

# SOLVING THE ASSIMILATION PROBLEM

## How We Can Succeed!

Writing to *Dawn*, Mr. R. G. Brown, a South Coast Justice of the Peace, had this to say:—

"I am referring to the Charles Perkins article which has appeared in the March issue, which seems to me to be his life's history, testimony, and a shot at how to solve the aboriginal question.

Mr. Perkins has been fortunate in his early life to get the education and training that has fitted him to take his place with the general community.

In his article he stated that he is denied the friendship of the Aborigines because he is not a full-blood, then on the other hand he meets with a rebuff from the whites because he is not a white man, in either case, Mr. Perkins should not let these be a sprag in his desire for progress.

There are some of his ideas I just don't think would be a success. I refer to the one under the heading 'Homes for Children'. This in my opinion would not work.

If there is going to be an uplifting for the Aborigines it must be by a natural effort—not of one State exchanging ideas with another.

In recent months there have been many articles published in the press about how and what to do to solve the tragic problem of the Aborigine people. As far as I can see all have been without merit.

The Mayor of Moree suggested the abolition of the reserves and stations: this would be one of the greatest

tragedies to ever happen to the Aborigine people, and I cannot see any wise Australian entertaining the idea.

The only solution to the problem would be to form a committee of both men and women of every State to work jointly together not to be dictated to by the State Leaders, but to be governed by the Federal Government. This committee to be made up of both Aborigines and white people, then divide the Aborigines into three groups, namely A, B, and C. The A group would be the families that are ready to be placed in proper houses in the towns with full citizen rights such as employment in all industry without the colour bar, also apprenticeships for the young boys and girls leaving school.

The B group would be those families living on stations and reserves whose children would be ready when they become men and women to take their place in the A group.

The C group are those who are still in the primitive stage, these people to be cared for in a special way, such as medical treatment and to see that they are not used as cheap labour on the outback stations.

In every case, A, B, and C, proper housing.

With this programme to work over a period of about twenty-five years I believe the problem of assimilation would be solved and unity of the both peoples would come through the children. The Government has made it law that we have a better education, let it make a law that we have better housing."

## ABORIGINES LAND LEASE

A lease of 1,600 acres on the Lower Richmond for agricultural use was granted to a group of aborigines in Lismore recently. It is believed to be the first time in Australia that a special lease has been granted to aborigines for agricultural purposes.

The Land Board granted the lease in Lismore to the Numbahging Co-op. Society at Cabbage Tree island. The lease is for 28 years and the annual rental fixed at £50.

The land is open heath country on the mainland west of the island. It is in the Parish of Broadwater, County of Rous and Shire of Tintenbar.

### Prompt Start

The chairman of Numbahging Co-op., Mr. Bob Bolt, said that cultivation of the land would start almost immediately.

Mr. Bolt said it was intended to grow pineapples, Bananas, passion fruit and citrus fruits on the leased land.

"In the Co-op.'s 10-year plan we intend, at a later date when finance is available, to build-up a beef cattle herd."

Mr. Bolt said it was hoped to plant pineapples in September. The Fruitvale Cannery at Ballina has donated 5,000 pineapple plants to the Co-op. Mr. Bolt said that the cannery had also agreed to pur-

chase all pineapples grown on the land. He said it was hoped to plant the other fruits next year. The Numbahging Co-op. was formed about a year ago and consists of 45 members. All members are aborigines and live on Cabbage Tree Island.

The Co-op. has about 60 acres of the 116-acre island leased.

### Good Crops

Recently a very successful broom millet crop and a pea crop were harvested from the island.

The Co-op. owns farm implements, including a tractor.

A cane seed bed was planted in November last year and this season it is expected that 40 to 50 tons of cane will be harvested after sets have been cut for planting.

Mr. Bolt said there were 40 acres of land on the island cultivated for cane growing and the C.S.R. had granted an assignment of 24 acres a year. It is the first time that cane has been grown on the island since pre-war.

The Minister for Co-ops., Mr. A. Landa, will visit Cabbage Tree Island on July 4.

The Manager of Cabbage Tree Island Aboriginal Station, Mr. H. W. Jeffery, said that the granting of the lease would be a terrific boom to the Co-op.

—With acknowledgment to *Northern Star*.