

1930-31-32.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.  
NEW SOUTH WALES.

ABORIGINES.

(ANNUAL REPORT OF BOARD FOR PROTECTION OF, FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1931.)

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Report of Board for Protection of Aborigines for the year ended  
30th June, 1931.

Office of Board for Protection of Aborigines,  
No. 5 Richmond Terrace, Domain,  
Sydney, 25 November, 1931.

The Under Secretary, Chief Secretary's Department.

Dear Sir,

In accordance with the established practice, we, the undermentioned members of the Board for Protection of Aborigines, duly appointed under the provisions of the Aborigines Protection Act, 1909, have the honor to submit for the Chief Secretary's information the following report of the operations of the Board during the period 1st July, 1930, to 30th June, 1931, together with the usual particulars of the numbers, location, and present condition of the Aborigines throughout the State, and means adopted for their relief as far as the funds at our disposal would permit.

GENERAL.

As a result of the general economic position, the Board has been faced with considerably increased expenditure due to the large numbers of Aborigines thrown out of employment, and thereby compelled to seek assistance on the Reserves. This assistance took the form of rations, blankets, clothing, medical attention, &c., and a reduction cannot be looked for until the depression generally lifts.

Regular inspections of Reserves and Stations were carried out, and numbers of minor improvements which did not involve expenditure were effected. These included the installation of pumping plants at two or three centres, material transferred from other Departments being utilised.

The question of water supply and housing accommodation is a pressing one, and application has been made to the Unemployment Relief Council for sufficient money to enable the Board to carry out very badly needed improvements in this direction. During the year the Unemployment Relief Council, upon the request of the Board, provided sufficient money for the erection at eight Reserves of thirty-three steel-framed huts, thus alleviating the condition of the Aborigines located there, in addition to providing employment for a considerable number of men in industry.

Much still remains to be done on the Board's Reserves before the Aborigines can be regarded as satisfactorily housed. At numbers of places they are living under very bad conditions, occupying shanties of their own construction, or galvanised huts with earthen floors, and to which the Board desires, in the interests of health and decency, to turn its urgent attention when funds will permit.

FAMILY ENDOWMENT.

During the year the Board continued the administration, on behalf of the Commissioner of Family Endowment, of all moneys payable to persons of Aboriginal blood, and to the end of the year had received from the Department an amount of £27,932 5s. 5d. This money has been expended on behalf of the endowed children in food, clothing, bedding, furniture, medical attention, and many other things which have definitely raised the standard of living of the families concerned. In a limited number of cases the money has been paid direct to the parents, but in each instance the Board has completely satisfied itself that the parents could be entrusted to spend the cash to good advantage.

The taking over of Family Endowment has resulted in a very large increase of work, but the results amply repay the effort, and must result in a saving of public expenditure.

#### ABORIGINAL STATIONS.

Satisfactory reports have been received of the various Aboriginal Stations which are under the immediate control of Teacher-Managers and Matrons. These Officers take personal interest in the well-being of all those committed to their charge, see to their housing and rationing, exercise a general supervision over their health, and assist them to secure employment. All Managers report an influx of Aborigines, and several of the Stations are suffering from the lack of sufficient accommodation, necessitating the provision of temporary shelter, such as tents, &c.

At several centres vegetable growing is undertaken, with a view to augmenting the Board's ration supply, and in this connection it might be stated that, as a result of representations made to the Chief Secretary, approval was given for the Board to increase its ration scale by 25 per cent., which was done by completely recasting the scale, and introducing a better balanced ration of greater caloric value.

Agricultural operations are carried on at a few of the Board's Stations, but nothing of an extensive character is undertaken. On the coast boats and fishing nets are utilised for augmenting the Aborigines' food supply.

#### TRAINING HOMES.

At Cootamundra the Board maintains a Home for the education and training of girls who have been taken from Reserves and camps, and are afterwards placed out at domestic service. Many hundreds of girls have, within recent years, passed through this Institution, and are now in situations under the Board's supervision, the younger ones being apprenticed and the older ones working for ordinary wages.

Apprenticeship conditions provide that the employer shall be responsible for the supply of proper food and clothing and sleeping accommodation, and the moral and physical well-being of the apprentice, to whom they shall also pay a certain amount of pocket money, the balance of the wages being collected by the Board, and held in trust for the apprentices, to whom it is paid later on at the Board's good discretion.

A somewhat similar type of Home is also conducted by the Board at Kinchela for boys, who are afterwards placed out at situations on farms and stations.

A Children's Home is conducted by the United Aborigines Mission at Bomaderry, under the Board's supervision, and into this Institution are received children up to 10 years of age.

#### EDUCATION.

Special Schools for Aborigines are established at all centres where the Aboriginal population justifies same. Satisfactory reports are received from the District School Inspectors regarding their conduct and operation. A special syllabus is taught, which is calculated to be of the greatest service to the children when they are called upon to earn their own living. Periodical medical and dental inspections are made by Officers attached to the Department of Education, and the Board arranges necessary treatment when the parents are unable to do so.

In numbers of Schools where the necessary facilities are available a midday meal is also provided for the pupils, portion of their ordinary rations being utilised for the purpose.

#### REMODELLING OF ABORIGINES' RESERVE AT LA PEROUSE.

The Board is pleased to be able to report the completion of the above work, which involved the demolition of a number of old galvanised iron dwellings and the erection of new ones on an adjoining site. The work was carried out by the Public Works Department, under the supervision of the Government Architect, with funds provided by the Unemployment Relief Council. The Aborigines at this centre are now very comfortably housed, the settlement having the water laid on to each dwelling, and the whole area properly sewered.

The Board has had the co-operation and help of the Director of the Botanic Gardens, and a large number of trees and shrubs have been planted, which work will be continued with a view to making the Reserve an attraction. It is understood that the Government Tourist Bureau contemplate including the Reserve in its itinerary for oversea tourists, who are being shown the attractions of the City and its beaches, and this should result in facilities for the Aborigines to dispose of their boomerangs and shell work, in the manufacture of which many of them earn their livelihood.

#### NUMBERS AND EXPENDITURE.

On 1st June a census of Aborigines throughout the State was taken, and the figures made available to the State and Federal Government Statisticians. These disclosed that in New South Wales there remain 1,038 full bloods and 8,775 half-castes, in the care and protection of which an amount of £39,610 was expended, including items within the Votes of the Aborigines Protection Board and the Departments of Public Health, Education, Government Stores, and Resumed Properties.

## HEALTH.

The Board is again able to report a satisfactory year so far as health is concerned, as there have not been any epidemics. Every care is taken to ensure that proper medical facilities are made available at Aboriginal centres, and the Board's Officers and the Police have authority to arrange admission to Hospitals or requisition the services of a doctor.

Stocks of simple remedies are on hand at all places where facilities exist for their administration.

## CONCLUSION.

Considering the period of stress through which the country is at present passing, the condition of the Aborigines may be regarded as satisfactory.

They are provided with housing accommodation, food, clothing, blankets, medical, and if necessary dental, attention, and those living outside the Reserves may, if circumstances compel it, return thereto and obtain every reasonable assistance.

In conclusion, the Board desires to again express its appreciation of the assistance it has received from the members of the New South Wales Police Force, without which it would have been well nigh impossible for the work of the protection of the Aborigines of the State to have been efficiently carried out.

(Signed)

W. H. CHILDS,  
Chairman.  
E. B. HARKNESS,  
Vice-Chairman.  
ROBERT DICK,  
B. C. HARKNESS,  
A. W. GREEN,  
ROY S. VINCENT,  
H. J. BATE,  
W. J. SCULLY,  
A. McCLELLAND,  
Members of the Board.