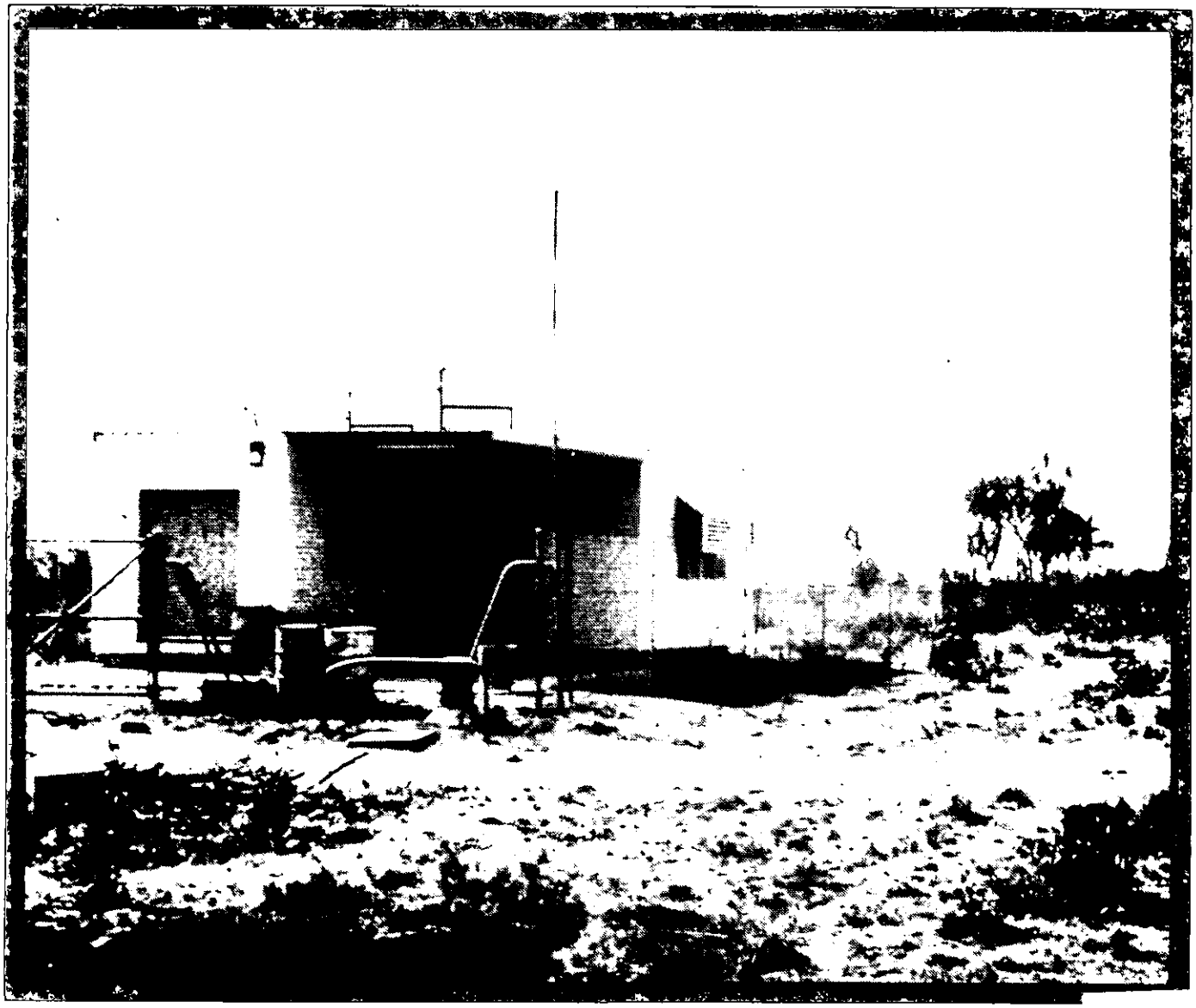
Owen Stanley

The Mission and Peppimenarti: An economic study of two Daly River Aboriginal communities



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INTRODUCTION

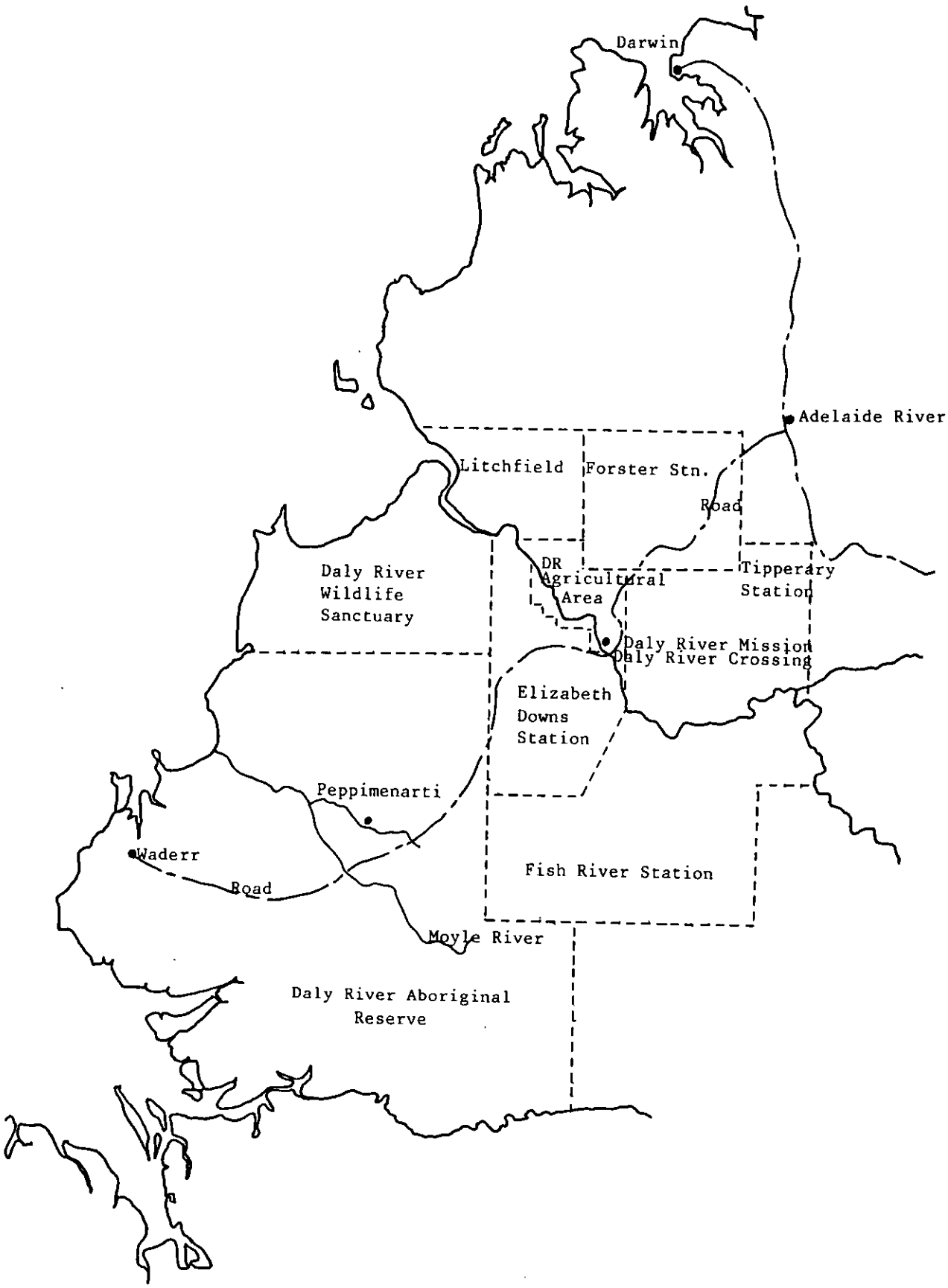
The purpose of this monograph is to examine the past, present and future economic circumstances of Aboriginal people living around the Daly River in the Northern Territory. To be precise, the area under study is bounded in the south by the Moyle River, in the west by the sea and in the north and east by the Daly River and its immediate environs. This area is shown in figure 1. Many Aborigines live south and west of the Moyle, at Waderr and outstations but the Moyle was used as a boundary for this study because people to south have an orientation toward Waderr and people to the north have an orientation toward the Daly River. Today, most people in the area of study live at Daly River Mission and Peppimenarti so that most attention will be focussed on these communities , although some attention will be given to the outstations in the area.

The study is in two parts. In Part I, the history of developments in the area is outlined. For the period from first contact to 1956, I draw extensively on previously unpublished studies while the history from 1956 to 1982 is derived mainly from primary sources. A knowledge of the history of the area is important in understanding the contemporary social and economic situation. European, and to a lesser extent Chinese, contacts have greatly disrupted Aboriginal society and have left it in a state of considerable disequilibrium so that further developments must be expected.

In Part II I discuss contemporary matters, beginning with a detailed description of conditions found at the Mission and Peppimenarti during field work in 1982. This is followed by the presentation of social accounting material. These data allow a comparison to be made between the communities, with Australia as a whole, and with another Aboriginal community for which the author has collected similar data, namely Nguiu on Bathurst Island (Stanley 1983). Issues which are discussed in this context include the overall level of dependence of the communities on government aid, levels of investment, economic structure, and European beneficiaries from trade with these communities. Finally, I discuss development problems and prospects and offer some speculation about the future.

Figure 1

The Area of Study



Part I

HISTORY OF THE REGION

Europeans have been in the Daly River area continuously since the early 1880s, beginning with a few pioneering individuals who were followed by a number of permanent residents by the early 20th century. The main attraction of the region was its perceived agricultural and mining potential and even today there is a scheme designed to develop the region agriculturally.

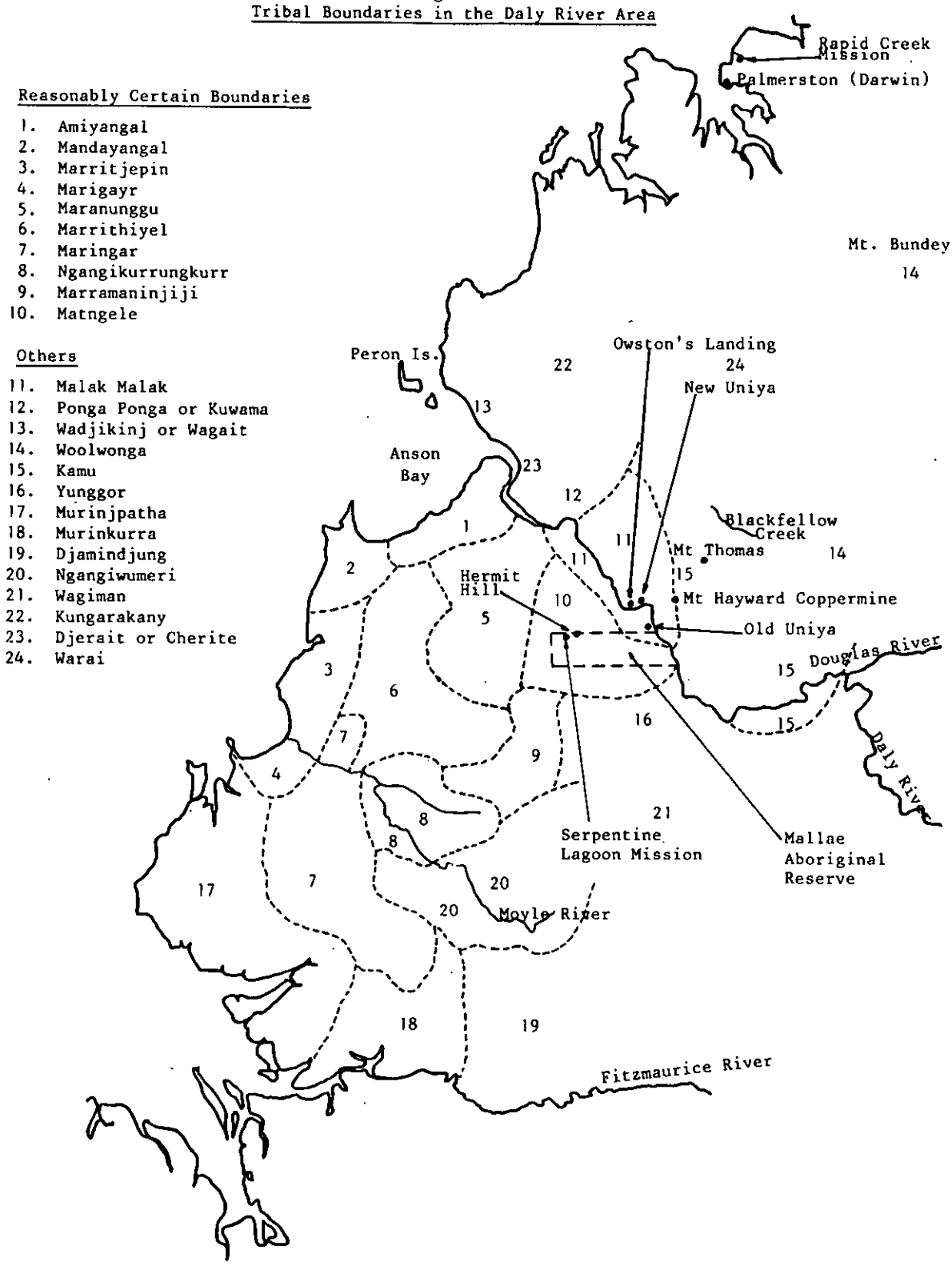
European and Chinese settlers have caused many changes in the conditions of Aboriginal life in the area. They changed Aborigines' perceptions of themselves, introduced new ideas, goods, work patterns and greatly reduced the area of land over which Aborigines had control. The Jesuit missions (which existed from 1886 to 1899), the missionaries of the Sacred Heart (MSC) mission which has existed since 1956, government policies in relation to welfare, health, education, wages and legal matters have all had an effect. Together they have weakened traditional Aboriginal power structures, changed desires for material things and modified Aboriginal production patterns. In recent years, however, interest in all things Aboriginal has strongly revived amongst the people, and the development of Peppimenarti and the outstations has been a product of this. In the following brief history of these changes, emphasis is placed on economic aspects of these changes.

Before European Contact

There are, of course, no historical records of conditions under which Aborigines lived in the Daly River region prior to the arrival of Europeans. At best, conditions can be inferred from early contact records, from information provided by Aborigines themselves and from guesses based on general observations. The area was (and is) occupied by people speaking a range of languages and belonging to a number of political and social groups. Figure 2 shows the boundaries of land owned by these groups. The Northern Land Council has recently obtained this information for land from the Moyle River to the Daly River, and the names and boundaries for that area are likely to be more accurate than for other areas of the map. There is considerable confusion in the literature over the boundaries, the appropriate spelling of the names of particular groups and whether groups named are the appropriate divisions or whether more or less aggregation is warranted. The reason for these problems is that early European reports were conflicting and by the time serious study had been conducted by WEH Stanner in the 1930s there had been considerable migration from traditional land. Now, much of the land is unoccupied and it is difficult to get information about ownership because many traditional owners live away from their land at the Daly River Mission, Peppimenarti, Wadderr, Adelaide River, Belyuen, on cattle stations, and in Darwin at the Nine Mile Camp, Howard Springs and elsewhere.

Some early reports suggest that Aborigines were numerous in the area, especially along the Daly River itself which must have been a major source of food, water, transport and production materials for the people in the area. It is reported that in 1884, for instance, Parsons, Biddles and Holtze met about 150 Aborigines near the present site of Woolianna.

Figure 2
Tribal Boundaries in the Daly River Area



Again, relatively little is known about trading patterns although the people south of the Moyle River and along the coast seemed to have cultural and trading links with other coastal people to the north, while people from north of the Moyle River had (and still have) strong cultural and trading links with people to the south and west, extending into Western Australia. The road that goes through the Daly River Aboriginal Reserve from the crossing to Waderr follows an old walking path for part of its way and was probably part of a trading route.

Early Foreign Contact

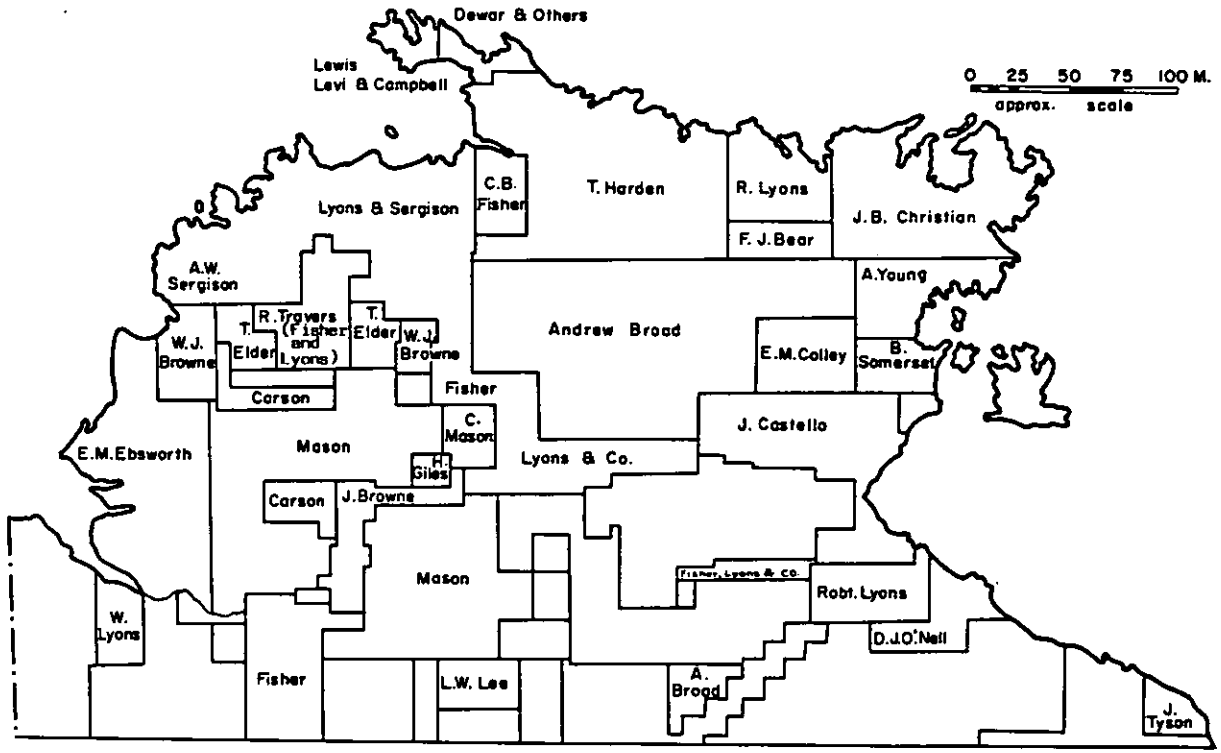
The Macassans may have visited the coast near the mouth of the Daly River on their travels in search of trepang but the only evidence of this is circumstantial. The first European contact was made by Abel Tasman who sailed into Anson Bay in 1644. It seems, however, that he did not go ashore. The first exploration of the general area took place in 1861 by J McDouall Stuart and the river was officially discovered in 1865 by B Finniss who named it after Sir Dominic Daly, the Governor of South Australia. The South Australian government began a search for a suitable place for a capital city in the north in the 1860s and as part of that search McKinlay navigated the river in 1866 and observed that it had the best agricultural land in the region. Surveyors, McMinn, Saunders and Sergison surveyed the area in 1877 and were attacked by local Aborigines. Three other surveys were made in the following decade: Hingston, Kelsey et al. surveyed the eastern side of the mouth of the Daly River in 1882, Captain Carrington surveyed from the mouth of the river to eight miles upstream in 1884 (Carrington 1886-7) and Cuthbertson surveyed the Woolianna area in the same year (Cuthbertson 1884). Eventually, however, it was decided not to establish the northern capital on the Daly River.

The first foreign occupation of the area took place in the late 1870s although there is a dispute as to which of two enterprises was the first in the area (Richards 1982: 2). One enterprise was a small farm owned by two Europeans, Edwards and Reece, and they employed one African and a number of Chinese workers. The other was a vegetable farm of 90 acres established by Chinese on Peron Island. Neither enterprise lasted long and their effect on local Aborigines was probably slight.

From 1881 onward some sort of European activity along the Daly River was more or less continuous. W Owston established a sugar farm near Woolianna in 1881. Substantial increases in sugar prices at the time resulted in interest in sugar farming in the north and Owston was initially given a grant of 20,000 acres by the South Australian government. However, after public protests this was reduced to 10,000 acres. He employed one European and 17 Chinese workers and by mid-1882 they had planted a cane nursery of 20 acres. By May 1883, however, the project was abandoned with nothing having been produced from the farm. An attempt was made to rework the farm in 1885 but this quickly failed. Owston is reported to have murdered his overseer, Mackinnon, in 1886 and all activity at the farm ceased (Hill 1970: 204).

Figure 3

Pastoral leases in the Top End, 1881



Source: Bauer, 1964, map 7

The first cattle enterprise to be established in the area was by WJ Browne in 1881 who occupied a lease at the mouth of the Daly River, see figure 3 (Duncan 1967: 145, 161). This was followed by Fisher and Lyons in 1882 who took over the lease previously held in the name of R Travers. They ran some 4,000 cattle between 1883 and 1886 but the station failed in 1890. The early years of pastoral settlement in the area, and all over the Northern Territory, were unstable, as Bauer's (1964) pastoral maps for years between 1881 and 1919 show.

Prospectors had been combing the area for some years when copper was discovered near Mt Haywood in 1882. Mining was undertaken by a small number of Europeans and Woolwonga Aboriginal workers from Pine Creek. In 1884 four European miners were murdered and this led to the revenge murder of a large number of Aborigines from the area.

There is disagreement about the details relating to the murder of the miners although it is generally agreed that they were conducted by the Woolwongas working for the miners, and not local Aborigines. The details, broadly, seem to have been these. On 15 August 1884 Harry Houschildt, one of the European miners, was killed by Aborigines while away from the mine. His fellow workers did not know this and on 3 September 1884 the remaining four European miners were attacked at the mine, Thomas Schollert being speared to death, John Landers and Johannes Nolterius being speared and badly wounded and Henry Roberts suffering a bad head wound from being struck by a pick.

The wounded men set off for Fisher and Lyons station. Landers had to be left after they had travelled only a short distance and on 5 September Nolterius had to be left at the billabong near Mt Thomas which now bears his name. Landers was found and killed by the Aboriginal attackers and Nolterius died later when rescuers tried to move him. He is buried at the billabong. Roberts made it to the station safely and raised the alarm. Mr Sachse, the manager, set out in vain to recover the other miners.

As a result of these attacks, punitive expeditions were mounted over two years against the Woolwongas. Their land was to the north-east of the Daly River, including land from Pine Creek to Mount Bundy. The tribe was decimated. The main point of contention in the accounts of the reprisals is whether Malak Malak people, who are local to the Daly River, were also murdered in large numbers. Some writers believe that up to 150 Malak Malaks and Woolwongas were massacred at Blackfellow Creek, nearly Daly River. Other accounts make no mention of it.

Whether Daly River people were killed or not, it is likely that the incident would have greatly intimidated them and left them with the feeling that Europeans and not they were in control of the local environment.

Alfred Searcy (1909) who was the Sub-Collector of Customs in Darwin for 14 years, makes it clear that he considered the Daly River a dangerous area. He narrates the story of the attack on the miners, attributing it to the Aborigines 'brute desire to kill and destroy'. Further, he remarks that 'the victims were really good men, who had always treated the niggers with the utmost kindness and consideration' (1909: 247). He also quotes his friend Dr Lynch who had been in the Fitzmaurice River area for some years as saying 'I am of the opinion that you should never trust a blackfellow' (1909: 251). A little later he remarks '(An Aborigine) thinks the white man is in the country to do something inimical to his best

interests, and to exercise a malign influence. He kills the white man on the same principle that the white man kills a black snake' (1909, 251). Searcy recommends that when camping in bad country one should set camp and then sleep elsewhere because 'over and over again have fellows found spears through their nets when they returned in the morning' (1909, 257). These views may have been widespread amongst Europeans and there may have been considerable fear of Aborigines, but there seem to have been very few murders by Aborigines to support these fears. Although Searcy tells of four murders in the area other than that of the miners, only one of these was committed by an Aborigine.

Jesuit Missions

Missionary activity in the area was commenced in 1886 by the Austrian Jesuits. They made a major attempt to change Aboriginal beliefs, life styles and standard of living and to establish the missions as major economic centres in the area. Like many similar attempts at intensive farming in the Northern Territory, the projects failed and there is now little left to record their effort. O'Kelly (1967) has written an excellent study of the Jesuit experience in the Northern Territory and the following summary has been prepared from it.

The Austrian Jesuit missions in Australia were an impressive experiment. Pope Leo XIII wrote to the Australian Jesuits in February 1881 making them responsible for catholic missions in the Northern Territory. They were unique missionaries in two ways. Firstly, they believed in establishing small missions which were based on tribal boundaries and in the concept of Reductions. These had been successful in Paraguay. Reductions, which existed from 1609 until the Jesuits were expelled from all Spanish territories in 1767, were self contained native villages with their own church, public buildings, legal institutions, factories, shops, farms and armed forces. Profits from activities were distributed to the community generally and the community was presided over by one or two priests. Secondly, Jesuits believed that people who were hunters and gatherers could not be effectively converted to Christianity. Such people had to become settled farmers before they could become Christians and the Reductions were regarded as being the appropriate intermediate stage in the development of such people.

The Jesuits worked in the Northern Territory between 1882 and 1899 and during that time they established four missions: the Rapid Creek Mission or St Joseph's Mission (near Palmerston - the old name for Darwin), October 1882 to December 1891; Old Uniya or Queen of the Holy Rosary Mission, October 1886 to July 1891; Serpentine Lagoon or Sacred Heart Mission, October 1889 to July 1891; and New Uniya or St Joseph's Mission, July 1891 to June 1899. The last three missions were in the Daly River area.

The Rapid Creek mission was established when Palmerston was only 12 years old and although it did not close until 1891, it was clear by 1884 that the experiment was failing. The mission was initially granted 320 acres of land, but this was later increased to 1,200 acres. Part of this land was cleared and fenced, wells were sunk, crops and fruit were sown and harvested and a mission house and other buildings were erected. Aborigines associated with the mission were the Larrakiyah, Woolnas, some Alligator Rivers people and some Djerait from the Daly River. However, they did not settle at the mission and it quickly became clear that the mission could

not establish a community along the lines of the Reductions. Aborigines only stayed for short periods and preferred to visit Palmerston which, the missionaries believed, had a corrupting influence on them. In 1887 there were 30 to 40 local Aborigines staying at the mission when a number of Aborigines from the Alligator Rivers visited. The missionaries welcomed them and this resulted in a fight between the local Aborigines (Larrakiyah and Woolnas) and the visitors, which the visitors won. The visitors soon left, however, for the Alligator Rivers and the mission never recovered its original residents. It closed in 1891.

The Jesuits decided that they would establish a mission in the Daly River area, since the Aboriginal population there was believed to be great and it was far from the evil influences of Palmerston. Two missions were planned: a small one on the Daly River (Old Uniya) and a major one further west at Serpentine Lagoon. Old Uniya was established in October 1886 on high ground on the west side of the river, opposite the present mission. The site was believed to be on the border area of land owned by three tribal groups - the Malak Malaks, Woolwongas and Agaquillas. Malak Malaks and Woolwongas did not get on well and once it was established that Woolwonga land was on the east side of the river, the missionaries forced the Woolwongas to settle on the east bank. This resulted in the Malak Malaks being the main object of the missionaries attention.

In 1888 an additional 30 families of various tribes, fearing reprisals after the copper mine murders and the threats of Mr Sachse, the manager of the Fisher and Lyons station, in particular, joined the east bank camp. By that year, the mission was well established. About 50 Aborigines resided 'permanently' at the mission, up to 40 were employed, three were 'apprenticed', and the mission had 40 goats and 50 fowls. Maize, beans, chicory, melons and potatoes were grown in the garden. Some families, including Woolwongas, had their own gardens. A number of families lived in bamboo huts with thatch roofs and there was a range of buildings which included a school. However, later in the year malaria, whooping cough and influenza, probably brought in by European miners, swept through the mission, killing many Malak Malaks. These diseases reached their peak in 1890 and all but one of the five Brothers who were stationed at the mission became ill. Activity ceased, Aborigines left the mission, the school was closed and the children were sent to Serpentine Lagoon. The difficulty of redeveloping the mission after these deaths and the realization that the area had poor soil resulted in the closure of the mission in July 1891. The resources freed by the closure were moved to a mission at Serpentine Lagoon, which had been established in October 1889. It had better soil than Old Uniya and was thought to be surrounded by several tribes. However, the resources devoted to the mission were meagre and it lasted only two years. No house was ever built, although one all-purpose shed was constructed. Most time was spent developing the garden and the first harvest was good, yielding a good supply of rice. A school was established and up to forty Aborigines were regularly employed at the mission. The land was not only better than at Old Uniya for horticulture, it was also better for bush tucker and it soon became clear that the mission could not establish a settled peasant population because alternative food supplies were readily available.

In 1985 the Catholic Church had applied for the establishment of an Aboriginal reserve in the area and in 1892, under the Northern Territory Crown Lands Act of 1890, the South Australian government proclaimed an area of 100 square miles on the west side of the Daly River as the Mallae

Aboriginal Reserve. By the time the Reserve was proclaimed, however, the Serpentine Lagoon mission had been abandoned and the Jesuits had no interest in the land. An examination of modern maps reveals that Old Uniya was not actually on reserve land, which had been applied for and granted, although it was probably thought to be so at the time of the application for the land.

Serpentine Lagoon and Rapid Creek were both closed in 1891 and their resources were moved to New Uniya, established on a 300 acre site chosen by the Jesuits and granted to them by the South Australian government in 1891. It was on the east bank of the Daly River, about 20 miles downstream from the site of Old Uniya and in the area which is now called Woolianna. New Uniya was established with four priests and seven Brothers. Many Aborigines followed the Jesuits from Old Uniya and Serpentine Lagoon and there were soon about fifty Aborigines living at New Uniya 'permanently'. The mission had 550 goats, 39 cattle, 16 horses and 6 asses. By November 1891 several acres had been cleared for cultivation and a number of buildings had been erected, including a temporary house, a small chapel, dormitories for boys and girls, a store, work sheds, a forge and stables. In addition a windmill for irrigation had been built.

With such a concentration of resources the future looked promising but with the onset of the depression of the 1890s, funds to support the mission became difficult to obtain in 1892, despite appeals for aid from the south. Financial difficulties coincided with a drought and then an outbreak of influenza which incapacitated 40 Aborigines and eventually killed 12. In September a Brother took the school children to a distant billabong to avoid disease and they stayed for two months living off herbs and goat meat. By December the mission had no flour, sugar or vegetables and malaria broke out.

The depression forced the remaining Europeans from the area, to the satisfaction of the Jesuits who considered them to be a corrupting influence. In 1893 there were only two or three Europeans left on the east bank of the whole Daly River and these had left by 1894. By 1893, mission land was composed of the Mallae Reserve, 900 acres leased from the government and 435 acres of freehold land purchased from a failed pastoralist. Later some Chinese gardens were purchased.

Conditions improved, the epidemics disappeared in 1893 and the mission underwent significant development until 1899. By the end of the 1890s the mission looked like the Reduction ideal. There was a large mission house, a church, a school, dormitories, 15 to 20 Aboriginal houses, stables, printing-house, granary, a boiler and pump for irrigation and sawing, wells, underground aqueducts, sheds for stores, tools and a forge. Sixty acres of land were developed for horticulture: half being worked by mission staff and hired Aborigines, and the rest was divided into two-acre fenced blocks which, together with a house and a few goats, were given to young married couples. Crops included maize, yams, sweet potatoes, pineapples, caffre corn, watermelons, Indian beans, tobacco, bananas, coconuts, pawpaws and mangoes. Livestock included 2,000 goats (20 killed per week), 150 cattle, and in 1897 there were 33 horses and 130 pigs.

Only Malak Malaks lived at the mission until 1895 when an attempt was made to unify local tribes around the mission. The Maranunggu, Cherite and Ponga Pongas (together totalling about 300) were invited to come to the mission. The school language was changed from Malak Malak to English in

May 1895. From then until the close of the mission there were 70 to 80 Aborigines living at the mission, including 20 to 30 school children and 19 apprentices. The number of peasant families working their land reached a maximum of 15 in 1897 but fell to 9 to 12 over the remaining years. Aboriginal employees usually numbered about 50 but once reached a peak of 120. During the annual ceremonies held at the end of the dry season 300 to 400 Aborigines camped at the mission. Only three children per year were baptized and only 12 couples were married by the mission over the life of the mission.

There was a flood in March 1898 when the river rose 40 feet. This ruined the fields and damaged property although the mission recovered quickly. However another flood followed in 1899 and this time the mission had difficulty recovering. It was decided that the mission had to be moved to a flood-free area, but Rome decided to close the mission. This was done on 21 June 1899 and the Jesuits were withdrawn from the Northern Territory.

According to O'Kelly the cost of re-establishing the mission after the 1899 flood was only one of the reasons for closing the mission. It had also failed to be self sufficient; it had failed to develop Aboriginal peasant farmers; it had imposed a financial burden on the church and, finally, the staff were wanted in other areas where there were staff shortages.

Thus a very determined and impressive attempt to change the circumstances of Aboriginal people in the area came to an end. It was another 56 years before a mission was established in the area again. It is not possible to tell the long term effects of this missionary experience on local Aborigines but it was likely to have been dramatic. One can only speculate about what happened to a society whose fundamental values had been so challenged. The people had been introduced to a new religion and ideas, new goods, a new life style, new skills, had been promised things, had submitted to European authority, had been moved from place to place and had recently engaged in serious fights with their neighbours over access to the missions. Suddenly, after 13 years, the missions had gone.

The missions were also major agricultural experiments. Agriculture had been tried in three areas, using a wide range of crops, irrigation and labour intensive techniques and the problems of disease and flooding had been experienced.

Aborigines continued to live around the area where New Uniya was located after the mission was withdrawn. Indeed it is reported that Wagiman, Woolwongas, Ponga Pongas, Maranunggu and Djeraits continued to move into the area after 1899, as both migrants and visitors. They came, it seems, to gain access to the European goods available in the area. Fights broke out after the mission closed, often involving Malak Malaks who tried to defend their land.

1900 to 1956

Once the missions had gone, the Aborigines had to depend upon European and Chinese economic activity in the area for employment and European-style goods. It was usual for Aborigines to be paid in kind, generally in tobacco, food, alcohol, clothes or even opium and although the wages were very low, there appeared to be a great supply of Aboriginal labour at the

wage rates. Richards (1982) gives a detailed account of developments in the area from 1900 to 1940 and much of the following is drawn from her account.

Productive activity in the area towards the end of the 19th century had declined. Fisher and Lyon's station had been abandoned in 1890. Mining had declined after 1890 and was abandoned in 1894. The Chinese gardens were also abandoned in that year. Some Chinese began mining in 1899 and smelting in 1904 - with the employment of up to 24 Aborigines in 1906 - but smelting ceased in 1908 and their other activities in the area ended in 1913.

Mr Neimann occupied the New Uniya site in 1903 and employed Aborigines to trap animals, to cultivate his crops and to mine silver. W Roberts and D Thomas employed Aborigines to clear and cultivate some 25 acres on which tobacco, sugar cane, bananas, cereals and vegetables were planted. Within two years the farm produced ample food for the Aboriginal employees, although the tobacco crop failed to be commercially successful. Although only eight Aborigines worked for Roberts and Thomas in 1911, it is believed that the farm fed 'scores' of others.

Economic activity in the area greatly increased after 1912 with the establishment of agricultural farms on the Daly River just north of the crossing. The Commonwealth government took over responsibility for the Northern Territory on 1 January 1911 and immediately commenced work on the experiment. This part of the Daly River had always been considered to have great agricultural potential. Indeed Searcy (1909: 244) remarks

> For forty miles from the head of navigation the river runs fresh, and it is along this that agricultural success can be met when the proper class of settlers arrive. With the banks as they exist, and a lovely stream of fresh water constantly running below, there is no part of the whole province that could be irrigated at less expense.

Such optimism about the area still exists amongst some people today.

The government, in 1911, dismissed the previous failures in the area by private farmers and the missions as the result of special circumstances: set backs induced by the depression of the 1890s; the farmers not being of the 'right type'; the use of Aboriginal labour; and the lack of thorough experimentation. The doubting results of a scientific study in 1910, and in particular, of (Sydney University's) Professor Lowrie's findings that the soil was greatly deficient in nitrogen and phosphorus were ignored in the enthusiasm at the time.

After the completion of a government survey in 1911 it was decided to establish an experimental farm of 2,560 acres and to settle the neighbouring land with farmers. As encouragement, farmers were to be charged no rent for the first 21 years, or for the life of the farmer if he died before the end of that period, and to be given a loan of up to 800 pounds for improvements and equipment. In 1912, 26 blocks were offered for selection, 329 applications were received and 18 applicants were accepted. Of these only eight applicants took up their blocks by December 1913.

The project, overall, was a failure in the sense that at no stage did it achieve substantial agricultural production. The experimental farm, as

well as the private farmers, produced little. The farm did, however, employ a large number of Aborigines at times. In 1912, for instance, there were 35 Aborigines working for the farm, and the private farmers would have employed Aborigines but the numbers are not known.

The police station was established at Woolianna in 1915. It employed one tracker permanently and it organised the employment of up to 20 Aborigines in stock work, carting and building and clearing for the Advances to Settlers Board.

The number of private settlers had risen to 14 in 1914. In that year three men arrived to work one block under the name of the Daly River Farm Company and an Englishman, James Parry, arrived to work the southern-most block (see figure 4). Parry is credited with having introduced peanuts to the area, one of the most successful crops over the years. But by 1917 only six private farms were operating. A great range of crops had been tried, including maize, fruit, vegetables, rice, wheat and other cereals, peanuts and fodder. The government had promised each settler 50 dairy cows to assist them until their crops were established. However, there were delays in the delivery of the cows and they arrived in poor condition with the weakest being diverted to Oenpelli where they later thrived. The Daly River cattle, however, remained in poor condition and many died. The fate of these two herds was later compared, to the detriment of the Daly River.

Although the dairy plan was a failure, some of the crops produced satisfactory yields, though none proved sufficiently profitable to provide a stimulus to development. In 1914 the government decided that all experimental farms should pay their way and since the Daly River farm was unable to do this, it was closed in 1916. The alleged reasons for the failure of the scheme to 1916 were: the low productivity of Aboriginal labour on the Farm; the fact that the settlers showed little interest in staying permanently; the lack of capital; and the difficulty of transport (shipment to Darwin was by cart to Brocks Creek and then by train).

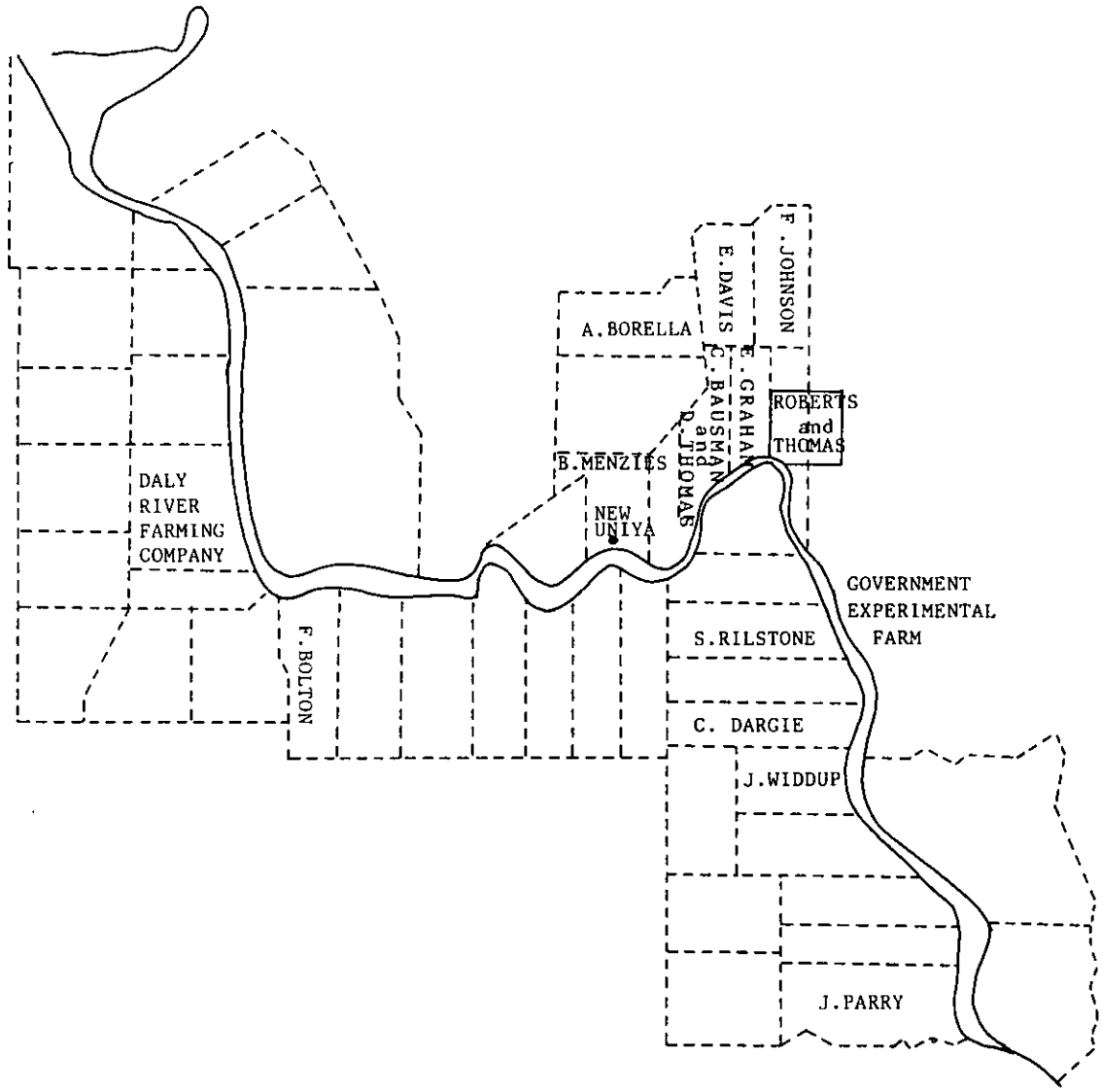
It is difficult from this distance to evaluate these reasons. However, it does seem that the market prospects for the settlers' agricultural products would have been very poor and that if they were not, the production problems would have been overcome in the pursuit of profit. In those days, Daly River was remote from Darwin, and Darwin was small and remote from overseas and southern markets. The settlers were no doubt aware of these problems and modified their commitment accordingly.

It was decided that the abandoned Experimental Farm would become a pastoral property for Aborigines but sufficient capital was not provided and in 1920 it became an 'Aboriginal Station' instead.

By 1918 all significant agricultural activity had ceased and in 1921 the government proposed a scheme to disband the settlement. The scheme involved an end to financial and transport assistance to farmers, a cancelling of all debts with the government, a free passage to any part of Australia and two months sustenance on their arrival. However, the farmers rejected the scheme. Some were in their middle age, some were married to Aboriginal women, and they were reluctant to leave at that stage. In 1922 the government advanced a large amount of cotton seed to them but only 20 acres were sown and yields were poor because of floods. More farmers left, leaving only Parry and Hill in 1923.

Figure 4

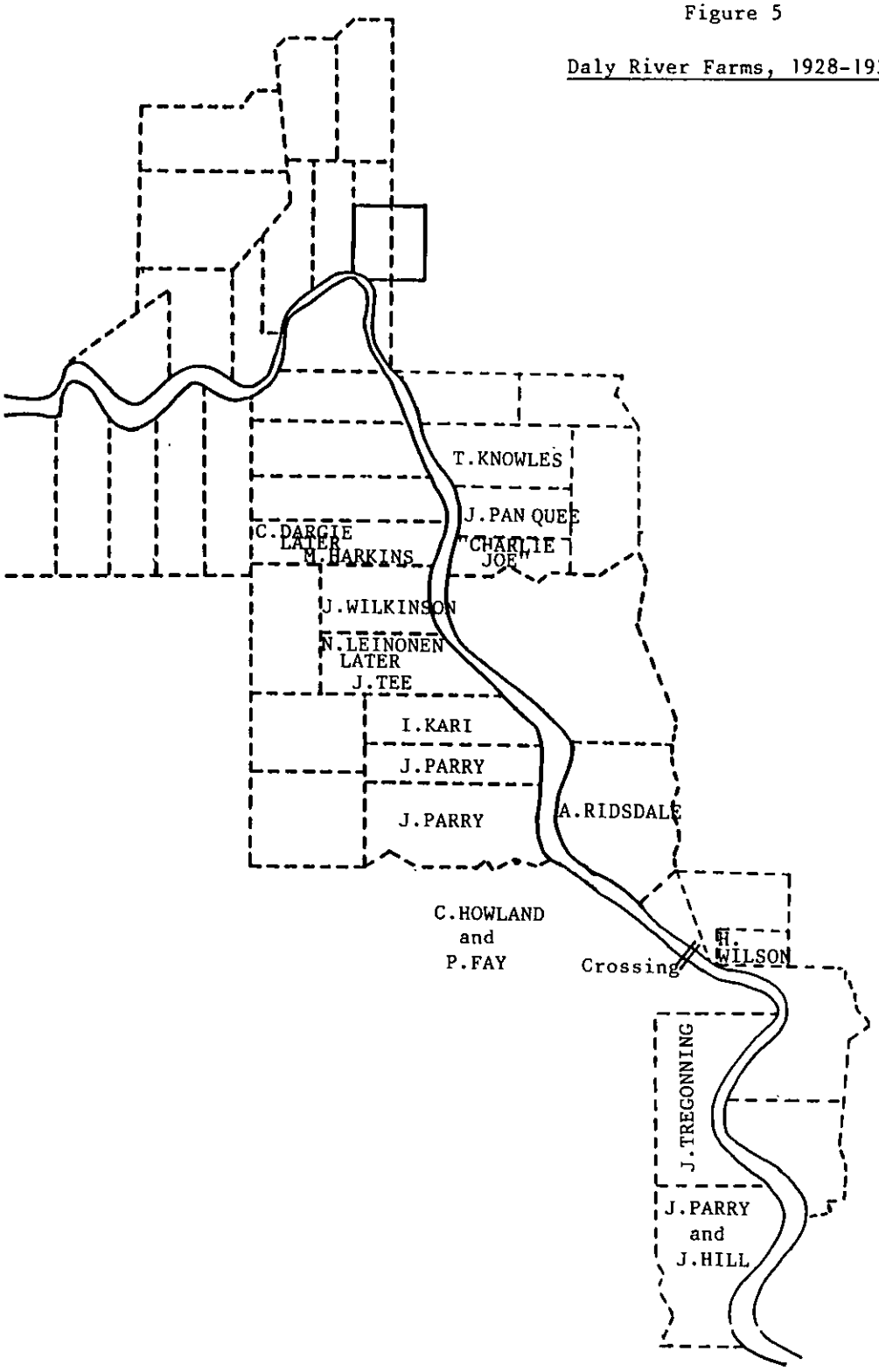
Daly River Farms 1913-1916



Source: Richards 1982, Maps 2 and 5

Figure 5

Daly River Farms, 1928-1932



In the late 1920s the price of peanuts boomed and in 1929 there were 15 farmers in the area. Richards' map of the agricultural leases at that time is reproduced here as figure 5. By this time Parry had acquired two blocks next to his original block and worked a southern block with Hill. Parry had two sons, Joe and Bill, and a daughter named Rosie. Joe died in 1975. Bill will be mentioned later as the leader of the Marrithiyel group (his mother's tribe) who are now in the process of establishing their own community within the Daly River Aboriginal Reserve. The names of other early non-Aboriginal residents are found amongst Aborigines from the area today, including Wilson, Dargie, Sams and Pan Quee, but it cannot be assumed the Aborigines bearing these names are relatives of the Europeans or of each other. Jimmy Pan Quee's name, particularly, is used by a number of Aborigines of Chinese descent.

Bad weather resulted in the crops being poor until 1934 and by then peanut prices had fallen and farmers left again. Those that remained formed a very poor European community with an even poorer Aboriginal community substantially dependent upon it.

Stanner (1933(a), 1933(b), 1979) visited the area in 1932 and found that all farmers employed Aborigines on farming or domestic work, for rewards in the form of rations of food (bread, tea, sugar and rice) and tobacco, and for an end-of-year bonus of goods. Aboriginal workers laboured five and a half days per week at eight hours per day, usually for between four and seven months per year. While employed they lived in camps on the farms. Richards (1982) quotes government figures showing that there were 96 Aborigines employed in the area during the bad year of 1933 and some 250 employed in the best year in the mid-1930s.

Stanner remarks that the Aborigines had become very dependent on the farms and had lost some of their hunting skills. European goods were even traded along traditional routes. Some Aborigines had become addicted to tobacco, alcohol and opium. By 1935, he reports, the country between the Daly River and Fitzmaurice Rivers was empty apart from 100 to 200 Moiils. Members of all of the surrounding tribes had migrated to the area to gain access to European goods including Wagaman, Nangiomeri, Maranungo, Maramandjii, Marithiel, Maritjamiri, Mariwuda, Maridan, Moiil, Maritjabin and Nangor (using Stanner's spelling). By 1938 there were 590 Aborigines living around the farms. These migrations caused considerable trouble including fights, and resulted in the merging of groups.

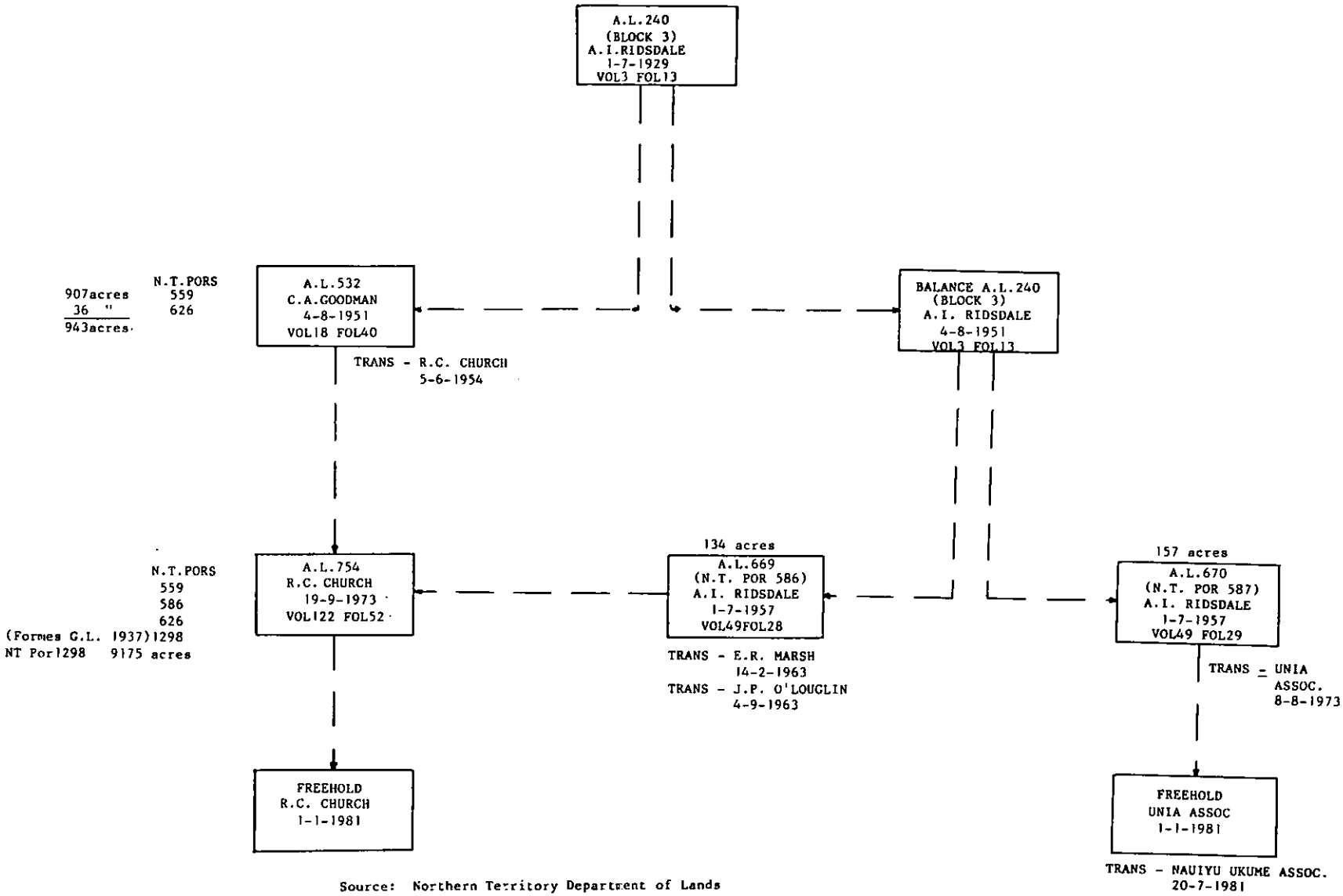
During and after World War II the area remained depressed. Peanuts remained the main crop. Aborigines continued to live around the old agricultural area, supplying labour to the farms and the surrounding stations. A major change came, however, in 1956 when a mission was established just north of the crossing.

MSC Mission

Being concerned about the lack of education facilities for Aboriginal children in the area, Joe and Bill Parry, Harry Wilson and John Chapman approached the Bishop of Darwin, JP O'Loughlin, MSC, and the Native Affairs Branch in 1952 to see if a school could be established. On investigation it was decided that since the people in the area had very bad health, a hospital was also needed. Thus the MSC established a mission on the Daly River just north of the crossing, aided by government funds. Pye reports

Figure 6

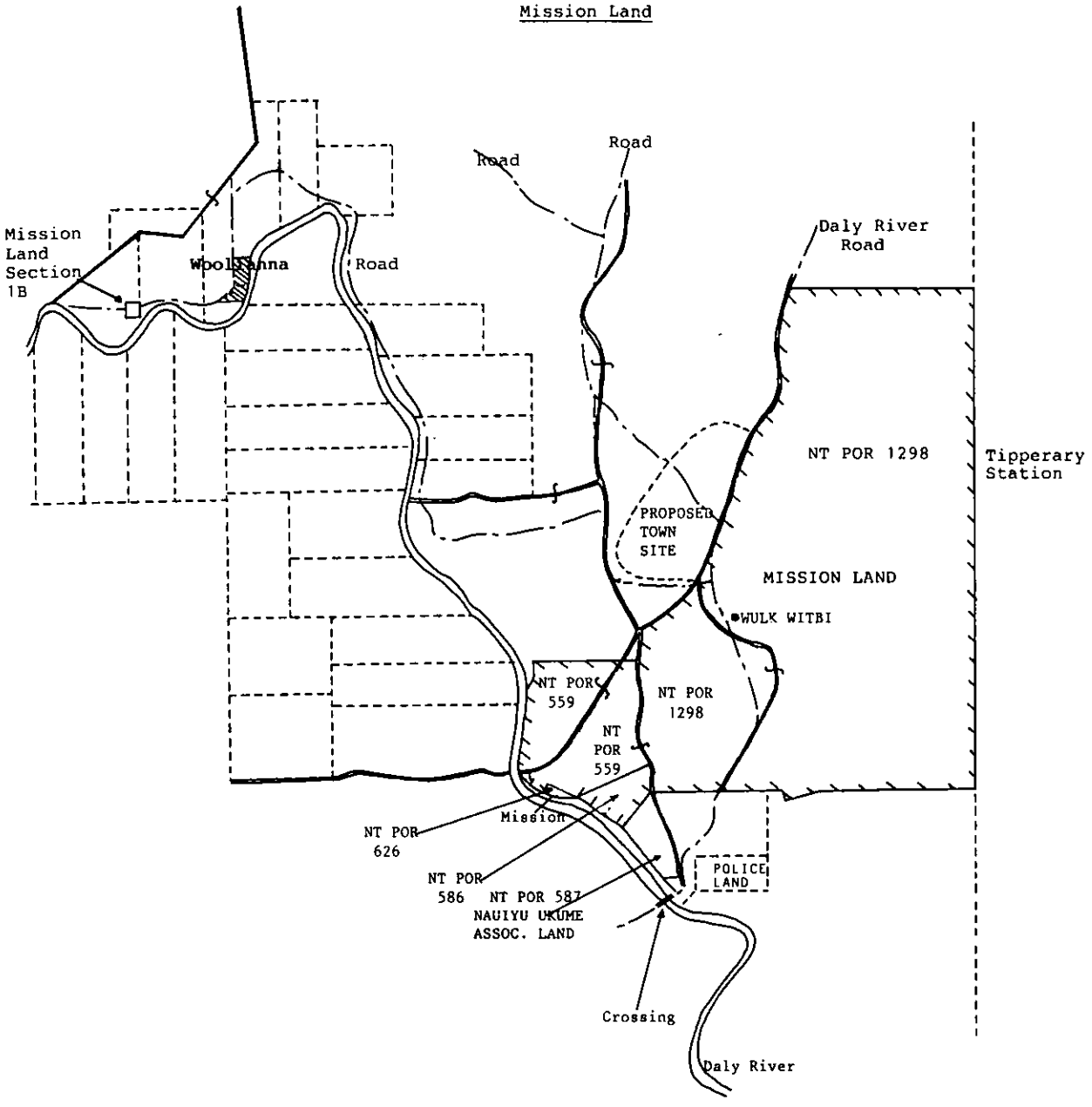
Flow Chart A.L.240 Daly River



Source: Northern Territory Department of Lands

Figure 7

Mission Land



that the initial government grants were 40,000 pounds in the first year, about 10,000 pounds in the second and somewhat less in the third year (1976, 18). The mission was opened officially on 28 October 1956 although there was much activity before that. The original idea was that the mission would be a resource centre for people living and working on the farms and stations in the area and there would not be a large resident and dependent population. This concept was to change, however.

The mission was established on a part of the agricultural block originally owned by A Ridsdale (see figure 5). Figures 6 and 7 trace the development of mission land to the present. The original area was 943 acres but in 1963 it was expanded by the addition of 134 acres and in 1973 by the addition of 9,175 acres making a total of 10,252 acres. (Notice that this figure, which was supplied by the NT Department of Lands, is slightly greater than the 10,214 acres figure for mission land, given in the Malak Malak land claim book (1982).) Until 1981 all of this land was held as an agricultural lease, although the agricultural terms of the lease were never enforced. In 1981 all of the land in the area owned by the mission was converted to freehold. The mission also owns a small block of 10 acres of freehold land in the Woolianna area known as Section 1B. The Aboriginal organisation based at the mission, originally called the Unia Association and later Namiyu Ukume, owns NT Por 587 which adjoins mission land.

Until 1970, Northern Territory Welfare Branch Annual Reports attempted to present production data and accounts of activities in Aboriginal communities in a systematic way. These reports have been used to construct table 1 and to construct an account of the development of the mission to 1970 as presented below. Many of the production figures in the table must have been 'best guesses' and they should be used only as a broad guide to production levels. Also, the number of houses reported to be built each year for Aborigines, does not always sum to the reported total housing stock. These totals are given in brackets in the housing column. Some of the houses would have been abandoned or reconstructed but there is no mention of it. In the table 'n.a.' means that no data was collected for the item concerned in that year and a dash indicates that data were collected but there was no entry for Daly River Mission. Presumably, the production level was zero. After 1970 the nature of the reports changed and they ceased to be as useful as they were, for our purposes.

Construction of the mission commenced in 1955 and the Welfare Branch report for 1955-56 remarks that by June 1956 the buildings satisfactorily completed, or almost completed, were the kitchen-dining room, infirmary, school, boys' dormitory, girls' dormitory, convent, presbytery, recreation centre, garage and workshop. The airstrip was also completed in that year. In the following year the Report comments that 'it has been found necessary to employ some adult natives on the mission and accordingly two houses for wards were constructed utilizing bricks made on the spot' (Welfare Branch Annual Report, 1957-58: 21-22). These houses were made of concrete bricks with an iron roof and had two large rooms and a verandah, with space for the addition of another room. Thus commenced the establishment of a resident Aboriginal population.

Table 1
Population and Production at the Daly River Mission
1957-1970

Year Ending	Population Adults	Population Children	Houses for Aborigines built in the year	Production: Fruit and Vegetables lbs.gross	Production: Meat and Dugong lbs.net	Production: Fish and Turtle lbs.net	Production: Eggs Doz	Production: Fodder lbs	Production: Sewing items	Other Production Activities Mentioned
1957	12	50	2	na	na	7,280	na	na	na	Brickmaking
1958	160	120	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	Brickmaking
1959	24	84	-	11,200	6,500	2,200	300	1,000	2,150	Brickmaking, artefacts
1960	72	114	-	13,450	5,500	1,400	330	970	1,700	Brickmaking, artefacts
1961	65	104	3	26,500	24,112	833	833	na	na	
1962	55	129	-	17,884	33,674	3,534	467	na	na	
1963	51	89	-	22,458	29,290	2,133	335	na	na	
1964	60	80	Start of village: 1 built	42,592	34,380	4,600	600	na	973	Brickmaking, artefacts, hunting
1965	38	88	8	35,034	31,950	2,400	400	26,980	646	Brickmaking, artefacts, hunting
1966	55	83	3 (13)	28,550	30,080	3,000	500	26,980	2,036	Brickmaking, hunting
1967	69	95	1 (16)	25,666	43,100	5,134	1,000	94,000	1,342	Brickmaking, cattle work
1968	62	102	-	24,210	47,100	700	1,000	4,480	230	Brickmaking, cattle work
1969	56	114	(13)	31,500	45,300	600	4,000	311,360	949	
1970	54	96	-	95,580	40,100	2,000	504	9,000	na	

Note: In 1966 the Welfare Branch began recording full and part Aboriginal population figures but did not give a break-up into adults and children. The population totals of full and all Aborigines for the years 1966 to 1970 were:

Year	Full Aborigines	All Aborigines
1966	138	155
1967	164	190
1968	164	189
1969	170	193
1970	150	180

Source: Northern Territory Welfare Branch Annual Reports

In 1957 the mission organised a small number of men to catch fish and the product was sent to Darwin where it earned 952 pounds. The garden had been an early priority but in March 1957 the Daly River rose, reaching approximately 50 feet (Pye 1976: 23) at the Crossing. Many of the buildings at the mission were under water and the garden was destroyed, resulting in no agricultural production in that year. This flood has been followed by others and flooding has been a constant nuisance to the mission. It might be tempting to assume that a simple repositioning of the mission could overcome this problem, but there are only two alternatives: the flat, relatively rich flood-prone ground or stony and relatively infertile hills. While the latter may have been a better choice given the current nature of the mission it would have been inappropriate in the early days when the mission was attempting to develop agriculture.

By 1959 the garden was producing substantial product, men were organised to kill native game and to fish, there was a fowl house, a clothes making enterprise, some stockfeed was produced and artefacts to the value of 840 pounds were sold. The church was also under construction, using local materials and Aboriginal labour where possible. By 1960 there were regular classes in which boys were taught joinery, motor mechanics and agriculture, and the girls learnt needlework, gardening, cooking and domestic duties. At this stage, the Report records that people from Brinkin, Malak Malak, Moil, Nangomeri and Wagiman groups lived at the mission. However, although the mission was on Malak Malak land it is doubtful if any Malak Malak lived there for substantial periods.

A very important development began in 1964. It was the beginning of the construction of the 'Aboriginal village' at the mission. This followed the recognition that the nature of the mission had changed dramatically from the original concept to something along the lines of a Jesuit Reduction. There was now a large resident population with most of the workers employed by the mission: 23 men were employed all told in brickmaking (4), hygiene (2), gardening (4), fencing (2), pastoral activities (4), building (1), machinery work (2), kitchen (1) and hunting (3); while 17 women were employed in craft work (2), teaching (1), baking (3), sewing and laundry work (4), home duties and gardening (5), at the hospital (1) and in the kitchen (1). Employees were paid wages as well as keep and a Welfare Branch study at the time remarked that 'facility in the use of money, the value of coins, etc. has been noted, and some are keen to bank their money against a rainy day'. Courses in hygiene, civics and nursing were being provided by the Welfare Branch.

Mission production of foodstuffs was substantial and local wildlife killed by employed hunters kept the mission in meat. The economy of the mission had so developed that it was largely self-sufficient, with everyone gainfully employed. Investment was continuing at the mission, a baling machine had been acquired from the Agriculture Branch, a substantial quantity of stock feed was being produced, a paddock was being cleared, five tons of peanuts were harvested, the fruit trees and the vegetable garden were producing well, the number of hens had been increased, and the brick-making business was selling bricks to European builders in the area.

In addition, the mission's attempts to convert the people to Christianity were meeting with considerable success. It is reported that 'one stockman who had six months of contact with Christianity at school some years ago was prepared to relinquish his job on a neighbouring station so that he could attend a six weeks intensive course to prepare himself for

baptism and marriage. Regular visits were made to the stations and a practice has grown up whereby, unasked, the Aboriginal stockmen themselves contributed to the expenses of these trips' (Report 1964-65: 153). Indeed, even today, people who have long ago left the mission declare their faith, and the people living at Peppimenarti make a religious contribution. On Aboriginal customs, the mission followed the policy that 'what is bad is (to be) gradually eliminated and what is good is (to be) encouraged' (Report 1964-65: 152). Aboriginal dancing and art were encouraged and marriages were approved only after an examination to see that they conformed to Aboriginal law. However, polygamy and many other marriage and Aboriginal punishment practices were strongly discouraged. Rev. Fr J Leary, MSC was the founding priest at the mission and remained for a decade. After leaving the mission, he wrote in 1975 on the general aims of employment, commenting that

> Employment should take the Aboriginal from his nomadic, tribal hunting, nature-dependent existence, to a modern, settled, economically based, individualistic independent existence. From it must stem concept of home, family-life related to the home (as against the tribal concept), status in the community, responsibility (individual rather than tribal) (Pye 1976: 69).

Further, he writes:

> Tribalism can both be a help and a hindrance; insofar as the group nourishes a spirit of cooperation, mutual help and support, corporate confidence in the approach to employment and a new way of living, it is a good thing and should be encouraged, but definitely within certain limits to such things as: Associations, Co-operatives, Self-Help Projects. However...it tends to keep the group statically as it is,...it discourages individual assertion, initiative, responsibility, authority. Whereas with the old life he faced it more as a group, the new life he must face more as an individual (Pye 1976: 71).

Although these thoughts were written a decade after Fr. Leary left Daly River Mission they are likely to give a clue to the philosophy adopted at the mission while he was Superintendent. They were certainly consistent with the nature of the development which was taking place at the time.

Employment outside the mission was difficult to obtain although 'greater Tipperary Station' (meaning the current stations of Litchfield, Forster, Tipperary, Elizabeth Downs and Fish River) still employed many Aborigines and was considered to be the main source of employment for people coming into the workforce from the mission. A Welfare Branch study (unpublished) in 1964 showed that there were 40 Aboriginal males and 19 Aboriginal females living on greater Tipperary, composed of 18 male workers and 5 female workers, 7 unemployed (all females), 22 children and 7 pensioners. While there was full employment at the mission at the time, it could only be maintained for as long as many of the school leavers obtained work on Tipperary or on the farms in the area. (For an account of the development of Tipperary Station as a pastoral lease, see Mollah 1980, 94,95.)

In the 1957-58 Report, it was noted that there was considerable illness and malnutrition in the area, but in the 1965 Report, the health of the people living at the mission was pronounced to be 'very good'. That

appears to have remained the case to the present. The flying doctor visited regularly and improvements to the airstrip had been undertaken so that it was open at all times. Seventy children were enrolled at the school and attendance was nearly 100 per cent. Improvements had been made to the curriculum and teaching equipment, students had been sent elsewhere to further their education and children had participated in the Eisteddford and Darwin Show.

Production continued at a high level. In that year the mission farm was the only one in the area to produce peanuts although all of the crop was consumed at the mission. The lucerne crop for that year, however, was sold. Further, three work contracts had been arranged for the men: for the supply of jumping poles to the show society, the supply of concrete bricks to nearby stations and for the felling of trees on the perimeter of the airstrip. 'On such contract work part of the payment was made in the form of a bonus over and above their weekly pay if the contract was completed on time' (Report 1964-65, 153). The mission staff remained small, being composed of a priest-in-charge, three brothers, two laymen and three sisters. The brothers worked as a driver/mechanic, a gardener and a hygiene supervisor, while the sisters were employed in teaching and supervision of the kitchen/dining room.

In previous years preparation had been made for the introduction of cattle by clearing and fencing paddocks and by laying on water and in 1967 a small herd was introduced and did well. In 1968 the most important issue in this area was the huge agricultural development which was taking place on Tipperary Station. Commenting on it, the Report for 1967-68 hoped that 'this would bring more men into permanent and gainful employment and improve the sense of responsibility and achievement amongst Aboriginal workers. Little possibility seemed to exist at the moment for this employment' (p213). There seems to be no public record of Aborigines ever being employed on the project (see for instance Pye 1976: 27-28, Reports) although it is possible that some Aborigines living on the station at the time were involved.

The Tipperary venture was yet another 'develop the north' project on a massive scale that failed almost immediately it was begun. Mollah (1980) gives a detailed account of the venture. In 1967 greater Tipperary Station was sold to a group of Texan investors who operated under the name Tipperary Land Corporation. The plans were to spend A$20 million to establish a farming community on Tipperary of 15,000 people, producing a crop of 300,000 tons of grain sorghum per annum, supported by irrigation. It was intended to sell the crop to Japan, initially.

The project was also to involve the production of high quality beef cattle and possibly produce fish and mining products. The Corporation planned to begin by clearing a large area of the station and to sow grain sorghum for profit, to demonstrate that it could be done successfully. Later this developed land would be divided into small farms of 4,800 hectares and sold to farmers. This development was to continue until the 300,000 hectares which were suitable for such development were exhausted. The theory of the development was sound: the Corporation with its expertise and capital, would convert unproductive land into productive land cheaply and either realise its capital gains by selling farms, or take high operating profits by continuing to cultivate, in whatever proportions seemed appropriate at the time. All it needed to do was to clear the land, develop appropriate infrastructure and show profitability. The latter it

could not do, however. Accumulated losses from the operations from 1968 to 1973 were of the order of US$7 million. Yields on the sorghum crop were well below expectations and major plantings were undertaken only for the first three years. The fishing project made a small loss in 1969, a major loss in 1970 and was then abandoned. Hopes for mining proved disappointing. The project was then run down in the next three years and Tipperary Station was sold in 1973. The clearing and improvements had increased the value of the station, of course. The acquisition costs of greater Tipperary station in 1967 were A$1.5 million and if the value of the station had grown at the same rate as inflation (using the CPI and assuming that no development was undertaken) then the value of the property when it was sold in 1973 would have been A$2.022 million. Since Sutton Motors bought the station for A$4.5 million one can conclude that the market valued the improvements at approximately A$2.5 million whereas the accumulated losses on the development were approximately US$7 million. Clearly the project was a failure as both a financial venture and as a regional development scheme.

Such a project in the area must have caused expectations that there would have been considerable flow-ons to the Aboriginal community but there appears to have been virtually none. If the project led to the settlement of a large rural community in the area then there would have been employment and improved facilities for Aborigines, but it did not. The project employed very few local workers in its development stage because the company wanted to use large and specialised machinery and there was insufficient time to train local workers. Almost all of the multiplier effects of this and similar projects in their development stage take place well away from the region where the development is taking place and the Northern Territory gained little from it.

Table 1 shows that by 1970, Daly River Mission had developed into a significant agricultural community in its own right. This was also true of other missions and government settlements in the Northern Territory at the time. All of the 13 missions and all but three of the 19 government settlements had an effective garden; all of the missions and all but one of the settlements produced significant quantities of meat; three missions and one settlment had dairy herds; ten of the missions and nine of the settlements produced significant quantities of eggs; three missions and five settlements produced significant quantities of fodder; ten missions and eleven settlements produced clothes; all missions and settlements on the coast produced a range of fish, dugong, turtles, oysters and crabs. The levels of production varied significantly from year to year. To illustrate the importance of this production in the Northern Territory economy table 2 shows total production of a range of commodities by the missions and settlements for three years and by the European community for one year. These figures cannot be assumed to be completely accurate, of course, because of the casual way in which much of the data were probably collected at source.

'Meat' figures include game caught by hunters employed by the missions and settlements as well as beef produced by the cattle projects. Bush tucker production is not included in these figures. At this stage much of the food consumed by the communities was supplied by the community kitchens. The cash economy had not developed significantly and community stores sold only a small range of 'non-essential' items. Most production was consumed by the local community but some was sold to local Europeans, sent to places like Darwin and Alice Springs or sold to other Aboriginal

communities.

To illustrate the relative importance of this production to the Northern Territory economy the last column in table 2 shows Aboriginal community production as a proportion of the total of European and Aboriginal production in the Northern Territory for 1967-68. These proportions fluctuated greatly between years. In 1965-66, for instance, the quantity of fish produced by Aboriginal communities as a proportion of total production was some 37.8 per cent. It is instructive of attitudes at the time that the Northern Territory Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch Reports, when reporting 'Agricultural production' for the year, did not include Aboriginal production. One effect of this was, of course, that the Reports considerably understated the level of production in the Northern Territory in all categories shown in table 2 apart from meat production. Further, since Welfare Branch figures did not include estimates of bush tucker produced, it is clear that production by the Aboriginal communities was even more important than that shown in the table.

The aim of the missions and settlements at the time was to establish communities that were substantially self-sufficient in food and clothing and building construction. Wherever possible local labour and materials were used. Today, the overall goal is for the communities to become self-supporting (that is, to achieve relative economic independence from government while being incorporated into the market system) and although this goal is, in principle, easier to achieve for a given target income, circumstances have changed so that its achievement now is almost impossible in practice. Until the 1970s, however, considerable self sufficiency was achieved and this was possible largely because of the low wage rates paid to Aborigines.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s Aboriginal wage rates in the Northern Territory were increased to reach parity with European wage rates and Aborigines were incorporated into the European social welfare system. While these changes are to be lauded and clearly led to an increase in per capita Aboriginal incomes, they have had undesirable effects on the level and nature of production and employment in Aboriginal communities. Those reforms, more than any other changes, brought about the decline in production and employment in the communities. Unfortunately, production figures for the communities were not kept in a systematic way from 1970 so that the decline in production cannot be documented in a simple way. However, there are very few of those highly productive gardens still operating in communities, and a visitor will often observe vacant iron sheds which were once the bakery and butchershop, the vast abandoned and overgrown garden, and possibly even decaying cattle yards. Activities which seem to have survived better than many others are egg and cattle production, both of which are capital or land intensive, and clothes making which is often able to attract subsidies or protective measures. Some communities have broken the nexus between Aboriginal and European wages and this has allowed more enterprises to survive in their communities.

Table 2

Food and Fodder Production in the Northern Territory 1963-64 to 1967-68

	Production on Missions and Settlements			Production by the European Community	Aboriginal Production as proportion of Aboriginal and European Production
	1963-64	1965-66	1967-68 (a)	1967-68 (b)	1967-68 $\frac{a}{a+b}$ %
Fruit and Vegetables (Gross weight, lbs)	828,127	887,170	714,222	1,164,800	38.0
Milk (Gross pints)	62,000	41,719	11,791 (1)	445,488	8.6 (2)
Meat (Net weight, lbs)	505,777	718,062	620,153	82,272,000 (3)	0.007
Eggs (Dozens)	27,078	41,118	62,722	373,760	14.4
Seafood including Dugong (Net weight, lbs)	277,109	215,768	262,045	630,000	29.4
Fodder (lbs)	678,776	534,643	578,217	4,256,000	12.0

Footnote: (1) This figure excludes production on settlements, which was usually much more than for missions, as it was not provided in the Report.

(2) Aboriginal production for the year 1965-66 was used in this calculation

(3) The Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch report does not give the weight of cattle produced so this figure was obtained by multiplying the number of cattle produced for local and export markets by 500 lbs.

Source: Northern Territory Annual Report, 1963-64, 1965-66, 1967-68

Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch of the NT Administration, 1967-68

The following is a brief chronology of the introduction of Aborigines into the European wage and social welfare system:

- 1966 - Conciliation and Arbitration Commission judgement providing that award wages be paid to union-member Aborigines working on pastoral properties to be effective from 1 December 1968.

- 1966 - Pensions and other social security benefits to be paid to nomadic Aborigines.

- 1968 - Social Security pensions and other benefits paid directly to Aborigines.

- 1969 - The introduction of the Employment Training Scheme (ETS).

- 1969-1970 - The introduction of the Special Work Projects scheme.

- July 1972 Substantial increases in the rates of training allowances under the ETS.

- Apr 1973 - Aborigines on reserves and missions become eligible for unemployment benefits.

- May 1973 - Easing of the work test for unemployment benefits to enable Aborigines on reserves and missions to receive unemployment benefits without having to shift away from their place of residence.

- Nov 1973 - The beginning of the phasing out of maintenance payments to pastoral properties.

- 6 Nov 1973 - Award wages replace training allowance under the ETS.

- 1973-1974 Expansion of Special Work Projects to reduce unemployment arising from decision to pay award wages to recipients of training allowance.

- Apr 1977 - Introduction of the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) scheme. Under this scheme a community can receive grants in lieu of unemployment benefits to employ people on development projects.

Prior to the increase in wage rates, the Northern Territory had a two-sector economy. The first sector was a high labour-cost, capital-intensive European sector and the second was the low labour-cost, labour-intensive Aboriginal sector. The pastoral industry, insofar as it used Aboriginal labour, was in the latter sector. Production could exist in remote areas with few resources if it was of the second type. European production, however, could not. The increases in Aboriginal wage rates forced the economy of the Aboriginal communities to conform to the European type. That is, labour intensive activities had to cease: bread, fruit and vegetables were cheaper flown in from the towns than produced locally. Meat, unless butchered in only an elementary way, was cheaper imported.

Imported clothes were cheaper than locally produced items. The communities lost their ability to compete in the supply of building materials to the European and their own communities, and European labour was employed in building construction. At the same time increases in labour costs in the pastoral industry led to less labour-intensive production methods and Aborigines (and Europeans) were sacked.

Unemployment in Aboriginal communities became a serious problem. The system responded to this in three main ways: firstly the government created many jobs in the communities in town development, housing, health and education; secondly the government subsidised the operations of and investment in enterprises in communities, and thirdly the communities have attempted to re-establish their own (lower-rate) wages structures. It must be repeated, however, that despite the decline in independence and the growth of unemployment, the level of per capita real income received in the communities is likely to be much higher now than it was in the low-wage period.

Table 3
Aboriginal Population of Daly River Mission
1971-1982*

Year	Population	Source	Year	Population	Source
1971	168	Welfare Branch	1977	171	DAA
1972	227	Welfare Branch	1978	170	DAA
1973	n a		1979	163	DCD
1974	n a		1980	150	DCD
1975	200	DAA	1981	163	DCD
1976	153	Dr M Wilson, MSC (personal communication)	1982	213	Daly River Miss Hospital records

* DAA is the Department of Aboriginal Affairs
DCD is the Department of Community Development

Daly River Mission was affected by these changes along with other communities. Much of the following account of developments at the mission in the 1970s comes from unpublished material in DAA files. Table 3 shows the population at the Mission since 1970 as well as can be gleaned from disparate sources. The population probably reached its peak in the early 1970s as in the second half of the decade many people moved to the new community that was being developed at Peppimenarti in the Daly River Aboriginal Reserve. Many people also lived at various camps on greater Tipperary, but their camps were highly unstable and their numbers depended on the amount of employment available on the station. Department of Community Development surveys in the late 1970s show that the number of Aborigines living on the Tipperary stations had reached the maximum of 60 on Elizabeth Downs (mainly Marrithiyels) 20 on Litchfield Station and 30 on Tipperary Station. When I visited the area in 1982 there was only one Aboriginal man living on Elizabeth Downs and none on the others. Greater

Tipperary Station had reduced its operations and employment, and the people had left. Many had gone to Daly River Mission and Peppimenarti. The Department of Community Development also reports the Aboriginal population in 1981 on the neighbouring stations of Douglas and Oolloo as 12 and 8 respectively. Again, on my visit in 1982 there was one Aborigine living on Douglas Station and all of the Aboriginal people on Oolloo Station had left. Although the number of people on the stations fluctuated in the 1970s the trend in the second half of the decade was for the number camped on the stations and around the crossing to decline.

A second major flood took place at the mission in 1974 when the river reached 49 feet (Pye 1976: 53). The garden was destroyed including all of the citrus trees, many cattle were killed and there was much damage to buildings. By 1975 the garden had been rebuilt, employing a tractor driver and several labourers. The mission ran about 500 head of cattle to provide meat for the kitchen and employed one stockman. The bakery employed one man and a number of people were employed in the kitchen which provided meals for 60 child boarders, many from Peppimenarti (who received three meals per day for seven days per week), and 60 child residents (who received a midday meal, and morning and afternoon tea five days per week). Several men were employed in fencing. A major building project was being undertaken to rehouse Aborigines from the existing village and to provide accommodation for an increased population. There were 30 families living in the existing 16 houses and an old farm house on the Unia block of land. The mission's town infrastructure was being improved.

By 1975 some 52 people were employed at the mission, including Europeans, and there was no unemployment. While the mission had ceased to sell bricks, fodder, artefacts and vegetables to the outside world, gardening, baking and stock work were still carried on successfully. Most of the jobs were subsidised by government Departments of Aboriginal Affairs, Health and Education. More Europeans were being employed as the nature of material goods in the community and financial arrangements for the mission had become more complex.

The mission had changed its name to Nauiyu and an Aboriginal council of residents had been formed called the Nauiyu Council. It had had no specific responsibilities but in 1975 it took over responsibility for hygiene, garbage disposal and sanitation. The Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA) financed the capital and recurrent costs of these activities. The Council has developed slowly by comparison with other Aboriginal community councils. An important problem for the development of the Council has been the fact that the mission is on land owned by Catholic Missions and not by the Aboriginal residents. Clearly, the Council could not develop like other Aboriginal community councils, which have powers similar to shire councils plus the power to control entry, when it was on land owned by another organisation.

Besides the Council, an Aboriginal organisation called the Unia Association was set up. It had been incorporated on 17 April 1972 for the purpose of 'assisting civic and community development' of people at the mission. By the second half of the 1970s, however, it had become principally concerned with developing a community and cattle operations at Peppimenarti in the Daly River Aboriginal Reserve. In 1975 it owned some houses at the mission and had a small block of land, of 157 acres, adjoining mission land on its southern boundary, which it had acquired in 1973. In figures 6 and 7 it is the block described there as belonging to the

Nauiyu Nambiyu Association. This block was never farmed. Unia also built a Community Hall at the mission which involved the substantial use of Aboriginal labour and some 45 per cent of the concrete blocks used were made locally. Working Aboriginal residents at the mission contributed between $4 and $15 per fortnight to the Association.

The experiences of flooding in 1957 and 1974 resulted in the mission building a flood safe centre on its land at 'five mile'. This was later to be called Peppiweti and then Wulk Witbi for reasons to be explained later. The centre was opened in December 1978 and has since developed as the focus for the mission's tourism plans.

In 1979 operations at the mission were satisfactory with full employment remaining. Indeed, four Timorese were employed in the kitchen because of a shortage of labour. Some 50 positions, Aboriginal and European (almost all of the employees) were subsidised by government departments and most of the equipment was financed by government grants and loans. Catholic Missions also subsidised some staff and equipment.

The cattle project at the mission was not working as expected - it was supposed to supply meat for the kitchen - but meat was being purchased from Darwin or Katherine. Alcohol had become a problem and the mission had established its own beer club in an attempt to control drinking. With up to 95 people being inadequately housed, housing was still thought to be a major problem.

The Council had changed its name to Nauiyu Ukume, for reasons to be discussed later, and had taken over responsibility for town maintenance and public utilities, the beer club, the store, some housing and Wulk Witbi. The distinction between the mission and Nauiyu Ukume is not easy to make at times because contracts were often held by the mission and carried out by Nauiyu Ukume, using a mix of staff and equipment from both organisations. The priest-in-charge sat in on Nauiyu Ukume meetings but did not vote. He did control entry to the mission, however. The degree of Aboriginal control was, and still is, a cause of concern to many observers of the mission and many see land ownership as being at the base of the matter. The mission, it seems, is prepared to hand over day-to-day running of the mission to the Aboriginal residents providing that does not jeopardise their control of the land.

A group of five families of Malak Malak who were living at Woolianna were admitted to membership of Nauiyu Ukume. Nauiyu Ukume agreed to seek government funds to build one house per year for the group at Woolianna and one house has been built on the small lease there, to date.

By the end of the 1970s, the mission had changed dramatically. It looked much like a very modern town, with modern houses and essential services, the people enjoyed a high standard of health, the housing shortage had eased and there was some level of Aboriginal control. Alcohol and unemployment were problems, but not nearly as important concerns as they were in many other communities.

Throughout the 1970s there had developed a homelands movement in the area. This resulted in the establishment of a new community called Peppimenarti and the establishment of outstations in the Daly River Aboriginal Reserve.

The Homelands Movement

The 1970s was a period in which the homelands movements developed all over the Northern Territory and by the end of the 1970s virtually all of the major communities (the Tiwi communities being important exceptions) had spawned a number of outstations housing substantial populations. Aboriginal desires to live in and protect their country, to live near important religious sites, to live a more traditional economic and social life-style, to avoid problems caused by mixing with Aborigines from different groups, to avoid Europeans, to avoid problems at the larger settlements, and to promote their claims for land and material resources such as vehicles and houses were all important reasons for these movements. In the latter 1970s, governments became sympathetic to the desire for re-settlement and it became policy to assist Aborigines by providing resources for the new communities and outstations.

Daly River Mission was built on Malak Malak land but the Malak Malaks do not live at the mission. The people at the mission are migrants, mostly from the Daly River Aboriginal Reserve, so it was natural that the main homelands movement was to the Reserve, and there is now a large community at Peppimenarti (a Ngangikurrungkurr word made up as follows: peppi meaning 'hill' and menarti meaning 'large') and a number of outstations in the Reserve.

Peppimenarti Hill is an important dreaming site for the people from around the Moyle River in the Reserve and it was common for these people, while living at the mission, to visit the area for ceremonies, meetings, to settle disputes, to engage in spear fights and to dispense Aboriginal punishments. Until the 1970s very few people lived there for very long. Those who did were mostly very old people or people with young children.

However, in 1969, Harry Wilson, his wife and children, two old men, one woman and a young man left the mission and established a permanent camp at Peppimenarti Hill. Shortly after this his camp was burnt, and his possessions were destroyed. Harry Wilson still speaks of this with great sadness. Later, he returned to the area and created the large community called Peppimenarti.

Harry Wilson is an important Aboriginal entrepreneur and deserves some attention. Such entrepreneurs do not conform to the traditional pattern found in economic theory but are a new type especially adapted to the conditions in Aboriginal communities. They are able to mobilise their own communities and win resources from government agencies. They must know the thought and administrative ways of Europeans and governments, be able to communicate effectively in English, and show they can achieve targets established by funding agencies. It is also helpful if they are active in Aboriginal political or resource granting agencies. Harry Wilson has all of these characteristics.

His father was a European and his mother was a Ngangiwumeri woman from the Moyle River area. He was born in 1938 at Peppimenarti, as is Aboriginal tradition, but at the age of seven years he was taken to Port Keats for the purpose of being brought up as a European. This was government policy at the time in relation to part-Aborigines. Later he was moved to Garden Point on Melville Island where his European education continued. He learnt stockwork there and as an adult he worked on cattle stations in Queensland. He returned to Port Keats where he managed the

cattle activities. Later he married a woman from Daly River Mission and worked on Elizabeth Downs. In 1952 he was active in attempting to have Daly River Mission established, as already noted, and moved there. He became president of the Unia Association in 1975. He is credited with establishing and maintaining the community at Peppimenarti and many observers are concerned for the survival of the community should he leave (see for instance Pye 1976: 40).

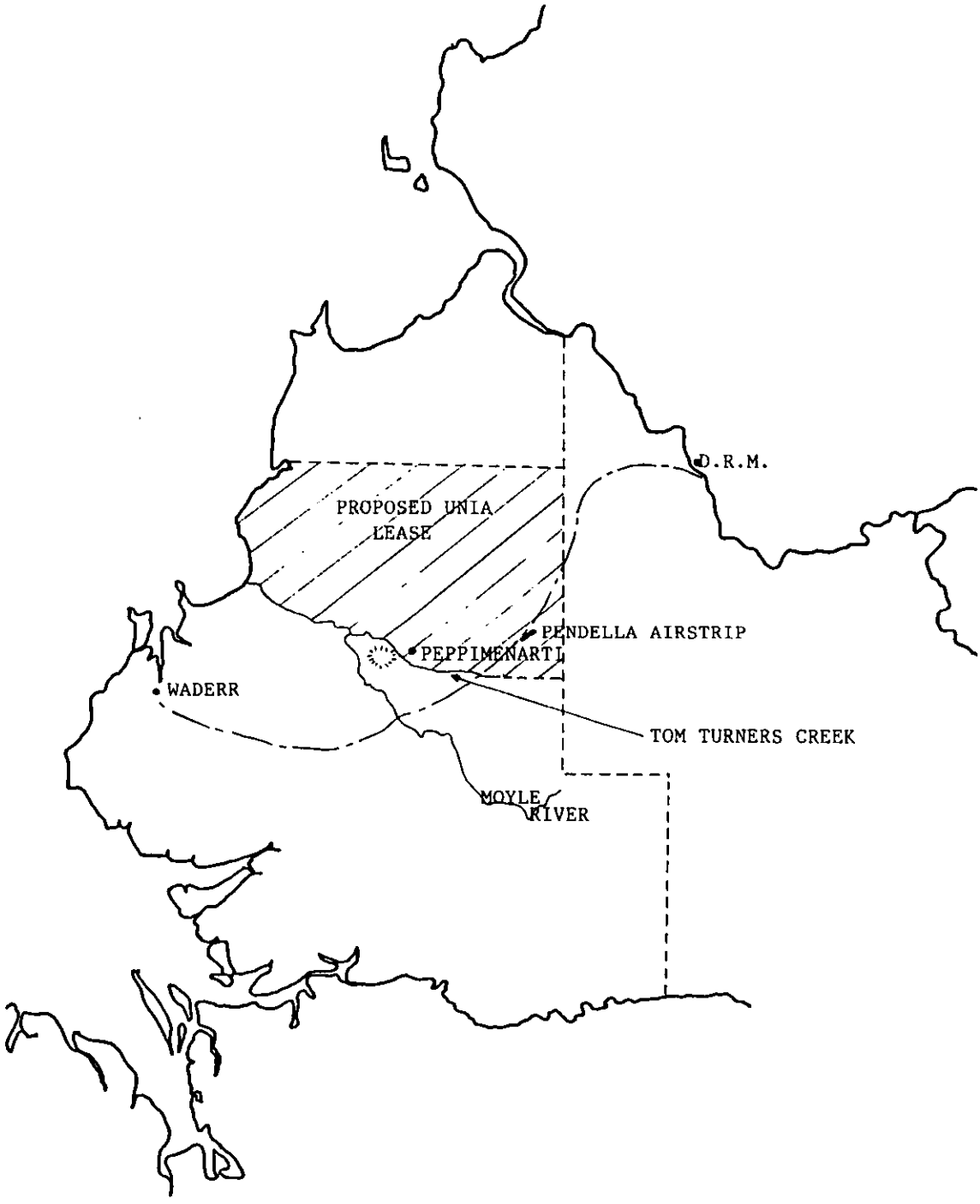
In February 1971 three Aborigines living at the mission, Charles Disbil, Billy Malbin and Martin Ngirnitj, on behalf of people at the mission, applied for a Pastoral Lease over that part of the Daly River Aboriginal Reserve bounded by Tom Turner's Creek in the south and the boundary of the Wildlife Reserve in the north (see figure 8). This is an area of 1,126 square miles and had a large number of bush cattle, mainly Shorthorns and Herefords. The Unia Association had not been incorporated at this stage and in subsequent correspondence the number of signatories to applications was increased to demonstrate greater acceptability of the idea at the mission.

Their plans were to develop the area in a number of stages over four years. The unbranded cattle on the land were legally the property of the Crown and it was proposed that many of the bulls be sold with the proceeds being shared with the Crown, perhaps on a 50/50 basis. This work was to be carried out in 1971 and 1972. Next, the northern boundary was to be fenced (about 40 miles), then two paddocks of 500 acres each would be fenced and sown with Townsville Stylo and two houses would be erected. Finally, the southern boundary fence was to be constructed. The program was to cost $42,100. In addition, it was thought that two small properties near the mission would be purchased: part of Ridsdale's original lease and the Colonia Brahman Stud. The former was a block of 157 acres adjoining the mission, of which 140 acres were cleared. The idea was that cattle could be mustered from the Moyle Plains at the end of the dry season and held on the block from where they could be sent to Darwin to take advantage of the high wet season beef prices. The block was eventually purchased in 1973 but was not used in that fashion. The Brahman Stud was an improved property of 1,700 acres. The idea was that it too would operate as a holding paddock and it had the advantage of having all-weather access to Darwin. Further, it could be used to produce fodder for sale and quality breeding cattle for the Reserve. This property was not purchased. The Aborigines were to conduct their cattle operations under the name of the Daly River Pastoral Company Pty Ltd. On further consideration of the appropriate structure for the Aboriginal organisation to run the business it was decided to form an association and not a company. Thus the Unia Association was registered on 17 April 1972.

The government decided to commission the firm of consultants, Australian Agricultural Consulting and Management Company Pty Ltd (AACM), to examine the feasibility of both the Daly River Mission project and a proposed cattle project based at Port Keats. In November 1972 the consultants produced their report (AACM, 1972). They recommended against acquiring the two small properties, thought the project was undercosted, advised reducing the proposed boundary fencing program and found that many of the people at the mission did 'not have a very clear understanding of what they want'. Nevertheless, the report recommended that the project go ahead and said that it would result in employment for up to 22 Aborigines by the third year of operation and a satisfactory rate of return on capital. It also recommended that management consultants be appointed.

Figure 8

Proposed Unia Pastoral Lease



The project was approved by the government although no formal Pastoral Lease over the area was granted and the proposal to split the proceeds from the sale of the bulls was considered unnecessary. The mustering area has since been expanded so that it is now bounded in the south by the Moyle River (and not Tom Turner's Creek) in the south and includes all of the Wildlife Sanctuary.

AACM were appointed as management consultants but a bitter dispute concerning them soon developed. Their services were discontinued after 11 months and government funds were suspended for a while, but were then resumed. Harry Wilson remarked 'People were asking us to give the consultants three years trial. What about everyone giving us three years trial? If we look like making a mess of this and we see the need for help, we will ask people to help us....We know people in the Government services in Darwin and the NT, and who will help us when we need it' (Pye 1976: 36). Points of particular irritation seemed to be the costs of the consultants, the view that they were giving directions and the fact that Harry Wilson's conception of the development was different from theirs. They were concerned with the development as a cattle project, while Harry saw it as a homelands movement: he said 'First we want a good life on our land and to live that good life, we want to run our cattle station as a way of living....We want as many homes to be built in 1976 for the people who wish to live there. The people intend living in humpies until such time as houses are available. About this we have made up our mind' (Pye 1976: 35).

The mission was supportive, morally and with administration, of both the cattle project and the settlement and relations between the mission and Peppimenarti were close. Bro Andy Howley, especially, provided valuable guidance and practical help in the early stages. Harry Wilson remarked about the planned community: 'We would like a priest to visit us sometimes. We will teach our small children what they should know about our faith. We would like our school children to stay at the mission as many already do...we would like a priest to live with us if possible...(or)...we would like to give land to the Church for church buildings, Presbytery, Convent for the sisters, if at a later time we are able to have a school and hospital' (Pye 1976: 36). Later, however, this closeness was to change over two main issues: many Peppimenarti people felt that the mission was trying to interfere with what was being done there, and some mission people felt that many of the activities at Peppimenarti were un-Christian. Regular visits by a priest were abandoned and the church never established buildings at Peppimenarti.

A village project was started by the 'Peppimenarti Housing Association' after it was given sufficient government funds to build three elementary houses. The Housing Association was incorporated in the Unia Association in 1976. The site chosen for the community was just across Tom Turner's Creek from Peppimenarti Hill, which is in full view. This site is Ngangikurrungkurr land for whom the traditional owner was Brandy Mingun, Harry Wilson's uncle. For many purposes in Aboriginal society, though not for land ownership, an uncle is the most important relative, so that while Harry is not a traditional owner of Peppimenarti land, or an inheritor, he does have substantial traditional power by virtue of his relationship with Brandy.

By 1975 there was a substantial population living at Peppimenarti (see table 4). As in the case of the mission, it is difficult to determine population figures for Peppimenarti throughout the 1970s and what could be

discovered from government and other records is presented in the table. DAA reports indicate that in 1975 the village was composed of six iron huts on concrete slabs which were connected to power. The village was clean and well maintained. There was, however, no school or medical facility and there was a great need for town and cattle plant. A temporary airstrip was established at Pandella, 10 miles away, on the Port Keats to Daly River road. It was replaced later by an airstrip at Peppimenarti.

Table 4
Aboriginal Population of Peppimenarti
1975-82

Year	Population	Source	Year	Population	Source
1975	115	DAA	1979	n.a.	
1976	162	Dr M Wilson, MSC (personal communication)	1980	300	DAA
			1981	350	DAA
1977	210	DAA			
			1982	241	Peppimenarti clinic records
1978	148	DCD			

The Unia Association had registered its cattle brand, 'UTA' on 5 September 1973. In 1975 cattle work was being carried out at two places: Peppimenarti (town), where under the direction of Harry Wilson (who was the 'Liaison Officer' and was elected President of the Unia Association during the year) 14 workers were employed; and at Arnguitj-Kirrim (devil-devil) under Ray Sams ('Head Stockman' and Harry Wilson's cousin) where six stockmen and four yard builders were employed. A vegetable and fruit garden had been established. Government aid was received for most activities being undertaken. The Peppimenarti community had instituted an internal tax system which still remains. At that time, the tax was equal to one-sixth of a worker's income and contributions varied between $5 and $40 per fortnight. The total collected was $500 per fortnight and it was used to buy fuel for vehicles and the power house. In addition, each worker contributed $2 per fortnight into a trust account for future activities of the Unia Association.

By 1977 Peppimenarti's population had grown to 210 including 80 children. Most of these people had come from Daly River Mission, but some had also come from nearby stations and Port Keats Mission. By this stage there was a strong feeling that as few Europeans as possible should be allowed to live at Peppimenarti. Children were sent to Daly River Mission to live in dormitories during the school term but the parents were reluctant to continue doing so. A clinic was established in a caravan and was run by an Aboriginal health worker. The community greatly desired a new town and new houses and were prepared to employ European contractors if this would lead to the town and houses being developed quickly.

Some 47 people were employed and two were unemployed. The policy was that unemployed people should work without pay for the community. Alcohol was sold through the store and residents were subject to a four can per day limit. Peppimenarti joined with the mission in objection to the continuation of the liquor licence at the Daly River Hotel Motel, located at the crossing. Their view was that any licence in the area should be

controlled by Aborigines so as to regulate Aboriginal consumption of alcohol. Later, when the Daly River Hotel Motel was offered for sale, Harry Wilson applied for government funds to enable the Unia Association to purchase the Hotel Motel. The plan was to move the two demountable buildings, of which it was composed, to the Unia Association's block on the Daly River where it would become the centre-piece of a tourist development. Some finance was eventually arranged and an offer was made but it was rejected.

By 1979 Peppimenarti and Daly River Mission had grown apart, although residents of one place would often visit the other for substantial periods. Since Harry Wilson became president of the Unia Association in 1975, the Association had concentrated more and more of its resources at Peppimenarti and in the financial year 1978-79, all of the Association's budget was spent there. This created resentment amongst people who were still living at, and desired to continue to live at the mission, and in November 1979 some of its members living at the mission petitioned the government for the winding up of the Association. This eventually took place in 1981 and, broadly speaking, the Association's assets at Peppimenarti became the property of the Peppimenarti Association and the assets at the mission became the property of the newly created Nauiyu Ukume which also served as the council at the mission. The exception was the 'Ridsdale property', NT Portion 587, for which Nauiyu Ukume paid the Peppimenarti Association the sum of $13,000.

Names became an issue in the dispute and Peppimenarti agreed to drop the name 'Unia' which is the Malak Malak word for a place on the Daly River near the mission, and Nauiyu Ukume dropped the name Peppi Wetti for the 'five mile development' because it was a Ngangikurrungkurr (Peppimenarti) word meaning 'small hill' (peppi meaning 'hill' and wetti meaning 'small'). It is now known by a Malak Malak name 'Wulk Witbi' which also means small hill.

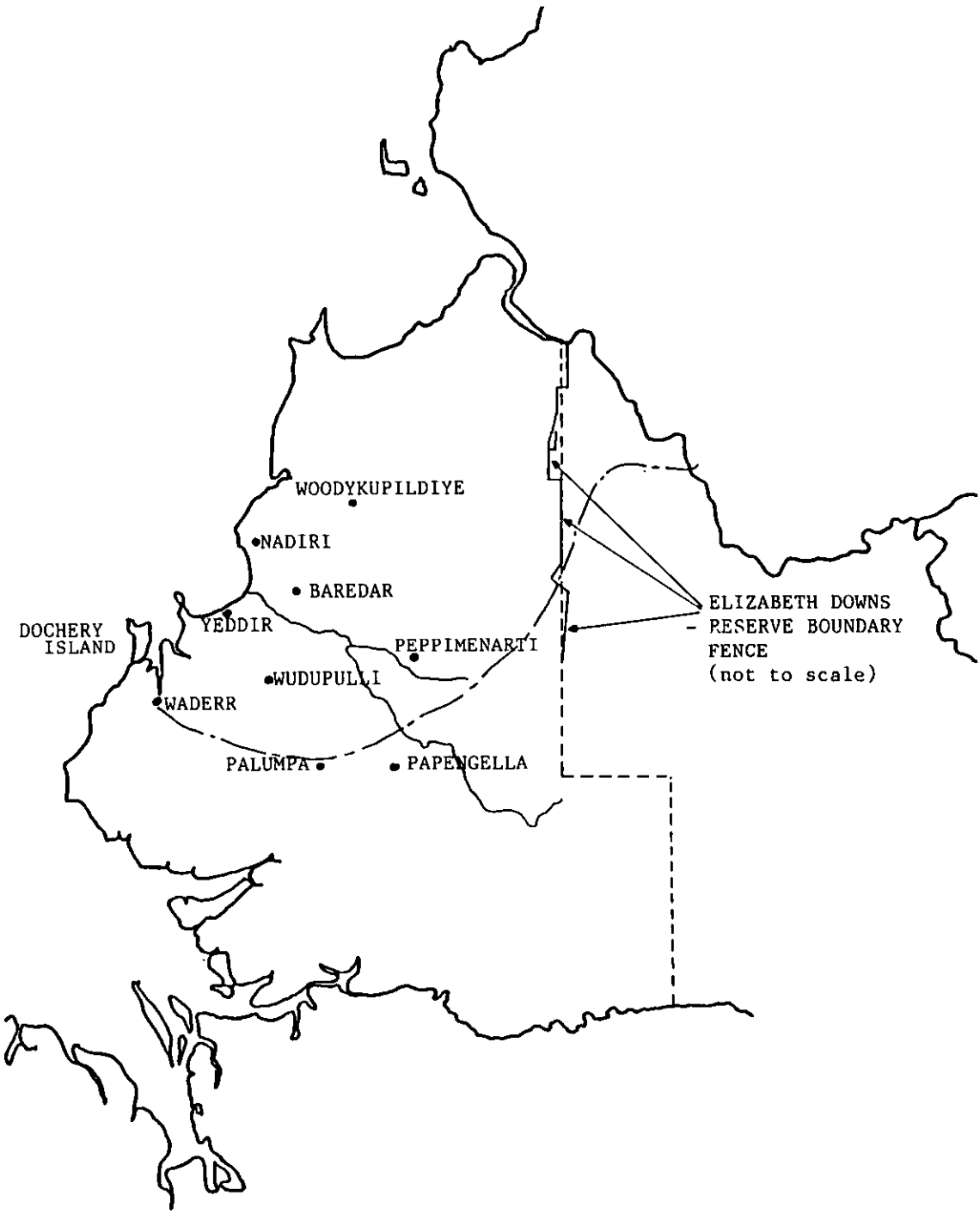
Peppimenarti was also involved in a bitter dispute which lasted some years with its neighbouring cattle station, Elizabeth Downs (part of greater Tipperary). The problem arose because the fence line down the eastern side of the Reserve does not follow the boundary of the Reserve. The reason for this is that there is a swamp on the northern boundary and the fence builders had to fence around it on firmer ground. Thus some of Peppimenarti's cattle were on Elizabeth Downs land and Elizabeth Downs cattle were on Peppimenarti land (see figure 9). Eventually, the issue was settled by each party agreeing to treat all cleanskin cattle on their side of the fence as their own cattle, and agreeing that all cleanskins on the other side belonged to their neighbour. Branded cattle on the wrong side of the fence were to be treated in accordance with usual practices.

Events in more recent years will be analysed in the second part of this monograph. However, by the end of the 1970s several things can be said about Peppimenarti.

1. It had become established as an important Aboriginal community with a large, though fluctuating population. There was a housing shortage but a new housing estate was being developed; there were health and school facilities; the cattle enterprise was operating satisfactorily though there was unemployment. Alcohol was a problem, from time to time.

Figure 9

Communities and Outstations in the Daly River Aboriginal Reserve



2. The community represented an attempt at Aboriginal independence from European employees and this had met with varying degrees of success. It was still very largely dependent on government funds. The administrative structure for the community was unorthodox since it did not have a council of the type found in most large communities and much of the accounting and administrative work was done by its accountants in Darwin (Price-Waterhouse). The community had grown separate from the mission and was continuing to grow apart. The people were showing considerable pride in their achievements.

3. Many of the 'old ways' had been revived including ceremonies, traditional attitudes to marriage and traditional punishments.

4. Outstations were being developed in the area. These were, in varying degrees, occupied by Peppimenarti people, used Peppimenarti as a resource base and were supported by Peppimenarti in their appeals to government for resources. Peppimenarti, to a minor extent, was becoming a staging point from which other homelands movements could develop. The outstations which had a close association with Peppimenarti were Nadidi (or Nardidi), Papengella (or Papangulla), and Baradar (or Ferrider, Paradale). As is common with newly created outstations, their names and the spelling of the names are uncertain. Nadidi is really an outstation from Port Keats but there were many people from Peppimenarti living there; Papengella is located in the Port Keats mustering zone (organised from Palumpa) but most of the people involved in establishing the outstation under the name of 'Muchirr Council' come from Peppimenarti. Two other outstations in the Reserve, Yedder and Wudupulli have much closer association with Port Keats.

Marrithiyel Outstation

Since the early 1970s members of the Marrithiyel (or Muddatiel, Marithiel, Maritiel, Mudatial, etc.) language group have expressed the strong desire to move back to their land in the Daly Aboriginal Reserve. These desires have been frustrated by the lack of knowledge of the boundaries of Aboriginal lands in the Reserve. This problem has been eased by recent research by the Northern Land Council, though some of their findings are still disputed.

Bill Parry is the principal person in the move back to the Reserve, the president of the Marrithiyel Association and the leader of the Marrithiyel people. He is one of James Parry's sons, the English farmer who settled on one of the Daly River farms just after World War I. Bill's position in the Marrithiyel community comes from the prominent status of his mother. Bill is both the leader of the Marrithiyel people and the leader of his own clan. He has also had considerable experience in farming in the Daly River area.

In 1976 Bill Parry applied to DAA for funds to purchase a 4x4 vehicle to carry people and material to their desired place for an outstation. At the time, DAA identified 69 Marrithiyel people distributed as follows: at or near Daly River Mission there was Bill Parry's group of twenty-two people, Jack Daly's group of nine, Ted Hayes' group of eight, Mr Doyle's

group of seven, Bruce Morgan's group of five and Ken Green's group of four persons; at Katherine there was Bill Huddleston's group of five and Tom Ah Fat's group of nine people. Unidentified by the study were many Marrithiyel people living in and around Darwin, including Peter Pan Quee (the second leader of the Marrithiyel) and his family. Bill Parry said that there were about 190 people who were Marrithiyel and that number could eventually be interested in living at the outstation. Many outsiders still consider this figure to be broadly correct.

The funds applied for were granted and in about April 1978 Bill Parry and a group of Marrithiyel moved to Leichhardt's Waterhole in the Reserve, variously known as Chiluk, Djilk or Tjiluk (see figure 10). The population staying there varied between 10 and 20 people. This site, however, is on Maranunggu land and even though the owners had shown no interest in returning to the Reserve and approval had been gained from some Maranunggu, this camp caused considerable hostility, especially at Peppimenarti.

Although the original camp was at Chiluk, the plan was to farm an area of 2,000 to 3,000 acres there and to establish a community at Lookback Billabong. Little interest was shown in cattle, and it was envisaged that a range of crops would be grown, including hay, fruit and vegetables, and fish would be caught from the local creeks and billabongs. Many of the Marrithiyel have had experience in this type of farming in the Daly River area. Lookback was chosen because it was close to the Elizabeth Downs Station road, there was a landing ground nearby (in need of repair) and there was a big billabong which would have provided water and fish.

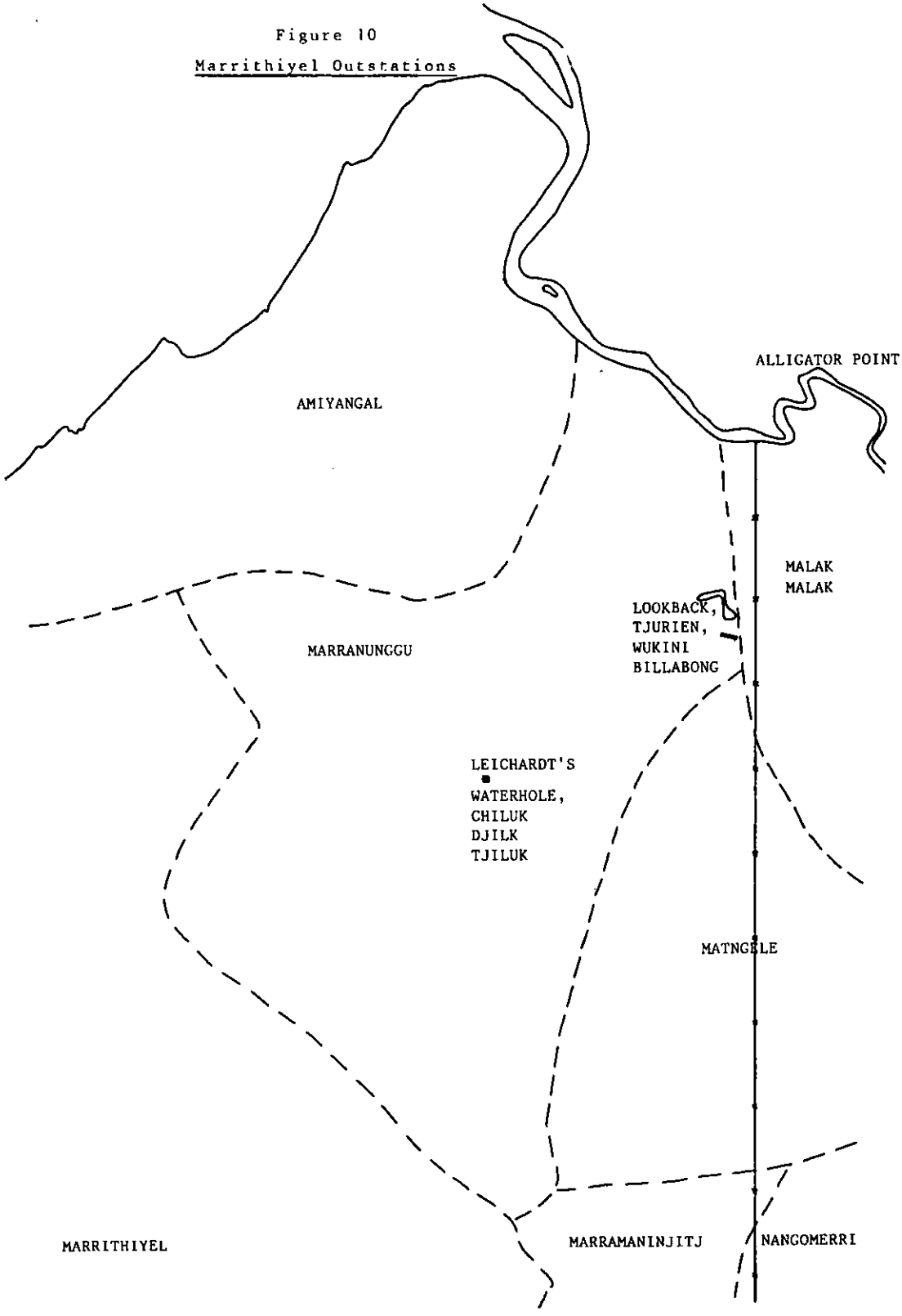
Some of the Marrithiyel felt that their people had suffered from having 'too easy' access to alcohol and money. Thus it was proposed that once the community was established the community would inform the Department of Social Security that it wanted its residents denied unemployment benefits. Further, many Marrithiyel felt that they needed to return to the Reserve to claim compensation from Peppimenarti which was turning off cattle from Marrithiyel land.

The Maranunggu had moved north from their land many years ago and had shown no interest in returning to the Reserve. Many of them lived in the Finnis River area and in Darwin. Bill Parry had gained the approval from some Maranunggu to occupy their land, as outlined, but this was not sufficient for the local Aboriginal people or for DAA, the funding agency. The map in figure 10 shows Lookback Billabong to be on the boundary of Maranunggu land and Malak Malak land and it would be natural to expect that Malak Malak people would have been involved in this question, but they were not. The boundaries drawn on the map are from the Northern Land Council (NLC) study and some Malak Malak people believe that the northern boundary of their land is well to the east of that shown on the map. They believe that the boundary comes into the Reserve in the south, as shown, but then runs towards Alligator Point and then veers to the east towards Sandy Creek. If this is correct then Lookback billagong is clearly inside Maranunggu land.

While the proposed sites for these activities were a source of dispute, the principle of the Marrithiyel people moving back to the Reserve was strongly welcomed by Aborigines in the area. Indeed, providing the community and farming were established on Marrithiyel land, Peppimenarti agreed in principle to exchange beef for produce from the Marrithiyel community.

Figure 10

Marrithiyel Outstations



DAA decided not to fund these activities on Maranunggu land; the camp at Chiluk was destroyed by fire and the Marrithiyel returned to the Daly River crossing and elsewhere. The NLC commissioned a study to determine tribal boundaries for the Peppimenarti mustering zone, and in the meantime Peppimenarti was paying royalties on cleanskin cattle mustered in the area. These royalties were held in an NLC trust account, pending settlement of land ownership issues, when distributions will be made to the owners.

As in the case of the establishment of Peppimenarti, Daly River Mission has helped the Marrithiyel in their attempts to establish an outstation. The mission has given moral encouragement and clerical assistance to the Marrithiyel Association and has helped in making respresentations to government agencies. Dr M.J. Wilson, MSC, was especially important in providing this assistance.

Postscript - March 1984

By the end of 1982, the mapping of tribal boundaries by the NLC was completed although there were still disputes over the positions of the boundaries in some areas. This put the government agencies in a position to fund an outstation development for the Marrithiyel and made possible the selection of a site which would avoid most of the objections made by local Aboriginal people.

A site was selected well inside Marrithiyel land (see figure 9) called Woodykupildiye ('Woody' means water, 'Kupil' means big and 'Diye' means bank, so that the name means, broadly, a 'billabong full to its banks'). DAA provided $6,800 for the construction of four buildings and DCD provided $52,200 for the construction of a road, landing strip and fencing. During 1983 a party of Marrithiyel worked at the outstation for 13 weeks and completed the four buildings. Peppimenarti gained the contract for the DCD tasks but they were not quite completed by the end of the dry season due to equipment failure and other problems. Consequently communications with the outside world were unsatisfactory for the wet season and nobody stayed at Woodykupildiye during that time. It is anticipated that the communications and fencing tasks will be completed in the 1984 dry season and that people will move to the outstation during the year. (The airstrip and most of the road were subsequently constructed by the Marrithiyel themselves.)

Between 25 and 30 people (including children) appear to be interested in living at Woodykupildiye in 1984 although the group could grow much larger. The population could eventually be even greater if the outstation became a staging position for Maranunggu, Amiyangal and Mandayangal who want to return to the Reserve.

The plans for activities at Woodykupildiye are not, and can not be, complete at this stage. It will, however, be a strongly traditional community in terms of observance of Aboriginal law and beliefs. Many Marrithiyel people believe that problems their people have had can be solved by returning to Aboriginal social and belief systems. It is intended that the outstation would have the usual range of social infrastructure institutions found in European and Aboriginal communities, including a school which would teach the Marrithiyel language. True to the original conception of the outstation, the people are not interested in establishing a significant cattle operation. The main reason for this is the very significant problems associated with conforming to the Government's Bovine Brucellosis and Tuberculosis Eradication Campaign

Plate 1: Woodykupildiye temporary town built by Marrithiyel people from 1983 to June 1985 - showing houses, meathouse, toilets and showers.

Plate 2: House at Woodykupildiye, June 1985 - showing some of the many fruit, shade and ornamental trees planted.

(BTEC). It has been suggested that the Marrithiyel would allow Peppimenarti to muster most of Marrithiyel land in return for the following compensation: 200 head of breeding cows and five good bulls, all BTEC clean, which would be kept behind fences and used as a killer herd; plus fifty per cent of the BTEC subsidy or fifty per cent of the DCD road and airstrip subsidy; plus the construction of a road to Woodykupildiye and the clearing of land for an airstrip by Peppimenarti. No formal agreement exists concerning this at present. As with their early plans, the people are primarily interested in fishing, growing fruit and other crops, establishing a crocodile farm and other such ventures. This group is fortunate in having people with a wide range of skills. Many people have experience in farming, building construction, power house operations; and Peter Pan Quee, who is now President of the Association, has considerable experience with buffalo management and crocodile hunting, and managing machinery and plant. He is expected to perform many entrepreneurial roles for the community. Some of the women in the group have had experience as teachers' aides, nursing aides, bank workers and shop assistants.

It is thought likely that once the community is established at Woodykupildiye a number of the families will move to their own particular outstations but the community would remain as the infrastructure centre for the area. It is also possible that the Marrithiyel may be given responsibility for 'looking after' the neighbouring land owned by the Amiyangal and Mandayangal, pending the return of these people.

Maranunggu, Amiyangal, Wadjikinj, Mandayangal

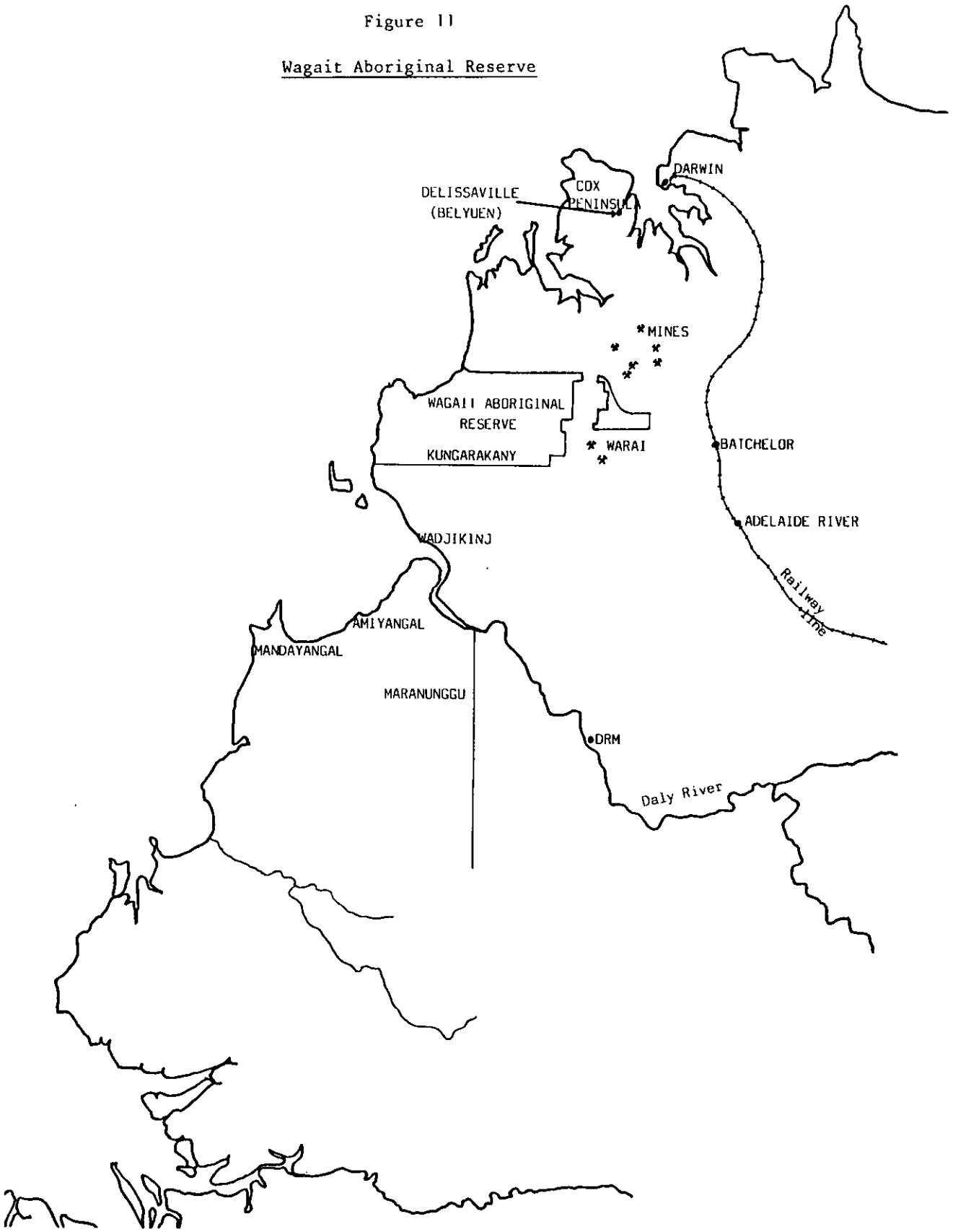
While the people from the Moyle River area migrated to the Daly River crossing area, the people in the north of the Reserve seem to have migrated to the north-east. Little seems to be known with certainty about this migration and what follows here is drawn from correspondence, most gratefully received from Maggie Brady of the Northern Land Council.

There has been some form of Wagait (originally Wangites) Aboriginal reserve north of the Daly River since 1892. Its shape and size has changed and its current form, which it has had since 1963, is shown in figure 11. The Aboriginal ownership of much of the land in the area is in dispute and since 1980 various aspects of the dispute (associated with the Finnis River Land claim) have been contested in the courts. In brief, the Kungarakany and Warai people claim to be the traditional owners of the reserve and surrounding land although they do not live there, and the Maranunggu, some of whom still live in the area, claim that it was always theirs. Each group claims land to the exclusion of the other. European opinion seems to be that the Kungarakany and Warai people left the area last century and that the vacant land was occupied by Maranunggu who moved north from the Daly River Aboriginal Reserve. The Marananggu claimants say that they are not from the Daly River Aboriginal Reserve and have no intention of going there. Whatever the truth is in this dispute, in 1982 there appear to be no interested claimants for the Maranunggu land in the Daly River Aboriginal Reserve. This situation can change rapidly, of course.

Aboriginal communities from the area north of the Daly River to Darwin have been greatly disrupted by foreign influences since late last century. The building of the overland telegraph line, the building of the railway and mining for gold and tin in the area as well as the development of pastoral properties and an attempt to grow sugar cane by DeLissa (1881)

Figure 11

Wagait Aboriginal Reserve



resulted in an invasion by a large number of Europeans and Chinese into the area. These activities took place to the north and east of the area being discussed and Aborigines from the mouth and north of the Daly River were drawn to them by the access to European goods which could be obtained by employment. In addition, many Aborigines died from introduced diseases and violence by Europeans. In the 1940s part-Aboriginal children were taken from their families and deliberate resettlement policies by the government continued to move people away from their homes. Thus the depopulation of the area of the mouth and to the north of the Daly River took place. The Kungarakany, Warai, Wadjikinj (or Wagait), Amiyangal, Mandayangal as well as some 'Brinken' and Malak Malak eventually moved to such places as Delissaville, Darwin, Batchelor and Adelaide River. The Maranunggu were in the area of the Wagait Reserve from at least late last century and are the only group to have remained in the area since.

Malak Malak

While the people from the northern part of the Daly River Aboriginal Reserve moved further north, some other groups along the river appear to have become extinct or almost so. There appear to be no survivors of the Djerait or the Ponga Ponga people and only one survivor of the Kamu, Mrs Kitty Pan Quee, still associates with her country. She lives at Berrimah, in Darwin.

Nothing appears to be known of the fate of the Djerait and Ponga Ponga people. They, also, may have moved north and been absorbed in European or other Aboriginal groups, destroyed in the massacres and by diseases or, most likely, have disappeared because of a combination of these causes.

There is some knowledge of the fate of the Kamu, however. Mrs Kitty Pan Quee, in giving evidence before the Malak Malak land claim, reports that there was a big fight involving Kamu early this century when she was a child and all the Kamu were killed:

> Yes, all been get killed for a fight, you know? All been die ... All the Larrakiya come from around this side and along Brinken way, all come up to big fight there. [The Larrakiya come from around Darwin and 'Brinken' is used to mean people from the Moyle River, and sometimes Ngangiwomeri, more specifically] (Daly River (Malak Malak) Land Claim Report, Canberra 1982: p25).

Early reports by Europeans, including that by Stanner, confirm the notion that the Kamu were almost extinct since early this century. Mrs Pan Quee's relatives are now associated with other Aboriginal groups and she remains the sole person with an interest in Kamu land. The land borders the eastern side of Malak Malak land, includes the coppermine area, runs north to Marion Hill, east to Blackfellow Creek, and then south to the Daly River. The westerly part of this land is an area in the Malak Malak land claim. Mrs Pan Quee expressed the desire that her land pass to the Malak Malak/Madngele group:

> Kamu country all been finished up. Nobody alive there, nothing....Let him have it, Malak Malak....But for hunting I can come up and camp here and go back here like that, you see. I bring children and me camp here and go back again (Daly River (Malak Malak) Land Claim Report, Canberra 1982: p27).

It should be noted that the name Pan Quee is not uncommon amongst people from the Daly River area. It cannot be inferred, however, that these people are blood relations or that they are related to Jimmy Pan Quee who owned a farming block in the area.

The Malak Malak group have always been considered a strong group. In the days of the Jesuit missions they were able to defend their rights of access to the missions against immigrant Aborigines and have, to this day, remained strongly independent. The Malak Malak and Madngele groups have been associated with each other since the earliest European accounts of the area and it is likely that the Malak Malaks and Madngele have been merging ever since. Recently the desire for this merger to continue, has been expressed by Madngele, when giving evidence to the Malak Malak land claim.

Unlike other groups in the area, the Malak Malak have always stayed in their country. Part of the reason for this, of course, is that their country became a centre for European activity (missions, mining and agriculture), so that many of the pressures which caused the others to migrate, caused the Malak Malaks to remain where they were.

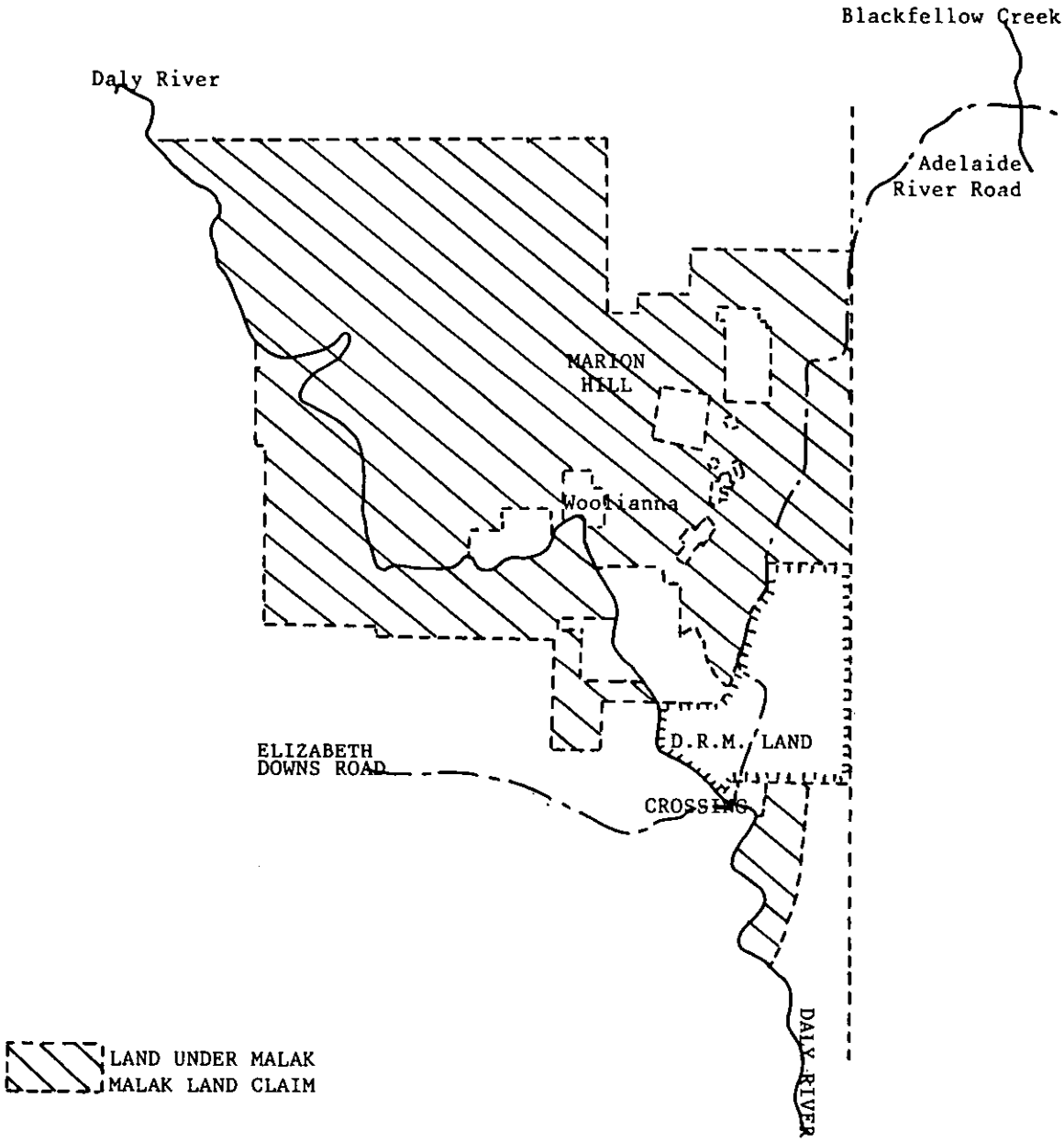
Although the Welfare Branch Reports mention Malak Malak as living at the Daly River Mission during the 1950s and 1960s as mentioned earlier, it is likely that very few, if any of them, lived at the mission for substantial periods. Instead, the Malak Malak who remained in the area lived at Woolianna supporting themselves, largely by traditional food gathering activities and from farming employment. Evidence presented to the Malak Malak land claim alleged that traditional food production is still substantial, that traditional ceremonies still take place and that the people still have a good knowledge of their dreaming.

On the 31 March 1978 the Malak Malak lodged a land claim on approximately 544 square kilometres of land which is most of the unalienated part of the Daly River Farms Rehabilitation Area. Figure 12 shows the area claimed. As can be seen from the map there are two large areas in the south, which are excluded from the claim. The larger and most northerly of the two is mission land. Part of the southerly area is expected to be included in another land claim. Two of the alienated blocks of land are owned by local Aborigines. One near the crossing is owned by Nauiyu Ukume, and another at Woolianna by one of the claimants, Albert Myoung. Both of these blocks are small. The other alienated blocks shown in the map are owned by Europeans mainly for agricultural or mining purposes.

On the 12 March 1982 Mr Justice Toohey, the Aboriginal Land Commissioner, presented his recommendations. In effect, he recommended that the part of the claimed land to the north of the crossing be granted. He was not satisfied that there were still traditional owners for the part to the south of the crossing and so did not recommend the granting of it. He also identified 59 successful claimants, although many lived away from the area.

Figure 12

Malak Malak Land Claim



At the time of writing the government has not granted the land but if they do the Malak Malak and Madngele people will be fortunate by comparison with many other Aboriginal groups for the following reasons:

(a) The area is very rich in bush resources as well as possessing agricultural potential.

(b) There are well established infrastructure institutions at the crossing and the mission: school, hospital, store, airfield, police, good roads, etc.

(c) The area has good tourist potential. It is only 200 kilometres from Darwin, is linked with Darwin by a good road and airfield, has many good camping, fishing and hunting areas and has many sites of interest, such as the remains of the Jesuit missions, old farms and mines.

Thus there is the potential for the people to chose between a mix of traditional, farming, grazing, and tourist economic activities. With appropriate planning and investment the area could yield substantial economic benefits for the Malak Malak.

Port Keats Mission

As has been noted already, the Aboriginal people who originally lived south of the Moyle River and from the coast a distance to the north of the Moyle River moved to the mission established at Port Keats. Development at this mission is not our special concern but a brief account is given here for completeness.

The southern part of the Reserve had always had a reputation as a dangerous place and in 1933 the Japanese captain and crew (three men in all) of the lugger Ouida were murdered by Aborigines at Injin Beach which is due west of where Port Keats is located now. Included amongst the Aboriginal attackers was Nemarluk, who later became famous because of his ability to avoid capture by the police, for being involved in a group called the 'Red Band', and for being a fearsome individual amongst his people (Pye 1973: 10-20). In 1935 the MSC mission was established at Port Keats under Fr F.D. Docherty, MSC, partly for the purpose of pacifying local Aborigines.

The first mission was located on the mainland just south of Docherty Island but it was intended to be temporary, until a better site was found. After four years the mission was moved 12 kilometres south to its current position. Cattle were obtained from Tipperary Station in 1938 and moved to the new mission when it was established. The establishment of a garden was of first importance and after some initial setbacks it became very productive. A landing field was cleared, a school and health facilities were established and then accomodation was constructed.

The mission developed as did other missions in the North. It attracted Aborigines from the southern and north-western part of the Reserve by the availability of goods and services (including health and education) in which the local people were greatly deficient. A large residential population was eventually established and although some groups have lived at the mission from the very early days their differences remain

very great and at times there is considerable tension and conflict.

The following is a brief outline of the structure of Port Keats as at June 1982. The community is no longer a mission , although there is still a strong mission presence. It has changed its name to Waderr and Aborigines own the land. Some 1354 Aborigines live there, averaging about 52 births per year. The community is on Murinjpatha (or Murinbata) land and for that reason they are the most powerful group. Other important groups living there are Maringar, Murinkurra, Marritjepin and Marigayr. Some Ngangikurrungkurr too live there.

The council, which is called Kardu Numida, is responsible for all essential and municipal services, post office, Commonwealth Bank Agency and Murin Airways (sub-contracted to Air North). The Murinbata Tribal Development Company is an umbrella organisation which controls the store, beer club, take-away food outlet, bakery, films, dining and visitor accommodation units. The mission provides religious services, runs the school and sewing factory. The community has a large well equipped hospital and clinic, and a police station/court house. Production activies comprise the sewing factory, a large but struggling garden and an active cattle enterprise based at Palumpa, to the east of Waderr; there is no systematic art and craft outlet.

Waderr is remote from Darwin. The Waderr-Daly River road is in poor condition and is closed for long periods after the wet season. This remoteness, aided by cross-subsidisation, has allowed some production activities to survive better there than in many other communities.

Unemployment, shortages of resources, tribal disputes and the outstation movement are important topics of concern. In figure 9 above, the outstations strongly associated with Waderr are Nadiri, Yedder and Wudupulli. Each is having difficulty although their existance has allowed people at Waderr to visit their homelands. There is an outstation resource centre but this has been the focus of many disputes. Overall, Waderr is a much less peaceful community than is Daly River Mission.

Development of Aboriginal Reserve Land in the Area

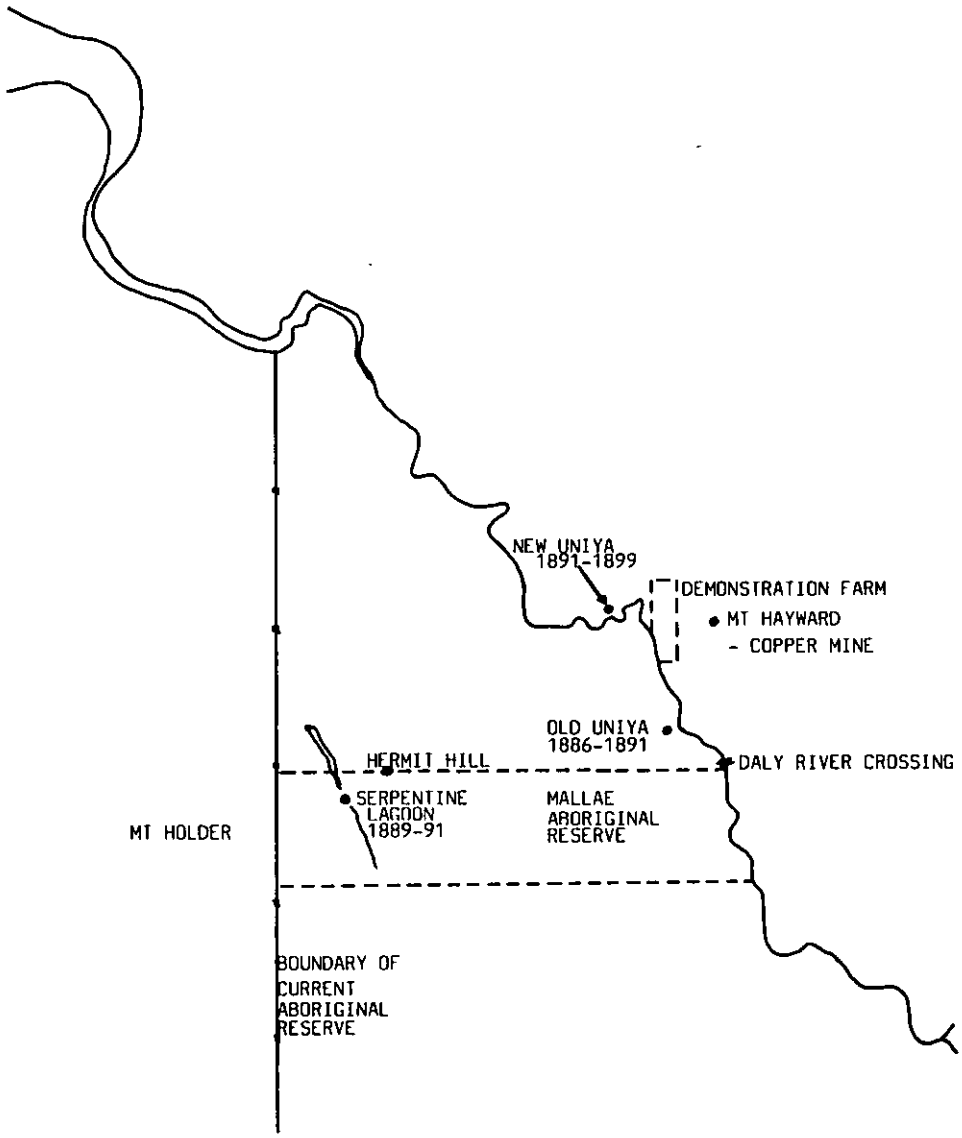
In the earlier discussion, the evolution of the Daly River Aboriginal Reserve was bypassed. That will now be redressed.

Towards the end of last century, many people saw the need to set land aside for Aborigines. This view was expressed in the editorial in the Northern Territory Times on 2 July 1881:

> As large tracts of land are being taken up for pastoral purposes, mainly by Victorian and New South Wales capitalists, it therefore behoves the Government to see that sufficient quantity of land is retained as reserves for the aboriginal natives. How are they to live if every acre is alienated. South Australia has ever been mindful of her obligations to the native race. On the Peninsula, known as 'Cox's', over 100,000 acres of land have been given away for sugar growing purposes, and as yet we have not heard of any suitable provision being made for the aboriginal. Surely some well-watered spot should be set aside for their use.

Figure 13

Mallae Reserve, Daly River



MALLAE ABORIGINAL RESERVE

Reserved SAG 28.4.1892
and CG 16.3.1912
Resumed CG 2.9.1920
CG Notice of 16.3.1912 cancelled NTG 2.10.1920

Later, policies were enacted to create reserves so that by the middle of the 1880s over 145 square miles of reserves existed in the Northern Territory and by 1912, reserve land totalled 2333 square miles (Powell 1982: 162).

The first reserve established in the Daly River area was the one associated with the Jesuit missions. On the 31 March 1885, Anthony Strele, for the Catholic Church, wrote to the Minister for Education and Justice in Adelaide requesting that the reserve, later known as the Mallae Aboriginal Reserve, be established. In part, his letter of application read:

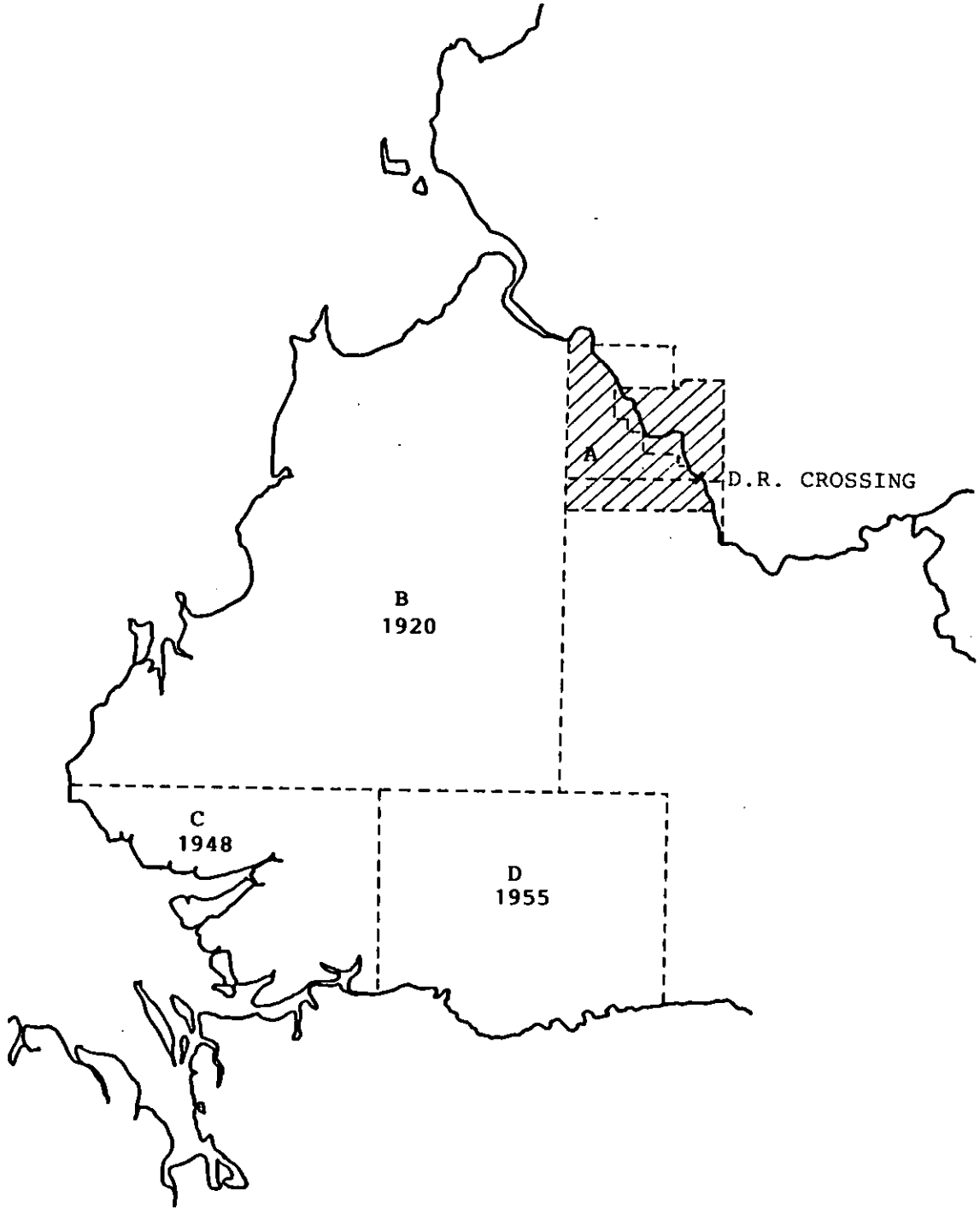
> I venture, therefore, to apply for a tract of land on the left bank of the Daly River, extending from the river towards the West to Mount Hermit and Serpentine Lagoon, and containing altogether an area of one hundred square miles, having a front to the river of about five miles.
>
> Only with a larger area is it possible to unite a greater number of Aboriginals and to find for them a living.
>
> They will indeed have to cultivate the land with the Missionaries, but they require besides, some room for hunting and fishing, as they cannot break off at once all their former habits without running great risks for their very preservation.
>
> The land ought to be an Aboriginal Reserve as long as it is used for the purpose, and ought to be under the management of the conductors of the mission with the absolute exclusion of other white men (Commonwealth Archives Office CRS A1640 item No. 85/402).

This land was part of the pastoral lease owned by W Browne. The application was not met with overwhelming approval by the government and there was feeling that a much smaller area of land ought to be granted on the river, just sufficient for the immediate needs of the mission, because the Aborigines would 'wander away when they are tired' of life with the missionaries (Commonwealth Archives Office CRS A1640 item No. 85/402). The Serpentine Lagoon mission was established on the land applied for but by the time the land was made a reserve, the mission had closed and the missionaries had moved to New Uniya. Figure 13 shows the position of the Reserve. Since the northern boundary of the Reserve met the Daly River at the crossing it can be seen that Old Uniya was not inside the Reserve. It is doubtful that the reserve was ever used as intended. Nevertheless, it was re-proclaimed along with nine other Aboriginal reserves in 1912 by the Commonwealth Government, after its take-over of the Northern Territory.

In June 1920, the Daly River Demonstration Farm was gazetted as an Aboriginal Compound, under the provision of the Aboriginal Ordinance Number 9 of 1918. This was an area of 3,620 acres. Then, in September 1920 a new reserve was established with an area of 3300 square miles. It incorporated the Mallae Reserve, the Demonstration Farm and most of the Daly River Agricultural Area, excepting for those areas alienated at the time. This reserve was composed of the hatched area A and area B shown in figure 14. It was shortlived as the gazette notice which declared it was cancelled on 10 November 1923. On the same day a new reserve was created, composed of area B alone. In March 1948 area C was declared a reserve and in 1955 area D was declared. In November 1963, the areas B,C and D were formally

Figure 14

Daly River Aboriginal Reserve



reserved as one area to form the existing Daly River Aboriginal Reserve. It comprised 13,467 square kilometres. Finally, under the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976, the area was converted to restricted freehold, and ownership was vested in the Aborigines of the Reserve.

Plate 3: The church, Daly River Mission.

Plate 4: Modern housing styles, Daly River Mission.

Part II

CURRENT CONDITIONS AND DEVELOPMENT PROSPECTS

A description and analysis of existing conditions and development prospects at the Daly River Mission and at Peppimenarti are the subject of the second part of this monograph. The discussion begins with a detailed account of the conditions and institutions in the two communities as they existed in 1982. These details are necessary to give the reader a feeling for the ways in which these communities work and to give depth to data presented later. Average and aggregate social accounting data for the communities are presented next. These allow comparisons to be made between the two communities, as well as with another community, Nguiu, for which the author has compiled similar data, and with the Australian economy overall. This is followed by a discussion of development problems in Aboriginal communities generally including those faced by the mission and Peppimenarti. Finally, possible future roles for these two communities are discussed.

DALY RIVER MISSION

Structure

By 1982, Daly River Mission had ceased to be a 'remote community' in the strict sense of that term. It is connected to Darwin by a good, partly sealed road and since it is on the east side of the Daly River, it is cut off from Darwin by road only during floods. There is an all weather air strip and people have access to television. Telephone communication is good. In addition, the crossing area is popular with tourists and fishermen so that visitors are in the area constantly.

Almost all Aborigines living around the Daly River now live at the mission although in the past there had been substantial numbers living on greater Tipperary Station and around the river. Most of these people have moved to the mission or Peppimenarti.

In 1982 there is only one Aboriginal man living on Elizabeth Downs and one on Douglas Station. There had been ten or so Aborigines living on Oolloo Station but these have left because the station is being subdivided to form grain growing farms under the Northern Territory government's ADMA (Agricultural Development and Marketing Authority) Scheme.

There is still a permanent community at Woolianna which forms a home for Malak Malak people. They have a large (two bedroom) mission-style house there and a number of huts. The population varies considerably over the year. Four sisters live there permanently and seldom leave but other residents and long term visitors may swell the population to 30 or so people from time to time. The Woolianna community uses the mission as a service point.

On the western side of Daly River and opposite the north end of the mission is the Marrithiyel camp. They live in crude huts and tents and have vehicles and a boat which is used to travel to the mission and for fishing. They are substantially integrated into the mission community. The population varies between 12 and 25 people with most of the variation reflecting the movements of people to and from the mission.

The main language groups at the mission are Ngangikurrungkurr, Marrithiyel, Wagiman, Maringar (two clans), Ngangiwumeri and Marramaninjiji. Kriol is spoken frequently. Table 5 shows the population at the mission as could be determined from hospital records. The Marrithiyel group are included but not the Malak Malak group. As can be seen, some 48 per cent of the population is under 18 years of age and there are very few old people. The structure of the Peppimenarti population is similar. Since most of the adults from the community appear to be living in the communities and not in towns or away working on stations (those temporarily absent are included in the figures), these age structures suggest that, with the improved longevity consequent upon improved health servicing, the populations of these communities are experiencing rapid growth through natural increase. This appears to be common for Aboriginal communities generally because of a combination of high reproduction rates and falling death rates.

Table 5
Population of Daly River Mission
October 1982

Aborigines

	Under 1 yr	1-4 yrs	5-14 yrs	15-17 yrs	18-64 yrs	65+ yrs	Totals
Males	3	15	20	7	45	2	92
Females	6	12	33	7	61	2	121
	9	27	53	14	106	4	213

Source: Health Clinic Records

Table 6
Sources of Incomes by Type, Daly River Mission,
October 1982

	Aboriginal	European	
		Religious	Lay
Full-time employees	51	4	11
Part-time employees	15	3*	1
D.S.S. Recipients			
Aged Pension	4	3*	
Supporting Mothers Pension	4		
Wives Pension	4		
Invalid Pension	6		
Unemployment Benefits (Family Allowances, 16)	7		
Unemployment rate amongst Aborigines as a percentage of the full-time Aboriginal workforce	12.1%		

Footnote: *these are three part-time employees who are semi-retired and on pensions, and so they are listed twice.

Figure 15

Daly River Mission

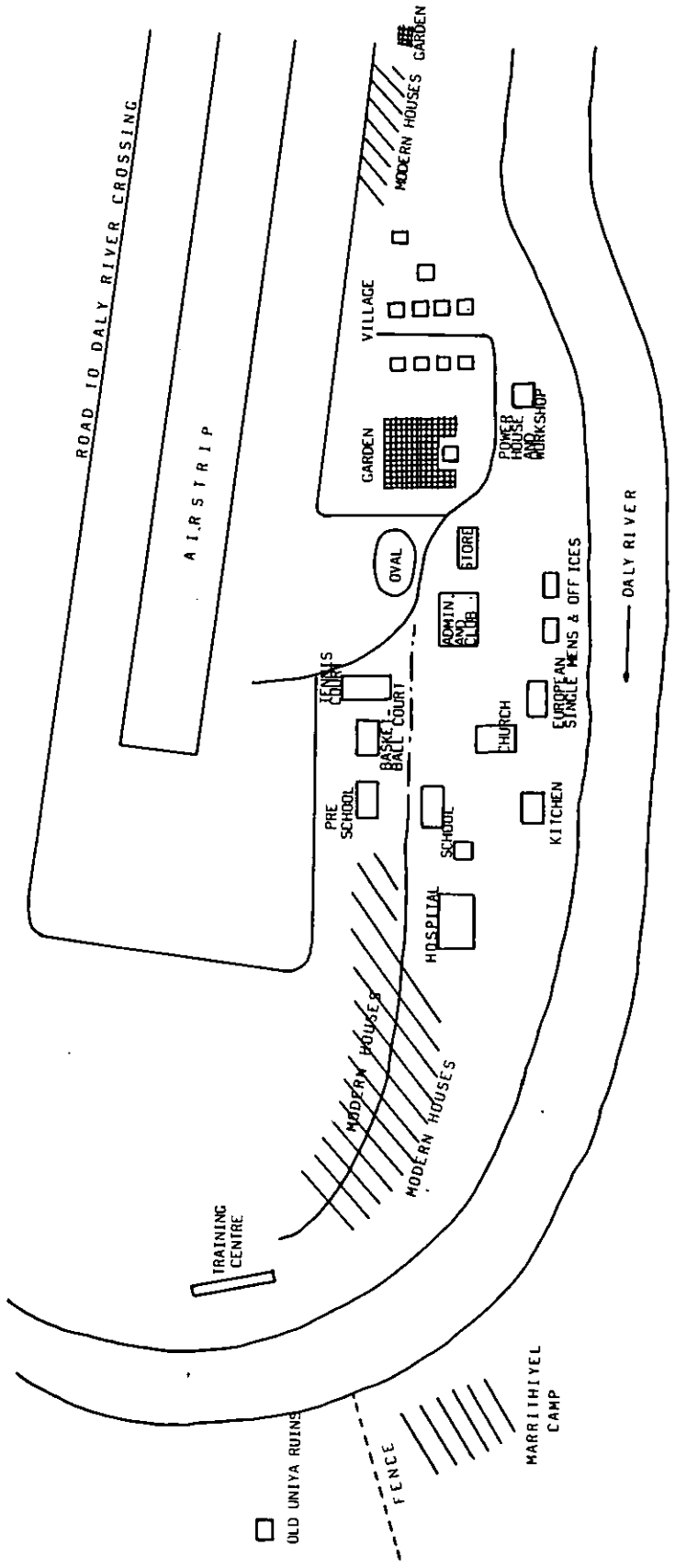


Table 7

Revenue and Cost Structures of Activities, Daly River Mission, 1982

	Revenue as a percentage of total revenue						Costs as a percentage of total revenue									
	Govt & Mission operating subsidies &grants	Contract and Agency Income	Sales and Hire	Rent	Other	Total Revenue	Abor Wages	Europ Wages	Total Wages	Frght	Stock and Materials	Legal, Accounting & Consulting Costs	Fuel	Dep'n	Other	Surplus or (deficit)
Mission Function	100.0					100.0		100.0	100.0							
TMPU	69.5	24.9	4.9		0.6	100.0	47.3	11.7	59.0		9.3	1.7	18.2	9.0	15.0	(12.3)
Hospital	100.0					100.0	42.4	32.5	78.9		17.8				3.2	
School	100.0					100.0	34.6	60.3	94.9		2.5				2.5	
Housing	82.1	8.8		9.0	0.1	100.0	27.0	21.7	48.7	0.7	51.2	9.1		20.7	6.0	(36.5)
Store			100.0			100.0	12.4		12.4		82.2	1.8				3.6
Cattle					100.0	100.0	100.0		100.0							
Totals overall activities[1]	61.8	12.4	22.4	1.3	2.1	100.0	36.0	19.0	55.0	0.0	29.1	2.4	8.2	7.0	8.1	(9.9)

Footnote: (1) The numbers shown in this row show the percentages of total revenue of all activities which are derived from each source, or absorbed by each cost. For instance, 61.8 per cent of revenue from all activities comes from government and mission subsidies.

Table 6 shows the population break-down by source of income. As can be seen the unemployment rate is 12.1 per cent of the full-time workforce, which is low by comparison with many other communities. One brother and two sisters, asterisked in the table, are semi-retired and so they are listed as both part-time workers and pension recipients. It is common for Catholic Missions to retain a retired person who has worked with Aboriginal people for many years, to work at the mission on a part-time basis for little or no special remuneration.

Figure 15 is a map of the mission. It is now a well equipped, clean and modern town and has a better appearance than most European rural towns. Only the village of huts remains as a reminder of a more frugal past. Many of the facilities at the mission are used by non-mission visitors and residents in the area.

There are two basic organisations at the mission: the mission itself and Nauiyu Nambiyu Incoporated. The mission owns all of the land and many of the houses and buildings, it provides religious instruction, runs the schools and hospital and provides some labour for special activities. Most of the operating and capital costs associated with running the schools and hospital are reimbursed by the government. Nauiyu Nambiyu runs town maintenance and public utilities (TMPU), housing and the enterprises. In practice the distinction between the roles and resources used by the two institutions is blurred, as is necessary for efficient running of a small community.

Table 7 shows the revenue and cost structures of the activities undertaken at the mission. As can be seen, the functions of the mission, TMPU, hospital and housing are all heavily dependent on outside funding, although the TMPU and housing functions are successful in gaining contracts to carry out government activities in the area. In so far as these activities are for the benefit of people at the mission, they constitute a subsidy to the community (and this is acknowledged in the social accounts presented later) but not a subsidy to the local organisations because these activities could have been performed by European organisations. The figures in the 'freight' column grossly understate freight costs because they are often included in the purchase prices of items, or included as 'vehicle costs'. The losses shown are not of great concern because they are almost offset by 'deprecaition' and it is very difficult to measure depreciation rates properly. Indeed it can be argued that providing reasonable maintenance is undertaken, housing stock and much plant should not be depreciated at a significant rate. Operating losses on TMPU and housing activities were greater in 1981-82 than in the previous year mainly because of a decline in government grants and contract incomes. Cattle operations are supported by other organisations in the community. The store receives no government support and makes a modest profit.

This structure is common for Aboriginal communities (see for instance Stanley 1983: 8,9). Typically, the infrastructure institutions of TMPU, hospital, school, housing, etc. are supported almost entirely by government subsidies and government contracts, while production activities receive subsidies, and only the internal servicing institutions can survive without subsidies. The reasons for this are obvious. Infrastructure institutions require large amounts of funds and the communities cannot produce enough local savings to contribute significantly to these costs. The remote environment means that few enterprises survive in this part of Australia, either European or Aboriginal, and so enterprises generally require

subsidies to compete against goods produced elsewhere. Finally, the local servicing institutions, such as the store, are monopolies, and are able to set prices to cover costs. The store,in this case, is efficient by comparison with many other community stores and so prices can be kept low.

Table 8 shows the levels and nature of employment at the mission in October 1982. More detail will be given about employment later when each of the institutions is discussed. The employment structure displayed in the table is also common for Aboriginal communities: infrastructure institutions employ a large proportion of workers (90.9 per cent); Europeans hold most of managerial, professional and trade positions while Aborigines provide the semi-trained, semi-skilled labour and unskilled labour; and Aboriginal men hold more positions than Aboriginal women. Serious attempts have been made to place Aborigines in managerial positions but there have been serious educational and cultural difficulties. The turnover of European managerial staff here has been low by comparison with many Aboriginal communities.

The Mission and its Responsibilities

The mission staff is headed by a Priest-in-Charge. His roles include that of the religious leader of the community, the Community Advisor, and, as the representative of Catholic Missions who are the owners of the mission land, he is controller of entry permits. He sits in on Nauiyu Nambiyu meetings but does not vote. The current holder of that position began his duties in February 1982.

There are three religious Sisters employed full time at the mission, one is the School Principal, another is a school teacher and the third is the nurse at the hospital. There is also a religious Sister who is the District Nurse. She lives at and operates from her quarters at the crossing.

In addition one Brother and two sisters are semi-retired. The Brother works in the garden and has a range of other duties, one Sister does some teaching part time and is involved in adult education. The remaining Sister has duties associated with the operation of the Convent.

The Schools

The mission was initially established to provide education for local Aborigines and there is still a strong emphasis on this function. There is a Pre-School (with 21 pupils enrolled), a Primary School (with 47 pupils enrolled), and a post-primary School (with 11 pupils, composed of 2 boys and 9 girls). The pre-school enrols children from 3 to 5 years of age, the primary school from 6 to 12 years of age, and the post-primary school from 13 to 16 years of age. About two-thirds of enrolments in pre-school and primary schools are girls. Most children living permanently at the mission are enrolled and attendance rates are high. Although the parents take an active informal interest in the schools the children are sometimes poorly motivated. It is thought that this is because there are few opportunities for employment in the area and pupils often cannot see any likely rewards from study.

Table 8

Employment at Daly River Mission, 1982

Infrastructure Institutions		Managers A	Managers E	Office Staff A	Office Staff E	Professionals, Tradesmen A	Professionals, Tradesmen E	Semi-Trained A	Semi-Trained E	Semi-Skilled A	Semi-Skilled E	Unskilled A	Unskilled E	Totals A	Totals E	Aboriginal Employment by sex M	Aboriginal Employment by sex F
Mission	M		1												1(1)		
	F												(1)				
Admin., TMPU, Essential Services	M	5	3	1				2		6		9(3)		31(10)	5	23(3)	8(7)
	F			4	2							4(7)					
Hospital	M							(2)						3(4)	1	(2)	3(2)
	F		1					1(2)				2					
School	M						2	1						7	5(2)	1	6
	F		1			1	2	4	(2)			1					
Housing	M		1				1					5		5	2	5	-
	F																
Total Infrastructure Institutions														46(14)	14(3)	29(5)	17(9)
Goods Production																	
Garden	M										(1)				(1)		
	F																
Cattle	M											3		3		3	-
	F																
Service Activities																	
Store	M													2	(1)	-	2
	F		(1)							2							
Wulk Witbi	M		1											(1)	1	-	(1)
	F											(1)					
Grand Totals		5	8(1)	5	2	1	5	8(4)	(2)	8	(1)	24(11)	(1)	51(15)	15(5)	32(5)	19(10)
% of full-time positions held by Aborigines		38.5		71.4		16.7		100.0		100.0		100.0		77.3		62.7	37.3

Footnote: In the table A=Aborigines, E=Europeans, M=Male, F=Female.
Part-time employees are shown in brackets.

All three schools operate from 8.30am to 3.30pm on Monday to Friday, and use curricula produced by the Northern Territory Department of Education for Aboriginal schools. Some instruction in Aboriginal art and culture is given. One hour per day is devoted to training in Ngangikurrungkurr, which is the dominant language at the mission. There is some school material in the language. It is intended that a linguist commence work soon on a dictionary and grammar in the language so that much more school work could be taught in this language.

There are no trade training facilities at the mission and it is intended to send six boys and six girls to St John's College in Darwin for training. In the past students who were sent to St John's or Kormilda College have become lonely and have returned to the Mission without completing their courses. Students are now being sent away at an older age (14-15 years old) and intensive efforts are being made to help the children settle in at the colleges. There is a work-experience program for girls involving them spending some time in the Nauiyu Nambiyu office and in the store. There is no such program for boys however. Nauiyu Nambiyu has not taken on boys for the same type of training because of the extra supervision needed for them, since they would be working around potentially dangerous council and housing plant.

Table 9 shows employment in the schools. In general, the turn-over amongst lay staff is very high with them staying only one or two years. Religious staff stay much longer.

Table 9
Employment in Mission Schools, 1982

	Rel.F	Lay M	Lay F	Aboriginal M	Aboriginal F
Principal	1 (1)				
Teachers	2	2	1 (2)		1 (3)
Teaching Assistants (4)			1	1	4
Cleaners					1

Footnotes:
(1) This number includes one part-time unpaid 'semi-retired' Sister
(2) Part-time, about 2 hours per week
(3) Two work in the pre-school
(4) This labour is supplied by Nauiyu Nambiyu under the TMPU budget

Facilities are composed of one pre-school building, buildings with a total of four full sized class rooms, an office, store room, staff room and an old iron shed which serves as the library. The school needs more staff and facilities, particularly to allow the teaching of manual arts.

Health Clinic

The mission has always placed a strong emphasis on the health of the people and a well provided hospital has been established. It has seven beds, including a maternity bed, its own radio and ambulance. There are no operating facilities. It is opened from 8.00 am to 5.00 pm on Monday to Friday, for one hour from 8.30 am on Saturday and is closed on Sunday. Emergencies are treated as they occur. A doctor visits from Darwin once every three weeks and about one patient per month is evacuated to Darwin for treatment.

There is no formal public health instruction although informal instruction is given by the nurse on a person-to-person basis. Attempts have been made to influence the store's stocking policy, for example, towards reducing the volume of high-sugar items, although the council has resisted this change. Very little baby food is sold and the nurse does not encourage its use, believing that it is better for children to go from mother's milk to adult food. Baby bottles are discouraged because of the problem of keeping them clean.

The overall health of the people is said to be good. The school children get a cooked lunch each school day, financed by contributions to the Social Development Fund. People eat a lot of bush tucker, especially magpie geese, fish, yams, water lilly roots and mangoes.

Table 10
Employment at the Mission Hospital, 1982

	European		Aboriginal	
	Religious F		M	F
Sister in Charge	1			
Health Workers -				
F/T				1
P/T (4 hrs/day) (1)			2	2
Cleaners				2

Footnote: (1) Paid by Nauiyu Nambiyu from TMPU allocation

The religious sister who is the local District Nurse, and located at the crossing is not included in this table. She visits European and Aboriginal people on greater Tipperary Station, Oolloo Station, the Daly River farms, at Woolianna and around the crossing. People living at the crossing, at Woolianna and on the farms are visited twice per week while people on the more distant stations are visited once per month.

She reports that over the six years (from 1976) she has been in the area, there has been a great decrease in the number of Aboriginal people living along the river, from about 50 originally to almost none, excluding the Marrithiyel camp across from the mission. She has also observed a continued decline in the number of Aborigines living and working on the

stations in the area. Although Catholic Missions employ the District Nurse, her position, facilities and vehicle are funded by the Northern Territory Department of Health.

Nauiyu Nambiyu Incorporated

Nauiyu Nambiyu is a Malak Malak phrase composed of **Nauiyu** meaning 'Daly River' and **Nambiyu** meaning 'people living together in unity'. It is the name of the principal Aboriginal organisation at the mission. The development of the organisation was outlined in Part I. In the community the organisation is sometimes referred to as 'the Council' since it is the mission's equivalent of such an organisation.

Nauiyu Nambiyu Inc. has a council of seven members, including the President. It is currently composed of five men and two women. Elections are held every year and all permanent Aboriginal residents of the mission who are over 18 years of age are eligible to vote. Strictly speaking, the council is 'nominated by the people and appointed by the elders'. The priest-in-charge at the mission sits in on council meetings. He does not vote on issues but he has the power to control entry permits. Meetings are held every three weeks, or otherwise as issues arise.

There is no formal voting pattern in the election of council members, as there is, for example, at Nguiu where each of the four skin groups elects four council members. Nor does voting adhere strictly to language groups. One important issue in the community and in elections, however, is alcohol. None of the councillors in 1982 were drinkers. In the past, when a President of the council began drinking, he resigned from the council. Members have ceased to be elected once they began drinking. It seems that this attitude amongst voters has been largely conditioned by two factors. The first is that in the 1970s a number of young people were killed in alcohol-related road accidents; the second is that many people have had bad experiences with alcohol in towns and elsewhere, and many stay at the mission partly because access to alcohol is controlled. There is also the general feeling amongst electors that councilors need to be sober to handle disputes and emergencies and to aid the control of alcohol at the mission.

Nauiyu Nambiyu has responsibility for the following functions:

Administration, including the bank agency

TMPU and Essential Services (water, sewerage, electricity)

Housing

The store

Tourist development

Beer club

Welfare

Table 11

Council Employment in Administration, TMPU and Essential Services

Daly River Mission, 1982

	Managers				Office Staff				Semi-Trained				Semi-Skilled				Unskilled				Totals			
	A		E		A		E		A		E		A		E		A		E		A		E	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Administration			1		1	4		2													1	4	1	2
Mechanical Workshop			1						2												2	-	1	-
Municipal Services	2		1														6	4			8	4	1	-
General Maintenance	1																2				3	-	-	-
Essential Services	2												6				1				9	-	-	-
Extras (P/T)																	(3)	(7)			(3)	(7)	-	-
Total full-time Employment	5		3		1	4		2	2				6				9	4			23	8	3	2

Footnote: In the table A=Aborigines, E=Europeans, M=Male, F=Female
Part-time employees are shown in brackets

Administration, TMPU and Essential Services

Nauiyu Nanbiyu is well equipped to carry out its functions of administration, TMPU and essential services and these activities as a group employ most workers at the mission (see table 11). The council builds and maintains roads and maintains hygiene all at a very high standard. Table 7 shows that a large part of funds for these operations comes from government grants and government contracts for the performance of essential services. To gain an idea of government financial support in the community in this area the government subsidies and contract income need to be added together. This will overstate the level of support slightly since agency income from bank operations is also included. Locally raised income for administration, TMPU and essential services is only about 6 per cent of total revenue for those activities. This comes mainly from a $7.50 per week charge on individuals for essential services.

The Bank agency is housed in the administrative centre and is an agency for the Commonwealth Savings Bank. Nauiyu Nambiyu took over the agency from Catholic Missions in 1979. The agency is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 11-12 am and 4-5 pm. The float is only $4000 but cash is not a problem because the store deposits cash with the agency and cashes cheques for customers. The agency does not cash cheques. The Administrative Officer (accountant) of Nauiyu Nambiyu oversees the agency. It is run by two Aboriginal women part time, who otherwise do clerical work for Nauiyu Nambiyu. They have had no formal training in bank work.

Housing

Both the council and Catholic Missions own houses at the mission. Table 12 gives details of the housing stock occupied by Aborigines. As can be seen, Catholic Missions (CM) owns the old village houses and a number of modern houses. All rents paid by Aborigines, however, regardless of which institution owns the houses, are paid to Nauiyu Nambiyu (NN). The mission is in the process of transferring ownership of its houses to the council. All of the houses have power and water, and most have their own refrigerator.

Table 12
Aboriginal Housing, Daly River Mission, 1982

Style	Owned by	Number	Rent per fortnight	Description
Old Village House	CM	8	$10	one room houses
Single Men's (Green House)	NN	1	$50	four room house
Block House	NN	5	$40	two bedroom houses
Stilt House	CM	4	$40	three bedroom houses
Woolianna House (1)	CM	4	$30	two bedroom houses
White House	CM	1	$50	two-three bedroom house
Total		23		

Footnote: (1) One is located at Wooliana.

European accomodation is provided in 7 houses, a convent accommodating five religious sisters, and single men's accomodation (presbytery) with accommodation for 10 men. All of these are owned by Catholic Missions which receives all rent. One house, occupied by the accountant, is owned by Nauiyu Nambiyu and her rent is paid to that organisation.

The council also builds houses. For that purpose it employs a builder/manager and a bricklayer, both of whom are Europeans, and five Aboriginal male labourers. The labourers are paid on an hourly basis and can work up to 40 hours per week. Only two were working a 40 hour week in 1982. There are no formal apprentices. All of the materials are imported. The designs of houses are determined by the council and the houses have wide acceptance in the community. The rate of completion of new houses is 3-4 per year and each costs about $30,000 for the more simple design (ground level). Both the rate of completion and costs of construction are very good by comparison with most Aboriginal communities. House construction is funded by the Aboriginal Development Commission.

It is difficult to determine the extent of the housing shortage in the community for two reasons:

(a) While it is intended to replace the village houses with modern houses, it is felt that many people are happy with the old houses and that some people are not equipped to manage a modern house.

(b) There is some crowding at present. However, there have been major long-term changes in population. About half of the population moved to Peppimenarti in the 1970s but some have moved back to the mission. In addition, the homelands movements is continuing to develop in the Reserve and there is a land claim on unalienated land south of Fish River Station, which, if successful, may result in many people (including Wagiman) returning to their country. Thus the mission may lose population in the long run.

There is currently a waiting list of 8 families. Allocation of houses is made by the council on the basis of complex and informal criteria, including: family size, period of residence at the mission, the way in which they have looked after their present accommodation and their position in the community.

Store

The mission established the store many years ago. As was the case on all missions and settlements, it began selling a small range of items but the range of stock grew with Aboriginal incomes. In 1980 the store was handed over to Nauiyu Nambiyu. It is a small but very well run store.

The store is the sole supplier of groceries, clothes and hardware at the Daly River crossing area (apart from ice and eggs which can be bought from Wulk Witbi). It opens for the following hours:

Monday - Friday	9.00 - 12.30 am and 1.30 - 5.15 pm
Saturday	9.00 - 11.30 am
Sunday	Closed

It has a part-time European manageress and employs two Aboriginal women full-time. The manageress will leave soon and one of the Aboriginal women will take her place this will be the first time the store is managed by an Aboriginal person. None of the workers has received formal training in store management although the Aboriginal women have had extensive experience in the store: one for three years and the other for two years. A Darwin consultant visits the store every two weeks to aid management and provides informal instruction on store procedures.

Sales revenue is about $275,000 per annum, of which less than 3 per cent constitute sales to Europeans living at the mission or to tourists visiting the crossing. As is usual in such communities, Europeans buy all of their goods, other than when they have unexpectedly run out, directly from Darwin. Essential food items, basic groceries, fruit and vegetables, meat and dairy items are 54 per cent of the value of all sales. Clothes, furniture, consumer durables, are all minor sales. Almost all items purchased by Aborigines at the Mission (other than some beer from the Motel and beer club) are from the store.

Store purchases are about $200,000 per annum and stock-in-hand is about $30,000. The number of items stocked is approximately:

Groceries, soaps, health and beauty goods	150	items.
Hard goods - camping items, guns, etc.	120	items.
Soft goods - clothing, footwear	60	items.

Various wholesalers are used, the main ones are: -

Food from Hickman's and ACW Adelaide
Cigarettes from TPD
Hard goods from NT Wholesalers
Clothes from Hickman's
Small goods from Bardens
Fruit and vegetables from Tully
Meat from Sourey, where it is pre-priced
Bread from Darwin Bakery

Eggs are obtained from Wulk Witbi. All goods, including perishables, are brought to the Mission from Darwin by the store's truck. On rare occasions ice cream is flown in. Freight is only about 3 - 4 per cent of the value of sales. None of the beef from the mission cattle is sold through the store.

Approaches have been made to the store to vary stocking and pricing policy in accordance with health considerations and the store's management is sympathetic although the council has not always been so. The only change has been that disposable napkins and baby bottles are not stocked. Some baby food is sold but mainly in jars. People are resistant to buying it in tins.

Stocking policy is determined largely by the Darwin consultant. His aim is to provide a 'basic store' with items as cheap as possible. This, together with the smallness of the store's building, means that only one brand of each item is stocked. There are no mothers' committees or store committees to make suggestions about prices or stock, although many suggestions come from Aboriginal women through a woman councillor.

Mark-ups vary greatly from the lowest of 25 per cent on the 'essential

food items' of tea, flour, bread, eggs, sugar, rice, milk powder, biscuits and hamper, to a maximum of 100 per cent on jewellery. These are set so that the gross profit rate of 25 per cent ought to be achieved. Items are put on 'special' when there is excess stock but Aboriginal customers rarely respond to price discounts. The store has been making modest profits from which the store truck was purchased and money has been paid to the Social Development Fund.

Shrinkage is very low, only about 7 per cent of sales (compared with 15 per cent or more in some Aboriginal communities). Theft and the consumption of food in the store are only minor problems. Shrinkage seems to arise mainly from goods damaged in transit from Darwin, or some goods bearing the wrong price.

The store does not operate as an important socializing place as stores do in many other communities, partly because it does not possess a wide verandah with seats outside.

Wulk Witbi (Little Hill)

Wulk Witbi is a development on a small hill about five miles north of the mission along the Daly River road. The site is about 40 acres and is on mission land. It was originally conceived of as a flood refuge for the mission but it is now being developed as a tourist centre for the area. It was opened in December 1978.

When it was first established, the area became an informal outstation, used mainly by drinkers. During this period buildings were damaged. It was then decided to develop the site for tourism, as well as a flood refuge. Initial plans included the provision of tourist accommodation, selling petrol, the marketing of artefacts made at the mission, establishing a golf course and a small nature park. In addition, it was planned to establish a poultry business and a commercial garden and plant nursery. The project has been proceeding satisfactorily and many of the plans have been realized, including the development of tourist accommodation and poultry production. Petrol serving equiment is about to be installed.

Tourist accommodation was opened in June 1982. There are four well equipped cabins, camping sites with toilet and washing facilities, and a games room. Guests have been a mixture of tourists, contractors and government employees. The occupancy rate has been satisfactory, considering the newness of the development. The development has its own bus and conducts tours of the copper mine, farms, Woolianna, the sites of the Jesuit missions and the existing mission.

There is a large modern fowl house with 230 white leghorn hens, producing 14.5 dozen eggs per day. Almost all eggs are sold to the store with the surplus being sold to tourists, Nguiu (on occasions) and Catholic Missions. Prices charged are at the commercial rate of $1.80 per dozen. One batch, of 235 pullets, has been supplied to Nguiu and it is hoped that such sales will continue.

It is intented that Wulk Witbi will become a major outlet for traditional art and craft made at the mission and it is to be sold under the name of Merrepen Art. No special display, storage or sale provisions for this exist at present (apart from a pin-board). Sales have been minor.

Some items, especially string bags (which have unique colours), are sold at the store. Two men and six women at the mission make artefacts from time to time.

The development employs one European manager full-time who is assisted by his wife (a local Aboriginal woman). It also has a small bus and a Toyota truck.

Beer Club

There are two liquor outlets in the area - 'Fairweather's Hotel Motel' at the crossing and the Nauiyu Nambiyu beer club. The Hotel Motel has the usual licence for such businesses and serves liquor to tourists, local Europeans and Aborigines. Aborigines who purchase liquor there are free to drink anywhere except on mission land.

It is illegal to bring liquor on to mission land without a permit from the Northern Territory Liquor Commission. This gives the beer club a degree of monopoly power and this power is used in an attempt to control drinking behaviour. The club is open every day of the week, including Sunday, and for two sessions each day The first session is from 5.00 pm to 6.00 pm and the second is from 8.00 pm to 9.00 pm. Any adult member of the community can drink at both sessions. The beer limit at each session is three cans for men and two cans for women. With the exception of one old man who has the appropiate Liquor Commission permit, nobody can take alcohol from the club. Any person who appears to have been drinking elsewhere is refused admission to the club. These rules apply to both Europeans and Aborigines.

The club is opened each day by the European manager of Nauiyu Nambiyu who remains on duty to assist in financial matters. Two or more council members work there, voluntarily, serving beer and assisting with the control of customers. Usually male councillors perform these tasks, but women take control when men are away on 'business' (ceremonies). There appears to be little pressure for more liberal drinking rules for reasons already mentioned.

The club makes substantial profits, as is common with such clubs, and the profits are transferred to the Social Development Fund.

Social Development Fund

Nauiyu Nambiyu has a Social Development Fund which runs a children's kitchen, shows films twice per week, makes personal loans for such things as cars and furniture and engages in social welfare activities. It has three main sources of income: profits from the beer club, profits from petrol and diesel sales and a tax imposed on residents. Such taxes are common in Aboriginal communities. People earning less than $100 per fortnight are required to pay $5 per fortnight, people earning from $100 to $150 pay $10 and the scale continues until people earning over $400 per fortnight pay $25 per fortnight. Apart from the lower and upper categories, the tax rate varies between 6 per cent and 10 per cent of incomes. Aborigines in the community own eight vehicles privately, of which four are in working order. Some of these were purchased with loans from the Social Development Fund.

The Garden and Cattle Activities

There had been a substantial fruit and vegetable garden until recently but funding for two Aboriginal workers was withdrawn in the late 1970s and it is now being worked by one of the semi-retired Brothers. The garden is greatly scaled down and the main crops are bananas, mangoes and citrus fruits. Grapefruit is the main citrus fruit and oranges, although they are popular, do not grow well. The best fruit is sold through the store and the remainder used in the children's kitchen. Output from the garden is small in comparison with total consumption of fruit in the community.

The mission owns between 300 and 400 head of cattle and their care employs three Aboriginal men full time. The cattle are killed for the children's kitchen and for private use.

PEPPIMENARTI

Structure

By 1982, Peppimenarti had developed into a substantial permanent community. Although it is relatively close to Darwin, poor communications means that it is isolated. The Daly River to Port Keats road is very badly cut up by cattle trucks from Peppimenarti and Palumpa, especially near the Reserve's border with Elizabeth Downs Station and since the road runs over black soil flats it is impassable during most of the wet season. The Daly River crossing itself is impassable until late in the new year. There is telephone communication but it is via the radio VJY system and reception is often unreliable. There is no television reception and radio reception is very poor. Peppimenarti does have a gravel all weather airstrip, however, and there is one regular flight per week.

Although the three outstations in the area, Nadiri, Baredar and Papengella are being developed, most of the population in the northern half of the Reserve live at Peppimenarti. Table 13 shows the composition of that population.

Table 13
Population of Peppimenarti, August 1982

	Aborigines	Europeans
Under 1 year	7	1
1 - 4 years	24	2
5 - 14 years	81	2
Men 15 years and over	60	8
Women 15 - 44 years	48	5
Women 44 years and over	21	-
Totals	241	18

Source: Clinic Records

Unfortunately the age categories used by the Peppimenarti and mission clinics are different so exact comparison is not possible, but it can be seen that both Aboriginal populations are very young. As already noted when discussing the mission's population, under conditions applying in the community, this fact implies a high population growth rate from natural increase.

Plate 5: A cattle truck, the garage and Peppimenarti Hill.

Plate 6: The school, Peppimenarti.

Most of the people living at Peppimenarti came from the mission during the 1970s and there is still considerable movement between the two communities. The people mainly speak Ngangikurrungkurr ('Ngangi' means 'language, story, word' and 'kurrungkurr' means 'the deep middle part of a river') as a first language. Many speak Ngangiwumeri and this appears to be a dialect of Ngangikurrungkurr. The only study of the relationship between the two languages, undertaken by Daryl Tryon (1974), found that the languages share about 84 percent of lexical items, on the basis of a cognate count of a list of 200 words. Other people at Peppimenarti speak Nangomeri, Wagiman, Marrintjepin, Marramaninjiji, Maranunggu, Malak Malak, and others, as first languages.

Table 14 shows the population breakdown by source of income. As can be seen, the unemployment rate is much higher than at the mission and this is an important explanation of the fact that average cash income is much lower at Peppimenarti. There is stigma associated with unemployment at Peppimenarti and the community holds the view that everyone in the community who receives an income (other than the infirm or aged) should work. Thus people on unemployment benefits are directed to jobs by the Community Advisor (Harry Wilson), usually on TMPU projects. They are not expected to work as hard as those receiving wages, however. This process is the same in spirit as the CDEP scheme.

Table 14
Sources of Incomes by Type, Peppimenarti, August 1982

	Aborigines	Europeans
Full time employees	25	10
Part time employees	7	
DSS recipients		
Aged pension	4	
Supporting Mothers pension	3	
Widows pension	4	
Invalid pension	2	
Unemployment benefits (Family Allowance 32)	22	
Unemployment rate amongst Aborigines as a percentage of the full-time Aboriginal workforce	46.8%	

Peppimenarti does not have a community council of the usual type found in Aboriginal communities. All of the non-private assets in the community are owned by the Peppimenarti Association, other than school and clinic assets, the power house and an accommodation demountable used for visiting essential services workers. The Association performs the function of local government, undertakes house construction and management and manages all of the enterprises in the community. These are the store, garage and cattle business. The Association is the only source of employment in the area, apart from the clinic and school.

The Association was incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act, 1981. It has a council of eight persons who include Harry Wilson (chairman), his cousin and nephew, and the important land owners in the area. Elections are held every year and every Aborigine over 18 years of age who is regarded as belonging to Peppimenarti can vote.

There are no police at Peppimenarti and the nearest police station is at the Daly River crossing. Law and order are the responsibility of the Kingerie Council. This is composed of a group of older men (usually the same as those on the council of the Peppimenarti Association) who impose traditional laws and discipline. The punishments are very severe by European standards. Europeans are usually punished by being expelled from the community. Many Aboriginal people in the area feel that traditional laws and punishments are necessary if their people and their communities are to prosper. In some activities strict adherence to skin group laws is required, although many Europeans believe that skins were introduced since the 1930s from Western Australia. There are well established trade routes through to Western Australia and Peppimenarti people have strong links with people living around Kununurra, so that such a development is certainly possible. Some of this trade involves Peppimenarti people supplying bamboo spears to the Western Australians and receiving ironwood fighting shields in return. The Kingerie Council also performs many social welfare functions, including looking after the interests of old people in the community.

People at Peppimenarti are very traditional and for many, the decision to leave the mission and move to the Reserve was a conscious decision to live 'in Aboriginal way', at least socially and religiously. Thus many patterns of behaviour which were hidden at the mission have become overt at Peppimenarti. Peppimenarti has held some big ceremonies since its establishment. The biggest (in terms of attendance) was held in May 1982 when there were the initiations (circumcision) of seven local boys. The Aboriginal doctors came from Kununurra and visitors came from Western Australia, Bathurst Island, Pine Creek, Katherine and elsewhere. It is believed that the visitors numbered between 1,500 and 2,000 people.

The issue of land ownership at Peppimenarti is somewhat complicated. The Peppimenarti Association owns no land as such although for some years it has mustered the area of the Daly River Aboriginal Reserve north of the Moyle River, including the Wildlife Reserve. This area is about 7,970 square kilometres. It is owned by people belonging to eleven language groups and, as already mentioned, as a result of an agreement struck at a meeting at the mission in September 1979, Peppimenarti pays a royalty equal to ten per cent of the sale proceeds on cleanskin cattle turned off. These royalties are held in an NLC trust account pending the identification of traditional owners, at which time distribution of the royalties to the owners will take place. The owners of the land on which Peppimenarti is located live there and can control developments. This greatly simplifies things from the community's and government's point of view in relation to developments at Peppimenarti Town, but not in relation to the cattle enterprise.

Table 15

Revenue and Cost Structures of Activities, Peppimenarti, 1982[1]

(i) Revenue as a percentage of total revenue

	Government Subsidies	Contract and Agency Income	Sales and Hire Income	Other Rent	Other Other	Total Revenue
Administration		12.3	35.2		52.5	100.0
TMPU and Garage	68.3	14.2	17.5			100.0
Clinic and Contract Income	27.7	72.3				100.0
School	100.0					100.0
Housing	93.9			6.1		100.0
Store	1.9		98.1			100.0
Cattle			100.0			100.0
Totals Overall Activities(2)	38.1	14.6	46.3	0.6	0.4	100.0

Footnote: (1) This table is constructed so as to show the sources and distribution of funds. It does not correspond to Income and Expenditure Statments. In Income and Expenditure Statements the gross value of capital grants (that is, the value before deducting wage and material costs involved in creating the capital) is treated as income. Applying this accounting rule the Association made a small surplus. The two activities for which this factor was important were housing and the store.

(2) The percentages in this row show the percentages of total revenue from all activities which is derived from each source or absorbed by each cost. For instance, 38.1 per cent of revenue from all activities comes from government subsidies.

Table 15 (continued)

Revenue and Cost Structures of Activities, Peppimenarti, 1982[1]

	Aboriginal Wages	European Wages	Total Wages	Freight	Stock and Materials	Legal Accounting, Consulting Costs	Fuel and Oil	Depreciation	Other	Surplus or (deficit)
Administration					69.4	24.1		36.4	62.5	(92.4)
TMPU and Garage	21.7	15.5	37.2	1.2	29.3	3.8	17.9	11.1	2.8	(3.4)
Clinic and Contract Income	19.0	13.9	32.9	0.8	59.7	9.0	0.9		0.7	(4.1)
School	31.1	64.5	95.6		4.4					
Housing	0.7	28.5	29.2	1.6	49.5	6.0	1.3	27.7	3.2	(18.5)
Store	9.5		9.5	4.3	71.9	8.5	0.6	1.8	3.5	(0.3)
Cattle	31.3	8.4	39.7	18.5	1.0	11.1	6.8	4.8	35.9	(17.9)
Totals Overall Activities (2)	16.4	13.8	30.2	3.7	46.3	6.9	5.6	6.9	5.9	(5.5)

Footnote: (1) and (2) same as on previous page.

Table 16

Employment at Peppimenarti, 1982

		Managers		Office Staff		Professionals, Tradesmen		Semi-Trained		Semi-Skilled		Unskilled		Totals		Aboriginal Employment by Sex	
		A	E	A	E	A	E	A	E	A	E	A	E	A	E	M	F
Infrastructure Institutions																	
Administration	M	1*					1							1	1	1	-
	F																
TMPU	M	1*					2					6		6	2	6	-
	F																
Clinic	M													2(1)	1	-	2(1)
	F		1					2(1)									
School	M		1				1	1						3	3	1	2
	F						1	1				1					
Housing	M		1				2					5**		-	3	-	-
	F																
Total - Infrastructure Institutions														12(1)	10	8	4(1)
Goods Production																	
Cattle	M	1*										10-20***		10	-	10	-
	F																
Service Activities																	
Store	M											1		3	-	1	2
	F	1										1					
Grand Totals		2	3	-	-	-	7	4(1)	-	-	-	19	-	25(1)	10	19	6(1)
% of full-time positions held by Aborigines		57.1		-		-		100		-		100		71.4		76	24

* These three roles are performed by the one man

** Occasional, rather than part-time, employees. Deleted from totals.

*** Employed in the 1981 and early 1982 dry seasons

(1) Number of part-time employees are shown in brackets

Table 15 shows the revenue and cost structures for activities undertaken by the Association in the financial year 1981-82. The table differs from Income and Expenditure Statements of the Association in one important respect. In the Association's accounts, the gross value of grants for capital items are treated as income. That is, no deductions are made for the labour and material costs involved in creating the capital items for which the grants were received. Using this accounting method the Association made a small surplus, overall. In table 15, however, the capital grants have been shown as 'Government Subsidies' and the labour and material costs associated with them (mainly in housing) have been allocated to the respective cost columns. Because the costs of the capital items for which grants were received were greater than the grants for housing and store activities, the Association overall appears to have made a loss. The differences between the two accounting approaches is of no great significance and merely reflects different purposes for which the data is to be used. The aim of table 15 is to show the source of revenue, whether recurrent or capital in nature, and the way that revenue was dispersed. This data provides the basis of the social accounting data for Peppimenarti which will be presented shortly.

In a strictly accounting sense, the Association made a small surplus in 1981-82 but this represented a very substantial improvement on the deficit made in 1980-81. The main reasons were the following: in 1980-81 substantial operating deficits were made on cattle trading, housing and clinic operations, although substantial profits were made on store trading and administration; and capital grants for housing were substantially smaller.

Table 16 shows the levels and nature of employment at Peppimenarti in August 1982. Infrastructure institutions predominate in employment at Peppimenarti, as they do at the mission, although the cattle activities have in the past, and still do, provide substantial employment. Harry Wilson, the Community Advisor, occupies many important entrepreneurial roles in the community. Mainly because of that fact, the proportion of managerial positions held by Aborigines in the community is very high. All of the professionals and tradesmen are Europeans and all of the semitrained and unskilled workers are Aborigines. The high proportion of positions held by men is typical of Aboriginal communities.

Table 17 shows the turnover in European staff over the past two and a half years and, as can be seen, it has been very high. The turnover of Europeans in Aboriginal communities, and to some extent in European communities in remote Australia, is usually very high. However, the turnover rates at Peppimenarti are very high even by these standards. These high rates create considerable problems because the continuity of policies and production is constantly broken and it often leads to long periods of time when the position is vacant.

Table 17
Turnover of European Staff, Peppimenarti
April 1979 to August 1982

Position	Number of Europeans holding position
Assistant Community Advisor	4, none for four months
Plumber	4, first appointed early 1981
Mechanic	7, none for one year
Nurse	5
Head Teacher	1, no turnover
Other Teachers	One replaced
Builders and Building Managers	8
Store Manager	2, the position is currently held by an Aboriginal woman

The Community

The community has gone through three stages of physical development. In the first stage shelters were erected as people moved to Peppimenarti. Then, in the second the village was built. This is composed of the store, sheds, water tanks and small dwellings constructed from corrugated iron with concrete floors. All buildings are connected to electric power. These buildings still house most of the population and the village remains the site for most town facilities. In the third stage, substantial modern houses have been built to the north and north west of the village. Construction is continuing and it is intended that all permanent residents, other than those who intend moving to their own outstations, will be similarly housed.

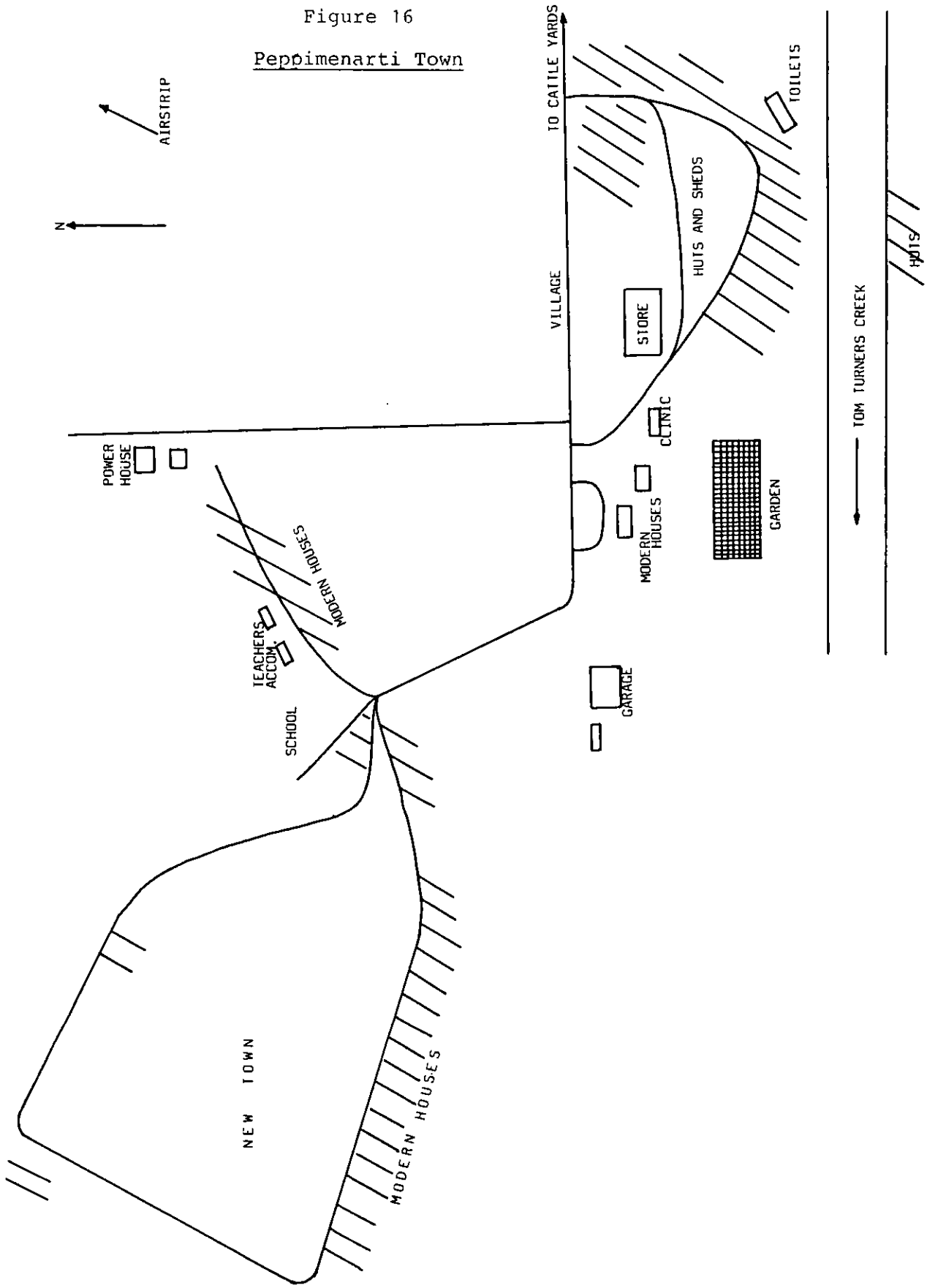
Figure 16 shows the plan of the community. Since the housing development to the north and north west is intended to be permanent its layout is decided with careful attention being paid to the status of the residents. Each housing block is twice the usual town block size and houses are built on one side of the road only. These features have greatly increased the cost of servicing the blocks but they are considered to be important for privacy. It is intended that once all of the village residents have moved to their outstations or have been rehoused, the village area will be retained as a service centre, a place for tourists (with the concrete slabs being used as sites for caravans) and for visiting Aborigines.

General administration is undertaken by the Community Advisor and the Assistant Community Advisor. The remoteness of the community has resulted in the Association's accountant/consultant in Darwin being active in most aspects of administration, especially those involving the cattle enterprise, contacts with government departments, contractors and lawyers. Town maintenance employs one European trademan (a plumber) and five Aboriginal men. Electrical work is done by outside contractors. Many of the unemployed are directed to work the TMPU area.

The Association has a garage to service and repair vehicles. It employs one European motor mechanic and one Aboriginal assistant.

Figure 16

Peppimenarti Town



School

The school employs three European teachers, two Aboriginal Teaching Assistants and an Aboriginal janitor. Some 64 children are enrolled, aged between six and fifteen years. These are children from all of the 'main families' living at Peppimenarti. Limited resources have meant that children of short term visitors are usually not accepted at the school. Attendance rates of those enrolled are very high, about 96 per cent.

About 75 per cent of class time is devoted to English and maths. This emphasis is in response to the community's desire for the children to have communication and numeracy skills. Two hours per week are devoted to European social and cultural material. There is no bilingual or bicultural education and the community holds the view that Aboriginal languages and cultures are adequately taught in the homes. The parents are interested and concerned with education although their participation in school activities is very low.

School facilities are poor. The classrooms are composed of one large caravan, one iron shed and a smaller caravan used as a toilet block. European teachers are housed in two demountables next to the school and the school has one vehicle. The school is totally financed by the Northern Territory Department of Education. There has been pressure on the school to commence pre school education but limited resources have prevented this from taking place. Parents are interested in their children receiving higher education but will not allow them to go to Kormilda in Darwin, saying that it is 'too free' and the children would become disruptive when they returned home.

Clinic

The clinic is open from 8.00 am to 5.00 pm on Monday to Friday and opens for a short time on Saturday and Sunday. The sister is a European woman and there are two full time and one part time Aboriginal female health workers. Apart from treating people as they arrive at the clinic, the clinic annually screens everyone living at Peppimenarti early in the dry season. It also screens children under six years of age every three months, children six years to 14 years of age every four months, and applies eye drops (as part of the trachoma program) to all school children every month. It is also active in organising a women's club and assists with social security problems. A doctor visits once a month. In addition, the clinic encourages the use of some traditional treatments, when European medicine is inadequate.

The clinic is housed in a demountable of inadequate size, has a radio and a 4x4 Toyota station wagon. It is financed by the Northern Territory Department of Health and has been promised more funds for a clinic building. More health workers are also needed.

The number of patients suffering from various ailments in August 1982 are shown in table 18. It is obvious from this information that the clinic is used intensively and few resources are available for disease prevention. The mortality rate, however, is low.

Table 18
Numbers of People Suffering from Ailments, Peppimenarti, August 1982

Ailments	Number of Patients
Chronic chest infections	42
Chronic obstructive airways disease	10
TB (all inactive)	4
Leprosy (all being treated)	5
Cardiac conditions	4
Chronic renal infections	39
Arthritis and gout	8
Hypertension	10
Diabetes	2
Handicapped (congenital, muscular, eye problems)	20
Epilepsy	2
Asthma	7
Skin infections	20-30
Anaemia	23
Change of mental state (usually associated with alcohol)	3
Number of evacuations over six months	26
Average number of people treated per month	280
Average number of people receiving surgical care in Darwin over six months	7

Source: Clinic records

Housing

As with many Aboriginal communities, housing is a vexing problem. There are four important issues: the style, rate of construction, cost of construction and allocation of houses.

Most of the modern houses at Peppimenarti were designed by a Melbourne architect and the style seems to be popular. They are built on a 6x12 metre concrete slab with a 6x3 metre verandah at one end, a large living area and two bedrooms. Plumbing is internal. Locally treated cypress pine poles are used for the structural timbers. The roofs and walls are made of sheet steel and much of the walls are louvred. Nine modern houses have now been completed.

There have been eight European builders in the three years since n1979. While this turnover is high, it is not rare in Aboriginal communities. The average for communities is probably about one builder every year. The original intention was that Aboriginal labour would be used to construct the houses under a builder's supervision. This policy eventually failed. Five modern houses were constructed satisfactorily but this was followed by a period of two years in which none was completed. This led to a crisis and the Assistant Community Advisor at Peppimenarti bid for the building contract. He is not a builder by trade, but was given a trial which he completed successfully. He and two other European workers (none of them

tradesmen) began work at the end of 1980 and between then and the end of 1981 they completed the three houses which had been commenced by the previous builder and completely built another. If the housing costs for 1980 and 1981 are added and divided by the three houses completed in that time, the per house cost was about $144,000, greatly in excess of the $33,000 which the houses now cost to build. Those excessive costs were caused by the previous building arrangements, involving poor supervision of labour and materials, and not by the activities of the current builder.

The original arrangement with the present builder was that the European contractors would supply labour, the Association would supply materials, (almost all of which are imported), and the Aborigines would lay the concrete slabs and install the structural poles. Later, it was decided that Aborigines would lay the slabs only and this is the current arrangement. This task employs five men for one and half days per house. One young Aborigine assists the contractors occasionally, without pay, for the purpose of learning about house construction.

This arrangement is working well. As already mentioned, in 1981 the contractor completed the three houses which had been started when he took over, and built one completely. In 1982 he was expected to complete five houses. These were well advanced in August 1982. The construction time is four weeks per house. Electrical work is undertaken by outside contractors and plumbing is done by the essential services plumber at Peppimenarti. Both the community and the relevant government departments are pleased with the quality of the contractor's work.

The number of houses needed is difficult to estimate because it depends upon the eventual plans of people living at Peppimenarti. If all of the existing continuous residents are to be housed then there is a backlog of 44 houses. It is most likely, however, that many non-Ngangikurrungkurr and non-Ngangiwumeri people will move to other parts of the Reserve so that the long term need for housing may be reduced by emigration. Most of the modern houses so far completed are occupied by the important land owning families in the area. Each of the council members has a modern house.

The Store

The store is the only source of clothes, household items, petrol, beer and food other than bush tucker and locally killed cattle in the community. It is managed by the Community Advisor's wife, an Aborigine, and employs two other women and one man (on stock) at any one time. It opens every day including Sunday. Pricing and ordering policies are usually determined by the same Darwin consultant who provides the service at the mission store. As is usual in Aboriginal communities, most Europeans purchase most of their goods by mail order. Stock is brought in by road during the dry season and stockpiled for the wet season. Emergency stock only is bought in by plane during the wet season.

On working days a four-beer-cans per person limit applies. On Fridays or weekends an individual can buy a carton of cans but sales on Sunday are restricted according to the work required to be done on Monday. The Community Advisor determines the alcohol policy. Problem drinkers are disciplined by the Kingerie Council. Aboriginal visitors can buy a case of beer at any time but it cannot be consumed near the town during working hours. No beer limits apply to Europeans.

At one stage Peppimenarti became dry, but this resulted in people moving to Daly River. It was then decided to allow alcohol but to devise ways of 'educating' people in its use. In 1982 there were plans to build a beer club which will sell beer in jugs only (no takeaway) and which would open after work and after patrons had time to shower and change. This idea probably came from Nguiu since these arrangements have been experimented with there and Peppimenarti people would have heard of it.

The Deputy Community Advisor kills between seven to ten bullocks per week (depending on the number of visitors) for Aborigines. Europeans make their own arrangements about beef supplies. Since all houses have refrigerators or freezers there is always plenty of beef and no meat, other than chicken and some small meats, is sold at the store. The stock camp is supplied directly from the store.

A kitchen provides children with lunches every day including weekends. Meat for the kitchen comes from the kills mentioned above, and surplus stock from the store is given to the kitchen. The meals are composed of meat, rice, chicken and fruit (especially apples and oranges). There is concern about diet, especially of the children, and the kitchen's operation is an attempt to improve it.

The store manageress also manages the Post Office agency and the bank agency of the CSB. The bank agency is used mainly for cashing DSS cheques and although the float is only $3,220 no liquidity problems arise. Peppimenarti is small enough for there to be no problems with the identification of DSS recipients. The manageress has received only on-the-job training in all of her roles from previous European managers. Personnel at the store also assist with social welfare problems. The store receives no government subsidies and has made substantial profits in the past.

Cattle Operations

Peppimenarti's mustering area is a mixture of rocky hills and outcrops, swampy black soil plains and yellow clay plains. The vegetation is mainly medium scattered scrub and open forest. The number of cattle is unknown but it is believed that there are about 20,000 head, of which about half are branded. They are mainly beef Shorthorn and Brahman cattle (especially in the Wildlife Reserve). Some show the effects of inbreeding and some may have tuberculosis and other diseases. Many, especially in the Wildlife Reserve, are fine specimens and attempts have recently been made to improve the quality of stock by introducing stud Brahman bulls. There are also many buffalo, brumbies, wild pigs and other feral animals which will make disease control difficult in the long term.

The Association has five cattle trucks in various stages of repair, portable yards and loading ramps, and a number of Toyota one tonne trucks for cattle work. The horse plant numbers about 300. There is a large set of timber cattle yards at the community and recently some 150 kilometres of fencing has been completed, which form four large paddocks near the community.

Table 19 shows the turnoff of cattle and Aboriginal employment in the cattle project in recent years. Many of the older men have had many years experience in the cattle industry but Peppimenarti's remoteness and difficult communications with the outside world have forced many managerial

decisions to be made in Darwin. Thus day-to-day operations are controlled in the community but other issues are managed by the Association's Accountant-consultant in Darwin; these include the hiring of contract workers, arranging shipment of cattle (done by Darwin-based hauliers), deciding turnoff rates and determining the destination of stock (usually about half are sent to Point Stuart abattoir and half to Katherine abattoir, though some are sent to Wyndham from time to time, depending on the prices offered). The accountant/consultant obtains information on prices offered by direct contact with abattoirs.

Table 19
Cattle Production and Aboriginal Employment, Peppimenarti, 1979 - 1982

Dry Season	Prices	Head Turned Off	Aboriginal Employment
1979	Good	1,000	10-20
1980	Good/Average	1,100	10-20
1981	Average	1,000	10-20
1982	Poor	6,600 (1)	5-9 (2)

Footnote: (1) This figure is composed of 4,200 head sent to market, 1,200 head found to be old or diseased or unmusterable and destroyed and 1,200 turned back for breeding stock.
(2) Non-Peppimenarti contractors.

In the past the government, through the Aboriginal Development Commision (ADC), has given operating subsidies to the cattle enterprise. From 1978-79 to 1980-81 the ADC provided funds sufficient to enable the cattle enterprise to employ 10 workers. It was agreed in the community that workers should receive half pay so that 20 workers could be employed. In 1980-81 cattle operations incurred large losses from a blow-out of wage costs and an unsatisfactory turnoff. Bull catching plant was purchased in 1981 and some local men worked successfully on this task under contract but this did not change the overall financial result. In 1981-82 ADC withdrew its operating subsidies and it was clear that some dramatic changes were necessary.

Peppimenarti, like all other cattle stations in the Northern Territory, has been affected by the Brucellosis and Tuberculosis Eradication Campaign (BTEC). The aim of BTEC, as the name suggests, is to eradicate these bovine diseases. Briefly, the campaign involves the following stages: inspection of the herd by a stock inspector; the drawing up of a contract between the pastoralist and the Department of Primary Production (DPP) which specifies the steps which must be undertaken by the pastoralist; the pastoralist must have his herd tested, keeping the 'clean' cattle separate from untested cattle, and the infected cattle are slaughtered; the DPP compensates the pastoralist at the market price for cattle thus slaughtered and for "unmusterables". Non-compliance by the pastoralist with the contract may lead to rewriting of the contract, where sufficient explanations exist. Where sufficient explanations do not exist the DPP may require complete destocking by the pastoralist, or let contracts for destocking in which case the pastoralist receives the sale price less destocking costs; or DPP may arrange a 'shoot out' without

compensation to the pastoralist (since no cattle are sold). For many stations, including Peppimenarti, compliance with the programme requires a substantial fencing programme.

The original programme for Peppimenarti was drawn up in 1980 and it was intended to be completed by 1984. It involved an extensive fencing programme over three years, costing $573,000 , and that value of funds was applied for from the ADC in July 1980. Some 205 km of fences were to be constructed along with eight sets of permanent stock yards, access roads, sets of portable panels and a spray race. Permission had been gained from the traditional owners to run the fences across their land. It was hoped that Peppimenarti could become an important supplier of BTEC clean breeding cattle for other stations under destocking orders, if the compliance with BTEC could be achieved quickly. No reply was received from the ADC concerning the application for funds by January 1981 and further representations were made since the matter was becoming urgent. Under the BTEC contract a minimum of 5,000 to 7,000 head would have to be turned off and a minimum of 3,000 head turned back (to become breeding stock) in 1981. Without the fencing and other improvements only a turnoff of 3,500 head was expected. As can be seen from Table 19 the actual number turned off in that year was much less than the anticipated number.

Eventually the application for funds for the original project was rejected by the ADC and the Association proceeded to get a bank loan of $132,000 for a reduced fencing project. The ADC agreed to underwrite the loan. The ADC then changed its mind and offered a loan for that amount at a lower interest rate than that offered by the bank. This loan was accepted and new turnoff plans were made, involving the turnoff of 3,000 head in 1981-82, 5,000 head in 1982-83 and 10,000 head in 1983-84. The fencing programme has been completed.

The above detail was given to demonstrate some of the difficulties Peppimenarti and other pastoral properties face because of the BTEC programme. Pastoral operations yield low profits. In Peppimenarti's case it had been making losses which were being covered by the ADC. When the BTEC requirements were imposed, Peppimenarti had to engage in a fencing programme for which a loan was sought. ADC was reluctant to make the loan since it was already subsidising operating losses. Thus Peppimenarti was being squeezed by the BTEC on the one hand and ADC on the other which, while eventually granting a loan for fencing, withdrew the operating subsidy. The only way out of this squeeze was for Peppimenarti to greatly increase the turnoff of cattle because this would relieve pressure from BTEC, would help reduce operating losses and help cover interest payments.

The turnoff of cattle up to 1981 has been so small that it would have been more than offset by the herd's natural increase. This poor turnoff of cattle and the wage cost blow-out of the previous year led to the reluctant decision to hire contract musterers. They commenced operations in July 1982. The original plan involved the contractor supplying the helicopter, all portable yards, equipment and men to muster, test and cart cattle for sale. All turnback cattle were to be seperated from the sale cattle and held awaiting Peppimenarti drovers and trucks. Peppimenarti was to be responsible for moving the turnback cattle back to the paddocks. This system quickly broke down, however, because the Peppimenarti part of the operation failed and the contract musterer took over the turnback operations as well. The pressure on Peppimenarti did not allow time for problems in their stock camp to be corrected. The contract musterer began

by employing four Europeans in addition to himself, but later expanded his employment to three Europeans and five Aborigines. None of the Aborigines were from Peppimenarti.

By August 1982 a large number of cattle had been turned off and cattle operations for the year were successful financially and in meeting BTEC requirements. The cost of achieving this, however, has been a great reduction in employment of local people and a consequent increase in unemployment.

In the longer term, Peppimenarti cattle operations will face a number of following problems:

1. Continued compliance with BTEC will cause problems. Peppimenarti has a large number of buffalo which may carry TB and they will have to be removed from the mustering area. This will involve additional costs. Also, workers will have to be employed in the maintenance of fences and the annual BTEC testing of cattle.

2. BTEC compliance means that Peppimenarti will be able to muster only fenced areas which, even with expansion, can never be more than a small proportion of its existing mustering zone. Since its cattle numbers will be proportionately reduced the employment which the cattle project can provide will be likewise reduced.

3. Now that tribal boundaries for Peppimenarti's mustering zone have been determined (although there are still some disputes) it is likely that more communities will be established in the northern part of the Reserve. The Amiyangal, Mandayangal, Marranunggu and Marramaninjiji have shown no strong interest in doing so to date but this may change rapidly now that other groups have shown that it can be done. If other communities are established Peppimenarti will have to arrange leases and agreements with the owners and the limited tenure under such conditions may create problems for the operations and investment in the cattle activities.

4. Difficulties in the control of Aboriginal labour are likely to come and go at Peppimenarti, as they do in other Aboriginal communities, leading temporarily to reduced Aboriginal employment, followed by an increase in Aboriginal employment. It should be noted that many European employers in remote Australia have similar difficulties getting satisfactory performance from their European employees. Climate and remoteness cause problems which cannot easily be solved for European and Aboriginal employers alike.

Tourism

Peppimenarti has long held ambitions to develop a tourist business in the area. As already mentioned, at one stage it tried to buy the Daly River Hotel Motel at the crossing. It was to be developed as tourist accommodation and ownership of the liquor licence was to be used to regulate drinking. Its purchase would have meant that Aboriginal organisations would have controlled drinking outlets from Waderr to Adelaide River, but the plan fell through.

Plans also exist to develop tourist activities in the Reserve. These would involve walking, photographic, hunting and fishing safaris. One experimental tour had been arranged but inadequate preparation resulted in it being a failure. The idea, however, deserves much attention.

Postscript - April 1984

Throughtout 1983 and early 1984 a number of people left Peppimenarti, reducing the population to about 200 people by April 1984. There appears to be no single reason for the exodus but a number of factors may have contributed to it. These are the following: the traditional mobility of Aboriginal people; a continuing movement to outstations in the area (a number moved to Nadidi, particularly); the recent deaths of three important old men; the introduction of more restrictive rules on beer consumption; some rejection of the authority structure in the community; in some cases, the desire to avoid punishments under traditional law; and lower incomes and poorer material conditions than at the mission. Because people have left, the unemployment rate has fallen. All of the European teachers there in 1982 have left, as well as the Assistant Community Advisor, the nurse, the plumber and the mechanic. Sadly, Brandy Mingin, the traditional owner of the Peppimenarti area had died and he had been replaced by Martin Pardu. Martin has worked in the garage for many years.

The financial performance of the Association had continued to improve, mainly because the cattle operations had been better managed. TMPU is now undertaken by a community council whose members are, broadly, the same people as are on the Association's committee and on the Kingerie Council.

House construction continued successfully under the arrangements that existed in 1982. In 1983 six houses were built as well as Stage 1 of the Health Clinic and in 1984 it is expected that three or four houses (depending on government funding), as well as Stage II of the Health Clinic will be built. Because many families have left Peppimenarti it is thought that, unless they return, housing will be broadly adequate by the end of 1985.

The financial requirements associated with servicing a loan and the requirements under the BTEC programme have resulted in the continued growth in sophistication of management (in Darwin) of the cattle operations. Long term projections are made of stock and financial matters and policy issues. Matters such as those relating to outstations, are considered well ahead of events. Although the financial aspects of cattle operations have been successful, local Aborigines are still not employed. To some extent, at least, this seems to reflect the unwillingness of people at Peppimenarti to do cattle work. The Association continues to employ the contract musterer who employs five to seven Aborigines, but they are not from Peppimenarti. Attempts have been made to recruit local Aborigines, with no success.

In the 1983 dry season some 4,167 head of cattle were removed from Peppimenarti, with 3,674 head being sent to Point Stuart Abattoirs and 493 unmusterables being shot. The financial failure of Point Stuart Abattoirs has resulted in losses to the Association of money owed it for cattle. A further 1,237 weaners were turned back to paddocks around Peppimenarti. This bought the total number of cattle behind fences to 3,500 head. It is expected that eventually about 5,000 head of cattle will be held in Peppimenarti's paddocks. Only four of all the cattle mustered reacted

positively to the TB test and none reacted positively to the brucellosis test. The Department of Primary Production, however, owes the Association a considerable amount of money under the BTEC programme for unmusterables shot but it was unable to pay the Association because of financial difficulties within the Department. This has caused considerable problems for the contract musterer. A small amount of fencing and two grids have been constructed and the main cattle yards (at Peppimenarti) were greatly improved. An aerial cattle survey was carried out by the Department of Primary Production for the first time in June 1983 and this led to a substantial revision downwards in the estimated number of cattle in Peppimenarti's mustering zone from about 30,000 to about 20,000 head. Another survey was conducted in February 1984 and found that there were only about 10,000 head, despite Peppimenarti killing or turning off only 4,167 head and despite the natural increase that would have taken place. Dingos are thought to be responsible for a reduced reproduction rate but it still means that the 1984 estimate is up to ten thousand cattle less than it ought to be.

The plans for 1984 include bringing Peppimenarti's traditional land (Ngangikurrungkurr land) to the BTEC free status. This requires a complete muster of the paddocks, the completion of nine kilometres of fencing and the building of two grids. In addition, the Association is urging the Northern Land Council to complete contracts quickly with traditional owners of land north of the Moyle River to give access to Peppimenarti musterers. If access is not granted quickly and the area worked according to a BTEC programme, the Department of Primary Production may order a shoot-out for which no compensation may be paid. (There are rumours that compensation will not be paid on cattle so destroyed on programmes commenced after 1985.) If this took place, Peppimenarti would lose its cattle in parts of the Reserve other than its own paddocks and the owners of non-Ngangikurrungkurr land would receive nothing from cleanskin cattle which had grazed on their land. A dingo eradication plan is being considered because of their attacks on young calves. Finally, there has been some discussion about the Association buying Elizabeth Downs Station.

Plans for a tourist development have progressed substantially. Money has been applied for from the Aboriginal Benefit Trust Account to build tourist accommodation at Peppimenarti. The plan is to have eight twin rooms, two double rooms and two family rooms. Community Development Program (CDP) money has also been sought to fence an area to form a buffalo safari paddock and a rodeo ground. It is hoped that the rodeo ground will renew interest in horse and cattle work. CDP money has also been sought to establish a mango farm.

There has been considerable dissatisfaction with the operations of the outstation resource centre at Waderr and it closed during the year. Harry Wilson argued that one ought to be established at Peppimenarti because that community is much more central to the outstations than is Waderr, and Peppimenarti is totally committed to the homelands movement. There have also been discussions about establishing a Daly River Land Council. These have been prompted by dissatisfaction with the Northern Land Council and from the desire of local people to gain more control over matters affecting the region. A new outstation, called "Fish River", and a new organisation called the "Nanthi Association" were established. The Nanthi Association was formed to represent the Amiyangal, Mandayangal, Marritjepin, Maranunggu, Marramaninjiji and Marrithiyel. Later in the year the Marrithiyel withdrew from membership. To some extent the Association was

formed to present a countervailing force against Peppimenarti but the Association is very new and attitudes and policies have not been established.

SOCIAL ACCOUNTS

In this section average and aggregate social accounting data for the communities are presented to allow comparison between these communities and in some cases, with Nguiu and Australian economy overall.

The social accounts used in this section are a selection of these usually found in national social accounting. National social accounting is designed mainly to assist governments and others to understand and solve macroeconomic problems such as low rates of economic growth, inadequate improvements in the standard of living, high unemployment and high rates of inflation. Since 1936, when J M Keynes published his book The General Theory of Employment Interest and Money, economists have described and analysed the economy in terms of a framework of theoretical social accounts which are the basis of national social accounting. National social accounts usually include the following: the Domestic Production Account which shows the composition of expenditure on one side and the types of income generated by the expenditure on the other; the Expenditure on Gross Domestic Product Account which shows the split of consumption and capital expenditure between private and government institutions and people; the National Income and Outlay Account which shows various measures of aggregate income and the distribution of income to consumption expenditure and savings; the capital accounts which show the sources and allocation of savings to investments in fixed capital and stocks; and the Overseas Transaction Account which records imports and exports of various types, and flows of capital into and out of the country.

Social accounts are also used to analyse regions within an economy, though this is a much more common practice in Europe and North America than it is in Australia. They are used for the same purposes as national accounts excepting the region's dependence on the central government and linkages with other regions are usually emphasised. The first use of the social accounting framework to examine the economic structure of an Aboriginal or a Torres Strait region was by M L Treadgold (1973, 1974) who produced production accounts for the Torres Strait Islands. This was followed by D H Penny (1976) who considered the usefulness of such an approach for analysing the economic structure of Willowra and Papunya. Finally, I have constructed social accounts for Nguiu (Stanley 1983).

There are a number of problems associated with using the social accounting approach to Aboriginal communities. Firstly, most data on incomes and expenditure are obtained from income paying institutions and expenditure outlets within the community. Some Aboriginal groups are very mobile so that much of their income is earned and expenditure takes place, outside the community and so the data collected may be inadequate. Secondly, this mobility, combined with the extended family system, leads to income being transferred between communities, and between communities and towns. There is no simple way of estimating the value of these transfers. However, I believe that neither of these problems create serious distortions in the social accounting data presented shortly for the mission, Peppimenarti and Nguiu.

Thirdly, the expenditure pattern revealed in the social accounts for a community cannot be taken as a reflection of the community's desires, because of the dominating influence of government agencies.

Fourthly, there is considerable non-market production in communities which results in cash incomes understating real incomes. Great emphasis has been placed on this problem as if it was unique to income estimation for Aboriginal communities. It must be remembered that it is also a very serious problem in social accounts for European communities. For instance, the following items are only partially included, or not included at all, in social accounting for European communities: income from the "black economy", non-cash income flowing from most consumer durables, and household production including house repairs and maintenance, house duties, child minding, vegetable and small animal production. These omissions result in social accounting data underestimating incomes in European communities by a significant degree.

When comparing European economies with similar participation rates in the black economy and domestic production rates, the estimated incomes and expenditure components will be underestimates by similar proportions and so the omissions are not of great importance. The same principle applies when using social accounts of Aboriginal communities. That is, when using a comparison of cash incomes of Aborigines with those of Europeans as a reflection of differences in real incomes, the downward bias should be similar (in proportion or absolutely, depending upon whether the comparison is presented as a ratio or as an absolute difference). Similarly, if the social accounts are to be used to compare conditions between Aboriginal communities then the levels of bush production, mobility, unobserved income flows into and out of the communities should be similar.

The social accounting data for the mission and Peppimenarti to be presented shortly, are designed to provide information on a number of important problems and characteristics of these communities. The data include information on real incomes, on the level of dependence on government funding, on expenditure and income components, on the relative importance of institutions in the communities, on the nature and level of trade enjoyed by the outside European community from these communities, and on the ways in which disposable incomes are used.

The Data

In table 20 various data are presented as indications of the material standard of living of Aborigines resident at the mission and at Peppimenarti. The first set of figures gives measures of per capital cash incomes. 'Income' includes wages and all DSS payments but does not include any value for bush tucker or income earned outside the communities. A considerable amount of bush tucker (including the killing of local bullocks) is consumed in both communities. Although Peppimenarti people have more land which can be used for bush production than mission people, the Daly River and billabongs near the mission constitute major resources for bush production. It would seem that in both cases sufficient bush tucker is produced to supply much of the required protein without resorting to the store. (While I was on fieldwork at the mission, for instance, one woman visited the hospital to complain about her aching shoulders, arms and back. It emerged that the day before she had plucked fifty magpie geese for her family).

It is clear from the cash income figures that Aborigines at the mission and at Peppimenarti have a low standard of living by comparison with European Australians, given any reasonable addition to those figures to reflect bush production and any reasonable allowance for errors in calculating European incomes. Similar results were obtained in an examination of the economy of Nguiu (Stanley 1983). For the year 1980-81, per capita cash disposable income at Nguiu was $1855 or about $2022 in 1981-82 figures, if scaled up at the rate of inflation. Much less bush tucker is obtained in Nguiu than in the two communities under discussion.

Table 20
Indices of Standards of Living at
Daly River Mission and Peppimenarti
1982

	Daly River Mission	Peppimenarti
Per Capita Cash Income Measures:		
Pre-tax Income per head	$2874	$1775
Post-tax Income per head	2382	1604
Pre-tax Income per adult (over 17 years of age)	5669	4279
Post-tax Income per Adult	4700	3866
Per Capita Government Subsidies and Spending excluding DSS Incomes		
Total	$4192	$2319
TMPU	2247	1150
Housing	742	539
Population per Nurse and Health Worker	53.3	80.3
Pupils per Teacher	6.6	12.8
Number of People on Housing Waiting List (1)	8	44
Percentages of the workforce unemployed	12.1	46.8
Aboriginal populations	213	241

Footnote: (1) Assumes that the aim is to replace old village houses by modern houses

The per capita incomes in the table are about one third of those for Australia overall. Some qualifications need to be made, however, in order that these figures are given a correct interpretation. Firstly, and as already noted, local bush production is not included. Secondly, rents and other charges at the community are usually below the economic rates which normally prevail in European communities. Thirdly, the socially minimum

acceptable levels of expenditure ("compulsory expenditure") on children, clothing, housing, cars, etc. are much lower in Aboriginal communities than in European communities. These factors suggest that the real incomes are higher than money incomes. Partly offsetting these factors, however, are the facts that transport costs and goods purchased at the store are dearer in these communities than in European Australia. In a study of the operations of stores in Aboriginal communities, E. Young (1984) used a price index for basic items to compare prices in Aboriginal community stores with those in the European community. She found that in 1982 the cost of goods at the mission was 30 per cent higher than in Darwin and 44 per cent higher than in Sydney; and the cost of goods at Peppimenarti (which were the highest of the 22 Aboriginal communities examined) were 82 per cent higher than in Darwin and 100 per cent higher than in Sydney. It is still true, on balance, that per capita incomes for the mission and Peppimenarti (as well as Nguiu) are low by comparison with per capita incomes for Australia generally, and there is a strong equity argument for continuing with attempts to increase Aboriginal incomes.

The table also shows that per capita cash incomes at the mission are much higher than at Peppimenarti. This comes about because the unemployment rate is much lower at the mission and this is explained, in turn, by the fact that per capita government subsidies and spending on the mission are 80 per cent higher than at Peppimenarti. This difference is explained mainly by the difference in TMPU funding but the bias is across-the-board. These differences in support are somewhat surprising since conditions at Peppimenarti in terms of town infrastructure, housing, health and schooling are all much worse than at the mission. A number of possible reasons exist for this bias: government departments may have doubts about the stability of the population at Peppimenarti; Peppimenarti does not have a council; there may be doubts about the Peppimenarti's ability to administer extra TMPU and other funds; the mission has proved that it can conform to government measures of performance in the use of government funds; finally, the funding authorities may be unaware of the bias.

The rest of the table lists indices in relation to the quality of health, education, housing and employment opportunities. Like all such indices they are only prima facie evidence but they do broadly reflect real differences in these aspects of life in the two communities. They reinforce the differences between cash incomes and suggest that real incomes at Peppimenarti are much lower than at the mission. It must also be remembered that as people left the mission to go to Peppimenarti, conditions at the mission improved as per capita education, health and housing facilities improved. One interpretation of these data is that people at Peppimenarti have been prepared to experience substantially lower real incomes in order to gain benefits from the homelands movement.

Table 21 does not have an equivalent in the usual social accounting framework. This account attempts to show the sources of funds for the communities and the ways in which they give rise to incomes. The reason for using this special table is that it shows the extent of government support for the communities and this is not as easily displayed in the usual social accounting framework.

Table 21

Sources and Types of Disposable Incomes, 1981-1982
$'000

	DRM	Peppimenarti		DRM	Peppimenarti
Personal Disposable Incomes[1]			Government Spending and Subsidies	892.9	559.0
Aboriginal incomes	507.6	386.6	Plus DSS payments	134.3	207.7
European incomes	197.7	137.3	Less Taxes paid by Residents and institutions	177.6	104.2
	705.3	523.8	Net Government payments	849.6	662.5
Less Losses on Operations	135.7	76.8			
			Final domestic sales	309.3	453.6
			Export Income	129.8	301.8
				1288.7	1417.9
			Less Institutional Imports	623.7	878.0
			Depreciation	95.4	92.9
	569.6	447.0		569.6	447.0

Footnote: 1 Wages less income tax paid plus DSS incomes

The first item on the right hand side is the cost to the government of maintaining these communities in terms of expenditure and subsidies. Both Europeans and Aborigines in the communities receive DSS incomes and these are recorded as the second item. Taxes are, of course, paid by wage earners and institutions and these are deducted to obtain net government payments to the communities. Other sources of income are domestic sales and exports. The terms 'exports' and 'imports' are used to mean the value of goods and services flowing out of and into the particular community. Since imports by institutions and depreciation do not give rise to incomes these items are deducted. The left hand side of the table shows the disposable incomes and operating incomes (losses) generated. It can be seen that the government spends some $1.512 million on the two communities. The economies of Aboriginal communities are very open in the sense that almost all of the goods purchased and many of the services consumed in communities are supplied from outside the communities. The communities' institutions purchased at least $1.502 million worth of trade from European suppliers, much of it passing through Darwin. To this must be added personal expenditure by Aborigines on goods and services purchased outside the communities to obtain total purchases from European enterprises. This openness means that almost all of the indirect multiplier effects of an increase in government spending in Aboriginal communities, or an increase in exports from the communities, take place outside the communities.

Estimates of personal imports into the communities and external expenditure can not be obtained directly but they can be estimated indirectly using the following method. Suppose, for a particular community, that Y* is Aboriginal personal disposable income, Y** is European personal disposable income, S is the value of final domestic sales anc harges , W is the value of welfare deductions to the community welfare fund, and M is the value of personal imports by members of the community plus expenditure outside the community from incomes earned in the community. Further, suppose that Europeans have a savings rate of 20 per cent. This high figure is used because many of the Europeans in communities are young and come to the Northern Territory to save money to buy houses, etc. down south. Aborigines are assumed to save nothing.

Now: $$M = Y^* + Y^{**} (1 - 0.2) - S - W$$

Using this method of estimation, the value of personal imports by residents of the mission is $342,500. This is an exceptionally large figure and is so mainly because beer sales for the club are not included because of lack of information. One would also expect the figure to be large because people at the mission have easy access to other parts of the Northern Territory. The Peppimenarti figure is $9,100. It is much smaller than the mission's figure for three reasons: Peppimenarti's figures for beer purchases have been included in S, the remoteness of the community means that both Aborigines and Europeans spend more of their income at the store, and Peppimenarti has had many Aboriginal visitors so that a significant value of the store sales were to outsiders. It should be noted that the same estimates for M can be obtained by using the following principle:

> all resources coming into the community ($979,400 for the mission) plus losses on operations ($135,700) must equal depreciation ($95,400) plus savings ($39,500) plus institutional imports ($623,700) plus welfare deductions ($14,000) plus beer purchases and personal imports ($342,500).

The same check can be done for the Peppimenarti estimate.

If the estimates of personal imports and external purchases are added to institutional imports the total for the two communities is $1.853 million or $4,082 per Aboriginal resident. This figure is greater than per capita cash incomes because it includes expenditure by Europeans in the communities and because much expenditure on the communities involves direct imports by institutions and does not create cash income for Aborigines. If imports and population data for Nguiu are pooled with data for the mission and Peppimenarti, the average value of imports over the three communities is $3,088 per Aboriginal resident. In the 1981 census, the population of Aborigines in the Tiwi and Northern Land Council areas (composed of Bathurst and Melville Islands, Arnhem Land, the Darwin, Katherine and Barkly Tableland districts and most of the Victoria River district) excluding Aborigines living in Darwin, was approximately 15,000. If it is assumed that imports for the communities in these areas come from Darwin and that the communities have structures similar to the mission, Peppimenarti and Nguiu then Darwin and other European towns in the north would be involved in supplying $46.3 million worth of goods and services to Aboriginal communities in 1982. This figure must be treated with great caution, of course, because communities do vary considerably, the Gulf coastal communities up to Groote Eylandt obtain goods by barge from Cairns, and many Aborigines in the Gulf and Barkly Tableland (especially) live on stations where different conditions apply. With these qualifications in mind the estimate may be too large. However, it is offered as a broad indication of the dependance of the northern transport, wholesaleing, storage, vehicular, oil supply and accounting industries on Aboriginal communities. To these effects must be added the very considerable government administrative costs in relation to Aborigines which are spent in Darwin. Since the Northern Territory is, itself, a very open economy, most of the multiplier effects of any increased spending on Aboriginal communities will take place outside the Northern Territory.

Europeans also benefit directly from the communities through employment in the community. Pre-tax wages earned by Europeans in the two communities were $445,000. The total over all communities in the Top End would also be very considerable but the great variations between communities in the number and conditions of Europeans employed makes extrapolation undesirable. Such extrapolation was required to obtain the estimate of the value of imports into the communities but an error in the estimates of European income and imports, when the latter is only part of total imports, creates a smaller percentage error in such a total than is the percentage error in European income and imports itself.

The values of institutional and personal imports into the mission and Peppimenarti were $966,200 and $887,100 respectively. That is, the value of imports created by the mission was only slightly greater than that created by Peppimenarti, despite the fact that the mission received substantially greater subsidies. The major reason for the difference is that Peppimenarti has a major production and exporting enterprise in the form of the cattle operations. The subsidies to Peppimenarti have allowed the establishment of an enterprise which has created revenue for the community, and hence imports, greater than the subsidies. The mission is unfortunate not to have such an enterprise although it, like Peppimenarti, does earn some export income from government contracts. There is a general point underlying this observation which will be explored later in the discussion on policy. The point is this: government subsidies to exporting enterprises in a community will, in general, have higher import and employment-in-the-community multipliers than subsidies to infrastructure

institutions. It does not follow, of course, that all subsidies should be taken from infrastructure institutions and given to exporting enterprises.

Table 22 gives the production account for the two communities constructed, as far as possible, on the same basis as the national production accounts generally. Most importantly, this account shows the division of expenditure into consumption and investment items. Both of the communities have a much higher proportion of gross domestic expenditure devoted to investment than for Australia overall. This is desirable since the communities are deficient in social overhead capital and their high population growth rates mean that these deficiencies would become worse rapidly if this investment was not undertaken. One cannot conclude, however, that the productivity of the communities is increasing rapidly, as one generally can for an economy with high investment rate, because the investment is mainly in town and housing facilities. The high investment rate is not spontaneous but is imposed on the communities by government funding authorities. Aborigines, as individuals, appear to have very low savings rates. Their low incomes and cultural attitudes contribute to this. They may, however, exhibit high voluntary savings rates as communities if they have an appropriate allocative organisation. The only group of Aborigines who have a substantial per capita independent income are the Gagudju Association. This is an organisation of Aboriginal people who own the land on which the Ranger Uranium Mine is located. Their expenditure patterns have exhibited two important characteristics: a desire to gain independence from the government in the provision of schools, medical facilities, housing and other social welfare facilities; and a very high rate of investment in commercial enterprises. If this experience can be projected to the Daly River area it suggests that if the Aborigines had control over all funds coming into their communities they would have a high voluntary rate of investment but would shift resources from social overhead capital to commercial projects. Thus the imposed investment rate may reflect Aboriginal attitudes but the direction of the investment may not.

The table also shows exports and imports as a percentage of gross domestic expenditure. As already mentioned, the economies of Aboriginal communities are very open. Personal imports (purchases outside the community) are not included and if they were this openness would become even more apparent. Imports are much greater than exports, which is typical of such communities. There are, of course, no balance of payments mechanisms to maintain a relationship between imports and exports. The differences between exports and imports, of course, are determined by government and private transfers into the communities and private imports and exports. In both communities Europeans earned a large proportion of the wage payments. Peppimenarti, with 45.7 per cent of wages being earned by Europeans, is worse than the mission with 34 per cent despite strenuous efforts by Peppimenarti to avoid this. The high rate of unemployment at Peppimenarti explains this failure. It is very common for communities to try to replace European labour with Aboriginal labour but lack of training amongst Aboriginal people and cultural factors often make this impossible.

Table 22

Production Accounts for Daly River Mission and Peppimenarti
1981-82

	DRM $'000	Peppimenarti $'000
A. Wages before Tax Deducted		
Aboriginal	489.5	220.6
European	259.1	185.9
B. Gross Operating Surpluses		
Depreciation	95.4	92.9
Less Deficits	135.7	76.8
Gross Domestic Product at Factor Cost	708.3	422.2
C. Incidentals		
Indirect Taxes	na	14.2
Gross Domestic Product	708.3	436.4

	DRM $'000	Peppimenarti $'000	Australia %
A. Final Consumption (Locally purchased goods and services)			
Mission, administration, TMPU, health, school, housing, store	565.6 (47.0%)	596.8 (58.9%)	(74.2)
B. Gross Investment			
TMPU, housing, store	636.6 (53.0%)	415.8 (41.1%)	(25.8)
Gross Domestic Expenditure	1202.2 (100%)	1012.6 (100%)	(100.0)
C. Exports	129.8 (10.8%)	301.8 (29.8%)	(14.7)
D. Less Institution Imports	623.7 (51.9%)	878.0 (86.7%)	(18.6)
Expenditure on Gross Domestic Expenditure	708.3	436.4	

Table 23

Institutional Data, 1981-82

	Government Subsidies		Disposable Aboriginal Income		Full-time Aboriginal Employment		Exports		Institutional Imports		Contribution to Communities GDP	
	DRM	Peppi	DRM	Peppi	DRM	Peppi	DRM	Peppi	DRM	Peppi	DRM	Peppi
Mission or Administration[1]	2.0	-	-	-	-	4.0	-	1.9	-	1.2	2.8	-1.1[2]
TMPU	47.1	36.2	45.2	14.3	57.4	24.0	86.9	9.3	39.6	20.1	48.3	34.5
Hospital	6.1	-	4.7	-	5.5	-	-	-	2.1	-	6.9	-
Clinic and Contracting	-	7.3	-	7.4	-	8.0	-	48.8	-	16.3	-	13.4
School	17.2	11.3	9.6	5.9	13.0	13.0	-	-	1.4	0.4	23.4	19.0
Housing	15.5	16.9	7.9	0.3	9.2	-	13.1	-	20.7	9.5	8.9	12.1
Store	0.0	1.1	4.8	8.4	3.7	12.0	-	-	36.2	44.0	6.2	13.6
Cattle	-	-	3.6	10.0	5.5	40.0	-	40.0	-	7.5	3.4	8.4
DSS Receipts	12.1	27.1	24.2	53.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Absolute values	$1.016m	$0.7667m	$0.5076m	$0.3865m	54	25	$0.1298m	$0.3018m	$0.6237m	$0.8779m	$0.7083m	$0.4364m

Footnote: 1 DRM administration is included in TMPU

2 This is the result of administration services not being fully charged to activities

Table 24

Comparative G.D.P. and Employment Data, 1981-1982

	Source of G.D.P. by %				Aboriginal and European Employment by %					
	N.T.	D.R.M.	Peppimenarti	Nguiu(1981)	Australia	N.T.	Katherine Statistical Subdivision	D.R.M.	Peppimenarti	Nguiu(1981)
Government Functions	50.0	81.4	65.8	66.2	24.3	33.2	32.4	80.3	54.3	58.5
Building	9.6	8.9	12.1	12.1	6.3	9.2	6.8	10.6	8.6	8.5
Agriculture, Fishing and Mining	31.8	3.4	8.4	1.6	7.4	8.6	19.7	4.5	28.6	3.1
Other incl. retailing & manufacturing[1]	8.6	6.2	13.6	20.1	62.0 (17.7)	49.0 (4.6)	41.1 (4.9)	4.5 (0.0)	8.5 (0.0)	29.9 (15.0)

Footnote: 1. The percentages in manufacturing employment are shown in brackets

Sources: Summary Characteristics of Persons and Dwellings: Australia (A.B.S., 1983)

Stanley 1983

Bannister 1985

Australian Bureau of Statistics, Year Book, Australia, 1983

Table 23 shows the relative importance of institutions in the two communities in terms of various indices. A glance across the table reveals that the infrastructure functions of the mission and administration, TMPU, health, schools and housing dominate all aspects of economic activity in the communities. They account for 90.3 per cent of GDP at the mission and 77.9 per cent of GDP at Peppimenarti; they absorb 87.9 per cent of government support at the mission and 71.7 per cent at Peppimenarti; they provide 67.4 per cent of Aboriginal disposable incomes at the mission and 27.9 per cent at Peppimenarti; they provide 85.1 per cent of full time Aboriginal employment at the mission and 49 per cent at Peppimenarti; they account for all exports from the mission and 60 per cent from Peppimenarti; they account for 63.8 per cent of institutional imports into the mission and 47.5 per cent at Peppimenarti. Similar dominance of those institutions exists at other Aboriginal communities. It is also clear from the table that, as is expected, these infrastructure institutions are less dominating at Peppimenarti than they are at the mission.

The dominance of infrastructure institutions in Aboriginal communities has been a basis of some criticism. It is sometimes alleged that they are almost exclusively involved in their own town development and, apart from bush tucker, produce very little. There are serious legitimate concerns associated with the dominance of infrastructure institutions and they will be discussed later. However, the structures of Aboriginal communities must be seen in the broader, European, context and table 24 has been produced to assist this. It shows the proportions of GDP produced by various sectors in the Northern Territory and three Aboriginal communities; and the proportions of employment in various sectors of the Australian economy overall, the Northern Territory economy, Katherine Statistical Subdivision and the three Aboriginal communities.

The 'softest' data in the table are those relating to the Northern Territory GDP figures. The reason for this is that the Northern Territory is grouped with South Australia for the purpose of calculating national income statistics so that even the Northern Territory Treasury can make only broad guesses at the size and composition of the GDP (see Bannister 1985). Before discussing the components of the table, some mention needs to be made of subsidies. It appears that the Northern Territory GDP in 1981-82 was somewhere between $1,500 million and $2,000 million, and about half of the GDP came from Northern Territory government spending. Since 83.4 per cent of Northern Territory government budget in that year was funded from the Commonwealth government, it can be seen that Commonwealth government subsidies were about 41.7 per cent of Northern Territory GDP. To this should be added direct spending by the Commonwealth government and subsidies to Northern Territory European and Aboriginal communities to obtain 'government subsidies' on the same basis as has been calculated for the Aboriginal communities in this study. These additional figures are not available so all that can be said is that total Commonwealth government subsidies to the Northern Territory were at least 41.7 per cent of GDP in 1981-82. Subsidies, excluding DSS payments and indirect taxes paid by the communities, were equal to 126.1 per cent of GDP at the mission and 128.1 per cent at Peppimenarti. The subsidies were in excess of GDP because they often involved the direct import of goods or services and so do not generate income in the local community in the GDP sense. They were "transfers". While the communities are greatly dependent on government subsidies, it can be seen that the Northern Territory economy overall is very substantially dependent on subsidies from the south.

The percentages shown in the table in the Northern Territory column under 'Source of GDP by %' were obtained by assuming that the contribution of each sector to GDP was the same as the sector's contribution to the value of transactions (the data were obtained from Bannister 1985). Since the proportions of expenditure resulting in imports into the Northern Territory or involved in intermediate trading will vary between sectors this assumption is not very satisfactory. However, it is hoped that the calculations shed some light on the situation. The selection of sectors listed in the table was determined by the limitations of data for the Northern Territory.

The table shows that there are similarities between the Aboriginal communities and the Northern Territory in their dependence on various sectors as generators of GDP. All rely very heavily on government functions. The dependency of the Northern Territory is greater than that shown in the table because Commonwealth government production in the Northern Territory is not included. Apart from the mission, the degree of dependence of Aboriginal communities is broadly similar. Building is roughly of equal importance in all cases. The next category of activities shows great dissimilarities mainly because of the importance of mining in the Northern Territory and because there is very little agricultural production at Nguiu.

The employment columns show a similar pattern with the exceptions of 'Agriculture etc' in the Northern Territory which reflects the low labour intensity of mining processes, and employment in 'agriculture etc' at Peppimenarti which reflects the high labour intensity of pastoral activities there.

The purpose of including data on the employment structure for Australia overall is to illustrate the following proposition: the high dependence of GDP and employment on government functions in the Northern Territory, a town such as Katherine, and Aboriginal communities relates largely to the remoteness and high population growth rates of these places. The remoteness requires the establishment of regional government institutions and inhibits the development of most manufacturing activities, and high population growth rates require resources to be directed into health, education and housing facilities. Since it is considered that Aborigines ought to have facilities which are similar to those enjoyed by Europeans the structures of Aboriginal and European communities must be similar.

Table 25 shows the composition of exports and imports into the mission and Peppimenarti. Exports were dominated by government contracts performed by the communities. These contracts, in general, involved providing facilities in the local community. The import figures indicate the types of European businesses which benefit from trade with the communities. Imports into Nguiu had the same general pattern.

Table 25

Institutional Imports and Exports
1981-82

Exports	D.R.M. %	Peppimenarti %	Imports	D.R.M. %	Peppimenarti %
Goods	0.0	40.0	Freight[1]	0.2	5.7
Contract Work for Government Departments[2]	93.3	48.8	Petrol, Fuel and Oil	17.9	6.8
Commissions	3.5	0.4	Insurance, Assurance	1.4	1.5
Interest and Other	3.2	10.9	Accounting, Legal, Consulting	4.5	10.6
			Goods, Materials, Tools, Stores	63.6	70.9
			Others	12.3	4.4
	100.0	100.0		100.0	100.0
Absolute values	$129,855	$301,833	Absolute values	$623,757	$877,999

Footnote: [1] Freight costs are greatly understated because transport costs are often included in the purchase price of stock or the community provides its own transport. These costs will be shown as general vehicular and labour costs.

[2] Government contracts for the maintenance of the airfields are treated as exports because the airfields are also used by people outside the particular community; Government contracts for powerhouse operations are not treated as exports since the only beneficiaries of operations are the people in the respective communities.

Table 26 shows the ways in which the total personal disposable incomes in the two communities were used. Since beer purchases at the mission are included in 'personal imports' a large part of that figure should be added to the mission's 'store purchases' in order to obtain the equivalent of Peppimenarti's store purchases' figure. If this is done the expenditure patterns in the two communities are similar, and they are also similar to the pattern found at Nguiu (Stanley 1983: 39). Expenditure by visitors reduce the usefulness of these figures as indications of expenditure patterns of people living in the communities. They are unlikely to be a large proportion of any item, however. The residual items include purchases in the communities by visitors.

Table 26
Disposal of Aboriginal and European Personal Disposable Incomes, 1981-82

	% of Aboriginal and European Personal Disposable Incomes	
	DRM	Peppimenarti
Rent	2.4	1.6
Essential Services Charges	2.6	1.9
Welfare Deductions	3.3	6.4
Store Purchases	38.9	84.0
Personal Imports (1)	48.6	1.7
Savings (1)	5.6	5.2
Residual	- 1.4	- 0.8
	100.0	100.0

Footnote: (1) Calculated as explained in the text and, in the case of DRM, personal imports include purchases of beer from the club

POLICY ISSUES

Principles

The task of devising government and community policies which would assist the mission and Peppimenarti achieve the goals of greater independence from government and a modest improvement in the standard of living of Aboriginal residents, is a very difficult one. Indeed, the task is difficult for all Aboriginal communities in remote Australia, with the exception of such communities as the Gagudju Association which have substantial independent incomes. Further, it would be just as difficult to devise such policies for poor European communities of the same populations, resources and locations as Aboriginal communities. Because of the

generality of the problems of achieving these goals the emphasis in the following discussion will be on the underlying problems rather than concentrating on specific policy recommendations for the mission and Peppimenarti. These underlying problems are: remoteness, the competitive nature of industries which can survive in remote areas, high population growth rates, the lack of entrepreneurship, low savings rates, and government restrictions on the resource allocation policies that can be adopted by the communities.

It is not entirely realistic, but is suitable for our purpose, to picture Aboriginal development as having four stages. In the first, or 'pre-contact' stage, the Aboriginal economic system was based on labour-intensive and largely self-sufficient activities. Trading and specialization were very limited. Under these conditions production could, and did, take place over almost all of remote Australia. In the second stage, which will be called the 'settlement stage', Aborigines moved to settlements, missions and stations where they were paid wages (in money and in kind) which were well below European wages. The settlements and missions were highly organized communities which enjoyed economies of scale of location by comparison with the pre-contact stage and had low labour costs by comparison with the European community. This meant that these settlements and mission could produce a range of European goods in areas where Europeans could not. In the third stage, which will be called the 'integrated stage', Aborigines became entitled to the European wage rates for many occupations in their communities and European social security benefits. These changes created cost structures in the communities similar to European cost structures and made European production in remote Australia as unviable for Aborigines as it was for Europeans. Governments have reacted to some extent by subsidizing capital and employment in the communities. The final stage, which we will call the 'independence stage', involves Aborigines taking control of, and many leaving , the old settlements and missions to develop new communities and outstations. Some communities are developing their own wage rate structures and using traditional redistribution and power structures to solve economic and social problems. They are living in smaller and more socially homogeneous groups which allows these controls to work effectively. Entitlements to DSS incomes and government subsidies are retained in this stage but there is probably more bush production taking place than in the integration stage.

Not all Aboriginal groups have progressed systematically from one stage to the next and communities are sometimes in more than one stage at a time. The Daly River Mission itself is coming to the end of its integrated stage while Peppimenarti is well into an independence stage.

In the independence stage, particularly, many communities have attempted to break the nexus between European and Aboriginal cost structures. Unemployment in the communities and the desire to establish their own enterprises have been major reasons for this. One way in which the nexus has been broken has been by the communities developing their own wage structures. Peppimenarti's decision to pay stockmen half wages and Nguiu's Bima Wear decision to pay less than usual wages are examples of this. Less obvious examples are the change from wages to piece rates at lower hourly rates and the use of contract labour rather than employees. There are, however, limits to the extent by which wages can be reduced below the European equivalent for a particular job. The rate of unemployment benefits imposes such a limit because labour response will

decline as wages near the rate of unemployment benefits. Further, emigration may occur, if wage rates are lowered too far. The CDEP scheme is an excellent concept because it means that everyone must work if they wish to receive a cash income, and the wage rates for people working under the scheme are determined by the community through its council. Thus the volume of production can be increased. The scheme is threatened by emigration, of course.

Because of government grants, subsidies and underwriting of loans, the cost of capital to Aboriginal communities is lower than for European communities. It will be argued later, however, that much of this capital is unwisely directed away from enterprises. Further, this government support has tended to lead to more capital-intensive technology in the community than is desirable when there is a high rate of unemployment.

Finally, communities engage in internal subsidies of activities. These take many forms. It is common for profitable activities such as the beer club or the store to support worthy but unprofitable activities, these are usually social welfare projects but they are sometimes enterprises. The Peppimenarti store, for instance, supported the stock camp with stores. Communities commonly impose 'income taxes' on wage earners. Prices, particularly at the store, are often set to achieve particular allocative and distributive effects. Purchasing policies are sometimes used to support local enterprises; for example the store may purchase locally produced clothes or bread, even though it is cheaper to import those goods, or the housing association may use locally cut and treated timber even though imported timber is cheaper. Lastly, informal or traditional allocation and distribution rules operate to affect cost structures in the community; traditional art work may earn a low hourly wage rate, for instance, partly because of esteem enjoyed by the artists.

Although all of the above mechanisms operate to break the nexus between European and Aboriginal cost structures it is still true that they remain very similar. Product differentiation by Aboriginal producers can create price premiums for Aboriginal goods in the market and this can allow Aboriginal production to survive when European production cannot. Often this product differentiation involves decorating European objects (shirts, table cloths, scarfs etc) with traditional designs. However, the impact of these two factors - cost differences and product differentiation - is not very great. Consequently, and unfortunately, the equilibrium geographic distribution of European activities by Aborigines is broadly the same as it is for European production of European goods. In other words, one cannot expect Aborigines to be successful in developing European industries in parts of Australia where Europeans have been unsuccessful.

In general terms, very little European production takes place in remote Australia. Manufacturing activities are minor because they are inhibited by high transport costs and by small local and export markets. These factors prevent the achievement of significant economies of scale in the production process. Building, retailing, wholesaling, various services and to some extent, government administration, all survive because they are services that cannot be easily imported. A small amount of horticulture takes place in areas close to large towns and where soil and climate are suitable, but these activities are directed mainly at the local market and are protected by remoteness. Major attempts have been made to grow crops at the Daly River (the Agricultural Area), Humpty Doo, Ord River, Tipperary Station, Fitzroy River, and on the Douglas-Daly agricultural area. None of

these attempts has been successful (with judgement yet to be made on the Douglas-Daly project) and the experience suggests that success in similar future attempts will be very difficult. The cattle industry is the predominant activity over most of remote Australia. This industry is successful in the sense that it has survived where other activities have failed. However, the very competitive nature of the industry means that it is not very profitable in the long run. Little empirical evidence exists on profit rates in the Northern Territory cattle industry, but the Bureau of Agricultural Economics (BAE) in 'Surveys Supplement' (BAE 1984, 11, 15,) for 1982-83 records that profit rates in the Northern Territory cattle industry were 17.83 per cent including capital appreciation but only 0.14 per cent excluding capital appreciation. Indeed, the BAE expects conditions to be worse in 1983-84, with an expected rate of return including capital appreciation of 9.39 per cent and an expected rate of return excluding capital appreciation of -2.15 per cent. Since it can be assumed that Aboriginal pastoral land will never be sold, the rates of return excluding capital appreciation are the relevant rates when considering Aboriginal pastoral activities. Thus one cannot expect Aboriginal pastoral activities to provide substantial profits for the communities. Two other industries which are successful in remote Australia, however, are mining and tourism because they require resources that are unique to particular areas and some projects are capable of yielding substantial profits in the long run.

Thus although the above pattern of economic activity relates to Europeans it is a strong indication as to the activities which Aborigines may be able to undertake successfully. Overall, however, there are two problems. The first problem is that apart from administration and building, the activities discussed above are not labour intensive so that the number of jobs which these activities could provide in the long run is small in relation to the potential workforce. Clearly there are two ways of overcoming this. One way is to use more labour intensive techniques than is conventional, and the other is to provide continuous subsidies to the activities. Both of these solutions are aided by the development of local wage rates. The second problem is that most of these activities are very competitive which means that the enterprises will always struggle to survive providing the communities do not have substantial cost advantages over the rest of the industry.

Population Growth

The above discussion suggests that the limits of location, resources and the competitive nature of likely enterprises mean that the possibilities for substantial and profitable European activities in Aboriginal communities are greatly circumscribed. High population growth rates in such communities further complicate the task. This problem is also great for underdeveloped countries. If population is growing at, say 3 per cent per annum, then total income must grow at that rate in order to maintain the standard of living. This, broadly, implies that housing, education and health facilities and jobs, etc. must grow at approximately that rate. Given that the possibilities for profitable economic activities are limited it is most unlikely that employment and income from such sources will grow at the required rate. It is also true that a rapidly growing population will create shortages of bush materials and bush tucker in the long run, and so limit the ability of bush production to supplement low cash incomes.

Entrepreneurship

Aboriginal communities have great difficulties in generating sufficient entrepreneurship from their local population. An Aborigine who wishes to establish his own business in a community other than in such areas as art production or contract fencing and mustering, is often subject to enormous pressure from his people to cease. Many Aborigines regard the usual western situation where a person employs others for the purpose of making profits as unAboriginal. Entrepreneurship in Aboriginal communities usually exists in the context of community owned institutions. However, Aboriginal entrepreneurs in such institutions often find it difficult to hire and fire Aboriginal workers and to allocate resources according to economic criteria alone; and these generally lack the management and accounting skills required to perform their roles with ease. These difficulties can cause Aborigines in conventional entrepreneurial roles to experience considerable pressure from Europeans in the community, from government officials and from their own people. European entrepreneurs in the communities, too, present problems. While some Europeans who are hired to perform these duties are very good at their tasks, many others are not. They are often relatively unskilled for their tasks and leave the job readily. The high turnover rates have a number of possible explanations: many employees accept the positions because they wish to visit remote and exotic places and have no intention of staying long anyway; they often have no experience of an Aboriginal community and find it difficult to live in one; the job may turn out to be very different from what they expected it to be; communities may impose social contact rules which make it difficult for single European men to live a normal life; inadequate schooling in the community often causes married families to leave once their children reach a certain age; some employees cannot cope with being a member of a racial minority; some managers feel that they are unfairly judged by their superiors because insufficient allowance is made for the difficulties of managing resources in Aboriginal communities; and finally, remoteness creates difficulties in maintaining contact with friends and relatives.

The lack of conventional entrepreneurs in communities inhibits development because it results in production opportunities not being perceived or being lost, because of the community's inability to organize its resources.

There is a less conventional type of entrepreneurship, however, at which many Aborigines excel. We will call this 'leadership'. There are many Aborigines who can inspire and mobilise their people to move to outstations or to undertake cattle projects or similar ventures. They can also organize aid from government and Aboriginal organizations. In general, these people need to have a substantial Aboriginal power base and have often been brought up 'both ways': Aboriginal and European. Unfortunately, an Aboriginal community needs both leadership and conventional entrepreneurs to be successful in fulfilling the Aboriginal peoples' desires and the lack of the latter imposes limits on development.

Although there have been substantial efforts in recent years to provide European (and sometimes bi-lingual) schooling and adult education, technical and professional jobs in communities are still usually held by Europeans. Many young Aborigines are partly trained in trades or are fully trained to the 'aide' or 'assistant' level or have some understanding of motor mechanics or carpentary. Often, however, only the older men and women have the more traditional skills associated with stock work and

farming. Providing suitable European or contract workers can be found to fill vacancies which cannot be filled by local Aborigines, these skill shortages will not inhibit development of communities. They will, however, mean that higher paying jobs in the communities will be denied to Aborigines.

Savings

Aborigines have low savings rates as individuals. Low cash incomes, their attitudes to the future and property rights rules make it very difficult for individuals to accumulate substantial savings which could be used for investment. It should not be inferred, however, that Aboriginal communities are myopic. It is clear that, as communities, they are very much concerned with the future. As mentioned earlier, one Aboriginal group which has complete control over its resources, including the power to determine its savings rate, is the Gagudju Association and it exhibits a very high savings rate (Stanley 1982). Thus whether the lack of savings would seriously inhibit growth for communities generally, if they had complete control of their resources and funding, is an open question. The problem with investment strategies for government-dependent Aboriginal communities at the present is not the level of investment but its direction. Given the goal of economic independence, there is too much emphasis on infrastructure investment and more investment ought to be directed to increasing the earning capacity of the communities.

Government Funding Policies

It is clear that communities such as the mission and Peppimenarti need substantial investment in infrastructure institutions. However, government funding overall is unduly biased in favour of such activities and against enterprises. There are a number of reasons why expenditure on infrastructure institutions has been favoured: such expenditure often involves the creation of some physical facility such as housing, roads and offices; it is politically important because it assists redress the visible differences between living conditions for Aborigines and Europeans; since funding for various activities comes from different government agencies the funding authorities are unlikely to know the overall position so that the bias may be unknown or even if it is known, there may be no mechanism by which a government can correct it; expenditure on infrastructure institutions is funded on the basis of perceived need (the benefits from which cannot be judged easily) while funding for enterprises has been limited by the profit goals established by the funding agency; and there is a genuine need for substantial infrastructure expenditure to improve health, education, housing and town facilities.

There is, however, a strong argument for reallocating funds from some infrastructure institutions to some exporting enterprises, even though the latter may never be profitable in an accounting sense. In the following discussion, exports and imports mean the value of goods and services flowing out of and into the community. The aim of the allocation of funds ought to be to maximize the social benefit per $1 subsidy of government funding. Benefits of government funding accrue to the local Aboriginal community and to some members of the broader European community. One of the major benefits to the Aboriginal community of government funding is that it creates employment. Unemployment is a chronic and growing problem in Aboriginal communities and the level of unemployment is a major determinant of cash incomes and hence of the level of poverty in Aboriginal communities.

Figure 17

Disposable income and unemployment rates

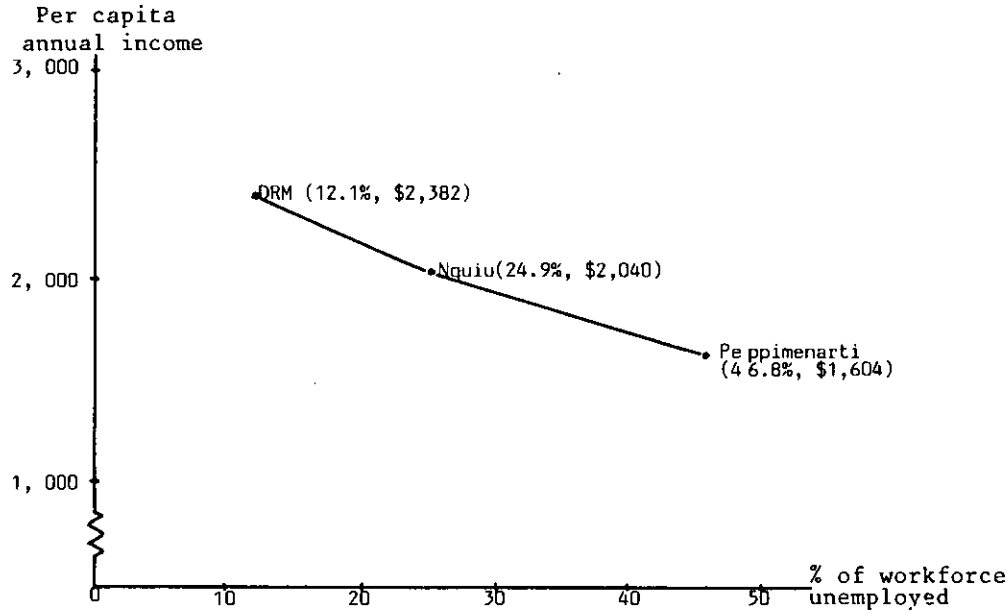


Figure 18

Theoretical average income - unemployment rate curve

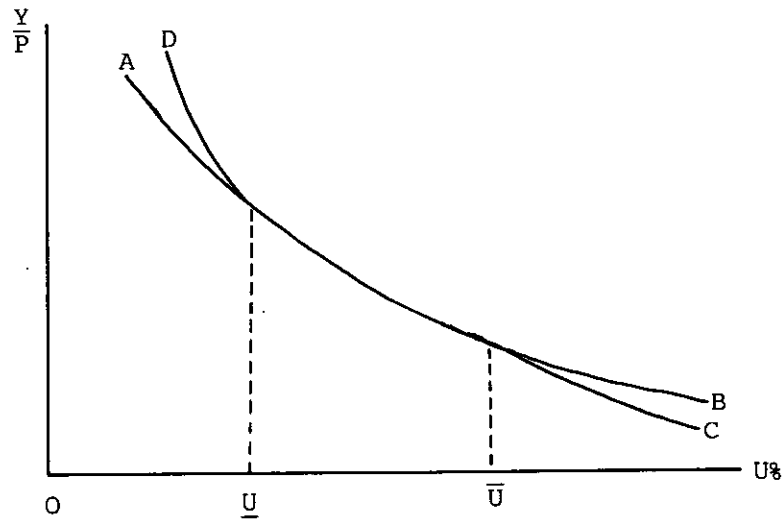


Figure 17 graphs the relationship between unemployment and disposable cash incomes for the mission, Peppimenarti and Nguiu in 1982 values. The Nguiu income figures were calculated in 1981 values and have been adjusted to 1982 values at the rate of inflation. The figure displays a simple negative relationship between cash incomes and unemployment. Of course, a sample of three communities is not sufficient to infer statistically that this relationship is general for communities. However, there are theoretical reasons why the relationship between average incomes and the rate of unemployment within a community, and between communities with similar employment and population structures, should be mildly convex to the origin, as shown in the diagram.

To establish this point we will use the following symbols. Suppose Y is total personal disposable income in the community, P is the community's population, L is the community's workforce, W is the average wage rate, B is the average rate of unemployment benefit received, A is total DSS payments other than unemployment benefits and U is the rate of unemployment. Now, per capita income is

$$\frac{Y}{P} = \frac{A + WL(1-U) + BLU}{P}$$

or

$$\frac{Y}{P} = \frac{A + WL + L(B-W)U}{P}$$

and so, if average wage rates and average unemployment benefits are constant with respect ot U, average income will be a linear function of the community's unemployment rate. The assumption, however, that W and B are constant with respect to U will be invalid as U becomes very small or large. When the unemployment rate is small, W is likely to be high because it is probable that Aborigines will occupy many skilled jobs and higher wages may have to be paid to workers overall to gain sufficient labour; and B is likely to be low since most of the unemployed people are likely to be men and women without dependents. When the unemployment rate is large, W is likely to be low for the converse reasons of these just given; and B is likely to be large because a large proportion of the unemployed workers are likely to have dependents. These assumptions are justified in the cases of the mission and Peppimenarti. The mission has a lower unemployment rate and a lower average unemployment benefit rate, and a higher average wage rate than Peppimenarti. The difference between average unemployment benefit rates in the two communities is very marked.

Now, whether the <u>average income - unemployment rate curve</u> becomes strictly convex for extreme values of U depends on the relative movemnts of W and B at those extremes. It seems reasonable to assume that when U is small B will be constant but W will increase significantly for decreases in U. That is, average income will increase more rapidly with decreases in unemployment when the rate of unemployment is already low. Conversely, when U is large, W is likely to reach a lower limit and further increases in U will leave W unchanged, while continuing to increase B as more workers with large families become unemployed. This would result in the average income falling less rapidly with increases in the unemployment rate when

the unemployment rate is already high. It seems likely, however, that variations in W and B will only be significant at extreme values of U. If these assumptions are correct then the theoretical average income - unemployment rate curve is likely to resemble the curve AB, shown in figure 18; that is, it is likely to be almost linear over a substantial range and becoming steeper for small values of U and flatter for large values of U.

Any migration which takes place because of the availability of jobs will complicate this analysis further. It will create limits to the values of U that can be sustained in a community in the long run. There will exist a high rate of unemployment, say $\bar{U}$ such that once it is exceeded workers will leave the community; and there will be a low rate of unemployment, say $\underline{U}$, such that once the rate falls below $\underline{U}$ immigration will take place. In most Aboriginal communities $\bar{U} - \underline{U}$ will be large. Until the unemployment rate is either smaller than $\underline{U}$ or larger than $\bar{U}$ the average income - unemployment rate curve for the 'with migration' case will coincide with the 'without migration' case.

If it can be assumed that unemployed workers without dependents - and hence on low rates of unemployment benefit - are the ones most likely to migrate, then if U falls ouside the limits $\underline{U},\bar{U}$, the average family structure in the community overall and on unemployment benefits will change, resulting in a change in the shape of the average income - unemployment rate curve. Suppose, for instance, that U suddenly increases beyond $\bar{U}$. Some unencumbered workers will leave the community. This will reduce the rate of unemployment but will also increase the average rate of unemployment benefit received in the community because the average unemployed person will have a larger family than before. However, this will be more than offset by the fact that, while the number of dependents has not changed, the number of income earners has been reduced. Thus at whatever value U settles, providing $U>\bar{U}$, the average level of income will be lower than in the 'no migration' case. Similarly, if U falls below $\underline{U}$, unencumbered workers will enter the community both increasing the unemployment rate and (because the proportion of income earners in the community has been increased) increasing the average income by comparison with the 'no migration' case. Thus the average - unemployment rate curve is like the curve CD when migration takes place in response to unemployment rates.

The shape of the average income - unemployment rate curve has a useful interpretation. The slope of the straight line drawn between the DRM and Nguiu points in figure 17 is -26.7, and the slope of the line between the Nguiu and Peppimenarti points is -19.9. Ignoring for the moment the fact that these curves will in reality be non-linear, the absolute values of these slopes (26.7 and 19.9 respectively) give the number of dollars per year by which average income falls as the unemployment rate increases by one per cent. As was to be expected from earlier analysis, the fall in income decreases as the level of unemployment increases.

While it has been emphasised that the actual observations in figure 17 are specific to those three communities, one would expect data on the relationship between average income and unemployment for other large communities to be broadly the same. The reason for this is that the relevant aspects of most large communities are alike: average wage rates are similar since employment in all large communities is concentrated in infrastructure institutions where particular award wage rates are paid; also, age structures of the communities appear to be very similar so that

the workforce as a percentage of the population, rates of unemployment benefits and other DSS incomes are likely to be similar. Thus the above empirical observations should have considerable generality.

Having established the somewhat obvious proposition that employment rates are a very important determinant of average incomes (this observation emerges generally in studies of poverty) it is clear that one criterion for the allocation of government subsidies to projects in a community ought to be the income and employment impacts of projects. The internal income and employment multipliers of a $1 government subsidy when allocated to an exporting enterprise will very often be greater than when the $1 is allocated to an infrastructure institution. As an illustration, consider the following example. If $1 subsidy is allocated to an infrastructure institution and all goods are imported into the community, then income will increase by $1 and wages will increase by, say $0.75. If, however, that $1 is used to support or help expand an exporting enterprise - suppose a cattle business - and the $1 enables the cattle business to sell, say $3 worth of cattle, then income increases by $4 and the enterprise may employ, say, $2 worth of labour. Clearly, the $1 should be allocated to the cattle business and not to the infrastructure institution. Diminishing returns will emerge, of course, and eventually the extra $1 allocated to the cattle business will simply increase the enterprise's income by $1 of which say $0.75 will be paid as wages. At this stage there is no benefit from further redirecting funds from infrastructure to exporting enterprises.

Simple diagrams will serve to illustrate this point in relation to employment. In figures 19a and 19b the vertical axis measures the marginal cost to the government of employing an extra worker in the community. This marginal cost has two components: it is equal to the extra subsidy required to employ an extra worker less the reduction in unemployment benefits which must be paid to the community. The first component will be assumed to be a constant for infrastructure employment, the second is assumed to decrease as employment increases, since it can be assumed that workers with many dependents will be employed first. However, for simplicity it is assumed that the reduction in unemployment benefits paid to the community declines linearly as employment increases. Now, if L is the number of workers and OC is the workforce, the total cost of employing the entire workforce in infrastructure institutions is the area OABC in figure 19a. If, however, money is allocated to enterprises appropriately, the community would employ O,D(1) workers in infrastructure institutions and D(1),C workers in enterprises. The total cost of employing all workers would then be the smaller value shown as the shaded area in the diagram. If, however, the government decides not to spend sufficient money to employ all workers but to employ only OF workers then figure 19b shows the optimal position where the community employs O,D(2) in infrastructure institutions and D(2),F in the enterprises. Providing market and cost conditions for the enterprises are independent of infrastructure employment and expenditure (which would usually be true) then the optimal strategy in this case will involve subsidizing the same enterprises and to the same extent as in the case shown in figure 19a. This result is independent of how the reduction in unemployment benefits is changed by an increase in employment because this reduction is deducted from the gross costs of employing workers in both infrastructure institutions and enterprises, when conducting the comparison.

Figure 19

Marginal Cost of Employment

Figure 19(a)

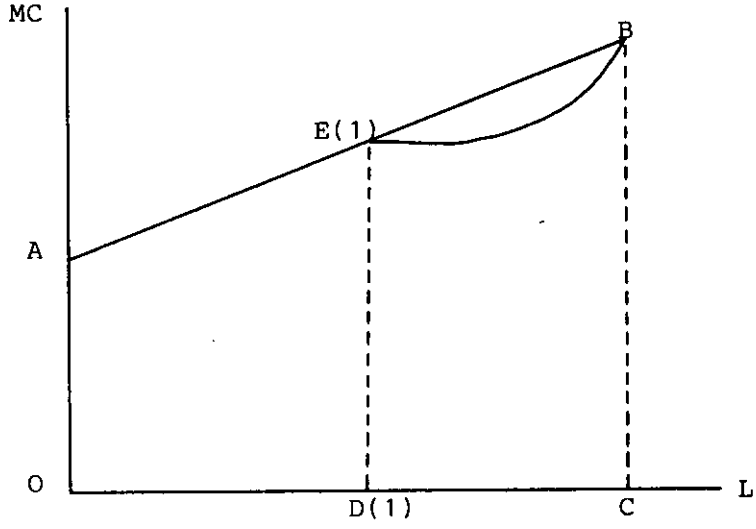
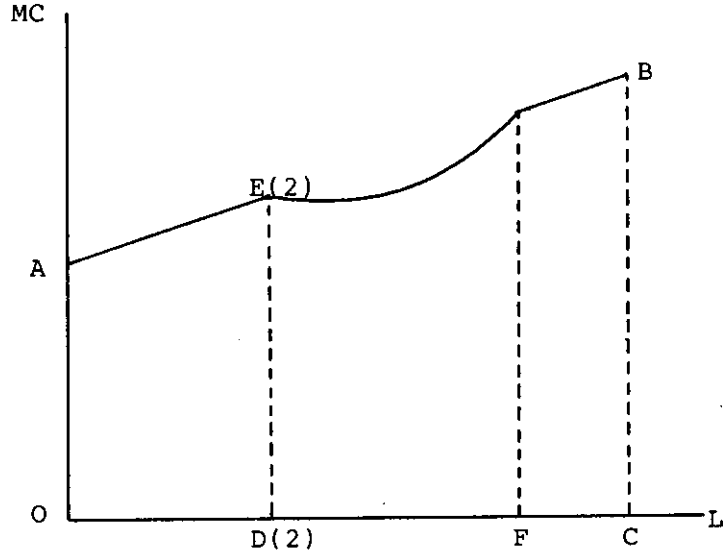


Figure 19(b)



Thus our conclusion is that there is always an employment argument for subsidizing an exporting enterprise, even if it will make a loss on operations, providing the marginal cost of employing a worker in the enterprise is less than or equal to the marginal cost of employing a worker in infrastructure institutions. Further, from the employment point of view, the same enterprises ought to be subsidised regardless of the total level of subsidies given to the community.

Europeans are also beneficiaries of funds allocated to Aboriginal communities because they are suppliers of goods and services to these communities. A similar argument to that above applies here. That is, $1 allocated to infrastructure work will generate, say $1 worth of imports (assuming that workers spend all of their incomes) while if the $1 is allocated to the cattle enterprise it will increase imports by a value equal to the total income generated by the subsidy which, in the example is four dollars. The multiplier effects from that stage will depend on the nature of the goods imported but in the case of TMPU versus cattle operations the imports are likely to be similar: store goods, petroleum products, vehicles, accounting and management services etc. Thus the trade multiplier, and hence the benefits to Europeans, of a $1 used to subsidise an enterprise will often be greater than when the $1 is used to support infrastructure institutions. As described before, diminishing returns will set in and eventually the $1 subsidy will increase the community's income by $1 only at which stage no further benefits to Europeans exist from the reallocation of subsidies. Clearly, from this point of view, funds should be allocated to enterprises and infrastructure institutions in such a way that the value of imports generated by an extra $1 subsidy be the same as that for infrastructure institutions.

An important omission so far is the consideration of the extra benefits which accrue to the community from infrastructure institutions. The suggestion is not being made here that expenditure on education and health be reduced but there are often areas of TMPU and housing which could be traded off against subsidies for enterprises. It is difficult to judge how Aborigines would allocate funds in their communities if they had complete control over them. The Gagudju Association is the only group of Aborigines with a substantial independent income (from Ranger Uranium Mine) (Stanley 1982). They have spent much of their income on infrastructure. They have established two schools, a health service, purchased vehicles for outstations and have built a number of elementary houses. However, most of the Association's income has been spent on establishing businesses such as the Border Store, an earth moving business, a hostel at Jabiru, in investments such as the purchase and redevelopment of the Cooinda Motel and the purchase of securities. There is no unemployment amongst members of the Association. Cash distributions to members have been small. This pattern of resource allocation is similar to that recommended above: a strong emphasis on the establishment of enterprises.

Given that government funds are scarce there is strong argument for moving - as rapidly as possible - to global funding for communities. The present system involves the communities receiving funds from various sources with no overall co-ordination. The community has very little power to reallocate resources once they are allocated by the government, regardless of how that allocation differs from the community's desires. Clearly the community's utility from such support would be greater if the community could allocate the support in accordance with its desires.

Industries

The next issue to be discussed is the types of enterprises that are likely to be successful in Aboriginal communities under the very difficult conditions outlined above.

Various types of manufacturing have been and still are successful. Examples are: traditional art and craft work survives in most communities; clothes making, screen printing and pottery at Nguiu; and batik printing at Utopia and Hermannsburg. An enterprise, producing goods that are the same as those available from the wider Australian community, under factory conditions where award conditions are paid is unlikely to succeed without considerable assistance. In general, the more differentiated the product (often achieved by combining manufacturing with local art) and the greater the use of piece rates, the greater will be the chance of success. Piece rates allow Aborigines to work at their own pace, in a less formal employment structure and allows effective wage rates to be sensitive to local economic conditions. Much manufacturing which still survives in the Aboriginal communities takes place under these conditions.

Horticulture of the style which existed in the missions and settlements until the 1970s is probably not a realistic option for most communities. These gardens grew a wide range of fruit, vegetables, maize and nuts, under conditions similar to European horticultural enterprises. High wages, difficulties in controlling horticultural labour and protecting the crops from children and animals resulted in these gardens becoming unworkable. However, there is probably an important place for less formal types of horticulture. Fruit is generally expensive and difficult to obtain in most communities and there would seem to be a case for establishing fruit plantations. The main aim of these plantations would be not to produce a cash crop but rather to provide a source of food which could be picked when ripe. Obtaining a cash crop from plantations involves much care and labour. In addition to the usual range of tropical and citrus fruits, coconuts and native fruit trees could be planted. These plantations would require some attention to protect them from disease and insect attack. Plans exist for the Marrithiyel outstation to have a substantial fruit plantation and already hundreds of young trees have been acquired. The Ernabella outstations in central Australia have been experimenting with permaculture and such an approach could prove very useful, especially for outstation people.

Prospects for forestry generally are poor. However, cypress pine is a very useful building timber because of its resistance to insect attack and a plantation of such trees would prove useful resource for the community and a cash crop for some communities in the long term.

For some communities, especially the coastal ones, various forms of fishing enterprises may prove successful. Arrangements which involve families fishing independently but using community-provided refrigeration and transport facilities are more likely to be successful than a large scale capital-intensive operation. Large financial overheads which are associated with capital-intensive techniques require continuous operations and this is difficult for Aborigines to achieve. The Nguiu experiment with a capital-intensive fishing project proved unsuccessful.

Open range cattle grazing has been successful for Europeans and Aborigines, allowing that profits are low. For Aboriginal communities a

cattle project has a number of advantages: it provides a cash crop and employment, the work is generally liked and is consistent with many cultural values (flexible in its timing, outdoors, allows them to visit important places while working, etc), and provides a source of food in the form of 'killers'.

The brucellosis and tuberculosis eradication campaign however, is likely to change the usefulness of pastoral activities for Aborigines. Bovine brucellosis and bovine tuberculosis are contagious diseases found in cattle and buffalo for which there is no cure. Brucellosis causes abortions amongst cows and tuberculosis causes death and failure to thrive amongst cattle. Humans can be infected by both diseases. Generally speaking brucellosis is a problem in the south of the Northern Territory and tuberculosis is a problem in the north. The diseases have existed in Australia since the 1920s at least and since that time State governments have instituted eradication policies, mainly for the purpose of protecting human health. Special attention was paid to tuberculosis in dairy herds prior to the pasteurisation of milk. By the 1960s many foreign beef exporting countries had been successful with their eradication programs and this put pressure on Australia to accelerate its programs. It was thought that national coordination was required because of the fear that Australian exports of beef and dairy products would be discriminated against on the grounds that trade within Australia would cause reinfection of areas previously rendered clean. Thus in 1970 an Australia-wide coordinated BTEC program came into being. The original aim was to achieve 'provisional freedom' by 1984. This would involve a prevalence of brucellosis of less than 0.2 per cent of the national herd and a prevalence of turberculosis of less than 0.1 per cent. The program has been largely successful in southern parts of Australia but there have been special problems in northern Australia which have led to the extension of the completion date to 1992 but it is doubtful that even this target will be met.

The main problems are the following. Firstly, Top End stations often have areas of inaccessible land on which graze large herds of feral cattle and buffalo some of which are infected with tuberculosis. Secondly, these stations have little fencing so that major fencing improvements have to be undertaken before economic numbers of BTEC clean cattle can be separated from feral animals. Thirdly, cattle management of a BTEC clean herd is much more capital and labour intensive than under the open range grazing, causing cost increases that are resulting in financial difficulties for some stations and may result in some stations being abandoned. These abandoned areas may in time become major reservoirs of the disease. The pastoralist receives some financial assistance including the following: cattle which are slaughtered under the program are compensated for at market prices after deducting transport costs; fencing and yard construction associated with BTEC programs receive a 100 per cent tax deduction in the first year; money from the sale of cattle as a result of destocking order does not attract tax until five years have elapsed; and pastoralists are aided in restructuring their debts. However, compensation in the form of tax deductions are of very little use to many pastoralists, including Aboriginal cattle companies, who do not generate taxable incomes. Meanwhile the program creates considerable cash flow problems for pastoralists.

The program affects Aboriginal interests in the following ways. Firstly, financial difficulties experienced by some European pastoralists will result in more stations being offered for sale which can be purchased

by Aboriginal interests. Secondly, the ADC underwrites and gives loans to Aboriginal cattle interests so that Aboriginal cattle enterprises can conform to BTEC requirements early. The purpose of this is to enable these enterprises to gain from being early suppliers of BTEC clean cattle to stations in the process of destocking. The profits from this process may not be great, however, if southern cattle producers also actively seek this market. Thirdly, cattle management required under the BTEC program is much more rigid than is ideal for Aboriginal communities. The constant need to patrol and maintain fencing, the systematic turn-off operations required to meet interest payments on loans obtained for BTEC improvements and to meet destocking plans, may combine with problems associated with the establishment of outstations on mustering zones to deter Aboriginal communities from engaging in cattle operations. Finally, the additional financial problems for an Aboriginal community associated with higher variable and capital costs of producing cattle and the lower revenues resulting from the stations carrying much smaller herds may lead communities to abandoning cattle activities. In addition to affecting cattle operations on Aboriginal communities the BTEC program will affect Aboriginal land use in areas where there are no formal cattle operations. Throughout Arnhem Land and in other parts of the Top End many Aborigines rely on feral buffalo and cattle as major sources of protein. Under the BTEC program it is likely that many of these herds will be decimated by mustering and shoot-outs.

It is this writer's opinion that the BTEC program is ill conceived in relation to much of remote Australia and especially the Top End of the Northern Territory. To some extent the program is based on naive beliefs about the politics associated with international trade in beef. Importers of beef such as the USA and Japan determine import quotas largely as the outcomes of conflicts between domestic producers and consumers, from the desire to open up markets for their exports, and as part of economic-political international relations. If it is convenient for such countries to reduce import quotas for Australian beef then no degree of BTB 'cleanness' in the Australian herd will deter them. Certainly the Industry Assistance Commission (1982)could not find evidence of relationship between BTB in the Australian herd and access to export markets.

The costs of the program are immense. It is estimated that the cost to the Commonwealth and Northern Territory governments over the nine years to 1992 will be $105 million although some authorities suspect that it will cost more in the vicinity of $300 million. To this must be added the private costs incurred by pastoralists. It seems highly likely that the government and private resources used in the BTEC program would be more efficiently employed in seeking new markets, particularly in Asia. Access to beef export markets is primarily a political problem, not an animal health problem and must be treated as such. Thus political manouvering including bargaining with potential buyers of Australian beef in terms of import quotas affecting their access to Australian markets, ought to be used. Meanwhile, the movement of cattle in Australia from areas where BTB remains a problem could be made subject to BTB testing and the very expensive program of restructuring cattle stations be abandoned. Such quarantine arrangements have been successful in the past. Limited disease control programs should be initiated in infected areas, of course. There is, however, a great cost difference between disease control and disease eradication.

While the industries discussed above can provide substantial employment overall for a community their competitive nature means that they are unlikely to provide substantial profits in the long run. Tourism and royalties from mining may, however, provide substantial profits for a community because they involve resources which are unique and not easily imitated. Both Daly River Mission and Peppimenarti have plans to develop tourism and although they are not ideally placed for that purpose they may develop very successful businesses. Tourism can employ people directly and indirectly in the community. Aborigines can be employed directly in maintenance, cleaning, providing locally produced food and tours, and indirectly in the production of art and craft work to be sold to tourists. Possibilities of either community receiving royalties from mining are remote at the moment, especially at the mission, because it is not Aboriginal land.

THE FUTURE

There is no doubt that the mission has successfully performed the roles for which it was established, and others which it adopted. At the time when it was established Aboriginal people in the Daly River area were able to find employment on the stations and farms in the area - at very low wages - but their standard of living in terms of health, education and housing was appalling, as far as one can tell. Their societies had been greatly disrupted by the dominating influences of Europeans and European goods. The mission was established, initially, to provide health, education and religious facilities but almost immediately found itself providing housing, employment and other facilities. Greater demands were made on the mission as farms in the agricultural area continued to wither and increases in wages for stockwork resulted in jobs disappearing. The mission provided a refuge for people and without the mission many would have drifted to towns, resulting in social problems for themselves and town dwellers. In the second half of the 1970s many Aboriginal people have left the mission to resettle their own country and this process is likely to continue throughout the 1980s. Changes in government policies have resulted in health, education, housing and other facilities being provided in these new communities. This migration has relieved the mission of pressure on its resources, and will change its roles.

The eventual role of the mission will depend on the success of the homelands movement. If it is successful then the mission may continue to develop as a regional centre for health, education, religion, and communication resources. The resident Aboriginal population will be small and composed of people with special health problems or undertaking special education or religious courses, or those who are still dispossessed of their land or are refugees from problems in their own communities, or those who simply prefer the life style at the mission. If this projection is correct, then the mission will have evolved to a role which reasonably corresponds to its original conception.

There is a dormant land rights issue concerning the mission which, in the future, may cause an important conflict and affect the mission. From an Aboriginal point of view, the mission is on Malak Malak land. Catholic Missions has freehold title to the land which prevents the land from being subject to a land claim, and it owns many buildings and plant, most of which were financed by government grants. The Aborigines at the mission own some buildings and plant but they are migrants from the west and south

and their right to be on the land is not strong, from an Aboriginal point of view. Added to this mixture is the fact that Aborigines in the area are becoming very political, as evidenced by the desire to establish a Daly River Land Council, and land ownership (recall Marrithiyel experience) is a very sensitive issue.

Thus it is possible that either the Malak Malak or Aboriginal residents at the mission could press a (political) claim for ownership of assets at the mission, including the land. A claim by either of these groups may well alienate the non-claimant Aboriginal group, as well as others, who may fear that ownership by one Aboriginal group may restrict access to mission by other Aborigines. A possible resolution to the conflict, if it arose, would be for the Malak Malak to own mission land, but to give Catholic Missions and Nauiyu Nambiyu long term leases over the land, which may involve joint control by all three parties.

Peppimenarti has also been successful in fulfilling the goals of its creators, as evidenced by the fact that it has a large permanent population, that it remains strongly under Aboriginal control and is a strong centre of Aboriginal lifestyle. The future of Peppimenarti is also difficult to predict. If the outstation movement in the area is successful, Peppimenarti may lose population and it may end up as a regional centre for education, health, communications (including road building and maintenance) facilities as well as a cultural and political centre. The population may be relatively small and composed of mainly Ngangikurrungkurr and Ngangiwumeri people. However, if population continues to grow in the outstations, from migration and natural increase, then in the very long run a limit may be reached in the capacity of the outstations in the area to support people in the desired way and the surplus population may then have to be absorbed by large centres like Peppimenarti. Since there is generally much more employment available at communities than at outstations some people will be inclined to go to Peppimenarti if outstations conditions deteriorate.

Unemployment in the whole area is chronic and growing. Social accounting figures presented earlier showed that the communities have very high investment rates. Most of the investment is in town structure and housing and, at the current rates of investment, shortages in such facilities will be eliminated. Many jobs will disappear, also. Thus the communities must try to develop employment opportunities. To do this they will need subsidies from the government and flexible reward systems in the communities. As already discussed, even under these conditions the task will be very difficult. Peppimenarti will have a substantial area of land, even after the outstations develop, and will have greater opportunities to provide employment than the mission. If the Nauiyu Nambiyu Association could acquire a neighbouring cattle station which would not involve land ownership problems, such as Tipperary, then the mission community could be in a similar position. However, the BTEC program, as already mentioned, will make stations less useful to Aborigines than they would otherwise be. A great spread of minor activities should also be tried since they, collectively, may provide substantial employment. Government subsidies will be crucial for any such employment scheme to work.

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