



Rt. Hon. R.G. Menzies,  
Prime Minister.

Bear Sir,

As a fellow-citizen of Australia, of the Commonwealth electorate of L. Probs, I feel I must write this protest to you.

The scandal of the aborigines' status in Australia is something this country will take centuries to live down.

The parliamentary committee, sent to investigate the Warburton Ranga area, went there when the Warburton Range Mission was in recess, and, because few natives were in the area at that time, assumed the problems of malnutrition and starvation not to exist.

Having witnessed, on April 22nd, one of the most shocking motion pictures of my life, I feel compelled to protest against this obviously incorrect assumption as vehemently as I can. We saw children with bloated stomachs, not because of a plentiful supply, but because of a lack of it. We saw the body of a young man, who had died at the edge of a dry water-hole, unable to go further in his search for life-giving water. We saw a tribe trying to make a meal for 40 from one kangaroo and one rabbit which was the only game the men had been able to find in a 20-mile trek. We saw a child so feeble he was unable to brush the flies from his face. We saw natives with eye diseases, some even blind, seeking the refuge of the Mission. We saw a mother with her dying baby being helped to the Mission, and well.

And yet the Committee has the affrontery to say there is no problem? There is a great deal of evidence to contradict that statement. As Pastor Doug. Nicholls, himself an aborigine, and one who has taken up the battle for his people, says, "We have shown these people our way of life, then sent them off to rot, without food, without medical care and without pity." Something must be done.

We have taken their lands - indeed the best parts of the Warburton Ranga's area are still being taken to provide space for white men's businesses to make money, and for testing of diabolical weapons that should be banned anyway.

There is something wrong with a country that spends hundreds of millions of pounds on defence, and just doesn't care a fig for the fact that some of her people are in such wretched need. Of course, we aren't killing them - we're just letting them die, with the hearty blessing of our complacent disinterest.

This is a national question, and can't be solved but on the national level. That is why this letter is addressed to you. Immediate aid is needed, both to relieve the present situation, and to prevent a recurrence. It seems obvious that something such as a Department of Native Affairs, as suggested by Pastor Nicholls, would be a step in the right direction.

The aborigine has a right to citizenship. He is not an animal. He is a human being whose only crime is skin colouring. We claim to live in a Christian country, yet we still refuse to interest our selves in these people whom we have so bitterly wronged. It is up to us to lift the aborigine out of the gutter into which we have kicked him. Let us stop pushing him back

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into the desert. Let us stop pretending there is nothing wrong. Let us have some realistic statesmanship. If we really are Christians, we owe it to Christ. At any rate, we owe it to Australia.

Hoping and praying for early action,

Yours, most sincerely.

Alan S. Williams