

Sun 19th February 1948

Charges On Blacks' Treatment

ABORIGINES were leaving Lake Tyers station and refusing to return because they were terrified, Miss Cora Gilsean, aboriginal welfare expert, told a public meeting at Box Hill Town Hall last night.

Miss Gilsean said many aborigines had told her they would rather die than return to the station.

Urging a public inquiry into the treatment of aborigines in Victoria, Miss Gilsean said the Lake Tyers station was mal-administered.

She alleged that a girl of 17 had been flogged and was too frightened to return, preferring to be gaoled as a vagrant; aborigines were paid 3d. an hour for work; and fines were imposed for any trivial "offence" like being a few minutes late for work.

INQUIRY WANTED

MISS GILSEAN said she grew up among aborigines in Gippsland and frequently received appeals for help from natives all over the State.

Mrs. Blackburn, M.H.R., said the Federal Government should set up a new department of aboriginal affairs. She stressed the need for the Federal Government to assume a considerable degree of responsibility for the care of aborigines in Australia.

The meeting passed resolutions demanding a public inquiry to investigate the administration of aboriginal affairs in Victoria and urging the Federal Government to call a conference soon to draw up an all-Australia plan to ensure full human rights for aborigines.