

1932-33.

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

REPORT

ON THE

ADMINISTRATION

OF

THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

FOR THE

YEAR ENDED 30th JUNE, 1932.

Presented by Command ; ordered to be printed, 30th March, 1933.

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Settlers coming under the first category having proved, conclusively, by results extending over a period of years, that they were absolutely incapable of ever becoming successful primary producers, have been effectively disposed of (*vide* the provisions contained in Section 21 of the Ordinance). Opportunities have thus been created for placing younger and more virile types on some of the holdings taken possession of, whilst the re-issue of many of the seized implements has enabled the Board to make "fresh" advances without having to draw on the funds of the Primary Production Vote.

The adoption of a systematic "following up" of the annual statement of account by a series of "reminders" has proved to be generally effective, and is undoubtedly responsible for the fact that the year 1931-32 was the first occasion on which the Primary Producers' Board has been successful in showing an excess of receipts over expenditure.

During the initial stages of the Board's activities, peanut growers were afforded the opportunity of forming a Peanut Pool. After having given the widest publicity to the proposal for a period of over three months, the Board, after lengthy deliberation, decided to inform the Minister that, in view of the apathetic attitude of a large proportion of the growers, it was unable to recommend the formation of a Pool.

It was then suggested, as a natural corollary, that the growers be advised that they should make their own arrangements for marketing in the future; this suggestion was, at that time, replied to in the negative. A subsequent recommendation on similar lines, but of a more comprehensive nature, has since been approved by the Minister. By this decision, the whole of the 1933 crop will be marketed by private enterprise.

The total receipts during the financial year under review were £1,184 19s. 5d. consisting of £829 1s. 2d. repayment of principal and £355 18s. 3d. payment of interest charges.

The total disbursements during the same period were £571 3s. 7d. of which £183 5s. 11d. were liabilities incurred by the previous Primary Producers' Board (North Australia Commission), payment not having been effected by it before vacating office. The expenditure incurred by the present Board is, therefore, only £387 17s. 8d. As a sum of £214 15s. 6d. was expended on the purchase of peanut seed, alone, it will be readily perceived that strenuous efforts have been put forth in an endeavour to comply with the Ministerial direction of 31st July, 1931.

Excess of receipts over expenditure amounted to £613 15s. 10d.

COURTS.

In the local Courts there were 266 actions, while those in the Police Courts numbered 503.

Mr. Acting Justice Sharwood arrived in the Territory on 18th June, 1932, to dispose of the cases fixed for the July Sessions and for the purpose of clearing up accumulations of Supreme Court work generally, occasioned by the prolonged absence of Mr. Justice Mallam through ill health.

ABORIGINALS.

The Chief Protector of Aborigines estimates the aboriginal population as 19,407.

During the year the boys from the Darwin Half-caste Home were removed to Pine Creek. At the end of the year 65 were in the Darwin Half-caste Home, 38 in the Pine Creek Institution and 62 in the Jay Creek Institution. The conduct and health of the inmates were satisfactory.

LANDS AND SURVEYS.

Through the low prices offered and offering for wool, sheep and cattle, and through no fault of their own, many settlers are in a precarious position to-day.

There are 891 holdings comprising 230,661 square miles. The revenue collected for the year was £23,056 3s. 2d., this sum being less than the average collection (£24,000) of the last ten years.

The carry over (rents in arrear) is approximately £15,000.

MINES.

The value of gold produced this year was £3,465, that of tin being £2,322 and that of wolfram being £1,369, whilst the value of mica produced was £5,547.

Unsuccessful efforts have been made to induce the investment of capital in the Northern Territory, exemptions after exemptions being granted. It is proposed, in future, to grant exemptions only when absolutely necessary.

REPORT OF THE CHIEF PROTECTOR OF ABORIGINALS.

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

District.	Licences.	Agreements.
Darwin	182	245
Parap	24	9
Pine Creek	7	9
Mataranka	4	4
	217	267

Country Licences.—The issue of country licences, which had been suspended for the greater part of the year in anticipation of the passing of amended legislation, was recommended during April owing to unforeseen delay attending the finalization of the amending ordinance and regulations.

Aboriginal Drivers.—Forty employers availed themselves of aboriginal labour under the conditions specified for the employment of aboriginal drovers, 110 aboriginal drovers being employed during the season.

Recognizances.—One hundred and twenty-five forms of recognizance were completed covering the removal of aboriginals or half-castes from the Northern Territory. Five recognizances were renewed in respect of half-castes resident in Southern States.

<i>Trust Fund, Darwin—</i>	£	s.	d.
Credit balance 1st July, 1931	1,888	15	4
Receipts during year	2,392	1	1
	4,280	16	5
Withdrawals during year	1,988	18	3
Balance at 30th June, 1932	2,291	18	2

Deposits increased by £184 16s. 4d. and withdrawals by £84 8s. 8d. as compared with the figures of the preceding year.

Cash orders to a total of 1,861, representing an increase of 243, were issued.

Cash orders on stores to the number of 687 were completed, as compared with 592 for the preceding year.

Cash withdrawals amounted to £918 6s. 4d.

Orders on stores amounted to £1,070 11s. 11d.

Goods valued at £550 were issued by employers to aboriginal drovers during the currency of their employment the transactions in all cases being supervised by a Protector and each aboriginal's receipt being witnessed by an independent person. This method of payment was adopted in order to enable the aboriginal to draw upon his earnings whilst still in employment. The amount involved in these issues is not reflected in the above statement of the Aboriginal Trust Fund although the employer's wage account is credited and the employee's debited accordingly.

Every effort was made to compel employers to honour their agreements with aboriginal employees and with that object in view two town licences and one country licence were cancelled during the year.

Aged and Infirm Aboriginals.—Three hundred aged and infirm aboriginals were rationed at rationing depots in that portion of the Territory north of the twentieth parallel. A rationing depot was also maintained at Alice Springs.

Aboriginal Employment Policy.—The extension to Central Australia of the aboriginal policy developed in North Australia during the period when these two territories were separately administered, provoked some opposition, particularly amongst pastoralists and aboriginal welfare workers south of the twentieth parallel. It was quite clear that this opposition arose as a result of a complete misunderstanding of the fundamentals of the policy concerned.

The basis of the Department's policy in respect of the employment of aboriginals in country districts is that the employer must maintain to the satisfaction of the local protector all the tribal dependants of the aboriginal employee. The reasons for this requirement are:—

- The running of stock on tribal hunting ground induces the owner to drive aboriginals from certain waterholes, thereby making tribal life more arduous.
- The employment of the able-bodied as stockmen reduces the number of hunters available for the maintenance of tribal dependants under native conditions.
- As a result of these two influences bush life may become so precarious that there develops a certain factor of compulsion pressing the aboriginal towards employment by a white man on such conditions as the latter may be prepared to offer.

In order at once to serve the best interests of the aboriginal coming in contact with white civilization and to permit the white pioneer successfully to settle in available pastoral country, the Department's policy has been to require that the employer of aboriginal labour shall satisfactorily maintain his aboriginal employee and his tribal dependants, no further wage being demanded. On the other hand the employee is free to commence and leave work at will and his right to migrate is reserved to him notwithstanding that his tribal country may be wholly subdivided into pastoral leases.

Where an aboriginal is employed as a drover it is naturally impossible for the employer personally to provide for his employee's dependants. He is, therefore, required to pay to his aboriginal drover a prescribed wage which is utilized by the Chief Protector for the benefit of the employee and his dependants.

Aboriginal Reservations.—A large number of applications were received during the year from persons desiring to enter aboriginal reserves for various purposes. The bulk of these were from prospectors desiring to enter the Arnhem Land Reserve or the south-western reserve and buffalo hunters desiring to enter the Arnhem Land Reserve. Permits were refused in all cases.

Half-caste Policy.—The extension to Central Australia of existing North Australian legislation in respect of the employment of half-castes provoked strong opposition from pastoralists and aboriginal welfare workers. This opposition, like that opposed to the aboriginal employment policy, was largely due to a complete misunderstanding of the purport and text of the Apprentices Regulations.

Half-castes in the Territory approximate in numbers to one-third of the European population and their rate of natural increase is considerably higher than that of any other section of the population. It has become a matter of social and economic urgency, therefore, that the living standard of the half-caste be elevated to that of a white and to the development of this policy the activities of the Department have been directed. Illegitimate children of not less than 50 per cent. white blood are removed from the aboriginal camps at an early age and placed in institutions where they are reared at European standards and given statutory State school education. On completion of their schooling the girls are taught domestic arts and dress and clothing making to fit them for a higher station as the wives of higher grade half-caste males or whites. The boys on leaving school are sent out for employment in the pastoral industry under the conditions of the Half-caste Apprentices Regulations which are similar to those laid down by the Pastoral Award for white apprentices.

During the year twelve half-caste male youths were apprenticed in the pastoral industry. The number of pastoralists inquiring for this class of labour exceeds the number of youths available. In order to meet the demand in North Australia during the year two youths were brought from Alice Springs to employment in the Maranboy district. In addition to the half-castes apprenticed under the wage conditions of the regulations, two special agreements were completed in respect of boys under sixteen years of age.

Twenty-five half-caste girls were employed under special agreements with European employers in Darwin, six in Alice Springs and two in rural districts—a total of 33. Employers were required to insure these girls under the Workmen's Compensation Ordinance.

Three half-caste females, who had been employed in Southern States, were returned owing to the depression existing there—two to Darwin and one to Alice Springs. One girl was returned by her employer on account of unsatisfactory work. Six special agreements were completed in respect of the removal of six half-caste girls to Southern States by employers travelling on leave. All these were returned during the year.

Permission was given by the Chief Protector for the celebration of the marriage of four female half-castes to Europeans.

Half-caste Housing Scheme.—In order to assist half-castes to provide themselves with better dwellings the Chief Protector submitted for approval a scheme whereby half-castes having moneys to their credit in the Trust Account might voluntarily subscribe towards a fund from which advances would be made to approved applicants for the purpose of building houses complying with the regulations under the Health Ordinance. An area of land has been reserved for this purpose and vested in the Chief Protector. The dwellings will be erected by the Government and the tenants will be required to pay a small sum weekly towards interest on and redemption of the advance made to them. The weekly levy was assessed by officers of the Commonwealth Statistician's Department and provides for periods of redemption ranging from five years to twenty years.

Aboriginal Vote.—The total expenditure from appropriation was £5,402 1s. 9d.

Although the activities of the Aboriginal Branch were considerably increased especially with the opening of the Half-caste Home, Pine Creek, expenditure for the year represents a decrease of £94 on that of the previous year.

Kahlin Compound, Darwin Half-caste Home, Kahlin Compound Native Hospital.—The average number of aboriginals and half-castes maintained at the Compound during the year was 136 whilst the average number residing at the Compound, including aboriginals working in the town district of Darwin, was 300.

Maintenance work such as the repairing and painting of huts was performed through the year as required.

The actual cost of maintenance of the Institution was £2,319 16s. 9d. (including the salaries of the Matron and the Superintendent). An analysis of expenditure follows:—

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Bread	76	13	8						
Meat	572	17	7						
Groceries, stores, fruit, vegetables	637	2	3						
Equipment, clothing	310	8	11						
Wages aboriginal staff	250	8	9						
Establishment changes	91	8	8						
							1,938	19	10
Less Credits on account of sustenance of aboriginals, hired labour, sales, bags, blankets, firewood, clothing, &c.				403	3	1			
							1,535	16	9
Repairs and maintenance							253	0	0
Salary Superintendent and Matron							531	0	0
							2,319	16	9

Half-caste Home, Darwin.—The number of inmates of the Half-caste Home, Darwin (Female) at 30th June, 1932, was 65.

Interior structural alterations, which constituted a decided improvement, were effected to the Half-caste Home and the building was painted throughout. Thirty new beds were provided.

Two delinquent adult female half-castes were ordered to be detained in the Institution.

The conduct and health of inmates were satisfactory.

The following articles of clothing were manufactured at the home by half-caste inmates under the supervision of the Matron :—

Trousers	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	186
Shirts	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	196
Dresses	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	122
Rompers	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	233
Bloomers	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	118
Pyjamas	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	43
Pillow cases	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	86
Pillows	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	48
Mattresses	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	12

Half-caste Home, Pine Creek.—The transfer of half-caste boys from Darwin to Pine Creek was effected on 9th September, 1931, when Mrs. Turner took charge of the Pine Creek Institution as Matron.

A statement of admissions to the Institution follows :—

Admitted 9th September, 1931	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	28
Admitted during the year from Darwin	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Admitted during the year from Rural districts	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7
Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	38

A domestic staff of three female half-castes transferred from Darwin was provided for the management of the Home.

Schooling facilities were provided for by the appointment of a school teacher, the old Pine Creek Hospital being utilized as a school house.

The conduct and health of the inmates have been satisfactory.

The cost of maintenance of this Institution was £835 13s., an analysis of the expenditure being as follows :—

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Rations	305	5	11			
Equipment	105	12	0			
Wages	27	9	7			
Sanitary	11	19	1			
Freight and cartage	32	9	7			
Firewood	4	0	0			
Travelling expenses	69	13	8			
				556	9	10
Repairs, maintenance	164	3	2			
Matron's salary	65	0	0			
Clothing, blankets supplied by Compound	50	0	0			
				279	3	2
Total				835	13	0

Mrs. Turner resigned on account of ill health on 17th March, 1932, and was succeeded by Mrs. J. Jones.

Half-caste Home, Jay Creek.—Nine males and ten females were admitted to the Institution during the year there being 62 in residence on 30th June, 1932.

Inmates of the Institution are classified as under :—

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Quadroon	13	6	19
Half-caste	17	21	38
Three-quarter caste	1	4	5
	31	31	62

The following articles of clothing were manufactured at the Home :—

Dresses	184
Rompers	14
Trousers	102
Bloomers	56
Shirts and jumpers	92
Other garments	44

The conduct and health of the inmates have been satisfactory.

Identification discs.—In order to facilitate the control of unauthorized migration of aboriginals into the prohibited area of Darwin and Parap, it is proposed during the next financial year to issue numbered discs to all aboriginals legally in employment in that area. By this means it will be possible for Protectors readily to identify aboriginals found on the prohibited area without lawful reason so that prompt steps may be taken to remove them either to a reserve or to their own country. With the object of preventing the unrestricted immigration of myall aboriginals to Darwin an arrangement was made during the year with the Manager, Commonwealth Railways, to refuse rail transport to all aboriginals except those presenting an authority to travel signed by a Protector of Aboriginals.

Aged and Infirm Aboriginals.—Expenses in connexion with rationing of aged and infirm aboriginals at ration depots and the feeding, transport and hospitalization of the sick, are analysed in the sub-joined table.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Meals sick aboriginals	18	2	1			
Fares transport sick aboriginals	95	5	2			
Aged and infirm, rations	625	10	7			
Hospital fees, aboriginals	242	2	0			
Blankets	115	6	2			
Maintenance, Aboriginal Southern Institutions	52	0	0			
Drugs	2	6	11			
						1,150 12 11
Less amounts paid account fares by employers						11 17 4
Total expenditure						1,138 15 7*

* Does not include costs of hospitalization of aboriginals, Kahlin Compound Native Hospital, such expenses being included under heading, Kahlin Compound.

Offences.—Details of proceedings taken against aboriginals during the year ended 30th June, 1932 :—

Offence.	Convicted.		Committed for Trial.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
Assault	8	2	..	..
Breach Firearms Ordinance	1	..	..	..
Attempted murder	..	..	1	..
Drunkenness	3	..	..	..
Drunk in compound	5	..	..	..
Escape legal custody	5	..	..	..
Fighting	1	..	..	..
Fighting in compound	3	..	..	..
Ill-treatment animal	1	..	..	..
Lunatic	1	..	..	..
Murder	..	..	1	..
Possession opium	1	..	..	..
Possession opium articles	1	2	..	..
Riotous behaviour	2	..	..	..
Prohibited area	35	9	..	..
Unlawfully on dwelling	5	..	..	..
Unlawful possession	54	..	..	..
Wilful damage	1	..	..	..
Larceny	1	..	..	..
	128	13	2	..

The number of offences shows a decrease as compared with 1930-31.

Ill-treatment of Aboriginals.—During the year nine instances of ill-treatment of aboriginals were reported. Details were as under :—

District.	Complaint.	Action Taken.
Alice Springs	Assault	Offender fined £2 in default three months hard labour
Alice Springs	Non-payment wages	Employer's licence cancelled—wages recovered
Borrooloola	Assault	Not sustained
Pine Creek	Non-payment wages	Wages recovered
Darwin	Assault	Insufficient evidence
Darwin	Non-payment wages	Employer's licence cancelled—wages recovered
Darwin	Non-payment wages	Employer's licence cancelled—wages recovered
Barrow Creek	Assault	Prosecution ordered
Pine Creek	Non-compliance with food and clothing conditions of agreement	Adequate monetary payment recovered

ABORIGINAL CENSUS.
YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1932.
Summary.

Districts.	Full Bloods.				Half-castes.				Total.
	Adults.		Children.		Adults.		Children.		
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	
Alice Springs	166	175	21	26	12	17	3	3	423
Arltunga	222	232	51	39	4	5	5	9	567
Anthony's Lagoon	64	38	7	9	1	4	6	4	133
Barrow Creek	190	250	44	32	12	5	5	7	545
Borrooloola	277	213	83	75	11	8	14	6	687
Brock's Creek	460	340	70	45	6	4	..	..	925
Charlotte Waters	377	401	92	116	6	9	10	10	1,021
Daly River	1,760	1,059	270	195	4	2	2	2	3,294
Darwin	1,375	1,143	345	265	55	70	69	72	3,394
Hermannsburg	82	91	57	55	3	9	2	3	302
Jay Creek .. .. .	..	1	1	3	..	3	15	17	40
Katherine	84	72	28	19	16	5	3	6	233
Lake Nash	51	14	5	7	2	..	..	..	79
Maranboy	130	100	21	20	1	..	..	..	272
North-west Patrol	470	530	185	236	9	3	2	1	1,436
Newcastle Waters	143	142	45	29	12	8	5	9	393
Pine Creek	36	22	2	3	5	2	1	..	71
Rankine River	45	36	12	9	5	6	7	10	130
South-west Patrol	240	153	62	42	6	4	4	5	516
Roper River	836	828	300	300	12	18	13	4	2,311
Timber Creek	821	510	256	220	13	3	2	1	1,826
Wave Hill	301	311	88	96	2	3	5	3	809
	8,130	6,661	2,045	1,841	197	188	173	172	19,407

Districts.	Nomadic.		In Regular Employment.		In Supervised Camps.		Others.		Total.	
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.
Alice Springs .. .. .	..	..	109	46	51	123	42	52	202	221
Arltunga	214	230	64	50	4	5	..	..	282	285
Anthony's Lagoon	29	34	49	21	..	..	..	..	78	55
Barrow Creek	133	172	61	54	57	68	..	..	251	294
Borrooloola	291	284	94	18	..	..	..	..	385	302
Brock's Creek	450	365	86	24	..	..	..	..	536	389
Charlotte Waters	205	252	33	34	70	58	177	192	485	536
Daly River	1,875	1,189	74	12	87	57	..	..	2,036	1,258
Darwin	1,101	986	420	260	323	304	..	..	1,844	1,550
Hermannsburg	4	1	27	23	112	129	1	5	144	158
Jay Creek .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	16	24	16	24
Katherine	56	45	56	39	16	12	3	6	131	102
Lake Nash .. .. .	..	..	26	3	32	18	..	..	58	21
Maranboy	141	110	11	10	..	..	..	..	152	120
North-west Patrol	617	738	49	32	..	..	..	..	666	770
Newcastle Waters	3	3	56	24	146	161	..	..	205	188
Pine Creek .. .. .	..	..	34	16	3	4	7	7	44	27
Rankine River .. .. .	..	..	45	22	24	39	..	..	69	61
South-west Patrol	243	153	51	35	18	16	..	..	312	204
Roper River	980	980	134	126	47	44	..	..	1,161	1,150
Timber Creek	821	601	271	133	..	..	..	..	1,092	734
Wave Hill	175	190	126	48	95	175	..	..	396	413
	7,338	6,333	1,876	1,030	1,085	1,213	246	286	10,545	8,862

CECIL COOK,
Chief Protector of Aborigines.

REPORT OF THE CURATOR OF BOTANIC GARDENS AND INSPECTOR OF AGRICULTURE.

BOTANIC GARDENS.

This year the regular staff employed has comprised one white man and two boys. Some unemployed men, who were given relief work, were made available for rough work.

Roads and paths have been kept in repair. A limited area in the centre of the gardens has been kept in improved condition, flower beds, &c., being maintained, but a great deal of the gardens has somewhat reverted. Fires have been kept out of the gardens by making firebreaks, and the gardens' fence has been repaired where necessary. White ants have done a great deal of damage to some of the trees. The difficulty experienced in the detection of these insects in a tree, until a fatal amount of damage has been done, makes any preventive measure often impossible until it is too late.

A number of young trees, shrubs, and other plants have been distributed during the year. The revenue from the sale of plants and fruits was approximately £55.

I was absent from the gardens on tour amongst settlers 60 days during the year.