

CITIZENSHIP FOR NATIVES

~~AGE~~ → 3 FEB 1947

Present Policy "Unchristian"

The Commonwealth Government was accused yesterday by the secretary of the Aboriginal Progress Association of Victoria (Mr. S. L. James) with having done little to help aborigines attain citizenship.

Speaking at Wesley P.S.A., Mr. James said aborigines should be given a share in the administration of their race, and have representatives in both State and Federal Parliaments. Some should be selected, educated, then sent out among their own people. Native inspectors should be appointed to visit outback areas.

Aborigines had received too much sympathy and not enough practical assistance. If they were taken into the confidence of white people and given the same benefits, it was almost certain they would make good. It was nonsense to say they were not amenable to the discipline of white society, and therefore should be left to their own devices. They had been expected to accomplish in a few years what white people themselves had not accomplished after many generations.

No man, Mr. James concluded, could support the present treatment of the aboriginals and remain a Christian.