

"Many Aborigines do not want to be absorbed"

Many Aborigines do not want to be assimilated, the superintendent of Aboriginal welfare, Mr H. J. Green, said yesterday.

But many of these Aborigines would be "perfectly happy" even if assimilated against their wishes, he said.

Mr Green was giving evidence before the N.S.W. Joint Parliamentary Committee on Aborigines' Welfare.

He made these points:

- He could, if he wished, give a case for the abolition of the Aborigines' Welfare Board, but preferred to keep an "open mind" on the subject.

- Aborigines were getting "a little bit tired" of being put under the microscope.

Mr Green told the committee that the problems facing many Aborigines were the same problems facing many underprivileged Europeans.

Finance alone could not solve the problem. Provision of housing was only one part of the program neces-

sary to bring about full assimilation.

Aborigines were getting a little tired of being put under the microscope, but there was a need for a small, expert research team to tour the State, interviewing board officers and Aborigines.

Mr Green said adult education could help Aboriginal parents realise the need for educating their children and could also end the "vicious circle"—which applied equally to many sec-

tions of the European community—of "what's good for me and my father is good enough for you."

More money was needed for Aboriginal welfare, but it need not necessarily go through the board.

The money must eventually be to the benefit of Aborigines.

European descent

Mr Green said he could, if he wished, put a case for the abolition of the board, but preferred to keep an open mind.

The board could be stripped of much "machinery" work—collecting rents, inspecting sullage pits and arranging housing—to allow it to "get on with the job" of providing social welfare.

The board was being forced into things it knew little about, such as education.

Mr Green said many people with Aboriginal blood, but of predominately European descent, should not be regarded as Aborigines.

To many people "Aboriginal" was a dirty word, conveying a man with a spear and boomerang or an underprivileged person living in a humpy.

Many Aborigines regarded those who had become assimilated as "bunnies." These people must be persuaded that the assimilated Aborigines were leading the right life.

Many people were trying to convince the Aborigines they must not forget they had lost their lands. This was being "forced down their throats," although several years ago they could not have cared less.

Mr Green said there was room for a sub-committee of elected Aborigines to advise the board.

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