

1932-33-34.

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

REPORT

ON THE

ADMINISTRATION

OF

THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

FOR THE

YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1933.

Presented by Command ; ordered to be printed, 29th June, 1934.

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Board was insisted on by the Department of the Interior, Canberra. In every instance the Board's attitude was upheld by the Honorable the Minister. This latter fact is appreciated by the Board as an expression of confidence in the conduct of its affairs.

It is, of course, recognized that it is much easier to diffuse criticism than to suggest constructive remedies, but settlers may rest assured that the present policy not only aims at the encouragement of genuine primary producers, but is also directed to the attainment of that stability so essential to pastoral and agricultural communities. As definite evidence of improved stability in the agricultural industry is already forthcoming, it is reasonable to expect that, with the advent of increased prices, the rate of improvement will be accelerated.

The total receipts during the financial year under review were £1,300 6s. 9d., consisting of £690 repayment of principal, £549 7s. 9d. payment of interest charges, £53 9s. account sales of implements, and £7 10s. account hire of implements.

The total disbursements (advances) during the same period were £412 17s. 9d.

Excess of receipts over expenditure amounted to £887 9s.

It is desired to point out that implements, machinery and material to the value of approximately £300 were advanced from stock and by transfer, without having to draw on the funds of the Primary Production Vote.

In my opinion the Government should withdraw from this activity, and leave same to the banking institutions, who in the States regard the encouragement of primary production as one of their legitimate functions.

In Darwin there are branches of the E.S. and A. Bank and the Commercial Bank of Australia, and in Alice Springs there is also a branch of the E.S. and A. Bank, but so far the Territory has not a branch of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia.

COURTS.

Actions in the Local Courts numbered 246, whilst there were 469 actions in the Police Courts.

Acting Judge Sharwood again visited Darwin to hold Supreme Court sittings in April, Judge Mallam having retired from office on the 1st March, 1933, on account of ill-health.

ABORIGINALS.

The Chief Protector of Aborigines estimates the aboriginal population as 19,424.

The Half-caste Home at Pine Creek was closed on the 20th May, 1933, and 28 boys were transferred to the Institution at Alice Springs, which was opened on the 17th November, 1932, after the closing of the Jay Creek Institution.

The conduct of the aborigines is satisfactory, there being a considerable decrease in the number of offences committed.

LANDS.

The area embraced in the Northern Territory is 523,620 square miles, but at present there are 231,472 square miles of country unoccupied or unreserved. The revenue collected for the last year amounted to £26,570 0s. 7d., the carry over (rents in arrear) being approximately £16,500.

PUBLIC SERVICE.

Again I tender my thanks to the members of the Service for their loyalty and co-operation during the year, but I regret the necessity for one resignation and two dismissals. Mr. T. Worgan, Director of Mines, died whilst bathing at Pine Creek, on the 23rd September, 1932, his death being regretted by all who knew him.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

R. H. WEDDELL, Lt.-Col.,

Administrator.

REPORT OF THE CHIEF PROTECTOR OF ABORIGINALS.

Protection Policy.—The amendments to the Aboriginals Regulations, which were designed to ameliorate the conditions of employment of aboriginals and half-castes, especially those employed in country districts, were sanctioned by the Minister of State for the Interior and became law.

Full details of these important amendments appeared in the *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette* of the 29th June, 1933.

This new legislation further advances the ideal of Aboriginal Protection in the Northern Territory by providing a minimum rate of wage for aboriginals in employment and ensuring the adequate maintenance and feeding of their relatives and dependants. Certain of the new regulations are framed to safeguard the health of the aboriginal population by making it obligatory on the part of employers to report promptly to a Protector cases of injury or sickness amongst aboriginals whether they are employed or not, and to provide transport for sick or injured employees to hospital centres.

The Aboriginal Medical Benefit Fund, which is incorporated in the new regulations, provides for the payment of contributions to a fund by licensees on a scale governed by the number of aboriginals employed.

It is anticipated that under this system illness amongst aboriginals will be promptly notified.

Important amendments to the principal Aboriginals Ordinance were promulgated and published in the *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette* No. 36, of 1933.

Under the new Ordinance aboriginals are not permitted to be employed on hotel premises and it is illegal for aboriginals or half-castes to drink or be in possession of intoxicating liquor.

The amendments facilitate police action against persons procuring or consorting with female aboriginals and half-castes and against aboriginals soliciting for purposes of prostitution.

Employment.—During the year licences to employ aboriginals were issued as follows:—

District.	Licences.	Agreements.
Darwin	168	220
Parap	32	17
Pine Creek, Katherine, Mataranka	11	5
Alice Springs	35	22
	246	264

Country Licences.—Two hundred and sixteen Country Licences were issued.

Aboriginal Drivers.—In November, 1932, a 20 per cent. reduction in the rates of wages prescribed for aboriginal drovers was ordered by the Minister for the Interior.

By a Ministerial decision announced in September, 1932, any station owner, who employed his permanent aboriginal stock-boys droving stock belonging to the station, was granted exemption under certain conditions from paying droving rates of wages. This decision was subsequently embodied in the new amendments to the Aboriginals Regulations.

The number of aboriginal drovers in employment under agreement during the droving season was 110. Fifty-two new agreements were completed during the year.

Recognizances.—The number of recognizances entered into by employers removing aboriginals and half-castes from various districts in the Northern Territory was 143.

Four recognizances were renewed in respect of half-castes resident with their employers in Southern States.

Trust Fund, Darwin—

Credit balance as at 1st July, 1932	£	s.	d.
Receipts during year 1932-33	2,291	18	2
	<hr/>		
Expenditure during year 1932-33	5,056	14	6
	<hr/>		
Credit balance as at 30th June, 1933	2,692	1	3

Receipts increased by £372 15s. 3d. and expenditure by £375 15s. as compared with the preceding year.

Cash Orders amounting to a total sum of £638 15s. 5d. were issued, showing a decrease of £279 10s. 11d.

Orders for goods, &c., were issued for a total sum of £1,725 17s. 10d., showing an increase of £655 5s. 11d.

The number of cash orders issued was 1,500 as compared with 1,861 for the year preceding, and the number of orders for goods, &c., was 749 as compared with 687 for previous year.

Trust Fund, Alice Springs—

Credit balance as at 1st July, 1932	£	s.	d.
Receipts during year 1932-33	801	6	6
	<hr/>		
Withdrawals during the year	1,193	12	0
	<hr/>		
Credit balance as at 30th June, 1933	783	2	1

The value of goods issued by employers to aboriginal drovers in lieu of wages during the currency of their employment is not included in the above statements.

A vigorous policy was pursued in reference to persons defaulting in the matter of paying wages to their aboriginal employees. All outstanding accounts were placed in the hands of the Crown Law Officer for collection. Legal proceedings were instituted in several cases.

Aged and Infirm Aboriginals.—There was a slight increase in the number of aged and infirm aboriginals fed and clothed at Rationing Depots throughout the Northern Territory.

The increase was particularly noticeable at Timber Creek Depot, where it was reported that large numbers of bush natives had visited the depot, thus making their first active contact with civilization.

All regular Rationing Depots were maintained.

Half-caste Policy.—With new legislation providing additional measures for the adequate protection of female half-castes, combined with the successful smooth functioning of the Half-caste Apprentices Regulations, the Department's activities were directed with vigorous effort towards the development of its policy which has for its main theme the elevation of the standard of living of the half-caste to that of the white. This is deemed to be a matter of social and economic urgency. An encouraging feature auguring well for the success of this plan was the increased number of marriages and prospective marriages of whites with female half-castes.

The opening of the new Half-caste Home at Alice Springs and re-organized conditions at the Darwin Home provided further facilities to fit half-caste boys and girls leaving the institutions for their role as citizens.

The number of half-caste inmates in Government Institutions at the 30th June, 1932, was 217, comprising 83 males and 134 females.

All inmates under the age of sixteen years received the statutory State school education prescribed for white children. Half-caste girls completing their education received vocational training in domestic arts, dress and clothing making and laundry work.

At the Alice Springs Institution male inmates received training fitting them for work in the pastoral industry.

Girls leaving the institutions were found employment in specially selected private homes where they were cared for by the ladies who employed them, and who were held responsible for their moral and material welfare.

Boys who left the institutions were found employment as apprentices in the pastoral industry.

Twenty-two half-caste girls were employed under special agreements with European employers in Darwin and twelve in Alice Springs. Four girls were employed under agreement with approved employers in country districts.

Four special agreements were completed in respect of the removal of four half-caste girls to Southern States; all of these girls returned to Darwin with their employers.

During the year 25 half-caste male youths were working as apprentices in the pastoral industry. This number represents an increase of thirteen on the figures of the preceding year. Difficulty has been experienced in meeting the demand for apprentices.

On 8th July, 1932, a 20 per cent. reduction in wages payable to half-caste apprentices was effected.

One apprentice was removed from employment on account of the employer's default in the matter of payment of wages.

Half-caste Housing Scheme.—This scheme, an outline of which appeared in last year's report, aims to provide better dwellings for half-castes, who will, as tenants, be required to pay a small sum weekly towards interest on and redemption of the amount advanced to them by the Chief Protector from the Trust Fund. The weekly payment was assessed by the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics.

During the year eight houses were partially completed under the scheme and will be ready for occupation early in the coming year. Proposals to extend the scheme are being considered.

The preliminary work of clearing the building sites and adjoining streets was carried out by unemployed aboriginals from the Kahlin Compound, who assisted also by supplying the sand and stone and laying the concrete foundations. Some thousands of feet of bamboo laths were provided by Kahlin Compound aboriginals, who also rendered assistance to the tradesmen engaged erecting the structure.

The completed cottages, which present a pleasing appearance, are well lighted and ventilated and provide ample accommodation for an average family.

The adjoining streets together with an area of parklands, which is situated in a central position to the dwellings, have been cleared and prepared for the planting of ornamental trees.

Portion of the park will be converted into a childrens' playground.

It is considered that the efforts of the Department to remove half-castes from degrading slum areas to better dwellings situated in a decent environment will tend to further fit them for their assimilation into the white community.

Marriages.—Permission was given by the Chief Protector of Aboriginals for the celebration of the marriage of seven female half-castes, four with Europeans and three with half-castes. Three applications received from Europeans were refused.

The attention of the Minister was invited to the grave problem which has been developing in North Australia owing to the unrestricted intermarriage of alien coloured races with aboriginals and half-castes, the result of which has been the accumulation of a hybrid coloured population of a very low order.

A strong recommendation was submitted that the Commonwealth Government take action to have the States adopt a policy uniform with that of the Commonwealth in the Northern Territory.

In the Northern Territory, half-caste coloured aliens constitute a perennial, economic and social problem and their multiplication throughout the north of the continent is likely to be attended by grave consequences to Australia as a nation.

In the Territory the mating of an aboriginal with any person other than an aboriginal is prohibited. The mating of coloured aliens with any female of part aboriginal blood is also forbidden. Every endeavour is being made to breed out the colour by elevating female half-castes to the white standard with a view to their absorption by mating into the white population.

Aboriginal Vote.—The total expenditure from appropriation was £4,398 2s. 1d., made up as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Darwin	2,212	12	7
Southern	2,185	9	6

Kahlin Compound, Darwin Half-caste Home, Kahlin Compound Native Hospital and Clinic.—The average number of aboriginals and half-castes maintained at the compound during the year was 150, whilst the average number residing at the compound, including aboriginals employed in the town district of Darwin, was estimated at 400.

The actual cost of maintenance of the institutions was £1,931, which amount includes the salaries of the matron and superintendent. An analysis of expenditure follows:—

	£	£	£
Rations and expendable stores	1,232		
Equipment and materials for buildings	103		
Wages aboriginal staff	349		
Establishment charges	117		
Material for clothing	241		
		2,042	
<i>Less</i> amounts credited on account of sustenance of aboriginals, hire of labour, sales of bags, blankets, firewood, clothing, &c.		652	
			1,390
Repairs and maintenance			50
Salary superintendent and matron			491
			1,931

Half-caste Home, Darwin.—The number of inmates of the Half-caste Home, Darwin, at 30th June, 1933, is reflected in the subjoined table:—

	Males.	Females.
Half-caste children female dormitories	1	54
Adult female dormitories		12
Residing with parents in married half-caste quarters	4	2
Nurselings living with aboriginal mothers	2	1
Adult half-castes employed at institution and residing in separate quarters	5	4
Half-caste female inmates residing with private employers in Darwin		18
Total	12	91

During the year one half-caste girl and three half-caste boys with a predominance of aboriginal blood were transferred to Bathurst Island Mission Station. Two boys were sent to Oenpelli Mission Station also.

Two half-caste boys sent to the institution for medical treatment were transferred to Pine Creek.

Five female half-castes (two married and three single), of whom unsatisfactory reports as to conduct had been received, were by order of the Chief Protector removed to the institution and detained for short periods. The detention had a salutary effect on their conduct after release.

Two married female half-castes sought the protection of the Chief Protector and were admitted to the institution. Both were discharged on reconciliation being effected with their husbands.

The conduct and health of inmates were satisfactory. Three children were admitted to the Darwin Hospital as in-patients for treatment. All sick children were nursed under the supervision of the Matron, Darwin Hospital.

Canteen.—A canteen for aboriginals and half-castes was opened on the 1st May, 1932.

The establishment of this project provides aboriginals and half-castes with an opportunity to obtain goods at a reasonable cost and ensures protection against possible exploitation.

The financing of the canteen was effected through the Aboriginal Trust Fund to which profits will be diverted.

Disposal of profits will be made to provide benefits for aboriginals and half-castes.

Business transacted to the 30th June amounted to £121 15s. 11d.

Laundry.—Three unemployed female half-castes with half-caste child dependents were provided with employment by the establishment of a laundry.

At first only bulk washing comprising sheets and pillow slips from the Darwin Garrison and institution laundry were handled, later it was found possible to extend the activities to include a small number of private customers.

The laundresses shared all profits obtained from this enterprise.

At 30th June laundry earnings amounted to £138 8s. 10d.

Clothing Section.—This section, which employs female half-caste labour, under the supervision of the Matron, Half-caste Home, manufactures clothing required for the Half-caste Home, Kahlin Compound, Aged and Infirm Aboriginal Depots, Leprosarium and Pine Creek Half-caste Home (now closed).

The activities of this section were extended by manufacturing clothing for the Gaol.

In addition stocks of articles of wearing apparel required for sale in the canteen were manufactured.

In order to cope with the increased volume of work it was found necessary to obtain three re-conditioned sewing machines from the Defence Department. The new plant will be installed at an early date.

This section provides an excellent medium of vocational training for half-caste girls who on leaving school are unable to obtain employment outside the institution.

The following is a list of the 1,836 articles manufactured during the year :—

Shirts	357
Trousers	383
Dresses	531
Bloomers	349
Rompers	136
Pyjamas	32
Other articles	48

Output for the year was increased by 80 per cent.

During the year five new huts of improved design and a new goat yard and poultry run were erected. Preliminary work for the erection of a substantial fish trap was completed. Two dormitories for adult females were re-conditioned. Extra accommodation was provided by erecting verandah additions to these buildings.

Kahlin Compound Earnings, 1932-1933 :—

	£	s.	d.
Firewood sales	81	0	0
Blanket sales	82	0	0
*Clothing sales	62	0	0
Miscellaneous sales	14	0	0
Labour charges	90	0	0
Sustenance charges	265	0	0
Laundry receipts	138	0	0
Canteen receipts	122	0	0
	854	0	0

* Does not include value of articles manufactured for aged and infirm and Institution requirements.

Transport Section.—The Northern Territory Medical Service motor truck, driven by Kahlin Compound labour, performed all Administration haulage work in Darwin. Miles run—8,705.

Half-caste Home, Pine Creek.—The institution was closed on the 20th May, 1933. Twenty-eight of the half-caste boy inmates were transferred to the Half-caste Institution at Alice Springs on 11th May, 1933. All arrangements for the long rail and overland journey were made by this Branch. The journey was completed without incident.

Nine male half-castes and one female half-caste child together with the domestic staff of three adult female half-castes returned to Darwin on the 13th May and were admitted to the Half-caste Home, Darwin.

Five of the nine half-caste boys had a predominance of aboriginal blood and were subsequently removed to Bathurst Island and Oenpelli Mission Stations.

During the year eight boys from the institution were apprenticed to the pastoral industry.

Half-caste Institution, Alice Springs.—The Jay Creek Half-caste Institution was closed on 17th November, 1932, on which date inmates were transferred to the new Home at Alice Springs, which provides accommodation for 150 inmates.

The number of inmates of the institution at 30th June, 1933, was 114, of which 71 were males and 43 females. Forty-three males, including 28 half-caste boys from Pine Creek, and 20 females were admitted during the year.

The following is a list of 658 articles of clothing manufactured at the institution during the year :—

Dresses	279
Rompers	36
Trousers	16
Bloomers	238
Shirts	10
Other garments	79

Offences.—No finalization has yet been reached in the matter of providing special courts of law for aboriginals of the Northern Territory.

Several legal difficulties were encountered and in consequence efforts to provide a smoothly functioning and effective court have been attended with some delay.

Details of proceedings taken against aboriginals during the year ended 30th June, 1933 :—

Offence.	Males.	Females.	Committed for Trial.
Assault	8	..	..
Drunkenness	1	2	..
Indecent language	2	..	..
Murder .. .. .	..	..	20
Prohibited area	30	..	..
Possession of opium smoking articles	3	..	..
Possession of opium	1	..	..
Offensive behaviour .. .. .	..	1	..
Escape from lawful custody	6	..	..
Wounding with intent to murder .. .. .	..	..	1
Wounding with intent to commit grievous bodily harm .. .. .	..	..	2
Unlawful use of stock	3	..	..
Unlawful possession	49	1	..
Fighting	2	..	..
	105	4	23

The number of offences shows a further considerable decrease when compared with 1930-31 and 1931-32.

Ill-Treatment of Aborigines.—Particulars of complaints respecting ill-treatment of aborigines reported during the year were as under:—

District.	Complaint.	Action taken.
Darwin	Assault lubra by half-caste	Not sustained
Daly River	Assault male aboriginal by European	Not sustained
Borrooloola	Intimidation of witnesses—Assault of detained lubra	Departmental inquiry
Roper River	Allegations Mission Staff	Board of Inquiry

The Governor-General appointed the Crown Law Officer, the Chief Protector of Aborigines and the Rev. Clifford H. Nash, M.A., to be a Board of Inquiry to investigate the conduct of certain of the staff of the Roper River Mission, Northern Territory, and the management of the Mission generally.

The finding was forwarded to the Governor-General.

ABORIGINAL CENSUS.

YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1933.

Summary.

Districts.	Full Bloods.				Half-castes.				Total.
	Adults.		Children.		Adults.		Children.		
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	
Alice Springs	158	177	18	26	18	35	56	21	509
Arlunga	222	232	51	39	4	5	5	9	567
Anthony's Lagoon	66	55	10	9	3	3	5	3	154
Barrow Creek	144	141	38	53	10	3	3	4	396
Borrooloola	277	213	83	75	11	9	11	6	685
Brock's Creek	130	47	15	10	9	5	2	2	220
Charlotte Waters	267	353	93	93	8	14	15	15	853
Daly River	1,823	1,168	247	197	1	..	2	2	3,440
Darwin	1,415	1,155	350	275	45	64	41	88	3,433
Katherine	115	102	29	19	5	2	2	2	276
Lake Nash	49	13	6	8	2	..	..	..	78
Maranboy	165	125	30	25	2	1	3	2	353
North-west Patrol	485	506	180	240	9	8	..	..	1,428
Newcastle Waters	143	139	48	34	10	7	5	6	392
Pine Creek	46	40	..	..	6	3	2	..	97
Rankine River	82	58	14	17	16	7	5	6	205
Roper River	830	824	309	306	13	13	13	8	2,316
South-west Patrol	369	378	244	274	18	19	10	7	1,319
Timber Creek	806	518	261	226	15	2	2	1	1,831
Wave Hill	320	330	100	105	2	2	5	3	867
	7,912	6,573	2,127	2,031	207	202	187	185	19,424

Districts.	Nomadic.		In Regular Employment.		In Supervised Camps.		Others.		Total.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
Alice Springs .. ..	..	..	104	51	109	155	37	53	250	259
Arlunga	214	230	64	50	4	5	..	..	282	285
Anthony's Lagoon	37	50	45	19	..	..	2	1	84	70
Barrow Creek	56	58	67	25	72	118	..	..	195	201
Borrooloola	285	278	87	20	9	5	1	..	382	303
Brock's Creek	55	36	99	26	..	..	2	2	156	64
Charlotte Waters	198	266	63	56	35	36	87	117	383	475
Daly River	1,870	1,189	38	28	165	150	..	..	2,073	1,367
Darwin	1,081	966	485	306	285	310	..	..	1,851	1,582
Katherine	87	75	45	36	17	12	2	2	151	125
Lake Nash .. ..	..	..	26	3	31	18	..	..	57	21
Maranboy	155	120	45	33	..	..	..	..	200	153
North-west Patrol	625	740	49	14	..	..	..	..	674	754
Newcastle Waters	6	3	54	23	146	160	..	..	206	186
Pine Creek	15	12	34	25	4	5	1	1	54	43
Rankine River .. ..	..	..	86	27	31	61	..	..	117	88
Roper River	980	980	67	33	118	138	..	..	1,165	1,151
South-west Patrol	311	350	107	74	222	253	1	1	641	678
Timber Creek	805	600	279	147	..	..	..	..	1,084	747
Wave Hill	190	200	132	52	105	188	..	..	427	440
	6,970	6,153	1,976	1,048	1,353	1,614	133	177	10,432	8,992

CECIL COOK,
Chief Protector of Aborigines.