

Aboriginal women record dissent

The National Council of Aboriginal and Island Women will demand the resignation of the Prime Minister, Mr McMahon, and his Cabinet when Parliament resumes next month.

The council made the decision to do so during its final conference session yesterday which ended three days of discussion at the Australian National University.

The council will demand also the resignation of the Minister for the Environment, Aborigines and the Arts, Mr Howson.

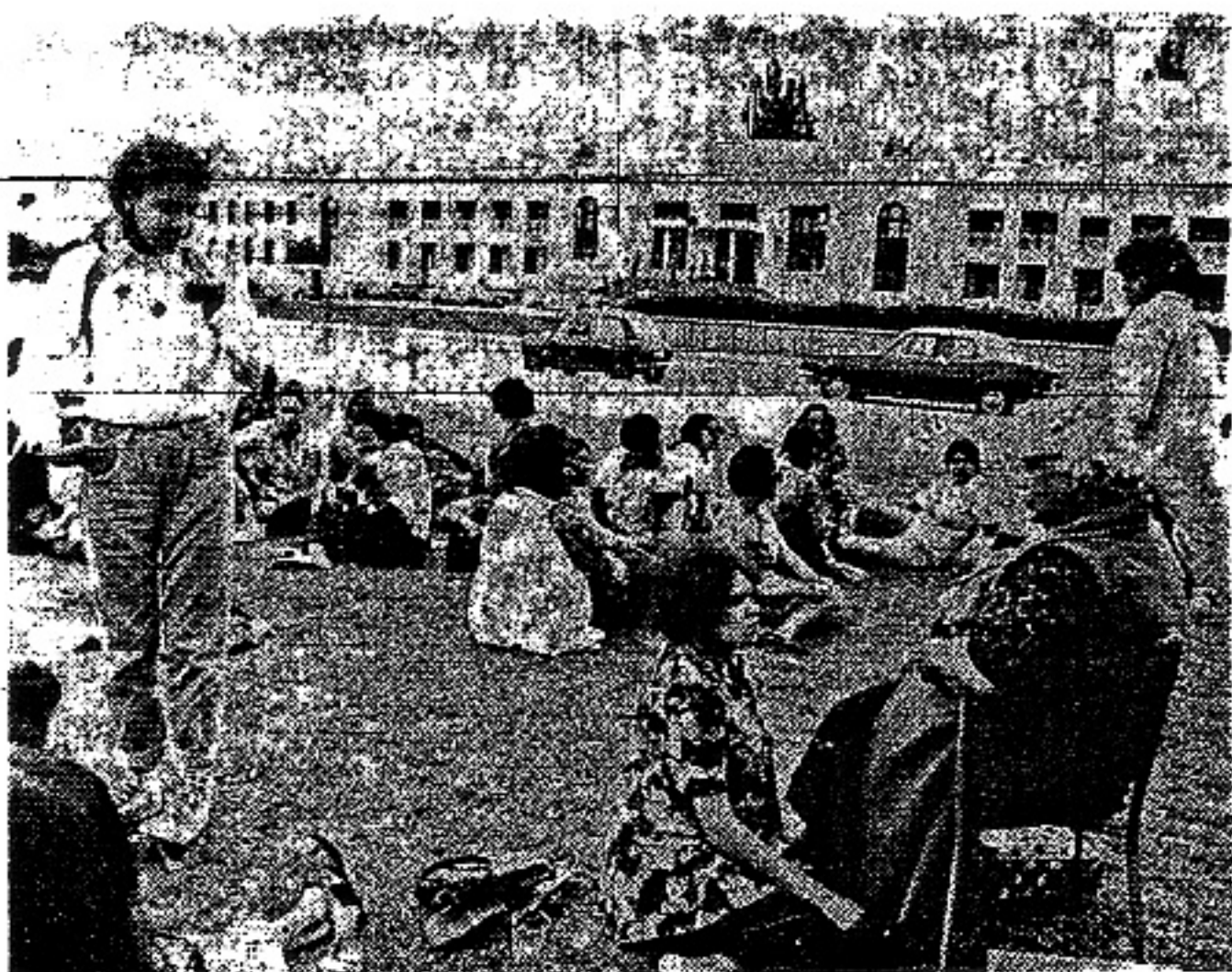
"The council plans to express its disappointment at the lack of sincerity with which the Federal Government implemented the mandate given it by the people of Australia in the 1967 referendum", the resolution said.

All States voted "yes" in 1967 on the two issues, to remove from the Constitution words which were thought to be discriminatory against Aborigines, and to make it possible for the Commonwealth to pass special laws for Aboriginal people in any State or territory and, second, to allow Aborigines to be counted in reckoning the population.

The council said it was particularly disappointed at token gestures regarding land rights in Mr McMahon's recent policy statement on Aborigines and that it was disgusted at Mr McMahon's incompetent, uninterested and unsympathetic handling of what should be treated as an important portfolio.

It will demand Mr Howson's resignation for what it claims was the insolent manner in which he treated the Aboriginal women's delegation which was invited to see him recently and for the denial of Aboriginal land rights.

It said Mr Howson



Aborigines gather in protest outside Parliament House yesterday.

lacked interest and knowledge of the Aboriginal people.

Spokesmen for Mr McMahon's office and Mr Howson's office were not available for comment yesterday.

Members of the Gurrindji tribe are expected to join the Aborigines' protest on the lawns opposite Parliament House next Thursday, a spokesman for the protesters, Mr C. Dixon, of Sydney, said yesterday.

Some of the Aborigines involved in protest in Brisbane also would arrive in Canberra later this week.

Many of the conference delegates joined the protesters outside Parliament House yesterday afternoon.

Mr Dixon said that these people offered solidarity to

their cause. The group would like to have as many Aborigines as possible at the site and they planned to set up a "tent city".

"Land rights involves all blacks", Mr Dixon said, "and we are all here to show that we are not going to be trodden on".

He said that two embassies in Canberra had offered financial and moral support to the group.

The Aborigines have said they plan to stay outside Parliament House indefinitely and Canberra police have mounted a 24-hour guard to watch them.

A Canberra police spokesman said yesterday that the guard would remain "until further notice".

The guard, one policeman with a portable radio is stationed at the front entrance to the House.

He was posted on Thursday after four young Aborigines set up an "Aboriginal Embassy" on the lawns outside the House.

The "embassy", which consisted of the four men sitting under a beach umbrella on Wednesday night, is now more established and three of the original group pitched three tents yesterday.

The three are: Mr Mike Anderson, 20, of Walgett, the vice-chairman of the NSW Aboriginal Lands Board; Mr Billy Craigie, 19, of Moree; and Mr Kevin Johnston, 21, of Cowra.

Hundreds of visitors who inspected Parliament House yesterday spoke with the men and heard their grievances.

Other reports. — Page 6