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The University of Sydney
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(Alan T. Duncan)
Staff Tutor,
Aboriginal Adult Education.
A SURVEY OF THE EDUCATION

OF

ABORIGINES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

With Particular Reference to its Historical Context

Volume I

Alan T. Duncan, B.A.

A thesis submitted to
The University of Sydney
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the pass degree of
Master of Education

1969
ABSTRACT

This thesis surveys the pattern of Aboriginal-white relationships in New South Wales from the time of the arrival of the First Fleet to the present day. Particular attention is paid to the various attempts by the Euro-Australians to provide educational opportunities for the indigenous inhabitants. It is shown that early attempts to educate and "civilize" the Aborigines were singularly unsuccessful. These attempts were not pursued with a great deal of vigour and were met with opposition and apathy on the part of Aborigines.

The culture clash which followed the establishment of a British colony in New South Wales and which deprived the Aborigines of their land and economic independence caused the Aborigines to become completely dependent on the Euro-Australian population. The failure of the Port Phillip Protectorate led to a long period of neglect and callous disregard of the deteriorating Aboriginal situation. When the Government eventually established the Aborigines Protection Board in 1883 it was firmly believed that the Aboriginal race was dying out and that
the need for the Board would quickly diminish. Although the number of full-blood Aborigines continued to decline, the number of part-Aborigines increased quite rapidly and the Board reluctantly accepted responsibility for their protection.

Aboriginal and part-Aboriginal children were refused admission to most public schools, so special Aboriginal schools were established on Aboriginal reserves. It was erroneously assumed that Aborigines were innately inferior as a race and that they were incapable of adapting to European civilization. For almost fifty years Aborigines were taught by untrained teachers who used a special syllabus designed to provide instruction as far as the normal third grade primary school level.

It is only in recent years that the Department of Education has accepted responsibility for the education of children of Aboriginal descent in New South Wales. Despite considerable improvements in the standards achieved by Aboriginal children, the educational attainments of the majority are still far below the average achieved by school pupils generally. Especially in rural areas, Aboriginal pupils often display a lack
of interest and negative attitudes towards school and are often absent from school. There is considerable retardation in the basic subjects and a general age-grade retardation when compared with the total school population. Because of the limited educational qualifications achieved by the majority of Aboriginal pupils when they leave school, their employment opportunities are necessarily restricted and their present depressed socio-economic situation is being perpetuated.
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td>1 - 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEFINITIONS AND THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitions - Employment Problem - Occupational Distribution - Educational Levels of Aboriginal Children.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>One</strong></td>
<td>36 - 48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIA</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aborigines in the days before culture contact - demography - Aboriginal culture - close relationship between economic, social and spiritual life of the community. Aboriginal education before European settlement.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Two</strong></td>
<td>49 - 87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>THE EARLY GOVERNORS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phillip's initial contacts, early culture clashes - breakdown of traditional pattern of Aboriginal culture - spread of European settlement - frontier clashes over dwindling food supply - failure of early attempts to &quot;civilize&quot; Aborigines.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macquarie's plans for assimilation and Aboriginal education, the Native Institution - attempts to establish Aboriginal industries - annual &quot;Feast&quot; at Parramatta - clashes continue - plans for large Aboriginal Reserve.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE EXPANSION OF SETTLEMENT
1822-1838

Brisbane's attitudes - decline of Native Institution - increasing friction on frontiers of settlement - martial law - expeditions against Aborigines - beginning of Missionary endeavour - Darling's attempts to subdue Aborigines - survey by Richard Sadleir - new plans for a Native Institution - Colonial Office policy - Bourke's appointment - work of C.M.S. at Wellington Valley - Humanitarian Movement in Great Britain - Port Phillip Settlement - the Batman Treaty repudiated by Bourke - missionary endeavour at Port Phillip under Langhorne - further work at Wellington Valley - distribution of blankets - culture clash continues.

GOVERNOR GIPPS AND THE PORT PHILLIP PROTECTORATE

The arrival of Gipps - "land wars" continue - Myall Creek Massacre - plan for Port Phillip Protectorate - Dredge and Le Souef in Goulburn River District - Sievewright at Geelong - Parker on the Loddon - Thomas around Melbourne - the Protectors and education - the Merri Creek School - Wesleyan Mission at Buntingdale - failure of the Missionary endeavour and of the Protectorate - Colonial Office proposals - Select Committees of Legislative Council in New South Wales, 1845 and 1849 - problems at
Wellington Valley - figures showing expenditure on Aborigines 1838 to 1850 - the abolition of the Protectorate - work of Crown Land Commissioners - race relations deteriorate.

### Five

**THE BEGINNING OF THE PROTECTION ERA 1856-1910**

Chapter Six

THE ABORIGINAL PROTECTION BOARD
1910-1939

Cootamundra Girls’ Home established - appointment of Home Finder and Inspectors of Aborigines - home for boys established - use of coercion to remove children to training homes - further amendments to Protection Act - antagonism of Aborigines against field staff of A.P.B. - growing public criticism of "Protection" policies.

Education policy of Protection Board - introduction of 1916 syllabus for Aboriginal Schools - standards examined - the Drummond minute - details of new syllabus introduced in 1938 - Select Committee and Public Service Board enquiry into administration of Protection Board - report and recommendation of P.S.B. - 1940 Protection Act - Protection Board abolished and Department of Education accepts responsibility for Aboriginal education in N.S.W.

Chapter Seven

THE POLICY OF AS SIMILATION
1940-1968

Importance of education in new Assimilation policy - difficulties faced by Education Department in implementing new policy - restrictive legislation retained - Aborigines encouraged to enrol at Public schools but meet with local opposition in many country towns - Certificates of Exemption introduced - enrolments at Public schools increase - Aboriginal schools staffed by trained teachers - Aboriginal children enter High Schools in increasing numbers -

Eight

THE ABORIGINAL CHILD IN THE SCHOOL 429 - 532

Aboriginal schools in 1939 - trained teachers gradually appointed - difficulties faced by teachers - problem of dual control on Aboriginal Stations - replies to questionnaire by Teachers' Federation 1961 - attitudes of teachers in Aboriginal schools - improvements in educational attainments - age-grade survey of pupils in Aboriginal schools 1955-1964 - considerable retardation revealed - reasons for retardation suggested in replies to questionnaire sent to Principals of Aboriginal schools 1964 - these reasons examined. (pp. 429 - 465)

Attendance: Absenteeism a problem in both Aboriginal and public schools. (pp. 466 - 469)

Reading Disabilities: Retardation in reading and in all basic subjects - attainments of Aboriginal pupils in Public schools examined. (pp. 470 - 487)

Poor Home Conditions: Overcrowding in Aboriginal homes - lack of educational material and study facilities. (pp. 487 - 491)

Lack of Interest: Included in later section on attitude. (p. 491)
### Lack of Intelligence: Range of I.Q's in Aboriginal schools
- survey of work on Aboriginal intelligence
  - Porteus, Coady, and Craig
  - Beckenham
  - UNESCO statement on race
  - McElwain and Queensland Test results. (pp 492 - 511)

### Poor attitude and lack of interest:
- Studies in attitudes of parents and pupils by Schonell and Huntsman
- Interviews conducted with Aborigines 1960-1969
- Attitudes of Aborigines towards education
- Age-grade distribution of Aboriginal pupils 1968-1969
- Considerable retardation still apparent
- Enrichment programme suggested. (pp 512 - 532)

## Nine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS</th>
<th>533 - 603</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>604 - 634</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDICES</td>
<td>635 - 644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Employment Survey, October 1964, Murrin Bridge Aboriginal Station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Population by Occupation, Percentage Distribution - Total N.S.W. and Aborigines N.S.W., 30th June, 1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Population by Occupation, Percentage Distribution (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) - Australia, 30th June, 1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>Population by Level of Educational Attainment, Number and Percentage Distribution - Aborigines in N.S.W. and Total N.S.W., 1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Aboriginal Secondary Pupils, 1964 and 1966 Surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>Crown Land Revenue and Expenditure on Aborigines, 1845-1847</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>Expenditure on Aborigines in the Port Phillip District, 1838-1850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>Grants to Aboriginal Missions (other than Port Phillip) 1838-1850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX</td>
<td>Total Expenditure on Aborigines, 1838-1850</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Number | Description | Page
--- | --- | ---
X | Return of Blankets, 1857-1861 | 213
XI | Aboriginal Children Receiving Instruction, by District, 1891 | 240 - 242
XII | Aboriginal Children Receiving Instruction, 1887-1912 | 254
XIII | Number of Aborigines and Expenditure by the Aborigines Protection Board, 1883-1910 | 281 - 282
XIV | Aboriginal Children Receiving Instruction, 1914 | 315
XV | Aboriginal Children Receiving Instruction, 1915 | 316
XVI | Time Allocation for Subjects - Public Schools and Aboriginal Schools, N.S.W., 1938 | 339
XVII | Number of Aborigines and Expenditure by Aborigines Protection Board, 1911-1940 | 351 - 352
XVIII | Exemption Certificates Issued to Aborigines, 1945-1962 | 397
XIX | Aboriginal Stations and Reserves, 1940 | 430 - 431
XX | Distribution of Pupils in N.S.W. Aboriginal Schools, 1955-1964 | 453
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>XXI</td>
<td>Comparison of Age Grade Distribution N.S.W. - Aboriginal Schools and Public Schools, 1955-1964</td>
<td>455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXII</td>
<td>New South Wales Aboriginal and Public Schools - Age Differences in Grades, 1955-1964</td>
<td>458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXIII</td>
<td>Basis for Retention in Grade</td>
<td>463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXIV</td>
<td>Aboriginal Schools, 1964 - Basis for Promotion to Higher Grade</td>
<td>465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXV</td>
<td>School Attainments of Aboriginal Pupils, 1955 and 1957</td>
<td>473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXVI</td>
<td>Teachers' Ratings of Aboriginal Pupils, 1968</td>
<td>483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXVII</td>
<td>Aboriginal Pupils in Secondary Classes - Level of Instruction, Percentage Distribution</td>
<td>485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXVIII</td>
<td>Age Grade Distribution, Aboriginal Pupils, 1968-1969 and N.S.W. Public Schools, 1968</td>
<td>525</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Illustration</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Map showing Aboriginal Language Groups of South Eastern Australia</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proclamation by Governor Bourke, 26th August, 1835</td>
<td>116a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notices in New South Wales Government Gazette, 1835 and 1837</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of Expenditure on Aborigines, N.S.W., 1847</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petition regarding sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Aborigines, 1867</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aborigines' Protection Association circular (about 1880)</td>
<td>227a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Department circular on Aboriginal Protection, 1883</td>
<td>230a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photograph: Teacher and School Children; House for Aborigines, Grafton, 1900</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photograph: Girls' School, Cumeroogunga, 1900</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photograph: Boys' School, Cumeroogunga, 1900</td>
<td>262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses of Instruction for Aborigines' Schools, 1938</td>
<td>341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF ATTACHMENTS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Application for Exemption Certificate, Aborigines Protection Act, 1909-1943; Form 14</strong></td>
<td>Page 395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composite Graph showing Age Grade Retardation, Aboriginal Schools, 1955-1964, Line of Trend for all Grades</td>
<td>Page 460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home on Aboriginal Reserve, Walgett, 1969</td>
<td>Page 488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Four Census - Occupational Division - Classification Maori and non-Maori - Percentages - Actively Engaged Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>Tabulation of Aboriginal Population, N.S.W., June 30th, 1966: Education - Age - Sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>Proclamation by Governor Macquarie, 1815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five</td>
<td>Batman Treaty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six</td>
<td>Duties of Protector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>Proposed Plan of Examination of Children at Assay Aboriginal Mission, 1846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eight</td>
<td>Graphs showing Age Grade Retardation, Aboriginal Schools, 1955-1964; Line of Trend for each grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten</td>
<td>Age Grade Questionnaire for Aboriginal Schools, 1964</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### LIST OF APPENDICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Page Reference</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1956 Census - Occupational Division - Classification Maori and non-Maoris - Percentages - Actively Engaged Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1961 Census - Occupational Division - Classification Maori and non-Maoris - Percentages - Actively Engaged Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Tabulations of Aboriginal Population, N.S.W., 30th June, 1966: Education - Age - Sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>Proclamation by Governor Macquarie, 1816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>Batman Treaty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>Duties of Protectors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>Proposed Plan of Examination of Children at Apsley Aboriginal Mission, 1846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eight</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>Graphs showing Age Grade Retardation, Aboriginal Schools, 1955-1964; Line of Trend for each grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>Age Grade Questionnaire for Aboriginal Schools, 1964</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

DEFINITIONS AND THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

Aborigines in New South Wales comprise an educationally, economically and socially disadvantaged minority in the community. The majority of Aborigines live in depressed socio-economic conditions on Aboriginal Stations or Reserves, or in fringe settlements on the outskirts of country towns. Although the Aboriginal population in urban areas is increasing, most of the urban Aborigines live in sub-standard, overcrowded dwellings in the inner suburbs of the Sydney Metropolitan area.

In this thesis, Aborigines are defined as those people who are descended from the Aboriginal natives of Australia and who identify themselves as Aborigines. "Aboriginal" is usually used adjectively in this same sense. "Identification" is the paramount aspect of this definition, which is not concerned with the degree of Aboriginal blood or the amount of skin pigmentation. The non-Aboriginal population is usually referred to herein as Euro-Australian rather than European: this is to avoid the confusion which could arise because of the frequent use of the term "European" in
everyday discussion to describe recent immigrants to Australia. "Euro-Australian", therefore, refers to all non-Aboriginal Australians who are, in the majority of cases, from Europe or descended from people who have come to Australia from Europe since 1788. The terms "blacks" and "whites" have emotional connotations, and are only used when quoted from source material or to illustrate public opinion in a particular period.

"Education" is used in two senses. It is used in the narrower sense to describe formal schooling; it is also used in a much broader sense of "preparation for full participation in community citizenship". In the Statement of Guiding Aims and Underlying Principles in the N.S.W. Department of Education's Curriculum for Primary Schools, it is stated: "The modern school cannot live apart from its community. The work of the school will, in many of its aspects, have full meaning for the child only when it is related to the life and work of the community". It will become apparent, during the course of this thesis, that the education of Aboriginal children in the past was seldom related to the life and work of the Aboriginal community, but usually served at best only to perpetuate

and reinforce their inferior socio-economic status in the general community.

Today, the vast majority of Aborigines are employed as seasonal workers or unskilled farm labourers in rural areas, or as process workers or labourers in industry. A survey of a cross-section of rural and country town part-Aboriginal households in N.S.W., conducted in 1965 under the direction of C.D. Rowley, ¹ showed that only 60 per cent of males over fifteen were in the work force. Thirteen per cent were on invalid or old-age pensions, and "20 per cent of those neither in schools nor on pensions were unemployed". ²

During the past five years the writer has conducted a number of surveys of Aboriginal employment in various parts of the state. Although there are seasonal variations, and the employment situation varies in different areas, certain generalisations can be made. It is usually found that about 30 per cent of the Aboriginal adult male population are casual or seasonal labourers and have varying periods of unemployment. About 60 per cent are employed on farms or properties as station hands, farm


² ibid.
workers or shearers, or work as labourers or mill hands in nearby country towns. A few are drivers, fettlers or linesmen, or work as labourers for the Department of Main Roads or for the Water and Irrigation Commission.

One of the worst areas is the far South Coast, where almost all the Aborigines are employed as casual seasonal labourers during the bean or pea-picking season, and are unemployed for a considerable period during the year.¹ Another "problem" area is Wilcannia, situated about 110 miles north-east of Broken Hill: a survey conducted by the writer at Wilcannia early in 1969 showed that unemployment amongst Aborigines was as high as 90 per cent, with little variation throughout the year.²

Employment of Aboriginal girls, except as domestic servants, has always been a problem in many rural areas. Although this is related to the shortage of employment for females generally in many country towns, Aboriginal girls in particular find serious difficulties in obtaining employment, partly because their parents lack "contacts"

¹ Surveys carried out by the writer in 1965, 1967 and 1968.
with local employers. In such towns, possible staff vacancies are usually discussed amongst friends at the local R.S.L. Club or over a game of golf. Thus, it is much easier for the daughter of a local farmer or grazier to obtain work, because her father has learned of a possible vacancy in the bank or in a local store, long before the vacancy occurs. Aboriginal parents, who usually lack such social contacts, are unable to help their daughters find suitable employment where the availability of female labour exceeds the demand. In many country towns also, prejudice against Aborigines is still quite noticeable, and shopkeepers do not employ Aboriginal girls in case they lose some of their customers.¹ This attitude is gradually breaking down, and in recent years a few young girls have been employed as shop assistants or as clerical workers. The vast majority, however, still find that the only employment available is as domestic servants, the traditional role of female Aborigines for many years.

There are still no Aboriginal doctors or scientists, no lawyers or engineers, no leaders in commerce or industry. Except for an occasional school teacher, trained nurse or pastor, Aborigines are not to be found in the professions; ¹ A number of shopkeepers have stated this in interviews with the writer.
and in rural areas Aborigines are rarely to be found as skilled tradesmen or as clerical workers.

One of the many employment surveys carried out under the direction of the writer was at the Murrin Bridge Aboriginal Station, near Lake Cargelligo in western New South Wales. At the time of the survey in October, 1964, there were 261 residents on the Station, but of these, some 137 were under the age of sixteen. There were also five men and three women over the age of sixty. The remaining 116 could be considered as the potential work force, but many of the married women were fully occupied on home duties with their large families. It was significant, however, that of the 53 women aged between 16 and 60, only four were in regular employment as waitresses or domestics, and a further two were employed on a semi-permanent basis in the same types of work. It was reported that one girl had left the station to undertake training as a nurse. There was some doubt, however, as to this girl's qualifications for nursing, and it is possible that she was employed as a nursing aide.

Of the 63 men in the work force, 18 (29.5%) were in permanent employment, 19 (30.2%) were in semi-permanent
TABLE I
EMPLOYMENT SURVEY, OCTOBER, 1964
MURRIN BRIDGE ABORIGINAL STATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Over 45</th>
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<th>21-30</th>
<th>16-20</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Permanent Employment (18)</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm Workers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisory</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em><em>Semi Permanent</em> (19)</em>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm Workers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supervisory</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td><strong>Casual (or Unemployed) (26)</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Farm Workers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisory</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals:</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>63</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Mainly employed away from home and returning to the Station for weekends only.
employment, and 26 (41.3%) were in casual work or were unemployed. It may be stated that the bulk of the casual workers were farmhands under the age of 21. The distribution of the work force showing the type of work related to age groupings is shown in Table I.

The employment pattern at Murrin Bridge may be taken as typical of many isolated Aboriginal Stations and Reserves \(^1\) in New South Wales. There are, of course, many variations.

At Woodenbong and on a number of Stations on the North Coast, many Aborigines are permanently employed in local timber mills, but it has been found that most youths under 21 are engaged in casual farm work or are unemployed. At Baryulgil, near Grafton, many Aborigines are employed in the local asbestos mine; whilst at Cabbage Tree Island, the majority of adult males work as cane cutters during the sugar cane season, which lasts from October to March, and are often unemployed during the rest of the year.

The employment problems in such places as Wilcannia and the far South Coast have already been mentioned. In a number of other areas, mechanisation in farming and in

\(^1\) For many years Aboriginal Stations were under the control of a resident manager, whilst Aboriginal Reserves were supervised by the local Police or a local school teacher who did not live on the Reserve.
the timber industry has led to a worsening of the employment situation. It has also accelerated the drift of Aboriginal youths to the city and to other urban areas in search of employment. The majority of the youths who have recently settled in the inner city area in Sydney are over seventeen years of age, and have, therefore, spent two or three years at least after leaving school as casual or seasonal labourers, and have already acquired established patterns of periodical unemployment. Very few have basic qualifications: therefore, they have been unable to obtain employment except as labourers or process workers.

A survey, conducted in April, 1969, of youths connected with the four teams in the Redfern All Blacks (Aboriginal) Football Team, disclosed that about 35 per cent were currently unemployed and about 60 per cent gained a living as unskilled labourers or process workers. In discussions with those who were unemployed, it was found that quite a number of them had been out of work for a considerable period of time. They freely stated that they were not making any determined effort to find work. Lacking the knowledge and skills necessary to enable them to compete successfully in an industrialised society, they appeared to have given up hope and to have become apathetic about their future.
The Department of Labour and National Service carried out a survey of all persons of Aboriginal descent registered for employment with the Commonwealth Employment Service in New South Wales on 16th February, 1966. The Regional Director of the Department of Labour and National Service, Mr. R.A. Smee, reported on this survey at a Conference held at Monash University in May, 1966. Of the 442 people registered for employment, 337 were males and 105 were females. Of these, 87 had been registered for less than two weeks; 95 for two weeks to one month; 130 for one to three months; 75 for three to six months; and 55 for six months or more. Discussing the nature of previous employment for these applicants, Smee stated that 26 of the 442 had not been employed previously, and there was no such information for three more of the applicants. Of the rest, 323 had been employed mainly in jobs of a seasonal or temporary nature, and of short duration; and only 90 (or about 28 per cent) of those registered had been in more permanent jobs.

1 Aboriginal informants have stated that February is a "good" month for employment because of the availability of casual work and crop picking.


3 ibid., p. 81.

4 ibid., p. 80.
The results of the various surveys which have been carried out have now been confirmed in figures recently published by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics. These figures are based on the Census undertaken on the 30th June, 1966, when some 14,219 Aborigines (7,343 males and 6,876 females) were enumerated for New South Wales. It must be pointed out that the Census included people who described themselves as 50 per cent or more Aboriginal, or simply as Aboriginal. It estimated that this represents about one half of the total Aboriginal population in N.S.W. if all those who are less than 50 per cent Aboriginal, but who identify themselves as Aborigines, are included.

The figures released by the Census Bureau indicate that 3,528 Aborigines were included in the work force, of whom 553 (or nearly 16 per cent) were currently unemployed at the time of the census, and 33 were unpaid helpers. Only 39 Aborigines were classified as professional, technical or related workers: these comprised 13 nurses, five teachers,

2 Ibid., pp. 3-4
3 Officials of N.S.W. Aborigines' Welfare Board, in personal discussions with the writer.
ten clergymen, three entertainers or artists and eight draftsmen, technicians or related workers. Eleven Aborigines were classified as administrative, executive or managerial workers, and all but one of these were included as "employers, workers on their own account, directors or managers".\(^1\) It is known, through personal contact, that the majority of these were self-employed. 49 Aborigines were classified as clerical workers, and a further 19 as shopkeepers, salesmen, shop assistants or related workers.

There were 932 Aborigines engaged in rural industry,\(^2\) and of these 24 were classified as farmers or farm managers; 52 as shearers; and almost all of the other 856 as station hands or farm labourers. There were 84 timber getters, forestry workers, hunters or trappers; and 51 miners, quarrymen or related workers. These could also be considered as rural workers.

There were 108 Aborigines engaged in transport or communications, and 1,565 who were classified as craftsmen, production process workers or labourers. Over one-third of these were in the building and construction industry. Of the 300 Aborigines employed as service, sport or recreation workers, 182 were female domestic servants,

\(^1\) ibid., p.17.
\(^2\) ibid.
housekeepers, cooks or maids. From these figures it can be seen that, at the time of the Census, the vast majority of the Aboriginal work force were engaged as production process workers or labourers in industry, or as farm labourers in rural areas. There is no evidence to indicate that any significant change has taken place since 1966.

The following table (Table II) has been constructed from the raw data supplied in the Census figures on the Aboriginal population. The writer has converted this raw data to a percentage distribution of population by occupational groups so that it can be compared with the percentage distribution by occupational groups of the total work force in New South Wales. Figures for the total New South Wales population were obtained from Census Bulletin 1.1 *Summary of Population, New South Wales*, and include all persons classified as Aborigines. Since the relative proportion of the Aboriginal work force (3,528) in the total of N.S.W. work force (1,814,152) is very small, the inclusion of the Aboriginal figures within the total figure for the state is not likely to have a significant influence on the overall pattern: it, therefore, seems quite legitimate to compare the respective patterns of distribution amongst occupational

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categories found in the Aboriginal Sector and the total work force as has been done in Table II. This is confirmed by Table III, which shows the percentage distribution of the population, by occupational groups, for Aborigines and for the total population, excluding Aborigines, for the whole of Australia.

The most significant difference between the distribution of the Aboriginal work force in N.S.W., and in Australia as a whole, is the larger proportion of urban Aboriginal workers in N.S.W. and the consequently smaller numbers in rural industry. The higher percentage of Aborigines engaged in service industries in Australia generally than in New South Wales is due to the large number of female domestics in other states, especially in Western Australia and the Northern Territory.¹

The other variation worthy of comment is the higher overall proportion of "professional, technical and related workers" noted in the Australian figure for Aborigines. This is due to the relatively large number of painters and creative artists (55) in the Northern Territory and the

TABLE II

POPULATION BY OCCUPATION
PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION
TOTAL N.S.W. AND ABORIGINES N.S.W.

Census 30th June, 1966

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Population N.S.W.*</th>
<th>Percentage of Persons 50 per cent or more Aboriginal N.S.W.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Technical &amp; related workers</td>
<td>9.20</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative, executive &amp; managerial workers</td>
<td>6.37</td>
<td>0.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical Workers</td>
<td>15.28</td>
<td>1.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Workers</td>
<td>7.66</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers, fishermen, hunters timber getters and related workers</td>
<td>7.78</td>
<td>26.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miners, quarrymen and related workers</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>1.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers in transport and communication occupations</td>
<td>6.19</td>
<td>3.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsmen, production-process workers &amp; labourers, n.e.i.36.12</td>
<td>44.36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service, sport and recreation workers</td>
<td>7.59</td>
<td>8.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of armed services</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>0.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation inadequately described or not stated</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>12.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## TABLE III

### POPULATION BY OCCUPATION PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION

**AUSTRALIA**

Census 30th June, 1966

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Population Exclusive of Persons 50 per cent or more Aboriginal</th>
<th>Percentage of Persons 50 per cent or more Aboriginal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional, technical &amp; related workers</td>
<td>9.29</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative, executive &amp; managerial workers</td>
<td>6.28</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical workers</td>
<td>14.72</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Workers:</td>
<td>7.74</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers, fishermen, hunters, timber getters and related workers</td>
<td>9.63</td>
<td>37.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miners, quarrymen and related workers</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>2.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers in transport and communication occupations</td>
<td>6.06</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsmen, production-process workers &amp; labourers, n.e.i.</td>
<td>35.48</td>
<td>30.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service, sport and recreation workers</td>
<td>7.42</td>
<td>19.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of armed services</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation inadequately described or not stated</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>5.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 100.00 100.00

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* Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, Canberra: The Aboriginal Population of Australia; Summary of Characteristics, part of Table 20, p.31.
number of female teachers (31) in Queensland. It is also worth noting that few of these teachers had matriculated.

Both tables clearly indicate the disparity which exists between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal workers in Australia. The New South Wales figures show that, whereas some 38.51 per cent of the general work force may be classified as "white-collar workers", only 3.34 per cent of Aborigines may be so regarded.

These tables provide an interesting comparison with the percentage distribution by occupational groups of Maoris and non-Maoris in New Zealand. In 1961, the Department of Maori Affairs published a report by Mr. J.K. Hunn, Deputy Chairman of the Public Service Commission, on the Maori Affairs Department and on the place of Maoris in New Zealand Society. The Hunn Report has been used as the basis for the development of far-reaching programmes designed to improve the socio-economic

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1 ibid., p.17
2 ibid., p.13
3 "White-Collar Workers" is the term generally used to describe people who are engaged in professional, administrative, clerical or sales occupation, i.e. the first four categories listed in Tables I and II.
status of Maoris. The section of the report on employment examined the occupational distribution of Maoris and non-Maoris found in the 1956 Census in New Zealand. The relevant section of this table is given in Appendix I. It should be noted that no distinction is made in this case between the managerial and clerical categories. The distinction was made, however, in the 1961 New Zealand Census, making these figures directly comparable with the Australian census figures.

The percentage distribution of Maoris and non-Maoris in the New Zealand work force reported in the 1961 Census is shown in Appendix II. It should be noted that in the 1936 Census in New Zealand, only 2.67 per cent of the Maori work force were included in the categories of professional, technical, managerial, administrative, clerical and related workers:¹ this figure corresponds closely to the 1966 figure of 2.80 per cent for New South Wales Aboriginal workers in the same categories.² The 1956 and 1961 figures for Maoris in these categories³ rose to 7.75 and 2.50 per cent respectively. This

¹ ibid., p.29. (Table showing Occupational Distribution 1936 and 1956.)
² This figure does not include sales workers.
³ Vide Appendix I and Appendix II.
was a significant increase over the 1936 figures, although the percentages were still far below the comparable figures for the non-Maori population.

The most recently published survey on Aboriginal employment was issued by the Department of Labour and National Service in May, 1969.\(^1\) This survey was carried out on all Aborigines registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service on 28th June, 1968. The report indicated that the survey did not include Aborigines who were unemployed but who had not applied to the Employment Service, and also pointed out that the survey was undertaken at a time "when substantial numbers of Aborigines in New South Wales were employed in drought relief work". At the time of the survey 1,505 Aborigines were registered for employment. Of the males 338 (33 per cent) were registered for farm, pastoral or other rural work, and 616 (60 per cent) were registered for unskilled manual work. Sixty-nine (less than 7 per cent) were registered for semi-skilled work and only two were registered as skilled workers. There were no males registered for professional, semi-professional or clerical work.\(^2\)


\(^2\) ibid., p.6.
Of the females, \(^1\) 243 (54 per cent) were registered as private domestics, 53 (19 per cent) were seeking semi-skilled manual work and 25 (12 per cent) were registered for farm, pastoral or other rural work. Twenty were registered for clerical work, 17 of whom were juniors, and three juniors were also registered for semi-professional work.\(^2\) Although this survey was conducted for the whole of Australia, it is important to note that 525 or 34.8 per cent of the 1,505 Aborigines registered were from New South Wales.\(^3\)

Of the 525 in the New South Wales survey, only 49 were from the metropolitan area, and all the rest were from country centres.\(^4\) An analysis was made of the average duration of known previous jobs for the 434 New South Wales Aborigines for whom this information was available. It was found that this average was less than six months for 180 of the Aborigines concerned, between six months and eleven months for 115 and twelve months or more for 139 of them.\(^5\) Since there were only 55 juniors amongst the 180 whose previous jobs had averaged less than

\(^1\) ibid., p.7.
\(^2\) ibid., pp.6-7.
\(^3\) ibid., p.3.
\(^4\) ibid., p.3.
\(^5\) ibid., p.9.
seven months, this suggests that a relatively high proportion of those who registered had an unstable job history.

It is usually agreed that people who obtain employment as "white-collar" workers require a higher standard of formal education than those who are employed as tradesmen or labourers. An examination of the tables relating to the Aboriginal work force clearly indicates that a large majority is engaged in occupations which do not require a high level of education. It would appear, therefore, that the level of educational attainments of Aborigines is not as high as that of the general population.

Of the 525 in the N.S.W. survey, there were ten adults and 21 juniors who had more than eight years of schooling;\(^1\) i.e., less than six per cent had proceeded beyond second year at high school. The relatively low educational attainments of Aborigines are a common factor in all Aboriginal employment surveys, and the high correlation between employment status and educational attainment cannot be ignored.

\(^1\) ibid., p.8.
The 1966 Census figures provide certain raw data concerning educational attainments of Aborigines. These have been used to obtain percentages which can be compared with the total New South Wales percentage distribution of level of educational attainment. This is shown in Table IV. Also included in Table IV is the number and percentage distribution of the total New South Wales population by level of educational attainment.

It must be pointed out that the proportion under the age of 15 years in the Aboriginal population of New South Wales (48.32 per cent)\(^1\) is far greater than the proportion in the New South Wales population generally (28.2 per cent).\(^2\)

Although this does account for some of the difference between the two sets of figures, the disparity between the educational levels achieved by Aborigines and those achieved by the rest of the population is quite evident.\(^3\)

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3. This will be examined in detail later in this thesis.
TABLE IV
POPULATION BY LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION
ABORIGINES IN N.S.W. AND TOTAL N.S.W., 1966

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest level of Education Attained</th>
<th>Aborigines N.S.W.</th>
<th>Total N.S.W.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>% Distr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Degree or Tertiary Qualifications</td>
<td>4*</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matriculation or higher</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>3.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended or attending Secondary school</td>
<td>3,405</td>
<td>23.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended or attending Primary school</td>
<td>6,126</td>
<td>43.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No education, including under 5 years of age</td>
<td>3,325</td>
<td>23.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No information</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>5.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>14,219</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Special Note on Table IV

The figure of 127 Aborigines with the Matriculation of higher standard of education cannot be accepted as realistic. The question has been discussed with officers of the Bureau of Census and Statistics and is now being investigated. There is a good deal of evidence (as seen in Chapters V, VI and VII of this thesis) which throws serious doubt on the figure. One piece of evidence, for example, is that between 1946 and 1966, 15 Aboriginal bursars sat for the Leaving Certificate and eleven of these were successful. From personal knowledge, a number of these bursars had only a slight admixture of Aboriginal blood and may well have been excluded from the census figures. There may have been a few Aborigines who reached Matriculation level without the assistance of a bursary. In discussion with the Bureau, the figures for the various regions in New South Wales were provided. It is extremely doubtful, for example, that 11 Aborigines in Coonabarabran had reached the Matriculation level or higher, as indicated by the returns. The validity of the figure can also be questioned when the table showing "Education by Age", supplied by the Bureau of Census and Statistics, is examined. The table is included as Appendix III, but the following summary is provided:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Attended High School</th>
<th>Reached Intermediate</th>
<th>Reached Matriculation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-34</td>
<td>4,396</td>
<td>1,855</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-54</td>
<td>1,988</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 and over</td>
<td>867</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This is confirmed by a survey carried out in 1964 by the N.S.W. Teachers' Federation. The Federation forwarded a questionnaire to all secondary and central schools outside the metropolitan area and to secondary schools within the metropolitan area where it was believed there were likely to be Aboriginal pupils. Of the 200 questionnaires sent out, replies were received from 193. The returns provided information about 514 Aboriginal secondary pupils, and showed that only one pupil out of the 514 had reached fifth form. The returns also showed that 299 children, or 50%, were rated as slow learners and that only five children were considered to have the potential for tertiary education. Following the publication of the Federation's report, the Department of Education carried out an age-grade survey of all Aboriginal children in public schools in New South Wales in August 1966.


2 ibid., p.1.

3 ibid., p.4.

4 ibid.

5 Statement prepared by Research and Planning Section of N.S.W. Department of Education on Aboriginal Pupils in Departmental Schools (non-Aboriginal) in New South Wales, 1966.
The returns indicated that there were 1,066 Aboriginal pupils in secondary of upper-primary classes, and of these 584, or over 50%, were in Form I. There were 19 pupils in Form IV and only two Aboriginal students in Form V. The findings indicated that "only about 50%, overall, were regarded by school principals to be working up to class standards".  

The actual numbers of pupils in each grade for both these surveys have been tabulated for comparative purposes, and the figures have also been converted to percentages. This is shown on Table V. It can be seen that, although the figures obtained by the Education Department show a slight improvement on those obtained by the Teachers' Federation, the two sets are quite comparable and indicate that the level of education attained by Aboriginal pupils is considerably lower than that reached by the majority of the population generally. In the Federation survey only 9.34 per cent of the students were in grades beyond Form II, and in the Department's survey this figure was 12.01 per cent. These may be compared with the 1966 Census figures, seen in Table IV, which show that some 31.13 per cent of the N.S.W. population at that time had not only completed

1 ibid., p.2.
TABLE V

ABORIGINAL SECONDARY PUPILS
1964 AND 1966 SURVEYS

Numbers and Percentages by Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>1964</th>
<th>1966</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form I</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>59.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form II</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>30.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form III</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>8.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form IV</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form V</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals:</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Numbers obtained from Teachers' Federation Survey, 1964, p. 4.
+ Numbers obtained from Education Department Survey, 1966.
Third form, but had obtained the Intermediate Certificate or higher qualifications.

It is generally agreed that one of the main purposes of the education system is to assist young people to develop their potential and so enable them to take their place as self-sufficient members of the work force. As such, they are expected to contribute to the socio-economic development of the community. It is known that most school "drop-outs" and people with relatively low educational attainments form the bulk of the unskilled and semi-skilled labour force. They also provide a high proportion of the unemployed and under-employed sector of the community, particularly in times of recession. It has been shown that a disproportionate number of Aborigines have relatively low educational qualifications and are employed as unskilled, semi-skilled or seasonal workers.

From the survey conducted by the Department of Labour and National Service, it was found that 79 per cent of the 442 Aborigines registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service were claimants for unemployment benefits. Nine were classified as physically handicapped, and only twenty-seven were being referred to employers at the time of the
survey. Officers of the Aborigines' Welfare Board have indicated that many Aborigines not only receive unemployment benefits, but also obtain various other special services.

One of the most important of these special services has been the provision of housing by the Aborigines' Welfare Board. In 1947 the A.W.B. embarked on a housing programme "to ensure that all Aboriginal families under the Board's care were satisfactorily housed". Between 1947 and 1967 the Board spent $3.5 million on new buildings, station improvements and land purchases, the bulk of this expenditure being used to provide some 700 cottages for Aboriginal families. The Board stated that the housing programme was designed "to prepare the Aboriginal people

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1 I.G. Sharp and C.M. Tatz, Eds., op.cit., p.74
3 Statement of Expenditure, payable from General Loan Account, as shown in the Annual Reports of the Aborigines' Welfare Board from June, 1947 to June, 1967. This amount does not include the annual maintenance figure but does include expenditure on homes occupied by the Field Staff of the Aborigines' Welfare Board.
for assimilation and, with that end in view, a nominal rent is being charged for new cottages when tenants are fully employed. ¹ This nominal rent was based on the weekly income of the tenant and was not related to the capital cost of the home concerned. In 1950, for example, the rent was 15/- per week for a two-bedroom home and 17/6 for a three-bedroom home.²

Despite these relatively low rentals, the Aborigines' Welfare Board found that less than one-third of the Aboriginal tenants met their rental obligations.³ The problem of rental arrears was mentioned in almost every annual report of the A.W.B. from 1952 to 1967. By 1967 a total of $60,975 had been collected for rents, but outstanding arrears totalled $157,788.⁴ During the twenty year period further arrears in excess of $182,000 had been written off.⁵ Actual repayments thus represented little more than fifteen per cent of the total rent charged, even

¹ ibid.
² ibid.
³ Interviews with Senior Welfare Officer, A.W.B., August, 1968; and with Vice-Chairman of the A.W.B., September, 1968.
⁵ ibid.
though these rents were based on the economic ability of the tenant to pay the amount concerned. There were many reasons for this rental arrears problem, which are not the concern of this thesis. The fact remains, however, that the provision of housing for Aborigines has represented a considerable liability for the general community.

There are a number of further examples which could be examined to show that considerable public expenditure is required each year to meet the special needs of the Aboriginal sector of the community. It may be argued, therefore, that at the present time, Aborigines represent a liability, rather than an asset, to the general economy, and that this is an important aspect of what has generally been called "the Aboriginal Problem". In this thesis, the basic element of this problem is considered to be a "human" one, involving a group of people who appear to be unable to take advantage of the educational opportunities which are now provided by the Department of Education and by other governmental and voluntary agencies.

1 The relatively high proportion of Aborigines who receive unemployment benefits has been mentioned. General Social Service assistance for Aborigines by both Government Departments and voluntary agencies involves considerable financial expenditure.
In the 1966 report of the Aborigines' Welfare Board, it was stated that: "Every Aboriginal child is at present afforded the opportunity of attaining the educational standard which is open to other children". As has already been shown, however, the educational attainments of Aboriginal children are generally far below those of the general community. This lack of educational qualifications represents an important factor in the relatively low job status of Aborigines and the consequential low socio-economic status of Aborigines in the community. The reasons for this situation can best be understood through an examination of present-day attitudes of Aborigines and non-Aborigines towards each other and also of Aboriginal attitudes towards "education". Whilst an attitudinal survey would go a long way towards indicating the patterns of such attitudes, the reasons behind the attitudes and the behaviour patterns associated with them can only be understood by an examination of Aboriginal-White relations in their historical context.

In this thesis, the first chapter briefly examines Aboriginal society prior to the arrival of the Euro-Australians. Chapters Two to Six trace the history of race relationships between Aborigines and non-Aborigines in N.S.W. between 1788 and 1939, including the various government policies adopted towards Aborigines, and the reactions of Aborigines to these policies. Special attention is paid in these chapters to matters relating to education, both formal and informal, prior to 1939. Chapter Seven examines the present policy of "Assimilation" from 1939 to the present day, and Chapter Eight looks more closely at the problems associated with Aboriginal education in New South Wales during the period of the assimilation policy. A summary of the thesis is given in Chapter Nine.

The aim of the thesis is to delineate the problem which exists today and, in particular, to indicate how present-day attitudes of Aborigines and Euro-Australians have developed in relation to the Aboriginal problem. It seeks to explain why Aborigines in N.S.W. in 1969 still represent a depressed socio-economic minority who appear to be unable or unwilling to take advantage of the educational opportunities which are now available.
Many people agree that improved educational attainments provide the highroad towards upward social mobility for Aborigines, and there is a good deal of evidence to support this view.

It will be seen that the educational attainments of Aborigines have improved considerably over the past twenty years. At the same time, however, the holding power of the schools has also shown considerable improvement, so that the gap between the Aboriginal sector and the rest of the community has not been narrowed to any appreciable extent. It will be seen in Chapter Seven that the number of Aboriginal children known to be attending secondary schools in 1949 was extremely small and probably did not exceed twenty. At that time, most Aboriginal children left school after reaching Fourth Grade primary level, although some did complete their primary school career. It has been shown in Table V that by 1966 a considerable number of Aborigines were in First and Second Forms in High Schools. Whilst this improvement has been taking place, however, the standard reached by school leavers generally has been raised considerably, and the majority of school children stay much longer at school.
Of the first year intake to High Schools in 1948, for example, 46.3 per cent remained at school until Third Year; 13.2 per cent until Fourth Year and 9.4 per cent until Fifth Year.\(^1\) By comparison, of the 1961 intake into High Schools 74.6 per cent remained until Third Year; 31.5 per cent until Fourth Year and 28.7 per cent until Fifth Year.\(^2\) The first intake under the new Wyndham Scheme was in 1962. It was found that 42.1 per cent of these pupils remained at school until Fourth Form and 19.6 per cent until Sixth Form. A further improvement in the holding power of the schools has taken place, and this year (1969) some 23.7 per cent of the 1963 intake are in Sixth Form and 28.3 per cent of the 1964 intake have entered Fifth Form.\(^3\) It is anticipated that the majority of the Fifth Form students will continue into Sixth Form and that, in future years, at least one student in every four who enter High School will complete six years of secondary education.

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\(^1\) Information supplied by the Division of Research and Planning of the New South Wales Department of Education in August, 1969.

\(^2\) ibid.

\(^3\) ibid.
It is obvious that the improvements which have already taken place in Aboriginal education must be accelerated if Aboriginal children are to overcome their present disadvantage in educational attainments. It is only when this disparity has been overcome that significant improvement can be expected in their present depressed socio-economic conditions. Accepting that a close relationship exists between educational attainments and socio-economic status, it is evident that education is one of the main keys to Aboriginal advancement. In recent years, government publications have suggested that "assimilation" is the answer to the Aboriginal problem.¹ Many voluntary organisations concerned with Aboriginal advancement, especially the Aboriginal-Australian Fellowship and the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, have suggested alternative solutions to the problem, including Land Rights and increased governmental expenditure on housing.² Many recent articles in newspapers, magazines and learned

¹ e.g. Department of Territories The Australian Aborigines, Sydney: Halstead Press, 1967. The film "The Australian Aborigines", prepared by the Department of Information, Canberra, also indicates that this is the official point of view.

journals have suggested a variety of possible solutions for the Aboriginal problem. This thesis does not attempt to suggest a solution to the problem, but does seek to establish what the problem really is. Although the problem is extremely complex, with many interrelated facets, it is argued that education is one of the most important aspects that requires examination if a satisfactory solution to the problem is to be found.

This thesis shows how the present situation has developed, and the dimensions of the present problem in relation to educational opportunity. By tracing the historical development of the culture clash between Aborigines and Euro-Australians, and by an examination of the various attempts to "educate" the Aboriginal population, this thesis shows how the problem has developed, and defines the dimensions of the present situation. It is only through such an examination of the past and the present that a positive policy for future action can be formulated.
Chapter One

ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIA

It is generally agreed by Anthropologists that the Aborigines migrated to Australia during the last Ice Age, more than 18,000 years ago. There is a good deal of archaeological evidence to support this estimate.\(^1\)

The Aborigines numbered about 300,000 by 1788 and were divided into about 500 tribes, some of which were possibly only sub-tribes or well marked local divisions of large tribes.\(^2\) The membership of a tribe averaged about 500 but varied from 100 to 1,500. "A tribe has been defined for Australia as a group of Aborigines having in common a language or dialect, a body of similar customs and beliefs and occupying a fairly definite territory".\(^3\)

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believed themselves related through descent from common ancestors

who brought their pre-existent spirits to the regions where they were later born. Because of this, they considered themselves tied to the territory which in the long past was inhabited, and given its natural characteristics, by the ancestors who were credited with super-human abilities.

Each tribe knew themselves or were known by a distinct name, derived in some cases from some special feature in the tribal country or from some plentiful article of food. In many cases the term is derived from the tribal negative - Kamilaroi (Kamil - no); Wongaibon (Wongai - no) and Wiradjuri (Wirai - no). 2

Prior to the arrival of the Europeans in Australia, the Aborigines had made an adequate and intelligent adaptation to the environment as they found it. Since there were no indigenous roots or grains suitable for cultivation, nor any animals which could be herded or domesticated, the Aborigines were inevitably nomadic hunters, fishers and food-gatherers. 3

1 ibid., p.6.
2 A.P. Elkin, op. cit., p.40.
3 All grains such as wheat, rice, barley, oats, etc., were introduced to Australia after the arrival of the Europeans, as also were cattle, sheep, pigs, goats, horses, etc.
Each tribe comprised several hunting and food gathering bands or hordes, each consisting of several generations of related men, women and children. Each of these groups roamed over a relatively small area which not only provided the food necessary for subsistence, but which also contained the special sacred sites of that group of extended families. Aborigines did not own the land in the sense that they could acquire it or dispose of it either individually or collectively. Central to Aboriginal philosophy was the assumption that they belonged to the land or that the land was in reality part of them. It was their spiritual home and the members of the local groups were the ceremonial guardians.¹

As has been indicated, the nomadic aspect of Aboriginal life was economically determined. Material possessions were, of necessity, kept to a minimum. Since Aborigines were constantly on the move, they did not need permanent houses, but built windbreaks or temporary huts which provided adequate shelter from the elements. The women gathered berries, seeds, nuts and edible roots in season, or killed small animals such as porcupines, lizards and tortoises.

¹ Department of Territories, op. cit., p.6.
The men snared birds and small game and hunted for emus and kangaroos.

Although Aborigines were relatively poor in material possessions, they did have a very rich spiritual and social life. Central to Aboriginal belief was the historic present or the living past. In the "Dreamtime", suprahuman ancestral spirits roamed the earth and formed the natural environment as they knew it. The tracks of these ancestors were marked by sacred sites associated with their deeds which were enshrined in mythology.¹

Eventually, they changed into other forms; their physical elements went into the ground, or the sky, or waterholes, or into rocks or trees, but their spiritual elements continued to exist. Living men, it was supposed, could keep in touch with them, draw on their magical power, and make sure that their country maintained the fertile pattern given it in the dreamtime, by faithfully following the teachings of the ancestors and reenacting their ceremonies and rites. The dreamtime was not merely the sacred past, it was vitally continuous with the present and future. Because of this it was conceived of as an eternal dreamtime and is appropriately referred to as the Dreaming.²

The Aborigines held an animistic philosophy: they saw themselves as sharing a common life-principle with

¹ A.P. Elkin, op. cit., pp. 187-221.
² Department of Territories, op. cit., pp. 21-22.
animals, birds and plants, with which they formed totemic relationships. All living things belonged to the same order and were the reincarnation of spirits. Man could participate in the spirit world and help to increase the food supply through his totemic association with particular animals, birds or plants.

By performing rites at spirit centres associated with the wanderings of the culture heroes, the Aborigines believed they could ensure a plentiful supply of game and food and make for the well-being of their people. Upon death, the individual would re-enter the spirit world, returning to the same spirit centre from which he had originally emerged.

For the Aborigines, the boundaries of the tribal territory were thus very clearly defined, not only by recognisable geographical features, but also by the various sites associated with the pre-existent spirits yet to be born. The tribal land also represented the spiritual home of all tribal members. When inter-tribal meetings were held for special religious ceremonies, these were rigorously controlled by tribal elders to ensure that

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safe passage was guaranteed for all visitors. At these gatherings "quarrels between groups of the one or different tribes are openly settled and corroborees or public entertainments shared".  

Except for these special occasions, members of a tribe put themselves in very real danger when they crossed tribal boundaries and entered the territory of another tribe. As Elkin points out, "as they got away from their own tribal territory, they passed into country of unknown totemic heroes and spirit-centres, some of which might be lethal to those who did not know how to approach them". This fear of the unknown, coupled with the Aborigine's close attachment to his own tribal area, meant that trespass was relatively rare. Similarly, inter-tribal warfare was so uncommon that Aborigines found no need to build up any military organisation for either offensive or defensive purposes. This lack of military organisation, and the relative independence of the food gathering bands of each tribe, became important factors in the culture clash which developed after the arrival of the European Australians.

1 A.P. Elkin, op. cit., p.30.

2 ibid., p.35.
It helps to explain the apparent lack of organised resistance to the new settlers, which was often misinterpreted by the Euro-Australians as proof that the Aborigines had no real attachment to their land.¹

As has been shown, the economic life of the Aborigines was much more than the search for food, being inextricably bound up in the sacred and religious life of the group. Aboriginal youths spent a long period of time under tuition from older members of the tribe, enabling them gradually to acquire a remarkable tracking ability and to "read" the signs of the bush. At the same time they learnt the sacred significance of each water-hole, rock-outcrop and landmark. They also learnt the acceptable ways of behaviour towards their kin. Patterns of reciprocal kinship behaviour were a prominent feature of the education of young Aborigines, as on their conformity to such customary behaviour patterns depended the cohesion and strength of the local group and of the tribe as a whole.

¹ This view is still commonly held today.
This learning was a continuous process but, as Aboriginal youths approached adolescence, they undertook an intensive initiation course which included seclusion away from the corporate life of the group and physical trials involving a certain amount of pain. This initiation ceremony became the high-point of learning and introduced the initiate into the sacred life of the tribe. The ceremony itself marked the turning point from youth to manhood. This, however, was only the first stage, for, as the young man learnt more and more of tribal mythology and the sanctions or authority which these myths supplied for tribal law, he became an active participant in the ceremonial life of the tribe. Gradually he accepted increasing responsibilities until, with acceptable behaviour patterns firmly established, and with authority commensurate with his established position in the natural order of things, he acquired the respect and veneration which were due only to tribal elders.

1 A.P. Elkin, op. cit., pp. 82 - 93 and 157-294.

2 This brief and rather inadequate description of Aboriginal education prior to the arrival of the Europeans is included as background information only. It is not intended to be an anthropological treatise on this important subject, for which the reader should refer to such works as A.W. Howitt, The Native Tribes of South East Australia; Spencer and Gillen, Native Tribes of Central Australia; B. Malinowski, The Family Among the Australian Aborigines; R. & C. Berndt, The World of the First Australians, and to the many works of Professor A.P. Elkin.
It can be seen that the loss of tribal territory which followed the arrival of the European Australians was much more than a threat to the economic survival of the Aboriginal group concerned. Tribal land was the basis on which the whole of the religious fabric of tribal organisation had been built. As religious sanctions regulated all moral and social behaviour, they provided the framework necessary for tribal cohesion. The alienation of tribal land, therefore, undermined all aspects of tribal organisation.

Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead and other anthropologists have pointed to the very close interrelationship between the religious, moral, economic and social life of traditional communities.\(^1\) The traditional Aboriginal system of education emphasised this interrelationship and also emphasised the close link which existed between the living past and the historic present enshrined in the dreamtime. The "dreaming" was not merely the sacred past, it was vitally continuous with the present and the future, and the vast body of ritual associated with it was an integral part of all traditional Aboriginal education. Economic

survival depended, not only on the hunting prowess of tribal members, but also on their understanding and performance of the various "increase" rites, so essential to ensure that an adequate supply of the various natural species would be maintained. With the arrival of the Europeans, the natural food supply began to disappear and this presented a threat, not only to economic survival, but also to the efficacy of the increase ceremonies and the whole fabric of religious beliefs associated with them.

Traditional education had been quite adequate to enable successive generations to meet the challenges of a relatively constant environment. It had been a whole-of-life process whereby tribal members gained increasing insights into the religious, social and economic organisation of the group. These insights became meaningless under the impact of European invasion as the whole pattern of tribal organisation and culture began to disintegrate. To meet the challenges posed by these dramatic changes in the total environment, rapid adaptations were essential. It is quite apparent that rapid social change presents many serious difficulties for any traditionally orientated group of people. For the
Australian Aborigines, such rapid adaptation was well nigh impossible because of the very nature of their social organisation.

Aborigines lived and worked together in co-operative kinship groups sharing the fruits of their endeavours. Individual aspirations were rejected in the interests of group cohesion, and co-operation rather than competition was encouraged. The accumulation of material possessions was impossible because of their nomadic tribal life. Leadership, based on age and experience, was exercised by a group of tribal elders, and decisions were made through a consensus of opinion, rather than by majority rule or an imposed oligarchy. Behaviour patterns were governed by religious and social sanctions and were rooted in tradition.\(^1\) Unlike many indigenous minorities who were faced with culture clash, there were no elements intrinsic to Aboriginal culture which could provide a bridge for negotiations. Individual land ownership, for example, was unknown, and there was no system of chieftainship or recognisable hierarchy through which negotiations could take place. The gap between

\(^1\) Many of these aspects of Aboriginal culture are to be found today not only with tribal groups but in Aboriginal fringe settlements in many parts of New South Wales.
traditional Aboriginal culture and the culture of the European invaders could not have been wider. Their training and temperament led Aborigines to reject almost everything that European society considered important. Coexistence would have been possible only under the most favourable conditions of mutual respect and understanding.

A carefully conceived programme of education and retraining was essential, under these circumstances, to enable Aborigines to play their part in the future development of the country. With the spread of European settlement which followed the arrival of the First Fleet, the education of the Aboriginal inhabitants now became primarily the responsibility of the officially appointed representatives of the British Colonial Office. In this new setting, Aborigines no longer controlled their own destiny: their future would be determined by official Government policy and by the actions of the new Euro-Australian settlers.
Aboriginal Language Groups of South Eastern Australia

Aboriginal Languages of Australia, G.N. O'Grady et al., University of Victoria, B.C., Canada, 1966.
Chapter Two

THE EARLY GOVERNORS

When Phillip established a penal settlement at Port Jackson in 1788 he brought with him certain instructions regarding the Aborigines. The instructions dated 25th April, 1787, stated:

Your are to endeavour by every possible means to open an intercourse with the natives, and to conciliate their affections, enjoining all our subjects to live in amity and kindness with them. And if any of our subjects shall wantonly destroy them, or give them any unnecessary interruption in the exercise of their several occupations, it is our will and pleasure that you do cause such offenders to be brought to punishment according to the degree of the offence. You will endeavour to procure an account of the numbers inhabiting the neighbourhood of the intended settlement, and report your opinion to one of our Secretaries of State in what manner our intercourse with these people may be turned to the advantage of this colony.¹

These instructions showed the genuine concern of the British Government for the native inhabitants but at the same time they clearly demonstrated the unrealistic attitude of the colonial authorities and their complete

failure to appreciate the inevitable consequences of the culture clash. The arrival of over one thousand Europeans, more than fifty percent of whom were convicts, on the tribal territory of the Awabakal completely changed the environment of the native people concerned. The alienation of tribal land not only destroyed the economic basis of the Aboriginal community, but completely undermined the legal, moral and religious fabric of the whole tribal organisation, Aborigines were to be treated as British subjects rather than as enemies of His Majesty's Government, but obviously this unilateral decision was made without any consultation with the Aborigines. It was felt that the natives would see what were assumed to be the obviously superior ways of the new settlers and would be more than anxious to become British citizens in the full sense of the word. The Aborigines, however, were not impressed with the material possessions of the Europeans and much less impressed with the example of civilization as demonstrated by a group of convicts and their authoritarian guards.

Despite the great administrative burden with which he was faced, Phillip did all in his power to carry out his instructions to establish friendly intercourse with the Aborigines. Other members of the First Fleet, however,
were not so enlightened, and relations quickly deteriorated. The actions of many of the early settlers made the natives suspicious and distrustful. Phillip's early attempts to persuade some of the Aborigines to live in the settlement were unsuccessful, and one Aborigine who was forcibly detained died of smallpox within five months. It was Phillip's intention that a few Aborigines should be taught English so that they could inform their fellow-tribesmen of the white man's good intentions. Two more natives, Colebe and Bannelong,* were captured but Colebe escaped and Bannelong proved a most unsuitable mediator. It would appear that he was not particularly influential within his own tribe and the more he accepted the veneer of white civilization, the less use he became in the promotion of understanding between the new settlers and the natives. Bannelong was able to come and go from the settlement as he pleased, but his addiction to drink and his ludicrous attempts to act as a sophisticated white man led him to become an object of derision and contempt. Phillip's attempts to civilize individual natives proved unfortunate failures.

Phillip records that:

* also spelt "Banalang", "Benelong", "Bannalong", "Bennelong". The spelling used here is that of Phillip and Hunter in Hunter's Journal, 1792.

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The natives, who appear strictly honest amongst themselves, leave their fizgigs, spears, etc. on the beach, or in their huts, when they go a-fishing; these articles have been taken from them by the convicts. The natives, as I have observed, revenge themselves on any they meet unarmed; it is not possible to punish them without punishing the innocent with the guilty, and our own people have been the aggressors.

Retaliating, the Aborigines attacked not only cattle which strayed from the settlement but also convicts who were on their own. Phillip's humanitarianism could not prevent the petty thieving he mentioned, any more than he could prevent the spread of European diseases such as measles and smallpox, against which the Aborigines had no immunity. Smallpox, introduced by the First Fleet, took heavy toll. Phillip, in a letter to Lord Sydney in 1790, stated that smallpox had proved fatal to a large number of natives in the Sydney area. The disease quickly spread to neighbouring tribes and Curr estimates that up to one half of the native population died from smallpox in the areas through which the disease had spread.

Aborigines in the vicinity of the settlement found their natural food supply dwindling rapidly. "To hunt and gather native foods over his tribal country became trespass; to hunt the white invader's animals or gather some of his crops was stealing and, indeed, was regarded almost as the predatory raid of an enemy".  

In his general orders issued on 13th December, 1790, Phillip strictly forbade:

under pain of the severest punishment, any soldier ... to fire on any native, except in his own defence, or to molest him in any shape, or to take away any spears or other articles which they may find belonging to these people.

On the following day, however, Phillip sent out an armed party under Captain Tench which included another captain, two lieutenants, four non-commissioned officers and forty privates to teach the natives a lesson and stop them from throwing spears at any of the settlers. Earlier in the month the game-keeper, when about eleven miles from the main settlement, had been wounded by one of the natives. The party was accompanied by the surgeon, a surgeon's mate

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and three people who had been with the game-keeper when he had been wounded.

The officer who commanded this party was directed to proceed to the spot where the game-keeper had been wounded, and to search for the natives in that part of the country; six of whom were to be secured and brought in as prisoners; or if that was found to be impracticable, six of whom were to be put to death; spears, and all other weapons which they happened to meet with, were to be destroyed and left on the ground, that the natives might see it was intended as a punishment inflicted on them, particular attention was also to be paid to the women and children, who were not to be injured on any account whatever.¹

Phillip did not appear to have been displeased, however, when the armed party returned without having been able to get close to any of the natives.² As will be seen, subsequent attempts "to teach the natives a lesson" were carried out with much greater vigour and were not held in check by Phillip's obvious reluctance for this type of "native education".³ It does point to the paradox involved in the policy of "conciliating the affection" of the natives and, at the same time, of ensuring that the

¹ John Hunter, op. cit., p.495.
² ibid., pp. 549-551
³ Phillip's many despatches to England clearly indicate his reluctance to take coercive action against the Aborigines.
Aborigines, as British subjects, conformed to the laws and regulations governing the new Colony.

On 30th March, 1791, Phillip made the first land grants to James Ruse (30 acres), Philip Schaffer (140 acres), Robert Webb and William Reid (60 acres each). Twenty-three further grants were made on 18th July, and ten on 17th August.¹ There was no thought of compensating the natives; the land was "unoccupied". To the Europeans, land used for hunting or food gathering did not appear to involve land ownership. The settlers acknowledged proprietary rights only over land used for farming or grazing.

No thought was given to the inevitable consequences as tribal land was alienated and the natives' natural food supply was cut off. It is perfectly true that it would have been extremely difficult to find any viable alternative, especially as the Aborigines lacked an autocratic political organisation with which negotiations might have taken place. At the same time, however, the policy must be considered as morally indefensible when no real attempt was made to assist the indigenous population to adapt to this dramatic change in the environment.

¹ J. Hunter, op. cit., pp. 549-561.
The Aborigines were now faced with three possible alternatives. They could starve; they could fight the European invaders or alternatively invade and fight members of a neighbouring tribe; or they could change the whole pattern of their living and become completely dependent on the Europeans for their economic needs. With the alienation of their tribal hunting grounds, food could now only be obtained in return for menial service or by begging for "hand-outs". In this way, proud, independent hunters and food gatherers became mendicants in their own land.

Phillip did, however, attempt to provide a further alternative by establishing a barter system with the Aborigines: the natives were induced to bring their surplus supplies of fish "which they exchanged for a very small quantity of bread or rice". Within a few days, however, convicts smashed the boat of the native who had been the leader in the barter agreement. Although Phillip punished the convicts concerned, this incident meant the end of an economic arrangement which might well have developed into a useful means of contact. To the Aborigines the incident also demonstrated the perfidy of the whites. It also foreshadowed much more serious clashes.

1 ibid., p.533.
as the settlement expanded. Phillip's "benevolent paternalism" was resented by many of the settlers, and the forceful annexation of land continued.¹ As further atrocities were committed by convicts and settlers alike, relations between the whites and the natives steadily deteriorated, especially after Phillip's departure in 1792 when the colony came under the control of officers of the New South Wales Corps.

Writing to Dundas in 1795, Captain Paterson informed him of the growing settlement on the banks of the Hawkesbury River, where up to four hundred settlers had begun the cultivation of ground for some thirty miles along both sides of the river. "They have for some time past been annoyed by the natives, who have assembled in large parties for the purpose of plundering them of their corn; and from the impossibility of furnishing each settler with firearms for his defence, several accidents have happened."² Paterson sent a detachment of soldiers and later received a report from the commanding officer. He was informed that the night after they arrived at the river:

the party had fired upon and pursued a large body of natives, who had concealed themselves in the neighbouring woods during the day, and at night came to a settler's farm to plunder it; that he supposes seven or eight natives were killed, and that he was taking every measure he thought likely to deter them from appearing there again.

Paterson remarks:

It gives me concern to have been forced to destroy any of these people, particularly as I have no doubt of their having been cruelly treated by some of the first settlers who went out there; however, had I not taken this step, every prospect of advantage which the colony may expect to derive from a settlement formed on the banks of so fine a river as the Hawkesbury would be at an end.

During this period, Aborigines who drifted into the growing settlement in Sydney were encouraged to engage in "ritual fighting", during which they threw spears at each other. White soldiers and settlers formed a ring around the contestants, cheered them on to greater efforts and gave them rum or spirits to liven up the spectacle further. These "ritual fights" continued for a generation and were a great source of amusement and entertainment for the early settlers. Casual sexual relations with Aboriginal women

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1 ibid., p. 499
2 ibid., p. 500
for food or blankets led to the spread of venereal disease amongst the Aborigines, and also the birth of half-caste children, who were invariably left with their mothers.

Governors Hunter, Bligh and King, although sympathetic to the natives, lacked Phillip's humanitarianism and forcefulness. Pre-occupied with administrative problems, especially the struggle with the New South Wales Corps, they appear to have been powerless to prevent further clashes as the frontiers expanded.¹ The scarcity of grain in the young colony led settlers to take extreme measures to protect their crops and Aborigines who even ventured near the ripening grain were in danger of their lives. Hunter, for example, in February 1796 ordered the settlers to "afford mutual assistance to one another whenever a numerous body of Aborigines were seen lurking around the Farms".²

In 1801, King ordered that all natives in the areas around Parramatta, Prospect Hill and George's River should be driven away from the areas occupied by settlers. In March 1802, he sent a detachment of soldiers to protect farms around Parramatta and the George's River. These troops were ordered to fire on any natives they saw, "every means is to be used to drive them off either by shooting them or otherwise".³

¹ G.W. Rusden, op. cit., p. 343.
³ ibid., Vol. III, p. 466. King to Portland 1-3-1802.
King issued a proclamation, stating that people found guilty of wanton killing, cruelty and injustice to the natives would be punished, but that settlers should not suffer their properties to be invaded and should resist attacks in the most humane way possible. Settlers caught indiscriminately shooting at Aborigines could thus always plead that their lives or property were in danger. In 1799, five men found guilty of killing two natives had their sentences remitted. Judge Advocate Atkins let it be known that he fully sympathised with the settlers in any action they cared to take and stated "self-defence will justify the most coercive measures being exercised against them".¹ Such actions would "point out to the survivors the necessity of regulating their conduct by other means than hitherto adopted".²

Although the Government condemned "wanton aggression" against Aborigines, they condoned the use of force when the natives raided crops at harvest time or killed sheep or cattle.³ Settlers and the Aborigines both suffered from the shortage of food, but the settlers had guns and ammunition to ensure that the food which they produced

¹ ibid., Vol. V, p. 503.
² ibid.
³ ibid., Vol. IX, p. 140.
would be retained for their exclusive use. "Dispersion" of the natives became an essential feature of the culture clash as the frontiers of settlement expanded.

The early settlers considered the natives as one of the many problems they had to face in a hostile environment. The "blacks were a nuisance" and when they raided crops or attacked isolated settlers, the obvious solution was to drive them away or kill them if they continued to cause trouble.

Early attempts to civilize the natives had failed completely. A few individual Aborigines had been captured or persuaded to leave their tribes and live in the homes of leading settlers. Some had even been taken on trips to England. They had been taught "to live at a gentleman's table and wear his clothes ... without being taught any mechanical or useful arts or means of supporting themselves. They had remained useless and despised in the society in which they lived". With a thin veneer of civilization they were treated with scorn by the majority of the population and rejected by their own people, who were vainly attempting to preserve their Aboriginal culture. Few Aborigines living

1 ibid., Vol. VIII, p.370. Macquarie to Bathurst 8-10-1814, quoting Shelley to Macquarie 8-4-1814.
outside the confines of the settlement showed any wish
to emulate their example.

Because of their complete disinterest in material
possessions or in self-aggrandisement, Aborigines were
despised by the early settlers as indolent and useless.
Europeans adopted an arrogant attitude towards these
"savages" who made no attempt to accept the "benefits"
of civilization and the white man's way of life.¹

The Aborigines, on the other hand, saw the Europeans
as thieves and robbers whose word could not be trusted.
They had brought diseases, death, and bloodshed. They had
dispossessed the Aborigines of land and driven away the
game which was their food supply. The Aborigines had no
understanding of the system of Government land grants which
gave proprietary rights over vast areas to individual settlers.
They could not understand that apparently unused land was
reserved for grazing or future cultivation and therefore was
forbidden territory. The Aboriginal custom of firing scrub
land to drive out game became a major issue when they fired
the corn and wheat fields to drive out kangaroos. Even the
supply of water had been cut off by the white settler in many

¹ ibid., Vol. X, p.270, Rev. R. Cartwright writing to
Governor Macquarie refers to "companies of black savage
beggars".
places, and no respect was shown for sacred places and ceremonial areas.

With depopulation and disruption of the traditional social system, tribal authority and customs broke down. The old forms of instruction given by the tribal elders were quite inapplicable in the changed situation. Religious duties and ceremonial gatherings became impossible and there appeared little hope for the future. Aborigines could no longer hunt or gather their native food in the areas which had once belonged exclusively to their own tribe. When they killed sheep or cattle, or attempted to interfere with the crops of the invaders, it brought swift retaliatory action and death by shooting, not only of the guilty party but of many other Aborigines in the area. Co-existence appeared to be impossible and the tribes in the immediate vicinity of settlement seemed doomed to extinction in the comparatively near future. The pitiful survivors of the once proud tribe around Sydney Cove were now demoralised and completely dependent for survival of the charity of the settlers.

It was not until over a quarter of a century had passed from the time of the first settlement that positive steps were taken to meet the Aboriginal problem. For those in close proximity to the settlement, however, it was by then
"more a case of salvage than salvation". The vast administrative problems facing the early Governors had led them to neglect the growing problem of the natives. The benign and just policies proposed by the British Government had proved unworkable in the struggle to establish a settlement. It was Governor Lachlan Macquarie who took the first practical steps to meet the needs of the native population and to stem, for a time, the worst abuses of the culture clash which had developed.

Lachlan Macquarie:

Macquarie arrived in the colony in 1810 and quickly showed his interest in, and affection for, the native inhabitants. His humanity and sympathetic interest led to better relations being established with those natives in contact with the settlement. In his many journeys throughout the growing colony, Macquarie made whatever contact he could with members of various tribes and quickly demonstrated his genuine interest in their welfare. In this he faced opposition and even derision from many of the leaders in the young colony. Macquarie set out

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his attitudes and feelings about the Aborigines in his despatch to Bathurst on 8th October, 1814:

Scarcely emerged from the remotest State of crude and Uncivilized Nature, these people appear to possess some Qualities which, if properly Cultivated and Encouraged, Might render them not only less wretched and destitute by Reason of their Wild wandering and unsettled Habits, but progressively Useful to the Country According to their Capabilities either as Labourers in Agricultural Employ or among the lower Class of Mechanics.

These Natives, Who resort to the Cultivated Districts of this Settlement, Altho' prone like other Savages to great Indolence and Indifference as to their future Means of Subsistence, Yet in General, are of free open and favourable Disposition, honestly Inclined and perfectly devoid of that designing Trick and Treachery, Which Characterize the Natives of New Zealand and those of the Islands in the South Seas.

Marsden, the Principal Chaplain, and some of the other early settlers often made unfavourable comparisons between the Aborigines and the New Zealand Maoris, usually to the discredit of the former. Marsden claimed that "it was impracticable to civilize these natives, that they were little above the rank of beasts

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1 Historical Records of Australia, Vol. VIII, p.368

2 J.B. Marsden, Life and Work of Samuel Marsden, p.39, quotes Samuel Marsden as stating "The Maoris are a noble race ... vastly superior in understanding to anything you can imagine in a savage nation". Samuel Marsden opened a Seminary at Parramatta for the training of Maori Chiefs brought over from New Zealand.
of the field and that all attempts to ameliorate their
condition and improve their minds would be totally
useless."¹ Macquarie, on the other hand was prepared to
accept the Aborigines as people. He treated them with
dignity and respect. There is no doubt that his obvious
sincerity was recognised by the Aborigines, who responded
to his efforts.

In his official despatches and in his journals of his
tours in New South Wales, Macquarie made many references
to his contacts with Aborigines. His descriptions show a
sincere respect for the dignity of these people. On one
of his early journeys to the Macquarie River in May 1815,
for example, he recorded his impressions of the natives
he met:

They were all clothed with mantles made of the
skins of opossums, which were very neatly sewn
together, and the outside of the skins were
carved in a remarkable neat manner.²

¹ M.H. Ellis, Lachlan Macquarie, His Life, Adventures and
² Lachlan Macquarie, Lachlan Macquarie, Governor of New
South Wales, Journals of His Tours In New South Wales
and Van Diemen's Land 1810-1822, N.S.W., Sydney: The
Trustees of the Public Library of N.S.W., 1956, p.97.
On his trip to the western and southern counties in October, 1820, Macquarie was near the Wallandilly (sic.) River when he met Nagaray "a fine old patriarchal native of about 70 years of age."¹ accompanied by members of his family. Macquarie writes "This old man belongs to the Burra-Burra tribe, of which his son Cookoogong is the Chief. His next eldest son Bhoohan is a very fine intelligent lad."²

Macquarie became very well known to the leaders of many of the tribes. On 15th November, 1821, he visited Wallis Plains in the Newcastle District. There he found "Bungaree, Chief of the Boan Native Tribe, with all his own family, and 30 more of his tribe waiting to meet me .... Bungaree and his tribe entertained us with a 'Karaburie' after dinner, and we did not go to bed till 11 o'clock."³

In January the following year, Macquarie toured the Illawarra district. He was met by one hundred natives who had assembled "to meet and welcome me to Illawarra. They were of various tribes, and some of them had come all the way from Jervis Bay ... They all knew who I was, and most of them pronounced my name (Govr. Macquarie) very distinctly.

¹ ibid., p. 152
² ibid., p. 152
³ ibid., p. 219
They were very civil and I regretted exceedingly that I had no tobacco for them."\(^1\)

The initial success of Macquarie's schemes for the natives may well be attributed to his attitude and behaviour towards the Aboriginal people. It can be argued that one of his major difficulties was that very few of the colonists shared his attitudes. As will be seen, Macquarie's plans for the assimilation of the Aborigines included a programme of education for both children and adults, and land grants to ensure their economic security.\(^2\)

His policies developed gradually from the time he assumed control of the colony, and modern social theory would agree with the wisdom of his approach. As far as can be ascertained, Macquarie was the only Governor to make land grants to Aborigines, on both an individual and a community basis. There is little doubt that if his enlightened policies had been pursued, there would have been marked changes in the whole pattern of culture contact. Lack of financial support from the Home Government, indifference and even opposition from the majority of

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\(^1\) ibid., pp. 240-241.

\(^2\) Historical Records of Australia, Vol. VIII, pp. 369-373.
settlers led to the abandonment of his policies once he had relinquished his office.

Perhaps the best known scheme instituted by Macquarie was proposed by the missionary, William Shelley, in April 1814. This provided for a Native Institution at Parramatta for the education of Aboriginal children of both sexes, to teach reading and writing and other basic subjects, "also useful occupations, as Agriculture, Mechanical Arts and such Manufactures as may best suit the Age and disposition of the children."¹

The girls were to be taught needlework. The proposed boarding school was intended to:

effect the Civilization of the Aborigines in New South Wales, and render their Habits more domesticated and industrious ... which may eventually contribute to render them not only more happy in themselves but also in some Degree useful to the community.²

It was hoped that government finance would be supplemented by subscriptions from private individuals and

² Sydney Gazette, 10th December, 1814, quoted in C. Turney, The History of Education in New South Wales, 1788-1900, pp. 198-199.
Clashes between Aborigines and settlers in the Bunbury-Curran Creek area lent urgency to Macquarie's plans to assist the natives to participate in the economic life of the community. Raids by Aborigines were followed by reprisals by settlers ... Macquarie ordered an immediate magisterial enquiry; while acknowledging that the settlers had cause for complaint, he admonished them not to take the law into their own hands. He pointed out that the Aborigines were entitled to the same legal protection as whites and concluded by promising to punish aggressiveness by either blacks or whites. Turney points out that "it is in the context of the above incidents that the establishment of the native institution - conceived by Shelley - must be placed."¹

Preparations were made for a public conference and feast for the natives, to be held in the Market Place (now the site of the Town Hall) at Parramatta on 28th December, 1814. Here Macquarie outlined his plans for the Native Institution and also advised the Aborigines that:

¹ C. Turney, *ibid.*, p.198.
an area of land had been set aside at Black Town for settlement. Blocks of ten acres with hut and farming implements were to be given to any adult native who wished to become a settler. He would be instructed in farm work and provisioned until such time as he could fend for himself.1

Macquarie was disappointed with the poor attendance at the feast (about sixty) and with the initial response of the natives to his overtures. The small number was probably due to "some false impression which the more distant tribes had given way to, relative to the design of the convocation, suspiciously imagining that they were to be forcibly deprived of their children and themselves sent to labour."2 As well as their warranted distrust and fear of the Europeans, the natives still felt the need to instruct their own children in the modes of behaviour required by the tribe, and prepare the young men for the initiation ceremonies necessary for the continuance of tribal organisation. In March 1815, Macquarie wrote to Bathurst about the native school and stated:

I have no doubt however of the Ultimate Success of the Institution, when the Elder Natives shall see and be Convinced that the few Children, who

1 V. Goodin, op. cit., p.152.
2 Historical Records of Australia, Vol. VIII. Macquarie to Bathurst 24.3.1815, p.467.
now remain in it, benefit so essentially from the Change in regard to their Health, Cleanliness and personal Appearance.

Although some of the children handed over were decoyed away again by parents, the Native Institution slowly prospered and by April, 1817, eleven girls and six boys were enrolled. After Shelley's death in June, 1815, the Native Institution had been taken over by his widow and his daughter, assisted by a convict male teacher for the boys. Significantly, the Committee in charge of the Native Institution included both of the Assistant Chaplains but Macquarie had deliberately left Marsden off the Committee of Management.

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1 ibid.
2 V. Goodin, op.cit., p.155.
3 J.B. Marsden, op.cit., p.62. The disagreement between Macquarie and Marsden on the Aboriginal question was part of a much larger quarrel between the two of them. Marsden objected to the omission of religion from the curriculum in the plan of Shelley and Macquarie for the Native Institution. (Johnstone S.M., Samuel Marsden pp.113-117). Macquarie was obviously not anxious to have Marsden interfering in a plan which was so dear to him. When Macquarie was informed by Bathurst that certain criticisms had been levelled at his work he immediately replied "Although the Name of the Author of these gross criticisms is withheld, I have good reason to suppose it proceeded from the Pen of the Reverend Samuel Marsden". (Historical Records of Australia, Vol. IX, p.502). Macquarie considered that Marsden was discontented, intriguing and vindictive and in a despatch to Bathurst on 1st December, 1817, wrote "At the head of the list of Malcontents stands Reverend Mr. Marsden ... I do firmly believe that there is not a more vindictive, unfeeling character in existence than the Reverend Mr. Marsden". (Historical Records of Australia, Vol. IX, p.499).
On 31st January, 1816, Macquarie set apart sixteen small plots of land at George's Head for settlement by the remnants of the Broken Bay group. A communal boat, the "Boongaree", and agricultural implements were given to these native settlers, who were encouraged to set a good example to others. Each was issued with a full set of slop clothing and, at the same time, Macquarie appointed Boongaree (Bungaree) as Chief of the Broken Bay tribe. Little mention of this experiment is to be found in the records, but the fate of a somewhat similar experiment at Elizabeth Bay (named after Macquarie's wife) is recorded in a letter from E.S. Hall to Sir George Murray on 26th November, 1828.

At Elizabeth Bay, Macquarie attempted to establish an Aboriginal fishing industry. The natives were given a fishing boat, tackle, casks for salting as well as land and nets, so they could become economically independent. Although expert advice and training were not provided in

2 ibid.
4 ibid., p. 597
the schemes at Elizabeth Bay and George's Head, Macquarie's personal interest and encouragement did ensure that the schemes were properly initiated. After his departure, however, little interest was taken in these plans. At Elizabeth Bay, for example, Governor Brisbane later established a lunatic asylum, and his successor, Governor Darling, granted some 58 acres around Elizabeth Bay including the acres previously given to the Aborigines and also the lunatic asylum now closed\(^1\) to the Colonial Secretary, Alexander McLeay, for his own use.

The spread of farms along the banks of the Nepean River, which cut off the water supply of the Aborigines in the area, led to further trouble. The clash became quite serious, so a strong detachment of troops was sent to drive the natives away. The troops were stationed in the area for some 23 days, during which time 14 natives were killed and a number taken prisoner. Macquarie's Proclamation\(^2\) clearly showed that, whilst he was quite prepared to act decisively to protect the settlers, he was also concerned to put forward positive measures "to enable them (the Aborigines) to obtain

\(^1\) ibid., p. 598, Hall to Murray 26.11.1828 encl. in Darling to Murray 2.1.1829.

\(^2\) ibid., Vol. IX, pp. 141-145. Proclamation dated 6.5.1816. See Appendix IV for full text.
an honest and comfortable Subsistence by their own Labour and Industry". 1

Following Macquarie's decisive action, it is significant that no further attacks by the natives are mentioned in the Historical Records of Australia during the rest of his term of office. This was no doubt due to his prompt action, and also to the definite overtures of friendship which were bearing fruit. In 1817 Miss Elizabeth Macarthur, writing to a friend in England, eulogises the Native Institution, saying:

The benevolent exertions of Governor Macquarie have induced some of these people to send their children to a 'School' which he has formed for their reception and instruction. The little creatures have been taught to read and write, with a readiness truly astonishing, and in the hand of Providence let us hope they may be instrumental in civilizing their countrymen. 2

Elizabeth Macarthur's solicitude for the Aborigines was not shared by many of her contemporaries. When the French ship "Uranie" visited Sydney, the officers were

1 ibid., p. 143. Proclamation of Macquarie 4.5.1816, encl. in Macquarie to Bathurst 8.6.1816.
invited to witness an Aboriginal "ritual fight" which was designated "a corroboree" by the colonists. The combatants were given two or three glasses of brandy and then, in the words of Monsieur Jacques Arago,

... puis voilà qu'une sanglante saturnale commence. Les vapeurs se sont emparées du cerveau, des cris éclatants emplissent les airs, des chants farouches s'échappent de poitrines haletantes, des contorsions frénétiques ont lieu, des trépignements fièvres frappent le sol, deux athlètes se présentent, ils se crachent des injures à la face, ils se heurtent de leurs bras, de leurs épaules, de leurs fronts, ils échangent une bave verdâtre, mousseuse, et, armés de leurs casse-tête, ils se placent sur la même ligne, ils le lancent à l'air ... et celui des deux combattants qui le ramène plus près de la ligne tracée est proclamé vainqueur. Alors le vaincu, sans autre façon, se pose en face de son ennemi, courbe là tête, étudie, en levant un peu les yeux, les mouvements de son adversaire, dont le bras tient l'arme fatale prête à tomber, cherchant à tromper l'attention de celui qui veut lui ouvrir le crâne. Si le coup est porté dans le vide, c'est au tour du premier à se soumettre à l'épreuve, et ainsi de suite jusqu'à ce que l'un des deux tombe mort sur le sol.

... Après la fête on emporta deux cadavres, et le thé fut servi au milieu des éclats derrière de l'assemblée.

Arago was shocked to think that such a display should occur "au milieu d'une cité belle, florissante et policée". ¹

There is little reason to doubt that this attitude towards the 'blacks' was quite common in Sydney during this period. It appears that Macquarie could do little to improve the situation.

Macquarie, however, continued to be interested in the progress of the Native Institution and other plans for the assimilation of the Aborigines. In his despatch to Bathurst of 24th March, 1819, he records with satisfaction that, at the last annual gathering at Parramatta, some 284 natives had been present and that peace and harmony had been achieved. He asked Bathurst to approve an issue of 350 suits of coarse red cloth for distribution to those who attended such meetings. He reported that:

... the native institution ... has succeeded far beyond my most sanguine Expectations, the Children having made great Progress in all

¹ ibid.
those Useful and Necessary Branches of Instruction they are taught, evincing good Natural Understandings and an Aptitude for learning whatever is proposed to be taught them.¹

One of the main features of the annual feast at Parramatta was now the parading of these children before their parents, when they read their lessons and produced specimens of their progress in education.

Macquarie's great interest in the Aborigines could suggest that his report to Bathurst was not entirely impartial. In April 1819, however, twenty children from the Native Institution competed against one hundred European children at the school examination held at Parramatta. The press report of this event was a triumph for Macquarie's faith in his efforts:

... it is not less strange than pleasing to remark, in answer to an erroneous opinion which had long prevailed with many, namely, that the Aborigines of this country were insusceptible to any mental improvement which could adapt them to the purposes of civilised association,

¹ Historical Records of Australia, Vol. X, p.95. Macquarie to Bathurst, 24-3-1819.
that a black girl of fourteen years of age between three or four years in the school, bore away the chief Prize with much satisfaction to their worthy adjudges and auditors. Other prizes were designated to children of much desert.

Macquarie's faith had been fully justified and even some of his opponents now admitted that improvement in the conditions of Aborigines was possible once positive opportunities were provided.

In August 1819 Macquarie granted 30 acres of land near Bathurst to a native named Colebee, on the same conditions as grants given to white settlers. Then Macquarie brought forward his most ambitious plan for the civilization of the Aborigines. He had foreshadowed the scheme for some time, but on 24th April, 1819, in his despatch to Bathurst, he suggested the establishment of a native reserve in the heart of the fertile Cow Pastures in the vicinity of Moss Vale and Sutton Forest. The scheme envisaged a reserve of 10,000 acres of land in

1 Sydney Gazette, April 17th, 1819.


an area where there was "fertility of soil and a plentiful supply of good water,"¹ and extended from Mr. Macarthur's boundary to Mount Hunter, with the Warragamba and Nepean rivers also acting as boundaries. The Rev. Robert Cartwright² had already offered his services as supervisor of this settlement and seminary for natives.

Despite the good work of Mrs. Shelley and her daughter at Parramatta, Macquarie realised the need for a male superintendent. He felt that the Native Institution should be moved to the Cow Pastures where children could be trained to become settlers. When they married, they would receive stock and equipment with land in the immediate vicinity of the establishment. He realised that, if the Aborigines had farms amongst white settlers, they would not be accepted by either the Europeans or their own people. By establishing farms in an area where they could stay together, the Institution itself would provide an asylum in old age. The plan called for a residence for the chaplain, with a library attached, a school for boys

² Cartwright had been the first Chaplain at the Native Institution at Parramatta.
and a school for girls, the latter to include a workroom for spinning and weaving. Agricultural and garden products should ensure cheap maintenance, and help from missions, especially the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, was envisaged. Macquarie concluded his submission with the suggestion that Bathurst should "Approve of this Measure, as One worthy of British Feelings to a harmless Race, who have been without Struggle driven by the Progress of British Industry from their ancient places of Inhabitation". 1

At the end of 1819, Commissioner Bigge and his secretary accompanied Macquarie to the annual meeting and feast held in Parramatta. The Sydney Gazette reported that two hundred and fifty Aborigines were present. The children, as usual, demonstrated their progress and exhibited their writings and drawings to the numerous spectators present, and in doing so "excited alternate emotions of admiration and applause". 2 The children then "passed round the circle, and received the affectionate embraces of their parents and friends, all of whom beheld with a gaze of admiration and apparently of gratitude and delight the improved appearance

2 Sydney Gazette, 1st January, 1820.
of the little ones, who were neatly and uniformly
dressed in the English manner". ¹ As this is the only
report available, we have no indication of the Aborigines'
real feelings at seeing their children "neatly and
uniformly dressed in the English manner". It is reasonable
to suppose that many of the "proud parents" had serious
doubts about the value of this new form of education which
undermined traditional tribal beliefs and customs.

Reporting on the school, Bigge stated that:

Since its establishment 37 boys and 27 girls have
been admitted; of these 6 have absconded, 2 died,
and one was taken by his father to reside on some
land that was given to him ... These children
have been taught to read and write, and have been
instructed in the principles of the Christian
religion. They also attend Church regularly at
Parramatta, and join in the service. The girls
have been taught the common sorts of needlework
and domestic service, and two have been hired
out as servants to respectable inhabitants in
the country.

From the experiment that has been made at this
establishment, no doubt can be entertained of the
natural capacities of the native black children
and their power of attaining the means of
improving their condition. It yet remains to be
proved whether the habits they acquire in the
schools are permanent. In the meantime, the
effort that has been made is very creditable to

¹ ibid.
Governor Macquarie and the meeting that he has annually held with the chiefs and black natives that are nearest to the settled districts, has tended in some degree to conciliate them.  

In Shelley's original plan, it was intended that the children who grew up in the Institution could find suitable marriage partners amongst others who had shared their educational experiences. However, the first girls to reach marriageable age had difficulty in finding suitable husbands, in view of the relatively small number of inmates. On 21st March, 1821, two were married to suitable "tame" natives at a Christian ceremony conducted by the Rev. Richard Hill, who was the Secretary of the Institution. In his letter to the Lord Bishop of London on 6th March, 1822, Hill stated:

Three girls who have been several years in the school have been married to native young men. To each of which has been given ten acres of land, with a Hut and some common domestic articles. They have also a Cow each. And under all circumstances, there is as much industry apparent as could be expected.  

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Macquarie's final despatch to Bathurst before he relinquished office again stressed the success of the Native Institution and claimed that "the progress, these Black Children have made in their Education, has been a subject of astonishment to every one, who has ever visited the Institution".¹ He also reported on his contact with various Aboriginal tribes in the areas of settlement, stating that:

members of three of the tribes chose to settle on the Shores of Port Jackson in the vicinity of Sydney on account of the conveniency of fishing whilst two other tribes had begun farming in the interior, from the products of which they now maintain themselves.²

This concept of tribes becoming economically independent suggest that Macquarie was prepared to accept Cartwright's proposal for community development rather than individual assimilation. Cartwright had criticised the Native Institution as he felt that "the intention of the Committee to apprentice the boys to the most useful mechanical trades and to put the girls out to service would not lead to the moral and spiritual improvement of those concerned who would

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² ibid., p.678.
be contaminated by bad examples of those around them".\(^1\) He does, however, hold out hope for the inmates of the Native Institution. "Buried as is the intellect of these Savages in Augean filth, we may yet find Gems of the first Magnitude and brilliance."\(^2\) Cartwright and Macquarie were well aware of the problems facing individual Aborigines who became settlers. "Whenever one or other of these natives settle, as in the instance of the South Creek\(^3\) Chief, who is one of the best, the rest forsake him, which is a trial too great for these savages who have ever been accustomed to wander about in companies".\(^4\)

It was for these reasons that Macquarie was so anxious to create Aboriginal reserves and settlements away from European contact, where the natives could develop their own economy and become self-sufficient, and where they would not be dependent upon hand-outs from the Government or the settlers.

\(^1\) ibid., p.265, Macquarie to Bathurst 24-2-1820, quoting Cartwright to Macquarie 6-12-1819, also in Great Britain and Ireland Parliamentary Documents, Vol.V.

\(^2\) ibid., p.264, Macquarie to Bathurst 24-2-1820 quoting Cartwright to Macquarie 6-12-1819.

\(^3\) near Bathurst.

When Macquarie was replaced by Governor Brisbane in December 1821, the basis for a positive and effective Aboriginal policy was in existence. Macquarie had shown that decisive action could maintain law and order between settlers and Aborigines in the closely settled areas. However, the rapid expansion of settlement which followed the crossing of the Blue Mountains in 1813 led to frontier clashes as inland Aborigines also were deprived of their sources of food and were driven from their water holes and river banks.

There is, unfortunately, ample evidence that during this period 1809-21, shootings continued along the advancing frontiers, and that these were conducted not only by convicts, but by free settlers who "thought no more of shooting a native than shooting a crow".

Macquarie's concern for the Aborigines no doubt prevented some of the worst abuses, but the lack of any effective law enforcement agency on the frontiers of settlement permitted settlers to use their own methods in dealing with the problem of the natives. Macquarie, too, could do little to assist the demoralised groups of Aborigines who drifted around the Sydney waterfront begging for hand-outs, or who became drunken derelicts associating with the dregs of the infant colony.

He was more concerned than other governors before him with positive measures to assist Aborigines to make an adequate adjustment to the impact of European Colonization. His humanitarianism and obvious sincerity earned him the respect of many Aboriginal leaders, who began to make the Annual Gathering an opportunity to discuss mutual problems with the Governor. The Home Government still issued instructions that the natives should not be molested and that they should be assisted to take advantage of the benefits of civilization, but appeared reluctant to provide adequate finance when positive proposals were advanced.

Macquarie's attempts to establish a middle-class, land-owning native group may have been over-ambitious, particularly in view of the lack of monetary support from the Colonial office, the thinly veiled contempt of many of the free settlers and the natural reticence of the Aborigines. On the other hand, although progress was fairly slow, the stage was now set for the introduction of further constructive measures designed to ensure significant improvements in race relations. There is no doubt that when Macquarie left for England he took with him the hope that his successor, Brisbane, would be given approval to implement the Cartwright plan and would be able to build on the groundwork of trust and confidence he himself had so carefully laid.
Chapter Three

THE EXPANSION OF SETTLEMENT 1822-1838

In his early despatches to Lord Bathurst, Brisbane indicated that he was concerned for the welfare of the natives, but he made no attempt to follow up Macquarie's proposals for the development of a Native Establishment in the Cow Pastures. It does not appear that Macquarie's ideas received serious consideration in England even though race relations in the young colony were deteriorating rapidly. Brisbane does not seem to have had Macquarie's strong interest in the Native Institution. It was quickly handed over to Marsden and the clergy and Brisbane appeared to take little further interest in it.

Mrs. Shelley retired at the end of 1822 but the Committee had already decided in 1821 that the school should be removed to Black Town, where 500 acres of land had been reserved. As well as the mission house

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1 Historical Records of Australia: Brisbane's despatches make little mention of the Native Institution. The majority of references in Historical Records of Australia concerning Aborigines refer to clashes with the settlers.
and church, there were plans for a school, workshop and farm. Mr. George Clarke, a Church Missionary Society clergyman on his way to New Zealand, was detained by Marsden for a few months to look after the new school. Clarke described the Aborigines (or New Hollanders as he called them) as "the poorest objects on the habitable globe". Aboriginal pupils were taken from the Male and Female Orphan Schools, but numbers remained very small. William Horton visited the Institution on 13th May, 1824. He reported that:

The Government Institution for instructing and civilizing the Aboriginal natives was in an unpromising state. Only 4 black children were in the school, 6 little cottages but only 3 inhabited. In every respect the Aborigines are as barbarous as 30 or 40 years ago.

In 1824 the few boys who were at Black Town were transferred to Liverpool under the care of Cartwright but the number never exceeded ten. The girls remained at Black Town under the care of William Walker who was

2 ibid.
3 Bonwick Transcript, Box 52, No. 48262
also in charge of the Female Institution at Parramatta.¹
Little progress was made at either place and Macquarie's
school programme was gradually abandoned.

Although Aboriginal attendance at the Annual
gathering continued to increase until 1829, the numbers
then declined considerably.² The meetings ceased to
have any real significance and degenerated into annual
"handouts" for the natives in the Parramatta district,
with decreasing interest on the part of both Government
and the Aborigines.

There was increasing friction on the frontier of
settlement in the Bathurst district. The Aborigines
found that their food supply had vanished and the settlers
became worried about the safety of their livestock. Sheep
and cattle were killed and the settlers retaliated by
driving the natives away.³

¹ Historical Records of Australia, Vol. XI, p.864.
   Brisbane to Bathurst, 3-10-1825.
   Brisbane to Bathurst 31-12-1824.
In August 1824, six Europeans were charged with killing a number of Aborigines but successfully pleaded self-defence. However, as Docker points out, the prosecution did not make much of the fact that three defenceless women, surprised on an open plain by a band of horsemen armed to the teeth, had been ruthlessly destroyed without any question of self-defence being involved.¹

A few days before this "not guilty" verdict was reached a serious clash occurred in the Bathurst area when seven Europeans, and at least double the number of Aborigines, were killed.² Brisbane declared martial law in the colony west of Mount York.³ The proclamation gave the whites a licence to kill but it was pointed out that:

> the Shedding of Blood is only just when all other Means of Defence or of Peace are exhausted; that Cruelty is never Lawful;

³ Proclamation of Martial Law, 14th August, 1824.
and that, when personal Attacks become necessary the helpless Women and Children are to be spared.¹

In a letter to the Sydney Gazette on 19th August, a correspondent stated that although the Aborigines were the inhabitants but not the proprietors of the land "I must decidedly protest against the indiscriminate slaughter of these tribes which has been recommended by some".² The Gazette editorial, however, appeared to express majority opinion:

The Colonial Government has at length interposed its powerful arm, to protect the unprotected settler, and his family, from the merciless invasion of the aboriginal tribes ... the lonely stockman may now lawfully defend his property and his life; but is advised to go no further.³

Martial law continued for four months; detachments moving about the country "keeping these unfortunate People in a constant state of alarm soon brought them to a sense of their Duty".⁴ During this period the natives were

² Sydney Gazette, 19th August, 1824.
³ ibid., (editorial)
"shot like wild beasts"\(^1\) by soldiers and settlers alike.

In September, an expedition against the Aborigines under the Bathurst commandant, Major Morisset, led to a "speedy reconciliation between settlers and blacks".\(^2\) Five Aborigines accompanied Morisset back to Bathurst and "soon after two groups totalling sixty natives altogether, the residue of the estimated 600 to 700 'came in' to plead for forgiveness".\(^3\) This was but one of many punitive expeditions organised against the Aborigines. A reward of five hundred acres of land was offered for the capture of Saturday, branded as one of the instigators of the original clash. Saturday had previously served a sentence of one month's imprisonment for 'supreme' insolence to Europeans but, at the end of the year, Brisbane was able to report to Earl Bathurst that "Saturday, their great and most warlike Chieftain has been with me to receive his pardon".\(^4\)

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2 Sydney Gazette, 16th September, 1824.


The importance of Brisbane’s Proclamation should not be underestimated. The Government had now officially sanctioned the use of naked force and extreme coercive action against the natives on the frontiers of settlement. Settlers could therefore claim some justification in taking strong action "to protect their lives and their properties" against the depredations of the natives long after the Proclamation was officially repealed (on 11th December, 1824).

Brisbane had the support of the Colonial Office when he used soldiers to subdue hostile natives and avenge settlers who had been killed. In a despatch dated 14th July, 1824, Bathurst had written:

In reference to the discussions, which have recently taken place in the Colony respecting the manner, in which the Native Inhabitants are to be treated when making hostile incursions for the purpose of Plunder, you will understand it to be your duty, when such disturbances cannot be prevented or allayed by less vigorous measures, to oppose force by force, and to repeal such Aggressions in the same manner, as if they proceeded from subjects of any accredited State.

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1 ibid., Vol. XII, p.21. Bathurst to Darling, 14-7-1825.
Soldiers were sent not only to avenge settlers who had been killed, but also to disperse natives who assembled in large numbers, whether or not there appeared to be any likelihood of conflict. That this prevented Aborigines from participating in initiation ceremonies and other religious rites, was of no concern to the authorities. Brisbane requested that a detachment of Mounted Police be formed to maintain law and order on the outskirts of settlement. This was eventually approved and the use of this special contingent was welcomed by the settlers. However, soldiers were still used as the main force when action was taken against Aborigines who had attacked settlers on the frontiers of settlement.

In 1825 an Auxiliary of the Church Missionary Society was founded in Sydney to support the work of missionaries who would reside amongst Aborigines. The main tasks of these missionaries were "to prevent the destruction of property and human life ... and for the promotion of their civilization and improvement". Brisbane who


was patron, promised to grant the Society 10,000 acres of
land. This was approved by the Colonial Office on
condition that the land should revert to the Crown if
the Mission closed. It was some time, however, before
the Church Missionary Society began their work and
in the meantime the London Missionary Society received
a grant of land near an inlet known as Yawanba on Lake
Macquarie. Here the Rev. L. Threlkeld endeavoured to
train the natives in agriculture and to translate the
scriptures by commencing a vocabulary and grammar of the
native tongue.¹

In December 1825 Brisbane was replaced by Darling,
but race relations continued to deteriorate as guerilla
warfare extended along the moving frontiers of settlement.
In May 1826, for example, when a group of Aborigines
assembled within a few miles of the residence of a
magistrate named Reid, Darling sent a force of soldiers
to disperse them.² "Dispersal" by shooting became the

¹ Historical Records of Australia, Vol. XII, pp. 795-796.
Darling to Bathurst 22-12-1826, enclosed Scott to
Darling 9-12-1826.

² ibid., p.269. Darling to Bathurst 6-5-1826.
accepted procedure to ensure that settlers would not be molested.

Brave men as well as others had arrived at the cowardly conclusion that the brutalities of the whites were inevitable, and their consequences must be condoned or neglected by the Government. Some were insolent enough to declare that it was the dispensation of Providence that the black race must be 'stamped out' by the white.

Captured natives were sometimes shot "while attempting to escape," but the cold-blooded murder of the native Jackey-Jackey, from the Upper Hunter, resulted in the trial of Lieutenant Low before a military jury in Sydney. Evidence was given that Jackey-Jackey had been captured and handed over to Lieutenant Low by a Thomas Farnham. On the following morning, without trial or investigation, Low ordered that the prisoner be shot. His body was buried by two men, in obedience to the order of a sergeant. Although none of the witnesses was contradicted, the jury retired for a few minutes and returned with a verdict of "Not

Guilty". 1 The successful defence of Low had been undertaken by Dr. Wardell and W.C. Wentworth. It was claimed as a major victory for an individual defending his rights against an autocratic government.

Further punitive expeditions were ordered from time to time, but when the Hunter River settlers asked for military protection, Darling replied:

I therefore, strongly recommend you to unite to take Measures for Your own defence; and you may be satisfied that, in any exertions you may make, you shall receive every necessary support. 2

Early in 1828, a party of soldiers:

fired on the natives and wounded four or five at least, amongst whom it afterwards appeared there was a woman and two children. The Woman and one of the children did not survive; ... and they appear to have despatched an unfortunate Man, who had been wounded from the first fire, from a desire, as they state, of relieving him from his Sufferings. 3

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1 G.W. Rusden, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
This matter was referred to the Executive Council. Darling commented that the Captain in charge of the detachment was a very good and efficient officer, and stated: "It did not appear, much as the Event is to be deplored, that any benefit would result from the further prosecution of the matter."¹

When the Colonial Office heard about this incident, Murray wrote:

I cannot too strongly express my reprobation of the behaviour of all the Persons concerned in this inexcusable transaction. An unofficered expedition of private Soldiers, and, as it should seem, of Convicts also, undertaken against the Natives upon a promise of a pecuniary reward for the capture of one or more of them, could scarcely tend to any other than the lamentable result, which actually followed.²

But Murray added that, because of the length of time which had elapsed,

it may be proper to acquiesce in the decision of the Council that the matter cannot with advantage be further pursued; but I beg you to make it distinctly and generally understood that if any outrage should hereafter be

¹ ibid.
perpetrated in any degree resembling that, on which I have now been addressing you, it is the determination of His Majesty's Government to proceed with the utmost severity against every individual who shall be a partaker, either as principal or as accessory in its commission.

The Colonial Office still formulated policy with a sincere regard for humanitarian principles, despite its lack of understanding of the real needs of the dispossessed natives. It was, however, a long way from the scene, not only in distance but also in time, when prompt action was required to meet an immediate situation. General statements of policy from the British Government were impracticable and, without the provision of adequate finance, became quite meaningless. Instructions issued to Governor Darling on his appointment for example, stated:

It is Our further Will and Pleasure that you do, to the utmost of your power, promote Religion and Education among the Native Inhabitants of Our said Colony, or of the Lands and Islands thereto adjoining; and that you do especially take care to protect them in their persons, and in the free enjoyment of their possessions; and that you do by all lawful means prevent and restrain all violence and injustice, which may in any manner be practised or attempted against

1 ibid.
them; and that you take such measures as may appear to you with the advice of Our said Archdeacon to be necessary for their conversion to the Christian Faith and for their advancement in Civilization.¹

Darling might well have asked the British Government how he could protect the Aborigines' "enjoyment of their possessions" when their land (their chief possession) was being alienated at an ever-increasing rate as settlement spread. He could also have asked how he was to prevent the natives from starving to death, once their natural food supply had been cut off. How was he to prevent stock-keepers and ticket-of-leave convicts on the frontiers of settlement from molesting Aborigines and taking their women? Who was to pay for the education and civilization of the native inhabitants of the colony? When the Aborigines retaliated, speared cattle or attacked settlers, who was to explain carefully that their conduct was unacceptable to the European settlers? At the enquiry into Low's conduct, it had been made very clear that witnesses were deliberately kept out of the way: "the inhabitants of every class being at least indifferent to the fate of the Natives, and unwilling that any one,

¹ ibid., Vol. XII, p.125. Instructions to Darling 17-7-1825.
that has been actuated by the same feelings, should be made answerable for his conduct". ¹ Faced with the task of winning a livelihood from the harsh natural environment, settlers had no time for sentiment when the natives proved troublesome. Natives who trespassed on the property of the new landholders did so at their own risk.

As Aborigines were deprived of their normal food and water supplies, they retreated and invaded the territory of neighbouring tribes. The resulting conflict was, of course, of no concern to the more "civilized" whites. With the growing number of colonists, the developing economy and the rapid expansion of settlement, the "natives" were considered a relatively minor problem by the Governor and his Executive Council.

Darling made it quite clear that he expected law and order to be maintained and was anxious that both the settlers and the natives should be restrained from further violence. However, faced with opposition and obstruction from the settlers and magistrates, Darling accepted a

¹ ibid., Vol. XIII, p.179. Darling to Hay 23-3-1827.
fairly broad interpretation of the orders that action should only be taken against the natives in defence or in retaliation for unprovoked attacks. In May, 1826, Darling issued a proclamation which urged magistrates and settlers to inform Aboriginal "chiefs" that the Government desired to protect them from ill-disposed whites but, in turn, these "chiefs" were to "restrain all acts of violence on the part of their tribes".¹

Towards the end of 1827, Darling, with the approval of Bathurst, appointed Richard Sadleir, a pious ex-Royal Navy Lieutenant, to travel throughout New South Wales to survey the numbers and conditions under which various tribes were living. Sadleir was also requested to recruit Aboriginal children for the Native Institution at Black Town which had recently been opened.² Here it was intended to provide the common elements of education, together with carpentry for boys, needlework for girls and religious instruction for all.³ More children could be accommodated but Sadleir found that the Aborigines in

¹ ibid., Vol. XII, p.271. Darling to Bathurst 6-5-1826 (enclosure).
² ibid., Vol. XIV, p.56.
³ ibid.
the interior were unwilling to hand over their children to Europeans and have them confined in an establishment at Black Town.\(^1\)

Sadleir was satisfied, however, that many Aborigines wished to have their children educated in their own tribal areas, but there must be considerable doubt about the Aborigines' understanding of the term "education". In his report, Sadleir suggested that three major establishments should be set up

... one on the Maurum (sic.) River to the South another about 80 miles below Wellington Valley to the West and another on or near Peel's River, to the North, and that a minor Establishment be fixed between each ... one on the Shoal Haven River to the South, another in Murrawarry Plains to the West, and one near the Mudgee Tribe.\(^2\)

At these establishments, farm labour could be combined with instruction.

In passing Sadleir's recommendations on to Darling, Archdeacon Scott omitted to mention the minor establishments, reduced the total expenditure from £3,000

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\(^1\) ibid., p.59. Scott to Darling 1-8-1827, enclosed in Darling to Huskisson 27-3-1828 and Great Britain and Ireland Parliamentary Documents, 1826-38, Vol. V., p.15.

\(^2\) ibid.
to £2,000 and presented strong arguments against the whole proposal. He pointed out to Darling that the proposed establishments would soon be surrounded by settlements; that there was little hope of finding qualified people to run the institutions; that the proposal would only cater for 200 to 300 of the 4,500 natives on the frontiers of settlement, and that this could cause jealousy and trouble between them. He claimed that work should either be undertaken on a large scale or, alternatively, that nothing should be done at all:

I am thoroughly satisfied that, unless the Government are prepared to go the length of feeding and clothing the whole of them (4,500) at an immense Expense and that constantly, not the least progress will be made either as to Civilization or Conversion.  

Scott added "How far your Excellency may think His Majesty's Government may, in these times when our own Children are not yet provided with the means of Education, be disposed to authorise such an Expense, it is not for me to anticipate". 

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Sadleir had suggested that an active mounted police force be established to patrol the frontiers of settlement, that a catechist or missionary be sent amongst the Aborigines, and that food and clothing should be distributed where necessary. ¹ Scott's alternative suggestion was that Sadleir himself should be employed to tour the outback area and establish friendly contact with the natives. He also urged that the Church Missionary Society be supported in a plan to establish a day school for both Aborigines and Europeans. ² All seemed to agree that "something should be done"; but it was apparent that finance would be made available only for token schemes, which could be quoted as proof of the concern of the Europeans for the native inhabitants.

Sadleir's own views on the natives are quite interesting. In his report to Scott, he stated that the "Blacks take advantage of the weaknesses of the stock-keepers" ³ and that they were responsible for various acts of aggression against them. Their habits, he claimed, were indolent in the extreme and "In the Winter they are

¹ Historical Records of Australia, Vol. XIV, p. 59.
Darling to Huskisson 27-3-1828, enclosed Scott to Darling 1-8-1827.

² ibid., p. 61.
³ ibid., p. 58.
so pressed for Food as to Eat their own Blood, congealed and mixed with Snow, and there is strong reason to believe they will devour their own Children". This report was hardly designed to arouse sympathetic interest and understanding and, in view of the problem of financing any real measure of relief, Sadleir's positive proposals were shelved. Scott had made it abundantly clear that he was totally opposed to any special form of assistance for the native inhabitants. Darling's opinion of the Aborigines was not calculated to encourage support and in his despatches he frequently referred to their vagrant habits and pointed out that "the appearance of the Natives about Sydney is extremely disgusting, mainly because of their access to spirits".

Goderich, in his reply of 27th March, 1828, agreed that there was no doubt about the importance of measures to help the natives. He added, however, that:

whilst due attention is paid to that desirable object, others of comparatively greater importance must not be neglected and, as a difficulty is already felt from

1 ibid.
2 ibid., Vol. XII, p. 796, Darling to Bathurst 22-12-1826.
the want of adequate funds in providing necessary religious Instruction for the benefit of the Colonists generally, I need not point out to you the expediency of suspending for the present any extensive exertions, leading to expense which it might otherwise be expedient to use in favour of the Aborigines of New South Wales.

Goderich felt that more work should be done on the survey of numbers and condition of the natives:

in order that the Government may be prepared with the means of adopting more effectual measures in furtherance of the object in contemplation, whenever circumstances will admit of the formation of the Establishments which the Archdeacon is of the opinion will be necessary for the purpose.  

This decision to postpone any decisive action until the survey of numbers and conditions had been carried out indicated that no finance would be available for such grandiose schemes. It was clear that the government was not prepared to undertake any major programme to "civilize and Christianise the natives" if it involved the expenditure of large sums of money. They were prepared, however, to assist

1 ibid., Vol. XIII, pp. 433-434. Goderich to Darling 6-7-1827.

2 ibid., p.434.
the missionary bodies in their endeavours and to confine their own direct activities to the Annual Conference and the issue of slop clothing and blankets.

In September 1829, William Grant Broughton succeeded Archdeacon Scott and, in his charge to the clergy delivered at St. James on 3rd December, pointed out that various early attempts to civilize the natives had been abandoned because of various difficulties but, "because of her advantageous position in the Colony, the Church of England should strive to be the Mother of Missionaries to the native population". ¹

Although Broughton was anxious that the Church Missionary Society begin its work with the Aborigines, he had no hesitation in supporting the application for government assistance for Threlkeld at Lake Macquarie. ²

In August, the Treasurer of the London Missionary Society, W.A. Hankey, had written to Darling informing him that his Society had dismissed Threlkeld and would no longer provide him with any financial support. Threlkeld had been spending more than he had been allocated and when the Society had remonstrated with him, he had published

²Ibid., p. 675, enclosure Darling to Murray 9-8-1830.
a pamphlet and circulated it in England. Darling referred the letter to the Executive Council and Broughton recommended that Threlkeld be paid £150 per annum and be given rations for four servants for a period of five years\(^1\) so that he could continue with his work on an Aboriginal Grammar and in translating the scriptures into the native tongue.\(^2\) On 8th January, 1831, Goderich approved of this grant on condition that Threlkeld forward to Broughton an annual report on his work.\(^3\)

In 1826 Darling approved a grant of 10,000 acres of land for the Church Missionary Society\(^4\) and £500 per annum for the services of two religious teachers to work amongst the Aborigines.\(^5\) The Church Missionary Society, however, was unable to find suitable workers

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\(^1\) ibid., p. 676, Executive Council Minute No. 18/1830 of 3rd June, 1830, enclosure Darling to Murray 9-8-1830.

\(^2\) L. Threlkeld, *An Australian Grammar*, was published in 1839, and *A Key to the Structure of the Aboriginal Language* was published in 1850.

\(^3\) Historical Records of Australia, Vol. XVI, p.14, Goderich to Darling 8-1-1831.


\(^5\) Historical Records of Australia, Vol. XVI, p.869. Note 133.
for New South Wales as the first missionary, Rev. J. Norman, went to Tasmania and the first schoolteacher, Mr. J. Lisk, remained at Parramatta because of his wife's health and later returned to England. However, the Aboriginal school at Black Town was re-opened under the charge of Hall, a missionary from New Zealand. Archdeacon Scott decided that the "Black children in the Male and Female Orphan Institution" be placed in the separate school at Black Town under the care of Hall and his wife.

In December, 1831, Governor Bourke replaced Darling and continued the policy of leaving Aboriginal education to the missions and the general control of Aborigines within the confines of settlement to the Police Magistrates.

The Church Missionary Society in England discussed the offer of 10,000 acres of land in the Wellington Valley. They agreed that they had not previously undertaken work amongst Aborigines because of the lack of finance. "But, to an invitation proceeding from such high authority and seconded by so liberal an offer, they could

2 Historical Records of Australia, Vol. XIV, p.56. Darling to Huskisson enclosing Scott to Darling 1-8-1827.
not have refused to accede without an abandonment of the
most sacred duty". ¹ The Report added:

We rejoice, however, in the proof thus afforded
us, that the Rulers of our Country are not
to be diverted by a timid parsimony from
performing the great duty of redressing the
wrongs inflicted by British policy on these
barbarous and helpless tribes ... The
revenues of the Crown in New Holland are
derived from the culture of lands, of which
the ancient proprietors have been deprived
forcibly and without compensation. The
small sum subtracted from these revenues,
for the benefit of that injured race, is
due to them, in the strictest sense, as a
debt of justice. ²

The area selected at Wellington Valley had
previously been a penal settlement, so the Church
Missionary Society also received a number of buildings
which they could put to immediate use. The two
missionaries appointed, the Rev. J. Handt and the Rev.
W. Watson, began their work at Wellington Valley on
3rd October, 1832.³ A school was soon opened and from
12 to 20 children began to attend. Due to the wandering
habits of the Aborigines, regular attendance was

¹ S.M. Johnstone, op. cit., p. 166, quoting Church
Missionary Society Annual Report, 1830-1831.

² ibid.

³ S.M. Johnstone, op.cit., p.168.
a problem. However,

Black children were taken into the mission-houses and taught to read and write, proving really intelligent; and hundreds of adults, notwithstanding their nomadic habits gathered under Christian instruction, joined in Christian worship, and gave many signs of great improvement.

The missionaries reported that ... "The children were not considered inferior in intellect or ability to those in civilized countries, they learned their lessons as readily as children in England".  

A major problem faced by the missionaries was the interference of stockmen who molested the Aboriginal women who had been left at the mission station while their menfolk were away on hunting expeditions or carrying out religious ceremonies. "This shook the confidence of the Aboriginal men on their return".  

The Humanitarian movement in Great Britain, spurred on by its success in having slavery abolished in 1833, now turned its attention to the conditions of the

\[\text{\[1\] E. Stock, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 361.}\
\[\text{\[2\] S.M. Johnstone, op. cit., p. 171.}\
\[\text{\[3\] ibid., p. 170.}\

coloured races of the Empire". On 1st August, 1834, the Rt. Hon. T. Spring-Rice wrote to Bourke and stated that the House of Commons had presented a humble address to His Majesty "as shall secure to the natives the due observance of justice and the protection of their rights, promote the spread of Civilization among them, and lead them to the peaceful and voluntary reception of the Christian Religion". 

In May 1835, the Port Phillip Association settled in the Port Phillip District and proceeded to make treaties with the natives for the transfer of land. The first treaty provided for the transfer of some 500,000 acres (more or less) in the area known as Dutigallar (Melbourne) for 20 pair of blankets, 30 tomahawks, 100 knives, 50 pair of scissors, 30 looking glasses, 200 handkerchiefs, 100 lbs. of flour and 60 shirts. The second treaty for some 100,000 acres, known as Geelong, is quoted in full as Appendix V. 

Many people claimed that the treaties were "a colossal bluff" to obtain land from the authorities.

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2 Vide Appendix V.
without the usual formalities. They stated that some of these settlers:

had assisted in the Black Drive in Van Diemen's Land and regarded all aboriginals as treacherous, uneducable, economically useless, and as creatures whose very existence was a menace to white settlement - a wool-bearing sheep was certainly of more value than an aboriginal.

Others, however, defended the new settlers and pointed out that the Deed of Association declared that "The two principal objects of the Association should be the civilization of the tribes, and pastoral pursuits", and that two of the fifteen clauses in the Deed concerned Aborigines. There is evidence that the surveyor of the Association, J.H. Wedge, was genuinely interested in the native population, as he had already published a pamphlet entitled "A scheme for Civilizing and Bringing into Industrious Habits the Aborigines of New South Wales". In it, he had said that if "the ever present disposition

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of settlers to drive the natives from their haunts was not checked" it would "perpetuate the hostile feeling of the natives towards the colonists." He also suggested that a missionary should be appointed to work with the natives in the area.

Bourke was not particularly interested in the motives behind the settlement but he made it abundantly clear that the land belonged to the Crown. When the Association formally applied to the Governor to ratify their agreement with the Aborigines, Bourke, with the advice of the Executive Council, proclaimed the limits of the colony of New South Wales (including the Port Phillip District) and announced that all claims to the land by pretended treaty or bargain with the Aborigines were void and of no effect against the rights of the Crown. Bourke informed the Colonial Office of this on 10th October, 1835. In April, the following year, Glenelg gave official approval

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1 E.J.B. Foxcroft, Australian Native Policy, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1941, p. 36.

2 New South Wales Government Gazette, Proclamation dated 2nd September, 1835, also Historical Records of Australia Vol. XVIII, pp. 811-12, Note 42. See illustration p.116a.

PROCLAMATION BY GOVERNOR BOURKE, 26th AUGUST, 1835

NEW SOUTH WALES
GOVERNMENT GAZETTE.
Published by Authority.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 1835.

PROCLAMATION.

By His Excellency Major-General Sir Richard Bourke, K.C.B., Commanding His Majesty's Forces, Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief of the Territory of New South Wales and its Dependencies, and Vice-Admiral of the same, &c. &c. &c.

WHEREAS, it has been represented to me, that divers of His Majesty's subjects have taken possession of vacant Lands of the Crown, within the limits of this Colony, under the pretence of a treaty, bargain, or contract, for the purchase thereof, with the Aboriginal Natives; Now therefore, I the Governor, in virtue and in exercise of the power and authority in me vested, do hereby proclaim and notify to all His Majesty's subjects and others whom it may concern, that every such treaty, bargain, and contract with the Aboriginal Natives as aforesaid, for the possession, title, or claim to any Lands lying and being within the limits of the Government of the Colony of New South Wales, as the same are laid down and defined by His Majesty's Commission; that is to say, extending from the Northern Cape or extremity of the coast called Cape York, in the latitude of ten degrees thirty-seven minutes south, to the southern extremity of the said Territory of New South Wales, or Wilson's Promontory, in the latitude of thirty-nine degrees twelve minutes south, and embracing all the country inland to the westward, as far as the one hundred and twenty-ninth degree of east longitude, reckoning from the meridian of Greenwich, including all the Islands adjacent in the Pacific Ocean within the latitude aforesaid, and including also Norfolk Island, is void and of no effect against the rights of the Crown; and that all Persons who shall be found in possession of any such Lands as aforesaid, without the license or authority of His Majesty's Government, for such purpose, first had and obtained, will be considered as trespassers, and liable to be dealt with in like manner as other intruders upon the vacant lands of the Crown within the said Colony.

GIVEN under my Hand and Seal, at Government House, Sydney, this Twenty-sixth Day of August, One thousand eight hundred and thirty-five.

"RICHARD BOURKE."

By His Excellency's Command,

ALEXANDER M'LEAY.

GOD SAVE THE KING!
for the settlement to continue but pointed out that the settlement in New South Wales should be "contained" in order to avoid conflict between the settlers and the natives and the need to avoid increased expenditure for the protection of settlers.¹

He made it quite clear, however, that land could only be purchased by public auction from the Crown.

Although many circumstances have contributed to render me anxious that the Aborigines should be placed under a zealous and effective protection and that their rights should be studiously defended, I yet believe that we should consult very ill for the real welfare of that hapless and unfortunate race by recognising in them any right to alienate to private adventurers the land of the colony... It is indeed enough to observe that such a concession would subvert the foundation on which all Proprietary rights in New South Wales at present rest, and defeat a large part of the most important Regulations of the Local Government.²

This decision, aimed basically at the Association, has become a cornerstone of Aboriginal policy in Australia. Unlike the Governments of many other countries in the world³

¹ ibid., Vol XVIII, p.379. Glenelg to Bourke 13-4-1836.
² ibid.
³ e.g., Canada and New Zealand.
where the land rights of the indigenous population have been recognised by law and where compensation has been paid for the alienation of tribal land, the governments of the various Australian States have adhered to this decision of the Colonial Office and refused to recognise land rights for Aborigines.¹

Bourke had already sent George Stewart, a magistrate, to report on settlement in the Port Phillip District. He learnt that there were 142 men and 35 women spread over an area of some one hundred square miles and grazing 25,500 sheep and 100 cattle with about 60 acres under cultivation.²

Bourke appointed Captain William Lonsdale as Police Magistrate³ and the Rev. George Langhorne as the missionary

¹ On 8th December, 1966, the Government of South Australia passed the Aboriginal Lands Trust Act which established a Lands Trust, composed entirely of Aborigines, to control Crown land which had previously been set aside "for the use of Aborigines". In view of the land rights campaign organised by Aborigines and many Aboriginal organisations, especially the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, it seems probable that Aboriginal Land Rights will be recognised in many states over the next decade.


³ Historical Records of Australia, Vol. XVIII, pp. 540-541.
To work amongst the Aborigines. On the advice of Mr. Justice Burton, Bourke set aside an area of five thousand acres on the banks of the Yarra opposite the new township of Melbourne in the hope that Langhorne would be able to "civilize the blacks of Port Phillip".

Langhorne began work in January, 1837, and was assisted by two school teachers, an overseer and two assigned servants. For some time the mission school was fairly successful and there was an average attendance of over thirty children. However, as the township grew in size, attendance quickly fell off and Langhorne reported that the mission was not only a failure, but was actually doing real harm by encouraging the natives to remain near the town where they were adopting various "demoralising practices of the lower order of Europeans". In both its main objects, the employment of natives and the education of their children, the mission completely failed, so in April, 1839, Langhorne resigned. He had constantly urged both Bourke and Lonsdale, the Police Magistrate at Port Phillip, to have the mission moved away from the contaminating influence of the rapidly expanding settlement. He also stated that "he had no

1 E.J.B. Foxcroft, op. cit., p. 43 (Quoting Report by Thomas on Native Education, 1849 - Thomas papers).
2 ibid., p. 45
doubt that the intelligence of the natives was of a high order, and if educated would be equal to that of Englishmen.¹ He pointed out, however, that once the novelty of schooling had worn off, the children were removed by their parents at every frivolous pretext. He could see the futility of the Government's policy and suggested that he be permitted "to live among the tribes in the unoccupied areas, and there to prepare them in a gradual way for their inevitable contacts with the whites".² He felt that an attempt to force the natives into an artificial way of life would defeat its own ends, but his suggestion was considered preposterous. Bourke was firmly convinced that the natives would easily be persuaded to change their mode of life and cease living "under a piece of bark in the woods or open fields", once they saw the "obvious superiority" of the Euro-Australian's way of life.³ 

Bourke had been particularly impressed with the suggestion of Captain Alexander Maconochie, R.N., concerning the formation of a Native Police Force. Maconochie sent letters to Bourke and Glenelg in 1837, and subsequently published articles in the Austral-Asiatic

¹ _ibid._, p. 47.
² _ibid._, p. 48.
³ _ibid._, p. 49.
Review of Tasmania and in the Journal of the newly-formed Aborigines Protection Society. He argued that the natives who joined the police force could be taught decency and cleanliness, erratic habits could be rectified and a greater degree of civilization would result. The families of the men concerned could be settled in native villages where children could be educated and the whole status of the natives would be considerably raised in the eyes of the white population.

Bourke directed Lonsdale to try the experiment at Port Phillip with a view to "the civilization of its members and the creation of a force that might prevent attacks by tribes upon the scattered European population".

Late in 1837, Christian L.J. de Villiers, who had had experience in police work at the Cape of Good Hope, was appointed as superintendent. Some fifteen natives were enrolled and supplied with clothing and rations issued by the government. However, there was continual wrangling between de Villiers and Langhorne: de Villiers resigned

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2 ibid., p. 51.
(for the second time) in January, 1839, and the corps was dissolved.¹ The scheme had not been very successful but there were many who still believed that the only approach to the Aboriginal problem was to encourage or coerce them into adopting the European way of life.

Meanwhile, across the Murray at Wellington Valley, the mission established by Handt and Watson continued its work. In 1837, the Rev. James Gunther replaced Handt who went to the new mission established at Moreton Bay and an Agricultural Assistant, W. Porter, was employed as a farmer. Gunther, writing about the Aborigines in the first year of his appointment, said "morally they were deeply degraded, intellectually they showed great promise and ability, racially they were doomed to extinction if some really adequate steps were not taken to protect and preserve them".² He went on to say that "however degraded they may be, they afford at least a decisive proof that they are quite as capable of cultivation of mind as any other natives".³

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¹ It was later argued that the scheme had not been given a fair trial and a Native Police Force was again established in Victoria and in northern New South Wales (later Queensland).

² S.M. Johnstone, op. cit., p. 173.

³ ibid., p. 174.
In November, 1837, the Police Magistrate at Bathurst requested the use of two buildings on the mission station for a lock-up, a hospital and a local Clerk of Petty Sessions. At the same time, a petition, signed by thirty-eight settlers in the area, was presented to the Governor. It asked that a township be established in the area with provision for a doctor, stores and other amenities. The petition went on to say

Your Petitioners cannot affect to be ignorant that an opposition to this project has been raised in certain quarters on account of the contiguity of the Aboriginal Mission; but, without entering into any lengthy discussion, your Petitioners trust they may be allowed respectfully to submit that it would be a case of extreme hardship if the interests of the European population of this District were to be compromised in order to prosecute an experiment upon the Natives, which after upwards of Six years' trial, has proved a failure as regards the Adults, whatever may hereafter be the effect upon the children at present under tuition.

Evidence taken before a committee showed the opposition to the Mission by the settlers in this area. J. Maughan stated

I do not think that these natives have been in any way improved by their intercourse with

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1 Historical Records of Australia, Vol. XX, p. 614. Petition 20-11-1838 on Formation of a Town at Wellington Valley (Minute No. 10 of 1839), enclosed Gipps to Russell 7-5-1840.
Missionaries, but I think the reverse; they have become more cunning and less industrious, they do not appear to have any desire to work even for themselves unless when rewarded for so doing.¹

Finch, another settler, added, "From the conversation I have had with the blacks, I do not think any good has been done".²

The Sixth Annual Report of the Mission in 1838 was rather pessimistic about the future of the venture.³ Cowper and the Corresponding Committee of the C.M.S. felt that it was impossible to conduct missionary work in the vicinity of a town and suggested that the establishment should be moved further inland. He claimed that in other lands it took twenty years of undisturbed effort before the full results could really be seen. Wellington Valley was already surrounded by settlers but it was obvious that a similar problem was likely to arise within a matter of years should the Mission be moved further inland. The rapidity with which settlement expanded in New South Wales was one of the reasons why missionary

¹ ibid., p. 620. Examination of J. Maughan by Executive Council, 19-4-1839 (Minute No. 13 of 1839), enclosed Gipps to Russell, 7-5-1840.

² ibid., p. 621. Examination of C.W. Finch by Executive Council, 19-4-1839 (Minute No. 13 of 1839), enclosed Gipps to Russell, 7-5-1840.

³ ibid., p. 619.
endeavour was so unsuccessful and why missionaries began to move further afield to more remote parts of the continent where they felt they could work without facing the interference of settlers.

The Annual Feast at Parramatta was now handled by the Commissariat and the Committee of the Female Factory. It consisted of a meal of "roast beef, plum pudding and rum" and the distribution of blankets, slop clothing, pipes and tobacco.\(^1\) In many ways the Feast had outlived its usefulness and Bourke felt that it was leading to a good deal of inconvenience and some disorder as Aborigines made their annual pilgrimage to Parramatta. He also realised that a more equitable distribution of blankets would be achieved if they were handed out in the areas where the Aborigines actually lived. In 1833 the Feast was postponed until May and blankets were sent to stations and police offices for distribution about the same time. In April, 1835, the Feast was finally abandoned altogether.\(^2\) £225 had been allocated for expenditure on blankets in the 1831-2 financial year\(^3\) but this was increased to £903 by 1837.

\(^2\) *New South Wales Government Gazette*, 1st April, 1835, p. 175.
From 1833, "parcels of blankets were despatched by the Colonial Storekeeper to magistrates, Crown Land Commissioners, missionaries and settlers"\(^1\) who were required to send a statistical return showing the numbers, probable ages and certain other details about Aborigines in their area. As the distribution of blankets became more widespread, Bourke realised that "some settlers were abusing their trust by falsifying their returns and selling the blankets or distributing them to their assigned servants".\(^2\)

The returns provide interesting information but there is no doubt that in many cases the details were far from accurate as settlers made little attempt to ensure that precise information was obtained. Many returns were incomplete or missing but Threlkeld analysed eleven comparable returns for the years 1835 and 1837 and demonstrated that a fifteen per cent decrease in the number of Females had occurred.\(^3\) The total of 24 returns for each of these two years cover the area from Port

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1 R.H.W. Reece, *op cit.*, p. 197


Macquarie to Twofold Bay and to Wellington Valley in the interior. They show that as the total number of Aborigines included in the returns dropped from 2,094 to 1,531, the proportion of Females fell from 75 per hundred Males in 1835 to 64 per hundred Males in 1837.¹ This evidence gives an important indication of one of the reasons for the decrease in the Aboriginal birth rate during this period.

Bourke had hoped that the distribution of blankets by the settlers would improve their relationships with the Aboriginal population. However, during his term of office, there was increasing resistance by Aborigines to the alienation of tribal lands, as squatters took over large tracts of land in the territories of the Wiradjuri, Wongaibon, Weilwan, Kamilaroi and Anaiwan.² Clashes occurred along the Barwon, Peel, Namoi and Gwydir Rivers and in the New England area. Bourke refused requests for police or

¹ ibid.

² Wiradjuri: Area approximately bounded by a line drawn from Mudgee - Rylstone - Tumbarumba - Albury - Carrathool - Ivanhoe - Trundle - Mudgee.

Wongaibon: Narromine - Bourke - Ivanhoe - Trundle - Narromine.

Weilwan: Dubbo - Trangie - Brewarrina - Walgett - Coonabarabran - Dubbo.


military support, stating that people who occupied stations on the outskirts of settlements did so at their own risk. He showed that he was prepared to give protection to those in the settled areas as, from time to time, "Reward" notices appeared in the New South Wales Government Gazette offering a reward for the apprehension of a native accused of crimes.¹ See illustration overleaf.

In 1837 Bourke threatened to cancel the licences of overseers and other persons beyond the limits of location,

... guilty of detaining by force, in their huts, and as companions abroad, black women of the native tribes resorting to their neighbourhood, an offence not only in itself of a most heinous and revolting character, but in its consequence leading to bloodshed and murder.²

It was most unfortunate that the Aboriginal question became a side issue in the struggle between the Government and the settlers over the unauthorised occupation of Crown Lands. Newspapers denounced the Government for their refusal to protect the squatters against the "aggressions

¹ New South Wales Government Gazette, 23rd May, 1835, p. 366, and 14th July 1835, p. 484.
² ibid., 20th September, 1837, p. 652. See illustration overleaf.
NOTICES WHICH APPEARED IN
NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT GAZETTE

SIXTY POUNDS REWARD.

WHEREAS it has been represented to the Government, that on the 27th ultimo, Six Native Blacks attacked and plundered the Store of Mr. Nowland on the William’s River—Notice is hereby given that a REWARD of TEN POUNDS will be paid to any Person that shall apprehend and lodge in any of His Majesty’s Gaols, either of the Offenders.

The aforesaid have been identified as concerned in the Outrages, viz:—

Cockin,
Scrammy Headed Jackey,
Baker,
Jemmy.

By His Excellency’s Command,
ALEXANDER N’LEAY.

14th July, 1835.

THE GOVERNOR having been informed by the Reports of certain of the Commissioners of Crown Lands, that at the Stations beyond the limits of location, Overseers and other Persons in charge of Cattle and Sheep in those remote Districts, are not unfrequently guilty of detaining by force, in their Huts, and as their companions abroad, black women of the Native Tribes resorting to their neighbourhood, an offence not only in itself of a most heinous and revolting character, but in its consequences leading to bloodshed and murder. His Excellency has been pleased to direct the Commissioners to report the names of all Persons whom they shall find in any manner concerned in so abominable and unchristian a proceeding, in order that their Licenses may be immediately cancelled, and that they may be prosecuted under the Act, as illegal occupiers of Crown Lands, or otherwise, as the Law directs.

By His Excellency’s Command,
E. DEAS THOMSON.

20th September, 1837.
of the blacks" and stirred up bitter resentment against the Aborigines. The settlers were thus encouraged to take the matter into their own hands and the rest of the population supported them in their actions.¹ The mild censure of the Surveyor-General, Major Mitchell, for his ambush and killing of natives who were following his expeditionary party near Mount Dispersion in 1836,² was also taken by the colonists as support for the blacks against the white settlers.

It was in this atmosphere that Governor Gipps arrived in Sydney in February, 1838, to take charge of the growing colony. A short time before Gipps' departure from England, the House of Commons had expressed its deep concern about the treatment of Aborigines in the various British settlements and had published the findings of the Select Committee which the House had appointed to investigate the problem.³ The findings reflected the attitude of the growing Humanitarian

¹ The Colonist, 22nd September, 1838, and Sydney Gazette, 11th January, 1838.
³ Great Britain, House of Commons, Report from the Select Committee on Aborigines, with Minutes of Evidence, Appendix and Index, London: 1837.
movement in Great Britain. Gipps was to find that very
different attitudes were prevalent in New South Wales.

Twenty years previously, Macquarie had suggested
strong Government action to meet the needs of the Aboriginal
population and had proposed the establishment of Native
Institutions which were to be concerned primarily with
education and training. During the two decades which
followed, however, the Government had restricted its
involvement in Aboriginal affairs to a small annual
expenditure on blankets and to small grants to missionary
bodies. It was these missionary bodies who had been given
the responsibility of meeting the educational needs of the
Aboriginal population. That their efforts had been
singularly unsuccessful was due, in the main, to the lack
of financial support from the Government and the indifference
and even active opposition of many of the settlers.\(^1\)

Race relations between the Aborigines and the
settlers had deteriorated considerably since the early
days of Macquarie's Annual Feast at Parramatta. Brisbane,

\(^1\) ibid., p.10.
Darling and Bourke had all indicated that they opposed needless bloodshed on the frontiers of settlement, but they had done little to regulate the actions of settlers, who had so often taken the law into their own hands. Gipps brought with him the earnest hope of the Colonial Office that more positive policies would now be adopted towards the growing Aboriginal problem which faced the young colony.
Chapter Four

GOVERNOR GIPPS AND THE PORT PHILLIP PROTECTORATE

From the time of his arrival Governor Gipps made it clear that he sought to restrain violence between the settlers and the Aborigines and to uphold British law and justice. However, his known sympathy with the Humanitarians made him suspect in the eyes of the settlers. Shortly before Gipps arrived in New South Wales, a detachment of mounted police, under Major Nunn, had been sent to investigate attacks on cattle around the Moree area. Nunn had encountered a large body of natives who were presumed to have been responsible. He attacked and killed a large number of them. Gipps immediately called for an enquiry, especially as Threlkeld, the L.M.S. missionary, claimed that he had heard that possibly 120 natives had been killed. The enquiry was held after a long delay, and the matter was

1 Historical Records of Australia, Vol. XX, p. 245.

reviewed by the Executive Council on 9th July, 1839. Although the Council regretted the loss of life it felt that, since Nunn had been acting under orders, he could not be blamed in any way.¹

About the same time a party of shepherds in an over­landing trip from Faithfull's estate near Goulburn to the Broken River (near modern Benalla) was attacked by Aborigines and eight of the shepherds were killed.² A local settler, Colonel White, set off after the Aborigines responsible and when he caught up with the stolen flock, he took revenge in full measure. Gipps sent a Police Magistrate to investigate the whole incident. It was decided that since the "guilty" Aborigines had been punished, no further action was required.

Although these two incidents occurred in different parts of the country, they clearly illustrate the realities of the colonial situation. In theory, Aborigines were British subjects entitled to the full protection of British

¹ Historical Records of Australia, Vol. XX, pp. 245-247. Extract from Minutes, No.20, 7th June, No.22, 9th July, 1839, of the Proceedings of the Executive Council. Enclosed Gipps to Glenelg, 22-7-1839.
² ibid., Vol. XIX, pp. 398, 402.
In practice, the Aborigines and the settlers were in a state of guerilla warfare along much of the moving frontier. It was the settlers who administered the "law" in the way they felt the situation required. Aborigines were taught to fear and respect the guns of the invaders. In many areas the continuation of white settlement depended upon the success of various measures taken to combat native hostility. It was quite unrealistic to assume that the settlers would be interested in assisting natives to become full citizens of the young colony or even of supporting the authorities in implementing plans for the education and welfare of the Aborigines.

In the Port Phillip District, for example, the settlers sent a delegation with a request to the Governor that he "either levy a war against the blacks or sanction the enrolment of a militia for that purpose and to supply them with arms and munitions". Gipps replied that military posts were to be established between Yass and Port Phillip to protect those people taking large herds of cattle and sheep between the two areas, but he would not support any

punitive action against the natives. The settlers "attacked the new Governor who seemed so filled with the Humanitarian ideals of Exeter Hall, that he believed every squatter cruelty incarnate and every native an outraged idealist living in primitive tranquillity".¹

The attack on Gipps was greatly increased following his action over the Myall Creek Massacre in 1838. At Myall Creek, a group of whites, all ex-convicts, rounded up some thirty Aborigines, including women and children, bound each with cords and then killed them in cold blood. Seven of the whites were found guilty and condemned to death, despite the plea of one of the prisoners that "we were not aware that in killing the blacks we were violating the law or that it could take any notice of our doing so, as it has (according to our belief) been so frequently done before".² There was a public outcry against the hanging of the offenders, as "many looked upon the Aborigines as animals, and the thought that white men should die for killing blacks appalled them".³ Gipps' refusal to save

¹ S. Roberts, op. cit., p. 87.
the prisoners and his insistence that they should be hanged caused a quiver throughout the colony. "Hitherto squatters and shepherds had shot natives as they would wild ducks, if they were not afraid to do so, but now, with the law invoked to enforce the utmost penalties, nobody quite knew where he stood."\(^1\)

Gipps' stand in this controversy reflected the growing influence of the Humanitarian movement in Britain and the findings of the Select Committee on Aborigines, which had been appointed by the House of Commons in 1837. In their report, the Committee had noted "the many deeds of murder and violence committed by stock-keepers, cedar cutters and other remote free settlers"\(^2\), and the great depopulation which had taken place through the introduction of European diseases.

In his evidence on the situation in New South Wales, Bishop Broughton had pointed out that, as settlement had expanded, the extinction of the Aboriginal race had become

\(^1\) S. Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

\(^2\) Great Britain, House of Commons, *Report from the Select Committee on Aborigines, (British Settlements); with the minutes of evidence, appendix and index*, London: 1837, p. 10.
a distinct possibility;

They do not so much retire as decay; wherever Europeans meet with them they appear to wear out, and gradually to decay: they diminish in numbers; they appear actually to vanish from the face of the earth. I am led to apprehend that within a very limited period, a few years, those who are most in contact with Europeans will be utterly extinct - I will not say exterminated - but they will be extinct. ¹

The Committee was informed that the work of the missionaries had not been successful, and this lack of success was attributed to interference by settlers in the areas concerned. The Committee agreed that some form of protection of the natives was needed and, therefore, recommended "the establishment of a Protectorate, to which the work of the missionaries would be complementary". ²

When Lord Glenelg forwarded a copy of the report to Gipps on 31st January, 1838,³ he announced that a Protectorate should be set up as soon as possible in the newly opened pastoral district of Port Phillip. He stated that the position of Chief Protector was being

¹ ibid.
² ibid., p. 83.
offered to Mr. G.A. Robinson, the Superintendent of the Aboriginal Establishment at Flinders Island. Robinson had previously been particularly successful in rounding up the remnants of the Tasmanian Aborigines, following the abortive efforts of Governor Arthur.

Glenelg had also appointed Dredge, Parker and Thomas, ex-schoolteachers, and Sievewright, an ex-army captain, as Assistant Protectors. Each Protector was to attach himself as closely and constantly as possible to the Aboriginal tribes, to watch over their rights and interest, to teach and encourage them, whenever possible, to engage in cultivation of the ground and to promote their moral and religious improvement by instructing them in the elements of Christian religion. Each Protector was also instructed to learn the language of the natives, obtain accurate information about their number and other particulars about them and be accountable for any food or clothing provided for distribution to them. The fourth

1 ibid.

2 ibid., p. 254. For the full text of the Duties of the Protectors vide Appendix VI.
paragraph of the instructions stated, "The Education and Instruction of the Children, as early and as extensively as it may be practicable, is to be regarded as a matter of primary importance".  

Despite this statement on the importance of education, it was obvious that the Protectors would be fully occupied with their other duties, at least for the first few months. It should also have been obvious that careful planning and adequate financial support were essential if the scheme was to succeed. Robinson arrived in Melbourne in January, 1839, and was joined shortly afterwards by the Assistant Protectors and their families.

The Assistant Protectors were dismayed to learn that they were expected to make all their own arrangements for setting up their respective establishments and travelling to their own areas. They claimed that promises made to them in England were not being kept. On their way to Melbourne, the Assistant Protectors had visited Sydney "to encounter a chilling reception - to incur heavy expenses - and to endure an amount of obloquy which could

1 ibid.

2 New South Wales, Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Council, 1843. Mr. Assistant Protector Dredge to Chief Protector, p.4. (Internal pagination.)
not well have been exceeded had we been expatriated for notorious offenses".¹ When they reached Melbourne, the Assistant Protectors could not find suitable accommodation and were forced to live with their families in tents. They were also unable to obtain the necessary equipment and provisions essential for their work. Complaints made to Robinson and Gipps were of little avail. The Colonial Secretary later wrote that Gipps

Observed in them all, and even in their Chief, a disposition to complain a great deal, and to write a great deal, but to bestir themselves, in their proper avocations, very little; instead of going to the Aborigines, the Aborigines were brought to them at Melbourne, where, as might easily have been foreseen, they became the prey of new diseases, and learned new vices."²

In answer to this criticism Dredge replied, rather heatedly:

It was not till the 1st of April, 1839, that I received instructions to proceed to the district of the Goulburn River, &c., at which time I was in possession of no means for the conveyance of my equipment and supplies, to so great a

¹ ibid.
² ibid. Letter from Colonial Secretary to His Honour The Superintendent of Port Phillip, 24th April, 1840.
distance into the interior. Nor could I have made any movement at all towards that district, had I not procured three bullocks at my own expense, additional to the one allowed by the Government.\footnote{ibid., p. 7, letter Dredge to Chief Protector 22-6-1840.}

Dredge started work in the Goulburn River District and was soon in contact with a large number of natives. He quickly realised that a supply of food was needed if the Aborigines were to remain concentrated in the area where he had established his headquarters. However, his appeals for adequate supplies were refused. He was told that food was only to be made available to the aged, sick and young. Dredge argued that this left no inducement for the natives to remain with him.\footnote{E.J.B. Foxcroft, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 60.} Since Dredge was not prepared to travel around the countryside with the Aborigines, and since Gipps made it quite clear that he would not sanction rations for able-bodied Aborigines congregating around the Assistant Protector, it was quite impossible to implement the general policy which had been envisaged.

Dredge resigned and was succeeded by Le Souef. Although younger and more active, Le Souef appears to
have had very little sympathy for the Aborigines and requested a trooper escort when he went amongst the blacks.¹ Le Souef established an agricultural garden to provide rations for the families of those natives who worked on it, but neglected most of his other duties. After continual arguments with Robinson, Le Souef was dismissed.² His successors also concentrated on the agricultural side of the native reserve, but from 1841 Dr. Baylie and later Dr. Campbell carried out itinerant medical work for the Aborigines in the area.³

In the Geelong district, Sievewright began work at Mount Rouse. He was considered as "the least satisfactory of the protectors",⁴ as he refused to follow up complaints by the squatters and also seemed to do little to protect the Aborigines under his care.

An interesting example of the difficulties faced by the Protectors is found in an account of the trial of three

³ B. Bridges, op. cit., pp. 1,008-1,010.
⁴ E. Foxcroft, op. cit., p. 62.
men in Melbourne in July, 1843, for killing several
black women and a child at Mustons Creek.

One of the black protectors, Mr. Sievewright,
arrived a few days after the murder and saw
the bodies. Three white men swore that they
saw the prisoners take guns from a hut and
heard shots fired. One saw a black fall
whom he 'judged to be a woman by the shriek'.
The strange sequel to the evidence was that
as soon as the 'Judge commenced his charge to
the jury, the foreman rose and said the jury
had already unanimously agreed on their
verdict, and that it was unnecessary for him
to deliver any charge'. The verdict was
'Not Guilty'.

Gipps reported the case to Lord Stanley who expressed
deep regret that "the perpetrators of so atrocious a
murder should remain unpunished". 2

Sievewright had continual arguments with Robinson
and was eventually dismissed. He was replaced by Watton,
a medical officer, whose primary concern was health. Watton
had little sympathy for the Aborigines whom he described in
his reports to Robinson as "generally exceedingly indolent"
and of "pugnacious disposition - only to be kept in check

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Papers, Vol. XXXIV, House of Commons, 1844.
2 ibid.
by force". He thought they should be rounded up and made to work and that the children should be educated. 1

William Westgarth, who later became M.L.C. for Melbourne, visited the area in June, 1844. He found about two hundred natives on the banks of the Eumaralla Lake but accepted the fact that there were some five hundred "when this locality was first taken up for pasturage" 2 some two years previously. He wrote:

There could be no reasonable doubt but that during these two years at least two hundred of these blacks had been shot or otherwise deprived of life, in various encounters with the white settlers.

Little was done at Mount Rouse and the station never really flourished. It was later abandoned when the Protectorate was abolished.

Parker began work on the banks of the Loddon River in September, 1839, but moved to what is now Franklinford (80 miles north of Melbourne) in 1841. He set up an

3 ibid.
agricultural establishment so that the natives could congregate around the station and receive farm produce in return for work. Parker conscientiously reported on the atrocities committed in his area and thus gained the contempt and antagonism of the squatters.

One of these squatters, Henry Monro, complained to Parker of a "dreadful outrage" on his property. Parker investigated but showed no sympathy when he discovered that the Aborigines had stolen some foodstuffs, soap, buttons, pannicans (sic.) and other small items from unoccupied huts, and that all the items had been recovered in a raid on the blacks' camp at night. ¹ Monro complained that the Aborigines were still "lurking about the creeks and seem determined to act as lords of the soil". ² Shortly afterwards Monro alleged that the Aborigines had driven off a large number of his sheep. Most of these were recovered, but Monro set off with three soldiers and seven armed men and executed vengeance on the first party of Aborigines he met. Two Aborigines were killed, several


² ibid.
wounded, one taken prisoner and the rest were dispersed. No action was taken against Monro, who wrote to Lieutenant Russell, Commander of the Mounted Police to say he was acting in self-defence. It is in the light of incidents such as this that the "Protectorate" and particularly Aboriginal education should be viewed.

Parker deplored the superstition, gross sensuality, crude religious notions and unsettled traits of the Aborigines, but did gain their confidence so that "several of the natives informed me confidentially that destruction was coming upon the white population, not even excepting those whom they knew to be their friends". It was known that they were practising secret incantations with this object. The effect was described, graphically enough, as producing dreadful sores, dysentery, blindness and death. In describing the Aborigines, Parker pointed out that the narrow forehead of the Aborigines indicated, according to phrenologists, "the absence of the quality called conscientiousness". Parker stated that "as far as I have been able to investigate the subject, the greatest deficiencies in the development of the Aboriginal cranium

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1 ibid., pp. 27-29.
2 E.S. Parker, op. cit., p.18.
3 ibid.
are in those organs which are regarded as indicative of moral qualities".  

Parker was very interested in the education of the children and obtained the services of a constable teacher who opened a school on 3rd January, 1842. Parker recorded in his diary "A regular day-school was commenced by the constable this morning. About 25 boys attended for an hour". The original school-house was actually the constable's residence of one room measuring 24 feet by 12 feet. In June, 1842, a 54 feet by 12 feet building was erected "to serve as a combination of church and school-room". Little was achieved, however, as the year 1843 marked the beginning of the sharp decline in the Government's support for the Protectorate system and inter-tribal rivalry caused attendance to fluctuate, as Aboriginal groups moved to and from the reserve. In 1846 Parker reported to Robinson that the school instruction was in abeyance "through the want of a suitable person to teach".

1 ibid., p. 9.
3 ibid., p. 45.
4 ibid., p. 45.
During the first six months of 1848 there was an average of only eight Aborigines in the immediate vicinity, but about the middle of the year a considerable number returned to the station. Parker again pleaded for the appointment of someone qualified to teach in the school, pointing out that he was unable to do this himself because of "the pressure of secular business".¹ His wife, however, had "brought the girls under daily instruction, and the results are such as greatly to enhance my regret that I have not been able to give the same advantages to the males".²

Parker's request was granted eventually and late in 1849 Mr. Charles Judkins opened the school with eleven boys and four girls on the roll.³ From the early requisitions submitted by Judkins, it is apparent that gardening and sewing received high priority.⁴ The school had opened just five weeks before the Protectorate was abolished.

² ibid.
³ ibid., p. 84.
⁴ ibid.
Although Parker received permission to remain in the homestead on the Mount Franklin reserve after the Protectorate was abolished, the number of Aborigines around the settlement dwindled rapidly and little further progress was made.

The fourth Assistant Protector, William Thomas, took charge of an area which included Melbourne. He established an agricultural settlement at Narre Narre Warren (near Dandenong) but found the proximity of the city a real difficulty, especially as he was unable to provide food for the natives who lived in the area. As with the other Protectors, Thomas appealed for food supplies which would be distributed to the natives in return for work. In order to overcome the unsettled habits of the natives, Thomas proposed the imposition of economic sanctions (withholding food) and the enforcement of the vagrancy laws by the police. His suggestions were ignored, but eventually he was successful in having a constable-teacher appointed in 1841.

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1 B. Bridges, *op. cit.*, pp. 1,029-1,030.
Attendance at the school was very irregular. During 1841 it rose from eleven to twenty-three but then in 1842 it fell to fifteen. In January, 1843, all the children left and, "as they had no intention of returning, the school was abandoned" and the third teacher tried over the two years was forced to resign. Shortly afterwards squatters took over much of the land, the station was broken up and turned into a police depot. Thomas continued to keep a watchful eye on the Aborigines in the area, especially those who began drifting into Melbourne. He did much to protect the Aborigines from outrage and won their confidence.

Thomas was actively associated with the development of Merri Creek School which was established by the Baptists in 1845. The success of their Sunday School led them to approach the government for a grant of £100 and a few acres of land. Thomas, who was asked to report on the proposal, was far from enthusiastic and pointed to the failure of Langhorne's mission school, which had been established on similar lines. He also stated that Peacock, who had been selected as the teacher, could not be recommended, as Peacock had not proved particularly suitable when he had

1 E.J.B. Foxcroft, op. cit., p. 91.
2 Ibid.
3 B. Bridges, op. cit., p. 1,047.
been engaged for a short time at the Narre Narre Warren native school. His main criticism, however, was that "the estimate that there would be forty children constantly present was altogether fallacious, and it would be a mere lottery to rely on such figures".\(^1\) Despite this adverse report, the school was established with La Trobe's support.

The first report on the school was presented in April, 1846, and requested a further government grant. Thomas was sent to inspect the school. He expressed surprise at its initial success, with an average daily attendance of twenty-seven, and recommended continued government support. During 1846 attendance fell slightly to an average of twenty-two, but the church deacons reported "that seven could read the Bible and were learning to write".\(^2\)

Progress was maintained during the early part of 1847. Although attendance showed a further decline and Thomas reported in May that there was some dissatisfaction amongst the boys, he recommended continued support as "the children were comfortably clad, fed, lodged and instructed".\(^3\)

\(^1\) E.J.B. Foxcroft, op. cit., p. 93.
\(^2\) ibid., p. 94.
\(^3\) ibid., p. 95.
For much of the day, the girls learnt sewing and household work and the boys were employed in the cultivation of vegetables, for which they were paid three pence a day.\(^1\) By November the attendance had dropped to sixteen, and shortly after another visit by Thomas all the Aborigines left Melbourne and the school was deserted. Five returned, but "a few weeks later one of the boys set fire to the wheat crop on the mission, and fled, followed on the next night by three others".\(^2\)

There was some discussion about closing the school at the end of 1847, but a few children came back in January and there were still five children at the end of first term. Friction between Peacock and the Church Committee led to Peacock's resignation and in June, 1847, J. Edgar took charge of the school. However, the average attendance never rose above seven or eight. As well as lessons in the classroom, the boys worked in the garden and looked after the farm animals. At the end of 1849, however, the Yarra flood destroyed the gardens and early in

\(^{1}\) *ibid.*

\(^{2}\) *ibid.*, p. 96.
the following year the few remaining children left and the school was closed. Just as Langhorne's school had attracted a number of children for a relatively short period, the novelty soon wore off. The children returned to their natural way of life when their parents decided that the veneer of civilization they were acquiring was not of any real value to them.

The 1847 report on the school had pointed out that one of the major difficulties had been that relatives, or pretended relatives, had attempted to decoy the children away and "young girls were claimed by coolies as their lubras". In teaching Christianity and the "benefits of civilization", the missionary teachers made it perfectly plain that the children should reject the superstitions, "vile habits and immoral practices" of their own parents. They attempted to win the children by denigrating the beliefs and customs of their parents and were thus completely insensitive to the family ties which Aborigines considered so important. This

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1 ibid. Quoting report of Yarra Mission, 1847 (in Thomas' papers), Mitchell Library.

2 Vide E. Stock, A History of the Church Missionary Society; quite clearly Stock brings out the attitude of many missionaries, who were sincere, but extremely self-righteous.
arrogance, and the lack of understanding of, and respect for, traditional life, naturally alienated both the parents and the children whom they sought to "save". The initial success, and then complete failure, of the Merri Creek school occurred at the same time as the Wesleyans attempted a somewhat similar scheme at Bunting Dale.

In 1836 the Rev. Joseph Orton, head of the Methodist Missions in Australia, was encouraged in his initial request to Governor Bourke for Government assistance to establish an Aboriginal Mission in the Port Phillip area. Early in 1839 Gipps approved the selection of ten square miles on the south side of the Barwon River about forty miles west of Geelong where the Rev. Francis Tuckfield and the Rev. J. Hurst began work.

For the first two years the mission had some success with many daily visits from the three tribes which surrounded the agricultural settlement. Ten acres of land were cultivated mainly by the natives, and a number of children were enrolled in the school. However, the rapid influx of European population and visits by hostile

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1 E.J.B. Foxcroft, op. cit., p. 92.
tribes led to a good deal of unrest and increasing periods of absence by the children, whose families moved away from the immediate vicinity of the station.

The missionaries discovered that their encouragement of visits by neighbouring tribes led to a good deal of friction. The idea of civilizing different tribes of natives by permitting them to reside around a homestead not only had little hope of success, but led to many problems caused by inter-tribal jealousies. In 1842, the missionaries decided to concentrate their efforts on one tribe, a move which had been suggested by Dredge when the mission had first started. However, the Government subsidy to the mission was discontinued and Hurst resigned. Tuckfield carried on quietly; a number of natives built their own huts in the vicinity of the agricultural settlement and the children made considerable progress in the school.¹

The government recognised the improved situation and restored its subsidy with a grant of £150 in 1844. However, the numbers in the tribe declined rapidly, so that at the end of 1848 the mission was abandoned, the reserve was resumed, and the land was sold by the Crown.²

¹ ibid., p. 85.
² ibid.
La Trobe's final comment to Fitzroy shows his disappointment: "After labouring for ten years it is now admitted that not a single individual has been civilized".  

Both the Baptist mission at Merri Creek and the Wesleyan mission at Bunting Dale had suffered much the same fate as Langhorne's earlier Yarra mission and all for very similar reasons. At the same time, the whole Protectorate system at Port Phillip was about to be terminated as a costly failure. The significance of this failure should not be underestimated, as it had a profound effect on New South Wales Aboriginal policy for the ensuing fifty years.

The inherent defects and contradictions in the Protectorate were not recognised in the early flush of success, which lasted until 1842. The protectors were expected to itinerate but, at the same time, they were also expected to persuade the natives to adopt a settled way of life, through agriculture. Although the rapid

1 E.J.B. Foxcroft, _op. cit._, p. 85.

2 _ibid._
expansion of European settlement in the Port Phillip area deprived the natives of their natural food supply, Gipps steadfastly refused to provide rations so that they could be properly fed.

The loss of land, accompanied by an active programme to break down tribal authority and cohesion, inevitably led to detribalisation. One of the greatest problems was the rapid depopulation which took place as European settlement expanded. Many natives were killed by settlers who alleged they were defending themselves. The famous judgment of Judge Willis in the Supreme Court on 21st December, 1841, gave settlers and squatters the right to expel Aboriginal natives from their runs: "Should the Aborigines resist, the result will be fatal". The spread of European disease led to a high death rate but, at the same time, the birth rate dropped alarmingly. It was reported that infanticide was increasing, but the rapid spread of venereal disease was a significant factor in the extremely high infant mortality rate.

1 G.A. Robinson, Papers 1846, Box A7082 Pt.2., p. 38.
2 ibid., p. 39.
3 B. Bridges, op. cit., pp. 759, 780.
It is important to note that very little medical attention was available to the Aboriginal population generally.

The squatters showed great animosity towards the Protectors, and did all they could to make their task more difficult. Parker, of the Loddon District, stated that:

In two districts at least of this colony, the extreme eastern and western, a fearful sacrifice of human life has unquestionably taken place, whether necessary of justifiable I will not now attempt to discuss. Within my own district (i.e. the Campaspe, Loddon and Wimmera country) I know of every individual life that has been sacrificed, from the foundation of the colony; and I am happy to say the number is comparatively small, though still leaving a sevenfold proportion to the number of colonists slain by the natives.1

The Protectors seemed powerless to prevent the squatters from taking the law into their own hands, especially as Aborigines were disqualified from giving evidence on the grounds that they could not comprehend the significance of the oath to tell the truth. Robinson repeatedly pointed out that, when whites committed an outrage against the natives, the ends of justice were being defeated "for want of legal evidence, the only

1 E.S. Parker, op. cit., p. 15
witnesses to be obtained in such cases being the Aborigines who are disqualified on account of their legal disability". 1

In some cases the presence of the Protectors made the squatters more careful so that they would not be caught. However, Rusden recorded that in "an indiscriminate raid upon men, women and children, on the Emu Creek, near Mount Noorat, ... hardly one survivor of the blacks attacked was left". 2 One of the Protectors was expected in the area so, "the criminal ... fled, taking ship to the East Indies". 3

Rusden pointed out that:

It is not to be suffered that all the colonists were accomplices in, or even knew of, the atrocities which were rife; nor were all the murderers themselves of like character. Some destroyed every native they met. Some with compunction (and in self-defence, as they persuaded themselves) kept guard on their property, and took life but rarely. ... In all districts the first capture of a black woman, or the first shot fired at a black man, led to retaliation by the blacks, when they found an opportunity, and thence to indiscriminate slaughter.

3 ibid.
4 ibid., p. 224.
From the documents and records of the Port Phillip settlement, it is quite clear that the Protectors were unable to carry out even the first article of their assignment. La Trobe became highly critical of the Protectorate as a whole, and in March, 1842, set out his objections to the Protectors in a letter to Gipps:

I am not disposed to assert that absolutely no good has accrued from their appointment, or that their efforts have been altogether misdirected or fruitless, but, considering that ample time has now been allowed to test the real merits of the arrangements under which they have been supposed to labour, and the aptness of the instruments employed for the work, I feel no hesitation in stating my belief, that all the advantages that may have resulted from the formation of the department might have been secured by far more simple and unpretending machinery. 1

Gipps added his own strictures about the Protectorate in his report to Stanley and stated that "the protectors have as yet created no good that can be put in comparison with the irritation which they have created". 2 At the end of the year he received full authority to act in whatever way he wished about the Protectorate. Stanley wrote:

1 New South Wales, Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Council, 1843, pp. 475-543. Enclosed letter from His Honour the Superintendent of Port Phillip to the Colonial Secretary, 4-3-1842, p. 38 (internal pagination).

2 Ibid.
In regard to the missions and the Protectors I give you no definite instructions; if at your receipt of this Despatch you should see no greater prospect of advantage than has hitherto appeared, you will be at liberty to discontinue the grants to either, as early as possible; but if circumstances should promise more success for the future, the grants may be continued for such time as may be necessary to bring the matter to a certain result.

Stanley had agreed with Gipps that "a portion of this ill success, perhaps a large portion, is attributable to the want of judgment and zealous activity on the part of the Assistant Protectors".  

The Assistant Protectors not only faced the hostility of the white settlers in Port Phillip; they also lacked the support and confidence of the Government authorities, both in New South Wales and in England.

The basic reasons for the failure, however, could well have been very different from those which Gipps and La Trobe assumed. It can now be seen that the Chief Protector and the Assistant Protectors regarded the Aborigines as inferior beings who could be changed into carbon copies of white

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1 ibid., p. 43. Despatch from Lord Stanley to Sir George Gipps, dated 20-12-1842.

2 Ibid., p. 42.
settlers, once they accepted the benefits of Christianity and of civilization. They showed very little respect for the dignity of the Aborigines as people, and underestimated their resilience in attempting to maintain some aspects of their own culture and tradition. Although the Protectors showed greater kindness and were more humane than the settlers or the government officials, their whole approach was doomed to failure. Macquarie had shown that Aborigines responded when treated with dignity and respect; there were very few Europeans, even in the 1840s, who were so enlightened.

Gipps gave serious thought to the abolition of the Protectorate after receipt of Stanley's despatch. However, he decided to allow it to continue with a drastic reduction in its scope and cost. He realised that, although he had been given permission to act as he felt, Lord Stanley and the British Government were reluctant to sanction the immediate dissolution of the Protectorate. Gipps was thus able to permit it to continue, whilst he starved it into inactivity in the plea of economy. After 1842 the expenditure on the Protectorate fell from almost £8,000 to a little over £2,000 each year.

1 E.J.B. Foxcroft, op. cit., p. 69.
There is no doubt that Robinson was hopeless as an administrator. "He was hesitant and unwilling to take responsibility preferring to nestle behind orders and on the whole he sat in his Melbourne Office and buried the Protectorate in a mass of paper". This judgment may be thought to be rather harsh, but a perusal of the Robinson papers tends to substantiate this opinion, which was widely held at the time.

It is interesting to speculate on the development of the Protectorate had La Trobe been offered and had he accepted Robinson's position.

It is said that at one stage he was considered by the Colonial Secretary (Lord Glenelg) for appointment as Chief Protector of the Port Phillip blacks, but was eventually given the most responsible post of Superintendent (virtually Governor) of that important Province.

From 1846 La Trobe became even more unhappy about the Protectorate and actively sought its abolition. He sent a very adverse report on the Protectorate to Fitz Roy and this was forwarded to Grey in May, 1847. Fitz Roy added

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1 B. Bridges, op. cit., p. 527.
2 E. Morrison, Early Days in the Loddon Valley, p. 47.
that La Trobe believed that any improvement which had taken place in the character or habits of the Aborigines

... is rather to be attributed to the improved state of feeling between these people and the Settlers than to the influence or exertions of the Protectors.¹

Whilst La Trobe, Gipps and Fitz Roy tended to reflect current thinking about Aborigines in Australia, the despatches of Russell, Grey and Stanley from England clearly demonstrated that the British Government expected a much more positive approach to the Aboriginal question.

In August, 1840, Lord Russell reaffirmed the British Government's policy regarding Aborigines. He admitted that there were difficulties in making suitable reserves of land available, because of "the ineptitude of the Natives to change their desultory habits and learn those of settled industry",² and also the "constant inroads of Europeans to rob, corrupt and destroy them".³

Russell added:

Between the Native, who is so weakened by intoxicating liquors and the European who has all the strength of superior Civilization and is free from its restraints, the unequal

² ibid., Vol. XX, p. 775, Russell to Gipps, 25-8-1840.
³ ibid.
contest is generally of no long duration; the Natives decline, diminish and finally disappear.

Russell felt that the best approach to the Aboriginal question was in the education of the children. The training was to include reading, writing, "oral instruction in the fundamental truths of the Christian Religion"; agriculture and "the trades of Shoemakers, Tailors, Carpenters and Masons" for the boys, and cooking and sewing for the girls.

The more promising of these children might be placed, by a law to be framed for this purpose, under the Guardianship of the Governor, and placed by him at a School or in Apprenticeship in the more settled parts of the colony. Thus early trained, the capacity of the race for the duties and employment of civilized life could be fairly developed.

Finance for this work was to be taken from the Land Fund. "It is my opinion that fifteen per cent of the yearly product of sales should be so applied. It will

1 ibid., Vol. XX, p. 775, Russell to Gipps, 25-8-1840.
2 ibid., pp. 775-776.
3 ibid., pp. 775-776.
4 ibid., p. 776.
be for you to consider the details of the appropriation". ¹ Russell had previously enclosed a report from the Land and Emigration Commission to Under-Secretary Stephens. The Commissioners had strongly recommended that reserves of land should be made available for the use and benefit of the Aborigines, and had acknowledged the strong moral claims "which the natives themselves had upon the humanity of those who enter upon the occupation of the waste lands of their Country". ²

Two months later, Russell sent Gipps a copy of the report of Captain Grey from South Australia, with pertinent suggestions on the civilization of the Aborigines.

Grey's report stressed the need for education and training and emphasised that this must be accompanied by adequate opportunities for employment. He pointed out that a real problem for the Aborigines was "the uncertain and irregular demand for their labour". ³ The solution

¹ ibid.
² ibid., p. 738. Russell to Gipps, 5-8-1840, enclosing Land and Emigration Commissioners to Under-Secretary Stephen, 17-7-1840.
³ ibid., Vol. XXI, p. 37. Russell to Gipps, 8-10-1840.
he felt, was for settlers to receive remuneration (money or land) if they could teach any Aborigine a useful trade. Settlers could have a number of Aborigines in training whilst other Aborigines could be employed in making and maintaining roads and other public works.¹

He then suggested that any native who could produce a Certificate that he had been constantly employed for a period of not less than three years should be given a grant of land "if possible ... in that district to which this native by birth belonged".²

Gipps, in his reply, stated that he fully agreed with Lord Russell:

> It is by the employment of the Aborigines as Labourers for Wages, and the Education of their children in Establishments conducted either by Missionaries or official Protectors, that I consider the civilization of the Aborigines of this continent must be worked out, if it is ever to be accomplished.³

However, Gipps made no attempt to follow up Gray's suggestions, and made very little effort to support the Protectors in their endeavours.

¹ ibid., pp. 38-40.
² ibid., p. 40.
³ ibid., p. 314. Gipps to Russell, 7-4-1841.
Although Stanley reaffirmed the policy of using sums not exceeding fifteen per cent of the gross proceeds of the Land Sales "for the benefit, civilization and protection of the Aborigines",\(^1\) neither Gipps nor Fitz Roy made any attempt to give legal sanction to the suggestion.

During the period of the Protectorate, Stanley and Russell constantly prodded both Gipps and Fitz Roy to take more positive action on the Aboriginal question. For their part, the Protectors expressed their disappointment at the lack of support given to them. The 1846 report of the Chief Protector states:

> Properly qualified religious instructors and schoolmasters to the Aborigines are greatly desired, it is a matter of regret so important a desideration in the original design of the Department should have been so long in abeyance.\(^2\)

Robinson enclosed copies of the reports from the Assistant Protectors. Although the Western Port and Mount Rouse districts made no mention of education,

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\(^1\) ibid., Vol. XXII, p. 281. Stanley to Gipps 15-9-1842.  
both of the other districts reported on the lack of schooling in their districts. The Loddon River Central Aboriginal Station report stated:

"Education: There is no day school at this Establishment, the want of suitable persons to teach is the reason assigned". The report of the Goulburn River Central Aboriginal Station included the following paragraph:

"School Establishment: There are no Schools at this Establishment, the want of a qualifying Schoolmaster or Matron is the reason assigned".  

Despite pressure from both the Colonial Office and the Protectors, Gipps, and later Fitz Roy, showed that they were not prepared to oppose the squatters, to whom the whole idea of Aboriginal protection was anathema. The following table (Table VI) clearly demonstrates the indifference Gipps and his Executive Council showed towards the Aboriginal question. The returns indicate that expenditure on Aborigines was 4.6 per cent of the income from Crown Lands and that over 90 per cent of this

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1 ibid., p. 6.

2 ibid., p. 10.
Table VI

CROWN LAND REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE ON ABORIGINES 1845-1847

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Crown Land Revenue (Sales and Rent)</th>
<th>Expenditure on Aborigines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>£65,134 2 10</td>
<td>£2,226 7 8(^1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1846</td>
<td>£82,708 2 2</td>
<td>£2,062 10 11(^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1847</td>
<td>£124,484 8 2</td>
<td>£2,250 4 4(^3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>£272,362 13 2</td>
<td>£6,539 2 11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) Historical Records of Australia, Vol. XXV, pp. 48-49
\(^2\) ibid., p. 597.
\(^3\) ibid., Vol. XXVI, p. 423.
expenditure was for salaries for Robinson and the Assistant Protectors. It could be argued that half the cost of the Border Police and the salaries of the Commissioners for Crown Lands should be added to the expenditure figures, although neither did much for Aboriginal Welfare or protection.

Although the proportion of Crown Land Revenue spent on Aborigines from 1845 to 1847 was more than double the proportion spent from 1831 to 1837, the total expenditure on Aborigines was considerably less than that spent between 1839 and 1842 when the Protectorate was at its height. *

From 1831 to 1837 the total expenditure on Aborigines, including donations and the expenses of missions, was

* Note: Anticipated revenue from Crown Land sales fell sharply, due to the increase in the upset price, the aughts of 1839-1844 and serious economic depression. The land fund was also used to assist immigration and Gipps appears to have been over-generous in his authorisation of immigration warrants.

The figures shown for Expenditure on Aborigines in the "Statement of the Revenue arising from Crown Lands in New South Wales" are slightly different from the figures given in the "Statement of the Expenditure on account of the Aborigines of New South Wales". The Crown Land figures understate the Expenditure figures by £303:15:9 (£51:16:11 in 1846 and £251:18:10 in 1847) but the error does not make any significant difference.
£9,266:3:4½, whilst revenue from Crown Lands was £439,652:4:4 1 Expenditure on Aborigines thus represented 2.1 per cent of income from Crown Lands.

Although the British government did not question the Colonial expenditure on Aborigines, Lord Stanley continued to suggest new ways of dealing with the Aboriginal problem. In 1845, for example, Stanley suggested the establishment of an institute for the education of half-caste children. 2

When he received Fitz Roy's adverse report on the Protectorate, Grey replied that his government regretted the apparent failure and he noted that both Fitz Roy and La Trobe had attributed a good deal of the failure to Robinson. 3 He pointed out that the office of Protector should not be confused with the person holding that office. 4 Robinson's failure did not necessarily mean that the idea of the Protectorate was wrong in itself, and perhaps

4 ibid.
Fitz Roy could find someone better equipped to carry out the policy in a more efficient manner. Grey then added:

It is of the highest importance that we should not suffer ourselves to be discouraged by the failure of experiments hitherto tried but should pursue with unabated zeal the execution of those measures which appear to promise the best, and seek watchfully for any opportunity which may present itself of rectifying errors and devising improvements on our policy towards this helpless portion of our fellow-subjects.¹

Grey suggested that small reserves should be established along the pattern followed in South Australia, and that these reserves should be cultivated either by the Aborigines or for their benefit.

Among other practical methods of attempting to introduce improvement among the natives to which these Reserves might be rendered subservient, one in particular deserves attention, namely the formation of schools, both for adults and young people, but especially the latter, who are more open to receive and retain the impressions made upon them; these schools should be formed as much as possible on the principle of combining the arts of Industry with the elements of ordinary and Religious education. ... The expence (sic.) attending any measures of that nature should constitute the very first charge upon the Land Revenue, a principle which Parliament

¹ ibid.
has recognised in the Australian Land Sales Act.\textsuperscript{1}

In the same despatch, Grey referred to the fact that Aborigines had apparently been deprived of their former right to hunt over areas not actually under cultivation or fenced in for that purpose. Grey strongly urged Fitz Roy to make it quite clear that Crown Land leases did not give the lessor the power to deprive the natives of their hunting rights. A public declaration should be made to this effect or, alternatively, "a declaratory Enactment"\textsuperscript{2} could be passed.

Grey's suggestions received little consideration. In September, 1845, a Select Committee of the New South Wales Legislative Council had been set up to enquire into the Aboriginal question.\textsuperscript{3} Although only five witnesses were examined during the session, the Committee received replies to a circular sent to magistrates and Crown Land Commissioners throughout New South Wales. The Commissioner

\textsuperscript{1} ibid., pp. 227-228.
\textsuperscript{2} ibid., p. 226.
\textsuperscript{3} New South Wales, Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Council, 1845. Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on Aborigines, pp. 937-998.
for the Portland Bay District in the Port Phillip area was F.F. Fyans, who gave his views on the reasons for the decrease in the Aboriginal population:

The children are often murdered (killed and eaten) in satisfaction for revenge against their tribe. The adults are always ready to commit murder and are in constant riot and dispute; one native will murder another for his gin; this causes the loss of many lives, and has been carried on for years, and I suppose will be continued until all are exterminated.\(^1\)

Fyans criticised the Aborigines for their sloth and idleness and their lack of inclination to work.\(^2\) He concluded by stating that he did not feel that "the slightest good has been effected by the appointment of the Protectors".\(^3\)

Evidence such as this reflected much of the current colonial feelings of the period. It helps in an understanding of the difficulties faced by Robinson and his assistants. The Chairman of the Committee, Windeyer, was able to have the Select Committee reappointed in the following session and again in 1847.\(^4\) However, with Windeyer's death, there

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1 ibid., (internal pagination) p. 43.
2 ibid.
3 B. Bridges, op. cit., p. 674.
4 ibid.
was no longer any driving force behind the Committee which eventually lapsed without reaching any conclusions.\textsuperscript{1}

In 1848 Fitz Roy officially referred the whole question of the Protectorate and related matters to the Legislative Council. He placed before them the views of La Trobe, the Surveyor General and various Commissioners of Crown Lands. In January, 1849, the Council appointed a Select Committee "to enquire into the state of the Aboriginal inhabitants of the colony, and more especially as regard to the success or failure of the present protectorate system at Port Phillip".\textsuperscript{2}

The Select Committee did not seek the views of Robinson, his assistants, or anyone known to be in favour of the Protectorate. Most of the witnesses, settlers who lived north of the Murray River, condemned the Protectorate even though they had no first-hand knowledge of it.\textsuperscript{3} The Committee's deliberations tended to resemble those of a lynching party rather than those expected from a genuine enquiry. However, members of the Committee were able to

\textsuperscript{1} ibid.

\textsuperscript{2} New South Wales, Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Council, 1849, Select Committee on Aborigines, Vol. II, pp. 417-475

\textsuperscript{3} ibid.
examine the annual reports of Robinson and his assistants; they also perused the annual reports from the various Crown Land Commissioners and from the Missions which had received a subsidy from the Government.

It was apparent to the Committee that the various Missions to the Aborigines had failed completely. The Lake Macquarie Mission had closed at the end of 1841, as Threlkeld had reported that there were no Aborigines left at the Mission and "the very few who remained elsewhere are so scattered that it is impossible to congregate them for instruction".¹ Twelve months later the Moravian Mission and Moreton Bay also closed for somewhat similar reasons.² At the same time the Mission at Wellington Valley was facing tremendous difficulties.³

The growth of a large European settlement on the outskirts of the Mission had led to unauthorised visits by Europeans, who lured away many of the native women or

1 Historical Records of Australia, Vol. XXI, p. 739.
2 It may be noted that the total Government grant to the Moravian Mission had been £1,516:14:2, and the total paid to the Lake Macquarie Mission had been £2,145:5:10. New South Wales, Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Council, 1845, p. 937.
3 Historical Records of Australia, Vol. XXI, p. 308.
sold "sly-grog" to the Aborigines. Internal strife between Watson and Gunther had led to Watson's dismissal in 1841. However, he moved only four miles away and established his own Mission on the banks of the Macquarie River. When he left he "carried with him some of the adults and all the children". ¹ Gunther continued the Wellington Valley Mission and, in his 1842 report, stated:

During the past year I have had particular opportunities to become acquainted with the nature of the absurd laws, the vile and superstitious practices of the Aborigines, and the unbounded sway which the old men exercise over their people, to counteract every improvement. ... I lament much that the difficulty to obtain Aboriginal Children for instruction has increased almost to an impossibility. In whatever direction I may go, even at a distance of 40-60 miles, the parents conceal their children as soon as they hear that a Missionary approaches their Camp; and, when I come upon them by Surprise I have the grievance to observe these little ones running into the bushes, or into the bed of the River with the utmost Speed.²

During 1842, the Agriculturist appointed to assist Gunther left; and shortly afterwards the Mission was closed.³ Watson continued his work, at first without

¹ ibid.
² ibid., pp. 735-736.
financial assistance from the Government. After an initial grant of £100:0:0 in 1845, he continued to receive an annual grant of £50:0:0 for a number of years. The Mission\(^1\) had become little more than a refuge for Aborigines on the outskirts of a growing European community.

The Select Committee realised that Watson's effort was merely a rearguard action and that the Mission would eventually close. Missionary activity had not proved a successful proposition, as even Stanley had admitted as early as 1842. "I have great doubts about the wisdom or propriety of continuing the Missions any longer".\(^2\)

The Committee could thus legitimately ignore the suggestion that Missions should play any part in future attempts to "civilize the natives".

To the Committee it seemed that the Protectorate had proved a costly failure. The Committee estimated that the cost of the Protectorate had been £61,000.\(^3\) This figure had been repeated in subsequent historical accounts of the Protectorate, although Foxcroft's figures, taken

\(^1\) Apsley Aboriginal Mission. See Appendix VII.

\(^2\) E.J.B. Foxcroft, *op. cit.*., p. 78.

\(^3\) *ibid.*
from the Blue Book of the Department, gave the total as £42,000. Many of the Blue Book figures were estimates only, and it is difficult to establish where Foxcroft obtained the 1843 figure which, apparently, was not available in the Blue Book.¹

The most accurate figures appear to be those which are shown in the Statements of Expenditure, included in the annual Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Council of New South Wales.

The following tables have been compiled from an examination of all "Statements of Expenditure on Account of the Aborigines of New South Wales" for the years 1838 to 1850. A photostat copy of one of these statements, that for the year 1847, is shown overleaf as an illustration. From the 1847 statement, it can be seen that approximately £2,500 was spent on Aborigines during the year, and of this, over £2,000 (or four-fifths) was used in the Port Phillip District. It can also be seen that over 70 per cent of the Port Phillip expenses were required for the salaries and allowances for the Chief Protector and his assistants.

¹ ibid.
STATEMENT of the Expenditure on account of the Aborigines of New South Wales, for the Year 1847. *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICT OF PORT PHILLIP.</th>
<th>£</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salaries of the Chief and Assistant Protectors, Medical Officers, Clerk, Overseers, Mechanics, Laborers, and Servant</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowance to an Assistant Protector</td>
<td>45 12 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provisions for the Aborigines, including £43 6s. 8d. arrears</td>
<td>376 13 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blankets and Clothing for ditto</td>
<td>28 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law Expenses incurred in Defending Aboriginal Natives in various Criminal Cases</td>
<td>29 12 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stationery, Printed Forms, and Postages</td>
<td>2 3 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fencing a Paddock for Wheat and Potatoes</td>
<td>26 3 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seed Wheat and Potatoes</td>
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<td>Wages to Reapers</td>
<td>16 13 2</td>
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<td>Repairs to Drays</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tools and Bridle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funeral Expenses of two Aborigines executed at Melbourne</td>
<td>3 4 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Incidental Expenses</td>
<td>8 11 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aid to the School for Aborigines at Merri Merri Creek</td>
<td>150 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gratuity to King Bembo for performing a Mission to the Barambool Tribe</td>
<td>0 12 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OTHER DISTRICTS.</th>
<th>£</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blankets and Clothing for the Aborigines in the several Districts, and Cost of Conveyance</td>
<td>50 13 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomahawks and Knives</td>
<td>5 9 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of Blankets, paid by the Colonial Agent General</td>
<td>202 17 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Whaleboat supplied for the use of the Aborigines, who assisted in saving the lives of some of the Passengers and Crew of the Steamer &quot;Sovereign,&quot; wrecked at Moreton Bay</td>
<td>£15 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brass Plates engraved for do.</td>
<td>9 5 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blankets for do.</td>
<td>4 4 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco for do.</td>
<td>1 4 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In aid of the Mission to the Aborigines at Wellington</td>
<td>50 0 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total | £ 2,502 3 2

* New South Wales, Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Council, 1848, p. 309.
It is possible that the total expenses for the Port Phillip District represented an even higher proportion of the total expenditure as the item "Cost of blankets paid by the Colonial Agent General" is included in "Other Districts", even though it appears almost certain that many of the blankets were, in fact, distributed in the Port Phillip Protectorate. In some of the annual statements of expenditure the amount for this particular item was quite considerable.

Table VII sets out the total expenditure on Aborigines in the Port Phillip District for the years 1838 to 1850, inclusive. The total expenditure for the period was a little over £47,000; less than ten per cent of this amount was used to assist the Wesleyan Mission and the Baptist school at Merri Creek.

From Table VIII, it can be seen that a little over £5,000 was granted to mission establishments in other parts of New South Wales, and, from Table IX, that a total of approximately £9,000 was required for all other expenses for Aborigines outside the Port Phillip District. Table IX clearly demonstrates that during the thirteen year period under review (1838 - 1850) over three-quarters of the total expenditure was allocated to the Port Phillip Protectorate.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Wesleyan Mission at Port Phillip and Merri Creek School (where given separately)</th>
<th>Expenses of the Port Phillip Protectorate</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1838</td>
<td>£1,460:11: 7¾</td>
<td>£ 990: 7: 6</td>
<td>£2,550:19: 1¾</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>795: 0: 5</td>
<td>5,611:12: 6</td>
<td>6,406:12:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1841</td>
<td>449:14:10</td>
<td>7,618: 3: 3½</td>
<td>8,067:18: 1½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1842</td>
<td>315: 0: 1</td>
<td>7,967: 5: 1</td>
<td>8,282: 5: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1843</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3,798:15: 6½</td>
<td>3,798:15: 6½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>2,733:15: 3</td>
<td>2,733:15: 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>100: 0: 0</td>
<td>2,066: 2: 9</td>
<td>2,266: 2: 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1846</td>
<td>50: 0: 0</td>
<td>1,973: 1: 4</td>
<td>2,023: 1: 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1847</td>
<td>150: 0: 0</td>
<td>2,013: 9: 7</td>
<td>2,163: 9: 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1848</td>
<td>150: 0: 0</td>
<td>2,067: 1: 0</td>
<td>2,217: 1: 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1849</td>
<td>125: 0: 0</td>
<td>1,775: 9: 9</td>
<td>1,900: 9: 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,317:13:11</td>
<td>1,317:13:11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

£4,227: 5: 5¾  £42,937: 3: 5¾  £47,164: 8:11½

* Merri Creek School

The following table gives the figures for other expenditure on Aborigines in New South Wales during the same period.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Lake Macquarie Mission</th>
<th>Wellington Valley Mission</th>
<th>Moreton Bay Mission</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1838</td>
<td>£186:0:0</td>
<td>£500:0:0</td>
<td>£310:0:0</td>
<td>£996:19:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1839</td>
<td>186:0:0</td>
<td>530:3:0</td>
<td>159:7:6</td>
<td>875:10:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>186:0:0</td>
<td>500:0:0</td>
<td>321:5:10</td>
<td>1,007:5:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1841</td>
<td>186:0:0</td>
<td>500:0:0</td>
<td>494:1:4</td>
<td>1,180:1:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1842</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>500:0:0</td>
<td>231:0:4</td>
<td>731:0:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1843</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>125:0:0</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>125:0:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>--</td>
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<tr>
<td>1846</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1847</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>50:0:0</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>50:0:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1848</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>50:0:0</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>50:0:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1849</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>50:0:0</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>50:0:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>50:0:0</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>50:0:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>£744:0:0</strong></td>
<td><strong>£2,855:3:0</strong></td>
<td><strong>£1,516:14:2</strong></td>
<td><strong>£5,115:17:2</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* No figures are shown in the estimates but it is known that a grant of £100:0:0d. was made in 1845, and a further £50:0:0 in 1846.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Port Phillip</th>
<th>Lake Macquarie Wellington Valley and Moreton Bay Missions</th>
<th>Blankets and other expenses</th>
<th>Overall Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>6,406:12:11</td>
<td>1,007: 5:10</td>
<td>961: 4: 0</td>
<td>8,375: 2: 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1842</td>
<td>8,282: 5: 2</td>
<td>731: 0: 4</td>
<td>689:10: 0</td>
<td>9,702:15: 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1843</td>
<td>3,798:15: 6½</td>
<td>125: 0: 0</td>
<td>602: 0: 0</td>
<td>4,525:15: 6½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>2,733:15: 3</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>297:14: 5</td>
<td>3,031: 9: 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>2,266: 2: 9</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>60: 4:11</td>
<td>2,226: 7: 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1846</td>
<td>2,023: 1: 4</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>91: 6: 6</td>
<td>2,114: 7:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1847</td>
<td>2,163: 9: 7</td>
<td>50: 0: 0</td>
<td>288:13: 7</td>
<td>2,502: 3: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1848</td>
<td>2,217: 1: 0</td>
<td>50: 0: 0</td>
<td>360:11: 9</td>
<td>2,627:12: 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1849</td>
<td>1,900: 9: 9</td>
<td>50: 0: 0</td>
<td>1,645:10:10+</td>
<td>3,596: 0: 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>1,317:13:11</td>
<td>50: 0: 0</td>
<td>721:16:10</td>
<td>2,089:10: 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


* Includes an amount of £636:10:11, being the cost of blankets purchased in England and paid for by the Colonial Agent General.
It has been shown in Table IX that of the £61,000 spent on account of the Aborigines of New South Wales, approximately 76 per cent had been allocated to the Port Phillip District. A little over eight per cent had been used for annual grants to Missions and just over 15 per cent had been spent on blankets and other incidental expenses. It has already been illustrated in Table VI that this annual expenditure was only a very small proportion of the revenue from Crown Lands and was well below the "fifteen per cent of the yearly product of sales" as had been suggested by Lord Russell and the Colonial Office in 1840.

It was obvious that a decision to abolish the Port Phillip Protectorate would mean that the annual expenditure on Aborigines would be negligible and that it would be confined mainly to the purchase of blankets and to the incidental expenses. It could hardly be claimed that an annual issue of blankets would do much to improve the conditions of the Aborigines. The concept of "civilizing and educating the natives" appears to have been forgotten entirely, as it had become quite obvious that the efforts

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1 Historical Records of Australia, Vol. XX, p. 776. Russell to Gipps, 25-8-1840.
of the Missionaries had not been particularly successful. No alternative was suggested and even the annual expenditure on blankets was seriously questioned by the Executive Council.

During the early 1840s many settlers had complained that the indiscriminate distribution of blankets "discouraged the economic initiative of the Aborigines and rewarded their natural habit of indolence". Gipps accepted this view and the number of blankets issued to Aborigines was drastically reduced. Although 2,485 blankets were issued in 1841, the number fell to 1,460 in 1843, and to 562 in 1844. From 1844 the issue of blankets was only continued on special application from the Missionaries or from Crown Lands Commissioners. It was clear that Aborigines could expect very little sympathy or understanding from many of these Commissioners of Crown Lands, even after Fitz Roy resumed the blanket issue in 1848.

During the period of the Protectorate in the Port Phillip District, the Commissioners of Crown Lands in other areas forwarded an annual return to the Colonial

2 ibid., p. 201.
Secretary showing the number and mode of living of Aborigines in their district. They also reported on Aboriginal-white relationships and in what way the Aborigines were becoming "civilized". The reports make interesting and rather depressing reading. They often convey more about the attitude and behaviour of the Commissioners, themselves, than they do about Aborigines.

Whilst the Select Committee was examining the Aboriginal question as a whole, the Legislative Council was asked to consider a bill concerning the admission of evidence by Aborigines in the courts of law. The question had been raised on numerous occasions since 1804, when Judge Advocate Atkins had ruled that Aborigines could not give evidence either as witnesses or defendants. His judgment was based on the assertion that Aborigines were heathens who had no knowledge of God or of a future state. For this reason, it was claimed, they could not understand the nature and import of the oath to tell the truth.

In 1834 the Executive Council had passed the "Aboriginal Competent Witnesses Act"\(^1\) which permitted Aborigines to give evidence on affirmation or declaration, in lieu of

\(^{1}\) Aboriginal Competent Witnesses Act, 3 Vic., No.16.
the normal oath. However, this Act was disallowed by the British Government as it held that it was contrary to the normal laws in England.¹ There was strong pressure from the Humanitarians, however, who realised that Aborigines and other native people were placed at a serious disadvantage in courts of law. The Imperial Parliament, therefore, passed an enabling Act which authorised the legislatures of certain colonies to pass laws to admit unsworn testimony as evidence in certain cases.²

In 1844 Gipps introduced the appropriate Bill to the newly enlarged Legislative Council,³ but it was defeated. Following strong protests from Robinson and the Assistant Protectors, Fitz Roy reintroduced the measure, the "Aboriginal Natives Evidence Bill", in May, 1849.⁴ The squatter-dominated Legislative Council again refused to pass the measure. Lowe, one of the members, commented, "... let the benighted tribes be taught how immeasurably inferior they were in every respect to civilized man".⁵

¹ New South Wales, Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Council, 1844, Vol. I, p. 18. (Gipps to Council, 30-5-1844.)
² ibid.
³ ibid.
⁴ B. Bridges, op. cit., p. 899.
⁵ ibid.
Since Lowe reflected the majority opinion of the Legislative Council, it is not surprising that the Select Committee of the Council recommended that the Protectorate be abolished. The members stated that "although they are compelled to advise the abolition of the present system, they are unable to recommend any other as a substitute".  

The Governor accepted the recommendation of the Committee and the Protectorate was abolished at the end of 1849, although Parker was permitted to remain on the Loddon Station and Thomas was appointed Guardian of the Aborigines in the counties of Bourke, Evelyn and Mornington. The future of the Protectorate was of little importance for New South Wales, since Victoria was shortly to attain self-government. The future of the Aborigines north of the Murray, however, was also determined by the recommendations of the Select Committee. 

The report stated that in view of the failure of all plans attempted and the great expense incurred, "no hasty steps should be taken towards the introduction of

a new system". 1 The report added:

Without underrating the improvement of the Aborigine, much more real good could be effected by similar exertions to promote the interests of religion and education among the white population in the interior of the colony, the improvement of whose condition would, doubtless, tend to the benefit of the Aborigines. 2

The Committee did point out that if any scheme were to be adopted "the total and compulsory separation of the children from their parents would be essential to the success of any plan". 3 It was quite apparent, however, that the New South Wales Legislative Council had no thought of introducing any new schemes. Their main concern was to stop Government expenditure on Aboriginal protection and to permit the Crown Lands Commissioners to deal with the problem as they saw fit.

Aborigines would no longer be pampered with gifts of food and clothing. They would be expected to work for food and would thus provide a cheap labour force for squatters

2 ibid., p. 420.
3 ibid., p. 419.
in the settled districts. Crown Lands Commissioner Mitchell of Liverpool Plains, for example, reported in 1847 that the natives were "performing a variety of services for the sake of the food and tobacco, which form the common remuneration for their labour". ¹

The New England Commissioner similarly reported:

They continue quiet, indolent, and inoffensive, frequenting the Stations for the purpose of procuring Tobacco and occasional supplies of Food and Clothing, in exchange for which they are generally employed as hewers of wood and drawers of water, and sometimes more permanently as shepherds, stockmen and servants. ²

The Moreton Bay Commissioner in his report for the year 1845, however, pointed out that many aborigines have now for years been within the reach of civilized man, but without I fear, any real improvement in their moral or social condition - they are still as lazy and indolent as ever, preferring with few exceptions ... the joyous life of the Bush to earning a scanty livelihood by daily labour from the inhabitants. ³

In the settled districts the Aborigines had become

¹Historical Records of Australia, Vol. XXVI, p. 397, Report for the Year 1847.

²Ibid., p. 394.

mendicants, completely dependent on the charity of the white settlers. In 1845, Count Strzelecki, the explorer, had written:

The whole eastern country, once thickly peopled, may now be said to be entirely abandoned to the whites, with the exception of some scattered families in one part, and of a few straggling individuals in another; and these, once so high-spirited, so jealous of their independence and liberty, now treated with contempt and ridicule even by the lowest of the Europeans - degraded, subdued, confused, awkward and distrustful - ill concealing emotions of anger, scorn and revenge - emaciated and covered with filthy rags - these native lords of the soil, more like spectres of the past than living men, are dragging on a melancholy existence to a yet more melancholy doom.

It was generally accepted that the Aborigines were a dying race and that it would only be a matter of time before they became extinct. A census of Aborigines in the Manero (sic.) District was forwarded by Commissioner Lambie. His figures were:

Similar depopulation was taking place in other settled areas where it was noted that deaths were well in excess of births. On the frontiers of settlement the Aborigines were still a force to be reckoned with, but experience had shown that when settlers took strong and positive action to protect their herds and flocks the Aborigines could be dispersed and eventually subdued. In the words of Commissioner of Crown Lands Mitchell of Liverpool Plains, the natives could be taught "to value the food of civilized man and to fear his means of defence".  

There can be little doubt that the majority of Crown Lands Commissioners encouraged the settlers to drive the Aborigines from their runs and made little attempt to investigate the shooting of Aborigines by stock-keepers

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1 Historical Records of Australia, Vol. XXII, p. 650.
2 ibid., Vol. XXIII, p. 492.
3 ibid., Vol. XXIV, p. 270.
4 ibid., Vol. XXV, p. 560.
5 ibid., Vol. XXVI, p. 403.
or squatters. Settlement of the Clarence and Richmond Rivers began in 1840 after cedar cutters had penetrated the area during the 1830s. In 1840 a robbery occurred on Dr. Dobie's property on the Clarence River. Macdonald, the visiting Commissioner of Crown Lands from New England, led a party of Border Police to "teach the blacks a lesson". At night they surrounded a large Aboriginal camp on the banks of Orara Creek.

At daybreak, Macdonald's men rushed the camp, firing indiscriminately among the sleeping bodies. Many who were able to escape into the river were shot from the bank, their corpses being carried quickly downstream.¹

Macdonald later discovered that the actual robbery had been committed by a convict hutkeeper "who had blamed the blacks to escape punishment".²

Some time later there were a number of reported "outrages" by the natives, including the murder of John Fagan at Tabulam on the upper Richmond. A party of Europeans set out for revenge and rushed one of the

¹ E.G. Docker, op. cit., p. 109
² ibid.
camps "scattering Aborigines in every direction". They then came to a second camp where, in the words of Commissioner of Crown Lands Oakes, "the white party, to preserve their lives, were compelled to use their arms". Oakes reported that seven natives had been killed and that the remainder had escaped. Oakes, who was in charge of the area from the Macleay River to the Richmond River, had extensive pastoral interests and was not particularly sympathetic towards the Aborigines. He wrote in his 1841 report, for example: "Such has been the kind feeling manifested by the white people towards them that Clothing and Provisions are the only incitement to the outrages committed by them". He added:

As yet, little is known of the Blacks on the Nambuckra; in consequence of the late attacks on the Sawyers, they keep out of sight, waiting an opportunity of a successful attack for provisions.

1 ibid.
2 ibid., quoting from the evidence of Haly at the Select Committee of the Queensland Legislative Assembly into the Conduct of the Native Police, 1861, Report, p. 80.
3 Historical Records of Australia, Vol. XXII, p. 65.
4 ibid.
Oakes was replaced by Commissioner R. Massie, who provided a little of the other side of the story in his 1842 report. He stated that the natives in the Nambucca area avoid contact with the whites: "This arises from the wanton aggressions committed on them by the Sawyers upon their first going to Nambucca and which the Blacks appear to remember". ¹

Massie, however, could hardly be considered as a friend of the Aborigines in his area. In his 1843 report he pointed out that he discouraged intimacy between the settlers and the blacks and in 1844 reported that there were no outrages by the natives, as he had impressed upon them that retribution would follow any outrage they committed. In 1845 he complained about their barbarous laws and customs, and in the following year reported on the "unprovoked aggression" by the natives who had no other reason "than a natural and inherent love of bloodshed and cruelty". ² The report added:

As regards the Social or moral improvement of the Aborigines, I have little satisfactory to communicate. There are the same characteristics of all Savages, apathy, insensibility and stupidity. They look with indifference upon any kindness done them, nor can you even

¹ ibid., p. 651

² ibid., Vol. XXV, p. 566.
expect the bare remembrance of it. Gluttons, even to voracity, when they get anything to satisfy their appetites; lazy and improvident, occupied entirely by the object present and determined by it alone without any solicitude for the future.¹

His report for 1847 mentioned that the population of Aborigines in the area was then not more than 300 to 400 and

... there is the same helpless apathy, the same wandering habits, the same want of consideration and forethought for the morrow, which are and have been the distinguishing features of Savage Natives in general, but in the Aboriginal population of Australia in particular.²

In 1842 Mr. O. Fry was appointed Commissioner for the newly formed Crown Lands district of the Clarence and Richmond Rivers. With six convict police troopers Fry attempted to subdue the natives who were resisting the new settlers taking up land in the area. In July, 1845, Richard Craig, one of the residents of the district, complained to Gipps that Fry and his police were particularly harsh on the natives and on one occasion had visited a native camp and killed "seven men, four women and five children".³ Fry's own report in the following year

¹ ibid., p. 567.
² ibid., Vol. XXVI, p. 393
³ E. Docker, op. cit., p. 113, quoting evidence before the Select Committee of the Queensland Legislative Assembly into the Conduct of the Native Police, 1861.
recorded, euphemistically, that "aggressions, however, have latterly been discontinued in consequence of the interference of the Police".  

Fry made no attempt to check the settlers who drove the natives from their runs but, following complaints, he was forced to arrest Thomas Coutts, one of the Clarence River settlers, on suspicion of poisoning flour. "Twenty Aborigines who had participated in the theft of flour from a hut on the property had recently been found dead from arsenic poisoning". It was impossible to prove the charge, however, so Coutts was released and no further action was taken.

In 1843 the Commissioner of Crown Lands in Tamworth reported that he held little hope for the Aborigines' "general progression in the scale of civilization" and "to spend fifteen per cent ... out of the land fund for promoting the Civilization of the Aborigines would be a useless expenditure". In 1847, Mitchell, the Commissioner

1 Historical Records of Australia, Vol. XXV, p. 569.
3 B. Bridges, op. cit., p. 707.
4 Historical Records of Australia, Vol. XXIV, p. 265, Allman to Colonial Secretary, 1-1-1845.
for Crown Lands for New England, wrote:

I continue to be of the opinion that any money lavished upon the education of the Natives would be thrown away; although I consider a certain sum should be devoted to their protection.¹

Not all the Crown Lands Commissioners were against the Aborigines, but those who tried to help them met with opposition from settlers in their areas. H. Bingham, Commissioner for Crown Lands in the Murrumbidgee area, reported outrages against the Aborigines rather than those by them. In 1843 he mentioned five natives shot by squatters in the Gerapthana River area,² and in 1844 three shot in an encounter with a stock-keeper.³ In the same report he praised the natives of the Tumut and Murrumbidgee Rivers for their "noble, kind and praiseworthy conduct" when floodwaters surrounded many white families. The natives

... cut bark Canoes, and rescued the men, women and children from watery graves with a zeal and promptitude that Speaks well of the untutored Native, when treated by those around with even ordinary kindness.⁴

¹ ibid., Vol. XXVI, p. 396.
² ibid., Vol. XXIII, p. 492.
³ ibid., Vol. XXIV, p. 268.
⁴ ibid., p. 269.
In his 1846 report, Bingham requested a small force of Border Police at the advanced stations as

... when some of the Settlers or their servants revenge themselves for either real or imaginary wrongs, their vengeance is fearful and sanguinary and which engenders a deadly hate in the breasts of the Aboriginal Natives.

In 1847 Bingham wrote of the sufferings caused by sickness and disease and that

They frequently apply to the Settlers for Medicine and will take anything that is given them in that way; and there is too much reason to believe that the Dispensing in such cases is both unsuited and injudicious. It has come to my knowledge that sheep medicines have been administered to them, producing violent salivation followed by their inordinate drinking of cold water has caused Death.

A perusal of all the reports of the Commissioners of Crown Lands indicates quite clearly that the vast majority of them had little sympathy for the Aborigines. The growth of settlement led, inevitably, to clashes which caused serious loss of life to the Aborigines and the complete disruption of their way of life. Aborigines, unable to

1 ibid., Vol. XXV, p. 561.

2 ibid., Vol. XXVI, p. 402.
resist the invasion of their territory, adopted a policy of passive resistance towards the Europeans. This became one of the most significant features of Aboriginal-white relationships which developed from this period.

Aborigines had not only lost their land and their means of economic survival, but had been forced to serve the squatters and other settlers in much the same way as the "croppies" (convicts), who were being punished for their crimes. In the culture clash and its aftermath many Aborigines lost their sense of dignity and pride. Many of the women, by force or by choice, became the casual sexual companions of the early settlers or their servants. The increase in the half-caste population was inevitable. These part-Aborigines were considered as "blacks" by the Euro-Australian community, but in some areas were not entirely accepted by the full-blood members of the tribe.¹ In most places the part-Aborigines participated in the tribal initiation ceremonies, but these ceremonies became less frequent in those areas where there was intensive European settlement.²

¹ Full-blood Aboriginal informants at Woodenbong, Coraki, Deniliquin and Wilcannia.
² ibid.
It is somewhat surprising, under the circumstances, that so many Aborigines had the tenacity to maintain their cultural identity and pride of race. The Aborigines in the Upper Richmond River, for example, still refer to Europeans as "dugais". The white skin of the Europeans resembles the bleached skin of Aboriginal corpses after death. The literal meaning of the term is "stinking white flesh" and the use of the word is one of the few ways in which Aborigines can show their contempt for their old enemy. The term is still used freely today and helps to indicate that the attitudes of many part-Aborigines in the 1960s have a long tradition, which began with the culture clash and their defeat by the white settlers.

It is possible that a different pattern of race relations may have developed, had not the Executive Council in 1849 accepted so completely the report of the Select Committee on Aborigines. This acceptance of the recommendations meant that settlers and the Mounted Police could "control" Aborigines in any way they felt necessary. On the frontiers of settlement Aborigines could be forced off their land and could be shot or "dispersed" if they resisted. Once they became "subdued" they were permitted
to work for settlers who could "give" them whatever rations or handouts they considered adequate. It is true that a number of settlers, such as the Ogilvie brothers at Yulgilbar on the Clarence River, and Alexander Berry on the Shoalhaven River, treated Aborigines with dignity and respect, but such men were an insignificant minority. "For years the Yulgilbar natives worked quietly on the Ogilvies' stations while all around Aborigines were being shot and poisoned by exasperated stock-owners or hunted by Fry's border police".¹

The demoralised remnants of once independent Aboriginal tribes inevitably became mendicants, living on the fringe of society, but not becoming part of it. In the 1850s strong positive action might have given Aborigines hope for the future. Instead, the 1850s ushered in the period of complete neglect. The laissez-faire policy of Government non-intervention led to a considerable saving in expenditure. Expenditure on Aborigines from 1st October, 1851, to 30th September, 1852,

¹ E. Docker, op. cit., p. 115.
was only £703:16:3,\(^1\) and this was considerably more than the annual expenditure in the early 1860s. Suggestions from the Colonial Office were either ignored or given scant attention. In November, 1850, Grey had written:

I am of the opinion that every possible encouragement should be given to the Natives to send their Children to the schools established for Europeans and that with this view any children whom their parents might wish to have educated, should be boarded, lodged and clothed,\(^2\) and taught with European Children.

Twelve months later the National School Board was asked to "offer any suggestions that may occur to you for giving practical effect to His Lordship's views in regard to the establishment of schools for the gratuitous teaching of the children of the white population and the Aboriginal inhabitants".\(^3\) There was no direct reply to this suggestion and it seems very unlikely that free education for Aboriginal children was seriously considered.

There is a good deal of evidence to suggest that as the Aborigines became paupers, they were treated with pity and scorn: "the worthless idle aborigine has been driven back

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\(^2\)Mitchell Library, Box 1/378. Grey to Colonial Secretary, 5.11.1850.
\(^3\)Ibid., Colonial Secretary to National School Board, Letter No. 37/45, 7.11.51.
from the land that he knew not how to make use of, and values not, to make room for a more noble race of beings".\(^1\)

There was growing conviction that the Aborigines could not be civilized and were dying out. It was firmly believed that, given time, the problem would solve itself; the depopulation taking place was considered to be "the Will of God".

When Governor William Denison arrived in January, 1855, his instructions contained the following paragraph:

And it is Our further will and pleasure that you do to the utmost of your power promote religion and education among the native inhabitants of Our said Colony, and of the lands and islands thereto adjoining; and that you do especially take care to Protect them in their persons and in the free enjoyments of their possessions; and that you do, by all lawful means, prevent and restrain all violence and injustice which may in any manner be practised or attempted against them; and that you take such measures as may appear to you to be necessary for their conversion to the Christian faith, and for their advancement in civilisation.\(^2\)

With responsible Government in New South Wales only a little over twelve months away, this instruction was quite

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\(^1\) M. Roe, Quest for Authority in Eastern Australia, 1835-1851, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1965, p. 67. Quoting from Weekly Register, 22nd March, 1845.

unrealistic. There was little likelihood that the squatter-dominated Legislative Assembly, which took office on 6th June, 1856, would take any steps to see that the instructions would be carried out.

Aborigines were not included in the franchise in 1856, they were completely ignored in the Land Acts of the 1860s, and it was not until 1881 that any steps were taken to provide for their protection. From the middle of the century the growing population in the main centres of the colony saw only the "derelict remnants of the original race" for whom little could be done except "to give them food when obviously necessary". A writer in the New South Wales Magazine of 1843 had summed up the situation in these words: "I wish to see our means applied to rendering the current of events by which the grave is closing on our sable brethren, smooth and regular".

1 Department of Territories, op. cit., p. 31.
2 ibid.
3 ibid., p. 33.
Chapter Five

THE BEGINNING OF THE PROTECTION ERA 1856-1910

In the previous chapters it has been shown that the pattern of culture contact between the Aborigines and Euro-Australians had become firmly established in the settled areas of New South Wales. This pattern was repeated as the frontiers of the settlement spread into remote areas. Initial contact was followed by the alienation of tribal land and dispersion of the native population. With the loss of the natural food supply and the spread of European diseases, de-population took place and the whole fabric of tribal organisation was undermined. As had happened in other areas in the past, the traditional pattern of economic, social and religious life began to disintegrate and the demoralised remnants of a once proud tribal group gathered together on the outskirts of European settlements.

Lacking the material possessions or skills necessary for participation in the economic and social life of the Euro-Australian community, Aborigines became casual
unskilled labourers or workless indigents, dependent on irregular payments or on handouts of food or clothing. Aborigines quickly realised that they were powerless to change, or in any way control, this inevitable sequence of events.

The Euro-Australians, aware that earlier attempts to civilize the natives had apparently failed, accepted the view that Aborigines were not capable of successful adaptation to their new environment and that they would eventually "die out". Attempts to "civilize" individual Aborigines met with strong resistance from the Aboriginal community, who had always considered that the group was more important than the individual. Indeed, the individual who left the group and adopted European attitudes became a very real threat to the group's very existence. On the part of European Australians, it will be shown there was a growing conviction that the Aborigines were unable to adapt to European civilization because of their lack of intelligence and their innate inferiority as a race.

1 The failure of the Port Phillip Protectorate was, of course, the main example.

2 J.H.Bell, "Aboriginal Education in New South Wales" in The Forum of Education, Vol. XXI, No. 3, October, 1962, p. 126. This has been confirmed by Aborigines interviewed by the writer.

3 ibid.
This provided a convenient rationalization for the callous disregard and neglect of Aborigines during this period. The failure of the Protectorate at Port Phillip had led many to believe that nothing could be done for the natives, who were doomed to extinction.

On the outskirts of settlement the Commissioners of Crown Lands continued to be responsible for the distribution of blankets and for other matters relating to Aborigines. In the settled districts the police accepted this responsibility. In all areas, however, Aborigines were left to make whatever adjustments they could without any real guidance or help from Government authorities.

When the Crown Lands Bill was under discussion in the Legislative Council in 1861, Captain Lamb pointed out that there was no provision for reserves for the Aboriginal natives. Although he agreed that it would be quite useless to make such reserves, he argued that it was the "duty of government to obtain, from time to time, grants from the Consolidated Revenue of the Colony,

to be applied to the amelioration of the condition of the Aboriginal natives, as occasion may arise. 1

He suggested that a resolution in these terms be presented to the "Administrator of the Government" by way of a deputation. 2 Although this resolution was passed, the matter was not raised again in the Council which appeared to be quite satisfied that the needs of the Aboriginal population were being adequately met by the increase in the expenditure on the purchase and distribution of blankets. This expenditure and the number of blankets distributed between 1857 and 1861 is shown overleaf in Table X. 3

During the early 1860's, the only other expenditure on Aborigines authorised by the Government were annual sums not exceeding £50:0:0 to meet special needs which arose and, in 1864, a sum of £500 for "medicines and medical attention for Aborigines". 4

1 ibid.
2 ibid.
TABLE X

RETURN OF BLANKETS 1857-1861*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Blankets</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1857</td>
<td>2365</td>
<td>£ 788.6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1858</td>
<td>2679</td>
<td>898.18.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1859</td>
<td>2789</td>
<td>929.13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>3077</td>
<td>1,382.3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>4720</td>
<td>1,664.18.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There was growing concern about the use of intoxicating liquor by the Aborigines, and petitions were presented to the Legislative Council requesting that the sale of liquor to the Aborigines be prohibited. The petition from the residents at Wentworth and the lower Murray and Darling district stated that:

there has been a very great increase of drunkenness and crime among the Aborigines; that quarrels of a serious character have become more frequent, involving great danger to themselves and the white population among whom they dwell; that many cases of stabbing and wounding, with two or three of murder, have been the result; and that your petitioners are apprehensive that still more serious crimes will be perpetrated by them, unless stringent measures are adopted to prevent their obtaining intoxicating liquors. ¹

A photostat copy of a similar petition presented by the Moderator and General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church to the Legislative Council through Mr. Gordon on 13th November, 1867, is shown overleaf as an illustration. ²

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS TO THE ABORIGINES.

(PETITION FROM MODERATOR AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH)

[Presented by Mr. Gordon, 13 November, 1867.]

Printed under No. 5 Report from Printing Committee.

To the Honourable the Legislative Council of New South Wales, in Parliament assembled.

The Petition of the undersigned, the Moderator and Members of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales,—

HUMBLY SKEWETH:—

That your Petitioners have frequently had their attention directed to the condition of the Aborigines of this Colony, and that the means of improving it has received their most careful consideration.

That as one of the most important of these means, they have considered it the duty of the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales to endeavour to impart to them a knowledge of the doctrines and duties of the Christian faith, and have for carrying out this object collected and expended considerable sums of money.

That your Petitioners have hitherto been unsuccessful in establishing an independent agency for the religious training of the Aborigines, but have liberally contributed to the support of such an agency established by the Presbyterian Church in a neighbouring Colony.

That your Petitioners, while making a preliminary inquiry into the best mode of Christianizing and civilizing the Aborigines of this Colony, and into the nature of the obstacles which prevent the accomplishment of this most desirable object, have been led to the conclusion that perhaps the most serious obstacle in the way of ameliorating their condition is, the facility they possess in obtaining by purchase and otherwise an unlimited supply of intoxicating liquors.

That the result of this facility is, that they are abandoning great and growing pursuits, and laying aside those orderly habits which they had begun to acquire; that they are contracting many fatal diseases, which are so rapidly reducing their numbers as to threaten, at no distant period, their complete extirpation; that they are involved in the commission of numberless crimes, by which the property and lives of the community are endangered; and that the efforts of Missionaries and others to improve their condition are rendered almost entirely unsuccessful.

That your Petitioners are fully aware that the sale of intoxicating liquors to the Aborigines, or even the gift of them, was, until very recently, prohibited by legislative enactment; that this prohibition was attended with the happiest results to the said Aborigines, and was not found to interfere prejudicially with any of the interests of the Colony.

That, therefore, your Petitioners earnestly pray your Honourable House to reinstate this prohibition referred to, or to take such other steps as may, to your Honourable House, seem most desirable, for the purpose of effectually preventing the sale of intoxicating liquors to the Aborigines of this Colony.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray, &c., &c.

Signed in name and by authority of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales, by—

JAMES B. LAUGHTON,
Clerk of General Assembly.

ROBERT STEEL, M.A., Ph. D.,
Moderator.
The Commissioner of Crown Lands for the Darling district pointed out in his 1867 report that many Aborigines in his district were employed as labourers and were paid wages, but that most of the wages was spent on drink. He suggested that "instead of wasting a considerable sum yearly in supplying blankets, the government should give power to the police to remove the Aborigines from the town 'when any excitement goes on' and to do something about the shanties and grog-shops that have multiplied tenfold over recent years".  

At the end of 1867 the N.S.W. Parliament passed an "Act to Prohibit the Supply of Intoxicating Liquor to Aboriginal Natives of N.S.W." providing a penalty of £10:0:0 for anyone found supplying liquor to Aborigines. This, the first legislation concerning Aborigines passed by the N.S.W. Parliament, marks the first step towards the policy of protection.

During the 1870's there was growing concern for the plight of the Aborigines. In 1876 in the Legislative Assembly, 1868-69, Vol. III, p. 1267.

1 Act 31 Victoria, XVI.

2 New South Wales Government Gazette, 27th December, 1867, p. 3629.
Assembly, Mr. W. Sutton moved that a Select Committee be appointed to enquire into the conditions of the Aboriginal inhabitants of the colony.\(^1\) He attacked the government for their inaction, and suggested that something should be done to have Aborigines educated and made into useful colonists. In reply, Sir John Robertson, Premier and Colonial Secretary, stated that it was wrong to say that the Government was not assisting the Aborigines as the Government had given the men and women clothes and blankets.\(^2\) He also pointed out that it was wrong to suggest "we had taken away the food of the blackfellows, for ... there are now in the country twenty times as many kangaroos, emus and possums as there were many years ago".\(^3\)

As well as the annual distribution of blankets, the government had now extended its aid by providing clothes and occasional food and medical attention in certain cases.

In Victoria, a Board for the Protection of Aborigines had been established in 1860; South Australia had a

\(^1\) *Sydney Morning Herald*, 20th December, 1876, Report of Debate.

\(^2\) ibid.

\(^3\) ibid.
Protector of Aborigines from 1843; and in Western Australia (still under the control of the British Colonial Office) Protectors were appointed with financial support from the government, to look after the interests of the native inhabitants.¹

Strong pressure in New South Wales eventually led to the appointment, in December 1881, of a Protector of Aborigines. The Protector was accommodated in the Chief Secretary's Department "and given the assistance of a secretary. Funds to the extent of a few hundred pounds were placed at his disposal for distribution of necessary aid".²

The first report of the Protector,³ George Thornton, tabled in August 1882, recommended that reserves should be established so that the Aborigines could cultivate grain, vegetables and fruit for their own consumption.⁴

¹ E.J.B. Foxcroft, op. cit., pp. 100-133.
² New South Wales, Aborigines Protection: Report and Recommendations of the Public Service Board of New South Wales, 1940, p. 7.
⁴ ibid., p. 2.
He suggested that young Aborigines should be taught trades so that the men could become mechanics and the girls domestic servants.¹ He was strongly of the opinion that government assistance should be given to "true" Aborigines only and that half-castes should be made to work for themselves.²

The half-caste question became an important issue as their numbers increased. In the early days of contact, many of the early settlers and their servants formed liaisons with Aboriginal women because of the shortage of European women in the colony. The offspring of these relationships were almost invariably left with the Aboriginal women and became members of the Aboriginal group.³ They were treated as Aborigines by the Euro-Australians, including the putative fathers, who rarely accepted the responsibility for their upbringing. Relationships of a much more casual nature became common and young Aboriginal girls became "fair game" for the satisfaction of the sexual needs of many members of the

¹ ibid.
² ibid.
³ Aboriginal informants.
European population. Since the number of full-blood Aborigines was visibly decreasing, it was widely thought that the Aboriginal problem would eventually solve itself.

The increasing numbers of half-caste and part-Aborigines, however, brought a new dimension to the problem, particularly when part-Aborigines found marriage partners amongst their own kind: the resulting offspring could range from almost full-blood Aborigines to those who were almost entirely of European descent. Although it was suggested that Aborigines should be classified in terms of the degree of Aboriginal blood, there were serious difficulties in cases where siblings did not have the same father yet lived as members of the same family. Since the government made no attempt to set out a clear and legal definition of "An Aborigine", the term was subject to a very wide degree of interpretation. To some, it meant a full blood Aborigine but to others, it included anyone who was of Aboriginal descent.

1 ibid.
In his report in August 1882, the Protector, Thornton, stated that the balance of £378.9.2 previously allocated for Aborigines, together with a further £200, had been spent in the distribution of rations, clothing and fishing boats.\(^1\) Requests for assistance from country areas had received prompt attention and "the hitherto almost uncared for blacks ..... will be, at least, preserved from cold and hunger by the kind and wise action of the government."\(^2\) Thornton stated that he had impressed upon the recipients of aid that this assistance would not be continuous, that they should work whenever work was available, and that any misconduct could be punished "by a partial stoppage of rations".\(^3\)

Thornton's report to 31st December, 1882,\(^4\) drew attention to the "disgusting state of affairs" in the inner city area of Sydney, especially around Circular Quay and Botany, where many Aborigines were "locked up for

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\(^2\) ibid.

\(^3\) ibid., p. 2.

drunkenness, fighting and riotous behaviour". With the assistance of the police, steps were taken to move the Aborigines away from Sydney and the suburbs and back to their own districts. The La Perouse people were anxious to remain at La Perouse where they could maintain themselves by fishing. A good boat was sent out to them for this purpose, and at the same time material for four or five huts was also provided.  

The replies to a questionnaire sent to all districts in New South Wales was included at the end of the report. From these replies it can be seen that there were 4,994 full blood Aborigines, (including 1516 children under fourteen) and 2,379 half-castes (including 1,271 children). The returns also provided information about employment, education, medical aid, intemperance, and the general condition of Aborigines and whether or not government aid was required.

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1 ibid., p. 4.
2 ibid., p. 3.
3 ibid., pp. 10-27
4 ibid.
In a number of districts, including the far north coast of New South Wales, Aborigines were still living off the land, but in many rural areas a number were engaged in some form of labouring or seasonal work.\footnote{ibid.}
The replies indicated that relatively few Aboriginal or part-Aboriginal children were receiving any form of educational instruction. At Kempsey, for example, it was stated that "none received instruction ..... except at Towen Creek where Mr. Thompson J.P. instructs the blacks on his station to read and figure."\footnote{ibid., p. 23.} The reply from the Shoalhaven area stated "about thirty half-caste children are at school at Coolangatta, five at Jervis Bay and three blacks."\footnote{ibid., p. 13.} There were quite a number of Aborigines and part-Aborigines in the Windsor and Picton districts who were reported to be attending school but most replies indicated that "no Aborigines receive any instruction."\footnote{ibid., pp. 13-25.}

The reply from Dubbo stated that there were no Aborigines and "the half-caste children are so circumstanced
that instruction would be impossible."¹ The Wardell report stated that "they receive no instruction, and from birth they follow the habits and customs of the older ones, viz., wandering about the bush and rivers."² At Hillston, where there were at least eighty Aborigines, it was reported that there was no medical aid and no schooling for the natives:

There should be some institution here, this being a central spot for this race of people, as the old ones require assistance and protection, and the young ones are in need of education, training and protection likewise.³

It was quite obvious that at that period when the government was insisting on the need for compulsory education for all children in New South Wales, the Aboriginal and the part-Aboriginal children were not included within the meaning of the 1880 Act. There were, however, two Aboriginal schools run by missionary bodies, one at Maloga on the Murray and the other at Warangesda on the Murrumbidgee.

¹ ibid., p. 11.
² ibid., p. 17.
³ ibid., p. 15.
In 1874 Daniel Matthews established a small property in the southern Riverina of New South Wales and established the Maloga Mission for Aborigines. He gathered a few boys and girls from the Aboriginal camp, "not without much opposition at first from the old people of the tribes who several times made determined efforts to remove the children." These children were taught "simple spiritual truths", arithmetic, reading, writing and cleanliness. Mrs. Matthews also taught the girls sewing.

In September, 1878, Matthews organised a public meeting in Sydney at which a committee was formed to assist him in his work. The objective of the mission was the social and moral elevation of the blacks, the protection and care of young children, and their training through Christian teachings in village settlement.

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Matthews was officially appointed as a Public School teacher, but the mission and the school were both run on strictly religious principles. Each and every day started with morning prayers asking God's blessing upon it, likewise church services in the evenings. In 1880, Rev. Gribble started a Mission at Warangesda on the Murrumbidgee River, near Darlington Point, where he quickly established a school for the children.

In February, 1880, at a public meeting in the Sydney Temperance Hall, an Association for the Protection of Aborigines in New South Wales was formed. Matthews, one of the main speakers, deplored "the cruel neglect of our Government" and urged that adequate reserves be set aside so that Aborigines would be able to maintain themselves in meat and vegetables.

2 ibid., p. 927 and R. Morgan, op. cit., p. 8.
3 Sydney Morning Herald, 17th February, 1880.
4 ibid.
In a circular, the Secretary, Mr. Edward G. Palmer, drew attention to the "deplorable condition" of the "miserable remnants of the Aboriginal race" and asked for public contributions to assist the work of the Association. (see illustration overleaf)

In May, 1880, the Rev. Gribble requested that the Warangesda school be officially recognised by the government and that a teacher and a suitable building be supplied. In 1881 this school was classified as a Provisional school and a certified teacher, Mr. Carpenter, was appointed to take charge.

In 1882, Messrs. P. G. King, ML.C., and Edmund Fosbery, Inspector-General of Police, were appointed to conduct an enquiry into the workings of these two Mission stations and to report on their progress. In their report, King and Fosbery stated that, at Warangesda, only a few children had been taught to read

1 ibid., 13th May, 1880.


ABORIGINES’ PROTECTION ASSOCIATION CIRCULAR

NEW SOUTH WALES

Aborigines’ Protection Association.

DEAR SIR,—

We would hereby draw your kind attention to the objects contemplated by the above Association, and ask your careful consideration of the same.

The Aborigines’ Protection Association of New South Wales has been formed for the purpose of ameliorating the present deplorable condition, and meeting the pressing requirements of the miserable remnants of the aboriginal race in this Colony.

This race has been most sadly neglected hitherto, both by the Government and Christian public. And, being impressed with a sense of their extreme physical wretchedness and moral degradation, as well as the justice of their claims upon us as a Christian community we feel constrained to take such steps as will reach their case. We would, in particular, call your attention to the up-growing race of half-castes. Hundreds of children (some of them quite white), are at present running wild, in some cases perfectly nude. These unfortunate victims of the white man’s sin should receive attention at our hands; for them especially, homes must be established, into which they may be gathered, and where they may be taught the arts of civilised life, and receive instruction in the great principles of our common Christianity.

Two Aboriginal stations are at present in existence, one at Maloga on the Murray, under the superintendence of Mr. Daniel Matthew. The other at Warangesa on the Murrumbidgee, under the superintendence of the Rev. J. B. Gribble; and other stations will be formed still further in the interior as soon as funds are available.

The two stations at present in existence are greatly in need of immediate assistance. We therefore kindly and earnestly solicit your practical sympathy by contributing to the funds of the Association.

Contributions to be addressed to the Secretary,

EDWARD G. W. PALMER,
177, Pitt-street.

and write: "We examined some of the children in reading but the results were not satisfactory; owing probably to some extent to the timidity of the scholars in the presence of strangers."¹ The report stated that the school building was quite inadequate.²

Although the results of the pupils at Maloga were much better, because the school had been operating for a longer period, the report pointed out that the school, itself, was almost entirely without any normal requisites. The report recommended that both Mission stations should be placed under the control of a police officer acting in the capacity of schoolmaster, storekeeper and overseer. Farm tools, clothing, medical attention and food should be provided, and the reserve lands used to train Aborigines to produce their own food:³ "We think the time has arrived when the Government should take upon itself the responsibilities and duties"⁴

¹ ibid., Report p. 4.
² ibid., Report p. 2.
³ ibid., p. 3.
⁴ ibid., p. 4.
which the Society and the Aboriginal Protection Association could not meet.

The report also suggested that orphaned or neglected children should be removed to institutions, or boarded out so that they could be trained as domestic servants or to take their place with the industrial classes in the colony. Later, other children could receive the same sort of training, with the consent of the parents.\(^1\)

The Colonial Secretary recommended that a Board of Protectors to the Aborigines should be formed, and that reserves of land should be set aside where children could receive instruction, the aged and sick could find a resting place, and the active could be encouraged to work.\(^2\) He also recommended that police magistrates or other interested gentlemen should be invited to act as District Agents to check on reported abuses or cases of merit.

\(^1\) ibid.

\(^2\) New South Wales, Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly, 1883, Vol. III, pp. 919-21. (Minute by Colonial Secretary pp. 1-3.)
The Board of Protection to the Aborigines was formally gazetted on 5th June, 1883, but functioned for many years without legislative authority.¹ The following were appointed as members of the Aborigines Protection Board:²

The Hon. George Thornton, M.L.C.
The Hon. Richard Hill, M.L.C.
The Hon. Philip Gidley King, M.L.C.
William John Foster Esquire, Barrister-at-Law
Edmund Fosbery Esquire, Inspector General of Police
Hugh Robison Esquire, Inspector of Public Charities

Fosbery was appointed as the chairman of the new Board and subsequently the Inspector General of Police held the position by virtue of his office. The police force was the main agent of the Board and was responsible for the majority of the work involved in country areas. A copy of a police circular dated 3rd July, 1883, regarding instructions to members of the police force, is included as an illustration.

¹ New South Wales, Aborigines Protection: Report and Recommendations of the Public Service Board of New South Wales, 1940, p. 9.

² New South Wales Government Gazette, 1883, p. 3087.
POLICE DEPARTMENT CIRCULAR ON ABORIGINAL
PROTECTION, JULY, 1883

[Circular re Aborigines. No. 693.]

Sir,

Police Department, Inspector-General’s Office, Sydney, 3 July, 1883.

In drawing your attention to a notification in the Government Gazette, dated the 6th instant, of the appointment of a Board for the protection of the aborigines of New South Wales, I have the honor, at the instance of the Board, to invite your co-operation and assistance.

The Board desire me to acknowledge the valuable aid already afforded by the Police Department, especially in the preparation of the census of the aboriginals resident in the Colony, which will be of great service for reference, and it is desired that any supplementary information obtained by the police at any time should be communicated to the Board.

The object in view is, as a matter of course, the amelioration of the condition of the aborigines, and the distribution of the Government bounty in such a manner as will prove most beneficial to them.

In future the distribution of blankets will be under the control of the Board, and any recommendations or suggestions in relation thereto will receive careful consideration.

As regards further assistance, food and clothing for the aged and sick, or helpless women and children, full information will be required in order that the limited funds at the disposal of the Board may be expended with fairness and discrimination.

Contracts for rations will in future be made upon the enclosed form.

The able-bodied should be encouraged to work, being given to understand that they will not be maintained in idleness.

The police should exercise supervision also over any boats, nets, or other implements or supplies provided for the aborigines, to see they are not injured, neglected, or improperly used by private individuals.

In the event of supplies of rations being authorized, it is hoped that the police will take an interest in seeing that the articles are of the stipulated quality, and not misappropriated in any way.

If medical attendance is necessary at any time on emergency, it will of course be obtained in accordance with the practice of the Service in that respect, but any general medical attendance deemed necessary should be the subject of special report and authority.

The attention of the police should be at all times directed to the necessity for enforcing the law as regards the supply of spiritual liquors to the aborigines, or against persons improperly lodging or wandering with them.

Generally, the Board rely with confidence upon your co-operation and that of the police generally in the task they have undertaken, which is to provide for the reasonable wants of the aborigines, and to protect the remnant of the race as far as possible from the injurious effects of contamination by vicious or thoughtless members of the community.

The Superintendent of Police,—

I have, &c.,

EDMUND FOSBERY.

The Aborigines Protection Association continued to be responsible for Malaga and Warangesda. Their report in 1883 drew attention to the fact that Aboriginal children had been refused admission to some public schools "on the grounds that their dirty habits rendered them unfit to associate with other scholars".  

In the following year, the Protection Board report stated that since the Board was responsible for Aboriginal homes, food and clothing, the education of the children "should also form part of their charge." The report added that "146 Aboriginal children were receiving instruction in Public and other schools." The Board pointed out that where the numbers warranted the establishment of a special school for Aboriginal pupils, a school should be provided for their exclusive use. It was stressed, however, that where the numbers

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1 Aborigines Protection Association, Report, 1883, p. 11.


were small and where there was no objection, Aboriginal children, "if clean, decently clad and well behaved, could attend the nearest public school." ¹

This dual possibility was set out in greater clarity in the 1885 report, which stated:

We were much gratified to receive an intimation from the Department of Public Instruction dated 3rd December, 1884, to the effect that the Minister is of opinion that in all localities where a sufficient number of aboriginal children can be grouped together for instruction, it would be advisable to establish a school for their benefit exclusively; but in places where there are only a few such children, there will be no objection offered to their attending the nearest Public School, provided they are habitually clean, decently clad, and that they conduct themselves with propriety both in and out of school. ²

The report added "Any prejudice which may have existed against the admission of aboriginal and half-caste children into the Public Schools will, it is to be hoped, be now entirely removed". ³

¹ ibid., Report p. 4.
³ ibid.
There were now 390 Aboriginal and part-Aboriginal children receiving instruction in Public and other schools so the Board could:

look hopefully to such children being in time reclaimed from the uncivilized and degraded condition in which they have hitherto existed, and taking their place — as they are well fitted by their natural intelligence to do — among the industrial classes.

In August, 1887, however, Mr. W.S. Dowel, a member of the Legislative Assembly, indicated that he was highly critical of the situation concerning the education of Aboriginal children.

I find that out of 2,000 Aboriginal children, only 272 are going to school. I think that it is a disgrace to the Education Department, and I hope the gentlemen, termed truant inspectors, will give their attention to this matter.

In the following session, Parkes was asked the number of Aboriginal children receiving education.

---

1 ibid.
2 ibid., Report p. 2.
He replied that 323 attended public schools and 56 received private instruction, a total of 379* out of an estimated possible number of 2,844. He stated that only one in seven had any possibility of obtaining education, either because they lived in sparsely populated districts where there were few schools, or because white children did not care to go to school with them. He also admitted that some arrangement ought to be made to provide them with special schools. He did not suppose that "any government would allow this state of things to exist through carelessness," but "absorbed as ministers were with the cares of state, perhaps these matters did not come before them with sufficient prominence." ¹

Dowel pointed out that at the Public School at Yass, "one bright May morning", the Aboriginal children had been ordered out of the school.² However, he added, the convent had taken them in and provided for their education.³

* 1888 figure

¹ ibid., Session 1887, Vol. XLI, p. 4351.
² ibid., p. 4352.
³ ibid.
In 1888 a special school for Aborigines was opened at Brungle and a similar school was about to be built at Maloga (Wallaga Lake) for some thirty Aboriginal children "who have hitherto had some instruction in a hut lent for the purpose by Mr. Bate". During 1889 there were 428 Aboriginal pupils receiving some form of education. The Protection Board report for that year admitted however, that a further 321 Aboriginal children within a radius of five miles of a public school were not attending and the census indicated that, outside this radius "a further 2,103 children of all ages under twenty, were leading a camp life or hanging on to the skirts of civilization." 

In 1890, when the number of Aboriginal children receiving instruction had risen to 485, the Protection Board report stated that there was every reason to be pleased with the results of their efforts for the education

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of the aboriginal children. Reports are constantly being received which tend to show that they, as a rule, make apt and diligent pupils, and in many instances are equally as advanced as European children of their own age.

Although the number of Aboriginal children reported to be receiving instruction increased to 555 in 1891, \(^2\) and to 631 in 1892, \(^3\) very little difference was reported in the number of children attending normal public schools. During this period the Protection Board established a number of schools especially for the education of Aborigines. When Mr. J. D. Reece was appointed as Superintendent of the Wallaga Lake Aboriginal station, his duties as Superintendent were "to be performed, in conjunction with those of teacher at the school built by the Board for the instruction of Aboriginal children on their reserve". \(^4\)

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\(^2\) ibid., 1892, Aborigines: Report p.2.

\(^3\) ibid., 1893, Aborigines: Report p.3.

In June 1891 there were six of these special schools with a total enrolment of 175 pupils; but by December, 1892, there were ten such Aboriginal schools with an enrolment of 256 pupils.¹ The main reason behind the establishment of these schools was the opposition of European parents to Aborigines attending public schools. At Rollands Plains, for example, four Aboriginal children were withdrawn from the public school "owing to objections raised by the parents of European children".² Subsequently, a special school was built for the Aboriginal children in the area. The Board encouraged the attendance of Aboriginal children at public schools by issuing rations and clothing as an inducement. In the Shoalhaven district, for example, some 29 Aboriginal pupils attended schools near their homes.

The 1892 report stated: "Since the Board issued clothing and rations to the children to encourage their parents to send them to school, they have been attending regularly".³

¹ ibid., Aborigines: Reports 1891 and 1892.
² ibid., Report 1891, p.6.
³ ibid., Report 1892, p.9.
A table showing the number of Aboriginal children receiving instruction in each district in 1891 is shown on the following pages. This list has been compiled from an examination of relevant information from the returns submitted to the Protection Board in that year. It is known from the reports that the majority of pupils listed as receiving private instruction were, in fact, enrolled in convent schools. A very small number may have been receiving tuition at a homestead where a tutor had been engaged to provide instruction for the children of settlers.

It is also known that children enrolled in the special Aboriginal schools did not proceed beyond Third Grade. Little is known of Aboriginal pupils who were enrolled in normal public schools. Theoretically, they could proceed as far as they wished, but when it was necessary for their parents to move around in search of employment

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2 Ibid., pp. 1151-1155 (Inspection Reports on Aboriginal Schools).
the children accompanied them and missed a good deal of schooling.

It would appear that the basic concept was to help Aboriginal children become literate so that they could take their place in the industrial classes. Officially, compulsory education had been in operation in New South Wales for over ten years. It is evident, however, that there was still no real attempt to include Aboriginal children within the meaning of the 1880 Act.
TABLE XI

ABORIGINAL CHILDREN RECEIVING INSTRUCTION

BY DISTRICT, 1891

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>No. of Aborigines</th>
<th>Public School</th>
<th>Private Instruction</th>
<th>Special Aboriginal School</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tweed River</td>
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<td>Tenterfield</td>
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<td>Armidale</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bellingen River</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nambucca River</td>
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<td>Macleay River</td>
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TABLE XI (Cont)

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<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>No. of Aboriginals</th>
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<th>Private Instruction</th>
<th>Special Aboriginal School</th>
<th>Total</th>
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* Convent School
+ Attending half-time school.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>No. of Aborigines</th>
<th>Public School</th>
<th>Private Instruction</th>
<th>Special Aboriginal School</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>Narrandera</td>
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<td>Wanaaring</td>
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<td>(sic.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mossgiel</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,467</strong></td>
<td><strong>312</strong></td>
<td><strong>46</strong></td>
<td><strong>196</strong></td>
<td><strong>554</strong></td>
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</table>
The 1892 Report of the Board admitted that a large percentage of Aboriginal children were not attending school at all, and that in a few places where they had previously attended "it has been found necessary to withdraw them, owing to objections taken by the parents of European children, not that they were not clean or decently clad, but simply because they were Aboriginal children".¹

In view of the culture-clash and the uneasy race relations which had existed in the past, the attitude of the Euro-Australians towards Aboriginal children was understandable. It was, however, clearly a case of racial prejudice. Aboriginal and part-Aboriginal children were thus seriously disadvantaged in many areas and were denied normal educational opportunities. One of the arguments advanced by Euro-Australian parents who refused to permit Aboriginal children to enrol in public schools was that Aboriginal children lacked the intellectual capacity of 'white' children and would retard the educational advancement of all pupils.

This misconception is still held to-day amongst many older people in country areas, despite modern scientific research findings to the contrary. ¹

The attitude of many members of the general community towards Aborigines was blatantly hostile and such derogatory terms as "blacks", "Abos", "coons", "bangs", "niggers" and "darkies" were freely used. ²

Even in areas where Aboriginal children were permitted to attend the public school, they were often faced with negative attitudes on the part of the Euro-Australian community. ³

The reports on the Aboriginal schools which were published in the 1892 Annual Report indicated that older pupils at Cumeroogunga, Warangesda and Brungle had reached Grade III standard; those at Barrington, Forster, Wallaga Lake and Wauchope had reached Grade II;

¹ Aboriginal informants and discussions with elderly people in country districts.

² ibid. These terms are still used to-day in a number of country areas, e.g. Woodenbong, Walgett.

³ ibid.
whilst those in the relatively new schools at Pelican Island and Rollands Plains were all at Grade I level.¹

There were many reasons for this slow progress of Aboriginal pupils, including language difficulties, lack of motivation, and the fact that the teachers were constantly being interrupted to carry out their managerial duties on the Aboriginal stations and were not, in fact, providing full-time instruction.² The Protection Board, however, stated that it had come to the conclusion that "the usual standard for Public Schools being scarcely applicable for schools for Aboriginal children, the subjects now taught are confined to reading, writing, dictation and arithmetic".³

¹ New South Wales, Aborigines: Protection Board Report 1892, pp. 11-15. (No report was received from Breewarina)

² This matter will be treated in more detail later in this chapter.

³ New South Wales, Aborigines: Protection Board Report 1894, p. 3.
This decision meant, in effect, that teachers in Aboriginal schools were primarily concerned with literacy, and that, in general, pupils would not be expected or encouraged to proceed beyond that level. Although further special schools for Aborigines were opened during the 1890's, the Protection Board continued to press for the admission of Aboriginal children to normal public schools. Their efforts met with little success, despite the fact that Aboriginal children who did enrol in public schools were granted a weekly ration of food and provided with decent clothing.¹

In 1899 the Protection Board reported:

It is to be much regretted that at Gulargambone and Wollar, owing to objections raised by parents of European children, the Minister of Public Instruction has thought proper to direct that the attendance of Aboriginal children at the local public schools should be discontinued; notwithstanding the fact that the children were habitually clean, decently clad, and conducted themselves with propriety both in and out of school.²

¹ ibid., Aborigines: Report 1898, p. 2.
This refusal to permit Aboriginal children to attend the public school at Gulargambone was the subject of a question in the Legislative Assembly on 8th March, 1899. Mr. Chanter asked the Minister of Public Instruction:

"(1) Is he aware that eleven aboriginal children, fully and properly clothed, were sent to the Public School at Gulargambone on the 7th February last, at the instance of the Aborigines Protection Board, and on the 20th day of the same month were told by the teacher not to attend the school again?

(2) What are the reasons advanced by the teacher for taking this extreme step?

(3) Will he issue instructions that, in all cases and at all Public Schools, when aboriginal and half-caste children, properly clothed and clean in their persons, desire to attend, they shall be admitted?

(4) Will he obtain a report from the Aborigines Protection Board as to the cleanliness and orderly conduct of the aboriginal children attending Public Schools, and as to whether there is any valid reason why these children should not attend the Public Schools, and become educated and taught to become useful and respectable members of society?"

Mr. Hogue answered:

"(1) Eleven aboriginal children, from the blacks' camp, were refused admission."
(2) Objection was made by the residents, who declined to send their children to school so long as the aboriginal children attended.

(3) Where no objection is made by the residents, no action is taken by the Department. Special schools are provided for the aboriginal children in the various reserves. In the case of Gulargambone the residents have offered to provide a school-building for the aboriginal children if the Department will appoint a teacher and provide material. This offer has been accepted.

(4) This is not necessary." ¹

This reply was unequivocal. It indicated quite clearly that Aboriginal children could only be admitted to Public Schools when the parents of Euro-Australian children raised no objection. The policy had general application and was not confined to the particular case at Gulargambone.

From 1887 to 1900, the number of Aboriginal children reported to be receiving instruction rose from 398 to 659, although the total Aboriginal population included in the district returns had dropped by approximately 1,000 from 7,902 to 6,901.²

¹ New South Wales, Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly, 1899, p. 28.
² Vide Table XII.
During this period the number of special Aboriginal schools rose from seven to eleven and, although these schools did account for some of the increase, it is evident that a number of Aboriginal children were in attendance at normal public schools. The enrolment dropped to 611 in 1901, however,\(^1\) and the enrolment dropped to 551 in the following year.\(^2\) This decrease of 108 pupils in the space of two years was a serious blow to the hopes of the Protection Board, which reported that:

It is feared that the decrease in the number attending school is due in great measure to the objection ..... which some European parents have to the Aboriginal children attending the same school as their children. Where such objections are raised, and there are sufficient children to warrant the establishment of a school for the exclusive use of aborigines, the Board endeavours to have one established, but as a rule without success. To encourage the parents to send their children to school, rations and decent clothing are provided;

\(^1\) Vide Table XII

TEACHER AND SCHOOL CHILDREN—HOUSE FOR ABORIGINES, GRAFTON.

From Aborigines' Protection Board Report, 1900
(Reproduced by The Mitchell Library)
and it is somewhat disheartening to find them excluded, especially as these children, at a number of places where they are allowed to attend, are reported as being cleanly in their habits and exemplary in their behaviour.¹

In 1903, the Board had attempted to have separate schools established for Aboriginal children at Burnt Bridge, Pelican Island, Murrumbong and Runnymede, but the Department of Public Instruction had refused to accede to the request.²

The report for the year stated that:

The Board are strongly of the opinion that the Aboriginal children should be given the opportunity of having a rudimentary education and if the Department of Public Instruction is unable to provide schools for Aborigines, the Board propose asking for a special amount to establish schools themselves.³

The situation was far from satisfactory. The Protection Board was not really qualified to accept the

¹ ibid.


³ ibid.
responsibility for the education of all Aboriginal and part-Aboriginal children, but the Department of Public Instruction was under strong pressure not to permit the enrolment of most Aboriginal children into normal public schools.

Although the two Departments eventually reached an uneasy compromise, the problem of educating Aboriginal children was never tackled effectively. Since the number of full-blood Aborigines was obviously dwindling fairly rapidly, it was probably widely believed that the problem would eventually solve itself. The Board considered that its primary task was to deal with full-blood Aborigines, and that part-Aborigines would eventually be absorbed into the general community. In the eyes of the Euro-Australian population, however, part-Aborigines were treated in the same way as full-bloods, and the Board reluctantly accepted an increasing responsibility for their protection.

The following table, Table XII, shows the number of Aboriginal children reported to be receiving instruction for the years 1887 to 1912 inclusive.\(^1\)

\(^1\) New South Wales, Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly, Aborigines: Protection Board, Reports, 1888-1913.
The figures have been obtained from an examination of the annual returns recorded in the Reports of the Aborigines Protection Board for the years 1888 to 1913 inclusive.

In some cases the figures may not be entirely accurate, as some of the officials making the returns indicated that they were uncertain of the exact number "because of the wandering habits of the Aborigines". It may be noted that in the 1891 figure, the total shown in the individual district returns is not exactly the same as the total given in the annual report itself.

It can be seen from Table XII that the number of Aboriginal children receiving instruction rose steadily from 1877 to 1907. There were fluctuations from year to year but the numbers rose fairly steadily from approximately 400 to a little over 700. There were marked rises in 1908 and 1909.¹

¹ In 1909 the number rose by 137, but dropped by 126 in 1910. It is possible that the figure as given in the 1909 Protection Board report was not accurate.
### TABLE XII

Aboriginal Children Receiving Instruction 1887-1912 *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Public School</th>
<th>Private Instruction</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1888</td>
<td>323</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>508</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td>607</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>556</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>607</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>664</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>606</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>568</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>584</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>521</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>676</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>665</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>633</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>696</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>- (not given)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>- (not given)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>802</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>846</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>873</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>994</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Aborigines' Protection Board Reports 1888-1913 inclusive.
After 1909 numbers resumed a fairly steady increase until they approached the 1,000 mark in 1912. Between 1887 and 1907 the number of Aboriginal pupils receiving private instruction, (mainly in Convents), fluctuated from a minimum of 11 in 1897 to a maximum of 73 in 1906. Between 1908 and 1910 there was a definite rise in the number of pupils receiving private instruction but the figures were still less than fifteen per cent of the total.

In 1883, when the Protection Board took office, there were 25 Aboriginal Reserves with a total area of 3,500 acres.¹ The number increased to 113 Reserves with an area of 26,930 acres by the end of 1897,² and, although the number of Reserves had increased to 145 by December, 1903, the total area had dropped to 25,871 acres.³ These Reserves were, in fact, areas of Crown Land, reserved for the use of Aborigines but could be revoked by the Department of Lands at any time,

² ibid.
with or without the approval of the Protection Board. In some cases the Reserves were areas which had been traditionally occupied by the Aborigines. In other cases, Reserves were established some distance from townships and Aborigines, who had previously camped on the outskirts of towns, were "encouraged" to move to the area which had been reserved for their use.

There is no reason to believe that the methods used by the police to encourage Aborigines to take up their residence on reserves was any different in the 1890's than those used during the early part of this century. A number of older Aborigines have informed the writer that the police used strong coercive measures to force them to move to the reserves. When Aborigines near townships needed assistance, it was not difficult to induce them to go out to the "Reserve", since the police were the agents through which rations or any other assistance was usually provided. The police also had the direct responsibility for supervising the behaviour of Aborigines on the reserves, and visited them in the course of their normal duties.
Aborigines who settled on reserves were encouraged to start farming, and could be provided with tools, fencing wire and seed for that purpose. However, many reserves were small or unsuitable for agriculture, and very limited financial assistance was available. Farming supplies were generally provided only for the large reserves, where agricultural activities were supervised by the resident managers or farm overseers. In other areas, Aborigines preferred to work on nearby properties for small wages. Encouragement was given to the Aborigines to build their own huts on the reserves, and for this purpose galvanised iron and sometimes timber was provided. Many reserves contained only one or two families, but in some places a considerable number of Aborigines were induced to take up residence. On settlements near the coast and on large rivers in the inland, some Aborigines were provided with boats so that they could supplement their diet with fish.

1 ibid., Aborigines: Protection Board Reports 1883-1910.
2 ibid.
3 ibid.
4 ibid.
There was often a good deal of local pressure concerning Aboriginal reserves. In some cases where there were comparatively few Aborigines, local farmers applied for leases of the reserve, but such applications were usually refused. Reserves which were no longer used by Aborigines were revoked and handed back to the Crown Lands Department for disposal in the usual way. When the Department of Lands revoked the lease of the reserve at Booligal without consulting the Protection Board,¹ the Board obtained a promise from the Secretary for Lands that no leases would be cancelled in future without consultation with the Board. At this stage the Protection Board were still acting without statutory authority, and were meeting with legal difficulties in such matters as prosecuting people who trespassed in reserves set apart for the use of Aborigines.

When reserves were set aside in relatively close proximity to the town, the European community sometimes applied to have the reserve moved further away.

¹ ibid., Report, 1907, p. 2.
A number of examples are recorded in the Protection Board reports. In 1906, the Forster and Coopernook Progress Association applied "for the removal of the aborigines located on the reserve near the town."\(^1\) The petition was refused, but the Board issued instructions to the Aborigines "that they must keep their camp clean",\(^2\) and also notified the police that they should "be kept out of the town at night-time".\(^3\)

In 1908, the Board reported that it had opposed attempts to have various Aboriginal reserves revoked and used for other purposes. These reserves included those at Burnt Bridge (Kempsey), Calimo (Deniliquin), Upper Burradorang, Kinchela (Kempsey), Forster, Broadwater and Stewart's Island (Nambucca Heads).\(^4\)

\(^1\) ibid., Report, 1907, p. 3.
\(^2\) ibid.
\(^3\) ibid.
\(^4\) ibid., Report, 1909, p. 3.
The 1903 Report mentioned that "several complaints have been received respecting the annoyance caused by the proximity of the aborigines camped at Erambie Reserve to the township of Cowra". The Board attempted to find a suitable reserve away from the township, and suggested they be sent to a locality in the vicinity of Farleigh. However, "objections were raised about them being sent there", so they were left at the Erambie site.

During the same year, consideration was given to closing the reserve at La Perouse and moving the Aborigines to Kurnell. It was decided to retain the La Perouse reserve, but in order to discourage any Aborigines who came from other parts of the state from remaining there, no rations or other Government assistance were to be provided for them.

When the Aborigines Protection Society found that it was unable to meet its commitments to maintain the Mission stations at Maloga, Warangesda and Brewarrina,

1 ibid., Report, 1903, p. 6.

2 ibid.

3 ibid., p. 7.
From Aborigines' Protection Board Report, 1900
(Reproduced by The Mitchell Library)
From Aborigines' Protection Board Report, 1900
(Reproduced by The Mitchell Library)
the Protection Board gradually assumed full responsibility for the management of these stations. The Maloga Mission, which had been on Matthews' private land, was moved further up the river to Cumeroogunga in 1888, where both farming and grazing were carried out under the direction of a manager. Managers were also appointed to supervise farming operations on the reserves at Brungle, and Wallaga Lake. Two Aboriginal Homes were established, one at Grafton on the Clarence River and the other at Runnymede on the Richmond River. These Homes were also developed as farms under the direction of a resident manager.

After the appointment of managers to the reserves at Walhallow (Quirindi) and Roseby Park (Nowra) during 1906, the Protection Board had nine Stations (or Homes) under its direct control. At each of these stations, and also at Lismore, Gulargambone and Singleton, Local Aborigines' Protection Boards had been established to exercise general oversight of Aborigines in the area.

1 R. Morgan, op. cit., p. 10.
These Local Boards, first established in 1895, each had five members of whom the senior local police officer was an ex-officio member. ¹ The function of the local Boards was to pay regular visits to the station or reserve, suggest improvements, hold regular meetings and forward an annual report to the Protection Board in Sydney. The central Board, which was under the chairmanship of the Inspector General of Police, included a number of members of Parliament, the Under Secretary for Lands and from 1907 the Under Secretary and Director of Education (Mr. Peter Board). ²

The appointment of the Director of Education to the Protection Board was quickly followed by a significant increase in the financial contribution of his Department towards the education of Aboriginal children. During 1908 the Department of Public Instruction contributed the sum of £1,691.17.6 (including £1,484.4.7 for salaries) towards the cost of ten schools on Aboriginal Stations


² New South Wales, Aborigines: Protection Board Report, 1908, p. 1. (Mr. Peter Board resigned in 1912 and was replaced by Mr. R. S. Hill).
or Reserves.\textsuperscript{1} In 1909, expenditure was £3,024.14.0 and included £2,557.10.2 for the salaries of teachers at twenty-five Aboriginal schools.\textsuperscript{2}

Not all of these schools were new, as a number of them had been operating for some years and the salary of the teacher had been subsidised by the Protection Board or by missionary societies. For example, in 1902 the Department of Public Instruction had refused the Protection Board's request for the salary of a teacher at the Runnymede Home on the Richmond River. Following this decision "the Board appointed the Manager's daughter, at a small salary, the Instruction Department supplying the school material".\textsuperscript{3} The Protection Board had also been paying the salary of a teacher at Erambie (Cowra). Both these salaries were now met by the Department of Public Instruction.

In 1909, new Aboriginal schools were established at Calimo (near Deniliquin), Dunoon (near Lismore),

\textsuperscript{1} \textit{ibid.}, Report, 1909, p. 22.
\textsuperscript{2} \textit{ibid.}, Report, 1910, p. 22.
\textsuperscript{3} \textit{ibid.}, Report, 1903, p. 5.
St. Clair (Singleton), Ulgundahi Island (Maclean) and Nanima (Wellington). Although most of their salary was met by the Education Department, selection was made by the Protection Board as, in most cases, they were also responsible for the general supervision of the Reserve where the school was located. Despite this increase in the number of Aboriginal schools and an increase in enrolment of over 100 pupils in 1909, there were only eleven more Aboriginal pupils receiving instruction in 1910 than there had been in 1908. The increase in the number of Aboriginal schools did not result in a proportionate increase in the number of Aboriginal children who were enrolled in schools in N.S.W.

The standards achieved by pupils in Aboriginal schools were rather low. It has been pointed out that one of the major reasons for these low standards was the fact that the manager-teachers were not qualified

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1 ibid., Report, 1910, p. 3.

2 Vide Table XII.
to teach and in many cases did not have particularly
high educational qualifications themselves. The
manager-teachers also found, as the total population
in Aboriginal Reserves increased, that more and more
time was required for managerial duties and that
consequently less time could be spent in teaching
in the school.

At the same time, however, it is clear that
Aboriginal children were not expected to do particularly
well at school, and that the basic aim in these
schools was to train the girls to become domestic
servants and the boys to become efficient manual workers.
This is clearly seen from the extracts of the inspection
reports which were sometimes included in the annual
reports of the Protection Board.

In 1906, for example, the inspector's report
on the Wallaga Lake school included the following remarks:

A small piece of land has been securely fenced
and prepared for a school garden. The aborigines
are clever at imitation, and show considerable
dull in copying the headlines of copy-books, and
in writing generally. In arithmetic, simple
exercises were performed - slowly but correctly.
A benevolent tyranny rules here. 1

1 New South Wales, Aborigines: Protection Board Report,
1907, p. 4.
A few short extracts from Inspectors' reports for 1907 and 1908 give an indication of the work carried out in other schools; published reports in 1908 include:¹

**Morcom:** Only four subjects - reading, writing, arithmetic and dictation are taught.

**Gulargambone:** The writing is well done on slates.

**Cumergoogunga:** The methods in use are exclusively memory methods, but they have been very diligently applied.

and in 1909:²

**Tobwabba** (near Forster): The advanced pupils are well up to the standard of 2nd class in reading, writing, arithmetic and dictation.

**Nanima:** The pupils are fairly clean ... restless, talkative, and inattentive. The pupils are a poor type mentally.

**Dunoon:** The pupils have made good progress in writing and drawing, subjects of which they are very fond.

**Brewarina:** The bigger girls do the laundry work for the station. A little carpentry is done by the boys. They also mend the gates and fences.


Gulargambone: The teacher takes a deep interest in her work. Recognising that mere book learning is not sufficient, she sets the girls to sweep out the school, to scrub the desks, seats and boxes, while the boys get the firewood.

Occasional reports indicated that pupils were making good progress in reading or arithmetic, but in the majority of cases there was a marked emphasis on manual training for boys and domestic training for girls. This emphasis was quite deliberate, as it was considered that pupils should receive instruction in subjects "likely to be of use to the children when they reach manhood and womanhood". They were to include "instruction in manual labour, such as carpentry, net-making, sewing, cooking and laundry work". Benches and sets of tools were supplied to a number of schools, and considerable progress was made by many children in manual work. So much time was spent on gardening, sewing and manual work, however, that there was not sufficient time for instruction beyond the most elementary level in the basic subjects.

Manual training was emphasised so as to increase employment opportunities for Aboriginal children once they left school.

1 ibid., Report, 1910, pp. 3-4.
2 ibid., p. 3.
3 ibid., Reports, 1908 to 1912.
From the turn of the century the Board arranged for Aboriginal youths and girls to be sent to private homes as apprentices or servants. Many Aboriginal girls were employed as domestic servants, but difficulty was experienced in finding permanent employment for youths in the rural industry. Much of the work on the land was of a seasonal nature and - particularly when seasonal conditions were unfavourable - there was a good deal of unemployment.

The young men tended to drift back to the reserves where kinship obligations ensured that they could "share" the rations provided for older and indigent Aborigines. This led to a great deal of friction with the managers and police. The Board was concerned with the growing number of Aborigines and part-Aborigines who were "growing up in idleness and under the influence of ill-regulated parents". They claimed that the only way to deal with this difficult problem was for the Board and its officers to have authority "in loco parentis".

The Protection Board pointed out that they had little effective authority over the Aborigines or over the reserves,

1 ibid., Report, 1907, p. 5.
2 Aboriginal informants in many parts of New South Wales.
3 New South Wales, Aborigines: Protection Board Report, 1908, p.4.
4 ibid., Report, 1907, p. 5.
and that until they gained "Legislative sanction for their existence and actions", they were "powerless to deal with many matters tending to the lasting good of the Aboriginal race, more especially with respect to the children, who, under existing conditions, must sooner or later become a burden on the State".¹

The Aborigines Protection Bill was introduced into the N.S.W. Legislative Assembly by the Colonial Secretary, W.H. Wood, on 18th November, 1909.² One of the most significant features of the debate was the lack of any reference to education, except on the question of the boarding out of apprentices. In the Upper House, the contribution by Fosbery, who had been Chairman of the Board for many years, could only be described as paternalistic in the extreme.³ The Aborigines Protection Act came into force on 1st June, 1910.⁴ The reconstituted Protection Board was still under the chairmanship of the Inspector General

¹ ibid., Report, 1909, p. 4.
³ ibid., p. 4655.
⁴ Much of the New South Wales Act was based on the Victorian legislation. Most of the Regulations were taken verbatim from the Victorian Protection Board Regulations of 1887 and 1890.
of Police and "the whole of the Officers of Police throughout the State" were appointed "Guardians of Aborigines, under the provisions of Section 6 of the Act".\(^1\) Local Boards were replaced by Local Committees composed of essentially the same people as those who had previously served on the Local Boards. Regulations under the Act were gazetted on 8th June,\(^2\) setting out the duties of the Board and its officers and other matters pertaining to the conduct and control of reserves. Regulation 29 stated:

> Every Aborigine under the age of 14 years shall, when so required by any local committee, guardian, officer of the Board, or member of the Police Force attend at the nearest school to which Aborigines will be admitted.\(^3\)

Since many Aboriginal children were refused admission to normal public schools, an increasing number were forced to attend the special schools which had been established for their exclusive use. It has already been mentioned that the teacher-managers on Reserves and Stations were unable to carry out their teaching duties efficiently because they required to spend so much time on managerial

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duties. This can be demonstrated quite clearly by an examination of the Regulations\(^{1}\) under the 1909 Aborigines Protection Act which set out, inter alia, the duties to be performed by the officers in charge of Aboriginal Stations and Reserves.

Regulation 14 stated:

The duties of managers shall be:

(a) To have the general management and control of all persons on the stations under their charge, buildings, stock, and other property; to deal with all manner of things affecting the good order and conduct of all persons residing on the stations; and to devote all their energies to the moral and social welfare of the Aborigines resident on such stations.

(b) To report in a prescribed form, at the end of each month, to the local committee or guardian, for the information of the Board, as to the general condition of the stations - i.e., the number of Aborigines located thereon, and the daily average for the month, distinguishing in all cases the sexes and the full-bloods from the half-castes; the number of children attending the school; the nature and extent of the work done during the month, and what work it is proposed to go on with; the number of births and deaths during the month; information as to the general health of the Aborigines; and any other matters of interest.

\(^{1}\) Ibd., pp. 2-4. The full text of Regulation 14 and a summary of Regulation 15 is included within the text rather than as an Appendix. This is because these particular regulations are of crucial importance in an understanding of the situation faced by teachers who were also managers of Aboriginal Stations or Reserves.
(c) To discourage any further introduction of half-castes, which shall be allowed only on the recommendation of the local committee or guardian.

(d) To keep a diary of all occurrences at the stations under their charge, together with the usual statistics, and submit the same when required to the local committee for inspection, and to members of the Board on visit.

(e) To exercise supervision of the Aborigines at the stations; to restrain them from leaving the stations and visiting public-houses; and to endeavour to see that they do not squander their earnings.

(f) To be accountable for all rations, clothing, medical comforts, &c., and their distribution as authorised by the Board.

(g) To keep daily accounts of all money and supplies received and disposed of, and to furnish to the Board monthly abstracts of the same.

(h) To forward all moneys received from the sale of wool or produce, &c., to the Board immediately after the end of each month, accompanied by a statement showing the various items.

(i) To consult the local committee as to the supply of stores and materials, and on any matters affecting discipline at the stations, and to seek their advice on matters generally.

(j) To submit requisitions for supplies of rations, clothing, &c., monthly, through the local committee.

(k) To submit to the Board, with the endorsement of the local committee, applications by Aborigines at the stations who desire to occupy blocks of land on the Aboriginal stations, to be cultivated by them to earn a livelihood thereon for themselves and their families, and to report fully as to the locality and suitability of the land applied for, and the character of the applicant.
(l) To assist in and supervise the erection of and repairs to buildings, fencing, &c., and the cultivation of the land, and do their best to make the Aborigines as comfortable and contented as practicable; also to take an interest in their work and recreations.

(m) As it is impossible to form rules to meet every contingency that may arise, the manager may use his own judgment in any case of emergency not herein provided for, and not involving the expenditure of money, but the management must be firm and systematic, regularity of hours being observed. The local committee must be consulted when practicable.

Regulation 15 stated that Managers were to take stock of all Government property on the station twice each year, and also furnish quarterly and monthly returns of rations and stores. The regulation concluded, "all correspondence must be promptly attended to and recorded for inspection". ¹

It is quite obvious from these regulations that the management of an Aboriginal Station was, in fact, a full-time job; but, since the Department of Public Instruction met a considerable portion of the salary, the manager was also expected to teach. School could only be started each day after certain managerial duties were completed.² Under Regulation 28, every able-bodied Aborigine who resided on

¹ ibid., p. 4.
² Interviews with a number of ex-manager-teachers who had been employed by the Aborigines Protection Board.
an Aboriginal Station was expected to do a reasonable amount of work, under the Manager's direction. The allocation of this work was one of the first tasks of the manager each day. As well as the supervision of plant and the purchase and distribution of rations, managers were expected to attend to many emergencies. These included the transport of Aborigines to the nearest town for medical or hospital treatment; attendance at court for prosecution against Aborigines or others guilty of breaches of the Act; arranging for employment of Aborigines prepared to work on neighbouring properties; funeral or burial arrangements when required, and many other activities involved in the day-to-day management of the Station.

As previously indicated, the selection of manager-teachers was made on the recommendation of the Aborigines' Protection Board and not the Department of Public Instruction. In general, managers were not trained teachers, and appointments were made on the assumption that they had the personality and temperament required to ensure that "good order and discipline" was maintained on the Aboriginal

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1 The words "as directed by the Manager" and certain other minor amendments to the general regulations were not included in the original regulations but were published in the New South Wales Government Gazette, No. 97, on 2nd June, 1915.
Station under their charge. Many of the manager-teachers had previously been policemen, prison warders, regimental sergeant majors or other servicemen, or had served in the British Colonial Service.¹

Because of their very restricted environment, Aboriginal children required special help in order to benefit from the instruction they received in school. Above all, they needed teachers with a sympathetic understanding of their educational needs. It has been shown that the teacher-managers had neither the training nor the time for this specialised work. Even those teacher-managers who were sympathetic and understanding found that their role as disciplinarian for the Station as a whole conflicted with their efforts to improve the very inferior educational standards which were common in these schools.²

Although the new Act recognised the fact that the Protection Board had assumed responsibility for the education of the majority of Aboriginal children in New South Wales,³ it ignored the realities of the situation.

¹ Interviews with a number of ex-manager-teachers who had been employed by the Aborigines' Protection Board.
² ibid.
³ New South Wales, Aborigines Protection Act, 1909, p. 3.
The aim of the 1909 Act was to give legal sanction to the work which the Protection Board had been doing for many years. It appears probable that many of the actions which the Protection Board and its officers had previously taken could have been seriously compromised had the Board's legal authority been challenged. Section Seven of the Act clearly defined the services and duties of the Protection Board:

7. It shall be the duty of the board\(^1\) -

(a) to, with the consent of the Minister, apportion, distribute, and apply as may seem most fitting, any moneys voted by Parliament, and any other funds in its possession or control, for the relief of Aborigines;

(b) to distribute blankets, clothing, and relief to aborigines at the discretion of the board;

(c) to provide for the custody, maintenance, and education of the children of aborigines;

(d) to manage and regulate the use of reserves;

(e) to exercise a general supervision and care over all aborigines and over all matters affecting the interests and welfare of aborigines, and to protect them against injustice, imposition, and fraud.

\(^1\) ibid.

Certain sections of the Act dealt with the employment
and apprenticeship of Aboriginal youths and girls.¹ For some years before the Act was passed, the Board had been concerned about the large number of "half-caste and other children on the reserves" who, after completing their primary schooling, "were growing up in idleness and under the influence of ill-regulated parents".² It was hoped that the new Act would enable the Board to take action on this matter.

The new legislation was not taken to mean a new deal for Aborigines and there was no suggestion that it would lead to increased financial assistance for the work of the Board. In 1884, the first full year of the Board's operations, expenditure had been about £3,500.³ There was very little change in expenditure until 1890 when the sum of £12,500 was allocated to the Board.⁴ There had been a slight but steady increase in expenditure until 1907 when, for the first time, the budget exceeded £20,000. In the following year expenditure rose to over £25,500 but

¹ ibid., Section 11, 12 and 13, pp. 6-7.
² New South Wales, Aborigines Protection Board Report, 1908, p. 4.
³ Vide Table XIII.
⁴ ibid.
was reduced by just on £1,000 in 1909. ¹ It was known, when the new Act came into force on 1st June, 1910, that the budget for the financial year would be almost identical with that provided in the previous year. ² The annual expenditure of the Aborigines' Protection Board for each of the years 1894 to 1910, inclusive, is shown in Table XIII. ³ The Board had been in existence for over 27 years and had spent a total of approximately £400,000 on the Protection of Aborigines. Most of this expenditure had been on salaries and expenses for office and field staff including the salaries of the manager-teachers.

It can also be seen from Table XIII that there were over 6,000 full-blood Aborigines in New South Wales in 1883, and that by 1910 the number had decreased to less than 2,000. At the same time, however, the number of half-castes included in the returns submitted to the Board had risen from 2,300 in 1883 to over 5,000 by 1910. The total numbers had thus shown only a relatively small decrease during the 27 years under review.

¹ ibid.
² New South Wales Government Gazette, 1910, p. 2486.
³ The figures for Table XIII have been obtained from an examination of the Protection Board Reports from 1883 to 1910.
TABLE XIII

NUMBER OF ABORIGINES AND EXPENDITURE BY THE ABORIGINES' PROTECTION BOARD, 1883-1910

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Full-blood</th>
<th>Half-caste*</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>6,126</td>
<td>2,345</td>
<td>8,471</td>
<td>Apt. 5.6.1883.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>5,689</td>
<td>2,402</td>
<td>8,091</td>
<td>£3,423:13:6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>5,362</td>
<td>2,622</td>
<td>7,984</td>
<td>2,975:6:5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td>4,893</td>
<td>2,741</td>
<td>7,634</td>
<td>3,606:13:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td>5,042</td>
<td>2,860</td>
<td>7,902</td>
<td>4,021:13:9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1888</td>
<td>4,718</td>
<td>2,767</td>
<td>7,485</td>
<td>3,411:14:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>4,652</td>
<td>2,877</td>
<td>7,529</td>
<td>5,275:13:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>4,693</td>
<td>3,007</td>
<td>7,700</td>
<td>12,622:2:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>4,458</td>
<td>3,015</td>
<td>7,473</td>
<td>14,078:19:8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>4,212</td>
<td>3,137</td>
<td>7,349</td>
<td>17,030:3:8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td>3,982</td>
<td>3,273</td>
<td>7,255</td>
<td>15,253:14:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>3,756</td>
<td>3,265</td>
<td>7,021</td>
<td>15,311:8:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>3,660</td>
<td>3,386</td>
<td>7,046</td>
<td>17,050:0:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>3,503</td>
<td>3,481</td>
<td>6,984</td>
<td>17,311:17:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>3,422</td>
<td>3,663</td>
<td>7,084</td>
<td>16,732:12:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>3,230</td>
<td>3,661</td>
<td>6,891</td>
<td>16,591:1:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>3,203</td>
<td>3,689</td>
<td>6,892</td>
<td>17,662:11:3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>3,108</td>
<td>3,793</td>
<td>6,901</td>
<td>17,848:11:1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE XIII (Contd.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Full-blood</th>
<th>Half-caste*</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>3,036</td>
<td>3,879</td>
<td>6,915</td>
<td>£18,663:13:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>2,880</td>
<td>3,948</td>
<td>6,828</td>
<td>18,824:15:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>2,786</td>
<td>4,148</td>
<td>6,934</td>
<td>19,755:13:0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>2,730</td>
<td>4,180</td>
<td>6,910</td>
<td>16,106:11:11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>2,656</td>
<td>4,477</td>
<td>7,133</td>
<td>17,196:14:10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>2,503</td>
<td>4,569</td>
<td>7,072</td>
<td>18,136:3:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>2,347</td>
<td>4,613</td>
<td>6,960</td>
<td>20,535:9:2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>2,152</td>
<td>4,781</td>
<td>6,933</td>
<td>25,739:5:5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>2,123</td>
<td>5,247</td>
<td>7,370</td>
<td>24,744:6:9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>1,872</td>
<td>5,085</td>
<td>6,957</td>
<td>24,899:12:0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Including lesser-castes.
When the Protection Board was established, it was believed that the Aborigines were passing rapidly towards extinction, and it was intended to "protect" them so that they could die out peacefully. The Government had reluctantly adopted the Protection policy in 1881 after many years of complete neglect of the Aboriginal problem because of the laissez-faire attitude which had predominated from 1855. The first Protector of Aborigines, George Thornton, had stated that assistance should only be given to "true" Aborigines and that part-Aborigines should be made to work for themselves. Throughout the period of the Protection Board, the position of the part-Aborigines had never been satisfactorily resolved. In Victoria, the Protection Board had adopted a policy of enforcing the absorption


of half-castes into the general community. In early reports of the Protection Board this idea had been rejected as impracticable, but the new Aborigines Protection Act was based directly on the Victorian legislation which had been passed almost thirty years previously.

If the number of full-bloods had continued to diminish and if the part-Aborigines could have been forced into the general community, this would, eventually, have "solved" the Aboriginal problem. Even if such a policy had been regarded as morally defensible, it could only have been achieved through strong coercive action on the part of the authorities. It would also have required the acceptance of part-Aborigines by the general community, but in many country areas there was a strong historical tradition against such acceptance.

When the Aboriginal Protection policy had first been introduced into New South Wales, reserves

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2 J. H. Bell, loc. cit.
of land had been set aside "where children could receive instruction," and where "the aged, sick and infirm could find a resting place and some degree of competent attention." Aborigines had thus been encouraged to live away from cities and towns, independent of the white population. "Protection" had thus included the segregation of Aborigines, and this segregation had also been applied to part-Aborigines.

Part-Aborigines had been subject to the same restrictive measures as full-blood Aborigines. These reinforced the strong kinship and family ties which bound Aborigines and part-Aborigines together. Aborigines accepted half-caste children as full members of the family, and they faced the same degree of prejudice from the non-Aboriginal sector of the community in rural areas. This prejudice had led, inevitably, to the development of separate and special schools for Aboriginal and part-Aboriginal children.

1 New South Wales, Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly, 1883, Vol. III, p. 920, (Minute by Colonial Secretary, p.2.)
It was clearly implied in the provisions of the 1909 Act that coercive measures would be taken to separate part-Aboriginal children from the rest of the Aboriginal population. It was inevitable that this policy would be resisted quite strongly by Aboriginal parents and by all Aboriginal communities. In New South Wales the 'protection' policy had originally been adopted somewhat reluctantly. In the early days of 'Protection', a few thousand pounds were allocated each year for "the hitherto uncared for blacks".\(^1\) It had been confidently anticipated that as the number of Aborigines diminished, the need for this expenditure would cease.

The Aborigines Protection Board now found that the number of Aborigines was increasing and that their annual expenditure exceeded £24,000. The apparently unforeseen complication to the problem had been the growing number of part-Aborigines with whom the Protection

\(^1\) New South Wales, Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly, 1882, Vol. IV, p. 1525.
Board was increasingly concerned. Under the new Act the apparent intention was to "solve" this problem by taking coercive measures against part-Aborigines and forcing them to merge with the general community. This shift in emphasis in the Protection policy had important implications for all aspects of Aboriginal education.

It was quickly discovered, however, that the Act did "not give the Board power to train or effectively bind them without their consent". The Board stated that they had no wish to take any special action with regard to full-blood Aborigines or the adult part-Aborigines "who for years have been taught to look upon themselves as Aborigines".

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1 New South Wales, Aborigines Protection Board Report, 1908, p. 4, (Writer's emphasis)
Prior to the 1909 Protection Act, the Aborigines Protection Board had expressed growing concern about the number of half-caste children who were growing up in idleness on the Reserves. It was expected that the new legislation would permit the Board to have the children taken away from the Reserves, given special training and then apprenticed as domestics or rural workers.

It was quickly discovered, however, that the Act did "not give the Board power to train or effectively bind them without their consent". The Board stated that they had no wish to take any special action with regard to full-blood Aborigines or the adult part-Aborigines "who for years have been taught to look upon themselves as Aborigines".

1 New South Wales, Aborigines: Protection Board Report, 1908, p. 4, (Writer's emphasis)
They were concerned, however, with the half-caste and lesser-caste children, whose numbers were "increasing with alarming rapidity".¹ It was the Board's view that these part-Aboriginal children should be taken away from the "vicious surroundings", "properly trained to spheres of future usefulness, and, once away from the reserves, not allowed to return - except in the case of those who have parents, on an occasional visit".²

It was quite apparent that the Protection Board intended to use coercion to separate the Aborigines and part-Aborigines, as had previously been done in Victoria. The Board began to press to have the new legislation amended so that they would have the necessary legal powers. Without waiting for the amendment to be passed, however, the Board established the

¹ ibid.
² ibid.
Cootamundra Home for Orphan and Neglected Aboriginal Children. This home, a converted hospital, was opened in 1912 and soon had a considerable number of Aboriginal girls who were being trained as domestic servants. Within a few months, further extensions were made to the building to increase the accommodation available from twenty-five to thirty-five.

On 1st August, 1912 the Board appointed Miss A. Lone as the Home-Finder. "Her duties were to visit stations and camps in order to induce parents to allow their children to be apprenticed out, or to allow them to enter Cootamundra Home to undergo a course of training to fit them for situations".

Despite the fact that the Board did not have the legal power to force children to go to Cootamundra

1 ibid., p. 3.
2 ibid.
3 ibid., Report, 1913, p. 4.
4 ibid.
5 ibid.
without the consent of parents (unless they were orphaned or neglected),\(^1\) the Home-Finder reported that in her first year, some twenty-six girls had been sent to the Training Home and a further thirty-six placed in domestic service. The Protection Board reported that:

"In almost every case the girls are bound to their employers for a number of years by indenture, the wages being received by the Board and placed to their credit in a Trust Account ... until the money is required for some legitimate purpose, when it is paid to the girls at the discretion of the Board".\(^2\)

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\(^1\) Pastor Doug Nicholls, a well-known Aborigine in Victoria, informed the writer that his sister was forcibly taken from Cumeroogunga Aboriginal Station about 1913. Mrs. M. Tucker, another informant, stated that she had been taken from Moonahcullah about the same time. In both cases, the police removed them despite the entreaties and protests of their mothers. Both claim that there was no suggestion that they were in fact "neglected" by their parents. The police had used force and had indicated that they had authority to take away any child they liked. Pastor Nicholls also stated that at Cumeroogunga, Aboriginal children had hidden under the school building when they learnt that the Police were visiting the Station. Aborigines from other parts of New South Wales, including Mr. C. Williams (Coraki), Mr. C. Leon (Taree) and Mr. H. Groves (Angledool) confirmed that Aboriginal children were forcibly taken by the Police in many areas throughout this State.

Under Regulation 41 of the 1909 Act, the children had to be provided with suitable sleeping accommodation, fed, clothed and lodged in a proper manner and paid at the following wages: first year, 1/6d. per week (of which 3d. was to be paid to the apprentice as pocket money); second year, 2/6d. per week (6d. pocket money); third year, 3/6d. per week (6d. pocket money); fourth year, 5/-d. per week (1/-d. pocket money). The amount not paid as pocket money was to be remitted to the Board quarterly, placed in a Trust Account and paid to the apprentice at the end of the apprenticeship or at such times as were approved by the Board.

In the following year, a number of girls were placed in suitable homes, others were admitted to the Church Rescue Home, the Female Refuge, or handed over to the State Children's Relief Department as neglected children. In the words of the Protection Board Report: "They will not be allowed to return to their former associations, but will be merged into the white population".

2 ibid.
4 ibid.
On 15th February, 1915, the long awaited amendments to the Aborigines Protection Act became law.\(^1\) These amendments gave the Board considerable powers to deal with Aboriginal children, who could now legally be removed to the Training Home, even if the parents objected. A number of new Regulations were added, one of which stated:

All quadroon, octoroon and half-caste lads on the Board's stations and reserves of or above the age of eighteen (18) years shall leave the same on or before the 31st May, 1915 and shall not again be allowed upon a station or reserve, except for a brief visit to relatives.\(^2\)

These visits were only permitted at the discretion of the Manager or the Police, and were not to exceed ten days.

In October of the same year, Messrs. H. Swindehurst and R.T. Donaldson were appointed Inspectors of Aborigines;\(^3\) their primary task being to deal with the problem of part-Aboriginal children living on Reserves and Stations. The legal sanction for coercion, so long awaited, was now


\(^3\) New South Wales, *Aborigines Protection Board Report*, 1919, p. 3.
available. The appointment of the two inspectors indicated that these new powers would be used.

Until 1916, the Protection Board had been composed of four members of Parliament and six private citizens, with the Inspector-General of Police as Chairman. It had been reconstituted to include a number of senior public servants. In 1911 these were the Under Secretary, Chief Secretary's Department; the Director General of Public Health; the Chief Inspector of Schools; a member of the Legislative Assembly; and the ex-president of the State Children's Relief Department. The Board remained under the chairmanship of the Inspector-General of Police.¹

The Cootamundra Home was available for the reception of girls; the complementary Home required for the training of boys was considered to be one of the Board's most urgent needs.² Because the Protection Board was required to exercise the strictest economy during and immediately after the war years, an existing Home run by the Aborigines Inland Mission at Singleton was purchased by the Board in 1917, at a cost of £400.³ By the end of that year, forty-six children

¹ New South Wales, Aborigines, Protection Board Report, 1911, p. 8.
³ ibid., Report, 1918, p. 2.
considered as "waifs", were placed under the care of the Protection Board. From 1920, an average of thirty boys, taken from the Aboriginal Stations and Reserves, were "trained in habits of cleanliness and industry",¹ and then placed out on farms and rural properties. The report of the Training Home for Girls at Cootamundra drew attention to the excellent work which was being done, and stated:

Into this institution are drafted Aboriginal girls from all parts of the State. They remain until they have completed a course of training in domestic duties, or until they reach fourteen years of age, when they are placed out in situations under supervision of a special officer. Seventeen girls were so placed during the year, while seven, being found unsuitable to remain at Cootamundra, were transferred to other institutions.²

In 1923, the Boys' Home at Singleton was closed and the inmates were transferred to Kinchela, near Kempsey, where new dormitories had been provided.³

This "drafting" of the children to Cootamundra Girls' and Singleton Boys' Homes was carried out mainly by Inspector Donaldson. Aborigines have described Inspector Donaldson

¹ ibid., Report, 1921, p. 2.
² ibid.
³ ibid., Report, 1924, p. 2.
as tall, well-built and very aggressive; his protruding jaw-line and ruddy complexion adding to his domineering appearance. He usually appeared on the various Aboriginal Stations or Reserves in the company of local police, and proceeded to 'round up' any light-caste children he could find. The children were taken to the local police station overnight, and then moved to Cootamundra or to Singleton. Many Aborigines report having "hidden in the mulga" or "towered in a hollow log" while Donaldson was on the rampage.¹ Parents threatened their children who disobeyed them that they would "hand them over to Donaldson", as his name became feared by Aborigines throughout New South Wales.

An article, published in the Sydney Morning Herald on 29th October, 1924, attacked the Protection Board's policy of sending Aboriginal girls from Cootamundra to the metropolitan area as nurse girls and servants; and keeping Aboriginal youths in rural areas to work on farms. The article pointed out that by keeping Aboriginal youths and girls apart it would expedite the passing of the Aboriginal race.²

¹ Aboriginal informants.
² Sydney Morning Herald, 29th October, 1924.
The Protection Board, in its annual report, answered this criticism by saying that its object was to "save the children from certain moral degradation on the Reserves and Camps". After the Aborigines reached maturity they could return to their own districts, find suitable employment and "then settle down and marry". Aboriginal informants have told the writer, however, that whilst this may have been the theory, it was not, in fact, the usual practice.

During this period, the Protection Board, became, in the eyes of the Aborigines, the 'Persecution Board'. Many Aborigines left the Stations and Reserves to settle in humpies on river banks or near garbage dumps on the outskirts of towns, where Donaldson could not visit them. The 1923 Report of the Protection Board described the situation in the following words:

During recent years a considerable diminution of the numbers of Aborigines residing in Aboriginal Stations and Reserves has been noticeable, due, it appears, to the Aborigines desiring to be free

1 New South Wales, Aborigines, Protection Board Report, 1926 p. 2.

2 ibid.

3 Dr. D. Barwick, Department of Anthropology, Australian National University, has informed the writer that at least 150 lighter-caste Aborigines were ordered to leave Cumeroogunga between 1909 and 1915, and many others were refused permission to take up residence.
of supervision and restrictions imposed upon them in Reserves where they have to comply with the rules and regulations ... it is feared that in many cases numbers of the Aborigines who have left the Reserves would have been better off had they remained, in view of the fact that in leaving, they have forfeited the benefits of good housing accommodation, regular supplies of food and clothing, and schooling for their children, to which they were properly entitled.

The only remedy to meet cases of this kind would be an amendment of the Aborigines Protection Act, giving the Board power to, in their discretion, prohibit such Aborigines from leaving a Reserve. The question, however, is one which the Board will continue to watch before taking any drastic action.¹

The Aborigines felt that the Board was already taking action which was drastic enough, and that the enforced separation of children from their parents meant that they were being treated as slaves rather than citizens.

In 1918, further amendments were made to the Protection Act in order to strengthen the powers of the Board.² Efforts to force "octroons and quadroons" to leave Aboriginal Reserves and Stations so that they could "earn their own living",³

¹ New South Wales, Aborigines, Protection Board Report, 1923, p. 2.
² New South Wales, Aborigines, Protection (Amendment) Act, 1918.
³ New South Wales, Aborigines, Protection Board Report, 1920, p. 3.
were intensified. The Board admitted, however, that:

The elimination of these people of lighter caste presents in many instances a difficult problem seeing that they have been raised among Aborigines all their lives and all their connections and interests are with Aborigines.¹

In the following year, the Board reported that "the process of gradually eliminating quadroons and octoroons is being quietly carried on, care being taken that no hardship is inflicted".²

Amendments were made to the Regulations under the Protection Act in 1923³ and again in 1924⁴. Both these Amendments were concerned with the Board's powers to move Aborigines away from unauthorised Camps and Reserves on the outskirts of country towns. On the Aboriginal Stations, the staff of the Protection Board adopted a "get tough" policy to enforce the Regulations promulgated under the Protection Act.⁵ Penalties were imposed for

1 ibid.
2 ibid., Report 1921, p. 5.
4 ibid., No. 17, 1st February, 1924.
5 Aboriginal informants.
breaches of the Regulations which governed the behaviour of Aborigines on Stations and Reserves. Police and officers of the Board, including the manager-teachers, could enter the huts or homes of Aborigines whenever they wished, to carry out daily inspections of the homes to ensure that they were clean. Aborigines were not allowed to enter a Reserve or Station without permission, even if only to visit a relative. Aborigines could also be punished for damaging any house, building, fence or any other property of the Board; for refusing to work when ordered to do so by the manager; for swearing, indecent or insulting behaviour; for drunkenness or disorderly conduct.

Many Aborigines have claimed that during this period many of the manager-teachers and other field staff "hounded" them whether they were guilty of breaches of the regulations or not. They also claimed that different manager-teachers interpreted the regulations in entirely different ways. Decisions appeared to be quite arbitrary, and increasingly

1 New South Wales, Regulations, Aborigines Protection Act, 1909.
2 ibid., Regulations Nos. 25 to 28.
3 Aboriginal informants.
Aborigines felt that they were being punished, not because they had done anything wrong, but simply because they were Aborigines.¹

There was a great deal of antagonism between Aborigines and many of the officers of the Protection Board. Many manager-teachers had no hesitation in interfering in Aborigines' domestic affairs: if an Aborigine disagreed with his wife, for instance, she could complain to the manager-teacher, who could then take whatever action he chose.² Outside employment was usually arranged through the Board officers, so that every facet of the Aborigines' life on an Aboriginal station was controlled by the Protection Board. All authority was vested in the Board's officers, and Aborigines were powerless to make decisions whilst they remained on the Stations or Reserves. The Protection Board interpreted this "get tough" policy as an attempt to "improve the moral and social tone"³ of the Stations and Reserves.

¹ ibid.
² ibid.
Many decisions were taken by the Board in Sydney without any consultation with the Aboriginal people concerned. The Aboriginal Reserve at Cowra was raised to the status of an Aboriginal Station; Aborigines living on the Station at Eurala near Boomi were shifted with the Station to a new site at Toomelah; the Reserve at La Perouse was remodelled and when a new Station was formed at Carowra Tank, near Ivanhoe, the Board reported that "it was deemed advisable to form a settlement where they could be concentrated and catered for". To the Aborigines, Protection had come to mean control and persecution by the police or by manager-teachers, whose main role appeared to them to be much the same as that of the policemen.

As indicated previously, many Aborigines left the Stations and Reserves during the 1920s and built shacks and shanties on the outskirts of towns. Since very few of them

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1 ibid., Report, 1924, p. 2.
3 ibid., Report, 1929, p. 2.
5 Aboriginal informants.
had any skills, they were employed only in seasonal work or as unskilled labourers. The drought of the late 1920s, followed by the severe economic depression, resulted in widespread unemployment and extreme poverty for many of these people. When Aborigines applied for ordinary unemployment food relief, they were told that they could only obtain rations if they returned to live on the Aboriginal Stations or Reserves.¹ Many were forced unwillingly to do so.

In 1930, the Protection Board took over the administration of Family Endowment, payable to "persons having an admixture of Aboriginal blood".² The Board then issued orders on stores for food or clothing which could be collected by the parents. During 1931, for example, an amount of £13,631:8:10d. was handed over to the Protection Board by the Family Endowment Department to be spent, on behalf of the Aboriginal children concerned, in the provision of food, clothing and other necessary items.³ Throughout the 1930s, the Protection Board continued to collect the Family Endowment

¹ ibid.
payments for Aborigines under their care. In a few cases, however, where it could be shown "that the parents could be trusted to expend the money in the manner intended, the cash has been paid to them direct". The Secretary of the Protection Board later admitted to the Parliamentary Select Committee in 1937 that some of the accumulated endowment money administered by the Board had been spent on timber and iron to make further additions to houses. These houses were, of course, the property of the Board and not of the Aborigines concerned.

The Government's policy of refusing normal unemployment relief to Aborigines led to an influx of Aborigines and part-Aborigines into Aboriginal Reserves and Stations. This forced the Board to instal pumping plants on a number of Stations, to ensure an adequate water supply for washing and also for community gardens, which were established to provide vegetables to supplement the ration supplies. All unemployed able-bodied men were required to work on the community gardens, the vegetables from which were distributed by the manager-teachers.

3 Aboriginal informants have stated that in some cases, vegetables and other produce were collected and taken for distribution to neighbouring Aboriginal Reserves.
This situation prompted the Protection Board to seek further amendments to the Aborigines Protection Act to give it the power to force Aborigines and part-Aborigines to live on supervised Stations instead of on stock routes and near towns. The Board wished to "maintain a definite control over them, so that they will not be at liberty to leave without permission".1 By June, 1933, there were twenty-three Aboriginal Stations, each under the control of a Manager-Teacher, whose wife acted as Matron.2 The Board again sought power to remove Aborigines from unauthorised camps, and to force them to live on Stations where they would be "housed and encouraged to live under better moral and physical conditions".3

Although Inspector Donaldson had resigned on 31st May, 1929, the policy of 'drafting' children to Cootamundra Girls' Home and Kinchela Boys' Home continued during the 1930s. The United Aborigines Home at Bomaderry in the South Coast was also used to accommodate young Aboriginal children under ten years of age, after which age they were transferred to Cootamundra or Kinchela.4

3 ibid.
Accommodation in these two homes was gradually increased from forty-five in each in 1934,\(^1\) to fifty in 1935\(^2\) and sixty in 1937\(^3\). The policy of training the girls for domestic service and the boys for farm and station work continued, but there was increasing dissatisfaction amongst Aborigines and part-Aborigines about this policy.\(^4\)

In 1934, it was found that the water supply for the Station, which had been formed at Carowra Tank, near Ivanhoe, in 1926, was likely to fail. The Board decided to move the total population of some two hundred Aborigines to a new site on the Darling River, about seven miles from Menindie.\(^5\) Here they were accommodated in galvanised iron huts with very little ventilation.\(^6\)

Shortly afterwards, the Aborigines on the Angledool Reserve, near the Queensland border, were moved to Brewarrina -

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\(^1\) ibid., Report, 1935, p. 3.
\(^2\) ibid., Report, 1936, p. 2.
\(^3\) ibid., Report, 1938, p. 2.
\(^4\) Aboriginal informants.
over one hundred miles away. One of the Aborigines concerned vividly remembers the move: he and his friends were put into the back of a truck like cattle and transported by night. Accommodation at Brewarrina was in tin huts with concrete floors and hessian over the windows. Aborigines found that regulations were being enforced more rigorously, and became increasingly unhappy about Government policy.

In June, 1936, further amendments had been made to the Aborigines Protection Act which gave the Board wider powers, including authority to authorise medical examination and hospitalisation of Aborigines or persons appearing to have an admixture of Aboriginal blood. This particular amendment followed complaints about infectious gonococcal ophthalmia, which was especially prevalent in the western districts. It was feared that this disease would spread to the European population. Davidson, one of the speakers in the Parliamentary debate on the new amendments to the Protection Act, pointed out that "the health of our own people is very seriously threatened".

1 Aboriginal informant, H. Groves, J.P., who later became the Aboriginal representative on the Aborigines' Welfare Board.
2 Aboriginal informants.
3 New South Wales, Aborigines, Protection (Amendment) Act, 1909-1936, Section 14A.
There was, at this stage, a good deal of public criticism of the general policies of the Aborigines' Protection Board in New South Wales and about the Aboriginal situation generally in Australia. The Society for the Protection of Native Races became particularly vocal, with William Morley (a retired Congregational Minister from Killara) as Secretary, and Professor A.P. Elkin as Chairman. In July and August, 1936, Elkin attended a Conference in Honolulu on the Education of Native Races in Pacific Countries. After his return, Elkin published a report in "Oceania". Many experts at the Conference had agreed that races were different primarily because their culture and history were different; and that no relationship had been established between physical differences and educability. This supported "the educator's basic assumption that all races are educable even to the higher grades and until all social and economic handicaps have been removed, no modification of that assumption based on psychological or biological grounds is possible".

3 ibid., p. 154.
4 ibid., p. 153.
In the 1930s, these statements were rank heresy: they questioned the basic assumptions underlying the generally accepted theory of white superiority. Although the Conference marked a definite development in Elkin's own thinking on this topic, it supported the general ideas he had held for some time on the need for a more positive basis for Aboriginal policies.

As early as October, 1933, Elkin had published an article in the "Morpeth Review", in which he stated that past policies had been protective and negative, rather than positive and developmental. "So far, the country, through its Parliaments, has not asked its Chief Protectors to do more than help the aged and sick where possible. Their function is negative. They have not been called upon to administer a positive native policy."¹

As Professor of Anthropology at the University of Sydney, Elkin added a great deal of "respectability" to the fight for a new deal for Aborigines. As well as the Society for the Protection of Native Races, a number of other organisations and groups were active at this stage

in demanding an end to the negative Protection policies which denied Aborigines normal citizenship rights. One of the most active of these organisations was the Committee for Aboriginal Citizenship Rights, whose President was Michael Sawtell. The Committee for Aboriginal Citizenship Rights called a number of public protest meetings in the Adyar Hall, Bligh Street, Sydney, where trenchant criticism was made of both Commonwealth and State policies towards Aborigines.\(^1\) The Committee received a good deal of support from Mark Davidson, M.L.A.

Another active organisation was the Aborigines' Progressive Association, whose President was Mr. Bill Ferguson, an Aborigine from Dubbo.\(^2\) On 26th January, 1938, as Australia was celebrating the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of settlement, Ferguson called for "a day of mourning and protest ... against the callous treatment of our people by the white men during the past one hundred and fifty years ... and to ask for a new policy which would raise Aborigines to full citizens.\(^3\)

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2 *ibid.*

3 *Brisbane Courier Mail*, 27th January, 1938.
On the very day that Ferguson's protest was published in the "Courier Mail" in Brisbane, the "Daily Telegraph" published a letter to the editor which stated "The suggestion that the people in possession of Australia owe any debt to the aborigines is absurd. The inflexible law of Nature is in operation - the inferior must always give place to the superior". ¹ Such sentiments were quite commonly held during this period. ²

The education policy of the Protection Board cannot be considered in isolation. The 'Protection' concept was negative in outlook and was designed to provide comfort and sustenance for a group of people considered mentally inferior and believed to be dying out. Aborigines had been segregated on small Reserves and Stations outside country towns, and had met with considerable prejudice from the general community. Public attitudes towards Aborigines varied from benevolent paternation to

¹ Daily Telegraph, 27th January, 1938.
² A. P. Elkin - personal interviews, 1957 to 1969.
open hostility. Aborigines had resented very strongly the attempts by officers of the Protection Board to separate the half-caste and light-caste children from their parents.¹

Aboriginal children had been excluded from Public Schools and had been forced to attend special schools where only sub-standard educational facilities were available. Manager-teachers had neither the time nor the training to carry out their teaching duties effectively. Above all, the manager-teachers were regarded by the Aborigines primarily as authority figures whose main function was to exercise discipline.² The antagonism of Aborigines towards the manager-teachers was an important factor influencing the relationships between the pupils and the teachers in Aboriginal schools. The relationship undoubtedly had a significant effect on the performance of Aboriginal children at school.

¹ Aboriginal informants.

² ibid.
The repressive atmosphere which characterised life on Aboriginal Reserves had a marked effect on the whole pattern of Aboriginal education during this period.

Clause 7 of the Aborigines Protection Act, 1909, stated:

(1) It shall be the duty of the board -
   ....(c) to provide for the custody maintenance
   and education of the children of
   aborigines"

The failure of attempts to have Aboriginal children enrolled in Public Schools led to an increase in the number of special Aboriginal schools on Reserves. In 1912, for example, a school and teachers' residence was built at the Euraba Aboriginal Reserve where "The Board contemplate the appointment of a married teacher, who will also act in the capacity of manager, to control and regulate the order of things in the Reserve."  

1 New South Wales, Aborigines Protection Act, 1909, No. 25, p. 7.

2 New South Wales, Aborigines: Protection Board Report, 1912, p. 16.
By 1914, there were over 1,000 Aboriginal children receiving instruction, in the majority of cases at the twenty-six Aboriginal schools which had been established. The following table (Table XIV) shows the number of Aborigines in each district under the age of twenty and the number of pupils receiving instruction in public or private schools during 1914. Table XV shows the comparable numbers for the following year.

In 1916, the New South Wales Department of Public Instruction drew up a special Syllabus for instruction in Aborigines' schools. This syllabus provided for instruction to Third Class,

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2 ibid.

# Table XIV

**ABORIGINAL CHILDREN RECEIVING INSTRUCTION 1914**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
<th>ABORIGINAL ENROLMENTS</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>NUMBER OF ABORIGINES under age 20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PUBLIC SCHOOLS</td>
<td>PRIVATE SCHOOLS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/Eastern</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/Western</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S/Western</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bourke</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murray</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broken Hill</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1044</strong></td>
<td><strong>33</strong></td>
<td><strong>1077</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Compiled from District Returns included in Aborigines Protection Board Report, 1915.

+ District Returns indicate the number of Aboriginal children under 20 years of age.
**Table XV**

ABORIGINAL CHILDREN RECEIVING INSTRUCTION 1915

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
<th>ABOREDINAL ENROLMENTS</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>NUMBER OF ABORIGINES under age 20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PUBLIC SCHOOLS</td>
<td>PRIVATE SCHOOLS</td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/Eastern</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/Western</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S/Western</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bourke</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murray</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broken Hill</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total        | 1074         | 7            | 1081   | 3248                           |

* Compiled from District Returns included in Aborigines Protection Board Report, 1916.

+ District Returns indicate the number of Aboriginal children under 20 years of age.

∅ Included 27 enrolled in the Aboriginal school at Breewarrina, and nine Aboriginal children at Wanaaring, six at Carbelgo and six at Walgett. None of these had been included in the previous return.
and stated that "Manual Training is the special feature of this Syllabus ..... this subject is to be regarded as of maximum importance."¹ It was stated that Indoor work was not to occupy more than three hours each day for First and Second Classes, or more than three and a half for Third Class. Of this time, indoor manual work for boys was to be given for five hours each week, whilst girls were to spend six hours each week on cooking, laundry work and needlework. Boys were expected to sew on buttons and learn how to mend and sew on patches. Instruction was also to be provided in music, physical exercises, scripture and moral lessons.² Obviously very little time would have been left for work in English, writing, spelling and number work.

¹ New South Wales, Department of Public Instruction, Course of Instruction for Aborigines' Schools, Government Printer, 1916, (Preliminary Notes p. 3).
² ibid.
The First Class course was expected to take two and a half years. It was noted that "As many children leave before completing the First Class course, they should be taught to write their names legibly at the earliest moment. In the later stages of this class, pupils are to write sentences of their own." Composition was introduced in Third Class for those pupils who remained at school. The syllabus also stated, in the preamble, that:

"The literary part of this syllabus is to be regarded as the minimum. It will be expected in all schools. The more intellectual children in Third Class may be given advanced work, such is to be left to the discretion of the teacher, but the lessons will be registered in detail for the information of the Inspector."  

Many Aborigines who attended schools in Aboriginal Reserves and Stations in the 1920's, have been interviewed by the writer at various times over the past eighteen years: not one of them could remember

1 ibid.
2 ibid.
any child being given "advanced work" by the manager-teachers. Since the Aborigines interviewed came from different districts throughout the State, it appears probable that Aboriginal children were rarely, if ever, given advanced work. Indeed, the main purpose of the special syllabus for Aboriginal schools was set out in the third paragraph of the Preliminary Notes, which stated:

"It is intended that the teacher, will, as far as possible, direct the whole of the school work with the object of assisting the boys to become capable farm or station labourers and the girls useful domestic servants."2

This very limited syllabus was not particularly useful for part-Aboriginal children who were expected to be merged into the general community. There was some attempt to adapt the syllabus to meet the needs of those who were remaining on the Stations, in that the number work for Third Class suggested "Concrete

1 Aboriginal informants.

2 New South Wales, Department of Public Instruction, Course of Instruction for Aborigines' Schools, 1916, (Preliminary Notes, p. 3.)
exercises in money only, including domestic accounts and business transactions common to the Settlement". ¹
Even pupils who completed the whole of the syllabus they would have found that their educational attainments were well below those achieved by the majority of pupils in non-Aboriginal schools. The reality of the situation was that the vast majority of Aboriginal children left school before they could be considered literate. The pupils concerned are now the parents and grand-parents of the present day Aboriginal students, as the syllabus remained in operation until 1938.

In 1917, the Department of Public Instruction provided a total of £4,414.9.0 for Aboriginal schools under the control of the Protection Board. Of this total, £4,290.5.3 was spent on salaries for the manager-teachers; £112.6.10 on repairs, rent, furniture, cleaning, fuel and conveyance; £2.9.0 on forage and travelling expenses and £9.7.11 on books and apparatus for all Aboriginal schools in N.S.W. ²

¹ ibid., p. 8.
The following thirty Aboriginal schools were listed in the 1917 Annual Report of the Protection Board:

Brewarrina  Mount Olive
Brill Brill   New Angledool
Burnt Bridge Noocoorilma
Cabbage Tree Island Nulla Creek
Cootamundra East Pilliga
Coraki        Roseby Park
Cumeroogunga Stewart Island
Erambie       Stony Gully
Euraba        Terry Hie Hie
Fattorini Island Towabba
Forked Mountain Ulgundah Island
Googeedeed Urunga
Grafton Common Walhallow
Karuah        Wallaga Lake
Moonahcullah  Warangesda
In 1919, two further schools - at Gulargambone and Pelican Island - were opened. Although expenditure on salaries was increased to £8,136.5.3, the amount spent on books and apparatus for the year was £9.17.2.¹ In the following year, only £2.17.0 was spent on this item.²

The 1922 and 1923 Reports stated: "the Aboriginal child readily adapts itself to work calling for imitativey powers and consequently writing and manual work to be found in an Aboriginal School compares very favourably with that of the average white child".³ In 1924, the Protection Board stated that the education of Aboriginal children was being carried out satisfactorily, but pointed out that "Particular care is taken that when reaching fourteen years of age, each child goes either to a Training Home or to suitable employment".⁴ The purpose of this policy, the Board indicated, was to prevent anyone remaining in idleness on the Reserves,

² ibid., 1921, p. 7.
³ ibid., 1923, p. 2.
⁴ ibid., 1924, p. 2.
⁵ ibid.
to get into trouble and raise another generation of illegitimate children. The report added hopefully: "the problem is thus gradually solving itself, as the younger Aborigines are being educated to something higher and have no wish to return to the level of camp life, thus ensuring that in time the necessity for Aborigines Reserves will be a thing of the past".  

During the 1920's, children at Aboriginal schools were provided with medical and dental attention and with rations. At some schools a midday meal was supplied.  

The 1928 Protection Board report drew attention to the fact that dark children who had previously attended a public school had been excluded because of objections raised by the Local Parents' and Citizens' Associations. In many areas, Aboriginal children were denied opportunities for education unless there was a special Aboriginal school in the district. A considerable number of Aboriginal children living on unsupervised reserves had no opportunities for

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1 ibid.


schooling at all. New schools were opened at Nowendoc and Pooncarie during 1929,\(^1\) and the Protection Board continued to claim that satisfactory results were being achieved. The 1932 Report mentioned that the children responded readily to tuition which appealed to their sense of form and colour, and that they had a particular liking for music and singing.\(^2\) In the 1934 Report, special mention was made of the aptitude of Aboriginal children for manual work. It was stated that satisfactory results were being obtained and that the children were receiving an education "appropriate to their mental capabilities".\(^3\)

By 1936, the number of Aboriginal schools had risen to forty. The Protection Board stated that "very satisfactory work is being done, the standard of achievement, as compared with similar white schools .... particularly in such subjects as manual work, writing, and nature study, being most favourable."\(^4\)

\(^1\) ibid., Report 1930, p. 2.  
\(^2\) ibid., Report 1932, p. 2.  
\(^3\) ibid., Report 1934, p. 3.  
\(^4\) ibid., Report 1936, p. 2.
These Reports by the Aborigines Protection Board conveyed the impression that the education of Aboriginal children was progressing quite satisfactorily. The true position, however, was quite the reverse. Standards achieved in Aboriginal schools were uniformly poor. No special Aboriginal schools were provided on unauthorised camps and reserves: in these localities few Aboriginal parents made any attempt to have their children enrolled at the local school. Others living on the outskirts of towns, refused entry into normal public schools, also received no instruction at all.

In a few country areas, however, Aboriginal children were not only admitted to the normal schools, but were given a good deal of encouragement by teachers and by parents of European students. Casino Public School, for example, had a tradition of welcoming Aboriginal pupils who were clean and reasonably dressed: quite a number of Aborigines completed the whole of the primary school course at that school. Unfortunately,

1 Aboriginal informants from Casino, Lismore and Woodenbong.
the number of such schools was relatively small; and even in these cases a child could be removed from school when his parents were required to leave the area to obtain seasonal work. Such children often had their schooling interrupted for long periods. In schools where Aboriginal children were enrolled, their attendance depended largely on the continued goodwill of teachers, parents and fellow-pupils: if an Aboriginal student found that his presence had become unwelcome, his parents would usually not force the child to continue attending.

Although children who lived on Stations under the control of manager-teachers could be refused rations for absenteeism from school without good reason, there was no compulsion for Aboriginal children not living on Aboriginal Reserves to attend school. It is not surprising, therefore, that many Aboriginal children rarely attended school at all.

1 ibid.
2 Aboriginal informants.
3 ibid.
The majority of Aboriginal children receiving instruction were educated at the special schools on Reserves and Stations. The inadequacy of the curriculum in the schools and the deficiencies of the teachers in charge of these schools has already been discussed. It should be pointed out, however, that a few of these teachers are remembered with affection by Aboriginal informants who have discussed their schooling with the writer. This was particularly true, for example, in the case of Mr. J. Shadrach James, a part Indian who was for many years a teacher at Cumeroogunga Aboriginal School.\footnote{Aboriginal informants from Cumeroogunga. James assisted children who 'hid' from Donaldson, and two of my informants vividly remember sleeping under the school-house when Donaldson was expected to pay a visit.}

In most cases, the teacher in charge of the Aboriginal school also controlled the Aboriginal Station. He was the person who "disciplined" the parents for breaches of the Protection Act, or strode around the station threatening Aborigines who did not obey promptly any orders he decided to issue.
In some cases, the manager-teachers used their guns to shoot pet dogs.\(^1\) One manager stated that when he had seen an Aboriginal near his woodheap at midnight he had fired a shot over his head, "that has been an object lesson to others, there has been no further trouble."\(^2\) He also stated that he had told the 'natives' that he would stop their rations if they refused to work or didn't work hard enough.\(^3\) Those managers who earnestly tried to help the people under their charge found their task an almost impossible one, because of the behaviour of some of their colleagues. Most Aborigines adopted an attitude of passive resistance towards all officers of the Protection Board.

\(^1\) The large number of dogs around Aboriginal camps was often considered by Europeans as a health hazard. When the numbers were considered too large, the manager or local police would shoot whatever dogs they could see around, without any regard to particular ownership. Informants have stated that this was a real grievance held by Aborigines for many years.

\(^2\) *Daily Telegraph*, 8th January, 1938, p. 2.

\(^3\) *Ibid.*
The physical conditions in most Aboriginal schools were much worse than those in normal public schools. Long desks with six to eight children sitting on forms were quite usual. The buildings left a good deal to be desired: many were of galvanised iron with no ceiling and inadequate lighting or ventilation. Although the hours of instruction were laid down in the syllabus, and were fewer than those required of teachers in ordinary public schools, manager-teachers often found that the school had to be closed when other matters required their attention. Two members of the Protection Board visited Brewarrina unexpectedly in August, 1936. They found that the school had rarely been used during the previous three months, and that the school interior was in great disorder, with books and papers strewn over the floor. The manager-teacher admitted that at one stage the school had been closed

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1 In the early 1950's, the writer visited a number of these school buildings which were still being used. He taught in one of them from 1952 to 1955.

for six weeks. He pointed out that he had really had very little time for teaching.¹

Aboriginal schools were visited regularly by District Inspectors, who generally gave a favourable report and indicated that everything was satisfactory. In view of the true situation, the reason for their lack of concern on this matter warrants consideration.

On 6th August, 1937, the then Minister of Education (Hon. D. H. Drummond, M.L.A.) forwarded a minute to the Department of Education concerning the policy to be adopted with regard to children of Aboriginal descent.² He indicated that Aboriginal pupils should not be excluded from schools if no objections were raised by parents of white children enrolled. He also indicated that, in localities where a number of Aboriginal children were attending school, "they should be segregated from the ordinary school-pupils

¹ ibid.
and provided with education in a school set apart
for the purpose, preferably at an Aboriginal
settlement".¹ Drummond pointed out that a practice
which had been followed by the Protection Board for
a number of years should be taken:

"as a reasonably sound procedure for future
action by the Department. According to this
practice, those persons who are distinctly
of Aboriginal blood and antecedents, are
regarded as belonging to a child race,
incapable of satisfactorily handling their
own affairs, and reasonably safeguarding
their own interests. Actually it is
an acceptance of a classification of
aborigines as belonging to a child race".² *

The Minister pointed out in his memorandum that the
people so classified lived under primitive conditions
and were not reared in an atmosphere which would render
the children suitable for admission to an ordinary
public school.³ The District Inspectors of
Schools appear to have accepted this directive by the
Minister as a statement of fact.

¹ ibid.

² ibid. * Emphasis added.

³ ibid.
Even if they had not been satisfied with the progress in Aboriginal schools, there was little that they could have done, since the teachers, although paid by the Department of Education, were appointed by the Protection Board and came under its general supervision. Managers selected by the Aborigines Protection Board were automatically employed as teachers also, under section 44 of the Public Service Act.¹

By 1938, there were twenty-three Aboriginal Stations and Homes and a further thirteen Aboriginal Reserves staffed by officers of the Aboriginal Protection Board. Twenty of these officers were designated as Manager-teachers, five as Matron-teachers, ten as Teachers (mainly on reserves), seven as Assistant teachers, and one as a temporary Teacher.² Nearly all of these were unclassified teachers with no teacher training.³ Twenty-five Aboriginal schools were classified as Provisional schools.

¹ New South Wales, Aborigines Protection, Report and Recommendations of the Public Service Board of New South Wales. Sydney: Government Printer, 1940, p.11. (hereinafter referred to in footnotes as "New South Wales Public Service Board Report, 1940".)
² New South Wales, Public Service Board Report, 1940, pp. 37-38.
³ ibid.
and a further eight as 6th Class schools (enrolment under 40). A reasonable estimate of the number of pupils enrolled in these schools in 1938 would appear to be about 600 to 800.

The agitation by the Society for the Protection of Native Races and similar organizations in other States, supported by considerable newspaper publicity about the conditions of Aborigines throughout Australia, led to the calling of a conference of State and Commonwealth Aboriginal Authorities in Canberra in April 1937. A number of resolutions were adopted, including some which affected the future of part-Aborigines. These represented a new policy of Assimilation for part-blood Aborigines, who were to be absorbed into the general community.  

1 ibid.  
in line with this policy, the Conference suggested that children of part-Aborigines should receive the same education as that of white children, so that they could take their place in the community on an equal footing with whites.¹

In New South Wales, a committee of District School Inspectors recommended that the standards in the Syllabus being used in Aboriginal schools should be raised from Fourth Class standard to Fifth Class standard.² It was stated that this was:

"with the ultimate object of assisting lighter caste aborigines to merge into the white population; every effort should be made to provide the Aborigines with a standard of education to fit them to take their place alongside their white brethren and the whole policy of the Department must be directed towards this end. This is in accordance with the resolutions passed at a Conference of Aborigines' Protection Authorities which was held at Canberra in April, 1937."³

¹ibid.

²New South Wales, Aborigines: Protection Board Report, 1938, p. 2. In actual fact the new syllabus raised the standard from Third to Fourth Class level.

³ibid.
In September 1937, the Legislative Assembly established a Select Committee on the Administration of the Aborigines Protection Board. The establishment of this Committee had been moved by Mr. M. Davidson in the Legislative Assembly following certain criticisms levelled at the Protection Board in the press and the Board's action in dismissing one of its officers. Although eighteen meetings were called, five of these lapsed through the want of a quorum. Those meetings which were held, however, appear to have been more a 'witch-hunt' on the behaviour of individual Board officers than an examination of general policy. The final meeting called for the Committee could not be held because it lacked a quorum, and the Committee lapsed when the Session ended. The Protection Board was most unhappy about the public criticism levelled at the


Board by a member of the Government, and the Board members offered to resign if the Government no longer had confidence in them.\textsuperscript{1} In June, 1938, the Chief Secretary (Mr. C. G. Gollan) prevented the re-appointment of the Select Committee by requesting the Public Service Board to review the whole question of the Aborigines Protection Board.\textsuperscript{2}

In 1938, while the Select Committee was meeting, the revised Course of Instruction for Aboriginal Schools was introduced by the Department of Education.\textsuperscript{3} This was further revised in 1939 and again in 1940.\textsuperscript{4} The syllabus provided courses of instruction which reached the end of the fourth class standard. The

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1} ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{2} ibid., Report, 1939, p. 1.
\item \textsuperscript{3} New South Wales, Department of Education, \textit{Courses of Instruction for Aborigines’ Schools}, Mimeographed, 1938, p. 1.
\item \textsuperscript{4} New South Wales, Department of Education, \textit{Courses of Instruction for Aborigines’ Schools}, Sydney, Government Printer; 1916, Revised 1938, 1939 and 1940.
\end{itemize}
General Notes to the syllabus stated:

Since most of our Aborigines' Schools are one-teacher schools, the work in some sections has been divided into two parts - (a) Lower Division - Classes 1 and 2; (b) Upper Division - Classes 3 and 4. Pupils generally, should spend three years in each division.

It was indicated, however, that those pupils who remained at school after completing the work provided in the courses for Aboriginal schools should be given more advanced work as set out in the course of instruction for primary schools. The General Notes further stated:

It is expected that most of the boys will become rural workers and most of the girls domestic workers. Hence this syllabus features manual training for boys and domestic training for girls and nature work for both. These sections of work are regarded as of prime importance. Under no circumstances should they be even relatively neglected.

1 New South Wales, Department of Education, Courses of Instruction for Aborigines' Schools, 1938, p. 1. and Courses of Instruction for Aborigines' Schools, 1940, p. 5.

2 ibid.

3 ibid.
Although it was pointed out that the literary part of the syllabus should be regarded as a minimum to be reached, the proportion of time allocated in Aboriginal schools for the normal basic subjects was much less than the time allocated to these in the normal primary school syllabus.

The amount of time allocated for English and Mathematics in Public schools ranged from eleven to thirteen hours per week depending on the particular grade. In Aboriginal schools, seven hours were allocated for these subjects. On the other hand, whereas children in Public schools spent approximately five hours each week on Music, Art and Manual Training, children in Aboriginal schools spent eight hours each week on these subjects. Although the time allocated for other subjects was much the same for both types of schools, it can be seen that the total time for all subjects was $23\frac{3}{4}$ hours per week in Public schools and $22\frac{1}{2}$ hours per week in Aboriginal schools.

1 Vide Table XVI overleaf.
2 ibid.
3 ibid.
Table XVI

TIME ALLOCATION FOR SUBJECTS

PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND ABORIGINAL SCHOOLS N.S.W.

1938

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>Second Grade</th>
<th>Fourth Grade</th>
<th>Sixth Grade</th>
<th>All Grades</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music, Art and Manual Training</td>
<td>5½</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4½</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies, Nature Study and Physical Training</td>
<td>5½</td>
<td>6½</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7½</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23¾  23¾  23¾  22½

* New South Wales, Department of Education, Courses of Instruction for Primary Schools, Sydney; Issued 1925, reprinted 1937, Government Printer, 1937. (General Notes p. x.)

+ New South Wales, Department of Education, Courses of Instruction for Aborigines' Schools, 1938, p. 2.
The 1938 syllabus, however, set out two alternative proposals regarding the hours of instruction. These are shown overleaf as an illustration. Although, under the first proposal, school work was to occupy four and a half hours per day, or $22\frac{1}{2}$ hours per week, there was an alternative which permitted a variation in the hours of instruction.\(^1\) Under the second proposal, pupils in the Lower Division were to spend three and a half hours each day ($17\frac{1}{2}$ hours per week) under instruction and pupils in the Upper Division spent four and a quarter hours each day ($21\frac{3}{4}$ hours per week) at school work.

Aboriginal informants have expressed surprise to learn that there were, in fact, specified 'Hours of Instruction' for Aboriginal schools. They have claimed that the schools often closed while the manager-teachers were engaged in other duties.\(^2\)

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1 New South Wales, Department of Education, *Courses of Instruction for Aborigines' Schools*, 1938, p. 2.

2 Aboriginal informants.
COURSES OF INSTRUCTION FOR ABORIGINES' SCHOOLS 1938

HOURS OF INSTRUCTION.

PROPOSAL NO. 1.

School work should occupy four and a half hours per day:

8.30 to 10 a.m. Lessons and occupations.
10 to 10.30 Play.
10.30 to 11.30 Lessons and occupations.
1.30 to 3.30 Lessons and occupations.

PROPOSAL NO. 2.

LOWER DIVISION.

8.30 to 10 a.m. Lessons and occupations.
10 to 10.30 Play.
10.30 to 11.30 Lessons & occupations.
1.30 to 2.30 Lessons & Occupations.

UPPER DIVISION.

8.30 to 10 a.m. Lessons.
10 to 10.30 Play.
10.30 to 11.30 Lessons.
1.30 to 2.30 Lessons.
2.30 to 2.45 Play.
2.45 to 3.30 Lessons.

Total - Three and a half hours. Total - Four and a quarter hours.

This time-table will necessitate a reduction in the times allotted to the subjects other than Manual Training and Domestic work.

N.B. No variation of the above routine should be made without the sanction of the Inspector of Schools.

* This photostat is taken from the 1938 version of the Courses of Instruction for Aborigines Schools. Although the second proposal was omitted from the printed 1940 version, a cyclostyled copy of this 1938 version was the only syllabus available in the school records of the Moonahcullah Aboriginal School in 1952, when the writer was appointed Teacher Supervisor of that Aboriginal School and Reserve.
On one day each week, for instance, the manager would drive the Station truck to the nearest township—often over twenty miles distant—for supplies and for medical and dental appointments for Aborigines. After the truck returned to the Station, the manager issued rations to all eligible Aborigines. ¹

"Ration day" was obviously a day when school could not be held. There were many other emergencies when managers were called away from their teaching duties. ² Since the manual training section of the curriculum was considered to be so important, the time left for instruction in the basic subjects was often negligible.

The standards required by the syllabus were far below those required for children in normal public schools. For this reason, if the lighter caste Aborigines were to be "merged into the white population" it could only be as unskilled manual workers or domestic

¹ Aboriginal informants.

² *ibid.*, Emergencies included hospital and urgent medical cases, and Court appearances.
servants. The provision that children of above average ability should be permitted to follow the normal curriculum was nothing more than a forlorn hope, as the manager-teachers had neither the time nor the training to assist pupils to achieve this goal. The new syllabus for Aboriginal schools was rather unrealistic and clearly out of harmony with the new Assimilation policy.

The Public Service Board completed its enquiry into the work of the Aborigines Protection Board and brought down a report which included a number of specific recommendations.¹ It suggested the appointment of a Superintendent of Aborigines Welfare; the re-organization of staff; the provision of additional funds for an expanded building programme; and an increase in the existing scale of rations.²

¹ New South Wales, Public Service Board Report, 1940, p. 3.
One of the Public Service Board's most important recommendations was to "Provide gradually over a period of years for the separation of the functions of manager and teacher in the station,"\(^1\) to "enable the Department of Public Instruction adequately to equip the schools and provide the necessary staff."\(^2\) The Public Service Board suggested the adoption of "an active campaign of education and training with a view to facilitating the absorption of the aborigines into the economic and social life of the community."\(^3\) The Report admitted that there would be difficulties in implementing this new policy and that a major difficulty was "the antipathy of the fully white community to those possessing aboriginal blood".\(^4\) The Public Service Board rejected

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\(^1\) New South Wales, Public Service Board Report, 1940, p. 3.

\(^2\) ibid.

\(^3\) New South Wales, Public Service Board Report, 1940, p. 3.

\(^4\) ibid., p. 12.
the suggestion that another major difficulty was "the indolence and absence of a sense of responsibility which is inherent in many persons with aboriginal blood". The Board agreed that some Aborigines were naturally indolent, but asserted that a considerable number were energetic and hard-working, so that "with proper guidance, encouragement and tuition, a considerable proportion of the aborigine population ..... can and do become efficient workers in various spheres".2

The report was rather critical of the existing system of education which, they claimed, left "much to be desired".3 They described the old syllabus as reaching a standard ordinarily attained by the normal child at eight years of age and added that the new syllabus, which emphasised the handicraft side of

1 ibid.
2 ibid.
3 ibid., p. 17.
education, took "the general education to a slightly higher standard".¹

This however cannot be a success under existing arrangements. In the first place, the manager-teacher is not competent, in general, to give the instruction; while the syllabus may be quite a good one, the schools are not equipped appropriately for carrying the syllabus into effect; due largely to staff disqualifications, the aborigine child, whose mental equipment is such as to warrant his or her progressing through the ordinary school course, and so qualifying for higher education, is not being given the opportunity of doing so.

The Public Service Board has elsewhere advised that, in its opinion, where the numbers so warrant, a change should be made in the existing method of staffing the schools by the separation of the functions of manager and teacher, and by the appointment of fully qualified persons to both these positions.²

The Board further suggested that the change should be gradual, and that care should be taken in the selection of suitable teachers, who should have some appreciation of the real problems associated with Aboriginal education.³

¹ ibid.
² ibid., p. 17.
³ ibid.
Even before the necessary amendments were made to the Aborigines Protection Act, certain changes were made in the administration of the Protection Board, including the appointment of a Superintendent of Aborigines Welfare. The new Superintendent became the senior executive officer of the administration and a member of the Board. A considerable increase in expenditure, especially for improved housing, was provided for the financial year 1938-39. The Protection Act was amended during the first session in 1940, and on 14th June, 1940, the Aborigines Protection Board was replaced by the Aborigines Welfare Board.

Although critical of the Protection Board's education policy, the Public Service Board Report supported the Aborigines Protection Board's policies generally. It pointed out that the "Protection Board's efforts have largely been confined over a period of years to the improvement of the conditions of life

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1 Vide, Table XVII.

2 Aborigines Protection (Amendment) Act, 1940, No. 12, Assented to 22nd May, 1940. Date of commencement 14th June, 1940.
of the persons within its control. Its efforts .... have resulted in a vast improvement in their conditions generally."\(^1\) The report stressed, however, that the nature of the problem in 1938 was quite "different to what it was apparently when the original Act under which the Board now operates was passed into law."\(^2\) The report indicated that "While the number of full bloods is gradually reducing, the total number of persons within the Board's administration is increasing fairly rapidly."\(^3\) The real problem now concerned the "constantly increasing number of persons who are half-castes, or who have a lesser proportion of aboriginal blood."\(^4\)

For this reason, the Public Service Board recommended strongly that future policy should be directed towards "assimilation ... into the general community."\(^5\) The report indicated that expenditure


\(^3\) *Ibid*.

\(^4\) *Ibid*.

by the Aborigines Protection Board had increased from time to time and "the assistance rendered to persons covered by the Act does not compare unfavourably with the social services provided for the members of the general community who .... are in need of State aid."¹ It was pointed out that considerable improvements could be made by using existing facilities to greater advantage.²

The Public Service Board no doubt had available for perusal, copies of the previous annual reports of the Aborigines Protection Board. These reports included information about the number of full blood and half-caste Aborigines and also the expenditure by the Board for the year concerned. The following Table (Table XVII) has been constructed to show this information for the years 1911 to June 1940 when the Protection Board was abolished. The table is, in fact, a continuation of Table XIII on pages 281-2

¹ ibid., p. 16.
² ibid.
of this Thesis. From Table XVII, it can be seen that the number of full blood Aborigines had decreased from over 2,000 in 1911 to less than 700 by 1940. During the same period the number of part Aborigines had increased from 5,200 to over 10,000. From 1911 to 1923, the numbers recorded had fallen slightly, but part of this decrease may possibly have been due to the Protection Board's policy of forcing light caste Aborigines to leave the Reserves. It is probable that the labour shortage during the war assisted a number of them to find permanent employment and merge into the general community. The majority, however, settled in river bank shanties where they felt safe from the officers of the Protection Board. ¹ Between 1923 and 1939, however, the numbers of part-Aborigines had more than doubled. This increase could not be explained only in terms of the numbers who returned to the Reserves and Stations to obtain food relief during the years of the depression. ² There was every indication that the numbers of part-Aborigines would continue to rise.

¹ Aboriginal informants.
² ibid.
Table XVII

NUMBER OF ABORIGINES AND EXPENDITURE
BY ABORIGINES PROTECTION BOARD 1911-1940

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Full-blood</th>
<th>Half-Caste (and lesser Castes)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>2078</td>
<td>5253</td>
<td>7329</td>
<td>£24,565.5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>1917</td>
<td>5117</td>
<td>7034</td>
<td>28,579.4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>5054</td>
<td>6915</td>
<td>28,775.16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>1730</td>
<td>5049</td>
<td>6779</td>
<td>21,089.12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>1597</td>
<td>4983</td>
<td>6580</td>
<td>24,805.16.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>1573</td>
<td>5026</td>
<td>6599</td>
<td>18,351.2.2*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>1326</td>
<td>4921</td>
<td>6247</td>
<td>24,211.12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>1451</td>
<td>5041</td>
<td>6492</td>
<td>25,639.18.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1919</td>
<td>1238</td>
<td>5990</td>
<td>7228</td>
<td>42,496.4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1920</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920-21</td>
<td>1281</td>
<td>4867</td>
<td>7551</td>
<td>36,219.15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921-22</td>
<td>1231</td>
<td>4740</td>
<td>7374</td>
<td>22,541.12.9+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922-23</td>
<td>1214</td>
<td>4783</td>
<td>7322</td>
<td>22,445.0.0+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923-24</td>
<td>1085</td>
<td>5185</td>
<td>7510</td>
<td>21,980.19.7+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924-25</td>
<td>1081</td>
<td>5991</td>
<td>7072</td>
<td>21,734.7.6+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925-26</td>
<td>1031</td>
<td>6054</td>
<td>7085</td>
<td>21,382.12.8+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Full-blood</td>
<td>Half-Caste (and lesser Castes)</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Expenditure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926-27</td>
<td>no figures given</td>
<td>£ 21,559.12.2</td>
<td>£ 21,559.12.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927-28</td>
<td>1201</td>
<td>6844</td>
<td>8045</td>
<td>37,584.0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928-29</td>
<td>1229</td>
<td>7026</td>
<td>8255</td>
<td>40,568.0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929-30</td>
<td>992</td>
<td>7928</td>
<td>8920</td>
<td>37,746.0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930-31</td>
<td>1038</td>
<td>8775</td>
<td>9813</td>
<td>39,610.0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931-32</td>
<td>913</td>
<td>8767</td>
<td>9680</td>
<td>55,517.0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932-33</td>
<td>1251</td>
<td>8437</td>
<td>9688</td>
<td>57,271.0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933-34</td>
<td>1008</td>
<td>9373</td>
<td>10381</td>
<td>54,082.0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934-35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10274</td>
<td>54,624.0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935-36</td>
<td>976</td>
<td>9884</td>
<td>10680</td>
<td>57,265.0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936-37</td>
<td>858</td>
<td>9735</td>
<td>10593</td>
<td>58,940.0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937-38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10415</td>
<td>63,762.0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938-39</td>
<td>794</td>
<td>10144</td>
<td>10938</td>
<td>89,169.0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939-40</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>10171</td>
<td>10861</td>
<td>81,534.0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 1916. Estimated only. (Budget figure unobtainable.)

+ 1921-22 to 1926-27. Protection Board Appropriation only. This does not include the amounts spent by the Department of Education and other Government Departments on behalf of the Protection Board. It is estimated that the further amount would not exceed £10,000 per annum.
The Public Service Board acknowledged this situation, and pointed out that unless urgent action was taken "it is feared the problem will become one of such magnitude, as is evidenced by the increasing numbers to be dealt with, that with the passage of time, the difficulties will become greatly intensified."\(^1\)

Less than half of the Aborigines included in the population figures resided on Reserves and Stations. The rest lived in camps and shanties on river banks and outskirts of towns, or lived independently of the Board.\(^2\)

In June 1939, of the 10,938 Aborigines enumerated, 3550 lived on Aboriginal Stations; 1451 lived on Aboriginal Reserves and 5937 lived in camps or independently of the Board.\(^3\) The 1939 report of the Aborigines Protection Board also indicated that the 794 full bloods included 194 children and the 10,144 half and lesser caste Aborigines included 4385 children.\(^4\)

\(^1\) New South Wales, Public Service Board Report, 1940, p. 21.
\(^3\) ibid.
\(^4\) ibid.
If assistance was to be provided for all Aborigines, including those living in shacks and shanties on the river banks, a marked increase in expenditure would have been required.

As indicated in Table XVII, expenditure had risen from approximately £25,000 in 1911 to over £50,000 from 1931-32 onward. During the last two years of the Protection Board, expenditure exceeded £80,000, but most of the increased funds were spent on urgently needed buildings and repairs.¹

The Aborigines Protection Board was responsible for all matters concerning Aborigines in New South Wales from 5th June, 1883 to 14th June, 1940. During the fifty-seven years of its existence, total expenditure was approximately £1,700,000.² This means that the average expenditure over this period was less than £4 per annum for each of the Aborigines enumerated in the census returns. The figure includes all

¹ *ibid.*, p. 7.

² *Vide* Table XIII, p. 281-2 and Table XVII pp. 351-352.
expenditure: salaries and accommodation for staff; rations; dwellings; and other benefits for Aborigines, including the costs associated with special Aboriginal schools.

In a masterly understatement, the Protection Board, in their last official report, stated "Past governments have not been liberal in their generosity to make provision for the facilities which would enable this Board to develop fully a progressive policy."¹

From 1909, when the Aborigines Protection Act gave legal sanction to the work of the Protection Board, the Board had adopted a two-pronged attack on the Aboriginal problem. Full blood Aborigines were to be cared for on segregated Aboriginal Stations and Reserves, whilst it was intended that part-Aborigines should be merged into the general community.

Regulations allowed managers of Stations to refuse permission to part-Aborigines to enter Reserves, and also to force those who reached eighteen years of age to leave. The "drafting" of light caste Aborigines into the Training Homes was also part of this policy aimed at absorbing half-castes into the general community.

There were many reasons why this policy completely failed, despite coercion by officers of the Protection Board and the Police Force. Public prejudice against all people of Aboriginal descent, coupled with restrictive legislation which discriminated against Aborigines and part-Aborigines equally, reinforced the strong kinship ties which bound all Aboriginal families together. Most part-Aborigines, of necessity, identified themselves as Aborigines.¹

The non-acceptance of part-Aborigines had led to an increasing rather than decreasing measure of responsibility for the Protection Board and its field staff. The negative policies prevailing throughout

¹ Aboriginal and part-Aboriginal informants throughout New South Wales.
the period gave the Aborigines and part-Aborigines no real hope for the future.¹

Segregation on reserves, accompanied by coercive measures to make the Aborigines conform to certain arbitrary standards set by Government officials had led to resentment and passive resistance. All major decisions were made by the Protection Board, and all local authority rested with the manager-teachers or local police. Aborigines on reserves thus had no power or responsibility. Increasingly, they used the term "Gubs" or "Gubbas" when referring to Government officials: this term had a definitely disparaging connotation.² Aborigines came to expect assistance from the Government as a right which entailed no reciprocal obligations. Thus the Aborigines came to see "Gubby handouts" as an acceptable compensation for government control.

¹ Aboriginal informants.

² ibid.
The negative policies of the Protection Board had led to the development of negative attitudes on the part of Aborigines. To quote an Aborigine who served as a member of the Aborigines Welfare Board, "We were kicked around so much that many Aborigines didn't care any more."¹ The Public Service Board Report expressed this in a different way: "A noticable feature at present on the stations visited is the general air of apathy amongst the residents."² In many cases, this apathy was a cloak for deep-seated resentment against all non-Aborigines, who were held to be accountable for this prejudice and discrimination which Aborigines had faced for so long.

Many Aborigines believed that any disciplinary action taken against them was entirely due to prejudice and not because of unacceptable behaviour on their part. Aborigines penalised for being in possession of intoxicating liquor claimed, quite validly, that

¹ ibid.
² New South Wales, Public Service Board Report, 1940, p. 21.
non-Aborigines could not be charged with this offence, as the discriminating law only applied to Aborigines.\(^1\) By extension, punishment for any offence relating to drinking was also considered as the result of prejudice and discrimination.\(^2\) Some girls returned to the Reserves after being in Cootamundra Girls' Home and after working as domestics in the city. If any of these girls brought back with them a "white" baby, the blame was rarely attributed to the girl or to the father of the baby - the real culprit was Inspector Donaldson or the manager-teacher who had forced the girl to leave home and go to Cootamundra in the first place.\(^3\)

There were many similar examples where Aborigines were able to absolve themselves from any shred of responsibility for unacceptable behaviour. This was because the original decisions had been taken by government officials, not by the Aborigines concerned.

\(^1\) Aboriginal informants.

\(^2\) ibid.

\(^3\) ibid.
With some justification, Aborigines could claim that all of their problems had been caused by Euro-Australians, who had made all the decisions. The significance of these negative attitudes cannot be over-emphasised. They had developed over a long period of time, and were now an important factor in all Aboriginal-white relationships.

The Aborigines' Protection Board had failed to solve the Aboriginal problem, and nowhere was this failure more apparent than in the field of education. Even before the 1909 Protection Act was passed, it had become apparent that part-Aboriginal children were not acceptable in public schools in many parts of the State. These part-Aboriginal children, therefore, were educated in segregated schools on Aboriginal Reserves, where standards were far below those achieved in schools generally. It may have been possible to find rationalisations for a special syllabus in Aboriginal schools, if instruction in these schools had been confined to full-blood children, whose numbers were dwindling rapidly, and who were not expected to "merge with the general community". There could be no justification, however, for a differential approach to education for part-Aboriginal children who, at eighteen years of age, were to be forced
to leave the Reserves so they could "earn their own living". 1 Without adequate education and training, these children could find no other employment than as unskilled labourers or seasonal workers. This perpetuated the social inequality of part-Aborigines, and was in direct contradiction to the policy of absorbing light caste Aborigines into the white community. This policy was itself framed on the questionable assumption that part-Aborigines wanted to be "absorbed" into the general population.

The Protection Board had adopted a policy of coercion to 'draft' part-Aboriginal children into the training homes at Cootamundra and Kinchela. Assuming that coercion was justifiable, in the circumstances the only logical approach consistent with stated Government policy would have been to force public schools throughout the State to accept the enrolment of part-Aboriginal children. This would have met opposition from many P. & C. Associations and from some teachers. Although such an approach may have initially

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1 New South Wales, Aborigines! Protection Board Report, 1920, p. 3.
involved some adjustment problems for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal pupils, it could have been a positive step towards the stated goal of Government policy. If the Government had had the foresight to take such a positive step in 1909 to ensure reasonable equality of educational opportunity for part-Aboriginal children, it is reasonable to assume that, by 1940, the dimensions of the Aboriginal problem would have been considerably reduced. In 1940, of the 10,861 Aborigines enumerated in the Protection Board Report, 10,171 (about 93 per cent) were half or lesser caste Aborigines.¹

The Public Service Board Report recommended not only that trained teachers should be appointed to Aboriginal schools, but also that

In connection with the education of the aborigine children the Education Department should permit (and encourage) their attendance at ordinary schools, and they should not be debarred from such attendance, except under very exceptional circumstances. This will assist in the ultimate solution of the problem and, provided the headmasters of schools with considerable numbers of aborigine children are carefully selected, should cause no difficulty in administration.²

¹ Vide Table XVII.
² New South Wales, Public Service Board Report, 1940, p. 30.
The Public Service Board was fully aware that, in many areas, parents of non-Aboriginal pupils opposed the enrolment of Aboriginal children in public schools. The Public Service Board was also aware of the climate of opinion in the New South Wales Department of Education, as expressed in the Drummond Minute which described Aborigines "as belonging to a child race";¹ and in the Preface to the 1940 revised edition of the Course of Instruction for Aborigines' Schools, where the Acting Director of Education, Mr. J.G. Mackenzie, stated:

The pupils of these schools provide a very wide range of intelligence. Some are full-bloods, who are sometimes lethargic and unable to proceed in the general subject beyond the third class standard ... To-day they are in the minority, although not an unimportant group. Some of the pupils with an admixture of white blood frequently exhibit an intelligence that permits them under good school conditions to proceed at the normal rate suggested in the Course of Instruction for Primary Schools ... It is felt, however, that the great majority will find sufficient scope for their natural endowments within the range of this syllabus.²

² New South Wales, Department of Education, Course of Instruction for Aborigines' Schools, 1940, p. 3.
Although the Acting Director acknowledged the fact that most of the children lived "under the influence of a very restricted environment", there were many Departmental officers who believed that Aboriginal children generally were not capable of profiting from education beyond the Fourth grade primary level. Under the 1940 Aborigines' Protection Act, the Department of Education became responsible for the implementation of the new educational policy for Aborigines.

This new policy was designed to provide greater educational opportunities for Aboriginal children as a first step in the assimilation policy. The success of this new educational approach was crucial for a successful transition in Government policy from 'protection' to 'assimilation'. Unfortunately, the social climate towards Aborigines in most country areas was not conducive to the successful implementation of the proposed new approach in Aboriginal education.

1 New South Wales, Department of Education, Course of Instruction for Aborigines' Schools, 1940, p. 3.
2 Interviews 1952-1955 with a number of School Principals and District Inspectors of Schools who still held this view as late as 1955.