

THE ESER PLAN HELPING THE ABORIGINES

An organisation aimed at helping the aborigines in a variety of ways, has been set up by the Australian Aboriginal Council.

In an introductory leaflet sent to *Dawn*, the sponsors say "This is a concrete practical plan for the material welfare of "fringe dwellers"; personal and individual and to help them cross the threshold to citizenship with constant vigilance to prevent them going back to the "Ashes of the Camp Fire".

It is known as the "ESER Plan".

The word ESER is made up of the initials from the words Education, Social, Education, Rehabilitation.

The leaflet says :—

1. ORGANISATIONS TO FORM A CENTRAL COMMITTEE

There are a number of organisations working now for the amelioration of the aborigine, and a central authority—possibly with a delegate from each—to co-ordinate their activities, etc., is needed.

2. EDUCATION DEPT. BE APPROACHED TO FORM ADULT CLASSES AND OTHER ASPECTS OF EDUCATIONAL RE-HABILITATION

Whilst concentrating on the young, the adults must not be neglected—Also financial aid is needed for providing facilities for primary school children, so as they can attend school on an equal footing with others. Help also is needed with high school students and scholarships.

3. HOUSING SITUATION INVESTIGATED

The allocation for building is so unproportionate that it's financing could well be undertaken by the Federal authorities.

4. ORGANISATIONS TO ENLARGE SCOPE OF MEMBERSHIP TO EMBRACE ABORIGINES AS MEMBERS

Native men, women and children should be encouraged to join in our social life.

5. FAMILIES TO CONSIDER INVITATIONS TO ABORIGINES TO SPEND WEEK-ENDS AND HOLIDAYS WITH THEM

A start could be made by inviting those sufficiently advanced, and the children.

6. EMPLOYMENT TO BE SOLVED

Recommended aborigines could be invited by firms, and individuals to accept positions. Control is needed here and the CENTRAL COMMITTEE working with the Aborigine Dept. could assist.

7. STUDY GROUPS OF THEIR PROBLEMS BE CREATED

This would be a worth-while start for organisations, clubs, church groups, etc. Guest speakers could be invited, films shown, etc. There should be a "follow-up"—sustained effort is needed.

Further information may be obtained from Mr. H. Roberts, Box 1519M, G.P.O., Perth.

AFTER 25 YEARS

Old Friends Meet

During my recent tour of the North Coast, my wife and I called into a place called Urunga. We stayed there for a month's holiday on the seaside reserve. The reason was that I'd lived up the South Arm when a child and there were people by the name of Kelly who had four girls and three sons at that time . . . names which I'll always remember for we were all good pals.

The girls were Ida, Muriel, Doreen and Madge and the boys were Stan, Thomas and Richard.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Kelly grew vegetable, and went in for poultry. The girls' jobs were to look after the farm and their father would cut sleepers and do bush work.

Quite a few of us boys used to go to the dances and Stan Kelly (their uncle) used to bring along the girls who were always very nicely dressed. We all made good friends. Then we moved away down South.

This is how I met Ida, as I knew her, again after all these years. She was walking across the Urunga football field with Madge. I asked the caretaker who the ladies were and when she told me, I couldn't get around to where she lived quickly enough. My wife is English and she was so amazed at Ida's neat home which is on the Pacific Highway. We talked about our childhood days. She asked us to have tea on the Thursday night, when we found a beautiful table set up. We had a nice baked fowl dinner with lots of sweets. I was amazed, so was my wife.

I was told later that Ida cooked at the Bellingen Hospital for ten years.

I've never met prettier girls than they were. I also met two of her cousins called Sadie and Hilda. They were on holidays from Nambucca.

So, Folks, now I know that my best dance partner is happily married to a soldier with three happy children and a home she can ask any white person into any time."

JEFF WESTERLY.