of the Anglican and Presbyterian churches with the New Hebrides Condominium government. An old but still valuable history of South Pacific colonialism, Linden A. Mander's *Some Dependent Peoples of the South Pacific*, documents well the collision of French, British and Australian interests in the New Hebrides and the role of the Presbyterian Mission in particular in opposing a French takeover of the islands. While France extended the New Caledonia model of colonization northward, the Presbyterians pleaded with Australia to exercise sovereignty over the islands for the protection both of indigenous New Hebrideans and their own work. The enormous depopulation and devastation caused to the people of the New Hebrides in the 19th century through disease, the labour trade and alcohol is almost unimaginable. The British reforms in labour trade legislation that followed Bishop Patteson's death in 1871 were easily evaded by fictitious sale of ships and re-registration under the French flag, putting the trade under the more lax French law. The English consul in Noumea attempted to put British subjects in the island group under British law and a British protectorate was reluctantly established in the Solomon Islands. The compromise in the New Hebrides, the 1887 British-French Joint Naval Commission and the establishment of the British-French Condominium government in 1907 (formed without consultation with Australia) pleased no one. Native New Hebrideans were given neither citizenship nor protection and had very little recourse to justice when wronged. The Condominium operated in favour of the foreign powers and Presbyterians and Anglicans universally argued that it favoured French economic and colonial interests in particular.³

² Anglican mission work began in the New Hebrides in the mid-19th century with visits by Bishop George Augustus Selwyn from New Zealand and the founding of the Melanesian Mission. Eventually through comity arrangements with the Presbyterian mission, Anglicans took on responsibility for the northern New Hebrides (Pentecost, Ambae and Maewo) and the Banks and Torres Islands, while the Presbyterians worked in the southern and central New Hebrides. However, by the 1960's both churches were working in Santo. Interestingly, this comity agreement meant that eventually the two churches had the greater part of the New Hebrides covered and contributed to the strength of the Vanua'aku Pati in rural areas of the Condominium.

³ Linden A. Mander, *Some Dependent Peoples of the South Pacific*, New York: Macmillan, 1954, 460-483.

Bishop Cecil Wilson (bishop of the Diocese of Melanesia from 1896 to 1911) writes of the Joint Naval Commission and Condominium governments in his time:

I suppose no place in the world is so badly governed in the interest of the natives as the New Hebrides. Just as trouble is caused amongst them through their not knowing who is chief and whom they should obey, so there is trouble on a far larger scale owing to these islands being under no single protectorate, but in the joint control of Britain and France.⁴

He gives an example of New Hebrides justice:

A trader under the French flag, though of British origin, sold gin to some of our people in the Torres Group, and I found many of them drunk. I reported him, and was told that I must bring up my witnesses two hundred miles to Vila. But as he was under the French flag, I should have had to plead in the French Court, and there were sixty cases to be heard before mine, so, for lack of time to waste, and money, to follow it up was impossible. There were neither police stations nor police in any of the islands. The laws differed under the two authorities, and to try to protect the natives against their exploiters was almost useless. At one time there were together a Spanish president, a French and an English judge, a Spanish public prosecutor, a Dutch native advocate, native witnesses who spoke pidgin-English; and the accused were mostly French traders.⁵

French importation of massive amounts of alcohol with its destructive consequences was a major factor in the Presbyterian and Anglican opposition to the joint administration. Wilson continues:

I was told by Dr. Bowie, the Scotch missionary at Ambrym, that a hundred and sixty cases of gin were landed in one day at a trader's store on that island, followed by two hundred more at the same place just afterwards; that the natives in that part were living on gin, and that stills had been landed on Opa. In his own hospital (of fifty beds) he had cases of delirium tremens and paralysis from alcohol drinking, and of gun wounds caused by drunken men. I myself saw in a trader's store on Opa fourteen cases of absinthe.⁶

I have never seen it asked but I think one must ask whether this deliberate poisoning of the indigenous people of the New Hebrides was an attempt to clear the land for French (and, indeed, English) colonization.

Bishop John Manwaring Steward, writing of the situation in 1920, ten years after Wilson's episcopate, comments,

⁴ Cecil Wilson, *The Wake of the Southern Cross: Work and Adventure in the South Seas*, London: John Murray, 1932, 57.

⁵ Wilson, *The Wake of the Southern Cross*, 59.

⁶ Wilson, *The Wake of the Southern Cross*, 59-60.

Our missionaries in the Condominium have a very difficult work before them, and that most farcical form of so-called government is unable to protect the natives from their enemies of European extraction. When the "Big Four" can spare time to consider this out-of-the-way part of the world one sincerely hopes that the position, creditable neither to France nor Great Britain, may be rectified.

He adds, "no one I know of has a good word for the Condominium".⁷ Steward also excoriated the Condominium in the Australian press.⁸

In 1921, comparing Melanesian Mission relations with the governments in the Solomons and New Hebrides, Steward writes,

Where, as is the case in the British Solomons, we are fortunate in the possession of a just and sympathetic Government, cases causing friction between the Mission and the settlers or Government officials are not of frequent occurrence; but even here cases may arise where the Missionaries may not see eye to eye with the European settlers or with the Government; whereas, in such places as the New Hebrides, under the calamitous Condominium, these cases are only too frequent.⁹

Even British government officials recognized that the Condominium was a failure in protecting the interests of native New Hebrideans. Sir Everard im Thurn, former High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, in his 1922 Preface to W.H.R. Rivers' *Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia* (to which three Melanesian Mission clergy contributed), writes,

In the case of the Solomon Islands, annexation by Great Britain . . . was comparatively easy; for . . . [almost] the whole of the group had for some time been undisputedly under British influence. It was unfortunately otherwise in the case of the New Hebrides, where, French and British interests being quite inextricably intermingled, the best that could be done was to patch up an Anglo-French "Condominium," which novel and remarkable political experiment, even though it might be effective as regards purely European interests, is entirely inadequate, owing to the radical difference between British and French views in such matters, for the control and help of the islanders.¹⁰

Anglican opposition to the Condominium government continued into the thirties. The May 1931 New Zealand edition of the Melanesian Mission's *Southern Cross Log* approvingly reprints an article from the *New Zealand Herald* a few months earlier entitled, "A Pacific Problem", which documents the New Hebrides situation:

⁷ "Report by Bishop Steward", *Melanesian Mission: Report Issued by the English Committee 1920*, [London], 1920, 11-12.

⁸ See for example, "A Bachelor Bishop, South Seas Diocese, Condominium a Failure", *The Argus* (Melbourne), 27 May, 1922, 26.

⁹ John [Manwaring Steward], "An Oceanic Province" n.p. [1921], 1. See <http://anglicanhistory.org/oceania/jmsteward/oceanic1921.html>

¹⁰ W.H.R. Rivers, ed., *Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922, xiv-xv.

On the testimony of a planter lately arrived in Auckland from the New Hebrides, the position there seems to be going from bad to worse, and calls urgently for review. More than twenty years have passed since the Anglo-French Condominium was established, and during that time there has been ample opportunity to judge the experiment. From the British point of view it has been an utter failure.

Morally-based English restrictions on the importation of indentured labour are undermined by French encouragement of the practice, bringing in thousands of indentured labourers from Indochina, thus making a mockery of English justice and putting the English traders at a great commercial disadvantage. The article continues,

In the opinion of these English planters, the necessity of two codes of law, operating side by side, has brought "pandemonium" rather than "condominium." This testimony confirms the general British opinion, shared at times by French writers, that the system of dual government has disappointed every hope raised when it was instituted.

It is interesting to note that the term "pandemonium" used to describe the Condominium, as in the title of Fr. Walter Lini's 1980 autobiography, *Beyond Pandemonium*, is not new but is a description applied to the New Hebrides for at least 40 years. The article concludes:

What next should be tried is not clear. French rule would probably lessen the chance of safeguarding native interests. Partitioning would present difficulty, as the two national interests are not wholly separable. An undivided mandate, while serving the natives, would not obviate other drawbacks. Complete British possession is an idea unacceptable to France. Acquisition by Australia raises the same objection. The time is fast arriving for submission of the problem to a European tribunal, preferably the Council of the League of Nations.¹¹

Ironically, Mander, writing twenty years later, advocates the United Nations taking over the New Hebrides as a Trust Territory.¹² It was also about this time also that the Presbyterian churches in the New Hebrides and Australia approached the Government of Australia about purchasing the New Hebrides, or part of it, but this suggestion went nowhere.

2. Anglican softening towards the Condominium government -- mid 1930's

With the arrival of Walter Hubert Baddeley as new bishop of Melanesia in early 1933, there was a shift to a more positive relationship with the Condominium government. Baddeley was a World War 1 hero on the battle fields of France and came to the position of bishop without any previous experience of mission work or the ethos or history of the Melanesian Mission. He was the most Erastian of the Diocese of Melanesia bishops, working very closely with the Resident Commissioner of the British Solomon Islands Protectorate (BSIP), for example, in the deportation of one of his clergy, Richard Prince Fallows, for organizing a parliamentary organization on Ysabel to press the BSIP government for better labour

¹¹ "A Pacific Problem", *Southern Cross Log* (Auckland), May, 1931, 71-73. The original article was in the *New Zealand Herald*, 13 December 1930.

¹² Mander, *Some Dependent Peoples of the South Pacific*, 491.

conditions, and in opposing the post-World War 2 Malaita nationalist movement, Maasina Rule. His predecessor, Frederick Merivale Molyneux, while a fierce opponent of illegal French recruiting, was found to have had homosexual relations with a large number of native youths, particularly during his time as assistant bishop in the New Hebrides in the late twenties. As this information became public, Molyneux and the diocese became the laughing stock of the planter community and there were even rumours that the French authorities would bring criminal charges against him. The diocesan staff conference in 1931 forced Molyneux to resign and Baddeley was chosen by the Melanesian Mission Committee in London to sweep clean the Mission and restore its credibility. Restoration of relations with the BSIP and Condominium governments was a high priority.¹³

Here is Baddeley speaking to the Melanesian Mission (MM) English Committee in 1936:

The Condominium Government which rules in the southern part of Melanesia has for long been a kind of "Aunt Sally" among governments, something at which all manner of things might be thrown in. I am glad to say that both the British and French Commissioners have, during these past three years, been most kind and helpful. When Archdeacon Godfrey raised the matter of the depopulation of the Torres, owing to excessive recruiting there, the Government immediately ordered the recruiting to cease. When I asked for help in our medical work, the British Commissioner immediately applied for (and received) an annual grant of £200 sterling to assist us. It is right that you should know these things.¹⁴

As far as I know, this is the beginning of Condominium (British administration) financial support of MM medical work in the New Hebrides. Godden Memorial Hospital at Lolowai on Ambae over the years became a major recipient of Condominium government grants. Presbyterian hospitals received similar grants. As with the Solomons, the British did not do direct medical or educational work in the New Hebrides and depended entirely on the missions. Only in the sixties did the British government become more directly involved in medical and educational work, but more rapidly in the Solomons than in the New Hebrides. Eventually the British administration and the Anglican and Presbyterian missions came to need and depend on each other with the British government providing much of the money and the two churches the services.

Other reasons for closer relations between the diocese and the Condominium government included the solidarity engendered by World War 2 (the New Hebrides became a place of refuge for the diocese's women's religious community, the Community of the Cross), the need for government permission to move personnel back and forth between the Condominium and the BSIP and good personal relations between the bishop and mission staff and the British Condominium staff, many of whom were faithful Anglicans.

¹³ See David Hilliard, *God's Gentlemen: A History of the Melanesian Mission 1849-1942*, St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1978, 249-51; Ruth Frappell, Leighton Frappell, Robert Withycombe and Raymond Nobbs, eds., *Anglicans in the Antipodes: An Indexed Calendar of the Papers and Correspondence of the Archbishops of Canterbury, 1788-1961, Relating to Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific*, Westport: Greenwood Press, 1999, 252; interview with the Rev. Richard Prince Fallows, Vryheid, South Africa, 4 August 1981.

¹⁴ *Precis of a Report by the Bishop given at a meeting of the General Committee at Church House, Westminster, 29th January, 1936*, Sydney: Union House, 1936, 3.

However, by the end of his episcopate, even Baddeley soured of the Condominium. In a 1947 interview in *Pacific Islands Monthly*, reprinted in the *Southern Cross Log*, he pointed out that the native population of the New Hebrides had fallen between two stools:

There has been little or no joint action in the interest of the indigenous peoples. Here and there is a French hospital where 'natives' are treated; in some areas mission hospitals (subsidized either by the Condominium Government or by the British Administration alone) fill the gap. There is very little district administration -- little interest in village hygiene; attempt to administer the law are very sporadic, and only some serious public misdemeanour -- a murder or a public fight -- puts the wheels in motion.

In particular, Baddeley strongly criticizes the British government for excluding the New Hebrides from the Colonial Development Fund of £5 million per year for ten years spread among the colonies. The 65,000 people of the Condominium "must still remain, so it would seem, the responsibility of societies and groups which, inspired by evangelistic and philanthropic ideas, have hitherto borne the heat and burden of the day, and that with very little encouragement or assistance."¹⁵

3. The importance of the close relations between Anglicans in the Solomons and New Hebrides.

From its beginning, the Melanesian Mission, or (after 1861) the Diocese of Melanesia, included New Caledonia, the New Hebrides, the Banks and Torres Islands, Santa Cruz and the Solomon Islands; in the late twenties, the Mandated Territory of New Guinea was added. From the beginning, lay and ordained missionaries from New Caledonia, the New Hebrides and the Banks Islands were crucial in the evangelization of the Solomons. Until 1920, all future indigenous teachers and clergy met and studied together at St. Barnabas School, Norfolk Islands, and there was often intermarriage between students from the "south" and the "north". The mission ship the *Southern Cross* travelled back and forth between Norfolk Island, the New Hebrides and the Solomon Islands two or three times a year. Two archdeaconries were established, South (the New Hebrides) and North (the Solomons). Eventually, in the late twenties, an assistant bishop was appointed for the New Hebrides. With the move of the mission headquarters from Norfolk Island to Siota, Gela, in the Solomons, in 1920 there was even more travel between the New Hebrides and the Solomons, as local and expatriate New Hebrides clergy and lay staff travelled to Siota to attend synods, staff conferences and to take up appointments. As colonial rule developed differently in the BSIP and the New Hebrides Condominium, visiting New Hebrideans would have experienced the difference. They would also have developed an identity as part of a church broader than just the Southern Archdeaconry of the New Hebrides.

The difference intensified in the fifties and sixties when the British administration, partly in response to decolonization on the global level but also in response to the post-war Solomon Islands' Maasina Rule movement, began to take steps towards preparing the BSIP for self-

¹⁵ "New Hebrides Natives", *Southern Cross Log* (Auckland), June, 1947, 22-23. The original article was in *Pacific Islands Monthly*, April, 1947.

government and independence -- while nothing of the sort took place in the New Hebrides. As Clive Moore points out in his paper, from the establishment of the Legislative Council in 1960 onwards, more and more local people are brought into the governance of the BSIP. These included the diocesan bishop, the two indigenous assistant bishops (from 1963), other clergy and lay Anglican teachers and administrators. All of this early Anglican participation in Solomon Islands nation-building was chronicled in the bishop's reports to synod and clergy conferences, which the New Hebrideans would have absorbed. Indeed, the church suffered brain drain as the government recruited church-trained teachers and administrators to staff the emerging new government.

The move of the Western Pacific High Commission (WPHC) from Suva to Honiara in 1953 also contributed to a certain centralization of the British decolonization process in the Solomons. The Western Pacific High Commissioner was also Resident Commissioner of the BSIP and set policy for the British Administration in the New Hebrides. The Resident Commissioner from 1955-1961 was Sir John Gutch, an active Anglican who wrote a life of Bishop Patteson for the centenary of his martyrdom. His successors, David Trench (1961-64), Sir Robert Foster (1964-69) and Sir Michael Gass, were all Anglicans or on very good terms with the bishop. Many of British civil servants moved back and forth between appointments in Vila and Honiara. At least three British Resident Commissioners for the New Hebrides, John Shaw Rennie (1955-62), Alexander Mair Wilkie (1962-66) and Colin Hamilton Allan (1966-73) were also posted to the WPHC in Honiara. Allan especially moved back and forth -- a British cadet in the BSIP in 1945, in charge of the British attempt to suppress and allay Maasina Rule in the early fifties, British Resident Commissioner of the New Hebrides in the sixties and seventies and Western Pacific High Commissioner and Governor of the Solomons, 1976-78.¹⁶

The Bishop, assistant bishops and senior indigenous clergy and laity in the Solomons were often in professional and social relationships with these British civil servants and their administration. Indeed, the bishop often stayed at the British Residency in Port Vila when visiting the New Hebrides; sometimes the Resident Commissioner hosted a cocktail party in his honour. However, in the Solomons emerging indigenous leadership was incorporated into the self-government and independence process, but not in the New Hebrides. But what was happening in the Solomons (and not happening in the New Hebrides) could not be missed in the latter because of the Solomon Islands church connection.

All of these interlocking relationships meant that the Bishop could do advocacy for the New Hebrides with the WPHC or even higher British government authorities. In 1966, rumours were circulating that Britain was moving to surrender the New Hebrides to France. Hearing that the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Frederick Lee, would soon be visiting the WPHC, the bishop of Melanesia, Alfred T. Hill, requested an interview with him. Later he requested a copy of the "in confidence" minutes of the meeting. The portion pertaining to the New Hebrides reads,

Bishop Hill said that as he was responsible for the activities of the Anglican Church in the New Hebrides he was concerned by recent press reports that Great Britain was

¹⁶ Allan was extraordinarily unsympathetic to Maasina Rule when a District Officer in Malaita and does not seem to have had good relations with Melanesians. (David Akin, private communication.)

about to leave the New Hebrides, He said that he would welcome information about these reports. The Secretary of State informed Bishop Hill in confidence of the subjects discussed at the London talks in particular membership of Advisory Council, land questions, unification of the law, the status of New Hebrideans, and said that the French were obviously reluctant to press political development too far because of other political repercussions in French Oceania. This affected the statement made about joint progress in the social and economic fields without touching upon political development and, secondly, the French attitude towards status of New Hebrideans, Nevertheless substantial agreement had been obtained on a format of a travel document which would offer the bearer protection by either metropolitan power when travelling outside the New Hebrides, Bishop Hill commented that this would be an important factor in giving those New Hebrideans who travelled overseas a feeling of self respect and security which they lacked at present.¹⁷

Needless to say, this conversation was reported by Hill back to the New Hebrides. Two years later, at the request of the archdeacon of the New Hebrides, Hill complained to the Chief Secretary of the WHPC of a decision made in Honiara to impose school fees at British schools while French schools remain free.¹⁸

The single Diocese of Melanesia became the four-diocese Church of the Province of Melanesia on 26 January 1975, a major move towards the decolonization of the church. The former archdeaconry of the New Hebrides became the diocese of the New Hebrides. However, the connection with the Solomons remained, as the Bishop of Central Melanesia (with Honiara as his see city) was also designated the Archbishop of Melanesia, and provincial headquarters remained in Honiara. So the New Hebrides Anglican church visits to the Solomons continued. With most of its territories well on the road to independence, the Western Pacific High Commission was abolished on 2 January 1976. However, the New Hebrides was not on that road, and the British half of the responsibility for its government moved from Honiara to London, making the road an even more difficult one.

4. The Diocese of Melanesia's strong tradition of indigenous ministry and the Vanuatu independence movement.

Bishop Patteson and other early leaders of the Melanesian Mission placed great emphasis on the training of indigenous teachers and clergy. The first Melanesian deacon (1868) and priest (1873), George Sarawia, was from the Banks Islands; he was followed by dozens more who took part fully in the synodical life of the church. However, Bishop Selwyn's model of "white corks and black nets" (a large number of indigenous clergy working under a small number of white leaders, including the bishops and archdeacons) obtained until 1963 when two Melanesian assistant bishops were finally appointed and consecrated, Dudley Tuti from

¹⁷ "Minutes of an Interview accorded by the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Right Reverend A.T. Hill, C.M.G., M.B.E., Bishop of Melanesia at Honiara on Tuesday, 9th August, 1966", Church of Melanesia archives, Honiara, Bishop Hill papers.

¹⁸ Bishop A.T. Hill to Chief Secretary, WPHC, 11 May, 1969, COM Archives, Bishop Hill papers.

Ysabel and Leonard Alufurai from Malaita, both Solomon Islanders trained at the College of St. John the Evangelist, Auckland.¹⁹

By the sixties the push was on to train Solomon Islanders and New Hebrideans for the highest levels of leadership in the church, both clerical and lay. Students, both boys and girls, were sent to senior secondary schools in New Zealand and later to theological colleges and other tertiary institutions, also largely in New Zealand.²⁰ Until 1975, the Diocese of Melanesia was a diocese of the Church of the Province of New Zealand; indeed, its General Secretary was based in New Zealand until the early seventies. Solomon Islanders who went to New Zealand under Diocese of Melanesia sponsorship included Norman Palmer (second Archbishop of Melanesia), Francis Bugotu (later Minister of Education), Mostyn Habu (sometime Minister of the Environment and director of the University of the South Pacific Solomon Islands Centre), Willie Betu (Minister of Education), Lily Poznanski (first SI woman to enter politics), and many others. Prime Minister Solomon Mamaloni, an Anglican from Makira, also studied in New Zealand under a government scholarship. The church sent these students to prepare for its localization but many were later seconded by the government as it moved to self-government and independence.²¹ After the establishment of Pacific Theological College in Suva, Fiji, in 1966, the bulk of Anglican advanced theological students from both the Solomons and New Hebrides did their degree-level studies there, where they met fellow-students from all the protestant churches across the Pacific, including the Presbyterian Church of the New Hebrides, a major contribution to the future unity of the Vanua'aku Pati.²²

As far as the New Hebrides was concerned, the Diocese of Melanesia pursued a similar policy of sending bright students to New Zealand (and eventually Suva) for further studies. I began with a list of some of them. Fr. Walter Lini and Fr. John Bani are good examples. Both attended St. Patrick's College, Vureas, the Anglican secondary school on Ambae. When it was discerned that both had a vocation to the priesthood, they were sent to St. Peter's College, Siota, in the Solomons for theological training; the staffs there were all expatriate. When they did well, both were sent to St. John's College, Auckland, where they found studies very difficult but passed a sufficient number of papers. Lini organized the Western Pacific Students Association in Auckland and began a monthly magazine, *Onetalk*. Bani returned to the New Hebrides, was ordained, became a parish priest and eventually a New Hebrides National Party/Vanua'aku Pati stalwart. Lini was posted to the cathedral in

¹⁹ The Anglican Diocese of New Guinea, at the behest of its bishop, Philip Strong, consecrated an assistant bishop, George Ambo, in 1960, an action that was criticised by some as tokenism but probably pushed Bishop A.T. Hill along in his determination to appoint and consecrate the two Solomon Islands assistant bishops. Despite Ambo's early appointment, the Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea has generally lagged behind the Church of Melanesia in the appointment of indigenous bishops.

²⁰ A few were also sent to St. Francis College, Brisbane.

²¹ Both Bishops A.T. Hill (1954-67) and John Wallace Chisholm (1967-1975) complained frequently about the BSIP's hiring away for government service diocesan staff that had been sent overseas on church scholarships. Chisholm, when the BSIP Localisation Committee complained to him in the early seventies that the Diocese was not moving quickly enough on localisation, replied that if the government had not stolen all the people the church had trained to enable its localisation, the complaint could be made. (COM Archives, Bishop Chisholm papers.)

²² A few Anglican students continued to go to St. John's, Auckland, for example, Ellison (later Sir Ellison) Pogo, fourth Archbishop of Melanesia, and John (later Sir John) Lapli, Governor General of Solomon Islands during the ethnic tension crisis, 1999-2001.

Honiara, where he met his wife, from Sikaiana in the Solomons. In Honiara, he knew Francis Bugotu and others (including Bishop Dudley Tuti) who were beginning to criticize the slowness and style of decolonization of the BSIP in the pages of the country's first independent indigenous newspaper, the *Kakamora Reporter*. Lini soon returned to the New Hebrides where he became a parish priest, established the *New Hebridean Viewpoints* newspaper and co-founded the New Hebrides National Party.²³ However, unlike the Solomons, there was no emerging soon-to-be independent nation seeking the expertise of well-educated and aware New Hebrideans such as Lini and Bani.

Despite all this emerging indigenous leadership in the sixties and seventies, in the Anglican church of New Hebrides, one "white cork" remained, Derek Alec Rawcliffe, Archdeacon of the New Hebrides (1959-1974), Assistant Bishop of the New Hebrides (1974-1975) and Bishop of the New Hebrides (1975-1980). Rawcliffe first came to the Diocese of Melanesia in 1947 as a teacher and headmaster at two schools in the Solomons and moved to the New Hebrides as archdeacon in 1959. Trained at the College of the Resurrection, Mirfield (run by the Anglo-Catholic religious society, the Community of the Resurrection), he was a gifted linguist, liturgist and musician and deeply interested in the ecumenical movement; he was single, ascetic, a good administrator and pastor, very hardworking, though, after many years as a bachelor in Melanesia, decidedly eccentric.²⁴

Given the New Hebrides' isolation, as archdeacon he was virtually the bishop and looked after an extensive network of village churches organized into districts, a church secondary school (St. Patrick's, Vureas) and an extensive network of village primary schools, and Godden Memorial Hospital at Lolowai. The secondary school and hospital also had expatriate staff and were receiving (along with the primary schools) British government funding that had to be accounted for.

When polled on whom they wished to be assistant bishop in preparation for the archdeaconry becoming a diocese in 1975, the majority of the clergy selected Rawcliffe. His ability to speak French and to deal with the French administration was one factor in this decision. But more importantly, by this time the leading indigenous clergy such as Lini and Bani (both still quite young) were deeply involved in the New Hebrides National Party and the push towards independence. It is not clear that any of them were free to make the shift to become the diocesan bishop. There were also Anglicans who were not supporters of the New Hebrides National Party and who wanted a more neutral bishop; and Lini, at least, had alienated the Bishop of Melanesia, John Chisholm, though some of his statements and activities. While the two indigenous assistant bishops in the Solomons could (and did) come

²³ Walter Lini, *Beyond Pandemonium: From the New Hebrides to Vanuatu*, Wellington: Asia Pacific Books, 1980, 13-15; Linda S. Crowl, "Politics and book publishing in the Pacific Islands", Ph.D. thesis, Wollongong University, 2008, 220, 226; Church of Melanesia Archives, Honiara. *Kakamora Reporter* and *New Hebridean Viewpoints* eventually reprinted some of each other's stories, for example, Bishop Dudley's Tuti's criticism of the BSIP Advisory Council and Lini's criticism of land speculation on Santo.

²⁴ *Crockford's Clerical Directory, 1973-74*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974, 793. I first met Rawcliffe in 1975 when I was appointed a theological lecturer at Bishop Patteson Theological College, Kohimarama, Solomon Islands. He frequently visited his New Hebrides students there. We have continued to keep in touch over the years. After his resignation as Bishop of New Hebrides in 1980 he became Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway in the Episcopal Church of Scotland. He is retired and living in Leeds.

under the close supervision of the diocesan bishop, an assistant bishop (or even diocesan bishop) in the New Hebrides could not.²⁵

Rawcliffe's presence as expatriate Archdeacon then Bishop of New Hebrides from 1959 to 1980 contributes in a major way to the ambiguous relationship of the Anglican church to the Vanuatu independence movement noted in the title of this paper. The present Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, speaking of himself in relation to the various political and social movements within the Anglican Communion, calls himself "an unreliable ally".²⁶ The same term could be used of Rawcliffe in his relations with the Vanua'aku Pati and the independence movement, with the Gospel taking precedent over political ideology and practice, sometimes supporting it, sometimes rejecting it. Thus the Anglican Diocese of Vanuatu Synod, unlike the Presbyterian Church of the New Hebrides General Assembly, never formally endorsed the Vanua'aku Pati's independence platform and strategy, even though an Anglican priest headed the party and many clergy and laity were very active members. On the other hand, Rawcliffe offered support and advice in many positive ways and never ceased to license clergy, including Lini, heavily involved in the movement. Indeed, some now even look back to him as an "advisor" of the party.²⁷

Upon his consecration as bishop, Rawcliffe established a diocesan newspaper, *One Bread*, published from three to six times a year from February 1974 to November 1979 which documents well his and the diocese's relationships with the Condominium Government, the Vanua'aku and other political parties and the Vanuatu independence movement.²⁸ But as tension between Rawcliffe and the Vanua'aku Pati increased in the late seventies, some thought back to the prophetic words of Grace Mera at the feast after his consecration, "like a true parent, consider and examine the qualities, capabilities, and capacities of your New Hebridean Priests and staff, training the most enlightened ones for your post so that when you leave us your absence will not be noticed."²⁹

5. English-medium church schools as promoters of independence for the New Hebrides.

²⁵ Church of Melanesia Archives, Bishop Chisholm papers; Rawcliffe wrote to the Rev. Donald Clark, Anglican Church of Canada Asia/Pacific Secretary on 21 November 1973: "I have accepted the appointment because it was the wish of the New Hebrideans as expressed in our Regional Conference last March in a secret ballot. Without that I could not have accepted, but as they have shown clearly that they want me, I cannot refuse." (Anglican Church of Canada General Synod Archives, Toronto, Donald Clark papers.) However, the Church of Melanesia archives also contain evidence of an authorized election for assistant bishop of the New Hebrides conducted by one of the Solomon Islands assistant bishops, Leonard Alufurai, on a visit to the Hebrides in the late sixties or early seventies. As the election was without authorization, the results were not accepted by the diocesan bishop and Alufurai was reprimanded for his action. This story requires further research.

²⁶ Williams made this comment in one of his addresses to the 2008 Lambeth Conference in the context in which contending factions, particularly in the issue of homosexuality, expected his full and unambiguous support.

²⁷ Interview with Fr. Judah Butu, Lolowai, Ambae, Vanuatu, 9 July 2009.

²⁸ There were four issues in 1974, three issues in 1975, six issues in 1976 and 1977, and four issues in 1978 and 1979. It is possible that for a time *New Hebridean Viewpoints* and *One Bread* were produced on the same gestetner machine at Lolowai. At least initially, the two formats were very similar.

²⁹ "Parts of Grace Mera's Speech at the Consecration", *One Bread*, No. 1 (Feb. 1974), 6. Grace Mera married Sela Molisa and as Grace Mera-Molisa was an active member of the Vanua'aku Pati and a Minister in the Republic of Vanuatu Government. She was also a gifted poet and a strong advocate for women's rights. She died in 2002. This speech was sometimes quoted to me in the Solomons in the late seventies by theological students from the New Hebrides unhappy with the bishop's political positions.

Last year at Lolowai, I interviewed Judah Butu, long-time Education Secretary of the Diocese of Vanuatu and now in his retirement a village priest. He was a secondary school classmate at St. Patrick's College, Vureas, of Fr. Walter Lini and other early Anglican leaders of the Vanuatu independence movement. He recalls reading regularly the magazine *Commonwealth Today* which was sent to the school, particularly the issues on Nigeria (1960) and Sierra Leone (1961) independence. He recalls a faculty member, Fr. George Arthur, telling students that if they studied hard, they could be independent like them. Localisation was taught to the students, teachers often saying to them, "Yu mus skul gud so yu save takim ples blong mi" ("You must study hard so that you can replace me"). Butu recalls that Lini as a student had such a high view of the British government that when asked by the school's careers master what work he wished to pursue, said "British District Agent". Butu also pointed out that the Anglican mission went out to many small islands and villages and began primary schools in them; thus, support for independence spread out to the villages partly through the English schools and teachers -- in contrast to the French who concentrated their schools in urban areas such as Port Vila and Luganville, Santo; thus support for independence was strong in rural areas and weak in urban areas.³⁰

Even staff at the government British Secondary School (BSS) in Port Vila supported the move towards political independence. Fr. Simon Tarinago, a student there in 1971-73, remembers a staff member from the Seychelles, Anne Stamford, organizing a Model Parliament with Government and Opposition leaders. Gordon Longmore, the Principal of BSS said he would not leave until a local principal took over. He stayed a long time until the position was finally localized.³¹ It would be important to document whether a similar pro-independence ethos existed in the Presbyterian and other English-medium schools.

6. Relations between the Anglican church and the British administration.

Relations between the churches and the British and French administrations took place on several levels. From the late sixties, Archdeacon (later Bishop) Derek Rawcliffe was one of two church representatives on the Advisory Council which met regularly in Vila. As such, he had continual contact with the two Resident Commissioners. The bishop and the heads of church institutions had regular contact with the British Senior Medical and Education Officers and their staffs who often made inspection visits, as the British administration was providing funds for Anglican educational and medical work. British government consultants from London also visited. There was also much contact with the British District Agent in Santo over matters of land, development, education and village life. When touring, the District Agent visited Anglican schools and reported back to the bishop on the quality of their teaching and infrastructure. When the diocesan vehicle was involved in a fatal collision with a motorcycle in Santo, the District Agent conducted an inquiry and exonerated the diocesan driver as those on the motorcycle were drunk.³² It would be important to ascertain whether such comfortable relations existed between the Presbyterian Church of the New Hebrides and the British District Agents.

³⁰ Interview with Fr. Judah Butu, Lolowai, Ambae, 9-10 July 2009.

³¹ Interview with Fr. Simeon Taringao, Senior Priest of Ambae, Lolowai, Ambae, 9 July 2009.

³² Diocese of Vanuatu and New Caledonia Archives, Luganville, Santo, British District Agency files.

There were, however, tensions. As in the Solomons, the British colonial administration in the New Hebrides complained about what they saw as the low quality of church educational and medical work. The church, particularly in the area of education, was spread very thinly and it was easy to find weaknesses. The British government pressed for improvements and better use and accountability of its funds. As the British government was also paying many of the school and hospital salaries, the Resident Commissioner demanded a role in the hiring and disciplining of staff, though this demand was complicated by needing to refer matters to London. The diocese saw this micro-management as interference. Relations between Rawcliffe and Colin Allen at times were quite poor, perhaps hearkening to the late forties when Rawcliffe as a young priest in the Solomons reported abuses by the police (for whom Allen had some responsibility) against Maasina Rule members at prayer and the desecration of their church building on Ulawa.³³ For example, on 25 July, 1968, Rawcliffe writes the Bishop of Melanesia informing him of Allen's attempt to take over the Godden Memorial Hospital at Lolowai:

We had Roger Greenough (the new SMO³⁴ in Bill Rees' place) here the other day, and he made it clear that Colin Allen is intending to push for the Government taking over our hospital. Roger himself is not in agreement, but Colin is in deadly earnest. Such a position would be intolerable, quite apart from our duty to witness through healing and training nurses and dressers. We could not have a hospital run by people who might be quite without any sympathy to our work right in the middle of our stations on our land. And any guarantees they made would be kept only so long as it suited them - and we have had that already on the education side.³⁵

Allan did not immediately succeed though after Vanuatu independence the hospital was turned over to the government. Another time, Allen writes to the hospital complaining about their financial reporting, urging them to be more like the Presbyterians who are always up to date in their reporting!

One cannot, therefore, generalize to say that the Anglican church and the British administration were hand-and-glove in a colonial relationship dominating the New Hebrides people. As in earlier years, despite cooperation and government funding, the church was sometimes in considerable conflict with the Condominium government and resented its exercise of authority and power, and vice versa. For years the Condominium government had done nothing in these areas and now, suddenly, it expected to be recognized for its expertise.

Nor can one generalize that the British administration opposed independence or the Anglican clergy who promoted it. While caution had to be exercised at the top, lest there be a diplomatic incident with France, lower-level British administrators gave quiet support to indigenous efforts towards autonomy. In 1972, Fr. Walter Lini began to organize the Longana People's Centre, a multifaceted community development centre on Ambae. He

³³ Church of Melanesia Archives, Honiara, New Hebrides and Rawcliffe files; W.J. Durrad-C.E. Fox correspondence, Arthur Turnbull Library, Wellington, MS- Papers 1171; personal communication, David Akin.

³⁴ Senior Medical Officer.

³⁵ Derek [Rawcliffe] to Bishop [John Chisholm], 15 July 1968, COM Archives, Chisholm papers, New Hebrides file.

sought financial support from the Anglican Church of Canada who sought matching funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the development assistance agency of the government of Canada. CIDA required the endorsement of the British District Agent in Santo. The Adult Education Officer of the British Education Service assessed the project very positively. The District Agent in Santo wrote CIDA recommending the project, noting that

the proposed People's Centre at Lonana on S.E. Aoba . . . is the brainchild of the Rev. Walter Lini (whom you will remember in another context as the Editor of "New Hebridean Viewpoints", the organ of the ultra reasonable and mild New Hebridean National Party.³⁶

The message seems to be, "they are our kind of nationalists". CIDA funded the project and Lini travelled to Canada where he met CIDA officials and attended the Anglican Church of Canada General Synod. Similarly, when teachers employed by the British Education Service went on strike in 1979, they were supported by the Vanua'aku Pati, the churches (including Derek Rawcliffe) and (covertly) British government officials such as Bill Romanes, Assistant Chief Education Officer.³⁷ However, as Vanuatu independence approached much of this British government commitment to independence evaporated, perhaps because of not wanting to alienate France in the new Common Market context.

7. Relations between the Anglican church and the French Administration.

One might assume that Anglican relations with the French Administration were minimal but this was not the case. As he could speak French, Rawcliffe was comfortable dealing with French administrators and tried to maintain cordial relationships with them. In 1968 he successfully negotiated to place an Anglican deacon, Walter Vanva, at the new French school at Port Patteson, Vanua Lava: "I have talked to the French Govt about Deacon Walter going to the French school at Port Patteson. They are in full agreement, and will provide house and salary as for a caretaker and chaperon of the children".³⁸ Aside from schools in south Pentecost (well away from Anglican north Pentecost) the secondary school at Vanua Lava was the only French school in the diocese. In the mid-seventies, when an earthquake threatened the volcanic lake on Gaua endangering the population, the Gaua people (all Anglican) were moved to the French school at Vanua Lava. Rawcliffe recalls that it was in the dining room of the school that he conducted his first ordination. "The headmaster of the school was very friendly, came to our Mass and made his confession to me when I celebrated at the school"³⁹ Only when the French began placing new schools very close to existing English schools contrary to previous agreements did Rawcliffe complain. I am not sure if the Presbyterian Moderators or Education Board had similarly close relationships with the French Administration and, indeed, it is possible that Rawcliffe's friendly relations with the French Administration eventually caused some to distrust his commitment to Vanuatu independence.

³⁶ C.J. Turner to J.F. McRae, 8 March 1972, Anglican Church of Canada General Synod Archives, Toronto, Donald Clark papers.

³⁷ Interview with Rev. Judah Butu, Lolowai, Ambae, 10 July 2009.

³⁸ Rawcliffe to Chisholm, 15 July 1968, COM Archives, Rawcliffe papers.

³⁹ Email communication from Bishop Derek Rawcliffe, 1 October 2009.

Necessity also compelled relationship. With the increased importance of Luganville, Santo, as a government, business and transportation centre in the late fifties and the resulting migration of Anglicans to Santo from other islands, the diocese decided in 1962 to try to buy land and build a church there. However, Luganville was still a largely a French town with most land held under French law. At the time, French regulations forbade the transfer of land from French to English jurisdiction and the piece of land at Sarakata which the diocese wished to buy was registered under French law. While the vendor was willing to sell, the French district agent refused to give permission, citing a veto from authorities in Vila. The bishop, archdeacon and diocesan secretary (in Auckland) began to make plans to register the diocese as a trust under New Hebrides or New Caledonia law to enable the diocese to purchase the land under French law. However, before this could happen, the French government reversed its position and allowed the transfer of the property to English jurisdiction. When Rawcliffe asked the French District Agent in Santo why the sudden reversal, he commented, "Well, there is a different minister now" as De Gaulle had changed his whole Cabinet.⁴⁰

In August 1961, the British Resident Commissioner, John Rennie, and his French counterpart visited Anglican schools on Ambae. Rennie wrote Bishop Hill in Honiara afterwards,

I visited Lolowai myself with the French Resident Commissioner last week and found everyone in good spirits. My colleague was very favourably impressed indeed with the work being done there. He was also delighted to be greeting with the "Marsellaise" by the boys of Vureas on the beach and also later by the girls at Torgil.⁴¹

It is quite likely that among the students singing the "Marsellaise" on the beach at Vureas were some of the future leaders of the Vanua'aku Pati.

8. Derek Rawcliffe's presence on the New Hebrides Condominium Advisory Council.

From the late fifties, first as archdeacon, then as bishop, Derek Rawcliffe was one of two church representatives on the Condominium's Advisory Council, begun in 1957. In 1962 he was appointed to the Standing Committee. Rawcliffe's recollection is that at the time of his appointment, the Resident Commissioners wanted one Roman Catholic and one Anglican; appointed with him was the Roman Catholic Vicar General, a Belgian priest. The appointment gave Anglicans and Roman Catholics an inside track on the thinking of the two colonial powers and some power to develop or at least influence regulations promulgated by them.⁴²

Perhaps the most dramatic action of the Advisory Council that directly affected Rawcliffe and the New Hebrides National Party was its 1971 response to Santo land speculation by the American entrepreneur, Eugene Peacock and the Phoenix Foundation, in which Peacock had already made \$3 million. It was this land speculation that spawned *New Hebridean*

⁴⁰ Rawcliffe to Hill, 26 April 1962, COM archives, Rawcliffe papers. See also Bullen correspondence.

⁴¹ COM archives, Bishop Hill papers.

⁴² Email communication from Bishop Derek Rawcliffe, 1 Oct. 2009.

Viewpoints, the New Hebrides Cultural Association and the New Hebrides National Party. In response to rising local protests, the Advisory Council with little warning passed two retroactive Joint Regulations "obliging developers to obtain British or French approval for subdivision schemes and to pay 50% tax on profits on subdivisions on previously undeveloped land".⁴³ The New Hebrides National Party held a protest in Port Vila *in support* of the new Joint Resolutions, their concerns finally having been met by the Condominium. French colonist backers of Peacock fiercely attacked Rawcliffe in the Santo French newspaper, *Nakamal*. One letter commented,

There are now 3 political Leaders in the New Hebrides: 2 Resident Commissioners and the Archdeacon. Under cover of soul-saving he has the advantage of close contact with the unthinking flock.

The writer went on to declare that "Brotherly-love is just a myth". Another argued that it only the expatriates are "the true New Hebrideans" not the native population and blamed Rawcliffe for organizing the political protest in Vila. Rawcliffe finally defended himself in a long letter to *Nakamal* and the matter quieted down. But in the mind of French colonists he was firmly in the camp of the New Hebrides National Party and not a friend.⁴⁴

At best, Rawcliffe was a gadfly on the Advisory Council. He recalls,

Once I went to the meeting of the Advisory Council and forgot to take my copy of the Minutes of the previous meeting. So I went to the library, where they had only the French version, so I borrowed that. At the previous meeting one of the members had asked the two Resident Commissioners about the future of the New Hebrides. Colin Allen (I think it was) had said that the British Government wanted the islands to continue to progress economically, politically and a few more words like that. The French translation had omitted the word 'politically'. So when we came to the acceptance of the Minutes I raised this so as to highlight the differences between the two Governments.⁴⁵

One question to ask is whether the exclusion of the largest church in the New Hebrides, the Presbyterian Church of the New Hebrides, from the Advisory Council increased their sense of alienation from the Condominium government and increased their militancy for independence. Or was there any sense in which they saw Rawcliffe as also representing themselves? Or did they distrust his presence there?

9. Derek Rawcliffe's all-inclusive charismatic ecumenism.

In Anglican polity, the bishop (especially in a mission context) occupies a unique position from which he or she can attempt to shape the diocese theologically, liturgically, pastorally

⁴³ Beasant, *The Santo Rebellion*, 46.

⁴⁴ Rawcliffe transcribed and sent to Bishop John Chisholm copies of the *Nakamal* letters and his response. The Bishop offered him support and encouragement. It is not clear that Rawcliffe's letter to *Nakamal* was published. Rawcliffe was later attacked in the Fiji media by supporters of Nagrimal land schemes but the issue did not persist. COM Archives, Rawcliffe papers.

⁴⁵ Email communication from Bishop Derek Rawcliffe, 1 October 2009. I have written out his abbreviations.

and politically. Churches having a more democratic polity, such as Presbyterians or Methodists, have no such single powerful leader shaping the local church; hierarchy is replaced with bureaucracy. Even Roman Catholic bishops do not have the freedom of Anglican bishops as they are under the clear authority of a central magisterium and the pope. Therefore, to understand how the Anglican church functioned during the Vanuatu independence movement, especially from 1975 to 1980, one must look more carefully at the theology and praxis of the first and only Bishop of the New Hebrides, Derek Rawcliffe.⁴⁶

In his early ministry in Melanesia, Rawcliffe was an "advanced" Anglo-Catholic, meaning that he followed the maximum Roman Catholic beliefs and practices allowable to an Anglican priest -- clerical celibacy, daily mass, a strong theology of Eucharistic sacrifice, prayers to the saints including use of the Rosary and other Marian devotions, fasting and other ascetic practices and frequent auricular confession. His liturgical interests were primarily musical and linguistic with little interest in inculturation of Melanesian art and theology into worship. As teacher, headmaster, archdeacon (and initially) as bishop he embodied this spirituality and expected those he taught and led to adopt it. Unlike earlier Melanesian Mission priest-ethnologists such as Robert Codrington, W.H. Ivens and Charles Fox, he had little interest in traditional Melanesian culture, as apparent, for example, in Walter Lini's response in *New Hebridean Viewpoints* to Rawcliffe's speech to the British Secondary School graduating students in late 1971 in which he said, "No doubt the basis of chieftainship will change from pigs [i.e., pig killing] to something else. Let us hope that it changes to character and merit and not to birth or money". In response, Lini ardently defends pig killing as the basis of traditional New Hebrides culture, a position he had already taken in early 1971 in the Diocese of Melanesia newsletter, the *Melanesian Messenger*.⁴⁷ While Rawcliffe did not regard Melanesian culture as particularly evil, he believed that western modernity was coming; he hoped that the inevitable changes would reflect justice rather than injustice. Lini, on the other hand, was not willing to give up traditional Pentecost culture in the face of social change. There was also an element of ascetic otherworldliness in Rawcliffe's lack of interest in traditional cultures.

As an "advanced" Anglo-Catholic, Rawcliffe was, of course, very interested in the Roman Catholic Second Vatican Council and the rapprochement with the Anglican Communion that it offered. He participated in meetings of the Anglican/Roman Catholic Commission for the South Pacific (Noumea, 1973, Port Vila, 1974) and entered into warm relations with the Roman Catholic hierarchy in both the New Hebrides and New Caledonia. A report of the Port Vila meeting, which Fr. John Bani also attended as a member, appeared in *One Bread*.⁴⁸ When attending Advisory Council meetings in Port Vila, Rawcliffe celebrated his daily mass

⁴⁶ Rawcliffe's successor, Harry Tevi, became the first Bishop of Vanuatu as the diocese changed its name with the arrival of independence.

⁴⁷ Walter Lini, "Comments on an Article by Archdeacon Rawcliffe in the British Newsletter NO. 14th December, 1971", *New Hebridean Viewpoints*, February 1972, 10-11; "Comments on Archdeacon Rawcliffe's speech to Secondary School Students continued", *New Hebridean Viewpoints*, n.d. [?April, 1972]; "Lonana Aoba New Hebrides", *Melanesian Messenger*, Easter, 1971, 5. In the latter, Lini writes, "Some people say killing pigs is a waste of pigs or meat. But these people do not really understand about this tradition custom. It is by close examination you will find that there are lots in it which establishes and explains clearly some of the Christian truths about our relationship with Christ and with God." Rawcliffe does not seem to have been able to relate positively with this kind of ethno-theologizing.

⁴⁸ "Anglican/Roman Catholic Commission", *One Bread*, February 1974, 3-4.

in the Roman Catholic bishop's private chapel, a courtesy extended because the Anglican church at Tagabe was too far out of town.⁴⁹ Another practical result was an arrangement whereby a Roman Catholic priest in Noumea looked after Anglicans there. Rawcliffe maintained good relations with his Roman Catholic colleagues during all his years in the New Hebrides, despite the general alliance of the Roman Catholic Church in the New Hebrides with French government interests, including opposition to independence. Here Rawcliffe's inclusiveness also set him at odds with the Vanua'aku Pati and its anti-French ethos.

However, in 1976, a major shift took place both in Rawcliffe's spirituality and the ethos of the diocese -- he became a charismatic and began promoting charismatic "spiritual renewal" among clergy and laity of the diocese. In early August 1976, ecumenical "Christian Renewal Conferences" with overseas speakers, sponsored by the Vila-based Trinity Renewal Outreach Ministry, were held in Santo, Tanna, Vila and Torgil. Speakers were the Rev. Alex Wylie (Presbyterian from Australia), Fr. Eugene Stockton (Roman Catholic from Sydney), Rev. Frank Harvey (Four Square Gospel from Sydney), Rev. Rex Mechan (Apostolic from New Zealand) and Fr. Edward Subramani (Anglican from Fiji).⁵⁰ The event in Santo was held exclusively at the Roman Catholic church, that in Torgil at the diocesan training centre and that in Vila at different churches including the Anglican church at Tagabe. The early and mid-seventies were the height of the charismatic movement in worldwide Roman Catholic, Anglican/Episcopal and protestant churches, influenced by the protestant Pentecostal churches such as the Assemblies of God and in 1976 it finally reached the New Hebrides. The movement was radically ecumenical, as the list of denominations above indicates, seeking to unite the most disparate elements of the worldwide church through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

According to the account in the September 1976 *One Bread*, many, especially at Torgil, were deeply moved by the conference. The issue contains the bishop's positive commentary on the event and many anonymous testimonies from participants. At Torgil, local participants were Anglican, Apostolic, Churches of Christ and Seventh Day Adventist members and a few Presbyterians. As follow up, it was suggested that (1) conference members take the experience back to their districts and reproduce it there, (2) encourage and develop the gift of healing at the local level and (3) begin prayer groups in all the districts.⁵¹ More testimonies followed in the next issue of *One Bread*.⁵² In January 1977, the bishop and six others from the diocese were included of a party of 23 from New Hebrides attending the International Charismatic Conference on the Holy Spirit and the Church and the Third Australian Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference in Sydney (the latter opened by a mass celebrated by the Cardinal Archbishop of Sydney). The report of this event is enthusiastic with positive testimonies from all the participants.⁵³ In August 1977, Fr. Edward Subramani returned from Fiji to lead a Renewal Conference at Torgil, which was again reported

⁴⁹ COM Archives, Hill-Rawcliffe correspondence.

⁵⁰ "Christian Renewal Conferences", *One Bread*, July 1976, 3.

⁵¹ "The Renewal Conferences", "What different people have written about the renewal conferences", and "Follow up of the Renewal Conference", *One Bread*, Sept. 1976, 1-8.

⁵² "Some more testimonies from the Renewal Conference: An Experience of Life in a New Dimension by a Priest" and "A Suggestion from another participant", *One Bread*, October 1976, 16-17.

⁵³ "New Hebrides Group at Charismatic Conference in Sydney", *One Bread*, February 1977, 4-10.

ecstatically in *One Bread*.⁵⁴ The Diocese of New Hebrides was now clearly set in a charismatic direction. And, as if to indicate the radically new order, the Bishop unexpectedly married a woman who had claimed to have been miraculously healed and brought her back to Lolowai.⁵⁵

What does all of this have to do with the Vanuatu independence movement? It would be easy enough to suggest a dualism at play, with the Anglican diocese opting out of the political struggle and engagement with *kastom* for the life of the Spirit, while the Vanua'aku Pati (buttressed by the more politically engaged Presbyterian Church of New Hebrides, guided by liberal protestant personnel from overseas) engaged prophetically with the messy political situation. While there is an element of truth in such a suggestion, especially with regard to *kastom*, a reading of successive *One Breads* suggests that both bishop and diocese were still deeply involved in the political struggle for Vanuatu independence and still committed to worldwide issues of justice, such as the end to apartheid in South Africa, nuclear weapons and world hunger. In August 1976, Dr. George Armstrong from St. John's College, Auckland, gave a clergy course on Liberation Theology, positively reported in *One Bread*.⁵⁶ Many of those who attended the charismatic renewal conferences were active members of the Vanua'aku Pati and saw their participation in such conferences helpful to their personal growth and resolution of problems in relationships.⁵⁷ In November 1976, Fr. Walter Lini visited Bishop Patteson Theological College and I remember discussing charismatic renewal with him. Some Anglican Vanua'aku Pati supporters, such as Fr. Timon Gao, sometime Vicar General of the diocese, were so moved by the charismatic movement that they eventually left the Anglican church to join the small family Pentecostal churches that were also proliferating at the time.

Perhaps the best example of how the Anglican charismatic movement and the Vanua'aku Pati came together was the visit of the New Zealand lay Anglican evangelist, Bill Subritzky, in late May 1978. Subritzky's specialities were the ministry of deliverance (casting out of evil spirits), Baptism of the Spirit (an additional laying-on-of-hands after water Baptism to impart the Holy Spirit) and healing. *One Bread* recounts Subritzky's imparting the Baptism of the Spirit in a meeting after the close of diocesan synod:

On Sunday afternoon he invited all those who wished to be prayed for for release of the Spirit in this Baptism to come forward. Together with them, he asked those who had already received this release of the Spirit but who wanted a further filling with the Spirit to come out with them. The whole meeting stepped out and came to the altar: every priest and deacon who was present . . . and all the lay people at the meeting. Bill prayed with them all after an act of repentance and an act of faith had been made. . . . Then first of all Bill laid hands on the Bishop for a renewal of the filling with the Spirit, and then the Bishop and he went round laying hands on all

⁵⁴ Nicholson Worek, "Thoughts on the Renewal Conference at Torgil", and other articles, *One Bread*, October 1977, 3-6.

⁵⁵ Sue Rawcliffe, "The Beginning of a Healing", *One Bread*, October 1977, 7-8.

⁵⁶ "Clergy Study Course, 1976", *One Bread*, July 1976, 9-11. Armstrong had taught Fr. Walter Lini at St. John's College, Auckland, and is a radical pacifist. Armstrong does not remember the clergy responding especially positively to his workshop. Lini was not present. (Email communication, 28 July 2009.)

⁵⁷ See, for example, George Worek, "Some Thoughts on Charismatic Renewal", *One Bread*, March 1977, 16. Worek was the first Minister of Health of the Republic of Vanuatu.

those who had come forward, praying that they might be filled with the Spirit. Every one of those prayed for received the gift of tongues and praised the Lord in their new language of prayer.⁵⁸

Earlier qualms about speaking in tongues had now vanished. Indeed, some would argue that in advocating a second Baptism, that of the Holy Spirit, Rawcliffe had now gone beyond the Catholic biblical teaching of "one Lord, one faith, *one baptism*, one god and Father of all" (Ephesians 5:29) to an Evangelical denial of Baptismal regeneration.

Subritzky stopped in Vila on his return to New Zealand. *One Bread* (probably the bishop) goes on to describe what happened there:

We heard that at [Subritzky's] meetings in Vila, the Chief Minister and the Minister of Transport received the baptism of the Spirit. Here Fr Walter Liñi received it. It is good to know of our political leaders coming into this experience, and we believe this will lead to the binding of the prince of the air whom Satan has put over the New Hebrides to cause division and strife, so that the Spirit of God may bring unity, peace and justice in the spirit of love.⁵⁹

The present Anglican Bishop of Vanuatu, James Ligo, who comes from a charismatic background, remembers being told that Subritzky interpreted a dream that Lini had long experienced of two beasts, one from the north and one from the south, in conflict with one another, giving an interpretation to Lini that encouraged him in his vocation to bring together peacefully the two colonial powers into a single free nation.⁶⁰ Subritzky writes in *Demons Defeated* of interpreting Lini's dream the night before the opening of diocesan synod so effectively that Lini in his opening address to synod commended Subritzky's ministry.⁶¹

10. The Anglican diocese and the Vanua'aku Pati: conflict and resolution.

On 29 November 1977, boycotting the national elections set for that day, the Vanua'aku Pati declared a People's Provisional Government (PPG) and raised its flag at centres throughout the islands. While in Santo the flag was pulled down and burnt and in Port Vila there were riots and tear gas, in many parts of the country (including in many Anglican villages) the flag continued to fly, indicating that those areas saw themselves under the authority of the Vanua'aku Pati and its Provisional Government rather than the Condominium. The flag was also raised by the Vanua'aku Pati subcommittee at the diocesan headquarters at Lolowai,

⁵⁸ "Meeting held by Bill Subritzky", *One Bread*, June 1978, 15.

⁵⁹ "Meeting", *One Bread*, June 1978, 16.

⁶⁰ Interview with Bishop James Ligo, Honiara, 2 June 2009. Ligo recalled a much earlier date for Subritzky's visit but it is clear from the *One Bread* article that Subritzky's first visit to the New Hebrides was in 1978. Rawcliffe first met him at a Charismatic Convention in Suva in 1977.

⁶¹ Bill Subritzky, *Devils Defeated*, Lancaster: Sovereign World Ltd (revised edition), 1996, 20-21. He also gives an account of the conference described above. The accounts I heard in 1978 of Subritzky's ministry of deliverance were quite alarming in that evil spirits were envisioned in a very literal way. I remember Rawcliffe explaining on a visit to Kohimarama that the sign that a devil had been exorcised was that a string of white saliva would follow him out of the (formerly) possessed person's mouth. I was not convinced.

led by the Vicar General, Fr. Timon Gao. The Bishop demanded that it be taken down. The subcommittee refused and the stalemate ensued for months.

Rawcliffe explained his position:

The sub-committee had asked if they could raise two flags on 29 November, the United Nations flag and the Vanuaaku flag. I agreed to the UN flag and said no to the Vanuaaku flag. The reasons are clear, whether you agree with them or not. The Church cannot appear to belong to any one party. Its members are free to join any party which they consider to be right, and to hoist a party flag at the Church HQ makes it seem that the Church is trying to force its member to support that party. And this is exactly what members of our Church who belong to other parties have said. The flag has divided our Church members. Also the Church cannot let itself be controlled by any party or government, as it must be free to commend or criticise what any party says or does.

The Diocesan Trust Board, owners of the diocese's property, also met and passed a resolution asking that the United Nations flag be substituted for the Vanua'aku flag. Rawcliffe agreed to this but it was later discovered that the U.N. flag could not be flown in the New Hebrides without the permission of the United Nations and the two Resident Commissioners.⁶² In the same issue of *One Bread*, Rawcliffe reprinted an article on "Jesus and Politics" by Fr. Paul Hodee published in *Eglise de Nouvelle Calédonie* earlier in the year.⁶³ The two Resident Commissioners refused permission for the United Nations flag to fly.⁶⁴ The matter was resolved only by the Vanua'aku Pati agreeing to suspend the PPG on 11 April 1978 and the formation of the government of National Unity in December 1978 with Roman Catholic priest, Fr. Gerard Leymang, as Chief Minister and Fr. Walter Lini, Deputy Chief Minister.⁶⁵ Tevi and Lini had been ordained priests together in Pentecost in 1970.

Rawcliffe welcomed these developments:

It has meant a real sacrifice on the part of both the Council of Ministers and the Cabinet of the Vanuaaku Pati to abandon the positions that both had taken up and to come together in agreement that there must be a new election as soon as proper registration can be made. I am sure this is the only way to get out of the deadlock in which we were. I am sure too that if the New Hebrideans on both sides are left to work out these plans, a real solution will be found. It is up to the expatriates of both Residencies to keep out and let the New Hebrideans involved in this work out their own compromise solutions.⁶⁶

⁶² "The Vanuaaku Party flag at the Church headquarters", *One Bread*, December 1977, 6-7.

⁶³ *One Bread*, December 1977, 9-12.

⁶⁴ "Correction", *One Bread*, February 1978.

⁶⁵ This conflict paralleled an earlier one in which Rawcliffe asked that the Vanua'ku Pati national office in Vila move out of the Anglican parish compound at Tagabe. At that point the party had limited resources and the parish had offered the office to Lini and the party as a base in Port Vila. Rawcliffe argued that it gave the impression that the diocese was supporting the Vanua'aku Pati and that the headquarters had to move. These and other incidents soured relations between Rawcliffe and the Vanua'aku Pati. (COM Archives, Rawcliffe file.)

⁶⁶ "The Bishop writes . . .", *One Bread*, May 1978, 1,

He strongly supported the Government of National Unity:

I am sure that the meetings which have been held between the Ministers and the Vanuaaku Party cabinet have been a result of our prayers, and also the decision of the Vanuaaku Party to join in the Government of National Unity. But Satan is always trying to spoil what our Lord is doing, and at the time of writing this it seems doubtful again whether the different parties will in fact join in Fr. Leymang's government. We must continue praying and must take authority in the name of Jesus to bind Satan's Strong Man once again that he may not be able to confuse our people and prevent the unity that we wish for.⁶⁷

It is not impossible that because of his Anglo-Catholic formation, Lini was able to work with Leymang more comfortably than a Presbyterian might have. Indeed, in the nineties, Lini would leave the Presbyterians in the Vanua'aku Pati and form a coalition with the Roman Catholic Moderate parties.

I believe that the Vanua'aku flag incident made it clear to Rawcliffe how marginal his presence would be in the future Vanuatu and he began to make plans for a local successor. On 4 February 1979, Fr. Harry Tevi, a priest from Pentecost, trained at Pacific Theological College, Suva, and a former Principal of Bishop Patteson Theological Centre in the Solomons, was consecrated assistant bishop of New Hebrides at Lolowai. At the consecration, Rawcliffe announced his intention to resign in a year's time. Tevi was a friend of Fr. Walter Lini and a Vanua'aku Pati supporter, but because of years of study in Fiji and teaching in the Solomons had not much been involved in New Hebrides politics. Lini was present at the consecration and offered congratulations on behalf of the Chief Minister and the Government of National Unity.⁶⁸ Tevi, sometime after his return to the New Hebrides, had also become a charismatic and in January 1979, immediately before his consecration, accompanied Rawcliffe and his wife to two charismatic conferences in Sydney organized by the Temple Trust, a Ministers Conference and the International Renewal Conference. Tevi continued on this course when he replaced Rawcliffe as diocesan bishop in 1980.⁶⁹ He was a participant in Vanuatu independence celebrations on 30 July 1980. Rawcliffe, who published the last edition of *One Bread* just before the 14 November 1979 election that brought the Vanua'aku Pati an enormous victory, left the New Hebrides before the independence celebrations.⁷⁰

Conclusion

I have briefly discussed the relations of one church in the New Hebrides with the Vanuatu independence movement. I have deliberately not sought to make comparisons with other churches but as the different churches' stories come forward, these comparisons will be

⁶⁷ "The Bishop writes . . .", *One Bread*, December 1978, 1-2.

⁶⁸ "The Bishop writes . . ." and "Consecration of Bishop Harry", *One Bread*, March 1979, 1, 4-7.

⁶⁹ "Visit to Australia", *One Bread*, December 1978, 5.

⁷⁰ As Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway, Rawcliffe continued to be an active member of the charismatic movement and was particularly involved in faith healing. However, after the death of his wife and his retirement to England, he made another major theological shift. He announced his homosexuality over BBC International (in a broadcast that reached Vanuatu) and became an advocate of gay liberation.

able to be made. (There were, for example, also charismatic Presbyterians.) Nor have I discussed the role of the New Hebrides Christian Council in which all of the churches were involved, including Roman Catholics, Presbyterians and Anglicans. Nor have I made much of a comparison between the New Hebrides situation and the involvement of the church in independence movements in other parts of the Pacific such as Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and New Caledonia. Nor have I tried to assess the effect on the future of the Anglican diocese of the 1970s generation of the best educated clergy (for example, Walter Lini and John Bani) moving from work within the church to politics, leaving church leadership to a sometimes unsympathetic expatriate and his protégé local successor (especially compared to the experience of the Church of Melanesia in the Solomons). Nor have I moved in any detail beyond Vanuatu independence on 30 July 1980 and the issue of inter-denominational conflict in the post-independence Government. There is still much work to be done but I hope this paper is a useful first account of the Anglican story.

An earlier version of this paper was presented at the conference, "'Going Finish' or 'Go Pinis'? The ending of the colonial era and the beginning of independence in the nations of Melanesia", Alfred Deakin Research Institute, Geelong Waterfront Campus, Deakin University (Melbourne), 12-13 November. 2009.