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The DirectorReport on Visit to Darwin
Period: 23/9/63 - 4/10/63

The purpose of this visit was to determine how pension payments on behalf of aboriginal natives in the Northern Territory were being disbursed and to arrange with officers of the Welfare Branch a full programme of inspection of missions, Government settlements and pastoral properties.

Discussions were held with a number of interested parties and in some instances specific queries were raised which have since been referred to the appropriate Branches for consideration and, where necessary, action. These specific queries will not be referred to in this report.

WELFARE BRANCH

In the course of the visit, the officers of the Welfare Branch with whom discussions were held were, Mr. Giese, Director, Messrs. Millikan and Flynn, Assistant Directors, Mr. Ford, Administrative Officer, Mr. Hamilton, Assistant Director Northern Division and Mr. Allom, District Welfare Officer.

The total amount of pension paid to the Director of Welfare in respect of wards residing on his settlements amounted to £158,208 up to the 1st July, 1963. Slightly more than 1/10th. of these payments has been handed directly to the pensioners in the form of pocket money.

At the out-set of discussions, Mr. Giese stated that he favours an early increase in the pocket money component of the pensions to 35/- per week. This increase follows a general rising of the wage standard for aboriginal natives and their increasing awareness of the value of money. Mr. Giese intends to confirm this decision by letter directed to this office at an early date.

It was mentioned that the Welfare Branch does not maintain a separate trust account from which it provides for housing and other amenities for native pensioners. A trust account was formerly maintained for this purpose but it was closed following a Treasury direction No. SL61/662, dated 4th August, 1961, dealing with pensioner wards residing on Government settlements. This direction from Treasury provided that from July 1961 the whole of the maintenance portion of pension payments for aborigines on Government settlements was to be credited to general revenue under Item No. 751/3/01. This is a bulk item covering the maintenance of wards on Government settlements. Mr. Giese considers that this direction is in conflict with Cabinet policy and certainly with the wishes of this Department. He has made representation to have it set aside and he now requests that this Department make some representations to Treasury with a view to his being permitted to set up again a special trust account for his pensioner wards from which he may meet the cost of their housing and other amenities.

Prior to July 1961, there had been £7,546 drawn from trust to purchase home units for pensioners on settlements. During the period from 1st July, 1961, to the 31st March, 1962, an amount of £21,600 formerly held in trust for the housing of pensioners, was credited to general revenue as a result of the Treasury direction. It is further estimated that for the period from the 14th November, 1963, to the 30th June, 1964, an amount of £16,500 would have been available for houses.

Mr. Giese mentioned that maintenance is paid to all children residing on missions and pastoral properties, the exception to this being the first child of the family of each worker. Maintenance was also paid for all hospitalised aborigines and those who are aged and infirm, but not receiving pensions. In addition, the wages of staff specialists employed on missions are subsidised to the extent of £985 per annum.

On pastoral properties, the pastoralist is obliged to maintain the first wife and first child of each native employee, but the Welfare Branch accepts responsibility for the maintenance of all other wives and children. The present rate of maintenance for children is 24/9 per week, provided the full ration scale laid down is supplied by the pastoralist.

On some of the Welfare Settlements located close to towns, such as Bagot, some native mothers are fully supporting and clothing themselves and their children, and Mr. Giese considers that these mothers might reasonably be paid child endowment direct. He favours such a change and has requested that we consider altering the method of paying endowment in these cases. 48
66

Regarding pension payments to fringe natives, it was explained that, as a result of a recent ordinance, it is now impracticable to maintain trust accounts for these people, as the Director of Welfare is obliged to pass on within 14 days, all moneys held in trust on behalf of wards. In some instances, Commonwealth Savings Bank accounts have been opened for these people and it is hoped to expand this method of dealing with pension moneys.

The feeling in the Welfare Branch is that over-all aborigine pensioners who are receiving payments direct are coping reasonably well with the expenditure of their money. In some instances, pensioners are deriving no apparent benefit from the money which they receive, but these cases are considered to be isolated.

Both Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Allom favour increases in the pocket money paid to pensioners on Government settlements and they feel that an arbitrary increase in the pocket money paid on pastoral properties should also be effected.

Mr. Hamilton mentioned that a full scale inspection of pastoral properties is impractical at the present time due to the impending wet season. He considers that August next year would be the best time to carry out an inspection programme in the Northern Section of the Northern Territory.

It was learned that for indexing purposes in the Register of Wards section, the English christian names are used primarily. The index card also includes the aboriginal personal name and the group name, but the card is filed under the English name. Because of changes of names and variations in spelling, it is acknowledged that there is no fool-proof system for indexing aborigines, but the Welfare Branch considers that the use of English christian names is the most satisfactory of the systems tried. In view of this and considering some of the indexing difficulties which we have experienced in this office, a change in the index set-up might be worthy of consideration.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Discussions were held with Dr. Byrne, Director, and Dr. Ryan, concerning pension payments at East Arm Leprosarium. At present there are 96 invalid pensioner wards at the leprosarium, who receive an institutional pension of £3-14-0 per fortnight, of which £1 is handed to them in cash and £2-14-0 is credited to individual bank accounts with the Commonwealth Savings Bank. The balance of their pension, £6-16-0 per fortnight, is used for their maintenance, including their medical treatment. A number of non wards who receive pension payments direct are also inmates of the settlement. No charge whatever is levied against these people, and they have the use and enjoyment of the whole of their pension money.

Dr. Byrne agreed that at first sight it was anomalous to deduct £6-16-0 per fortnight from the pensioner wards for their maintenance whilst no charge whatever was raised against non wards. However, he pointed out that as a rule, non wards had heavier family responsibilities than wards and were not able to seek the assistance of the Welfare Branch in the event of financial need. In the past these people had always retained the whole of their pensions and it was considered inopportune to make any charge now against them.

Dr. Byrne feels that a liberalised pension should be made available to lepers in an endeavour to encourage them to come forward for medical treatment. There are 684 known lepers in the Northern Territory, but it is believed that considerably more are living in the bush and avoiding treatment. A sufficient financial inducement might encourage these people to enter the leprosarium.

It was mentioned that consideration should be given to the payment of wife's and child's allowances to the dependants of inmates of East Arm where the separation of husband and wife was brought about solely by the need for the husband's medical treatment.

Pastoral properties are visited in rotation by a Doctor each 5 weeks, so that no difficulty arises in arranging C.M.R. examinations for invalid pension purposes.

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METHODIST OVERSEAS MISSION

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(65)

Aborigine pensioners residing on the missions controlled by this group in the Northern Territory have received a total of £63,521, to the 1st July, 1963.

The Reverend G. Symons who is in charge of the Northern Territory Division, maintains a separate set of books for each mission for handling pension moneys. He feels that an increase in pocket money from 15/- per week to £1 per week would not be excessive, but he declines to recommend higher payment.

The maximum wage paid on Methodist Missions is £8-5-0 per week and the minimum £2-2-0 per week. It is considered that the pocket money component of the pension should not at any time exceed the minimum wage paid. Mr. Symons fears that any substantial increase in pocket money would react to the detriment of pensioners and to the benefit of their relatives and hangers-on.

The maintenance component of the pension is at present apportioned in the following manner:-

Food and tobacco	35/- per week	
Clothing and blankets	7/6 per week	
Rent and general services	12/6 per week	
Administrative costs	5/- per week	23,000 p.w.c
Capital improvements	30/- per week	

The balances at present held in trust for the pensioners at the various missions are:-

Croker Island	£775-0-0
Goulburn Island	£1548-0-0
Elcho Island	£1882-0-0
Milingimbi	£1135-0-0
Yirrkala	£411-0-0

120 000 spent
5751

Production from mission gardens and herds returns approximately twelve to thirteen per cent of the annual running costs. This figure does not include approximately £45,000 being the value of foodstuffs produced and consumed on the missions each year.

A housing programme for pensioners is under way, home units costing from £450 to £600 each.

Mr. Symons mentioned that on some of his missions he was supporting the wives and children of lepers who had been admitted to East Arm Settlement. He requested that consideration be given to the payment of wife's and child's allowances to these dependants who had previously been supported by the leper prior to his hospitalisation. For child's allowance purposes a complete record exists of all children under the age of 16 years born on Methodist Mission.

CATHOLIC MISSIONS

Pension payments to aborigines on Catholic missions in the Northern Territory have totalled £136,779 to the 1st July, 1963.

Father Clancy, the Procurator, maintains a record of moneys held in trust for pensioners, the balances as at 30th June, 1963, being:-

Pt. Keats	£2120-0-0
Daly River	£1935-0-0
Bathurst Island	£8205-0-0

88000
25,000 spent
12,260 held.

A separate record is kept at Santa Teresa in respect of the pensioners there.

The present native population on Catholic missions is approximately 1,000 at Bathurst island, 600 at Pt. Keats, 300 at Daly River and 300 at Santa Teresa.

43 (64)

Father Clancy considers that the proposed increase in pocket money from 10/- per week to 15/- per week should not unduly affect mission economy. He does not, however, recommend any further increase as he considers the present generation of pensioners to be beyond redemption as far as their appreciation of the value of money is concerned. He states that any increase would be shared with relatives.

All missions are provided with canteens at which the pensioners may spend their pocket money.

As a working rule, the maintenance component of the pensions is applied in the proportion of $\frac{1}{3}$ rd. to the general upkeep of pensioners, which includes food, clothing and tobacco, and $\frac{2}{3}$ rd. to a special trust fund for the provision of housing and other amenities. 3) 4.15.0 / 11.8 / 3.3.4

At most missions, the provision of housing presents difficulties for various reasons. At Bathurst Island, water is in short supply for sanitation purposes. Most pensioners are housed in existing huts, but a new housing project is under way. Father Clancy stated that it was difficult to reserve a house for the exclusive use of a pensioner because he was inclined to share it with his relatives and friends. Therefore, housing is being provided for the aborigine population as a whole and the pension fund is being called upon to bear a proportionate cost of all capital improvements. Debits raised for this purpose represent approximately $\frac{1}{5}$ th. of the total cost. The erected cost of each home unit approximates £400 - £500. A housing programme is already in course at Daly River and Bathurst Island, whilst at Pt. Keats, it is proposed to start building, later.

At all missions, communal feeding is provided for all pre-school children, invalids and nursing and expectant mothers. The girls normally reside in dormitories and are fed communally, but the boys live with their parents in the native camp and are fed there. Cooking points at the Pt. Keats and Daly River mission provide hot meals which are served in the camp.

It is stated that at Santa Teresa housing is provided for all and water is laid on at the camp.

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY

Total pension payments to C.M.S. Missions in the Northern Territory to 1st July, 1963, amounted to £65,712.

Mr. Langford, the Officer-in-Charge, advises that separate pensioner trust accounts are kept for each mission at the Sydney Headquarters of the Society. Pocket money payments are at the rate of 15/- per week, whilst the maintenance component is apportioned at the rate of £3-7-6 to food, clothing and maintenance, and £1-2-6 per week to Pensioners' Trust accounts. Balances now held in trust are:-

Angurugu (Groote Eylandt)	£2758-0-0
Roper River	£3216-0-0
Oenpelli	£3387-0-0
Umbakumba	£2386-0-0
Rose River	£2214-0-0

*Apparent
Nattery plan*

It is believed that eventually, the ¹³⁹⁶¹control of these trust accounts will pass from the Sydney Headquarters to the Darwin office.

The Society is anxious to proceed with housing programmes on all missions but in some localities they have been frustrated by site difficulties. This is apparent at Roper River and Umbakumba where there is a possibility that the locations of the missions may be altered. Lack of suitable building labour is also a problem.

The eventual plan is to provide all mission natives with separate houses provided with toilets and showers. A housing grant of £110,000 has been sought from the Welfare Branch for the current year, but it is expected that this grant will be pruned to approximately £50,000. The Welfare Branch is providing a subsidy for all trained staff employed on C.M.S. Missions. They also pay maintenance for children, mothers and the aged and infirm.

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4/2 (63)

NORTHERN AGENCIES

A visit was paid to Mr. Durack of this firm who acts as Pastoral Inspector for all of Vestey's properties.

The Sydney office controls all Pensioner Trust Accounts for their various pastoral properties with the exception of Wave Hill, which has an account with the Commonwealth Savings Bank, Darwin where the balance now stands at £6,001.

There are 18 pensioners at Wave Hill and a record is kept of pension moneys which have accumulated to the credit of each, the average amount being approximately £400 each. Pensioners receive £1 per week pocket money. £2 per week is debited against them for their food and clothing, whilst the balance of their pension is credited to the trust account.

Huts constructed of angle iron and galvanized iron are being erected at a cost of about £300 each. All pensioners are required to bear a proportionate cost of each hut as it is erected.

18) 600/1000 each. Nearly 2 yrs. Not yet spent.

54
60
60

Visits were paid to the following settlements, missions and pastoral properties.

BAGOT SETTLEMENT

Pensioner wards here number 33. In addition, a number of non wards are receiving payments direct. All pensioners are fed and housed and they eat communally. They receive a quarterly issue of clothing.

At present they are living in existing huts, but a housing programme is now under way from which pensioners will eventually benefit. King Strand huts are being erected at a cost of £500, plus an additional amount of £400 where a concrete floor is provided.

At present the pocket money component is fixed at £3-10-0 per fortnight which may be spent in the canteen. A wide range of supplies is carried. Because of the number of non wards living here who are under no restriction regarding the purchase of alcohol, drinking is fairly extensive and it is considered that a fair proportion of pensioners' pocket money is spent in this way.

Certainly, a number of pensioners who were interviewed could give no really satisfactory explanation of how they spend their money. This settlement serves largely as a staging camp for aborigines working in Darwin and there is a move afoot to treat all aborigines residing there as fringe natives.

OENPELLI (C.M.S. MISSION)

Superintendent - Mr. Harris

Assistant Superintendent - Mr. Wilson

Native population 320.

Children 118.

Staff 13 or 14.

Pensioners 20.

Total payments to 1st July, 1963, - £15,296.

Most of the residents here are housed in existing huts. Recently one new house was provided for a married pensioner out of mission funds. As yet there has been no expenditure for housing out of pension money held, the reason being that the Superintendent was not entirely certain what this Department required in this regard. The Department's views on the question of housing were explained to him. At present a new kitchen and dining block is being erected for pensioners, the aged and infirm and for children. To date a grant of £12,000 has been received from the Welfare Branch for this building.

Pensioners are issued with dry rations daily and in addition they are supplied with a cooked mid-day meal which they collect at the kitchen and eat in the camp. Children eat in the kitchen except over weekends when rations are supplied for them and they eat in the camp.

The Superintendent is not in favour of an increase in pensioners' pocket money because of its possible effect on mission economy. However, the income of the mission is stated to be improving due to the sale of cattle and buffalo meat, and wage standards are expected to rise. At present a herd of 900 cattle is kept.

Plans are in course for the erection of a new school and a new hospital, and recently a craft hut was completed where lepers returning from East Arm receive Occupational Therapy.

MANINGRIDA (GOVERNMENT SETTLEMENT)

Superintendent - H. Sedgewick.

Population 650.

Children 300.

Pensioners 28.

All residents here are housed in native huts. Water is drawn from nearby waterholes in the river.

A canteen supplies tobacco, cigarettes, soap and similar items. Pensioners have a fairly wide range of goods on which to spend their pocket money.

The Superintendent is not in favour of any increase in pocket money as he considers that it would affect the incentive to work of the younger residents. Pensioners are inclined to share their money with family members.

All residents are fed communally, and no rations are allowed in the camp. All young children are fed at the hospital.

There is a certain amount of movement between the settlement and the bush and some local game is caught.

A housing programme is under way. Five new homes are now ready for occupation and three are under construction. Timber for this project is produced locally in a well equipped mill which is worked by native labour.

The hospital sister reports that as yet, few births have occurred in the hospital. Most mothers prefer to bring their children in to her after they have been born in the bush.

GOULBURN ISLAND (METHODIST MISSION)

Superintendent - Mr. Ingram.

Population 200.

Children 80.

Pensioners 23.

Total pension paid to 1st July, 1963, - £11,000.

All the residents here are housed in existing huts, some of which are in a fairly dilapidated condition. Only one new home has been erected from pension moneys, but more are planned.

Pocket money component of pensions is spent in a canteen which provides a fair variety of goods.

The Superintendent is not in favour of any pocket money increase at this juncture.

With the aid of a Welfare subsidy, a new dispensary and hospital is almost ready for use. The total cost is expected to approximate £4,000. No proper hospital existed previously and all births occurred in the bush. It is hoped that native mothers will now avail themselves of the new building.

40 (61)

The population generally, does not receive any cooked meals. Dry rations are issued to them. However, children are provided with cooked meals except during the school holidays. They eat outdoors or in a bark hut.

A new Government school is planned for the near future. Recently the mission purchased a new water tank and a tankstand has now been erected with pension money. The object is to extend the present water system to the native camp.

SNAKE BAY (GOVERNMENT SETTLEMENT)

Superintendent - Fred Lucas.

Population 267.

60 Children.

Pensioners 14.

This settlement is run on similar lines to most other Welfare projects. There is evidence of recent heavy expenditure on the provision of new housing and facilities. At present no mess hut exists. Meals are prepared in a communal kitchen and are eaten in the native huts. All residents are housed, some in old type huts and others in recently completed houses. The housing programme here is quite impressive and has been pushed ahead fairly rapidly.

A canteen exists at which the pocket money of pensioners may be spent.

BATHURST ISLAND (CATHOLIC MISSION)

Superintendent - Father Carrigan.

Population 1,000.

Children 375.

Staff 17.

Pensioners 113.

Pension payments to 1st July, 1963, - £88,000.

*1875
n. 765
161 pensioners
out of 220*

The pocket money here is fixed at 10/- per week and is spent entirely in the canteen. Highest wage paid on the mission is £3 per week whilst the average is only about 25/- per week. Consequently, the missionary is not anxious to increase the pocket money component of pensions. He has stated, however, that there is a trend now towards higher wages. Pensioners and workers are said to share their money with their friends and relatives.

All residents are housed in tin huts. 15 new houses have been erected recently and more are planned.

Adults are issued with dry rations which they cook in the camp. All children are fed in a dining room. Separate provision is made for the feeding of pre-school children. School girls from the age of 10 until their marriage sleep in dormitories. They see their parents daily in the camp and return to them at week-ends. There are 122 schoolgirls on the mission of whom 78 have attained the age at which they are housed in the dormitory. Schoolboys live in the camp with their parents.

The population here is largely Catholic and the tribal influence is not strong. Consequently there is a trend towards more genuine widows who have not become espoused to relatives of their late husbands.

PT. KEATS (CATHOLIC MISSION)

Superintendent - Father Flynn.

Assistant Superintendent - Father O'Bryan.

Population 450.

Children 240.

Staff - nine religious, two lay.

Pensioners 26.

Pension payments to 1st July, 1963, - £15,500.

This mission has been established since 1935. 39 (60)

All residents are housed in huts in varying stages of repair. Girls from the age of 9 years sleep in dormitories, but are in daily contact with their parents.

As at Bathurst Island the population is largely Catholic.

No increase in the pocket money component of pensions is favoured by the missioner because of the relatively low wages paid. A saw mill has been set up to provide timber for mission houses and a cattle raising project is under way.

Native women are trained in various handicrafts.

KOOLFINYAH STATION.

Owners - Evan and Oscar Herbert.

Pensioners 3.

Total payment to 1st July, 1963, - £2,110.

All pensioners here are housed in existing dwellings, the standard of which varies somewhat.

They are stated to be heavy gamblers and no pocket money increase is recommended.

A deduction of £2 per week is made from each pension to cover the cost of rations provided. A separate deduction is made from time to time to cover the cost of clothing. In all there are 28 adult wage earners on the property, plus pensioners, widows and children.

Cement floor houses were provided for these people about 15 years ago, but it is stated that they prefer to live outdoors except during the wet season. As yet no new houses have been provided from pension funds. However, recently an ablution and toilet block was erected at a cost of £750. This was financed by pension money.

At present the balance in Pensioners' Trust Account stands at ~~£196-10-0.~~

HUMPTY DOO STATION

Owners - Herbert brothers.

Manager - Mr. Yates.

Pensioners 5.

Pension payments to 1st July, 1963, - £3,087.

The Manager here operates a separate pensioner trust account with the E. S. & A. Bank, Darwin. He maintains a separate ledger in which a record is kept of the balance held on behalf of individual pensioners. At the present time one pensioner has a balance of £162, another has £155, and the three others have £145 each.

The Manager's wife is a regular visitor to Darwin and is often accompanied by one or more of the pensioners. They spend their pocket money on these trips or in the station store.

The Manager does not consider an increase of 10/- in their pocket money would be too much, although he states they are heavy gamblers.

No new houses have been built recently. The dwellings now used were renovated and repaired about 4 years ago. Twelve male employees and their wives and nine children live in the camp. Recently an ablution and toilet block was built out of pension funds at a cost of £750.

Not in file for support

MANBULLOO STATION

Owners - Vesteys Ltd.

Manager - Mr. Warren.

Native population 70-80.

Children 20.

Pensioners 12.

Pension payments to 1st July, 1963, - £7,643-10-0.

The balance held in the Pensioner Trust account on this property now stands at £1,377. A record is kept of the balances held on behalf of individual pensioners. All pensioners are debited with £2-7-6 per week each for the cost of food and clothing supplied to them.

Recent expenditure on account of pensioners has been £1,940 for the purchase of galvanized iron huts, plus £575 for their erection. Also, an amount of £206 has been expended on the establishment of a garden for the use of pensioners and the connection of a water supply.

The Manager considers that an increase in the pocket money, to say, £1 per week at this juncture, would not be unreasonable. The pocket money now received is being spent in the station store. The main items of expenditure are extra tea and sugar, cordials, biscuits and similar items. The property is quite handy to Katherine and pensioners visit the town fairly regularly to spend their money there.

The pensioners are now occupying five new huts with concrete floors which were especially built for them. Five older type huts are also in use. Water is laid on at the camp and taps and showers are provided.

Dry rations are issued and are cooked in the camp. The garden which was recently established is maintained by the pensioners and they have the benefit of all produce. They also keep about 20 fowls.

ELSEY STATION

Owners - Elsey Station Ltd.

Manager - Mr. P. McCracken.

Population 85 aborigines.

Children 30-40.

Pensioners 10.

Pension payments to 1st July, 1963, - £6,816.

The Manager considers that the present pocket money component of £1 per fortnight is ample for the needs of all pensioners. He states that a number of them have young children who would derive more benefit from an increase in the maintenance component rather than from a pocket money increase.

When in funds, pensioners are stated to be heavy gamblers. A station store is conducted which is well stocked and at which any pocket money may be spent. It was stated that most of the expenditure was for fresh fruit which was brought from Adelaide. Comparatively little is spent on tobacco.

The award wage payable on the property is £2-15-0 per week, but actually payments rise to £3-10-0 or £4-0-0.

Dry rations are issued weekly and the quantity varies according to the number of children in the family unit. Clothing is issued each two months approximately.

Recently a total of £2,800 was spent on the erection of pensioners' huts and the installation of a water supply. Eight home units were erected and showers and toilets have been provided.

An inspection of the books showed that the Pensioners' Trust Account had a present balance of £1,580.

10.

BESWICK CREEK (GOVERNMENT SETTLEMENT)

37 (58)

Manager - Mr. Faint.

Population 320 aborigines.

Children 110.

Pensioners 7.

A canteen has been set up at which pensioners' pocket money may be spent. The main interest is in tobacco, lolly water and additional clothing.

Recently the accommodation was extended by the erection of 15 King Strand huts. Twenty-one older type huts were previously in existence. The remainder of the population is housed in fairly dilapidated native shelters.

All residents are fed in communal dining room. Eating in the camp is not permitted. A drive against gambling is being conducted to stabilise the settlement economy.

All births on the settlement occur in the hospital.

A Commonwealth Savings Bank agency has been set up recently for the convenience of residents.

Food for the settlement is obtained from a large garden and from a poultry run having about 500 fowls. In conjunction with this settlement, a cattle station is operated which runs 4,300 head.

TIPPERARY STATION

Owners - Tipperary Pastoral Co. Pty. Ltd.,
P. & C. Building, Eagle Street,
Brisbane Qld.

Manager - Mr. R. Easy.

Population 107 aborigines.

Children 23.

Pensioners 4.

Pension payments to 1st July, 1963, - £1,858.

All pensioners are housed in 16 existing dwellings. Recently a new toilet and shower block was erected for the use of all residents. The cost of this structure was financed by the Management. A new hut for the use of pensioners is on order. It will have a concrete floor and is of a type which will house two pensioner families. The cost is estimated to be something over £300.

Pensioners receive £1 per week each in cash and in addition they are permitted to buy goods on credit at the station store to the value of £1 per week. In effect they are receiving £2 per week pocket money. All pocket money is spent in the store, which is well stocked with fruit, tinned milk, tobacco, etc. Rations are provided by the station and the meals are prepared in a native kitchen by native labour. Children under 3 years are supplied with supplementary milk, soup, custard and fruit.

The Manager stated that the pension trust account was kept at the E.S. & A. Bank, Darwin. His Bookkeeper had recently left and he was not aware of the present balance in the account.

Pension cheques are forwarded to Mr. Packer, of Chins Arcade, Darwin, who maintains a running record. However, when Mr. Packer was contacted later, he stated that he had maintained his record since March 1963, only. In the period since then, the Pensioner Trust Account balance had built up to £455. He had no record of any balance held prior to March 1963, but he suggested that the owners in Brisbane might be able to provide further information. The present owners have held the property since December, 1961, only.

It was stated that a debit of £1-2-6 per week was raised against pensioners for rations issued to them. The balance, after this debit and the pocket money issue, was then credited to the trust account.

Plans are being made to purchase separate homes for all pensioners as soon as funds become available. A new school is also planned.

110
5-36 (57)
DALY RIVER MISSION (CATHOLIC)

Superintendent - Father Corry.

Population 162.

Over 100 children.

Pensioners 22.

Staff - 7 religious, 7 lay.

Pension payments to 1st July, 1963, - £19,800.

The mission is conducted on an agricultural lease and is not strictly an aboriginal reserve.

The pocket money component of the pension is spent at the mission store and at a private store at a nearby tourist resort on the river crossing. Pensioners are issued with dry rations comprising flour, sugar, rice, tea, peanuts, tinned meat, butter and milk. They also receive an issue of fine cut tobacco. The total of these goods approximates £2-15-0 per week.

They receive hospital care when sick and entertainment is provided for them at the mission picture show.

Water points and sewerage are provided in the camps.

Most residents are housed in existing buildings. Four new houses are now proposed together with a new toilet and laundry block. Water will be laid on to the houses.

All school children sleep in dormitories, but they maintain regular contact with their parents. Seventy children are attending school. The school building was erected comparatively recently with the aid of a Welfare subsidy.

The mission grows all its own vegetables. Game is plentiful, as the river area abounds in wallabies, geese and ducks.

It was learned that a number of pensioners do not reside permanently at the mission, but move about on adjoining small farms. However, these people are fully rationed from the mission. It was stated that the adjoining property owners on whose land these pensioners some times live have no objection to the mission collecting their pensions.

The point which emerges is that although these people receive full rations they will never receive the benefit of housing on the mission whilst they are living elsewhere, and therefore they will not get full value for their pension money. This point was discussed with Father Corry and later with Father Clancy in Darwin and it was agreed that the mission authorities would list the names of the people concerned, who would be paid in future on a separate schedule from pensioners permanently residing on the mission. In effect, Father Corry would then be acting as warrantee for them, and separate trust accounts would be maintained on which these pensioners could draw for whatever needs they may have.

*By now
see it to
them?*

EAST ARM SETTLEMENT (LEPROSARIUM)

Superintendent - Mr. F. Shaw.

Acting Superintendent - Mr. Thompson.

Staff - 5 nuns, 3 laymen.

Patients 140.

Children 17.

Pensioners 96.

Pension payments to 1st July, 1963, - £58, 653.

Pensioners receive pocket money component of £3-~~10~~¹⁰-0 per fortnight, which is split into a cash payment of £1 and a bank credit to £2-14-0. Commonwealth Savings Bank agency has been set up at the settlement. All passbooks are held by the Superintendent who controls banking activities.

The maintenance component of £6-16-0 per fortnight is retained by the Commonwealth Department of Health and paid into revenue.

A canteen is in operation selling cigarettes, tobacco, lolly water, biscuits etc. 3556

The majority of inmates live in good standard huts in the camp area. Ten or twelve bad cases are hospitalised. Seven new houses were erected recently for white and half caste patients.

A communal dining room is provided for all non hospitalised patients. The patients assist in the kitchen and in gardening and maintenance work.

An inquiry disclosed that the completion of Forms "R" in connection with general review was proceeding satisfactorily.

In some instances, pensioners have built up bank balances amounting to several hundreds of pounds.

ALICE SPRINGS

On the return journey to Adelaide, an overnight stopover was made at Alice Springs and Mr. L. Penhall, Assistant Director Southern Division Welfare Branch, and Mr. C. Lovegrove, District Welfare Officer, were interviewed.

They both stated that, because of rising wage standards on pastoral properties, a general increase of the pocket money component of pensions was recommended.

Aborigines are showing an increasing appreciation of European standard housing and general facilities.

Aborigines on the nearby settlement at Amoonguna are reasonably well developed and have quite a fair appreciation of the value of money. Mr. Penhall feels that pensioners here might now be paid direct, in full. He intends to discuss this matter with his Director and will then approach us by letter, requesting a change in the method of payment.

Patrol Officers visit pastoral properties in the Alice Springs area regularly throughout the year. It would not be difficult to arrange a tour of inspection in connection with disbursement of pension moneys. The Welfare Branch is prepared to arrange such a tour provided about one month's prior notice is given.

It is felt that local pastoralists in the main are conscientiously caring for pensions on behalf of aborigines on their properties. To date, they have not been keen to erect houses out of pension money because they felt that they would lose their title to any houses thus erected, which they felt would pass to the ownership of the pensioners concerned.

It was explained to Mr. Penhall that the Department's view was that all houses erected with pension money on a pastoral lease should remain the property of the pastoralist, but it was expected that he would reserve them exclusively for the occupation of pensioners. Mr. Penhall undertook to present this view point to pastoralists whenever he contacted them.

Fringe natives living in this area appear to be handling pension money reasonably well. Mr. Penhall feels that it is extremely doubtful whether there are any genuine widows in aboriginal society and he considers that the grant of widow's pensions to aborigines may be on shaky grounds.

AMOONGUNA SETTLEMENT

Superintendent - Mr. Casey.

Population 450 aborigines.

Children 150.

Staff 22.

Pensioners 20.

This settlement was visited during the stay in Alice Springs.

The great majority of residents are housed in varying types of huts. A few natives on the fringes of the settlement are living in shanties. Fifty two new King Skand huts and six concrete huts have been erected recently. A row of six or eight new two roomed houses is at present under construction.

3455

All residents are communally fed in the dining room. No rations are issued for consumption in the camp. A modern hospital and school have been provided

Babies up to 3 years are fed in the hospital. Children from 3-5 years are fed at a pre-school centre, whilst those over 5 eat with their parents in the dining room.

All births occur in the settlement hospital or in Alice Springs.

Maternity allowances are paid in full to suitable mothers. In other instances, where the mother's financial sense is not sufficiently developed, her allowance is controlled by the Superintendent.

A citrus orchard has been established, along with a kitchen garden. A number of poultry are kept.

The settlement is supplied with bore water, but at the present time, the flow is only fair.

A social centre has been established where the residents can see films regularly.

A fully stocked canteen is in existence.

CONCLUSION

From the discussions held and the inspections already made, the overall impression emerges that the great majority of aboriginal pensioners are receiving at least reasonable value for their pensions. On those pastoral properties which were inspected, no less than on the settlements and missions, they are being fed and housed with the prospect that their degree of comfort will progressively increase. Indeed, it is on the pastoral properties that the lot of the pensioner is most likely to improve because, on missions and settlements, the unproductive aged and infirm aborigine has already been enjoying a degree of comfort and attention.

*Also for
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that with
£300 each*

With the exception of Tipperary Station, where the position of the Pensioner Trust Account will require further investigation, pastoralists have made available for inspection books of account which set out particulars of pension receipts and expenditure and which reconcile reasonably with the Department's own payment figures.

In the case of Welfare Settlements, the direction by Treasury that the maintenance component of pensions be paid into general revenue prevents any check of the method of pension disbursement. However, pensioners share in the generally high standard of food and housing prevailing on settlements and their well-being is manifest.

The Church Missionary Society and Methodist Overseas Missions have adopted a system of accounting for pension moneys which involves the raising of debits for specific capital items provided for pensioners. Their books present an accurate picture of the manner of disbursement of pension moneys. On the other hand, the Catholic Missions have adopted a "rule of thumb" method of debiting the Pension Account with a proportion of all capital improvements and mission overhead. This proportion runs to the order of about 1/5th. of total costs and, by this method, any credit balance in the account is cleared each financial year. This system prevents any detailed check being made and is hardly satisfactory from our viewpoint.

*Pensioner
Number
is 1/13*

However, it is hard to quarrel with the missions over their accounting methods because they are providing a devoted service to the aborigines who are unmistakably benefiting from such dedication. Ample food, clothing and, to a lesser extent, housing are provided for them and they have access to hospitalisation entertainment and other mission amenities.

As a group, the aborigine pensioners who are possibly benefiting the least are those who live as fringe natives. Their spending is largely un-supervised and the old, well known pitfalls lie in their paths. A large number, if not a majority, appear to dissipate their pensions in gambling, drinking, taxis and the distribution of largesse to relatives. Officers of the Welfare Branch feel that these people are gradually coming to a more enlightened concept of the tangible benefits which can follow wise expenditure and they hope to encourage

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this process by persuading pensioners to open Savings bank accounts.

F. J. McMillan
(F. J. McMillan)
Special Magistrate.

"/10/63.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Telephone: W 0133

Department of Social Services,

Mr. J. J. McK

Churchill Building,

In reply please quote:

61 Gawler Place, Adelaide

A.117/2/1(8)



18th October, 1963.

The Director-General,
MELBOURNE.

Payment of Social Service benefits to
aborigines in the Northern Territory.
(Your memo. A55/3074 of 30.8.63)

Mr. F.J. McMillan and I visited Darwin, Alice Springs and outlying areas between 23rd September and 4th October, 1963, to discuss the payment of Social Service benefits. Mr. McMillan has been responsible for the control of the examination of pension claims for aborigines since the inception of pension payments to them. He has been selected as the officer who will make inspections from time to time of the method of disposal of these moneys. I accompanied him on this visit because it was the initial one after a period of over three years of pension payments to aborigines, and we wished to plan a subsequent investigation programme so that Mr. McMillan could travel with the Patrol Officers during their visits to pastoral properties, missions and settlements. We had discussions with the Director of Welfare (Mr. H.C. Giese) and his officers, various mission and pastoral representatives, and with the Managers of selected settlements, missions and pastoral properties.

Mr. J.A. Nagel, Officer-in-Charge, Department of Labour and National Service, Darwin, and Special Magistrate of this Department (responsible for Social Service matters in the Territory), accompanied us on our visits to outlying areas, for information purposes.

The payment of pensions to aborigines has progressed smoothly during the past three years, although there has been passing reference in both Houses of the Federal Parliament, and in the Legislative Council in Darwin, to the method of payment. In recent months there has been veiled reference to the alleged misuse of pension moneys and, as the amount paid in the Northern Territory now approaches £1 million, it was deemed expedient that now was the time for a review of the method of payment and the results being achieved.

I have arranged that Mr. McMillan visit Darwin again next year during the dry season, and he will visit the Darwin and Katherine Districts to inspect other mission and Government settlements and other selected pastoral stations. Towards the end of November he will visit the Alice Springs district and make an inspection of areas west of Alice Springs, Santa Teresa Mission, and Maryvale Station, and perhaps other selected pastoral properties north-east of Alice Springs. Early next year he will visit the Tennant Creek district and inspect pastoral properties in the Barkly Tableland district. Also Government settlements, pastoral properties and mission stations in South Australia will be visited when it can be arranged with the South Australian Department of Aboriginal Affairs.

Mr. McMillan and I are most satisfied with the method of accounting and dispersal of pension and other Social Service moneys from what we saw in the Northern Territory. We appreciate that it is impossible to reconcile exactly details of departmental pension payments with the appropriate expenditure on behalf of the aborigines. However, it is possible

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to get an over-all approximation, and reach a conclusion as to whether a genuine effort is being made to keep a proper record of moneys received and paid.

We believe that most of the pensioners are receiving value for their pension payments, and that the spirit of the original instruction that the moneys are to be used for cash payments to the pensioner, feeding and clothing him, and the provision of amenities, is being observed.

Opportunities for spending pension moneys vary in the different areas because of the facilities provided, such as canteens and the nearness of shopping areas. Some canteens are fully stocked with a variety of items, and the natives can be trained along the correct lines of spending. In others the canteen facilities are poorer, and there is more of a tendency to gamble their money. I think it can be fairly said, even although there is a lot of gambling, that in the long run if the money is not siphoned out of the settlement or area (e.g. payments to taxi drivers, etc.), most share in the benefit of the expenditure of the money ultimately because of the communal habit of sharing their assets.

There are different standards of deductions for rations, clothing, rent, fuel and administrative costs, and also for the provision of capital and maintenance expenditure. I do not believe that the Department can enforce standards in this regard and, provided that we are satisfied that the money is spent on the general welfare of the pensioner, it is better to allow the different systems to suit the local situation. Our brief examination shows that there is no doubt that, where the expenditure of pension money is being supervised wisely, then the aborigine is better off than when left to his own resources. This is exemplified by the habits of spending of some of the "fringe" natives, including a few at Bagot Settlement and three or four at the Ten Mile area out from Darwin. Any political pressure to extend the payments direct to aborigines at too fast a rate could be to the immediate detriment of the aborigine rather than his betterment. It will be quite some time before pension moneys can be paid direct to aborigines in all areas.

However, we will endeavour to encourage the keeping of full records, and in this regard the system adopted by the Manager of Humpty Doo Pastoral Station is nearer the ideal. He has a separate pension bank trust account, and keeps a separate ledger record of debits and credits of individual aboriginal pensioners.

... The following comments are offered on the details mentioned in the enclosed report prepared by Mr.F.J.McMillan.

Welfare Branch

The Director and officers of his Branch were most co-operative and extended every assistance possible during our visit. We had initial discussions with Mr.Giese and Messrs. Millikan, Flynn and Ford (Administrative Officer), and other officers of that Branch. Later we had discussions with the Assistant Directors for the Northern and Southern Divisions (Messrs.Hamilton and Penhall), and with Mr.Allom and Mr.Lovegrove, the District Welfare Officers.

Mr. Giese mentioned that his Patrol Officers have quite a task on their hands, but they do endeavour, in the course of their inspection visits to the settlements, missions and pastoral properties, to maintain some check on the standard of facilities

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provided for the aboriginal pensioners. This aspect is covered in their inspection reports and has been reasonably well attended to. Both Mr. Giese and I agreed, however, that there is a need for a Department of Social Services representative to "show the flag" and make periodical visits with his Patrol Officers, and this should be of great psychological value in addition to providing an accounting check.

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The Director's offer to raise the pocket money portion of the pension on Government settlements from 10/- to 35/- a week is a bold move, but we can see no departmental reason for not agreeing with it. Unlike the South Australian Department of Aboriginal Affairs, the Welfare Branch does not maintain a separate trust account for each pensioner. The trust account was closed on a Department of Treasury direction, and the maintenance portion of pension payments for aborigines on Government settlements (payment of pension less 10/- a week pocket money) was credited to General Revenue (Item No. 751/3/01).

An amount of £21,600 was formerly held in trust for the housing of pensioners, and this was transferred to General Revenue as a result of the Treasury direction. Payments totalling £7,546 had previously been drawn from the maintenance section of the pension to purchase home units for pensioners on settlements. Because of the revised Treasury procedure, the Welfare Branch has apparently been deprived of capital, and this has slowed up the process of providing housing for aboriginal pensioners on Government settlements. This is not in accordance with the original approval for the expenditure of pensioners' money, and it would be difficult to defend this system politically if the matter were ever examined in detail. Moreover, we are asking missions and pastoral stations to keep a separate account and provide for capital expenditure. The Commonwealth Government should set an example in this regard.

See file 1.8/19

It is recommended that the Department of Treasury be approached and advised of the terms of the original Cabinet approval relating to pension payments, and requested to reverse the decision so that capital funds can be accumulated on behalf of pensioner aborigines, and this money could then be specially earmarked for pensioner capital projects.

This matter is being taken up over file B448 P4/8

I was surprised to learn that pastoralists receive 24/9 per week (providing the full ration scale is supplied by the pastoralists) for each child of a native employee other than the first. As child endowment of 10/- per week is also paid, it is obvious that most of the pastoralists should be very happy with this aspect of Government policy. Arrangements will be made to pay child endowment direct to those mothers in Bagot Settlement who are fully supporting and clothing themselves.

We believe that the recent Ordinance making it impracticable to maintain trust accounts for wards was an important one as far as the effect on accounting is concerned. However, the alternative action of opening savings bank accounts and appointing Welfare Officers as trustees is a satisfactory procedure, provided the Welfare Officers are not over-burdened.

The Assistant Director-General (Policy and Benefits), Mr. I. Prowse, of your office, requested information concerning the disposal of pension moneys where the ward is deceased or missing. Where the ward is deceased, any moneys held in trust for him are paid to the Public Trustee for inclusion among his estate assets, and where he is missing, such moneys are paid into revenue under the item "Miscellaneous Sundries".

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69Department of Health.

We were surprised to learn of the pension pay arrangements to pay only £1.17.0 per week of the invalid pension to pensioner wards at the Leprosarium, while the others (7 non-wards and 1 European) received their invalid pension in full. In view of the explanations given, we believe that the present arrangement is a reasonable one, particularly in view of the excellent accommodation, food and hospital facilities provided for the wards, and they are not unfairly treated by being asked to pay £3.8.0 per week into Commonwealth revenue. There was every indication that they are better off financially while in the Leprosarium than in other areas.

Dr. Byrne, Director, Department of Health, Darwin, advocates the payment of a leprosy allowance to all sufferers from leprosy, whether permanently incapacitated or not. No doubt we will hear more of this proposal in due course, and I am not offering any comments at this stage.

Arrangements will be made to pay wife's and child's allowances to dependants of inmates at East Arm upon receipt of the necessary claims. At present the dependants are a burden on the settlements, missions and pastoral managements.

Apparently there is some misunderstanding in regard to permanent incapacity in relation to leprosy patients. It was explained to us that the invalid pension was continued for only three months after the discharge of the patient from the leprosarium. We pointed out that the invalid pension can be paid indefinitely if a certificate is given that the person is still permanently incapacitated (although the leprosy is arrested, many have residual deformities which make them permanently incapacitated). We anticipate an increase of approximately 20 invalid pensions under this heading.

Catholic Missions.

As explained by Mr. McMillan, detailed accounting records are not being kept by the Headquarters of the Catholic Missions in Darwin, or by the individual missions. There is a control account of pension moneys paid in and out, but it is in total only and it is not possible to check it. It would be difficult to defend this system if it were challenged in political circles, and if queries were raised as to the balance held on behalf of a particular pensioner. However, the missions are doing an excellent job with a minimum of staff, and there is no doubt that overall the aboriginal pensioner is receiving full value for his money. His wants are being attended to most conscientiously by the dedicated workers. We will keep the mission accounts under review during further visits to Darwin.

Tipperary Station.

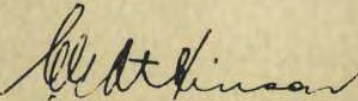
The present accounting records on this station are most satisfactory. There is evidence of recent large-scale expenditure on capital projects, and the pensioners will be most suitably provided for. However, the property changed hands in December, 1961, and the previous accounting records have been maintained only since March, 1963. There is no record of a pension balance carried forward, and we will have to make further enquiries with the previous and present owners. We will have to institute some procedure for checking up on pension moneys and their dispersal where there is a change in ownership of a pastoral property.

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(68)Daly River Mission.

Father Corry will in future keep separate trust accounts in relation to pensioners who do not reside at the mission but move about on adjoining small farms. He is unable to spend capital moneys on their behalf, and the solution offered by him is satisfactory to the Department.

A copy of this report is being forwarded to the Director of Welfare, together with an expression of thanks for the co-operation of his Department in the payment of pensions to aborigines.

... A set of photographs of items of departmental interest in the areas visited is enclosed.


C.G. ATKINSON,
DIRECTOR.

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The Director General,
Department of Social Services,
301 Flinders Lane,
MELBOURNE. VIC.

20 NOV 1963

PAYMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICE BENEFITS TO ABORIGINES IN
THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

The report of your Adelaide Director on the use of social service benefits paid on behalf of Aborigines in the Northern Territory has been read with interest. It raises a number of points on which a clearer determination of policy seems necessary. Some of these are the different charges raised by missions and pastoralists (even from within the same organization) for maintenance in respect of rations and clothing; the accumulation and non-expenditure of pension funds for the benefit of pensioners; the actual use to which amounts in excess of personal and maintenance components are put, and the protection of accumulated funds in the event of change of ownership e.g. Tipperary.

I think it would be beneficial to both our Departments if these matters could be discussed as soon as an opportunity offers. If an appropriate officer of your department will be in Canberra perhaps he could arrange for such a discussion.

DESPATCHED

CRH
(C. R. Lambert)
Secretary

Note

Seen in Melbourne
I spoke to Mr Tritton (Social Services Dept) about the above. (Mr Prowse was not available). Social Services Dept. is now fully engaged in preparation of the new Social Services legislation. They will try to answer the questions in 3 or 4 weeks. They will try to take the initiative if we could.

National Archives of Australia

WA 100 734 117 1363/500

The DirectorPAYMENT OF PENSIONS TO ABORIGINES IN THE
NORTHERN TERRITORYInspection of Pastoral Properties from the
27th April, 1964, to the 10th May, 1964.

In the course of this tour of inspection, almost 1,400 miles were covered by road and 20 properties in the Alice Springs area were visited. Access to a number of other properties, which might otherwise have been visited, was prevented by recent falls of up to $1\frac{1}{2}$ " of rain which washed out some roads.

From the tour, the impression was formed that the lot of the majority of aboriginal pensioners is gradually improving. Even on properties where permanent housing for pensioners is not already provided, most Managers have plans in this direction. On a few properties it was apparent that sufficient was not being done to house pensioners.

Also, in a number of instances, it was not possible to ascertain what sums were being held in trust for pensioners or details of rations being issued. In these cases, further enquiries will be necessary to clarify the position.

A general acceptance that an increase in the pocket money component of pensions is desirable was noted. In this regard, a number of Managers are already paying pocket money at a higher rate than the standard of 15/- per week, which has been laid down. In one instance, a Manager is still paying only 10/- per week due to his misconception of Departmental instructions. As pensioners on Government settlements and also on a number of pastoral properties are already receiving pocket money of £2 per week, I would suggest at this juncture that it would not be unreasonable to request all pastoral managers to increase their pocket money payments to this amount. This recommendation may not appeal to a number of Managers on outlying properties where the pensioners are considered to be backward or to Mission Superintendents whose internal economy may be affected, but for the sake of uniformity, I consider that a general increase in pocket money is now warranted.

Perhaps a firm decision in this regard might be deferred temporarily until a proposed inspection later this year of pastoral properties in the top end of the Northern Territory has been carried out.

In the Alice Springs area, most pastoral properties are managed by the owner. It is not usual to find that a station is controlled by an absentee Bookkeeper, the Manager's wife was almost invariably called upon to handle the recording of receipts and disbursement of pension moneys. Although the Department has not requested station managers to maintain separate trust accounts for individual pensioners, it seems to be the rule that a record is kept of the amount which has accrued in trust for each pensioner. This is done as a matter of convenience to the station and to satisfy pensioners' queries. This trend is even more likely to be apparent on the larger company owned properties where a Bookkeeper is employed. It is known for certain that Vestseys follow this policy. For this reason, it might now be opportune to request all Managers to maintain separate records in future of the amounts held in trust for individual pensioners.

At present, it is well nigh impossible to reconcile exactly the expenditure of pension moneys by stations with the amounts paid out from this office. For example, comprehensive lists of rations which are stated to have been issued to pensioners are available, but there is no guarantee that the pensioners have received the amounts claimed. A similar position arises with the issue of clothing, blankets, camp sheets etc. The only reconciliation possible is to consider the total amount of pension paid and to arrive at a rough approximation of the total value of rations, clothing and extras issued. The result can then be compared with the present balance of the Pensioners' Trust Account. On most properties inspected, this formula resulted in the conclusion that pensioners are receiving adequate value for their pension payments. Future checks might be facilitated if separate records were available of the details of expenditure on behalf of individual pensioners.

The major problem associated with pension payments to aborigines is

their frequent movement from property to property on walk-a-bout. In many cases the Station Manager is unaware, when a pensioner first leaves, that his absence will be protracted and accordingly he delays furnishing the details of the pensioner's departure to this office. Often the pensioner is rationed and paid pocket money in advance on his assurance that he will be absent for a week or two only. Unfortunately, these assurances are often valueless, because the pensioner may decide to take up extended or even permanent residence on a neighbour's property. In such instances, the date on which pension payments should be transferred from station to station is never definite, and problems inevitably arise in making adjustments. In other cases, the Manager is unaware that the pensioner has left his property, believing him to be camping and hunting in an isolated area remote from the homestead. This problem is one which has been discussed at length with Welfare Branch and pastoral representatives, but no ready solution is available. Managers have been requested to do their utmost to keep us advised of the movement of pensioners and it seems that we will be obliged to continue to rely almost entirely on their efforts in this direction.

Drought conditions in the Alice Springs area over the past eight years have resulted in a great deal of unemployment amongst aborigines who would normally be employed. As a consequence, Unemployment Benefit for aborigines is becoming a live issue. At the time of my visit to Alice Springs, the Registrar of Unemployment and Sickness Benefit in Darwin, Mr. J. Nagel was also there on business. He feels certain that a number of test claims for Unemployment Benefit will soon be lodged on behalf of aborigines.

At present the attitude of Pastoral Managers towards any improvement in conditions for aborigines is conditioned by a recently introduced ordinance which proposes to remove existing restrictions on Wards of the Director of Welfare. The Managers are loath to commit themselves to any definite policy until the effects of this new ordinance have been experienced.

In the course of the tour of inspection, the following properties were visited:-

ERLDUNDA STATION

120 miles south of Alice Springs.

Manager owner - Mr. S. Stanes.

Aboriginal population 40,
including 14 children.

Total pension payments to date £5,860.

Currently there are seven pensioners on this property. They are each receiving £3.10.0 per fortnight pocket money, although payment schedules indicate that the Manager previously notified his intention to pay them £4 per fortnight. The balance held in trust for these pensioners at the A. & N.Z. Bank, Alice Springs, at present stands at £300. A separate record is maintained by the Manager showing the balance on hand for each pensioner.

A charge of £5 per fortnight is levied against each pensioner for rations and clothing, and an amount of £2 per fortnight is credited to the trust account. This account has been utilised to date to provide some housing and household items.

Two huts have been erected already out of pension funds at a cost of approximately £200 each, and it is now proposed to purchase wood stoves and kitchen tables for them. Occasionally, the trust account is drawn on to provide supplementary rations and additional clothing. A canteen on the station supplies a wide range of foodstuffs, including tinned fruit, fruit juices, soft drinks etc. The whole of the pensioners' pocket money is spent here. Pensioners who were interviewed in the camp area expressed satisfaction with the allotment of money and rations to them.

KUIGERA

150 miles south of Alice Springs.

The pastoral property located in this area has no pensioners residing

on it at present. In the township area, one pensioner, an old lady, is living as a fringe native. Pension is paid to her direct, C/- of the local storekeeper, who has been supervising her expenditure.

Due to lack of employment on surrounding cattle stations because of the prevailing drought, there has been a build up of aborigines living in a camp near the township. These people at present are maintained mainly by the manufacture of native artifacts. Some of these may be approaching pension age and there is a possibility that claims will emanate from this area in the future.

MT. CAVENAGH

182 miles south of Alice Springs.

Owner Manager - Mr. D. Major

Permanent aboriginal population - 3 families including 10 children.

Total pension payment to date £222.

At present only one pensioner, [REDACTED], is residing on this property. Her pension was granted to her only recently and, as a consequence, there has been no build up yet of trust moneys for her. She is receiving a pocket money payment of £2 per fortnight, although the amount shown on the schedule is only 30/- per fortnight.

The Manager states that he has been fully rationing and clothing her from her pension funds. She is at present housed in a bush humpy in the native camp. It is anticipated that a claim will be lodged shortly on behalf of an aged married couple.

VICTORY DOWNS

25 miles south west of Kulgera

Owner Manager - Mr. C.V. Morton

Total pension payment to date £537.

The population here includes five age pensioners and a widow's pensioner. There are five children in all in the native camp.

In addition to operating a cattle station, the Manager also conducts a tourist camp and a licensed store. Pensioners are handed £1 per week each in cash, and they are issued with rations valued at £2.10.0 per week. The Manager considers that the pocket money payment is adequate for the present needs of pensioners. A separate record is kept of amounts held in trust for individual pensioners. The credits in trust vary, but they average about £15 per pensioner.

At present, the widow's pensioner is purchasing a house by instalments, the cost of which to the station was £200. A number of huts for use by pensioners are now in the course of erection. In addition, toilets and showers are to be provided. A contractor has been engaged to carry out this programme. When ready for occupation, it is proposed to let these huts to pensioners at a rental to be agreed upon. A store which has been provided for the use of tourists also serves to provide an outlet for the expenditure of pensioners' pocket money. This store carries a wide range of supplementary foodstuffs.

MULGA PARK

112 miles west of Kulgera

Owners - Fogarty Brothers.

Manager - Mr. Ted Fogarty.

Population 25, including 11 children.

Total pension payments to date £877.

This property is located on the walk-a-bout route between Ernabella and Areyonga. Consequently, the numbers here vary considerably from time to time.

At present four pensioners reside on the property. They receive pocket money of 30/- per fortnight and an amount of £4 per fortnight each, is paid into trust for them. Rations to the value of £3 per week are supplied. These include the usual range of meat (5lb.), flour, tea, sugar, rice and syrup etc.

The trust account balance now stands at £160 at the Commonwealth Bank, Alice Springs. To date the trust account has been used to provide clothing, blankets, camp gear etc. The Manager has agreed to provide houses for his pensioners when sufficient funds are available. Pensioners spend their pocket money at a store operated by the Manager, mainly on supplementary rations.

The Manager here is not in favour of any increase in pocket money as he feels that any additional foodstuffs purchased would be handed on to relatives or wasted.

CURTIN SPRINGS

49 miles east of Ayers Rock.

Manager - P. Severin, Esq.

The Manager here is operating a licensed store for the convenience of tourists in addition to his pastoral property.

No aboriginal families reside on the property and no pensions are being paid. Few aborigines are employed. It is the Manager's practice to engage single native men as and when required, but his labour needs have been slight due to drought conditions. Prospective employees come to him from Areyonga Settlement or Ernabella.

Due to the Manager's policy of not allowing a native camp to build up, it is unlikely that pension applications will be received from this area.

ANGAS DOWNS

150 miles south west of Alice Springs.

Owner Manager - Arthur Little.

Aboriginal population - 150, including 50 children.

Total pension payments to date £9,787.

Fourteen pensioners are being paid on this property. Pocket money was recently increased from the scheduled payment of 15/- per week to £1 per week. The Manager seems to be not averse to further increasing the amount of pocket money. However, the standard of development of aborigines in this area appears to be not as great as elsewhere.

Pocket money payments are being spent on a store located on the station. A trust account balance of £150 is held at present and it is the Manager's intention to allow this amount to increase so that certain items required by his pensioners may be purchased. He does not maintain any record of the amount due to individual pensioners. Rations to the value of £3 per week each are issued. These include the usual items of meat, flour, tea, sugar and jam, with the addition of fruit and tobacco.

At present a large dormitory type building is under construction for the use of pensioners. The cost of materials was £290, drawn from the Pensioner Trust Fund. The erection is being financed by the Manager. It is proposed to divide this building into six rooms each covering 10' x 10'. Each pensioner couple is to be allocated one room and single pensioners are to be required to share rooms. This plan is of dubious feasibility, but the Manager considers that it will work out. He plans to build further similar structures as his trust account balance increases.

At present he has no employed natives on his property other than two house-girls.

MT. EBENEZER

160 miles south west of Alice Springs

Owner Manager - Mr. E. Kunoth

Aboriginal population approximately 20,
including 12 children.

The Manager here is conducting a restaurant for tourists in addition to his pastoral property. The population of the native camp is subject to fluctuation due to walk-a-bouts to and from neighbouring properties. No natives are employed and no pensioners are now paid, although it seems possible that pension claims may possibly be received from this area in the future.

A discussion was held with the Manager's wife concerning the Department's requirements in regard to the disbursement of pension moneys. She expressed her willingness to handle pensions on these terms should circumstances require it in the future.

YAMBAH STATION

44 miles north of Alice Springs.

Owner Manager - Mr. John Gorey,

Aboriginal population 16, including 6 children.

Total pension payments to date £1,028.

There are two pensioners on this property, who each receive 30/- per week pocket money. This is in accordance with the amount shown on the payment schedule. Rations are supplied to them in excess of the Welfare Branch ration scale of about 36/- per week. Pensioners are required to supplement these rations by purchases from the station store.

At present they are housed in pre-existing huts which were erected approximately three years ago at a cost of about £175 each. To date no rent has been charged, but it is the Manager's intention to charge rent of 10/- per week in the future.

As a bank statement had not been received recently, the Manager was not able to advise the actual balance held in trust. However, he agreed to supply this information later after checking with his bank. He has stated that an amount averaging about £2.9.0 per week, per pensioner, is being banked at present.

Since my return to Adelaide, I have had a letter from the Manager advising that his trust account balance stands at £178. Against this he intends to debit arrears of rent for his two pensioners of £30.10.0 and £11.10.0 respectively. He states he will now close this group trust account and open two individual trust accounts with balances of £107.5.0 and £28.15.0.

Extra clothing and camp requisites have been financed from the trust account in the past.

ALCOOTA STATION

146 miles north east of Alice Springs.

Owner Mr. P. Puckridge, Port Lincoln.

Manager Mr. Ivor Payne.

Aboriginal population 45 approximately,
including 20 children.

Total pension payments to date £5,323.

At present eight pensioners including one married couple reside on the property. They each receive £1 per week pocket money, although the schedule

provides for a payment of only 15/- per week. An amount of £3.10.0 per fortnight each is credited to separate trust accounts maintained for the benefit of the pensioners. Records were sighted which confirm that the balances at present held in trust for pensioners average £150 each.

Rations are issued to the value of £3 per week to each pensioner. At present no permanent housing has been provided. The Manager is not keen to undertake any housing programme for the usual often expressed reasons that the natives are lacking hygiene, they damage the buildings, they refuse to live in huts in fine weather, they quit them when a death occurs and so on. The practice at present is to provide tents for pensioners, from trust moneys.

A store is conducted on the property and, in addition, an itinerant hawker from Hermannsburg Mission calls at the native camp periodically. These provide an outlet for the expenditure of pocket money.

The Manager mentioned that the aboriginal population on his property was relatively static.

WATTE RIVER

140 miles north east of Alice Springs.

Owner Manager - Mr. George Isaacson.

Aboriginal population about 24, including 15 children.

At present no pensions are being paid, although a claim is pending on behalf of one aged aborigine, [redacted]. The Manager states that he has returned to us his agreement in writing undertaking to handle pensions on the Department's terms. At present [redacted] is maintained by Welfare Branch maintenance. She is not housed, but a tarpaulin has been provided as a covering for her wurlie. No huts have been erected in the native camp as yet.

The Department's wishes concerning the utilisation of pension moneys were explained to the Manager.

UTOPIA STATION

150 miles north east of Alice Springs.

Owner Manager - Mr. Alec McLeod.

Aboriginal population 100, including 50 children.

Total pension payments to date £13,022.

Sixteen pensioners are currently being paid on this property. They are receiving pocket money at the rate of 35/- per week, although the payment schedule provides for the payment of only 15/- per week. The Manager's wife is maintaining a separate record of trust moneys held for individual pensioners. Records were sighted which confirm that the total balance now held stands at £125.

Rations to the value of 35/- per week are issued to each pensioner. These are supplemented by purchases from the station store out of the pocket money component. The store carries a range of tinned fruit, tinned meat, rice, lolly water etc. At present pensioners are living in wurlies or bush huts. Some tent flies have been purchased for them from their trust accounts, but no permanent housing has been provided. The Manager states that he erected huts for his working boys some time ago, but these were gradually demolished. He also had toilets erected, but these were similarly destroyed. Water which was laid on to the camp, is said to have been wasted and has now been disconnected. As a consequence, he states the camp has been allowed to revert to what he calls "natural aboriginal conditions".

Mr. McLeod has recently sold this property to Mr. Mac Chalmers, the present owner of McDonald Downs Station, where pensions are also being paid. The transfer of ownership is expected to take place in about one months time.

Prior to that, the present Manager intends to spend all moneys held in trust on new winter clothing, blankets, etc. Thus no trust moneys will be transferable to the new owner.

WOOLLA DOWNS

140 miles north of Alice Springs.

Owner - Mr. W. Heffernan,

Manager - Mr. R. Potter.

Aboriginal population 5, including 2 children.

Total pension payments to date £126.

Only one pensioner, [redacted] resides on this property. His pension is paid on a schedule forwarded to the Manager, who in turn hands the full amount to the pensioner. The pensioner fully maintains himself by purchasing rations and clothing from a store in the nearby township of Ti Tree. He is at present residing in a tent supplied by the Manager.

NEUTRAL JUNCTION

7 miles north east of Barrow Creek

Owner Manager - Mr. W. Petherick.

Accountant - Mr. D. Colsen

Aboriginal population 85, including 18 children.

At present, thirteen pensioners are being paid here. Two of these, [redacted] and [redacted] are temporarily in hospital in Alice Springs and the Accountant is forwarding their pensions in full to the Sister-in-Charge for their benefit. Pocket money on this property is being paid at the rate of £1 per week although the payment schedule provides for the payment of only 15/- per week. Separate trust accounts are maintained for each pensioner, the present balance held in trust at the E.S. & A. Bank, Alice Springs, being £1,359.

Rations at the value of £3 per week are supplied to each pensioner, the foodstuffs provided being, meat, flour, sugar, tea, rice and milk. Pensioners may purchase fresh fruit from the station store which also sells a variety of other food items, clothing, blankets, etc.

The majority of pensioners are at present accommodated in a fairly rough type of hut. The Management provided galvanized iron, nails and other building material at station expense and the erection was carried out by the aborigines themselves. A housing scheme for pensioners is now planned and, for this purpose, it is intended to draw on the trust account balance. Quotes have been obtained which indicate that the proposed huts will cost approximately £200 each.

WILLOWRA STATION

210 miles north west of Alice Springs.

Owner Manager - Mr. Edgar Parkinson.

Aboriginal population about 100, including 28 children.

Total pension payments to date £4,936.

Pensioners here number twelve in all, which includes two widow's pensioners. Due to an oversight, the Manager has never increased his pocket money payment above 10/- per week, but he has undertaken to increase this payment to 15/- per week, as shown on his payment schedule, forthwith. He is not in favour of any further increase in the pocket money because he considers the aborigines in his area to be fairly backward and he feels that any increased payment would be spent on non-essentials. At present he is supplying rations to the pensioners to an average cost of £3 per week each. In addition, supplementary rations are supplied periodically.

A group trust account is being maintained at the Commonwealth Trading Bank, Alice Springs, the present balance being £1,100.

Pensioners are at present housed in galvanized iron humpies which they have erected themselves. Four two roomed huts measuring 20' x 18' are now on order from Wride & Abley. The erected cost of these is expected to be at least £400 each. The Manager is dubious as to whether his pensioners are ready yet for permanent housing, but he is prepared to try the experiment. He states that he previously built a wood and iron hut for a pensioner but, after the roof was loosened in a storm, the iron was torn off by other natives and used to build humpies. The hut has now been abandoned. He pointed out that, as in most other areas, the aborigines here tend to vacate permanent buildings and the existing camp area whenever a death occurs.

ANNINGIE STATION

160 miles north west of Alice Springs

Owner - Mr. Tony Chisholm

Manager - Mr. Arthur Cawston

Aboriginal population about 100, including about 12 children

Total pension payments to date £7,146.

There are ten pensioners residing on this property at present. Two of these, [redacted] and [redacted] are non wards and it has been requested that they be paid direct in future.

At the request of the owner, pension payments are forwarded direct to the Manager of the Bank of New South Wales, Alice Springs, to be credited to Anningie Pensioners' Trust Account. The payment schedule and acquittances are forwarded direct to the Station Manager who arranges to pay £1 per week pocket money to each pensioner from station funds.

The Manager states that he issues basic rations to the value of about 35/- per week to each pensioner. In addition they are at liberty to come to him for supplementary rations as and when required, which he issues to them free from the station store. They also receive a free issue of clothing. All payments and issues to pensioners are in the first instance a debit against station funds which are consequently re-imbursed by a withdrawal from the Pensioner Trust Account. The Manager has no record of the trust account balance which is controlled by the owner who is mainly resident on another of his properties at Tumut, New South Wales. He will now be contacted to ascertain how his trust account balance stands.

A station store is operated, but the Manager states that pensioners seldom spend their pocket money here as all their requirements are issued to them. He suggests that the pocket is either used for gambling or for bartering within the native camp.

All pensioners, as well as a great majority of other aborigines on the property, are comfortably housed in substantial galvanized iron huts. In the past six months, twelve huts have been erected, some of which are occupied by workers and others by pensioners. The Manager is not certain of the erected cost of these huts, the details of which are known to the owner. A proportion of the cost of erection was borne by the Pensioner Trust Account.

TI TREE STATION

120 miles north of Alice Springs

Owner Manager - Mr. W. Heffernan

Total pension payments to date £8,240

The owner here is very aged and decrepit. He claimed that he was unable to supply any information about the number of aborigines on his property or the details of pensioners. He stated that his wife handled all pension payments, but she was indisposed and could not be interviewed. Payment schedules reveal that ten pensioners are being paid on this property and the pocket money component has been fixed at £1 per week.

An old pensioner who was interviewed confirmed that he was receiving this amount in two payments of 10/- each per week. He also seemed satisfied with the rations supplied to him.

No huts have been erected on this property for aborigines and the camp is, in fact, something of a disgrace. The District Welfare Officer in Alice Springs reports that the Manager's wife called on him some time ago and stated that she intended to purchase tents for pensioners from moneys held in trust. However, she supplied no particulars of the amount which she was holding.

Further enquiries will be necessary to determine what rations are issued, how much is held in trust, and what plans have been formulated for the future.

AILERON STATION

100 miles north of Alice Springs

Owner Manager - Mr. Albey Colson

Aboriginal population 100, including 36 children

Eleven pensions are being paid here. The pocket money rate has been fixed at £1 per week. Weekly rations to the Welfare maintenance scale of 36/- are issued. In addition, clothing, blankets, camp sheets, tent-flies, etc., are purchased from pension moneys and issued to pensioners.

The Manager is maintaining a trust account at the A. & N.Z. Bank, Alice Springs, having a present balance of £400. However, he states that he has been paying Welfare maintenance and Child Endowment into this account in addition to pensions. Henceforth, he has agreed to retain this account solely as a Pensioners' Trust Account and he will regard the present balance as belonging to his pensioners. He considered this to be a reasonable procedure as maintenance and endowment payments are not large enough to permit any balance to build up after rations have been provided. No record is kept of the balance due to individuals.

No huts have been erected to date from pension moneys, although several pre-existing huts are occupied by pensioners. However, the Manager is willing to embark on a housing programme where sufficient funds are available. He feels that the present balance in trust will be largely depleted by the purchase of winter clothing and additional blankets.

No store has been set up on the station property, but pensioners may spend their pocket money in a store in the nearby township of Aileron. In addition, the Lutheran Church has an Evangelist with a van who calls approximately each six weeks to sell extra foodstuffs, clothing etc. The Manager states that there is very little movement of pensioners to or from his property.

NAPPERBY STATION

130 miles north west of Alice Springs

Owner - Mr. Sargood, Adelaide

Manager - Mr. Ron Shepherd

Aboriginal population over 100

Total pension payments to date £11,124

Twelve pensions are being paid on this property. Payments are split up in the following proportions:-

Pocket money	£2. 0. 0. per week
Rations and clothes	£1.14. 6. per week
Rent	17. 0. per week
Held in trust	18. 6. per week on average

The trust account balance currently stands at £233. A separate record is kept of the amount held on behalf of each pensioner. As soon as pension payments are received, they are paid in full to the trust account. Pocket money and rations are financed from station funds and a debit is raised quarterly against the trust account to re-imburse the station for meeting the initial costs. It is noted that the pocket money payment here is in excess of the scheduled amount of 15/- per week. A well stocked station store provides an outlet for the expenditure of this money.

Ten huts have been erected for pensioners at station expense. The pensioners are all housed in these huts and are charged 17/- per week rent for their use. Separate toilets for males and females have been constructed in addition to separate shower blocks. A community kitchen has been erected for the use of the aborigine camp as a whole, but is not at present being utilised. The conditions in the camp here appear to be eminently satisfactory.

BOND SPRINGS

14 miles north of Alice Springs

Owner Mr. Bruce Chisholm, New South Wales

Manager - Mr. Allan Coleshaw

Aboriginal population about 15, including 5 children

Total pension payments to date £4,155.

Five pensioners reside on this property. The Manager has opened five separate cheque accounts at the Bank of New South Wales, Alice Springs on behalf of these pensioners. He acts as their trustee for banking purposes. Each pension pay day he has their pensions credited to their individual accounts less a deduction of £28.10. 0 per fortnight which he makes from the Department's bulk pension cheque to cover the cost of rations supplied. Pensioners receive £2 per fortnight each as spending money and a balance of about £3 per fortnight each is allowed accumulate in their cheque accounts. Their cheque books were sighted and it was noted that their balances range from £20 to £50.

The station maintains a well equipped store which sells a wide variety of goods and is patronised by the pensioners.

A house has been built for a pensioner couple out of pension funds. Other pensioners are living in station huts, although the Manager states that as a rule they prefer to camp out in the open. Water is laid on to the camp and a shower has already been provided. In addition, a laundry has been erected. The Manager has recently purchased a number of beds and mattresses from pension funds.

He reports that there is little movement of pensioners to or from his property.

(F. J. McMillan)
Special Magistrate

13/5/64