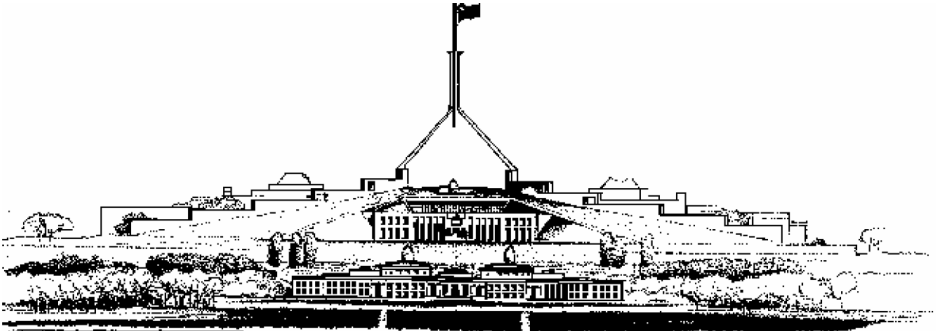




COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



# House of Representatives

## Official Hansard

No. 16, 1961  
Thursday, 20 April 1961

TWENTY-THIRD PARLIAMENT  
THIRD SESSION—FIRST PERIOD

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

# PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

TWENTY-THIRD PARLIAMENT—THIRD SESSION: FIRST PERIOD.

## ADMINISTRATOR.

His Excellency General Sir Reginald Alexander Dallas Brooks, Knight Commander of the Most Honorable Order of the Bath, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, Companion of the Distinguished Service Order, Knight of the Venerable Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, Administrator of the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia from 4th February, 1961.

## SEVENTH MENZIES GOVERNMENT.

(ASSUMED OFFICE 10TH DECEMBER, 1958.)

( <sup>1</sup> )Prime Minister; and Minister for External Affairs	The Right Honorable Robert Gordon Menzies, C.H., Q.C.
Minister for Trade .. .. .	The Right Honorable John McEwen.
Treasurer .. .. .	The Right Honorable Harold Edward Holt.
( <sup>2</sup> )Minister for External Affairs; and Minister in Charge Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization	The Right Honorable Richard Gardiner Casey, C.H., D.S.O., M.C.
Vice-President of the Executive Council; and Minister for National Development	Senator the Honorable William Henry Spooner, M.M.
Minister for Defence .. .. .	The Honorable Athol Gordon Townley.
Minister for Territories .. .. .	The Honorable Paul Meernaa Caedwalla Hasluck.
Minister for Labour and National Service ..	The Honorable William McMahon.
( <sup>3</sup> )Minister for Shipping and Transport; and Minister for Civil Aviation	Senator the Honorable Shane Dunne Paltridge.
Postmaster-General .. .. .	The Honorable Charles William Davidson, O.B.E.
Minister for Immigration .. .. .	The Honorable Alexander Russell Downer.
Attorney-General .. .. .	The Honorable Sir Garfield Edward John Barwick, Q.C.
Minister for Primary Industry .. .. .	The Honorable Charles Frederick Adermann.

(The above Ministers constitute the Cabinet.)

( <sup>4</sup> )Minister for Repatriation .. .. .	Senator the Honorable Sir Walter Jackson Cooper, M.B.E.
( <sup>5</sup> )Minister for Health; and Minister in Charge Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization	The Honorable Donald Alastair Cameron, O.B.E.
Minister for the Army .. .. .	The Honorable John Oscar Cramer.
( <sup>6</sup> )Minister for Repatriation .. .. .	The Honorable Frederick Meares Osborne, D.S.C.*, V.R.D.
( <sup>7</sup> )Minister for Air .. .. .	The Honorable Frederick Meares Osborne, D.S.C.*, V.R.D.
Minister for Social Services .. .. .	The Honorable Hugh Stevenson Robertson.
Minister for Customs and Excise .. .. .	Senator the Honorable Norman Henry Denham Henty.
Minister for Supply .. .. .	The Honorable Alan Shallcross Hulme.
Minister for the Interior: and Minister for Works	The Honorable Gordon Freeth.
Minister for the Navy .. .. .	Senator the Honorable John Grey Gorton.
( <sup>8</sup> )Minister for Shipping and Transport ..	The Honorable Hubert Ferdinand Opperman, O.B.E.
( <sup>9</sup> )Minister for Air .. .. .	Senator the Honorable Harrie Walter Wade.

(1) Appointed Minister for External Affairs, 4th February, 1960. (2) Resigned portfolio, 4th February, 1960.  
(3) Resigned as Minister for Shipping and Transport, 5th February, 1960. (4) Resigned portfolio, 29th December, 1960.  
(5) Appointed Minister in Charge Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, 4th February, 1960. (6) Appointed Minister for Repatriation, 29th December, 1960. (7) Resigned as Minister for Air, 29th December, 1960. (8) Appointed, 5th February, 1960. (9) Appointed 29th December, 1960.

# THE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

TWENTY-THIRD PARLIAMENT—THIRD SESSION: FIRST PERIOD.

*Speaker*—The Honorable John McLeay, M.M.

*Leader of the House*—The Right Honorable Harold Edward Holt.

*Chairman of Committees*—Philip Ernest Lucock.

*Temporary Chairmen of Committees*—Wilfred John Brimblecombe, Frederick Charles Chaney, A.F.C., Joseph James Clark, Laurence John Failes, Charles William Jackson Falkinder, D.S.O., D.F.C., Hon. William Crawford Haworth, Anthony Sylvester Luchetti, Hon. Norman John Oswald Makin, Edward William Peters, and Bruce McDonald Wight.

*Leader of the Opposition*—The Honorable Arthur Augustus Calwell.

*Deputy Leader of the Opposition*—Edward Gough Whitlam.

*Leader of the Australian Country Party*—The Right Honorable John McEwen.

*Deputy Leader of the Australian Country Party*—The Honorable Charles William Davidson, O.B.E.

Adermann, Hon. Charles Frederick	Fisher (Q.)
Allan, Archibald Ian	Gwydir (N.S.W.)
Anderson, Charles Groves Wright, V.C., M.C.	Hume (N.S.W.)
Anthony, John Douglas	Richmond (N.S.W.)
Aston, William John	Phillip (N.S.W.)
Bandidt, Henry Norman Charles	Wide Bay (Q.)
Barnard, Lance Herbert	Bass (T.)
Barnes, Charles Edward	McPherson (Q.)
Barwick, Hon. Sir Garfield Edward John, Q.C.	Parramatta (N.S.W.)
Bate, Henry Jefferson	Macarthur (N.S.W.)
(*)Beaton, Noel Lawrence	Bendigo (V.)
Beazley, Kim Edward	Fremantle (W.A.)
Bird, Alan Charles	Batman (V.)
Bland, Francis Armand, C.M.G.	Warringah (N.S.W.)
Bowden, George James, M.C.	Gippsland (V.)
Brimblecombe, Wilfred John	Maranoa (Q.)
Browne, Peter Grahame	Kalgoorlie (W.A.)
Bryant, Gordon Munro	Wills (V.)
Buchanan, Alexander Andrew	McMillan (V.)
Bury, Leslie Harry Ernest	Wentworth (N.S.W.)
Cairns, James Ford	Yarra (V.)
Calwell, Hon. Arthur Augustus	Melbourne (V.)
Cameron, Clyde Robert	Hindmarsh (S.A.)
Cameron, Hon. Donald Alastair, O.B.E.	Oxley (Q.)
(*)Casey, Rt. Hon. Richard Gardiner, C.H., D.S.O., M.C.	La Trobe (V.)
Cash, Earl Douglas	Stirling (W.A.)
Chaney, Frederick Charles, A.F.C.	Perth (W.A.)
(*)Chipp, Donald Leslie	Higinbotham (V.)
Chesby, Arthur Albert	Griffith (Q.)
(*)Clarey, Hon. Percy James	Bendigo (V.)
Clark, Joseph James	Darling (N.S.W.)
Clay, Lionel Daniel	St. George (N.S.W.)
Cleaver, Richard	Swan (W.A.)
Cope, James Francis	Watson (N.S.W.)
Costa, Dominic Eric	Banks (N.S.W.)
Courtney, Frank	Darebin (V.)
Cramer, Hon. John Oscar	Bennelong (N.S.W.)
Crean, Frank	Melbourne Ports (V.)
Curtin, Daniel James	Kingsford-Smith (N.S.W.)
Daly, Frederick Michael	Grayndler (N.S.W.)
Davidson, Hon. Charles William, O.B.E.	Dawson (Q.)
Davies, Ronald	Braddon (T.)
Davis, Francis John	Deakin (V.)
Dean, Roger Levinge	Robertson (N.S.W.)
Downer, Hon. Alexander Russell	Angas (S.A.)
Drummond, Hon. David Henry	New England (N.S.W.)
Drury, Edward Nigel	Ryan (Q.)
Duthie, Gilbert William Arthur	Wilmot (T.)
(*)England, John Armstrong, E.D.	Calare (N.S.W.)
Erwin, George Dudley	Ballaarat (V.)
(*)Evatt, Rt. Hon. Herbert Vere, Q.C., LL.D., D.Litt.	Hunter (N.S.W.)
Failes, Laurence John	Lawson (N.S.W.)
Fairbairn, David Eric, D.F.C.	Farrer (N.S.W.)
Fairhall, Hon. Allen	Paterson (N.S.W.)
Falkinder, Charles William Jackson, D.S.O., D.F.C.	Franklin (T.)
Forbes, Alexander James, M.C.	Barker (S.A.)
Fox, Edmund Maxwell Cameron	Henty (V.)
Fraser, Allan Duncan	Eden-Monaro (N.S.W.)
Fraser, James Reay	(A.C.T.)

THE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—*continued.*

v

Fraser, John Malcolm .. .. .	Wannon (V.)
Freeth, Hon. Gordon .. .. .	Forrest (W.A.)
Fulton, William John .. .. .	Leichhardt (Q.)
Galvin, Patrick .. .. .	Kingston (S.A.)
Griffiths, Charles Edward .. .. .	Shortland (N.S.W.)
Halbert, Hugh Victor .. .. .	Moore (W.A.)
Hamilton, Leonard William .. .. .	Canning (W.A.)
Harrison, Eli James .. .. .	Blaxland (N.S.W.)
Hasluck, Hon. Paul Meernaa Caedwalla .. .. .	Curtin (W.A.)
Haworth, Hon. William Crawford .. .. .	Isaacs (V.)
Haylen, Leslie Clement .. .. .	Parkes (N.S.W.)
Holt, Rt. Hon. Harold Edward .. .. .	Higgins (V.)
Holten, Rendle McNeilage .. .. .	Indi (V.)
(7)Howse, John Brooke .. .. .	Calare (N.S.W.)
Howson, Peter .. .. .	Fawcner (V.)
Hulme, Hon. Alan Shallcross .. .. .	Petrie (Q.)
Jack, William Mathers .. .. .	North Sydney (N.S.W.)
(8)James, Albert William .. .. .	Hunter (N.S.W.)
(9)Jess, John David .. .. .	La Trobe (V.)
Johnson, Leslie Royston .. .. .	Hughes (N.S.W.)
Jones, Charles Keith .. .. .	Newcastle (N.S.W.)
(10)Joske, Percy Ernest, Q.C. .. .. .	Balaclava (V.)
Kearney, Victor Dennis .. .. .	Cunningham (N.S.W.)
Kelly, Charles Robert .. .. .	Wakefield (S.A.)
Kent Hughes, Hon. Sir Wilfrid Selwyn, K.B.E., M.V.O., M.C., E.D. .. .. .	Chisholm (V.)
Killen, Denis James .. .. .	Moreton (Q.)
King, Robert Shannon .. .. .	Wimmera (V.)
Lawson, Hon. George .. .. .	Brisbane (Q.)
Lindsay, Robert William Ludovic .. .. .	Flinders (V.)
Luchetti, Anthony Sylvester .. .. .	Macquarie (N.S.W.)
Lucock, Philip Ernest .. .. .	Lyne (N.S.W.)
Mackinnon, Ewen Daniel .. .. .	Corangamite (V.)
Makin, Hon. Norman John Oswald .. .. .	Bonython (S.A.)
McColm, Malcolm Llewellyn .. .. .	Bowman (Q.)
McEwen, Rt. Hon. John .. .. .	Murray (V.)
McIvor, Hector James .. .. .	Gellibrand (V.)
McLeay, Hon. John, M.M. .. .. .	Boothby (S.A.)
McMahon, Hon. William .. .. .	Lowe (N.S.W.)
Menzies, Rt. Hon. Robert Gordon, C.H., Q.C. .. .. .	Kooyong (V.)
Minogue, Daniel .. .. .	West Sydney (N.S.W.)
Murray, John, M.B.E. .. .. .	Herbert (Q.)
Nelson, John Norman .. .. .	(N.T.)
O'Connor, William Paul .. .. .	Dalley (N.S.W.)
Opperman, Hon. Hubert Ferdinand, O.B.E. .. .. .	Corio (V.)
Osborne, Hon. Frederick Meares, D.S.C.*, V.R.D. .. .. .	Evans (N.S.W.)
Page, Rt. Hon. Sir Earle Christmas Grafton, G.C.M.G., C.H. .. .. .	Cowper (N.S.W.)
Pearce, Henry George .. .. .	Capricornia (Q.)
Peters, Edward William .. .. .	Scullin (V.)
Pollard, Hon. Reginald Thomas .. .. .	Lalor (V.)
Reynolds, Leonard James .. .. .	Barton (N.S.W.)
Riordan, Hon. William James Frederick .. .. .	Kennedy (Q.)
Robertson, Hon. Hugh Stevenson .. .. .	Riverina (N.S.W.)
Russell, Edgar Hughes Deg .. .. .	Grey (S.A.)
Sexton, Joseph Clement Leonard .. .. .	Adelaide (S.A.)
Snedden, Billy Mackie .. .. .	Bruce (V.)
Stewart, Francis Eugene .. .. .	Lang (N.S.W.)
Stokes, Philip William Clifford, E.D. .. .. .	Maribyrnong (V.)
Swartz, Reginald William Colin, M.B.E., E.D. .. .. .	Darling Downs (Q.)
Thompson, Albert Victor .. .. .	Port Adelaide (S.A.)
(11)Timson, Thomas Frank, M.B.E. .. .. .	Higinbotham (V.)
Townley, Hon. Athol Gordon .. .. .	Denison (T.)
Turnbull, Winton George .. .. .	Mallee (V.)
Turner, Henry Basil .. .. .	Bradfield (N.S.W.)
Uren, Thomas .. .. .	Reid (N.S.W.)
Ward, Hon. Edward John .. .. .	East Sydney (N.S.W.)
Wentworth, William Charles .. .. .	Mackellar (N.S.W.)
Wheeler, Roy Crawford .. .. .	Mitchell (N.S.W.)
Whitlam, Edward Gough .. .. .	Werriwa (N.S.W.)
(12)Whitton, Raymond Harold .. .. .	Balaclava (V.)
Wight, Bruce McDonald .. .. .	Lilley (Q.)
Wilson, Keith Cameron .. .. .	Sturt (S.A.)

(1) Elected, 16th July, 1960. (2) Resigned, 9th February, 1960. (3) Elected, 10th December, 1960.  
 (4) Death reported, 17th May, 1960. (5) Elected, 5th November, 1960. (6) Resigned, 9th February, 1960.  
 (7) Resigned, 28th September, 1960. (8) Elected, 9th April, 1960. (9) Elected, 9th April, 1960. (10) Resigned,  
 2nd June, 1960. (11) Death reported, 18th October, 1960. (12) Elected, 16th July, 1960.

to say about this legislation is that we just do not accept it as just or legislation worthy of respect.

**Dunphy, J.:** I do not think anybody appearing with leave in this Court should be heard to say that sort of thing.

**Mr. Docker:** Your Honour—

**Dunphy, J.:** Do not interrupt me, Mr. Docker. You have been told this before and I think if you say that again your leave to appear should be withdrawn. That is final as far as I am concerned.

**Spicer, C.J.:** You see, many of us have to accept legislation and obey legislation that we do not like. It is no use coming along and telling us you do not like the legislation. That does not get you anywhere. It only tends to emphasise the fact that your organisation will disobey the Court's order whenever it feels disposed to do so.

**Mr. Docker:** Your Honour, all I can say on this question that Mr. Justice Dunphy has raised is that it is my submission on matters of this nature where we virtually represent the defendant, that I am entitled to put anything that is not improper in defence of the organisation and I submit that what I put was not improper.

**Dunphy, J.:** I consider that it is improper and no member of the legal profession would be heard to say it and if you persist in saying it your leave to appear should be withdrawn.

**Mr. Docker** is not a member of the legal profession. The transcript continues—

**Mr. Docker:** My submission is that I am in the same position as a criminal in criminal proceedings who is entitled to make a statement from the dock. I am not in the position of a legal advocate—

**Spicer, C.J.:** I think you are. The only right to appear that you have is that you are a lay advocate given leave to appear before the Court.

**Mr. Docker:** If that is so, there is no way in which the defendant can appear in its own right.

**Spicer, C.J.:** That may be so; it is true of every corporation. It is one of the disabilities of being a corporation.

**Eggleston, J.:** Strictly speaking I think a corporation can only appear by Counsel in the ordinary course. But you have a special permission which enables you to stand in the place of Counsel.

**Mr. Docker:** What I am putting is that because we are a corporate body we should not be in any different position to the position we would be in if we were a single individual defendant.

**Mr. Docker** then went on to say—

The only other point I wish to put, Your Honours, is that it is true, as the situation stands, that an exercise of our right to withhold our labour for a day even can constitute a contempt of this Court and in that sense we plead guilty, but we do so with no sense of guilt or shame in the matter.

We simply say, Your Honours, that in fulfilling our proper function—

Debate interrupted under Standing Order No. 291.

Question resolved in the negative.

**Sitting suspended from 12.45 to 2.15 p.m.**

## CHEMICAL PHYSICS LABORATORY BUILDING, CLAYTON, VICTORIA.

### Report of Public Works Committee.

**Mr. DEAN.**—In accordance with the provisions of the Public Works Committee Act 1930-1960 I present the report relating to the following work:—

The proposed construction of a chemical physics laboratory building for the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization at Clayton, Victoria.

The committee has found that the existing facilities incorporate very few of the conditions desirable for the type of research work being undertaken, and recommends the construction of the building to the size and design proposed.

Ordered to be printed.

## NATIVE WELFARE CONFERENCE.

**Mr. HASLUCK** (Curtin—Minister for Territories).—by leave—For the information of members and for the completeness of the record, I wish to present to the House an outline of the work of the Native Welfare Conference held at Parliament House, Canberra, on 26th and 27th January last. This was a conference of Federal and State Ministers responsible for native welfare and the agenda was formed of items relating to matters which governments handle in respect of the advancement of native welfare. In keeping with the custom of Federal-State Ministerial conferences each participating Minister is reporting the results to his own government, and the responsibility will rest on each government to make decisions on matters which fall within its constitutional powers. The conference agreed on the following statement of the meaning of the policy of assimilation, to which all Australian governments adhere, and on methods of advancing that policy.

The policy of assimilation, in the view of all Australian governments, means that all aborigines and part aborigines are expected eventually to attain the same manner of living as other Australians and to live as members of a single Australian community

enjoying the same rights and privileges, accepting the same responsibilities, observing the same customs and influenced by the same beliefs, hopes and loyalties as other Australians. Thus, any special measures taken for aborigines and part aborigines are regarded as temporary measures not based on colour but intended to meet their need for special care and assistance, to protect them from any ill effects of sudden change, and to assist them to make the transition from one stage to another in such a way as will be favorable to their future social, economic and political advancement. In making this statement attention should be drawn to the rather loose use of the term "citizenship" when aborigines are said to have achieved citizenship by being exempted from the provisions of special State and Territory statutes which apply only to aborigines. In some respects, the position is somewhat like that of a minor who is basically a citizen but who, because he is under the age of 21 years, may not be able to do everything that other inhabitants of Australia may be able to do, and may be protected and assisted in ways in which the adult is not protected and assisted. In our view, Australian aborigines are Australian citizens by virtue of the Nationality and Citizenship Act 1948-1960. The special rights and disabilities which they have under State and Territory statutes can in no sense derogate from citizenship in the sense of status as Australian citizens. In effect then, a person placed under the provisions of State and Territorial native welfare acts has certain restrictions placed on him in some States but that does not in any way take his Australian citizenship away from him, although it may limit for the time being his exercise of some of the rights enjoyed by other citizens and may afford him assistance not given to other citizens.

Secondly, the conference gave attention to methods of advancing the policy. They are—

1. Extension, where applicable, of government settlement work to encourage nomadic and semi-nomadic natives to adopt a more settled way of life and to make health services, better standards of housing and nutrition, schooling, vocational training and occupation available to them and their

children, as a first stage towards their assimilation.

2. Provision of health services including particularly child welfare services.

3. Provision of education in normal schools and pre-schools to the extent possible otherwise in special schools and pre-schools for all aboriginal and part aboriginal children.

4. Continual improvement in housing and hygiene standards on government settlements, missions, rural properties in towns and assistance towards provision of and training in the use of improved housing facilities particularly in town areas.

5. Vocational training, including apprenticeship and employment, particularly in ways which will assist aborigines and part aborigines to make a contribution to the advancement of their own people by employment — teaching assistants, nursing and medical assistants, patrol officers, welfare officers and so on.

6. Encouragement of social and sporting activity both among aborigines and part aborigines and participation by them in general community activity.

7. Extension of welfare work, particularly to assist those people living in or near towns to adjust themselves to the life of the community.

8. Welfare services provided for other members of the community to be available to aborigines and part aborigines, for example, child, family and social welfare services.

9. A liberal approach to the removal of restrictive or protective legislation as soon as the capacity and advancement of the individual makes this possible.

10. Positive steps to ensure awareness in the general Australian community that implementation of the policy of assimilation is not possible unless advanced aborigines and part aborigines are received into the community and accepted without prejudice, and to ensure, as far as possible, that the Australian community plays its full part in this programme.

11. Further research into special problems associated with the native welfare programme.

It is recognized, Sir, that some of these methods may not be applicable in every State of the Commonwealth and that methods may vary from State to State. For example, in a State such as Victoria, the need for all of those methods may not arise, although in an area such as the Northern Territory we will wish to use every one of them, because every one of them is necessary. I am sure the House will appreciate the point that the condition of people of the aboriginal race varies very greatly from place to place in Australia, but the methods the list of which I have read to honorable members are the methods which the conference of Ministers agreed would best serve advancement of the policy of assimilation.

The conference also gave attention to methods of advancing this policy, to be taken either severally or in co-operation. The conference agreed that, apart from measures covered by other items on the agenda, particular attention needs to be given to the following:—

1. Housing: Notwithstanding the considerable progress that has been made, shortage of sufficient houses for aborigines and part aborigines ready to accept employment opportunities which would enable them to take their place in the community is a major factor militating against assimilation. Special attention needs to be given to increasing facilities and resources in order to meet this general problem.

2. Transitional Housing: It is believed that in some States there is a need for transitional housing for aborigines and part-aborigines who are able to accept award employment but require further guidance in home management before they can manage a normal home. Such houses may be simple in construction and established quite cheaply but should conform with local government minimum building standards.

3. Supervision by Welfare Staff: In all phases of assimilation welfare workers must be available to assist the people in making the necessary adjust-

ments. Personal contact and guidance must be continually available to each individual and family. In some States an increase in the number of welfare workers is necessary.

4. Welfare Work: Aborigines who are deemed fit to take their place in the community must be provided with the opportunity by way of employment placement and housing to do so. They need to be encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities and stimulated to a greater degree of self-reliance. Welfare policy should be more strongly directed towards creating an interest in the new way of life.

5. Education: A major instrument of assimilation is education of aboriginal children. There has been a marked increase in the extent and range of facilities available and this trend should be continued. At this stage particular attention could be given to the extension of pre-school training as an essential basis for further educational advancement. I would say in passing that, if it is considered that a child who comes from a normal Australian home needs the advantage of pre-school teaching as a preparation for further education, the need for pre-school education of aboriginal children who are handicapped in their homes is even greater.

In addition to the matters I have traversed, the conference of Ministers examined closely a number of other matters and I shall enumerate some of them. Attention was given to the problem of aborigines who, by moving from one State to another, may come under restrictive legislation. In one State, they may be free of restriction. They cross the border into another State and because in that State they are regarded by law as coming under special legislation, their position may become different. The Ministers agreed to confer with their Governments on any measures that may be necessary to overcome this problem.

The conference agreed that the extension of social service benefits to aborigines, which has now been in operation for twelve months, has worked very smoothly. There should continue to be close co-operation on

the administration of social service benefits. In any case where there was misunderstanding, arrangements were made for consultation with the Department of Social Services. At this point, I should interpolate that the conference had the assistance of my ministerial colleague, the Minister for Social Services, in this part of its work.

The special problems of nomadic and semi-nomadic people moving between South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory were recognized as involving co-operation between the authorities concerned, and it was agreed that a consultative committee be established. This is a problem affecting a comparatively small number of aborigines who are still in a nomadic or semi-nomadic condition and roam freely across the borders of those two States and the Northern Territory. We will co-operate to see that they are dealt with to the best advantage.

The Ministers agreed that aboriginal children should be educated in schools with special curricula and special teaching methods only for as long as the educational authority considers that they will derive greater benefit from a form of education developed to suit their stage of advancement than they would under the normal curriculum. Where such schools are needed they should be either conducted or supervised by the authority responsible for aboriginal education, which in most States is the Education Department. Unless this applies, the children should, wherever practicable, be educated in normal schools rather than in special schools. This is particularly important for children in higher grades. Ministers from States where the schools are conducted by the Education Department emphasized that they would continue that method. It should be recognized that already very large numbers of aboriginal children are attending the same schools as are other Australian children.

The Ministers paid a tribute to the valuable work the Christian Missions have done and are doing in education for aborigines.

Consideration was given to problems of staff for welfare work. The Ministers agreed that, while there are common elements of training associated with welfare work in all States and the Northern Terri-

tory, the recruitment and training of welfare workers is primarily a matter for each State, having regard to its particular requirements.

The conference considered the laws of those States and the Northern Territory which limit the supply to or consumption of alcohol by aborigines. The discussion brought out clearly that conditions in the States in which some limitation still applies vary greatly and that therefore a common policy throughout Australia is at this stage not possible and may be undesirable. It was agreed that the matter is one that should be decided by each government concerned.

Consideration was given to further study and research in respect of particular problems that may arise in such fields as health, nutrition, education, housing and vocational training.

It was agreed that, while further research into health problems is necessary, the most urgent need in this field is to educate aborigines and part aborigines in an understanding of the basic requirements of health—personal hygiene, preparation of meals, feeding of infants, and pre-natal and post-natal care. The Ministers agreed that the National Health and Medical Research Council should be asked to discuss particular fields in which further research should be carried out.

The conference considered problems of education, including the use of English in teaching, and the nature of the curriculum for aboriginal children in the process of transfer from settlement to normal schools.

Employment, particularly the types of jobs in which aborigines are at present engaged and the extent and diversity of jobs available now and in the future, was discussed.

The conference agreed that further research was necessary into the social organization of aborigines and the nature of social change. It was agreed that a number of topics should be referred to the Social Science Research Council which should be asked to put them before appropriate university authorities.

The Ministers agreed that directors of the State authorities and the Northern Territory should keep each other informed on research projects on aboriginal welfare which are undertaken in their various States, and that



the Department of Territories should consult the Bureau of Census and Statistics to seek suggestions on the way in which the State authorities and the Northern Territory might present the statistics in their report to facilitate comparisons, and the Department of Territories should pass any suggestions to the State directors and the Northern Territory Administration. One of the difficulties and a cause of much misunderstanding in any public discussion of this problem is that figures which may be used by one authority in its reports are not directly comparable with figures which may be used by another authority. A good deal of misunderstanding and even misrepresentation occurs just because we do not have that common statistical basis.

The Ministers agreed that the discussions at the conference had been valuable and decided to hold meetings in future at two-yearly intervals. The next conference is expected to take place in Western Australia early in 1963.

That concludes the summary of conclusions reached by the conference of Ministers. In reviewing the work of the conference—work which was essentially practical and was confined to matters involving government responsibility—I would suggest to the House that we should try to keep this problem in perspective. We are concerned with the problems of advancement and adjustment of a racial and social minority of approximately only 70,000 people in a total population of 10,000,000. It is estimated that there are already—apart from those 70,000—approximately 30,000 aborigines or people of aboriginal ancestry who do not come under any form of restrictive or protective legislation but live like other Australian citizens.

**Mr. Haylen.**—Are they of the 70,000, or in addition to them?

**Mr. HASLUCK.**—They are in addition to the 70,000. There are 30,000 persons who, in ancestry, may be regarded as of the aboriginal race but who are not regarded as aborigines but just as much Australian in every privilege and manner of living as is the honorable member for Parkes (Mr. Haylen) or myself.

**Mr. Nelson.**—That means 100,000 altogether?

**Mr. HASLUCK.**—Yes. That includes some part-aborigines.

**Mr. Nelson.**—How many part-aborigines?

**Mr. HASLUCK.**—I would not give an exact figure for the full-bloods, but my estimate is that of the 70,000 who are still, for the purposes of the law, regarded as aborigines or part-aborigines, and under special care, possibly from one-half to two-thirds would be full-bloods—possibly two-thirds. Where special legislation applies to aborigines only, it is solely because of a clear and temporary—I accentuate the word “temporary”—need for this in their own interests. Contrary to popular belief, the restrictions are of limited effect. For example, in three States that have protective legislation the persons who come under protection are fully eligible to vote at elections. In two States there are no restrictions of any kind. In all States and Territories restrictions are being lessened.

The recent conference demonstrated the strong and growing interest of Australian governments in aboriginal welfare and the fact that a considerable effort is being made. Continuing changes in legislation and administrative practice have advanced the policy of assimilation. While it is recognized that each State and the Northern Territory have particular problems in aboriginal advancement and that conditions differ from place to place, the exchange of views at the conference was valuable to every one concerned. The decisions arrived at will accelerate the attainment of the objective of a single Australian community. In conclusion, we should emphasize, however, that although the Governments can do a great deal towards helping the aboriginal people towards assimilation, ultimately the success of assimilation will depend on acceptance of aborigines by the whole Australian community and assistance to them in this difficult period of transition. At the present stage the most direct challenge comes not to governments but to the whole of the Australian community. I lay on the table the following paper:—

Native Welfare Conference — Ministerial Statement—

and move—

That the paper be printed.

features in building their morale and I hope in the near future more initiative will be taken by the governments. The Minister for Territories has a great opportunity laid at his door. This is the field in which Australia is most earnestly and critically examined by many people overseas. This is the question that was raised at the United Nations by Khrushchev himself. We cannot rest at peace at night while these problems face us. It is not much good our wringing our hands about the people of the Congo or South Africa if some thousands of our aboriginal people are left to sleep at night on the river banks, cold, wet and hungry.

This problem can be solved only by co-ordinated Commonwealth action. I want to make it clear—I believe that this is the feeling of my fellow citizens in Victoria—that people living in a State which has no great material responsibility for aborigines should consider it their duty to share the burden that falls so heavily on the people of the northern part of Australia. This sharing of the burden can be achieved only through Commonwealth action. One of the most pressing problems involves employment. I do not know exactly how this will be solved, but there should be some industrial opportunities offered in the northern parts of Western Australia, the Northern Territory and Queensland. It is no good passing them through primary or secondary schools if, when they stand outside the school door, there is nowhere for them to turn for full employment and a gainful and satisfactory existence. It is not a question of a sub-race or an inferior people. I think everybody with any conscience in this field has given that idea away. The aborigines of Australia are entitled to equal legal rights.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Chaney).**—Order! The honorable member's time has expired.

**Mr. BARNES (McPherson)** [4.6].—I join with previous speakers in paying my tribute to the Minister for Territories (Mr. Hasluck) for his efforts to solve this very difficult problem. I agree with the honorable member for Fremantle (Mr. Beazley). I do not think any other Minister who has had the responsibility of doing something

for the aborigines of Australia has succeeded to the extent that the present Minister has. I believe he has one of the most difficult tasks that any one could have in Australia. Here we have not only native people in differing states of development; these people live in States which have different problems to meet in respect of aborigines.

The honorable member for Wills (Mr. Bryant) has preached that we should give the aborigines full citizenship rights. I realize that he means well when he says that; but, after long experience of aborigines, I think that step would be disastrous for them. It might work out all right in southern Victoria, or in Tasmania or elsewhere, where the stage of development of the aborigines is advanced, but not in north Queensland, the Northern Territory or Western Australia, although I have never been to Western Australia. I think such a policy would tend to degrade the aborigines. I do not mean that the right to vote in our community would degrade them. The right to vote would be meaningless to most aborigines. However, like many primitive races who have not a traditional experience of alcohol, alcohol would degrade them.

**Mr. Clyde Cameron.**—It degrades some white people.

**Mr. BARNES.**—It has worse results for black people. I have seen the effect of alcohol on people who are unable to cope with it.

**Mr. Cairns.**—When are they going to get this experience, and how?

**Mr. BARNES.**—Possibly, the honorable member for Yarra would suggest that we rush this matter. The Minister stated as one method of applying policy—

A liberal approach to the removal of restrictive or protective legislation as soon as the capacity and advancement of the individual make this possible.

That is a very wise method. It states the position very plainly and envisages the fact that the aboriginal will advance to a position where he will be able to look after himself in our modern society. As I have said, we have variations between the States. I do not think there are any nomadic aborigines in Queensland, although there may be some on Cape York Peninsula who could be classed as semi-nomadic. But development

is taking place very quickly in that region and that class of native will rapidly disappear in Queensland. In the Northern Territory and Western Australia there are considerably greater numbers of nomadic natives.

How are we to approach the problem of the aborigines? Somebody has said that where it is possible to leave them in the nomadic state they would probably be happier than if they were assimilated in our community. I cannot help but agree with that view because in his natural environment the aboriginal is very happy. He has his tribal rites and rules, which we may think are barbaric; but, unfortunately, when we break down those tribal rules and laws he has nothing to live for. He is at a loss and his morale drops. Unfortunately, however, we cannot leave him in his nomadic state because, with the development of Australia, white people are gradually pressing into areas where the nomads exist, and we must therefore help in smoothing out contact between the two races. We are indebted to the honorable member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Browne) for stating the difficulties of these people who are taken from their semi-nomadic conditions into conditions under which the white race exists. I refer to putting them into houses and under conditions to which they are not used. That is probably the greatest problem we have to face in raising the standards of living and life of the aborigines.

How can we meet that problem? The Minister stated that there should be pre-school training for aboriginal children. That is very important. How are we to provide this pre-school training? Are we to establish camps and settlements and that sort of thing, and establish the schools in the traditional environment of the natives? Such a system might work; but the children on finishing school would go back to their parents who are completely steeped in tribal customs. There have been instances, of course, as the honorable member for Macarthur (Mr. Jeff Bate) mentioned, in which aboriginal children have been taken by whites and reared and educated by them, and such children have made a success of their lives. However, in general, it would be impossible to take aboriginal children from their parents because there is a deep-seated affinity between the parents and the

children. But I have no doubt that in the case of orphans, for instance, such an opportunity would be presented. There is another way, I believe, which would give greater scope to prepare these people gradually for the way of life which we follow, and that is in their natural surroundings on the cattle stations in the north.

I know from experience that the treatment of aborigines varies considerably from station to station. I have seen spectacular successes achieved by some station owners in the development of their aborigines. On the other hand, I have seen some frightful results of the treatment of aborigines on stations. The important factor, from the point of view of the aboriginal, is the example set by the particular white to whom he owes allegiance, whether as his employer or in some other capacity.

Much can be done for aborigines on stations. The aboriginal is a natural stockman and a natural horseman, and he is very happy in station life, which is somewhat similar to the life in the open that he and his kind have been used to. When aborigines work on a station, in good conditions, some educational facilities should be provided, so that their children may be prepared for some other way of life, should they wish to follow it.

I think it was the honorable member for Macarthur who said that the aboriginal is a very sensitive individual. That is very true. His feelings can be greatly hurt. All our experience shows, I believe, that in most cases sensitive people are quite admirable people. It is because of this sensitiveness, and also a high degree of kindness, that aboriginal women are particularly suited for work as hospital nurses. In the outback of Queensland there is a great demand for nursing staff. I believe that many hundreds of aboriginal women could be absorbed into our outback hospitals. The women themselves would be greatly assisted, because they would have the satisfaction of doing something useful in the community. They would be able to establish themselves both as individuals and as useful units in the community.

I have mentioned two ways—and I have no doubt there are many other ways—in which aborigines could be enabled to establish themselves gradually in our community.

The attitude of our white people, of course, is most important. In fact, it constitutes probably the most difficult problem we have to overcome. I think the Minister's statement made reference to it. The Minister mentioned, as one method of advancing the policy of assimilation—

Positive steps to ensure awareness in the community that implementation of the policy of assimilation is not possible unless advanced aborigines and part aborigines are received into the community and accepted without prejudice, and to ensure, as far as possible, that the community plays its full part.

The Government itself cannot take these steps; it can merely instill the idea into the people. This is something that the people themselves can do. It is a way in which the people can make the assimilation of aborigines easier.

I think it was the honorable member for Wills who said that the aborigines have nothing to be ashamed of. I quite agree that they are admirable people. Unfortunately—or, perhaps, from another point of view, fortunately—they were cut off geographically from the rest of the world for thousands of years. While people in other parts of the world continued to develop, the aborigines remained at the Stone Age level, and it is a tremendous task for them to catch up in a comparatively few years.

I am not going to suggest what the Minister meant by assimilation. I will simply say that assimilation apparently has one of two meanings in the context in which we are at present using it. It means either, first, making the aboriginal people similar to us while preserving their entity as aborigines, or, secondly, absorbing them by intermarriage. I see nothing wrong with either meaning. If we do not absorb them by intermarriage, we will simply erect another barrier. Are we to forbid them to intermarry with whites? If we do, we will simply lower their standards further.

**Mr. Beazley.**—It is simply a question of the meaning of the Government's objectives, that is all.

**Mr. BARNES.**—But is it not better that they intermarry?

**Mr. Beazley.**—Nobody is arguing against that proposition.

**Mr. BARNES.**—If they are allowed to intermarry they will be absorbed, because although people do not generally realize it,

we are, genetically speaking, a particularly dominant people, and after a few generations there would be no remaining signs of the aboriginal strain. The contrary result has been seen, of course, with other races.

In this connexion I remind the House that the history of New Zealand shows what splendid results can come from intermarriage between whites and Maoris or Polynesians. Although I am not an expert in these matters, I have read somewhere that in the distant past we all had a common taproot in the Caucasian race. Having had some experience in breeding some of the lower animals, I feel that there is an important lesson to be learned from this fact. At least it shows that the aborigines could be quickly assimilated.

I think the honorable member for the Northern Territory (Mr. Nelson) spoke of the expenditure per head on aborigines in the various States and in the Northern Territory. I think he said that the Commonwealth spent £45 a head per annum on aborigines in the Northern Territory, and that this compared adversely with the expenditure by the various States. I defer to his intimate knowledge of conditions in the Territory, but I suggest that in large areas of the Northern Territory, particularly in Arnhem Land, the aborigines live in their wild state, and that the comparison which he has made is hardly a fair one. However, the consideration should not be confined to the amount of money that is spent. The important point is the effectiveness of the expenditure and the results that are achieved.

**Mr. Nelson.**—I think I stressed that point.

**Mr. BARNES.**—Then I agree with the honorable member. I was most impressed by his useful contribution to this debate. I am very hopeful, as are other honorable members, that much good will result from the conference that has been held, and from the report that has been given by the Minister. He has stated the problems that have to be faced, and, after all, if we are to find a solution to a problem, it is most important, first, that the problem be stated.

**Mr. CLYDE CAMERON** (Hindmarsh) [4.53].—I join with other honorable members in complimenting the Minister for Territories (Mr. Hasluck) on his presentation

of a report which, generally speaking, puts the position of the aborigines reasonably fairly. Far too few members of this Parliament have given any attention to the problems of the aboriginal people of Australia. Apart from the honorable member for Wills (Mr. Bryant), the honorable member for Fremantle (Mr. Beazley), the honorable member for Macquarie (Mr. Luchetti) and the honorable member for the Northern Territory (Mr. Nelson) I can think of few on either side of the House who have given much thought to the welfare of aborigines. I believe the honorable member for MacKellar (Mr. Wentworth) has given the matter quite a deal of attention and has made some worthwhile contributions to debates on the subject.

**Mr. Hasluck.**—What about the honorable member for Macarthur and the honorable member for Perth.

**Mr. CLYDE CAMERON.**—No, they are recent converts.

**Mr. Hasluck.**—And the honorable member for New England?

**Mr. CLYDE CAMERON.**—No, they are all very recent converts to the cause of aboriginal welfare. I am glad that the Minister has mentioned them because he has given me the opportunity of saying that this is the very first time I have heard the honorable member for Macarthur pay the slightest attention to the plight of the aborigines. However, it is very nice, after all these years in Parliament, to find the honorable member belatedly, and perhaps reluctantly, coming in on the side of the aborigines. A lot more could have been done, a lot more should have been done, and a lot more should have been said by the Minister. Although the things which have been mentioned in the statement are good as far as they go, a lot has been omitted from it. The Government should take more positive steps than it has taken already to ensure that aborigines receive the same award rates of pay as white men receive for the same class of work. That is not so at present. For years courts have refused applications to give to aboriginal station hands in Western Australia, South Australia, New South Wales, Tasmania and Victoria the same rates of pay as apply to

non-aborigines. The cold hard fact is that aboriginal stockmen, station hands and boundary riders are far better in those positions than are the majority of white men.

**Mr. Hasluck.**—Why do they not join the Australian Workers Union?

**Mr. CLYDE CAMERON.**—They do.

**Mr. Hasluck.**—Then why do they not obtain the increased rate of pay?

**Mr. CLYDE CAMERON.**—I am glad that the Minister has interjected. The aborigines join the Australian Workers Union, and the union includes in its applications to the court for a variation of the federal pastoral award a claim for these people to be brought within the provisions of the award, but on each occasion the court rejects that claim. According to the decision of the Commonwealth court, the only aborigines in the pastoral industry who are entitled to award rates are shearers and that is because the shearing section of the pastoral award obliges the employer and the employee to enter into a personal contract which stipulates that the award rates of pay and other conditions prescribed for the shearing personnel shall apply. But the station hands who come within the category of aborigines set down by the various State authorities are not entitled to the provisions of the federal pastoral award, even though they are members of the union and even though the union repeatedly has made application to the court that they should be given the benefit of the award.

**Mr. Duthie.**—Why are the applications refused?

**Mr. CLYDE CAMERON.**—Because the graziers, by whom the aborigines are employed, and who now occupy the land which once was theirs, always vigorously oppose the application in the court. They do everything that they can to ensure that these remnants of this fast disappearing race, on whose land they are now squatting, are refused even the rudiments of industrial justice. Can any one justify that? I should like to hear the views of the honorable member for Wannon (Mr. Malcolm Fraser), whose association—the Graziers Association—was responsible for preventing these aborigines—

**Mr. Malcolm Fraser.**—Who said that it is my association? I am a member of the Wool and Wheat Growers Association.

**Mr. CLYDE CAMERON.**—You are also a member of the graziers association.

**Mr. Malcolm Fraser.**—How do you know?

**Mr. CLYDE CAMERON.**—I looked up the list. I also learned that the honorable member for Corangamite (Mr. Mackinnon) has contributed to the graziers' association so that he can put forward a case against aboriginal station hands receiving the same rate of pay as others receive. The honorable member for Hume (Mr. Anderson) is a member of the graziers' association. Where is he now? All these honorable gentlemen who protest in this House that they believe in giving the aborigines justice and a fair go, and who are members of the graziers' association are wittingly or unwittingly, directly or indirectly, by their contributions helping to pay the costs of the case that is put forward by the graziers' association each time that the union submits its application to the court to ensure that the union's proposal is defeated.

The Government belatedly has dealt with the matter of social services for aborigines. Only last year, after years of agitation by honorable members on this side of the House, I wrote two or three letters to the Prime Minister (Mr. Menzies) pleading with him to do something about this matter. It was a waste of time writing to the Minister for Social Services (Mr. Robertson) who is not even bothering to listen to what I have to say now. The only way in which I eventually got some common sense out of the Government was by forgetting the Minister for Social Services and by writing to the Prime Minister, reporting to him that the Minister for Social Services was unable to understand the logic of my submission, and reminding him that as well as being our Prime Minister he was also the Prime Minister of the aborigines. I think this softened his heart because shortly afterwards he directed the Minister for Social Services to ensure that the aborigines were given social service benefits.

**Mr. Hasluck.**—The Minister for Social Services was a strong campaigner for that.

**Mr. CLYDE CAMERON.**—He did not show any evidence of it.

**Mr. Hasluck.**—He did. He campaigned very hard for it.

**Mr. CLYDE CAMERON.**—I did not notice any evidence that he was a strong campaigner for social services for aborigines. In fact, my understanding is that if he had his way he would cut out social services altogether.

**Mr. Hasluck.**—That is completely false. Be fair to him.

**Mr. CLYDE CAMERON.**—This statement by the Minister, who seems to be quite vocal at the moment—

**Mr. Hasluck.**—You say such extraordinary things.

**Mr. CLYDE CAMERON.**—The Minister's paper states—

The conference agreed that the extension of social service benefits to aborigines, which has now been in operation for twelve months, has worked very smoothly.

I do not know how the conference came to that conclusion because the scheme has not worked very smoothly for the aborigines. I have complained vigorously in Parliament about the fact that the Playford Government in South Australia takes all the social service benefits to which the aborigines are entitled and gives them only a small hand-out which is, in fact, less than what a white man who is an inmate in a hospital receives. Can any one justify that?

When I took up this matter with the Minister for Social Services I received a reply which I am still trying to interpret, but the fact is that no action has been taken to correct the anomaly to which I referred. The Government talks about giving justice and equality to these people. Why does it not give the Minister for Social Services a good shake-up and tell him to get over to South Australia and direct Tom Playford to cough up the money, that has been contributed by the taxpayers of Australia, to the people living on mission stations? These people are not wild, roving nomads, savages or primitive natives. Some live on the Point McLeay mission station and some on the Point Pearce mission station. They pay taxes as we do. They send their children to school and they can read and write and speak English as well as, if not better than,

some of us here. They are good workers. They go into the shearing and other industries and stand shoulder to shoulder with the white men, doing their work just as well as any white man does it. The native shearers, in the main, are better shearers than the white men.

How disgusting it is for the Minister to sit at the table stroking his forehead with his hand and appearing to take absolutely no notice of the fact that the Playford Government is receiving all of the money that is sent to South Australia for aborigines living on government mission stations! What right has the Playford Government to take this money? Why does not this Government take its courage, if it has any, in its hands and state that it will pay the social service benefits to which the natives are entitled direct to them? I made inquiries into this matter and I learned that the Playford Government claims that it is putting portion of the money into a trust fund, but it will not state who is to operate the trust fund. Not one member of the aboriginal race living on these mission stations knows what his share is of the money that is now presumably in the trust fund. When social service benefits were introduced the first thing the Playford Government did was to show its concern for the native people by charging them for electricity which previously had been free.

When you come to think of it, this country at one time was owned by these people, and we got it by guile, by murder and by the worst form of exploitation. Honorable members on the Government side may protest, but that is true. If honorable members read any history of Australia, they will see that some of the settlers spent the week-ends murdering natives. That was the week-end sport for some of the squatters. They went out shooting not kangaroos, but aborigines. It is useless for supporters of the Government to scream their heads off at that statement. They can consult the historical works and they will see that there is ample evidence that squatters did, in fact, go out at week-ends and cut these people down for the very sport of it. They poisoned the aboriginal children by putting strychnine in honey and by placing the honey on top of the posts so that the aboriginal children would eat it.

**Mr. Hasluck.**—This is fantastic nonsense.

**Mr. CLYDE CAMERON.**—It is true, and I can produce writings to prove it. I can produce historical works and writings to prove everything I have said is absolutely true. We have a disgraceful record in Australia. The people who came here at the beginning of our settlement of this country have a disgraceful and wicked record so far as treatment of the aborigines is concerned. We virtually wiped out the whole race. The Minister has stated that there are only 70,000 of them left. What a record. What an admission.

**Mr. Aston.**—You have not produced one tittle of evidence.

**Mr. CLYDE CAMERON.**—You have the Minister's own statement. He admits that we have wiped out all but 70,000 of the aborigines.

**Mr. Hasluck.**—I rise to a point of order. The honorable member alleged that I had admitted that we had wiped out all but 70,000 of the aborigines. I have not said anything of the sort. He has not produced one word of proof or one authority for the monstrous statements he has made.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Failes).**—Order! There is no substance in the point of order raised by the Minister.

**Mr. CLYDE CAMERON.**—I refer the House to page 5 of the Minister's statement. He said—

We are concerned with the problems of advancement and adjustment of a racial and social minority of approximately only 70,000 people in a total population of 10,000,000.

Is not that what I said? Did I not say that we have only 70,000 aborigines left in Australia? That is what the Minister has declared. Of the people who inhabited this continent when we first came here, there are now only 70,000 left although 150 years or more have elapsed. What happened to the rest of them? The Minister and his supporters know that those are questions that they cannot answer.

Not long ago the Aborigines Department in South Australia was feeding the natives at Ooldea on boiled wheat. They were treated like pigs. The department

sent up bags of wheat, boiled it and shovelled it out as though the aborigines were some low form of animal life. That is how the Government treated these people. Anybody who has travelled on the east-west railway and has seen the poor, pitiful things called human beings who come to the sidings to see the train when it stops will know perfectly well that we have nothing to be proud of. It is an absolute disgrace to the Australian people that we have allowed these things to go on for so long, and that we have treated so badly these people who were the original inhabitants and owners of Australia.

We have denied them the right to vote. Until a year ago, we denied them any social service benefits. Whenever they worked, we compelled them to pay the same taxes as we pay. We do not give them the same wages as we give to white men. We have a very disgraceful record in our treatment of the aborigines. No one who has been in a position to see what is happening to the aborigines can ever say he is happy and satisfied with what we have done for them. It is useless hiding our heads in the sand. Measured against events in other parts of the world, is it any wonder that some of us are ashamed of the way we have treated these people?

What about the right to drink? The natives are not the only people who cannot take alcoholic beverages. I am not referring to this Parliament, because parliamentarians are above that sort of thing. Very rarely, if ever, does one see anything to complain about in that connexion in Parliament House. I cannot say I have ever seen anything of the sort here; but you have only to go outside and attend certain functions. I am not talking about the electorate of Hindmarsh because so far as I can see, the railway workers are better behaved than are those who attend posh functions to which I have been invited. When I have been to certain functions, particularly in the higher strata of society, and have looked at the people who emerged at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, I have wondered whether there ought not to be a law against white men drinking. That is what I think of the way some of them behave.

There should be no discrimination between white men and black men, either

in their right to drink or in their obligation to observe the law if they become stupid with the booze. If you are going to run aborigines into gaol every time they are found drunk, that is all right with me provided you treat white men the same way. Let the law be fair and let us not discriminate against the natives. If a person drinks too much and makes a nuisance of himself, the law should be applied against him fully whether he is black or white.

The honorable member for McPherson (Mr. Barnes) said that we must prepare these people gradually for our way of life. He must be very happy with what has happened in the past 150 years because if anything could be more gradual than the preparation we have made for the aborigines in that time, I would like to know of it. The Opposition's complaint is that we have been too gradual. If honorable members cannot claim any further advance than we have achieved in 150 years of gradual preparation of the aboriginal people for our way of life, then I am far from satisfied with it.

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER.**—Order! The honorable member's time has expired.

**Mr. CHANEY** (Perth) [4.43].—Before the honorable member for Hindmarsh (Mr. Clyde Cameron) spoke, I thought that most honorable members who had been in the House during the course of this debate were of the opinion that it was one of those rare occasions in the Parliament when a topic could be discussed on non-party lines and that nothing but good could result from the discussion. But all that has been destroyed in the last twenty minutes. I have never heard a speech more damaging to Australia and the aborigines. The honorable member should be thoroughly ashamed of himself. I think he was only half serious in his attitude. He did not intend to speak in the debate. He walked into the House, and I received a message that he wanted to speak for a few minutes. He got a copy of the statement of the Minister for Territories (Mr. Hasluck), and in his speech he wandered over things that are dangerous in the extreme. If he was sincere and if he prepared what he said, I am sure that he is the wrong type of man to represent Hindmarsh in this Parliament.



The honorable member talked about award rates for native stockmen obtained by the Australian Workers Union. Mr. Victor Johnson held a seat in this Parliament for a long time. He knew more about the natives than the honorable member for Hindmarsh knows about anything.

**Mr. Hasluck.**—He was also respected in the A.W.U.

**Mr. CHANEY.**—That is exactly right. He was a man who had gone amongst them, who knew their habits and knew what was best for them. I do not think any one ever heard him advocating in this House some of the things that have been advocated by the honorable member for Hindmarsh. If the honorable member for Hindmarsh cares to go to the north-west of Western Australia where there are many natives working on stations and cattle runs, he will find that one of the worst things he could do would be to bring down for the natives an award similar to that applying to the white pastoral worker:

**Mr. Clyde Cameron.**—Rubbish!

**Mr. CHANEY.**—The honorable member thinks it is rubbish because he cannot think of anything but a sum of money. Let him go to some of the big pastoral properties up there like Gogo, Liveringa and Fossil Downs, where cattle-raising is carried on under great difficulties, where the amount of profit is not great and where they employ a great amount of aboriginal labour, and he will appreciate the position. If the pastoralist employs one stockman it means that he must feed and clothe not only that stockman but fifteen or twenty other aborigines in his family. The stockman's family lives on his property and the pastoralist supplies housing of a fairly good standard, with ablution blocks and cement floors. If the honorable member for Hindmarsh goes to one of those properties he will see some of the tribal members of the family giving up what we call comforts such as buildings with cement floors and sitting out in the age-old fashion on the sand in front of a fire, where they love to sit. If nobody disturbs them, they are extremely happy. If the honorable member for Hindmarsh were to come along and say: "This happiness has got to cease. This man to whom you have been

paying £1 a week and whose family you have been keeping must now be paid £15 a week", the owner of the station would reply: "I cannot possibly do that. Indirectly, it is costing me that now. I will have to let the whole family go." Therefore, the whole family of aborigines would be penalized, and anybody who knows anything about the aborigines of Western Australia will know that what I say is true. As I said before, anybody who heard the honorable member for Wills (Mr. Bryant) and the honorable member for Fremantle (Mr. Beazley) speaking during this debate would have felt that the debate was proceeding along lines calculated to serve the best interests of the aboriginal population. The honorable member for Fremantle devoted a good deal of his time to praising the Minister for Territories (Mr. Hasluck). I was glad to hear that but, although on most occasions when the honorable member for Fremantle speaks here his speeches are given a great deal of space in the Western Australian newspapers, I would wager, if I were a betting man, that his praise of the Minister on this occasion will not receive so much space in the Western Australian press. I admit at once that the honorable member for Wills has given some study to this subject, as has the honorable member for Kalgoorlie, but I cannot agree entirely with the honorable member for Kalgoorlie when he refers to certain people as dogooders. In the past, organizations such as that to which the honorable member for Wills belongs, and others operating in Western Australia, have been helped in their work by some very devoted and idealistic people whose aim is to lift up the status of the natives. Now that this matter has been highlighted, there is a danger that power will get into the wrong hands. These people who have worked in the interests of the natives in the past feel that if power is taken from the organizations which they have been helping it will not be in the best interests of the aborigines.

The honorable member for Wills advocates complete federal control of aborigines. I do not think that would be practicable, especially when we realize what the States have been doing over the last few years. Even the honorable member for Wills, paid

tribute to the States of Victoria and Tasmania. He went so far as to pay tribute to a Liberal government for removing all legal barriers, and he pointed to Victoria as an example to be followed by the other States. But it is well to remember that, according to the latest figures available, the number of aboriginal persons in the various States varies so much that it cannot be said with certainty that a problem which exists in one State will necessarily arise in another. For instance, out of a total of some 39,319 full bloods, New South Wales has 1,403, all of whom are accounted for, Victoria has only 141, all of whom are accounted for, Queensland has 9,579, of whom 2,000 are estimated, South Australia has 2,500, of whom about 1,800 are estimated, Western Australia has 10,000, of whom some 3,500 are estimated and the Northern Territory has about 15,500, of whom 10,000 are estimated.

**Mr. Chresby.**—How many are in the Australian Capital Territory?

**Mr. CHANEY.**—The Australian Capital Territory had one full-blooded native at the time this count was taken. We must be careful to guard against working on the basis that what can be done in one State can be done in another. Uniform provisions cannot be applied to all States because the natives are in so many different stages of advancement. One speaker used the argument that if natives were given houses we should find that windows and shutters would be broken. It is ridiculous to condemn a race of people because of the actions of perhaps one or two. That is one point on which I can agree with the honorable member for Hindmarsh. It is possible to find amongst white people who should know better as much stupidity as is to be found amongst aborigines who do not know better. But at the same time, we cannot talk about a complete national housing scheme, as the honorable member for Wills did, because, if we had the power, the money and the capacity to erect and provide a house for every aboriginal family in Australia, and did so, we would certainly reach the stage of broken windows, broken asbestos and destroyed doors. Our housing programme has got to be a gradual one, and here I pay tribute to two successive Ministers for Native Welfare in Western Australia, one a member of a

Labour government and the other a member of a Liberal-Country Party government, who were most sympathetic towards the aborigines. Both those Ministers were ably assisted by a most efficient and sympathetic Director of Native Welfare, a man named Middleton who, before his appointment as director, was a member of our own Papua-New Guinea native administration.

The honorable member for Wills also said that a State like Western Australia, with a great number of aborigines, should not be asked to carry the responsibility of ministering to them. I do not agree with that. I believe that the care of aborigines should remain the responsibility of the States, and special provision is made by the Commonwealth Grants Commission for those States which suffer in carrying out this work. I do not think it is fair to rise in this Parliament and blame the State governments for what they have or have not done in this respect, and I am supported in this by the honorable member for Hindmarsh who, amongst the many untruths he uttered, did utter one small truth when he said that the average Australian had not been interested in this problem. It is true that to-day there is a greater awareness of the problem, and I believe that the only way in which we can solve it is to absorb gradually into the community those who have been developed a little, so that they may become ordinary citizens amongst the people of Australia.

To those who are interested in this question, I recommend a perusal of the annual reports of the Commissioner of Native Welfare, which are presented to the Western Australian Parliament each year, and are available in the Parliamentary Library here. In reply to the references made by the honorable member for Kalgoorlie to the people whom he calls the do-gooders, let me quote from a statement made by the superintendent of a desert mission station where some dedicated people are working in the interests of the aborigines. It is a statement by Reverend Father John McGuire of Balgo Pallottine Mission. In it he speaks about placing the foot of the ex-desert native child on the bottom rung of the ladder of assimilation. It will be remembered that I said to one speaker by way of interjection that it was impossible

simply to take a native from his tribal way of life and put him straight into society without doing great damage to the native himself. I think, too, that it was Daisy Bates who said: "If you want to destroy a native, if you want to wipe the natives out completely, civilize them and take them into your community. If you want them to increase in numbers, let them develop in their own environment as that is best for them." Father McGuire said—

The system of education at Balgo is based on Christian principles; the dignity of the human person is stressed, a dignity which demands rights from society and equally so demands duties or obligations on the individual's part. However, the process is by necessity a slow one, a Christian can never be a savage, equally so a savage—or one little removed—cannot be a Christian. Although we have been established 20 years here, we still do not baptise the children. With the limitations of these people it would be most unfair to place such responsibilities en masse upon them. On occasions babies baptized on the point of death have lived, indeed the tribal king's wife brought her small baby to be baptized believing that the baby was dying. I do not envy the future of these isolated Christians; although on fire with our chosen vocation, we are prepared to wait for the second or third generation.

This is the salient point—

Would that other bodies were as patient re the development of the Natives—I refer to articles in the popular press.

He might also have referred to something that the honorable member for Wills mentioned, a statement by Khrushchev in the United Nations. It is a pity that Khrushchev would not see, as this man has seen after living amongst the natives, that, in the ultimate, any attempt to hurry this process along hurts the people we are trying to assist.

In my own State, various experiments have been carried out. One of the greatest problems of the aborigines, I believe, concerns those who have been made ready to move into a civilized community, who have been able to absorb the education of the white people and to live in the environment of the white people. The Australian native, of course, has had some wonderful ambassadors in this respect. Most of us remember Captain Reg Saunders, of New South Wales, who, during the Second World War, was commissioned in the Australian Imperial Force, fought overseas, attained the rank of captain, and later served with the Citizen Military Forces. We also re-

member Harold Blair, the singer, and Eddie Gilbert, the test cricketer. In Western Australia we have a young lad called Irwin Lewis, who was granted a scholarship by the Church of England to board at Christchurch Public School. He passed the Junior and Leaving Certificate examinations and went to the university. He was a prominent Rugby League footballer and he is now working in the Department of Native Affairs. I know that we cannot establish general principles from isolated instances or from individuals and say that a whole race would react in the same way, but these instances show that aboriginals can do these things, given the opportunity and given, as the Minister mentioned in his speech, a chance by society's accepting its responsibilities in this matter.

In 1951, I think, the Department of Native Affairs decided to establish in the suburb of Mount Lawley, which is a part of the electorate of Perth, a home for native girls who were proceeding to the Junior or Leaving Certificate examination or to higher technical education. The moment that the department purchased a house for this project there was, as one might expect, an outcry from some of the people in surrounding houses to the effect that values would go down and that native girls could not be housed in such an area. Fortunately, there were more people who made a sympathetic and sensible approach to this matter and the home was established without notice being taken of the small minority who cried out in opposition. A few years later, sixteen girls were in residence. This report reads—

At 30th June, 1959, there were sixteen girls in residence at Alvan House; this number being made up of seven girls resident in 1958 and returned in 1959 plus nine girls who entered the home in February, 1959. Only two girls were discharged at the end of 1958. Both completed their education to Junior Standard. One is now employed at the Laverton District Hospital and the other in this Department's Central District Office.

The present inmates attend Mount Lawley High School and all are enrolled for the commercial course—

two in third year (tenth grade),  
five in second year,  
seven in first year.

It is pleasing to report that two of the first-year girls have been appointed school prefects.

That is most important. It indicates that the other children at the school have

accepted these girls as ordinary students, with complete equality. The report continues—

All girls play sport and either hockey or basketball in the Y.W.C.A. competition each Saturday. In the 1958 season the Alvan House hockey team was defeated in the final and the house basketball team in the semi-final.

This year the hockey team was undefeated up to the 30th June.

The report goes on to deal with social activities, and then states that the health of the girls was generally good, and that no major dental attention was necessary. It continues—

The house and grounds continue to be kept in first class condition. Each girl has specific assignments to be completed each day plus her personal washing and cleaning weekly.

The important point is that here we have complete acceptance of a group of young aboriginal girls who, one could say, are a credit to their race. What we must do is to move a step beyond this. It will be noticed that in every instance where employment has been offered to these people it has been with a governmental or semi-governmental authority. If we can train these people to a level at which they can take their places in commerce, there must be free acceptance of them throughout, not only by their employers but also by all employees in the establishments in which they work. One of the tragedies of the matter is that when an aboriginal who has been educated to the standard attained by our own children finds himself to be socially unacceptable, there is only one course open, which is to return to some sort of tribal life with the lower-grade natives who are sometimes to be found around the capital cities. This is one of the tragedies that we must avoid. If I can use my own State as an example, the present welfare administration is tackling this problem with wisdom, foresight and a great deal of success, but the welfare departments must be given what is most important, namely, time. It is foolish for the honorable member for Hindmarsh to say, "Look at what we have not done for 150 years". The thing to do is to look at what we have done in the short space of time since the public and governments generally became aware of this problem. If we can do that, I believe that we have nothing to worry about and that we can face any nation in the United Nations

Organization when this subject comes up for discussion.

The honorable member for the Northern Territory (Mr. Nelson) mentioned per capita expenditure by the Commonwealth and the States. I am open to correction, but I understand that the expenditure by the Commonwealth and the expenditure by the States are worked out in different ways. For instance, in working out the Commonwealth expenditure on native affairs no account is taken of items which are included in the expenditure of some States. The cost of health services is an example. In Western Australia, the allocation of £591,000 for native affairs in the year before last included reimbursement to the Education Department of the cost of salaries of people employed in native schools, and expenses of administration, including salaries and wages, of hostels. The interesting point is that a breakdown of the amount expended on native welfare shows that missions accounted for 37 per cent., health for 28 per cent., relief 14 per cent., administration 10 per cent., and education 9 per cent. The amount for education represented only reimbursement of salaries. So, it is pleasing to see that even though the amount is small in relation to the size of the task envisaged—

**Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER.**—Order! The honorable member's time has expired.

**Mr. THOMPSON** (Port Adelaide) [5.4].—We have had a very interesting debate this afternoon on this matter. I should like to compliment the Minister for Territories (Mr. Hasluck) upon his statement. I agree with the honorable member for Fremantle (Mr. Beazley) that the Minister is to be congratulated upon the wonderful work that he has done in connexion with aborigines in the Northern Territory. My remarks to-day will relate mostly to those Northern Territory aborigines, with whom we are mainly concerned. I was rather impressed by the fact that the number attending school is six times the number that attended some years ago. However, there are two or three phases of the matter that have come to my notice and that give me great concern.

During the Christmas period, two representatives of a mission near Alice Springs took a number of aboriginal children—I

think there were hardly any full-bloods among them—to Victoria and South Australia. On a Saturday afternoon I was asked by the president of the local branch of the Returned Servicemen's League to present to the children gifts from the league. I was pleased to go and do so.

The boys and girls were very nicely dressed. Clearly their standards of personal hygiene were good and altogether they were a very fine crowd. The younger ones were very shy. When I tried to give them a present, they could hardly take their eyes off the floor, which showed that they still had a little diffidence when coming in contact with white people in the normal way. There were three or four girls of about fourteen years of age, nicely dressed, just as any white girls would have been. I said to the man and the woman who were with them, "What is going to become of these girls now?" They said, "That is one of the tragedies that we have—the difficulty, when they reach a certain age at the mission, of placing them where they will be able to continue life in a satisfactory way". They said: "Unfortunately, there is nothing much that we can do. Very likely, within two or three years they will marry aboriginal lads who, perhaps, have not very much future and they will drift back to the lower standard from which they have come".

When I was in Port Darwin about three years ago I met the Director of Welfare, Mr. Giese, who is a fine man and who is doing a fine job. We visited some of the schools. The question arose of what would become of the boys—what jobs they could get—when they finished their schooling. Again, there was a difficulty. In order to give them a job in one of the large towns it would be necessary to take them away from other aboriginal children who had not had the same opportunities and the community would lose the benefit of having in it the boys who had been educated. Yet, if they were not sent away to take positions in the towns they could not get a job commensurate with their education and the rise that had occurred in their personal standards. I think that that is one of the great difficulties which the Minister must be facing.

It might be possible to employ these boys in Port Darwin or Alice Springs. But at

Alice Springs I found that there were a lot of natives—some half-castes and some full-bloods—doing no work but just drifting along. The aboriginal boys to whom I have referred have been educated to appreciate something better than they have come from, which may have been a humpy on the bed of a creek. But what are we to do with them? There is not enough work in a place like Alice Springs to provide all of them with jobs suited to their education. I do not know the answer to this problem, but I do know that it is one of the big problems in connexion with aboriginal welfare, particularly in the Northern Territory.

The difficulty is not as great in New South Wales where an aboriginal settlement may be close to a town. There, perhaps, it is possible to lift the aborigines stage by stage until they almost reach equality with our own people. The great number of aborigines for the welfare of whom the Federal Parliament is responsible, as distinct from those in the States, are scattered about the Northern Territory. I think that Bagot is the name of a settlement at which I visited a school one Saturday afternoon. The Minister for Territories or whoever was responsible is entitled to 100 per cent. marks for that school. It was no shabby thing. It had shiny steel furniture, just as any school in the Australian Capital Territory might have. I picked up the book of a girl, nine years of age, who had written an essay on the human teeth—milk teeth, molars and the rest. The writing was good and it was most enlightening to read this essay, composed by a girl coming from a small aboriginal settlement where the people were occupying small huts and perhaps sleeping on bags on the verandahs.

This brings me back to the plight of the girls who were entertained by the Returned Servicemen's League. When such girls reach fourteen years of age, what are you going to do with them? The mission cannot continue to keep them. It might be possible to place odd ones on stations to work in the homes but that would mean taking them away from their relatives and those with whom they have been brought up. The relatives would lose sight of them instead of having the benefit of their company.

We are apt to say that you cannot depend on aborigines because they go walk-about. We must recognize that, for thousands of years, a system of life has been bred into their bones and it cannot be altered in five minutes. Consequently, from time to time, these people will hark back to the walk-about. But the aborigines are not the only ones who behave in this way. Sometimes British immigrants who have been here for three or four years want to go back to see what things are like at home. They want to leave their jobs here and go back to the old surroundings—to go walk-about, as it were. So the practice of walk-about is not something that you have to worry about very much. Human nature in the aboriginal is the same as human nature in the white person. If an aboriginal gets a job, has a decent home and decent surroundings, he will not be anxious to go walk-about in the bush where he will have to look for tucker.

A way of getting over the problem has been found in the bigger centres where there is a school with a lot of children. It might be possible to establish small manufacturing industries, such as furniture making, into which boys who have been educated in the schools could be absorbed.

I happened to be in Darwin at the time the local show was held. I am not like some people who go to Melbourne about the first week in November to attend a certain sporting event there; and I did not go to Darwin specifically to visit the show. However, I had great pleasure in attending the function and I found that it was a sort of Mecca to which the folk in the Territory came. The first thing that impressed me was the very good displays of produce in the various pavilions. I saw work that had been done by native people, perhaps under white supervision, and it was really good. I was also impressed with the appearance and bearing of native people who attended the show, and particularly the womenfolk. One honorable member to-day spoke about the necessity for doing everything possible to encourage native women to become teachers. Many native women who attended the show had small children with them. It is true that in appearance and dress they may not have been up to the standard of people to be seen in the suburbs of Can-

berra, but it was obvious that these aboriginal women—many of them full-blooded aborigines—had the same love for their children, and the same desire to do something for them, as other womenfolk in Australia.

The native women obviously tried to dress their children in the best way they could and to provide them with the highest standard of living within their means. That illustrates that it is possible for these people to raise their standards. Some people say that they are no-hopers. Well, I have lived in Port Adelaide nearly all my life. If you wanted to find worse no-hopers among white people than some who have been born in that district you would have to go a long way. Generally speaking, you cannot reasonably condemn any group of people just because there are some notorious no-hopers amongst them. I may go to a town and see twenty drunk people walk out of a pub at 6 o'clock. I may be inclined to say, "What a boozy place that is", but I would be forgetting the 20,000 sober, solid citizens in the town. One has to be careful not to judge the whole group by the behaviour of a few.

I am pleased that the Minister has recognized that we must do the best we can to help the aborigines. When the Public Accounts Committee held an inquiry in the Northern Territory, some of us took the opportunity to visit Beswick and Katherine, and we saw what was being done in those places. It seemed to me that the greatest concern of the Government was to improve the conditions of the public servants, to raise the standard of housing and schools, to construct wharfs and undertake various other public works. It is on such projects that the great bulk of our money is being spent. I am not decrying that sort of thing one little bit. I believe that it is necessary for the people to have those proper standards. Although the great bulk of the money is being spent for the benefit of the Northern Territory, it is not being spent for the benefit of the aboriginal people themselves. A large sum may be provided for their welfare, but generally speaking most of the allocation is used to promote general progress in the community.

We are most concerned now about teaching the aborigines how to use the country. The Government has made every effort to

get white people to go to the Territory and successfully cultivate the land. That is a laudable object and something of which we can be proud, but at the same time I think we should recognize that, after a period of training, the aborigines themselves should be able to do a lot of that work. Even in a white community it is only a small percentage who succeed in business. It is only a small percentage of the people who go on to the land who make a success of farming. One has to be cut out for the job to make a real success of it. The same applies to the aborigines. We must provide facilities for them to do the job, and in order to provide these facilities it is necessary to supply the money that is required.

I hark back to the point I made at the commencement of my speech. What are we going to do with these people when we educate them up to a certain standard? An attempt has been made on the far west coast of South Australia to help the aborigines by setting aside a large area where they can run cattle and sheep and learn how to look after them. Something more will have to be done about that. I know that the Government has done something along those lines in the Northern Territory, and I am not telling the Minister anything new. What I am saying is that we must recognize the necessity to do more for these people than we have done in the past.

I happen to be one of those peculiar people who believe that every man, whether he be black, white or brindle, as we say, is God's creature, and is entitled to the best treatment the country can give him.

**Mr. Turnbull.**—That is not being peculiar.

**Mr. THOMPSON.**—It is not peculiar, but I am one of those people. Some say that people are peculiar because they believe that of their fellowmen. The difficulty is to get people to go the whole way. They believe in the principle but when it comes to the application of that principle there is always a "but" involved. I remember a member of Parliament in South Australia. If some proposition was put up he would say, "I think that is a really good idea, but . . .". We named him "But". He always gave a reason why something that had been suggested could not be done. I

am a person who has no "buts" about these things. I think we should go the whole hog, as it were, and see that the aboriginal people are given every opportunity. On behalf of these folk I make a plea that we be not satisfied with building schools, sending teachers to those schools, raising the aborigines up to a certain standard and then saying to them, "If you go 500 or 1,000 miles away you will be able to get the real benefit from what you have been taught". I submit that we should do something to give these people an opportunity to do something in the areas in which they live. We talk about our unpopulated north and about how very few people there are north of the Tropic of Capricorn. It has been said that if we do not populate these areas we will not be able to keep them. We are spending large sums to bring migrants to Australia.

**Mr. SPEAKER (Hon. John McLeay).**—Order! The honorable member's time has expired.

**Mr. WENTWORTH (Mackellar) [5.24].**—Many constructive speeches have been made during this debate and not by any means from only one side of the House. Although we may differ from time to time, this question has been approached with goodwill and sincerity. Honorable members have acknowledged what the Minister for Territories (Mr. Hasluck) has done, what the Government has done and what the Government intends to do. However, we cannot be satisfied with the present position. We must realize that an appallingly difficult problem exists. The problem has been difficult, not only in Australia and not only during a recent period of history. The aborigines in India, for example, are a problem to the Indian Government, which faces some of the difficulties which we are facing in Australia.

Going back a little in history, I find that in Africa the races corresponding to our aborigines—the Bushmen—met disaster at the hands of the Bantu—the black people who came down from the north. So the problem of an aboriginal race is not peculiar to Australia, although I think that our aborigines are perhaps now unique and probably one of the most interesting and, in a sense, most important groups of people in the world. I do not think that any of

us believes that the individual aboriginal is either better or worse, person for person, than we are, but we do know that he has lived in a different environment for a very long time and that this makes it very difficult for him to be assimilated into our way of life. This does not absolve us from the responsibility of assimilating our aborigines. It does not absolve us from the responsibility of allocating resources of money, land and material to this task.

What we are talking about at present is not the principle of this policy of assimilation, on which we all agree. What we are talking about is the way of bringing about the inevitable transition which will be best for the aboriginal himself. I was very glad to see that in the Administrator's Speech on the occasion of the opening of the Parliament recently there was a reference to the making of a study of these people and their ways of life. Such a study is necessary and desirable if we are to deal with the numerous problems which various honorable members have discussed and if we are to carry through this transition in the way which is best for the aboriginal people themselves. This fact is further acknowledged in the statement made this afternoon by the Minister for Territories, who, speaking of the recent Native Welfare Conference, said—

The conference agreed that further research was necessary into the social organization of aborigines and the nature of social change. It was agreed that a number of topics should be referred to the Social Science Research Council which should be asked to put them before appropriate university authorities.

As I say, this is not in any sense an excuse for doing nothing. It is a means of determining the best thing to do. Looking at our efforts in the past, I am not certain that we have been wise in entirely ignoring the tribal organization as an instrument of transition. The aborigines have been living in a complex environment. Let us not underestimate the physical skills which they have demonstrated in maintaining life and surviving in the very difficult terrain of the Australian countryside. This is an achievement which none of us would like to be asked to emulate and which we probably would not be able to copy successfully with the tools and implements which the aborigines have at their disposal.

In the very difficult conditions in which the aborigines live, they have evolved a very complex tribal organization. Until recently, we have not appreciated fully the delicacy of this mechanism and the way in which it works. It differs from our community organization in that it is a personal and not an impersonal one. The transition from the personal to the impersonal is the big change which the aboriginal has to face. He is involved in a tribal life which is very rigorous and very complicated, but it is a life in which he knows by name and personally practically every one of his associates, because he lives in a small community. He has now to be translated into a community in which not only the laws are different. That is perhaps not such a big thing. The great difference is that the aboriginal has to go into an impersonal community, because he has to come into contact with thousands of people, most of whom he will not know personally, in place of being in contact with a few hundred people, almost all of whom he knows personally. To him, this is a tremendous shock. Let us not underestimate the psychological troubles which inevitably will follow when the things in which he has believed—the tribal beliefs—are broken down and become of no account. Which of us would survive without psychological shock an experience of this kind? Let us not underestimate the terrific difficulties with which the aboriginal is faced as an individual in making this transition. With these considerations in mind, I say that perhaps we have been unwise in the past in ignoring entirely the aboriginal's own tribal organization as a means of transition, because the transition and the advancement that are envisaged have to take place.

As honorable members know very well, the Australian aboriginal is a hunter. He is in a sense a nomad, although he lives within strict tribal boundaries, and he has no agriculture as such. The universal experience of the human race has been that it has progressed from the hunting stage through an agricultural stage to the present industrial civilization in which we live. I am not certain of this, but I put it forward as something which merits examination rather than as a conclusion, because I feel that in these matters we know far too little and that we should not be dogmatic about



any conclusions in this field. This transition of which I have spoken may well be achieved through an agricultural phase, using to some extent the old tribal organization in order to pass through this agricultural phase quickly, and perhaps in a generation. Where we have tried putting aborigines on farms, we have found that they do not take to them. As we know, the aboriginal is not tolerant of agriculture. He is good with animals, but he is bad with plants. However, I am not at all certain that we have persisted sufficiently with our efforts along these lines, and we may well find that we can adapt a tribal organization for agricultural purposes. This is what has happened in the past with all humans, including our own ancestors. This may well be the natural path along which we can force the aboriginal quickly in order to achieve the full transition to our way of life. We want this full transition to take place as soon as possible.

I think that the Minister's statement describes the objectives admirably, and I am glad that it has received so much support from both sides of the House. May I just reiterate by saying that, whatever we do, we need to be more carefully informed about the background. We shall handle the problems of the aborigines more sympathetically, more successfully and with less hurt to themselves during the period of transition if we are better informed about both the background from which the aboriginal comes and the nature of the psychological forces which will be at work in the making of the necessary transition.

**Mr. MALCOLM FRASER** (Wannon) [5.34].—Mr. Speaker, I agree with the honorable member for Mackellar (Mr. Wentworth) that many constructive speeches have been made in this debate and that many honorable members have looked impartially at the problems which confront the various governments in Australia and the Minister for Territories (Mr. Hasluck) with respect to the aborigines. The speech made by the honorable member himself was an example of constructive and impartial thinking, as were those of the honorable member for Fremantle (Mr. Beazley), the honorable member for Wills (Mr. Bryant) and the honorable member for Port Adelaide (Mr. Thompson). However, unfortunately, a little earlier, the House

was treated to a demonstration by the honorable member for Hindmarsh (Mr. Clyde Cameron) which was of an entirely different kind and which has indeed cast a shadow over the whole of this debate. As the honorable member for Perth (Mr. Chaney) stated, what the honorable member for Hindmarsh said during his speech could be used by the enemies of this country to do Australia great harm in the forums of the world. The honorable member for Hindmarsh attacked the Minister for Social Services (Mr. Robertson) when, amongst other things, he belittled the great advance that had been made by giving aborigines the full social service and pension rights that are applicable to other Australians. It may well be that this should have been done earlier. There have been Commonwealth governments in Australia for 60 years, but it has only been during the term of office of this Government and of the present Minister for Social Services that this advantage has been given to the Australian aborigines. That is something for which credit must be given.

The honorable member for Hindmarsh said that our progress in dealing with the problems of aborigines over a period of 150 years has been much too slow. If he had been just in his remarks, he would have admitted that for a great while no one tried to do very much about it. This Government and the present Minister for Territories in particular have kept pace with changing conditions over the last ten or twelve years. More has been done in relation to these matters under the administration of the present Minister than was done during the whole of the earlier history of the Commonwealth.

There is only one other remark that I should like to pass about the honorable member for Hindmarsh. It is something of which honorable members and the country at large may well take note. The honorable gentleman has been engaged in a battle with the union to which he belongs—the Australian Workers Union, the greatest union in Australia—for much more than one year. In fact, I think it has now extended over several years. The A.W.U. does not want this man as a member of the union or of its executive, and it will do everything it possibly can to reject him. It is a pity that

electors in the division of Hindmarsh do not examine the reasons for the A.W.U.'s action and do the same in regard to his membership of this House.

Having regard to earlier debates in this session and events that have occurred overseas, the statement of the Minister for Territories is very important. It defines quite clearly the aim of assimilation and sets out in clear and concise terms which cannot be misunderstood, except by those who want to misunderstand them, the meaning of and the methods that will be used to achieve assimilation. Unfortunately, some doubt has been cast upon the meaning of the term "assimilation". Surely it means that ultimately the aborigines will have the same privileges, responsibilities and rights that other Australians now have. In other words, aborigines will live in the same street as other Australians and will be treated as their equal, as indeed they are in certain areas already. It is our hope that at some stage in the future all aborigines will achieve that status. The marriage of two persons of different colour would be a part of their assimilation. It may well be that by that means the aboriginal race will be absorbed over a period of time. As far as I can see, assimilation and absorption are part of one and the same thing.

The methods that the Government and those who attended the conference on native welfare laid down in moving towards this objective of assimilation are many and varied and are different in the various States. It has been pointed out that the processes that are applicable to the north of Australia may not be applicable to the State of Victoria in which I live and in which the problems are different. Various methods of assimilation will be followed out. There will be greater government settlement of tribes and people who are still living in a nomadic or a semi-nomadic state. More health services and education services must be made available to aborigines in all States. Child welfare services will have to be extended. Already there are special schools for aborigines. Those will have to be extended so that aboriginal children ultimately may be taken to the stage where they will sit side by side with white children in the same school. The provision of special schools is a transitional process which we

hope will not last for too much longer. The special school is necessary because of language difficulties, environment and heredity. It is not necessary because of any lack of natural intelligence in native children who, I am led to understand, having regard to language difficulties and difficulties of environment, are as intelligent as the average white child.

A great deal will have to be done in relation to housing and hygiene. I shall say more about that later. The provision of vocational training so that aborigines may get different kinds of jobs and not have to rely upon the pastoral industry for most of their employment is certainly important. It is also important that they play a great part in the sporting activities of this country. The honorable member for Perth has directed attention to the part that aborigines have been able to play in this sphere and to the increasing part that they will probably play in the future.

Perhaps most importantly, the report of the conference directs attention to the fact that certain restrictive legislation which remains on the statute-book must, as time permits, be removed and that the sooner it is done away with the better the position will be. The last point to which I wish to refer in dealing with this aspect of the problem of assimilation is the importance of ensuring that the white people accept their responsibility. The process of assimilation will succeed or fail according to the attitude that is adopted by the white people of Australia. There are many persons in this country who at some time or other have uttered what could be described as pious remarks in relation to the shortcomings of white people in other countries but who themselves have not been put to the test of facing up to the problems of a multi-racial society. Of course, in Australia the problem is a small one, because of the smallness of the number of aborigines. It is quite certain that in certain parts of Australia the good faith of Australians will be put to the test. It is my hope and belief that Australians will not fall short in this regard.

The conference agreed that particular attention will have to be given to the transitional housing of members of the aboriginal race who are not used to housing of any kind and who are reluctant to move into

the kind of houses that we regard as being traditional and normal. The conference also directed particular attention to the supervision of welfare staff. I think it was the honorable member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Browne) who made some pertinent remarks regarding the importance of this matter. Attention was directed also to certain special problems brought about by the nomadic or semi-nomadic state of many aborigines, and to the fact that the settlement and assimilation of these people will involve the co-operation of several States and the Commonwealth, for reasons that have already been brought to the notice of the House. Quite clearly, if an aborigine is entitled to vote in one State, he should also be entitled to vote in other States. But that is not the position at the present time. The more that can be done to remove this anomaly, the sooner will a great step forward be taken in the process of assimilation.

Attention is also directed in the report of the conference to the fact that this problem involves approximately 70,000 aborigines throughout Australia, and that 30,000 or more aborigines and part aborigines have full citizenship rights. This is clear and straightforward evidence to any one who tries to argue to the contrary that our process is one of assimilation and that it is quite different from processes that are being followed in other countries, such as South Africa.

The Minister indicated, towards the end of his statement, that a conference of the kind we have been considering will be held every two years. That is a great step forward. I think the previous conference was held in 1951; the Minister might correct me if I am wrong. If a conference is held every two years, it will be much easier for the States and the Commonwealth to co-operate and to learn from each other's successes and mistakes in this field.

The Minister is to be congratulated on the progress that has been made in the treatment of aboriginal people. The Department of Territories was created by this Government in 1951, and the present Minister has been Minister for Territories since that date. I said a little earlier that I believed more progress has been made

in that time than was made in the whole of the previous history of the Commonwealth. This is due to the drive and the initiative of the Minister. If some people believe, on the facts and figures, that progress has at times been too slow, they should not forget the extreme difficulties of the task before us. The honorable member for Mackellar directed our attention to these difficulties. Few people in the world are living in a more primitive state than are the Australian aborigines. The aborigines here were, and some still are, in a nomadic state. Many are not accustomed to any kind of housing, many travel from one area to another and they do not possess any skills that could readily be used in their assimilation in the kind of society to which we are accustomed and which we are trying to bring the aboriginal people to accept.

About 16,000 aborigines in the Northern Territory receive benefit from the welfare ordinances. In this year, £1,100,000 is being spent on their account and works programmes costing nearly £130,000 are being undertaken. Development work has been, and is being, undertaken at each of several settlements, and on an average this costs £250,000 at each settlement. At the settlements, the growing of food, animal husbandry, fishing, forestry and trades are taught, and the aborigines show a readiness to learn these skills, which will be useful to them. The Government has afforded other assistance. Subsidies are paid to mission workers and to native hygiene assistants. In this year, about £370,000 will be going to missions for assistance of one kind or another.

I have already mentioned that, in the field of education, the object is ultimately to have one system of schools for black and white children where aborigines are living. However, at present this is not always possible, simply because of language and environment differences which make it impossible for the aborigines to take their place in the white schools. So, special schools have been created to meet this demand. I emphasize that this is a transitional phase which will not be continued. It is worth noting, and it is praiseworthy, that there are now more than 2,000 native children in 28 schools in native settlements,

pastoral properties which have willingly co-operated, and missions.

One of the most important factors in the assimilation of aborigines is housing—and the acceptance by white people of aborigines living in houses in the same street. This is an important question, and at times there have been arguments on it. I believe that Victoria has set a good example. The report of the Aborigines Welfare Board for 1959 draws attention to this question of housing and points to the success that has been achieved in Victoria. It is worth noting that, as the honorable member for Wills said, aborigines in Victoria, whether of full or part blood, have full citizenship and voting rights. Referring to housing, the board reported—

Approximately 30 families are tenants of the Housing Commission in the city and in various country towns and generally they are making a good effort to maintain themselves, but are faced with rentals which some of them cannot consistently meet. During the year the Board has assisted some of these families who have fallen into arrears with rent, taking the view that it was essential to preserve the tenancy and keep the family together rather than allow them to drift back to sub-standard living conditions and become a heavier burden not only on the Board but on other Social Service activities of the State. There are 160 families satisfactorily housed in various districts throughout Victoria—some of them owning their own homes or in the process of buying them.

The report refers to the Mooroopna Housing Settlement, which is the first special housing project for aborigines. It was originated by the board and carried out with the co-operation of the Housing Commission. The report also directs attention to the fact that aborigines quickly adapted themselves to their new homes and set about improving the surroundings with gardens. The report goes on to say—

... regardless of their previous conditions the tenants' response to new housing has been immediate and continuous and a very potent factor in the acceptance of the settlement's children in the schools and their parents in the general life of the town.

That is a most important feature, because in this debate some doubt has been cast on the ability of aborigines to look after a house when given one for the first time. The general experience in Victoria is that the aborigines have looked after their houses very well and have taken a pride in them, and good care of them.

The report of the Aborigines Welfare Board refers to the fact that several aborigines are living in town districts in areas not by any means set aside for aborigines, but in ordinary houses in a street just as any one else would have a house in a street. No objection is raised to this, and there is a very willing acceptance of it. However, this must be extended, and further efforts in this regard are being made in Victoria.

The Commonwealth has shown a very real sympathy for the problems of the aborigines, especially in the last few years under the administration of the present Minister. Further evidence of this is shown in the fact that the Minister for the Interior (Mr. Freeth) has announced in the House that a select committee has been appointed to examine the subject of full voting rights for aborigines. Surely enough has been said in this Parliament to make honorable members doubt the wisdom of giving full voting rights to aborigines immediately. I hope honorable members will agree with me. A select committee has been established to examine the difficulties, to see what more can be done to speed up the process and to see whether advantage can be taken of this as a further move in bringing the aboriginal people closer to full assimilation. The Commonwealth has shown its sympathy and understanding by its attitude in the field of social services, and I have previously mentioned this matter.

I would like to emphasize the part that the Australian community must play. This will become increasingly important, and every Australian has a duty to ensure that the white race in Australia plays its part honestly, fully and justly. But it is worth noting that the present policies are directed most to helping the children of the aborigines. An aboriginal who has lived a nomadic life can probably never be fully assimilated into the Australian community, but his child can if he has the right attention, care and help from welfare workers and from the State and Federal governments. It is my belief that if this assistance is given we will see the assimilation of aborigines.

Sitting suspended from 6.54 to 8 p.m.