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Title:

Handwritten radio script regarding 'Australia's treatment of its aborigine peoples'.

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Good evening

RECORDED

Last week I promised you that
starting from tonight I would bring you
a series of conversations with people
who would tell you in their own words
of their problems. I am afraid that
my abilities as a recording engineer were
not equal to the occasion & the recording
for this week's broadcast was not up to
scratch - so we will have to postpone
the commencement of the new series of talks
until next week, by which time I
should think that I will be more
proficient.

Tonight I want to talk to you
about a ~~new~~ situation which, particu-
larly in the light of events of the past
week, should be exercising the minds of
us all.

We have seen how the Govt. of the
Union of S. Africa was condemned for
its policy of apartheid. Under this
policy the Bantu people who form the
majority of the coloured people in the
Union were ^{in many} denied access to facilities
available to Europeans, denied adequate
education, & relegated permanently to
a second class position in the community.

I could go on for some time describing the
 repressive policies of the S. African Govt.
 which make the statement of Dr. Verwoerd
 that apartheid is a policy of good neighbourliness
 appear an exercise in the techniques of
 Dr. Goebbels - if you say the opposite of
 the truth often enough and loud enough
 you will begin to be believed.

But enough of S. Africa. The heartening
 thing is that the majority of Commonwealth
 Prime Ministers rightly took the stand
 that policies of this kind are incompatible
 with the principles on which the Common-
 wealth was founded. Mr. Menzies expresses
 concern for the fact that domestic policies
 of member nations should be scrutinised.
 Well he's right. For should Australia's
 treatment of its aborigine peoples be
 questioned overseas we have much to
 answer for.

What is the position of these poor
 Australians. The Commonwealth Govt.
 has no power to legislate for them except in
 its territories. In the northern
 territory although the situation has improved
 it remains most unsatisfactory. There are
 many cases in outlying areas where aborigine
 people are used for work under conditions
 of severe exploitation.

Within the States, each State can pass laws with regard to aborigines. Every State except Tasmania has such laws - in Tasmania the aborigine people were shockingly massacred - so it has no aborigine problem.

Numbers of the State laws regarding aborigines place them under severe disabilities - in the ~~name~~ guise of protecting them.

For instance, in South Australia, all people of aborigine descent, no matter how remote - it could be as little as one/32nd part aborigine - are subject to "protection" unless they obtain a special ~~and~~ exemption certificate - it is like an identity card with a passport photo on it. While intermarriage with aborigines is not unlawful - it is unlawful for an exempt aborigine man or a European to associate with an unexempt aborigine woman.

Non exempt aborigines are subject to the directions of the protector, and all aborigine children are legally in the custody of the protector. If an ordinary citizen neglects his children that neglect must be proved in a Court if the child is to be removed from the custody of its parents - aborigine children can be removed without proving anything.

No adequate work or training on a large scale has been provided for our aboriginal or part-aboriginal population.

In relation to social service payments non-exempt aborigines cannot get them directly. The Aborigines Department gets the payment, and hands out what it thinks is appropriate to the needs of the person concerned. Although professedly wanting to train aboriginal people to take their place as normal citizens in the general community, ~~the board~~ does not let many of them handle their own affairs.

Even worse situations exist in some other States. At Easter this year a Federal conference of aboriginal advancement associations is due to examine the policies and practice of all Australian States, and to endeavour to concert action to improve the position of aborigines throughout Australia. There is already overseas interest in these matters.

It is small wonder if Mr. Menzies is concerned. But people of goodwill & principle in Australia should be delighted - if overseas interest in Australia's policy on aborigines is needed to show Australia that giving aborigines a fair deal - ~~is~~ welcome that overseas interest. Goodwill