

(Workers Weekly, 16/5/30, p. 5)

## ABORIGINALS

### Ruthlessly Exploited

The aboriginal natives of Australia are exploited as ruthlessly as the natives of any other land which flies the flag of the British Empire. Although most of us know a little about the exploitation of the native population of the other countries, we do not know much of the intense exploitation of these natives being exploited by the same white-skinned parasites who exploit (sic) us, we brush it aside as being unimportant and assume that being “superior” we have no need to worry about such primitive people as the Australian natives.

Let the workers in Australia face facts: let us look at things as members of the International working class and not as isolated, supposedly superior, workers. Although the native workers do not toil in the manufacturing industries and compete with us there as low-paid slaves, they do compete with the white-worker on cattle stations, sheep stations, and in the dairy-farming industry. In north Australia, formerly the Northern Territory the native receives the very low sum of 5/- per week, flour, tea and sugar. He has to catch his own meat, which is chiefly wallaby and kangaroo. If he does get beef, it is rarely more than the offal and such scraps as the station owners cannot use. In addition to this, he receives the most inferior grade of tobacco known, called Nichy Nichy. Not only is this made of inferior grade leaf, but also contains the filth and muck swept from the floors of the factory, the whole being stuck together with molasses, and then pressed.

The blacks in Queensland call it “fowlyard twist,” and its odour certainly suggests the fowlyard as its place of origin. An idea of the quality of this “tobacco” may be gained when one considers that its pre-war price was one half-penny per stick; no native smokes it while he has a few pence in his pocket to buy any other brand.

## NO WAGES

Even the meagre pay of the aboriginals is in many instances withheld by the managers or owners of stations employing them, and having no protection from the N.A.W.U., they are thus a menace to the higher paid white workers who are striving to maintain their living standards. In drovers’ camps the aboriginals are terribly exploited and in many cases cruelly ill-treated; corned beef and damper with black tea in none too plentiful measure is what they exist on during their long hours of toil. They have also to take in hand the roughest horses and broken bones are the rewards for this dangerous work, and do not have the services of expert masters to teach them, as did the Prince of Wales.

It is a common saying that the natives are not worth their tucker, but wherever there are natives to be had as slaves at low wages, whether as station or farm laborers, or the females as domestics or nurse-maids, in those places in Australia where such labor (sic) is obtained they are readily sought (sic) after; the capitalist will always buy on the cheapest market and as labor-power is a commodity, just as flour or meat is, the workers in selling his labor-power is subjected to the same fluctuations of the market as other commodity vendors are. Hence a plentiful supply of native workers at low rates of pay is a direct menace to the station workers in North Australia.

Recently an award was made for half-caste workers, but to a certain extent this is nullified by all half-castes under 21 years being classed as full-blooded aboriginals; therefore, only entitled to the low pay of the aboriginals. The unionists of the North must see that these workers, full-blooded as well as half-caste aboriginals, are

organised into the union of workers. Let our slogans be: Workers of the World  
Unite! Away with racial barriers! Onward to Communism!