

RESEARCH SCHOOL OF PACIFIC STUDIESDirector's Comments on 1968 Annual Report

The year was largely one of re-organisation, with new Departments of Linguistics, formerly in Anthropology & Sociology, and of Biogeography & Geomorphology and of Human Geography, both formerly in Geography; it may be helpful to Council to carry the story forward into 1969. As foreshadowed in the Annual Report for 1968, this re-organisation has since been taken further by the formation of the Department of Prehistory, again from Anthropology & Sociology. Heads of Department have been appointed in Biogeography & Geomorphology (Professor Donald Walker), Linguistics (Professor Stephen Wurm), and Prehistory (Professor Jack Golson); but Human Geography has remained vacant owing to the acceptance of a post in the United States by the Professor-elect, Dr H. C. Brookfield, and Anthropology & Sociology, vacant by the appointment of Professor J. A. Barnes to the new Chair of Sociology at Cambridge, has not yet been filled: in both cases a recommendation should come forward shortly. The appointment of Professor Wang Gungwu to fill the Chair of Far Eastern History has greatly strengthened that Department. Recruitment in general made marked progress around the turn of the year.

Accommodation difficulties are becoming acute, and the commencement of work on the new Hemi-hexagon and the Lab Block is still, unfortunately, awaited. On the other hand, the opening of the Coombs Theatre has provided a very useful addition to the University's facilities, much in demand; and the New Guinea Research Unit has moved from its cramped old quarters to new and convenient buildings at Waigani.

Academically, perhaps the most notable trend was towards the strengthening of our work in Southeast and East Asia. The detailed reports from Economics and International Relations will show that foundations have been laid for really effective contributions to the study of contemporary Japan and China; recruitment in these fields is difficult and we have had one or two disappointments, but these are being made good. This work is being actively forwarded by an informal group styled, still more informally, the "China Lobby"; at the same time, Far Eastern History is tending towards an increasing emphasis on modern studies, without neglecting the more classical side for which the Department has a high reputation. Economics has continued to be a substantial contributor of objective information on the economy of Southeast Asia, notably through the Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies.

International Relations held the first conference of Australian academics in the field; this successful event was mounted with the aid of Ford funds, which also essentially supported the very active Strategic and Defence Studies Centre. This Centre, which goes some way to fill a marked gap in Australian thinking, received an appreciative reference from the Deputy Leader of the Federal Opposition, who spoke of "the devoted work of a handful of university people" at ANU.

New Guinea remains a most important locus of activity for the School, and it may be convenient to group together references to the work carried out there. Studies on the Territory's current economic problems have been carried out by staff and students from Economics and Human Geography. In addition to its normal and important research activities in the island, Anthropology has produced a three-volume Ethnographic Bibliography of New Guinea. Prehistory and Biogeography & Geomorphology between them are greatly extending our knowledge of New Guinea's past, and Linguistics is establishing relations between the Papuan languages, hitherto thought to be isolated: these developments suggest radical changes in generally accepted views, and this holds also for Prehistory's work on the Australian past.

The New Guinea Research Unit continues its essentially "applied" enquiries into various current affairs, economic and social; some of its bulletins are in fact substantial monographs with a most direct bearing on the problems the country faces as it advances towards self-government. The great events of the year for the Unit were the opening of its new building on the University of Papua & New Guinea site, and its participation in the very successful Second Waigani Seminar, on The History of Melanesia, a notable and most enjoyable occasion.

In Pacific History, the most notable development is the setting up (in conjunction with four major regional libraries) of the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau, which is responsible for the collection, reproduction, and distribution of unpublished material to the member libraries: it publishes a lively bulletin, Pambu.

It has indeed been a notable year for publications, with some 40 books and substantial monographs. Several Departments (International Relations, Biogeography & Geomorphology, Human Geography, Linguistics) produce working papers, for the distribution of which we must thank the ANU Press; and there are now four actual serials: Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies, Journal of Pacific History, New Guinea Research Unit Bulletin, and Pambu.

Members of the School are in considerable demand as consultants and commentators; Economics for instance has made the services of four staff members available to various international agencies; Sir Leslie Melville has the invidious task of advising the Government on the budget for the University of Papua & New Guinea. Mention should be made of the "internal loan" of Dr G. J. R. Linge (Human Geography) to the University for six months to assist in preparing the brief for the Site Planner. Notable outside engagements were Professor Miller's Röntgen Oration to the College of Radiologists, and Professor Stanner's Boyer Lectures on Australian attitudes to the aborigines.

The School has received generous support from a number of sources: the Ford Foundation has assisted several small projects as well as the work on contemporary China, Indonesia, and the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre; the Reserve Bank's Rural Credits Fund has

financed a number of useful New Guinean Studies. Finally, Professor Davidson's assistance to the Republic of Nauru (whose President the School had the honour of welcoming) led to a gift of \$10,000, to be devoted to library and publications needs in the Pacific field.

These comments have not sought to describe the School's activities in detail, but the full Annual Report will, I trust, show that 1968 was a year of energetic and rewarding work, despite staffing difficulties in some Departments. Some further information is given in a brochure, Structure and Activities 1968, of which the first issue was produced early in 1969.