

The N.S.W. Aborigines Welfare Board during a three-day inspection tour of Aboriginal living conditions in Murray River towns in October announced that \$70,000 would be spent by the Board to provide twelve new houses near Dareton.

Mr A. G. Kingsmill, chairman of the Board, spoke to a reporter from Mildura's *Sunraysia Daily* and forecast other improvements for Aborigines in the region.

The Board's main problem here is the provision of adequate accommodation, and with the finances available to it will do all it can to solve this problem. Population of several of the towns swells considerably during fruit picking seasons. Under the Rural Workers' Accommodation Act it is the employer's responsibility to provide satisfactory accommodation for his workers.

Mr Kingsmill said that the Board could not accept the responsibility for accommodating itinerant workers, and that its first concern was to clear up the major problem of Dareton's sub-standard housing.

Dareton

About fifty Aborigines who are permanent residents live under very adverse conditions in thirteen shacks on a Reserve set aside for use as a future cemetery. The Board has tried for a long time to acquire land on which to provide suitable housing for these people, and recently has been successful.

Plans for twelve fully self-contained houses costing from \$5,000 to \$6,000 each will be prepared as a matter of urgency by the Department of Works at the Board's request. The houses will be built on a site about 1½ miles from Dareton near the road to Buronga; buses pass the site each day, providing transport to Dareton and Mildura for shopping and school.

The placid Murray at Moama



The Board Visits

\$70,000 for 12 new houses at

Mr Kingsmill said that these houses would be used as staging accommodation, and that as soon as families had advanced to a point where they could be fully integrated into the general community, they would be given the opportunity of moving into better houses which the Board will build in Dareton.

Two houses have been purchased by the Board in the town of Dareton and have been occupied by such families ready for town housing.

Wentworth Shire Council's building and health inspector considers the proposed houses would be acceptable as town houses in Dareton.

When members of the inspecting party asked Aborigines if they would like to move into the new houses all showed interest in the scheme. It's easy to see why.

They would leave the tin shanties for well-built and attractive houses which offer privacy—which is almost non-existent at the present camp.

Each house in the "village" of twelve will have three bedrooms, bath and chip heater, separate external laundry with fuel copper and tubs, attractive fencing, and individuality—achieved by varying roof line, window treatment, and painting schemes. Siting of the cottages in relation to the road alignment would be staggered; electricity and water will be supplied.

While in the staging houses, the families will be taught such things as hygiene, mothercraft, and efficient housekeeping. The families will also receive special help and guidance from the area welfare officer Mr R. Snook and Mrs D. Hall, who are based at Deniliquin.

At a meeting of Board members and representatives of Wentworth Shire Council held in Dareton Public Hall, Councillor Whyte said that the Shire was anxious to see conditions for Aborigines improved and was prepared to co-operate with the Board in every possible way.

Mr Kingsmill submitted a sketch plan of the proposed housing "village" which favourably impressed the Council men. Detailed plans would be submitted to the Council before tenders for construction were called.