History of the Land Rights Struggle in Queensland

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The struggle for Land Rights for the Aborigines of Queensland may appear to be a recent phenomenon, but its origins go right back to the first attacks against the white invaders, who were very quickly recognized as a danger to the indigenous peoples.

The Dutch navigator, Captain Willem Janz, arrived in the Gulf of Carpentaria and landed near Mapoon in 1609. He was driven off with the loss of nine men.(1) On 16th July, 1799, Matthew Flinders landed on the southern point of Bribie Island. “There was a party of natives on the point and our communication was at first friendly,” wrote Flinders, “but after receiving presents, they made an attack and one of them was wounded by our fire”.(2) Flinders named that place Skirmish Point.

In fact, practically every first intrusion by white men, whether explorers or squatters, was contested by Aborigines. A reading of white explorers’ records of their journeyings clearly reveals this. Most of those attacks must be interpreted as the genesis of the Land Rights struggle, for the Aborigines were fighting to retain their tribal lands from a hostile enemy.

Tribal areas had exact boundaries and even Blacks from neighbouring tribes had to ask permission to cross tribal boundaries. This was understood by early settlers like the Petries, and has been confirmed by Justice Woodward in his Report on Land Rights.(3)

In the south, where Aborigines had appeared to accept the white man’s presence, their spirit of rebellion still lived. One of the earliest protests by Aborigines was on Stradbroke Island in 1830, when a white man who had fired at and wounded an Aborigine was later killed by them.(4)

When the convicts were removed from Stradbroke to the mainland, the Settlement was handed over to the Moravian missionaries who taught the Aborigines to pray each day for “daily bread”, though white bread only appeared on the missionaries’ table. One day, Aborigines refused to pray, saying, “Blackfellow he no more pray ’im daily bread...You white fellow missionary go away. You bin plenty gammon blackfellow!” Maybe that was the first strike by Aborigines in Queensland!(5)

Tom Welsby reports that on the death of two Aborigines who had been given “brass plates” for saving survivors of the wrecked “Sovereign” in 1847, “probate was never taken out in the estates of either Nuggin or Toompani, for they held no title deeds of land on Moreton or Stradbroke where for centuries past their progenitors had held sway. All owned the island in equal proportions. It was theirs to roam over at will, to live in, and use as they liked....”(6)
An Aborigine named Dundalli who was hanged on 5th January 1885 in Queen Street, near where the present G.P.O. is, called from the scaffold to his wife and family to avenge his death. History reports "a great gathering of the Ninghi Ninghi Tribe, who swore revenge on whites generally, and on those blacks who had assisted in Dundalli's capture in particular". There were many other individual blacks around Brisbane who were brave and daring in attacking the white invader by various means and many suffered the white man's wrath.(7)

Cape York Peninsula was probably more hotly contested than any other area in Queensland, as can be seen from the records of the journeys of explorers Leichhardt (1842) and Gregory (1855-56). And Edmund Kennedy and most of his party were killed by Aborigines in 1848 near the tip of Cape York.

Rowley has described how between 1864 and 1875, the Aborigines of Cape York Peninsula had waged a guerrilla war for their land over a period of seven years, at the cost of hundreds of lives.(8)

Since then there has always been spontaneous and largely individual rebellions against injustices, violence and oppression and for elementary human rights, but it was not possible for Aborigines to form any coherent or lasting organisations through which they could voice their needs. This was mainly due to the notorious Queensland Acts, the most repressive legislation in the whole of Australia, and now well known as such.

But it was also due to the intensive efforts of the missionaries to christianise the remnants of the defeated tribes. They did this by dividing children from their parents, keeping the former in dormitories under 24-hour white supervision to prevent the inculcation in the young of Aboriginal culture and tribal lore.(9) British imperialism was adept at subjugation of native peoples and well knew that language is the repository of a people's cultural heritage. Destroy language and you kill identity, and hence struggle. Missionaries were conscious or unconscious vehicles for promotion of this policy.

In fact, there does not appear to have been many, if any, conscious demands by Aborigines for land rights until around the late 1950's when renewed robbery of the last remaining reserve lands became rampant.

However, small groups of sympathetic white people had tried to raise the consciousness of the dominant majority and its governments on the matter of land and other rights for indigenous people. Several books and pamphlets from the 1940's on did advocate land rights for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in Queensland.

A long-range program appeared in the appendix to a book by Gerald Peel, M.A. in 1947, calling for a "declaration by the government of the area (Daru included) as an autonomous region within the Commonwealth, with sovereign internal rights for its people, including the right to secede."(10)

Around the late 1950's two trade union organisers, one from the Building Workers' Industrial Union and another from the Amalgamated Engineering Union, visited Weipa and Thursday Island to check on the proposal to develop rich bauxite fields on the Cape York Peninsula. In their report, these men said that "unless public opinion can alter it, both church and coloured people will have to bow to the dictates of monopoly, or be pushed into the sea." Their statement was almost prophetic as regards the Weipa and Mapoon people.(11)

In 1958 a book by five academics was published by the Western Suburbs United Nations Association of Brisbane, and advocated, among other things, the "transfer of ownership of the present Reserves and Settlements from the Government to the Aborigines and Islanders".(12) One result of this work, was the birth of the Queensland Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Islanders (QCAATI) which later affiliated with the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (FCAATSI), the first and still the only national Aboriginal organisation to withstand the test of time.

The first political party to propose of program for Aboriginal Advancement in Australia was the Communist Party. Its earliest published programs were presented in T. Wright's pamphlet "New Deal for Aborigines" in 1944 and Gerald Peel's work
Above mentioned. A further program, compiled in co-operation with many Aborigines and Aboriginal organisations, appeared in 1967. All called for land rights.(13)

One of the first articulate demands by Aborigines for Land rights in Queensland was embodied in a “Declaration of Rights of the Queensland Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders; being the decisions of the first Conference of the Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders Advancement League, Cairns, North Queensland, 29-31 July, 1960”.

This Conference set out a comprehensive list of demands and needs, one of the most important of which was that “the people need the Islands, Settlements and Mission areas to be made their absolute property, including minerals, timber, etc. on them”. The Conference also demanded the unrestricted right of movement to and from Reserves, self-government of Islands, Settlements and Missions; compensation and royalties for minerals taken from lands already annexed and the right of individuals to own and control land.

This Declaration of Rights was the Aborigines desperate response to the signing - by the Queensland Government of the Commonwealth Aluminium Pty. Ltd. Agreement Act of 1957, which said not one word about Aborigines, their rights to their Reserves, nor did it reserve to them even the right to live in areas formerly occupied by them. It was as if they did not exist.

The Commonwealth Aluminium Pty. Ltd. (Comalco) had no obligation whatsoever under this Act to provide for anything at all for the original inhabitants of Weipa and Mapoon Reserves.

All the latter could look forward to was the assurance of the then Minister in charge of Aboriginal Affairs (Dr. Noble) that “the employable will be employed...the men will be given the right to work.”(14)

The Presbyterian Church argued for compensation for the Aborigines, but all they got was a promise of £150,000 ($300,000), which was eventually used to build a number of aluminium cottages without internal amenities such as kitchen sinks.(15)

This Act led to the excision by the Queensland Government of 1,485,000 acres out of a total of 1,600,000 acres of Reserve land on the Cape, for an initial royalty of five cents a ton of bauxite and land rent of £2 ($4) a square mile to be paid into consolidated revenue.(16)

It took a lot of political pressure to get even an area of 2,250 acres for the Weipa Aborigines (17) and this has since been reduced to 332 acres with “permissive grazing rights” to certain areas not immediately needed by Comalco.(18)

Many Mapoon people stubbornly refused to leave their Mission for several years until finally, on the night of November 15, 1963, they were ruthlessly and forcibly removed to Bamaga by armed police, and their houses and belongings burnt. November 15 - “a day to remember” they say. (19)

Mapoon Mission lands of 1,353,000 acres were thus confiscated and the name of their Mission wiped from the list of Reserves published annually by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. Mapoon was first established in 1896 by the Moravian missionaries.

Comalco now became the owner of their homelands for 84 years with the option of renewal of its lease for a further 21 years.(20)

The Mapoon people have refused to give up the fight for their homeland. To appease them the Government has allowed them to visit “Old Mapoon” for holidays, and has called their new “home” at Bamaga, “New Mapoon”.(20a) However, in 1974 some of them, led by two elders, Mrs. Jean Jimmy and Jerry Hudson who gave up his job as head stockman for the Department at Weipa, returned to Old Mapoon and began to rebuild their homes and gardens.(21)

Their request for Commonwealth aid to regain their land was rebuffed by the Whitlam Government who were not prepared to forcibly resume their land, thus challenging the Queensland Government, even though the Commonwealth does have power to do this, and has actually done it in time of war.

However, a grant of $5,000 was made for the people to buy a truck to fetch supplies from Weipa, and it was suggested that they “have a town plan drawn up, so that there would be no delay in the progress of the
community once title was granted." Senator Cavanagh, then Federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, told them he was "optimistic that Queensland Aboriginals and Islanders would in the near future be granted title to their lands....even though the matter might have to go eventually to the High Court to see justice done."(22) The Senator omitted to advise them how many long years that might take.

A little over twelve months later, the Whitlam Government was no more.

Premier Bjelke-Petersen's retort to Senator Cavanagh's visit to the Mapoon people was typical:

"My information on the so-called Weipa conference conveys that it is a determined attempt by radical people in North Queensland, as a result of manipulation by Commonwealth Department of Aboriginal Affairs' officers and others, to create distrust and unrest among former residents of Mapoon."(23) He went on to fill two and a half pages of Hansard with a vitriolic attack on the Australian Government and quoted from an alleged telegram he'd received from "Aborigines" bitterly attacking Senator Cavanagh. Some of the words of that telegram, viz. "...you are just as bad as your braggadocio false promises and time wasting tactics", do not appear to be those likely to be composed by any Aborigine. It could be argued that that telegram was "organised" by some white person for some specific purpose. Nevertheless, when one reads Cavanagh's airy promises, there seems little doubt that criticism was warranted.

Land Rights and Deeds of Grant

To digress a little, let's contrast the Government's actions on Weipa and Mapoon with its attitudes towards other Australians.

Ever since the first European invasion, the invaders' governments have rewarded their friends with Deeds of Grant of chosen Crown Land. These days such Deeds of Grant usually entail conditions that set amounts of money be spent each year on "developing" such lands.

Queensland as a State, until 1957 when the Gair Labor Government was defeated, had retained most of its land as Crown Land. This was perhaps a legacy from the halcyon days of the first Labor Governments in this State. The election of a Liberal Party-Country Party Government in 1957 changed all that.

At December 1957 only 5.89 of the State was freehold land and 0.58 per cent was in the process of being freeholded; while 84.84 per cent was leased under the Land and Mining Acts.

By December 31, 1972, 6.61 per cent had been freeholded, 8.04 per cent was held under various freeholding tenures and 79.69 per cent was leased.(24)

The new Coalition Government greatly liberalised freeholding conditions and also increased the maximum area which could be held under grazing selection tenure to 60,000 acres. The largest area freeholded up to 31 August, 1973 was for 59,201 acres situated near Cooktown and in respect of which a Deed of Grant was issued to Lakeland Downs Limited in December, 1971.(25)

It was also revealed in Parliament on the same day that the owner of Lakeland Downs, Mr. C. J. Foyster (reputed to be a millionaire), also held Special Lease No. 33858, for 64,710 acres; that a Japanese company held a registered mortgage over that lease, and that Mr. Foyster was advertising to sell part of his interest - reportedly to "Japanese interests".(26)

On 19 November, 1974, the Courier-Mail reported that the North Queensland Pastoral Company, Lakeland Downs Limited was ordered to be wound up by the Supreme Court, because the company "was unable to pay its debts".

Recently Lakeland Downs was reportedly occupied by Vietnamese refugees, who were said to have abandoned it because they could not make a go of it.

In view of the Government's intransigence in relation to Aboriginal Land Rights for Mapoon, this attitude towards land ownership by other people and interests is particularly significant. The word "racism" comes to mind, but that's a dirty word according to Queensland's Premier.

Similar policies have applied since 1965 as since that date there has been no legislative bar to the holding of land by non-resident companies or individuals, either freehold or leasehold, according to the relevant Minister.(27)
The unease of many ordinary Queenslanders regarding the Iwasaki project at Yeppoon and the reported buying up of Queensland land by Chinese from Hong Kong, Yanks from U.S.A., etc. and the unchecked entry into Australia of purported "refugees" from Vietnam who arrive with gold and diamonds, has finally penetrated the National Party. Their Executive now wants the State Government to establish a register of land owned or leased by alien corporations or individuals. (28)

In contrast to this soft line of the Government towards foreign ownership of Queensland is its parsimonious attitude towards Aboriginal Reserves, and its absolute refusal to even concede prior ownership by the original people of this State, or offer compensation of any kind for reserve lands being stolen.

A case in point is Mona Mona Mission. Of 4,518 acres, it was established in 1913 by the Seventh Day Adventist Church on Crown Land north-west of Cairns on the Atherton Tableland. It was closed in December 1962 to make way for the Flaggy Creek Water Conservation Scheme, and Aborigines demanded compensation for loss of their homeland and that the Government should provide homes for them. (29)

It was revealed in 1968 that in the year 1960 the Trans-Tasman Union Conference of the Seventh Day Adventist Church had indicated to the Government a wish to withdraw from material administration of the Reserve, but had agreed to maintain the Mission until December 31, 1962. (30) No doubt this Church, like others, was suffering a drop in donations to its Mission programs, and the grants by the State government were not sufficient to cover this gap.

Be that as it may, a re-settlement program was developed whereby former mission residents would be "assisted" to obtain suitable accommodation and employment in North Queensland, or be transferred to other Aboriginal communities.

It is noticeable that exemptions from the Act in the year ending June 1962 were only 146 for the whole Aboriginal population of 26,000 odd living under the Act, yet at least 43 of those 146 came from Mona Mona Mission which had a population of only 285 altogether. Obviously, mission residents were being "assisted" rather heavily to leave the Mission before its closure. (31)

The Church received $46,000 compensation from the Government to "establish a full-time Pastor/Welfare Officer in Kuranda" where the Church's headquarters were. This sum was also to meet the cost of removing housing from Mona Mona to 16 "Special Lease" allotments in four or five isolated areas. (32)

Once the Mission was closed and Aborigines removed, the Government washed its hands of any responsibility for their welfare. The State Member for the area, Mr. Eddie Wallis-Smith, continually raised the matter of a water supply for some of these Aborigines who were living in huts at Mantaka, Kowrowa and Koah for several years until 1971, it was reported that the local Shire Council was finally preparing some plans to improve conditions for the people. (33)

In 1968, the Flaggy Creek Scheme was postponed and the Government decided to auction a 5-year leasehold of 4,000 acres. Mona Mona people requested they be allowed to return to their homeland, but the Government refused. Aborigines then organised to bid for the land. They went among the white people at the auction, advising them it was their land which they wanted back and asking the whites not to bid against them. In this way, they secured the lease at a reasonable rental. (34)

The Aborigines then formed a co-operative and applied to the Australian Government for a grant of $25,000 to help them establish farming, artifact and tourist facilities. After over a year's delay, they were granted a mere $5,000. They had themselves saved $1,600 for the venture from their meagre earnings. (35)

It is of interest to note that the Aboriginal Department's Annual Reports do not mention the reason for closure of Mona Mona Mission, nor record the Aborigines' efforts in 1968 to regain their land and develop it.

The Government's attitude to Aboriginal ownership of their land was again instanced when the Yarrabah Aboriginal people applied for a Deed of Grant of their Reserve lands, their application in the prescribed form having been forwarded to the State Land Commission, the normal authority
dealing with Land Grants. Their application was merely handed to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs which conveniently buried it. (36)

Again in 1965, Lockhart River Aborigines appealed through the Cairns Aborigines and Islanders Advancement League "to the conscience of all fair-minded Australians...to support our demands to prevent any further alienation of Aborigine land or transmigration of Aborigine communities to Bamaga". They further demanded a "full public inquiry into the administration of Native Affairs in Queensland". This appeal followed a two-year campaign by the Queensland Government to "persuade" Aborigines at Lockhart River to "leave our homelands for the doubtful blessings of Bamaga", as the Aborigines put it. (37)

The people of Lockhart River have mostly all gone now either to Iron Range or Bamaga. Like other areas on the Cape, Lockhart River Reserve is reputed to be rich in minerals, gold and monazite being mentioned, among others.

The Palm Island group of about 9 islands, 26 miles east of Townsville, has been an Aboriginal reserve since 1918. Originally used as a place of exile or punishment for Aboriginal and Islander offenders against the Acts, this beautiful area has now become part of the City of Townsville. This occurred following reports of opening up the islands to tourist interests. (38)

The Islands' Community Chairman, the late Tom Geia, made urgent appeals for better facilities for his people at a Conference at Queensland University in January 1972. He died later that year in mysterious circumstances. (39)

The specific event which sparked off the transfer to Townsville City was a petition on which Aborigines claimed their signatures had been forged. It asked for Government intervention in the Islands' control. It was promptly acted on by Government dismissing the Community Council and ordering new elections which returned only one of the former Council. This new Council immediately agreed to transfer the Reserve to the Townsville City Council.

While the old Council had been pressing for full self-management of their Island, it is interesting to hear that members of the new Council recently raised the same demand. (40) In view of the repeated talk about the tourist potential of Palm Island, one wonders what the reason was for the Reserve being reduced by 53 acres between 1971 and 1972? N.Q. Message Stick of February 1977 also reports the sale of Orpheus Island in the Group.

The rising demand for land rights and compensation has sent Premier Joh and his Ministers into hysterical opposition. The inauguration of the North Queensland Land Council and their request for Commonwealth finance, resulted in the Premier's personal request to Prime Minister Fraser not to fund the Council. A leaked letter to Mr. Fraser states: "I note the assurance given in your letter of 9th December that your Government will not meet any request from the proposal Council for assistance." (41)

The Conference setting up the N.Q. Council received a claim for Wentworth Station from the Karawa Tribe of Doomadgee Mission. (42) That this demand for land rights was a long-standing one is demonstrated by a letter received in November 1970 by the Queensland Council (QCAATI) from a resident of Doomadgee who wrote, in part: "We would like a little more acres of land for our stock," and then, "We do hope one day we will have the right to own our rightful land". (43)

Fifty members of the Karawa Tribe had signed a land claim sent to the Aboriginal Land Fund Commission in Canberra, and stating they had a deposit of $5,000 owned them from a cattle company for "service rendered". Wentworth Station owner had agreed to sell to them. (44)

The Premier stated in February, 1977: "We don't want the (Land Fund) Commission used to dodge the Constitution so Federal enclaves can be set up in this State." So, beware anyone who wants to help Aborigines regain some of their land through the Land Fund Commission!

However, the Commission pursued its objective and purchased a freehold block near Cardwell for a group of Aborigines and was negotiating the purchase of two leases adjoining. It was also negotiating the
transfer of a lease of a pastoral property on Cape York for the Aurukun people threatened with seizure of their Reserve for a mining project.

When the State Government heard this, a letter was sent to the Prime Minister by the Premier, stating: "My Government’s policies in regard to the care and welfare of its Aboriginal and Islander population have been made clear, and are specifically opposed to the permanent development of areas by Aborigines or Aboriginal groups in isolation. My immediate concern is that the recent land purchases by the Aboriginal Land Fund Commission are in direct conflict with state policies...." (46) The State Government could do nothing about the purchased land, but blocked the proposed leases with the statement that: "the Government had alerted lands offices to check for people buying land on behalf of the commission then slipping the land to blacks". (47)

It may appear contradictory to people reading Director Pat Killoran’s statement that "Aboriginal people of Queensland are not restricted in any way in ownership of land. There are many who own and hold title to freehold properties, perpetual town leases and special leases as normal members of the general community". (48)

It is well to remember the State Government's policy is assimilation. (49) In the Aboriginal view this means dispersing them in among the white community, and breeding out the colour - a refined form of genocide. And this explains the Government’s fanatical opposition to giving land to Aboriginal tribes or groups. It is also held by some that the new 4-man Commission set up in 1977 to advise the Government, has the purpose of declaring Aboriginal Reserves “open towns” and their lands therefore open to developers as happens in all other towns. This could bring new millions to Government and land sharks’ coffers and end in deprivation of Aborigines chances to own their Reserves and Settlements or even obtain the best blocks of land on them.

The latest in the long list of demands for ownership of Reserves by Aborigines living on them are probably those of Mornington Island and Aurukun. Both are under control of the Presbyterian Board of Millions as were Mapoon and Weipa.

A letter signed by Senator Neville Bonner as President of O.P.A.L. was distributed at the 1971 FCAATSI Conference and supported there by Rev. Jim Sweet (Presbyterian Board of Missions). It stated that "the Board of OPAL emphatically affirms and supports the claim to Aboriginal Land Rights and delcares that the Aboriginal people have a right to secure tenure and ownership of tribal lands and reserves now occupied or set aside and that this right should not be subject to encroachment under Mining Regulations, except with the consent of the Aboriginal people concerned and with provision for adequate royalties or compensation; for the land to revert to its former ownership on cessation of mining operations and to be properly rehabilitated." (50)

An Aboriginal deputation later presented an 800-signature petition to the then Federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs (Gordon Bryant) stressing the overall concern for land rights of the communities of Mornington Island and Aurukun. (51)

This petition called for the introduction of legislation to provide for Corporate Aboriginal title to all the Aboriginal Reserves; prospecting and mineral rights to corporate Aboriginal groups; purchase of suitable pastoral properties on non-reserved lands with ownership rights in Aboriginal hands and compensation for loss of "all other parts of the continent". It also called for establishment of a national trust fund, under Aborigines’ control, in addition to normal government assistance. (52)

A second delegation of four Aboriginal officers of Community Councils from Mornington Island and Aurukun communities arrived in Brisbane on 18th September, 1974 with two Message Sticks seeking land rights, one for the Premier and the other for the Prime Minister. (53)

The leader of the delegation, Mr. Gavenor, Chairman of the Mornington Island Community Council, later said that after waiting three days, the group had finally seen Mr. Bjelke-Petersen for “two or three minutes” outside Parliament House, when they had given him the Message Stick. Prime Minister Gough Whitlam received them in Canberra and told them the
Australian Government wanted to be sure the laws it passed on with land rights in Queensland would survive any court challenge. (54)

Unfortunately before the Whitlam Government got around to considering such land rights laws for Queensland, the Government was sacked by Kerr.

Aurukun Mission began in 1904, yet it was only in 1957 that the last of the tribal people were finally persuaded to come in to the Mission. In recent times some of them have followed the lead of Northern territory Blacks in returning to their tribal areas and setting up outstations there. (55)

They are a proud and independent people and it was three of their women who were the first Aborigines in Queensland to write story books in their own language - Wik-Munkan - and the first Aboriginal women in Queensland to do so. (56)

The Presbyterian Church has fully supported the people in their demand for full consultation before any action is taken to mine their land. (57)

However, in spite of this, the State Government resorted to “rush tactics” in the dying days before Parliament rose for the Christmas recess in 1975. In three days ending on 12th December, the Aurukun Associates Agreement Act 1975 was passed and proclaimed, despite opposition from the Aurukun people, the Church Mission authorities and the Labor Party Opposition. (58) This Act is a most unjust document and an attack on the Aurukun people’s rights. Their wishes have not only been ignored, their power has been usurped by the State Government through its Director, Pat Killoran, who as trustee agreed to an Act which deprives the people of even the right to walk across their land without permission from the mineral company. (59)

The Aurukun people accused Mr. Killoran of breaching his trust and won a Supreme Court case on this, but Killoran appealed to the Privy Council and the people were defeated, being levied $40,000 costs also.

CONCLUSION

So the struggle goes on. It needs much more support from the white community, especially from the organised working class. But deep-seated racist attitudes, mostly unadmitted by the white majority, greatly weaken the Aborigines’ struggle. Often racism is disguised by a veneer of paternalism. Sympathetic whites need to analyse their outlook and actions and to study the Aborigines’ struggles from the Aborigines’ point of view.

To this end, this article is concluded with mention of a very important resolution of the Senate on 20th February, 1975. It was moved by Senator Bonner and seconded by Senator Withers and after debate was carried. It is as follows:

“That the Senate accepts the fact that the indigenous people of Australia, now known as Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, were in possession of this entire nation prior to the 1788 First Fleet landing at Botany Bay; urges the Australian Government to admit prior ownership by the said indigenous people, and introduce legislation to compensate the people now known as Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders for dispossession of their land.”

It stands to the discredit of the present Australian Government, to its Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser, and to its Aboriginal Affairs Minister Viner, that nothing has been done to implement the legislation proposed in that resolution.

5. Ibid. p. 125.
6. Ibid. p. 115.
17. Ibid.
20. See Clth. Aluminium Pty. Ltd. kAgreement Act, op. cit., p. 8 which states, inter alia, “...the State shall forthwith grant to the company a special Bauxite Mining Lease...for an initial term of eighty-four (84) years, commencing on the first day of January, 1958”.
24. Hansard 1, 2/8/73, p. 35.
25. Ibid.
29. Statement by Aborigines & Torres Strait Islanders Advancement League, Cairns Branch; and the Cairns & District Trades & Labor Council, undated, but probably 1961 or 1962. (In personal file.)
34. QCAATI Newsletter No. 62, Nov./Dec. 1968, also personal conversation.
35. Personal conversation.
36. Information from Mr. Joe McGinness.
37. Roneed document “Lockhart River Mission Notes” by the Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders League, Cairns.
42. “Message Stick”, op. cit.
43. Letter dated 11/11/70 from Doomadgee Aborigine to QCAATI.
44. “Message Stick”, op. cit.
45. Melbourne “Age”, 14/2/77.
46. “Courier-Mail”, 12/2/77.
47. Melbourne “Age”, 24/2/77.
48. Annual Report, Director of Native Affairs for year ending June 30, 1965, p. 3.
50. Roneed circular (OPAL - One People for Australia League).
51. Press Statement, Clth. Aboriginal Affairs Minister, Gordon Bryant, 28/2/73.
52. Ibid.
54. Ibid, 21/9/74.