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REVIEW REPORTGENERAL DETAILED REPORTA BERTHELMERS ISLAND MISSION

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NATURE AND LOCATION OF MISSION:

See Review Report for 1951.

The Home is still situated on the Bagot Aboriginal Reserve, Darwin, occupying a position between the Bagot Aboriginal Hospital and the Bagot Aboriginal Settlement.

The transfer of the Home to the new site seven miles out of Darwin was omitted from the estimates for the year 1952/1953; it will be included in the estimates for 1953/1954.

STATISTICS:

Inmates of the Home.

At 31.12.51 - 57 children + 12 adults.

At 31.12.52 - 45 boys + 54 girls = 97 children + 10 adults.

During the year one lad was transferred to Croker Island Mission and five lads left the Home to work in the Pastoral Industry. Three children removed from Hilares Station and six children from a needy Darwin family were admitted to the Home; the remaining admissions were children of unmarried part aboriginal mothers in Darwin.

In addition to regular inmates the Mission accepts children of part aboriginal mothers who are sick or in hospital and are unable to arrange care for the children during that time. During the year several families were assisted in this way.

The inmates are divided as follows:-

Nurses	10
Kindergarten	10
Boys' Dormitory	50
Girls' Dormitory	34
Senior Girls' Dormitory	4
Total	97

HOUSING:

There have been no major additions to the housing owing to the impending move of the Home.

Minor Additions:-

A 20' x 20' section of a Sydney William hut has been converted into a small dormitory for kindergarten children under Miss Spohn. Eleven kindergarten children plus five of the younger boys occupy this dormitory.

A 20' x 20' section of a Sydney William type hut is being erected as a dormitory for senior boys.

1953/12/2

02850005

FOOD: STORAGE, PREPARATION AND CONSUMPTION:

For the year ending June 30th 1952, rations were supplied by the Northern Territory Administration through its Native Affairs Section. See Financial Statement. From July 1st 1952, under the new budget system, the Mission is responsible for supplying all of the rations for the Home.

Refrigeration facilities are insufficient for the requirements of the Home. Owing to the failure of one 5 1/2-cubic feet refrigerator, only two Kelvinettes are now available. The Superintendent intended waiting until the Home was moved to its new site before purchasing and installing a larger refrigerator unit; she is now investigating the possibility of hiring an additional refrigeration unit to meet the present needs of the Home.

Meals supplied to the children are of good quality and varied. Potatoes, yellow and green vegetables are regularly supplied and the meat menu includes roast beef, liver, ox-tail and tongue. All children receive milk and a piece of fresh fruit each day and nursery children in addition to extra milk receive pentavite daily.

The kitchen staff is provided by the adult inmates of the Home who work on a roster system. The older girls assist on weekends.

ILLNESS:

Inmates receive hospitalisation when necessary in the Darwin Hospital with the white patients.

A measles epidemic occurred from July to September, in all twentysix cases were treated. Diphtheria immunisation was given to thirtysix children during September and October.

Apart from the measles epidemic the health of the inmates has been good throughout the year.

PRIMARY EDUCATION:

Sixty-three children attended the Darwin High Primary School throughout the year: one of the children is in the High School Section and is doing second-year commercial work. No children will be passing into the High School for 1953.

The progress of the part-aboriginal children from the Home has not been equal to that of the white children attending the school. The majority of the older children had missed their first years of schooling and are now in classes with younger white children and, owing to the crowded condition of the Home, there are not the full opportunities for supervised homework. Better results can be expected with the younger children, who have commenced at the Darwin school from the lowest grade and are in classes with white children of their own age.

Ten children of pre-school age attend kindergarten classes under Miss Spohn.

The craft classes at the Home have made little progress owing to the lack of continuity of instructors during the year. Items of fancy work and weaving were entered in the 1952 Darwin Show, the latter being awarded a prize. The Superintendent plans the revival of the classes for 1953.

SPIRITUAL TEACHING AND WORSHIP:

See Review Report for 1951.

EMPLOYMENT PLACEMENT:

During the past year the following lads left the Home for employment in the pastoral industry:

	AGE	
<i>noted H/C</i> Claude Holke	16 years	Returned to his parents to assist in pastoral work
<i>noted H/C</i> Joseph Russel	15 years	Returned to his mother, Mountain Valley Station (Murrumbidgee District)
<i>noted</i> Cecil Sharper	15 years	Working on Mountain Valley Station.
<i>noted H/C</i> Colin Halbert	15 years	Working on Douglas Station, Daly River.
<i>noted H/C</i> Peter Van Cuse	17 years	Working on Mr. H. Knowles' Buffalo shooting property.

Peter Van Cuse returned to the Home on November 24th when work closed down for the Wet Season. He has been offered work with Mr. Knowles again next year. He was paid off at the Home with a cheque for £60; this has been paid into his Savings Bank Account. Peter now has £75.10.0 in his Bank.

Patrol Officers keep in touch with the lads working in their districts.

One girl who left school at the end of 1950 is now employed in domestic work in the town: she resides at the Home.

Part-aboriginal women out of employment may reside at the Home, when every effort is made to find employment in the town for them. Owing to the cramped conditions of the Home it is not able to offer sufficient amenities for this type of woman and the majority of part-aboriginal unemployed women prefer to stay with relatives or friends in the town. The necessary discipline required in the Home is another reason why it is not popular with this class.

RECREATION AND SOCIAL LIFE:

See Review Report 1951.

Three educational movie films are obtained each week from the National Film Library Canberra and are shown at the Home on Monday evenings.

There is an equipped children's playground attached to the Home, which is used by the younger children.

At the close of the school year boys and girls attend a week's camp. The camp this year was held at Coonah Creek 50 miles south of Darwin.

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS:

See Review Report 1951.

02850005

STAFF AND SUPERVISION:

Under the supervision of the Superintendent, Miss K. Hamilton, the staff comprises:-

- Miss G. Pinham - European Missionary in charge of the nursery.
- Miss H. Spelm - European Missionary in charge of the kindergarten.
- Miss E. Kelly - European Missionary, on furlough.
- Mrs. C. Kner } - Coloured missionaries in charge of girls' dormitory.  
Miss G. Smith }
- Miss E. Ance } Coloured missionary assistants.  
Miss W. Baraka }
- Mr. and Mrs. Knight } Mr. Knight supervises the boys and looks after the mission truck and maintenance work of the Home.

Mrs. Knight assists with office work.

There is an excellent spirit among the staff, who are devoted to their work and give themselves wholly to the welfare of the children. The discipline of the Home is good. Although the staff are working under the difficulties due to the cramped position of the Home, they carry on without complaint.

FINANCIAL:

The following financial statement of Income and Expenditure is for the year 1951/1952. During this year the Northern Territory Administration through its Native Affairs Branch supplied the rations for the Home:-

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<u>INCOME</u>		<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	
Balance, 1/7/51	249. 9. 11	Provisions	103. 12. 10
Child Endowment 27/2/51 - 21/1/52, (14 mos.)	2172. 4. 3	Clothing	938. 0. 11
Commonwealth Govt. Staff Allowance Years 1950/1, 1951/2	2000. 0. 0	Linen, Bedding, Cots	367. 19. 11
Donations from Parents 284. 0. 0		School Expenses and Pocket Money	148. 3. 6
from other sources 201. 8. 7	428. 8. 7	Recreation and Holiday Camps	245. 15. 0
Government Rations Supplied	4555. 0. 0	Christmas Toys	125. 17. 2
		Children's Travelling expenses	48. 18. 5
		Wages	
		Coloured Labour	
		Laundry & Outfits	578. 14. 0
		Married Couple	
		Wages, 5 min. Sh. 0.0	662. 14. 0
		Travelling Expenses	512. 4. 2
		Transport Expenses	273. 1. 9
		General and Maintenance Expenses	253. 2. 1
		Telegrams	35. 11. 5
		<u>Rations:</u>	
		Meat	8826
		Bread	627
		Fruit, Vegg. Butter	986
		groceries	876
		Stores from Mgmt	1440
		Salt Ration Store	
			4555. 0. 0
		Balance, 30/6/52	1355. 1. 9
	<u>29205. 2. 9</u>		<u>29205. 2. 9</u>

The Mission commenced with a balance of £249. 9. 11 and finished with a balance of £1355. 1. 9. Child Endowment payments do not represent the twelve months of the financial year owing to the overlapping of payments from one quarter to the next. The payments of the staff allowance for 1950/51 and 1951/52 were received during the financial year 1951/1952. Donations from parents and other sources amounted to £428. 8. 7. For the financial year 1952/53 the Mission has agreed to raise £500 in this way.

Government rations supplied amounted to £4555, an increase of £1255 from the previous year owing to increased number of inmates and increased price of rations.

The above financial statement is evidence of the strict economies under which the Mission operates.

The new system of financial control under the budgetary system commenced on July 1st 1952. The Aborigines Inmate

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Fiscion budgeting for the year 1952/1953 estimated their expenditure at £11,805 and sought a grant of £10,000. Allowing for certain reductions approval was given for a subsidy payment of £7900, vide Secretary, Department of Territories memorandum 51/1195 of 29th July 1952. Two quarterly payments, each of £1700 have been paid to the Mission for the half year ending December 31st, 1952.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

The children are encouraged to keep Savings Bank Accounts and money boxes. Thirty-three Commonwealth Savings Bank accounts are held by the children to the value of £256. 0. 6. This sum does not include Peter Fan Quee's account for £75. 10. 0. Thirty other children have money boxes. This is a worthwhile contribution of the Home to the training of the children.

The scope of work on behalf of part-aboriginal women who are unemployed or in need of assistance is limited by the lack of space and amenities available for this class of person. However, this necessary work is still carried on and from ten to fifteen adults live at the Home and assist in the work of the Home or go out to work.

The cramped conditions and the poor soil in the environments of the Home does not permit of the development to any extent of self-help activities, such as poultry run or a vegetable garden. This is a serious lack both in the economy of the Home and for the training of the children. The Superintendent is aware of this need and plans such developments when the Home is moved to its new site.

A problem arising from the present position of the Home alongside of the Native Settlement is the friendships that are growing up between part-aboriginal girls of the Home and full-blood youths on the Settlement. There are few full blood girls on the Settlement to act as companions for the native youths, who are therefore seeking the company of the part-aboriginal girls. This adds to the difficulties of supervision of the Home and there is a real danger that such friendships may develop into liaisons, which are undesirable and contrary to the policy of assimilation for the part-aboriginal children of the Home.

The above further stresses the urgency of the removal of the Home to its new site.

The Home continues its work on behalf of the children committed to its care, in preparing them for their place in the Australian community and, in spite of the difficulties inherent in its present position and in the nature of the work, is making satisfactory progress and is meeting an essential need in Darwin. The continuance of financial assistance is recommended.

*G. Sweeney*  
(G. Sweeney)  
DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT.

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