

***Labor Call*, 20 September 1934, p. 3, Anna Morgan, Under the Black Flag**

What flag flies over the Australian Aborigines? Some say it is the British flag. We say that we live under the Black Flag of the Aborigines "Protection" Board. We have not the same liberty as the white man, nor do we expect the same justice. For twelve years we lived on a mission station in New South Wales. My husband was given a 30-acre block of land; he cleared and fenced it, and then waited for implements to break it up. There were only two teams of horses to do all the work for ten such farms, and no assistance from outside was allowed. When at last we did get in a crop the Board took away the land from us. We wanted to remain on the land and make our living however we could. But, no; the Board would not have that; we must live on the mission station.

After the men had cleared and fenced about 90[0] acres of virgin soil the manager wrote to the Board, saying that the men were too lazy to work the land. Those who protested against this injustice were classed as agitators, an expulsion order was made out against them, and it was served by the local police. My husband was among the victims. Soon after, he went away, but because we had no way of removing our belongings, we left some at his father's place.

A few months later we came, prepared to take our belongings away. We stayed one night at his father's place, and the next day my husband got a summons for trespassing. He was taken and gaoled for fourteen days. Did he break any of the British laws? No. He broke the laws of the Black Flag. When a white man is charged with a crime, he is taken to court and judged. If innocent, he is allowed to go home to his family, and there the matter ends. A black man is expelled from the Mission—the land reserved for him and his people—and can never go back to his own people again. Perhaps the family, unwilling to be separated from him, shares his exile until it pleases the mighty "Protectors" of the aborigines, or their managers, to give them a gracious pardon, and allow them to return home again. My husband and I have been expelled for all time.

Here we are! Taken from the bush, placed in compounds, told, "This is your home and your children's as long as there is an aboriginal left"; put under managers, scarcely allowed to think for ourselves. We were suppressed. We were half-educated. We lived on what white people call "sustenance." We bought our own clothes. We cleared Crown lands. At the age of fourteen our girls were sent to work—poor, illiterate, trustful little girls to be gulled by the promises of unscrupulous white men. We all know the consequences. But, of course, one of the functions of the Aborigines' Protection Board is to build a white Australia. Those who pride themselves on "British fair play" should think of us who live under the Black Flag. We want a home. We want education. You have taken our beautiful country from us — "a free gift."

Even a worm will turn, and we, the down-trodden of the earth, at last raise a feeble protest, and dare to ask for better conditions and the abolition of the rule of the "Black Flag." Will you help us?