



**House of Representatives Standing Committee on
Aboriginal Affairs**

REPORT

Being a Report that the Committee has been
unable to complete its Inquiry into Aboriginal Education

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October 1984

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

the following publications in the present issue:

Editorial

recent work on the effect of the chemical environment on the properties of organic materials, and the use of organic materials in the field of organic chemistry.

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Editorial

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MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE (to be appointed by the Board and acting in accordance with the instructions of the Board in respect of the functions of the Committee and the powers and authority given to the Committee by the Board)

Chairman: **Mr G.L. Hand, M.P.** (Chairman of the Standing Committee on Education and Science)

Deputy Chairman: **Mr J.R. Porter, M.P.**

Members: **Mr J.N. Andrew, M.P.**

Mr C.A. Blanchard, M.P.

Mr I.M.D. Cameron, M.P.

Mr G. Campbell, M.P.

Mr R.N.J. Gorman, M.P.

Mr L.R.T. O'Neil, M.P.

Secretary to the Committee: **Mr D.W. Nairn, LL.B.**

ABORIGINAL EDUCATION

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committee has been requested by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs to inquire into and report on all aspects of Aboriginal education with particular reference to:

1. The educational needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people including the effect on these needs of environmental, social and cultural factors.
2. Means of promoting wider and more effective participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people at all levels in the development and implementation of appropriate programs and curricula.
3. The most effective methods of providing appropriate education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people at all levels, having regard to the expressed needs of the Aboriginal communities and organisations and to the respective responsibilities of -
 - a) the State, Northern Territory and Commonwealth Governments; and
 - b) Aboriginal communities and other agencies administering Aboriginal education programs.

4. The effectiveness of funding arrangements, including a) whether the best use is made of available funds; and b) whether present priorities as between States Grants and Grants-in-Aid are appropriate.
5. The effectiveness of existing programs and special support schemes including - a) Aboriginal student assistance schemes; b) enclave support schemes; c) independent Aboriginal schools; d) bilingual and bicultural education programs; and e) pre-employment and vocational training and courses.
6. The recruitment and training of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal teachers and teacher assistants.

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UNFINISHED INQUIRY INTO ABORIGINAL EDUCATION

1. This is a report from the committee that it is unable to complete its Inquiry into Aboriginal education. This is a matter of disappointment to the committee which in the course of the present parliament has expended considerable time and effort in public hearings, inspections and visits to Aboriginal Communities to gather evidence on the Inquiry. The committee's inability to report in this Parliament is due both to the shortness of the session and to the demands made on the time and resources available to the committee by the Minister request that it (at the same time) undertake the Inquiry into the effects of Asbestos mining on the Baryulgil Community.
2. The committee reported on the latter reference on 9 October 1984 the matter having been referred in September 1983.
3. The Inquiry into Aboriginal education was first referred to the committee in the 32nd Parliament by the Minister for Education, the Hon. Peter Baume, pursuant to paragraph 1(b) of the committee's resolution of appointment. The committee in that Parliament also undertook and reported on Strategies to Help Overcome the Problems of Aboriginal Town Camps. It was unable to complete the Aboriginal Education Inquiry in view of the early dissolution of the 32nd Parliament. The matter was referred back to the committee in this Parliament by the present Minister the Hon. A.C. Holding, MP on 10 May 1983. The committee had access to the evidence taken by the previous committee which had undertaken extensive visits and inspections in NSW and Tasmania. In the course of the present Parliament the committee has held Public Hearings in all capital cities other than Hobart and Sydney and also in some provincial centres. It has also undertaken extensive tours in Victoria, the Northern Territory, South Australia, Western Australia and Queensland during which it visited remote Aboriginal Communities in the North and central areas of Western

Australia, Queensland and the Northern Territory. In the course of these visits to the various States and Territories the committee consulted widely with specialists involved at all levels of Aboriginal education from early childhood to the tertiary level. It visited numerous schools and educational institutions engaged in the education of Aboriginal people and accumulated voluminous quantities of material relevant to the Inquiry. Considerable progress has been made to the preparation of the committee's report.

4. In view of the advanced state of the inquiry and the progress made on the preparation of the report on Aboriginal education the committee believes and recommends that the matter should be referred back for completion in the 34th Parliament. However, in view of the commitment and involvement of members in the present standing committee on Aboriginal Affairs we believe it appropriate and desirable that the Inquiry should be completed by a committee composed, as far as possible, of the membership of the present committee. As it is possible that the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs in the 34th Parliament if re-appointed, may not be so composed, we recommend that those members of the present committee returned to the 34th Parliament be appointed as a select committee to complete the Inquiry into Aboriginal Education.

5. The Committee recommends -

1. That the House of Representatives upon its Assembly in the 34th Parliament, refer to a select committee composed, as far as possible, of such members of the existing House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs as are returned to the 34th Parliament the uncompleted Inquiry on Aboriginal Education and that the committee have power to consider and make use of the evidence and records of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs in the 32nd and 33rd Parliament relating to the Inquiry into Aboriginal Education.

2. That if the House does not appoint such a committee that the matter again be referred to the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs for completion of the Inquiry.