

WE ARE A PROUD PEOPLE!

A STIRRING ADDRESS

Addressing a large gathering of people in Martin Place, Sydney, on the occasion of National Aborigines Day observance, Mrs. Margaret Morris of Kempsey said:—

To-day I feel very honoured that I have been chosen to bring a message on behalf of the aboriginal women of New South Wales.

I would first like to say thank you to those members of the white community who are opening up their hearts and see fit to assist us wherever possible so that we aboriginal people can live as human beings should.

We are of different coloured skin, but deep down we are all of God's children. He made some white and others dark, because, I think, just as He liked variety in the colours of flowers and many other things, He also liked it in the colours of the people He has made. I am certain He did not want a colour bar, so why should there be?

We want to work with you, not against you. We want to serve this country as you do and we believe that given the proper opportunity, you will be proud of our contribution to the well being of Australia.

We are a proud people. We have a culture and tradition which though different, is not inferior to that of other races. We believe we should be entitled to "a place in the sun"; a position of equality—no more. However, we do resent being a depressed or discarded group.

I know many of the white community are concerned about assimilation, but I feel it must come. There are, however, difficulties. I know also that many of our people have no desire to be assimilated and are content to live their lives as they do at present.

I had the opportunity of bringing my family into the white community and accepted it, because, I knew I must do everything possible to give my children much more than my husband and I had been used to.

I knew we had to have great courage and be prepared to meet difficult situations, and we knew particularly that what we did could assist or hinder others of our people in the being given the opportunity to also live a normal life.

Three years ago this complete change in our family life took place, and, I am proud to say we do not regret it in any way the decision we have made. My great conviction is that irrespective of what happens so far as the adults are concerned, our future will lie with our children.

These children must have the homes, the conditions and above all, the educational facilities of the rest of the community to give them the chance of becoming first class Australian citizens in the full meaning of that term.

We need assured employment. We need proper homes where families can live under good conditions.



This husky young fellow, David Patrick Ward, is only 2½ years of age