

***Argus*, 25 July 1939, p. 15, Privations Suffered. Blacks Defiant**

Persisting in their refusal to return to the Cumeroogunga aboriginal station (N.S.W.), aborigines who are camped on the Victorian side of the Murray River, near Barmah, are said to be suffering privation through the lack of blankets and adequate clothing.

Bags provide the only shelter for some of them, according to the organising secretary of the Australian Aborigines League (Mr G. Patten), who is arranging relief in Melbourne.

There were 44 aborigines near Barmah, and 25 more near Mooroopna, who were entirely dependent on supplies of food sent from Melbourne, Mr Patten said.

“Most of the aborigines remaining away from the station are older people, who can see no future for their children under present conditions”, said Mr. Patten. He added that the natives considered an investigation by a Royal Commission to be essential.

A public campaign will be launched in a week or so to direct attention to the condition of aborigines in various settlements. A petition seeking a Royal Commission will be circulated.

The manager of the station (Mr A. McQuiggan) pointed out yesterday that more than 220 aborigines now living at station were contented with their conditions. Only about 20 malcontents, he claimed, refused to return and because they were on the Victorian side of the border the station had no control over them. Mr McQuiggan said that some of the aborigines were receiving assistance in Victoria.