The Research School of Social Sciences carries out research in selected areas of the social sciences with special, but by no means exclusive application to Australia. Research is carried out on the history, politics, demography and sociology of countries with which Australia has links and on the history of ideas in parts of the world from which we derive our cultural and intellectual heritage. Some of the School's research, especially in philosophy and statistics, is theoretical and has application quite generally. The research in statistics deals with physical and biological as well as social phenomena.

The School's research aims particularly to contribute to a better understanding of the causes and consequences of social, political and economic phenomena. This is pursued in an historical context, especially in the Departments of History and Economic History and the History of Ideas Unit. It is also pursued through comparative studies of Australia and other countries, and comparisons between Australian states and cities.

A small proportion of the School's research is concerned with the evaluation of particular policies. A much larger proportion attempts to assess the impact of policies along with the many other determinants of social phenomena. Some of the School's research has direct implications for policy. Much more of it provides a basic understanding of social relationships that are a foundation for policy formulation. Members of the School are frequently asked to advise governments and to sit as members of public enquiries. Less frequently they are involved in a similar capacity in the private sector.

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

Although the publication of major books such as Professor K.S. Inglis' *This is the ABC* and Professor O. MacDonagh's *States of Mind: a study of Anglo-Irish Conflict, 1780-1980* are the most visible achievements of the School, the sending of major manuscripts to a press for publication sees the end of most of the input of the School. Other important publications during the year include Professor N.G. Butlin's *Our Original Aggression on the early impact of European settlement on Aborigines*, Volume 9 of the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* and Dr L. Day's *Analysing Population Trends*.

Manuscripts completed include Dr G.C.L. Hazlehurst's biography of Sir Gordon Chalk, Dr R. Brown's *The Nature of Social Laws*, Dr K. Haakonsen's *From Enlightenment to Utilitarianism: Studies in Scottish Philosophy, Politics and Jurisprudence*, Professor J. Smart's *Ethics, Persuasion and Truth* and Dr K. Campbell's *A Stoic Philosophy of Life*. Dr M. Carter and Dr R. Maddock completed two books, one on working hours and the other on "rational expectations macrotheory". Dr M. Osborne completed a book on *Finite Algorithms in Optimisation and Data Analysis*. 
Dr S. Wilson, with Dr A. Jakeman (CRES) completed a study in which spinifex ground cover was used as a measure of bush fire risk. Two School projects began to contribute to the School’s output. Dr R. Goodin’s Protecting the Vulnerable and Dr S. Macintyre’s history of social justice in Australian public policy were completed in the Social Justice Project. The first report of the Ageing and the Family Project: Health, Welfare and Family in Later Life was published late in the year.

The School takes a lead in organising conferences and seminars on topics on which its members are working. During the year the Law and Politics of Industrial Relations Project sponsored a seminar on Changing Industrial Law which involved practitioners as well as academics. The Economic History Department held a seminar at which authors of a book on Australian economic development in the twentieth century, who come from a number of universities, discussed their work. Other conferences dealt with numerical economic modelling, federalism and ethnic politics.

**NEW DEVELOPMENTS**

The School has been selected to produce the Bicentennial Encyclopaedia of the Australian People by the Bicentennial Authority and work on it commenced late in the year. A feasibility study for a project on the changing Australian family was commenced by Dr Michael Bracher. Following consideration of its findings the School will decide whether to embark on a project in this field. The Demography Department has begun to develop research on the population of China. Professor Caldwell has advised on the one-in-a-thousand sample survey of China. Dr P. Dichomides with Dr R. Miles began work on measures of how much of a mineral has been released from an ore body at different stages of processing.

Professor Self has begun research on policy making and planning in the Australian states and capital cities. Dr D’Agostino and Dr Routley are sponsoring an interdisciplinary program in environmental philosophy. The School, together with the Brookings Institution, Washington D.C., has sponsored, during 1983, a series of studies of the Australian economy. Following a conference in Canberra in January 1984 the papers will be revised and published.