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THE RESEARCH SCHOOL OF PACIFIC STUDIES 554/1963

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR 1962

NEW GUINEA RESEARCH UNIT

SUMMARY

Staff

Executive Officer	Dr. D. G. Bettison, M.A., Ph.D.
Research Officers	Mr. N. D. Oram, M.A. Dr. R. G. Crocombe, B.A., Ph.D.
Research Assistants	Mrs. L. E. Barnett, B.A., Dip.Soc.Studies. Mr. M. Rimoldi, B.A., Dip.Soc.Anthrop.
Departmental Assistant	Miss P. M. Richardson, B.A.
Secretary (Canberra) (Port Moresby)	Mrs. J. Anderson, M.A. Mrs. L. M. Dudley

The New Guinea Research Unit was engaged in studies of urbanisation and re-settlement of immigrant persons in Port Moresby and on land tenure as it affects agricultural productivity. Each of these studies was approached by a team of workers from various disciplines. The Unit's staff in conjunction with others temporarily assisting in the studies, have worked in Port Moresby and environs, the Popondetta area of the Northern District of Papua and in the Markham Valley, Morobe District.

The analysis of the census of indigenous people in Port Moresby and environs is nearing completion and will be published in 1963.

Through the generosity of the Rural Credits Development Fund of the Reserve Bank, it is possible to develop research in 1963 into the relationship of subsistence agriculture to cash cropping and the effect of varying forms of social organisation on indigenous agricultural production.

The Unit has begun the development of a library for research purposes in Port Moresby to assist its own staff and others working in the territory. The Unit continued to assist scholars and staff from the Departments of the School in the Territory by the control of vehicles, stores and other facilities. The planning of further accommodation for research personnel in the Territory was continued and building in Lae and Port Moresby will commence early in the coming year.

The assistance given the Unit in its first year of field research by the Departments of the Territory Administration, the Missions and by individual Australian and indigenous people is gratefully acknowledged.

The New Guinea Research Unit benefitted during the year from the temporary employment of Dr. Diana Howlett, Ph.D., as Research Assistant. Five Papuans and New Guineans were appointed in the Unit or seconded from the Territory Administration to work with the Unit's staff in the field or at Port Moresby and to undertake training. Difficulty has been experienced in obtaining indigenous staff of sufficient education and quality for the Unit's needs. The co-operation and assistance of the Territory Administration in this matter is greatly appreciated. The Unit also enjoyed the part-time services of locally recruited personnel to assist in the processing of data at head-quarters and in secretarial capacities.

/Research:

Research:

(a) Urbanisation and Resettlement - Mr. Oram, who is in charge of this study, took up residence in Port Moresby in January. He was assisted throughout the year by Mrs. L. Barnett and indigenous workers.

The study of Port Moresby is designed in terms of:

(i) the physical phenomena - including such topics as land tenure, housing, services, planning and economic resources.

(ii) the social aspects such as the circumstances of selected indigenous communities, immigrant families, the economic and social roles of women, the process of immigration and settlement, nutrition, etc.

During the year Mr. Oram has concentrated on the composition of immigrant settlements, completing the processing of the 1960 unofficial census of Port Moresby and environs, and on problems of land tenure in the urban area. Mrs. Barnett is working on the process of adjustment of urban women in Hohola Township to an urban way of life. Ah encouraging feature was the work done by Messrs. Gavera Baru and Haro Eka, indigenous assistants from Port Moresby.

It is hoped to expand this team by additional staff in the forthcoming year.

(b) Land Tenure - Dr. Crocombe arrived in the Territory in March, 1962. The study has been formulated as follows: the work was started by a comparative study of six forms of tenure in the vicinity of Popondetta, Northern District. He was assisted in this work by Dr. Diana Howlett, Mr. Russell Cheetham of the Department of Agriculture, Stock and Fisheries of the Territory Administration, Mr. G. Hogbin of the Department of Economics of the Research School of Pacific Studies of this University, Mr. Max Rimoldi, and Mr. R. Dakeyne of the Department of Geography, University of Sydney, all of whom spent varying periods on the study of select groups. An encouraging feature of this work was the way Mr. Cromwell Burau, an indigenous assistant from the area, came to grasp the significance of the study and to learn appropriate techniques of interview and the gathering of data.

In September and October, Mr. Crocombe and Mr. Hogbin made a brief study of the Erap Mechanical Farming Project in the Markham Valley, Morobe Distric This project is significant in terms of the way in which indigenous leaders have successfully launched an important enterprise of a type which bears little relation to their traditional experience.

The exploring of new areas suitable for detailed study is continuing. It is likely that this team will spread into Manus Island, the Gazelle Peninsula and other selected areas in the forthcoming year. The kind assistance given by personnel outside the Unit is gratefully acknowledged.

(c) Population Census - Port Moresby and Environs - The census conducted in the field by the Department of Native Affairs of the Territory Administration in 1961 has been processed through Powers Samas cards by the Unit's staff in Port Moresby. A report is being prepared by the Unit's staff and a publication is expected early in 1963. Acknowledgement is made of the kindness of the Public Health Department of the Territory Administration and of Mr. K. Bruce for its maintenance.

(d) General Analysis - Dr. Bettison, with the assistance of Miss Richardson, has been engaged on a general analysis of the Territory's problems from the literature available. Political, educational and religious development have been concentrated on in the current year. Miss Richardson completed a survey of current research in the Territory. A selection from this, on a regional basis, is to be submitted to the Committee for Urgent Anthropological Research in New Guinea, centred in Amsterdam, for circulation in 1963.

/(e) Future Research -

(e) Future Research - An attempt was made during the current year to start work on problems associated with the formation of democratically controlled indigenous associations. Staffing and financial reasons made it necessary to postpone this activity.

Through the generosity of the Rural Credits Development Fund of the Reserve Bank of Australia finance is available for research into problems of indigenous primary production. It is intended to co-ordinate this study with the work of Dr. Crocombe and of Mr. Fisk and Dr. Shand in the Department of Economics, Research School of Pacific Studies. The terms of reference are the relationship of subsistence agriculture to cash cropping and the role of social organisation on indigenous production. Staff will be appointed early in 1963.

Research into selected aspects of schooling and the role of teachers in the community is under consideration. An application for funds from an American source has been made. Consideration was given to developing research into problems of education.

The Hon. Charles and Mrs. Banks Fund: An estimated £3,000 of this fund has been set aside to finance a history of the Bulolo Gold Dredging Company. Dr. Alan Healy is undertaking the work in the Department of Pacific History.

Seminars: The first of the Unit's seminars in the Territory was held in Port Moresby during September. Papers were read by members of staff and visitors. The participation of visitors from the Territory, of Dr. Jacques Barrau of the South Pacific Commission and of Mr. and Mrs. Alcock, town planners carrying out a study of building methods, was heartening.

It is intended to hold two or three seminars each year somewhere in the Territory. It is hoped that one of these may be enlarged to conference proportion and include a number of public lectures.

Library: With the assistance of the Library of the Institute of Advanced Studies and the Hunter Douglas Fund, the Unit has built up a reference library in its offices in Port Moresby. This library, in addition to general reference and works on the Territory, contains books referring to the various fields of interest of the staff. The library is available to all members of the University and has been made use of by visiting scholars and others.

New Guinea Research Unit Bulletin: The need to provide a medium for the speedy dissemination of findings to interested scholars and officers of the Territory Administration has been met by the development of a simply produced 'Bulletin'. Issues will be made at irregular intervals as field material becomes available. The first issue on the Erap Mechanical Farming Project will appear early in 1963.

Lectures: Dr. Bettison and Mr. Oram gave a number of lectures to the public, student organisations and learned societies in Australia and Papua-New Guinea during the year.

Organisation of the Unit: The Committee controlling the Unit met on five occasions during the year. The Executive Officer made two visits to the Territory and members of the staff resident in the Territory made periodic visits to Canberra to plan research and consult with colleagues.

The Unit is presently divided into three sections: a team at head-quarters in Canberra and in the Territory, the urbanisation and resettlement team under Mr. Oram and the land tenure team under Dr. Crocombe. A feature of the Unit's organisation has been the temporary employment by, secondment to, or association with, the Unit in the Territory of persons with particular skills and interests in the work on hand.

As senior representative of the Unit in the Territory, Mr. Oram has carried a considerable administrative burden. In addition to the problems associated with getting personnel into the field, Mr. Oram and Dr. Crocombe

/have made wide contacts

have made wide contacts with members of the Administration, the indigenous people and resident Australians. The homes of staff and the Unit's offices in Badili, Port Moresby, have become centres for visiting academics and research personnel from many countries. Much of Mr. Oram's time has to be devoted to discussion with visitors and grateful acknowledgement is made of his efforts on behalf of the Unit generally in the Territory.

Accommodation: The policy of building houses for staff in the Territory was continued during the year. In addition to the two dwellings in Boroko, Port Moresby, plans were prepared for further dwellings in Hohola Township, Port Moresby and in Lae, Morobe District. The decision to erect dwellings of a standard and design suitable for either Australian or indigenous staff, and built in communities of predominantly indigenous people, will facilitate the easy mixing of staff with them and also effect a considerable saving in capital costs. The kindness of the Territory Administration in making accommodation available to field workers and of the indigenous families with whom staff have stayed, is gratefully acknowledge.

General: The year was marked by the Unit's first moves into the field. A team approach is being adopted in all field studies. The role of the Unit in assisting the field work of others in the Departments of the School was actively pursued. The administration of five vehicles scattered over the Territory, the purchase and control of stores and equipment as well as attention to more routine needs of persons in the field have added considerably to our work.

The assistance of many departments of the Territory administration especially the Transport Department for the maintenance of vehicles, is gratefully acknowledged. A sound basis for research and for the exchange of knowledge has been built up over the year.

Publications

CROCOMBE, R. G.	"Development and Regression in New Zealand's Island Territories," Pacific Viewpoint, vol.3, pp.17-32.
CROCOMBE, R. G. and CROCOMBE, M.	"The Star Massacre, 1841," Etudes Melanesiennes, December, 1962.