

***Herald* (Melbourne), 11 October 1939, p. 10, Aborigines at Barmah. Sustenance and School Sought**

A school for aboriginal children at Barmah and sustenance for adults were sought by a deputation to the Minister for Education (Sir John Harris) and Sustenance (Mr Mackrell) today.

The aborigines left Cummeroogunja Mission Station, in New South Wales, and went to Barmah, near Echuca, after a dispute.

There were 29 children of school age at Barmah, the deputation told Sir John Harris. One of the reasons the people had gone from Cummeroogunja had been that they knew there were better educational facilities for aboriginal children in Victoria. Sir John promised that the department would consider the request if the New South Wales authorities refused to allow the aboriginal children now living in Victoria to use the school at the Cummeroogunja Station, which was two miles from the present camp across the river.

Mr George Patten, a member of the deputation, said that he had been educated at Cummeroogunja. It was possible to attain only third grade standard there he claimed.

The Cummeroogunja aborigines came into Victoria in February with the knowledge that aborigines in Victoria were given better education.

Aboriginal children had to exist on 1/8 a week and adults on 3/5, he claimed. Land held in trust for the aborigines by the Protection Board had been leased to a grazier and they had very little to live on.

#### SUSTENANCE TO END

When the deputation came before Mr Mackrell, he said that aborigines who crossed to Barmah last February could not remain on sustenance after November. Adequate provision was made for the aborigines in New South Wales.

However, Mr Mackrell promised to consult the Chief Secretary about these aborigines and give further consideration to his decision.

The president of the Australian Aborigines League (Mr A. Burdeu) protested against forcing the aborigines back to the station by cutting them off sustenance.