



Archived at the Flinders Academic Commons:
<http://hdl.handle.net/2328/27231>

This is a scan of a document number DUN/Speeches/2733
in the Dunstan Collection, Special Collections, Flinders University Library.
<http://www.flinders.edu.au/library/info/collections/special/dunstan/>

Title:

Speech notes at the National Aborigines Day ceremony at Elder Park

Please acknowledge the source as:
Dunstan Collection, Flinders University Library.
Identifier: DUN/Speeches/2733

© Copyright Estate Donald Allan Dunstan



STATEMENT

from the Premier

43
2733

Date.....
July 11, 1975.
Embargo.....

State Administration Centre,
Victoria Square, Adelaide,
South Australia 5001
228 4811

SPEECH NOTES AT THE NATIONAL ABORIGINES DAY CEREMONY AT ELDER PARK.

I was indeed pleased to be invited to speak at this National Aborigines Day function.

As most of you are aware, my Government has always been concerned with Aboriginal problems, determined to make up as far as possible for decades of injustice, intolerance and neglect. When we first came to office we set out to implement, and I believe with considerable success, a policy of equality, equal opportunity and self determination for our Aboriginal people.

Although Aboriginal Affairs is now almost wholly a Federal jurisdiction, I would like to mention very briefly some aspects in which this State has a continuing interest.

Our Prohibition of Discrimination Act was pioneering legislation and a model for the other States.

South Australia also led Australia in the granting of land rights to Aborigines with the setting up of the Aboriginal Lands Trust - an Aboriginal body - which is also a model for the other States.

In addition to numerous unoccupied reserves which have been transferred, the Lands Trust has received freehold title to some of the larger occupied reserves. These have been leased back on a long term basis to the Aboriginal Councils.

The Councils assume full control in running the reserves as soon as they are able and willing to do so. Point Pearce, Point McLeay and Gerard Reserves are already success stories, and more will follow.

I think we can also claim considerable success in education. Our programme of providing pre-school education began in 1971 and now every Aboriginal school has a pre-school designed to meet the needs of Aboriginal children. Some of these are run, under supervision, by Aborigines. The Department now employs more than 80 Aboriginal teacher aides - not all in Aboriginal schools.

There are now four Aborigines employed as teachers at tribal schools in the North West.

All these and other aspects of the programme will be expanded as rapidly as resources permit, and here it is not only a question of money, but of training and staffing as well. The Department has just engaged a former principal of Adelaide Teachers College to advise on the best methods of training Aborigines, especially tribal Aborigines to become teachers.

Again, there have been great advances in Aboriginal housing, though much more remains to be done.

When the South Australian Housing Trust took over the administration of Aboriginal housing just over two years ago there were 198 houses occupied throughout the State.

Since then, a further 302 have been purchased or erected, and there are 24 now being built either in the country or being manufactured as transportable homes for location in the country. It is anticipated that another 120 will be bought or built this financial year.

A most gratifying feature of the housing programme is the extent of Aboriginal involvement, which has been more rapid in South Australia than in most States.

There is now an Aboriginal Housing Policy Committee which makes decisions concerning the particular needs of Aborigines. In addition, there are five Aboriginal Housing Management Committees which make decisions concerning the eligibility of tenants, approval of transfers and other decisions which need special knowledge of Aboriginal requirements. The Trust also employs a number of Aborigines in its housing management unit.

There has been excellent co-operation between the Trust and the various committees.

Now, in these areas I've spoken about there has been a good deal of Aboriginal involvement. And, as I've said, this is most gratifying, but it is still not enough.

There is so much more to be done to ensure that the proper needs of Aborigines are met, that they do have equal opportunity and a community acceptance of them as human beings and fellow Australians.

With the best will in the world, and even if sufficient money was available, it can't be done properly by Governments alone.

We need more assumption of responsibility by those Australians who are able to cope with the strains and stresses of our society, those who are articulate and concerned, who understand the problems of their own people and are therefore equipped to provide leadership.

There must be more co-operation between black and white and a genuine desire for the improvements we want to make. There must be developed mutual tolerance and understanding. Much as we deplore the past, it can't be undone. Continuing hate and bitterness can only be counter-productive.

It is the present and the future that count now.

If we are to achieve our objectives then it is not only desirable, but absolutely essential that more and more Aborigines become involved.



STATEMENT

from the Premier

Date.....
July 11, 1975.
Embargo.....

State Administration Centre,
Victoria Square, Adelaide,
South Australia 5001
228 4811

SPEECH NOTES AT THE NATIONAL ABORIGINES DAY CEREMONY AT ELDER PARK.

I was indeed pleased to be invited to speak at this National Aborigines Day function.

As most of you are aware, my Government has always been concerned with Aboriginal problems, determined to make up as far as possible for decades of injustice, intolerance and neglect. When we first came to office we set out to implement, and I believe with considerable success, a policy of equality, equal opportunity and self determination for our Aboriginal people.

Although Aboriginal Affairs is now almost wholly a Federal jurisdiction, I would like to mention very briefly some aspects in which this State has a continuing interest.

Our Prohibition of Discrimination Act was pioneering legislation and a model for the other States.

South Australia also led Australia in the granting of land rights to Aborigines with the setting up of the Aboriginal Lands Trust - an Aboriginal body - which is also a model for the other States.

In addition to numerous unoccupied reserves which have been transferred, the Lands Trust has received freehold title to some of the larger occupied reserves. These have been leased back on a long term basis to the Aboriginal Councils.

The Councils assume full control in running the reserves as soon as they are able and willing to do so. Point Pearce, Point McLeay and Gerard Reserves are already success stories, and more will follow.

I think we can also claim considerable success in education. Our programme of providing pre-school education began in 1971 and now every Aboriginal school has a pre-school designed to meet the needs of Aboriginal children. Some of these are run, under supervision, by Aborigines. The Department now employs more than 80 Aboriginal teacher aides - not all in Aboriginal schools.

There are now four Aborigines employed as teachers at tribal schools in the North West.

All these and other aspects of the programme will be expanded as rapidly as resources permit, and here it is not only a question of money, but of training and staffing as well. The Department has just engaged a former principal of Adelaide Teachers College to advise on the best methods of training Aborigines, especially tribal Aborigines to become teachers.

Again, there have been great advances in Aboriginal housing, though much more remains to be done.

When the South Australian Housing Trust took over the administration of Aboriginal housing just over two years ago there were 198 houses occupied throughout the State.

Since then, a further 302 have been purchased or erected, and there are 24 now being built either in the country or being manufactured as transportable homes for location in the country. It is anticipated that another 120 will be bought or built this financial year.

A most gratifying feature of the housing programme is the extent of Aboriginal involvement, which has been more rapid in South Australia than in most States.

There is now an Aboriginal Housing Policy Committee which makes decisions concerning the particular needs of Aborigines. In addition, there are five Aboriginal Housing Management Committees which make decisions concerning the eligibility of tenants, approval of transfers and other decisions which need special knowledge of Aboriginal requirements. The Trust also employs a number of Aborigines in its housing management unit.

There has been excellent co-operation between the Trust and the various committees.

Now, in these areas I've spoken about there has been a good deal of Aboriginal involvement. And, as I've said, this is most gratifying, but it is still not enough.

There is so much more to be done to ensure that the proper needs of Aborigines are met, that they do have equal opportunity and a community acceptance of them as human beings and fellow Australians.

With the best will in the world, and even if sufficient money was available, it can't be done properly by Governments alone.

We need more assumption of responsibility by those Australians who are able to cope with the strains and stresses of our society, those who are articulate and concerned, who understand the problems of their own people and are therefore equipped to provide leadership.

There must be more co-operation between black and white and a genuine desire for the improvements we want to make. There must be developed mutual tolerance and understanding. Much as we deplore the past, it can't be undone. Continuing hate and bitterness can only be counter-productive.

It is the present and the future that count now.

If we are to achieve our objectives then it is not only desirable, but absolutely essential that more and more Aborigines become involved.