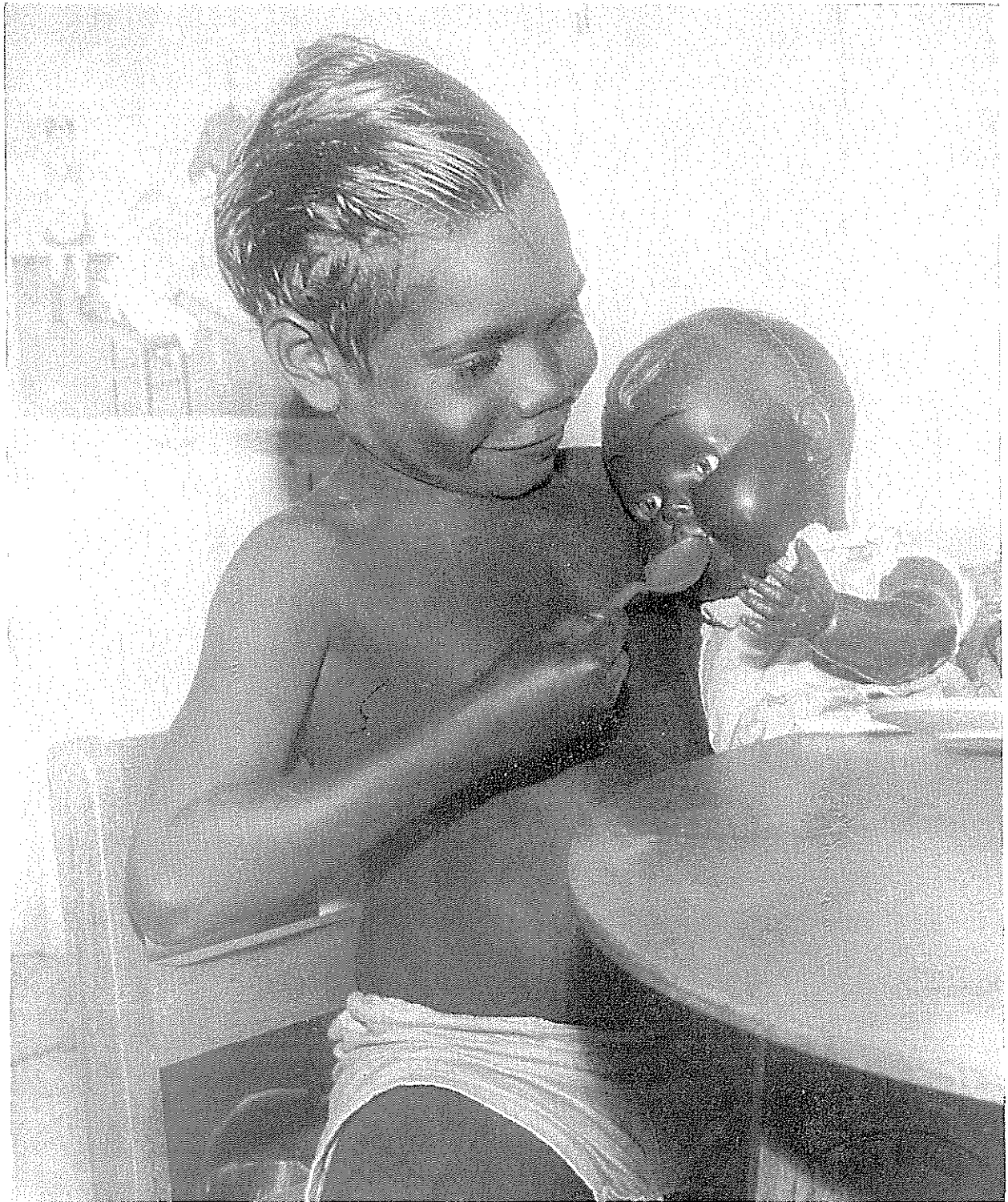


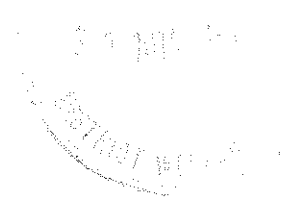
NORTHERN TERRITORY
CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL

D.W.O



ANNUAL REPORT

1966 - 1967



NORTHERN TERRITORY

CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

1966/1967.

NORTHERN TERRITORYCHILD WELFARE COUNCIL

To: His Honour the Administrator of the
Northern Territory
Mr. Roger Levinge Dean,
Darwin.

Your Honour:

Section 13 of the Child Welfare Ordinance 1958-1967 requires that the Child Welfare Council furnish a report to you for presentation to the Legislative Council for the Northern Territory, on or before the first day of August in each year concerning :

- (i) The working of the Ordinance; and
- (ii) Any other matter relating to child welfare in the Territory.

In accordance with Section 13, we have the honour to submit to you, on behalf of the Child Welfare Council, the Eighth Report of the Council, covering the period 1st July, 1966 to 30th June, 1967.

- 2 -

EIGHTH REPORT OF CHILD WELFARE COUNCILINTRODUCTION

Under Part II Section 13 of the Child Welfare Ordinance, 1958-1967, the Child Welfare Council is required to furnish an Annual Report to the Administrator for presentation to the Legislative Council for the Northern Territory. This is the Eighth Annual Report of the Child Welfare Council, and covers the period from 1st July, 1966 to 30th June, 1967.

MEMBERSHIP OF COUNCIL

2. The Child Welfare Ordinance 1958-1967 which became operative on 26th November, 1958 made provision for a Council to be appointed by the Administrator consisting of :

- The Director of Child Welfare; and
- (a) A Welfare Officer;
 - (b) Two persons representing the interests of the Christian Missions in the Northern Territory;
 - (c) Two persons representing the interests of the Christian Churches in the Northern Territory, apart from the interests of those Churches in the Christian Missions in the Northern Territory.

- 3 -

- (d) A Legal Officer of the Public Service of the Commonwealth;
- (e) A representative of the Police Force of the Northern Territory not below the rank of Sergeant; and
- (f) Four persons of whom -
 - (i) at least two are women; and
 - (ii) none is a member specified in any of the last five preceding paragraphs.

3. The Council was constituted by Notice signed by the Administrator on 22nd April, 1959, and its members hold office for a period of two years, when they are eligible for re-appointment. In the period under review Pastor P. G. Albrecht was appointed to replace Archdeacon Bott, following the latter's departure from the Territory. The Council wishes to place on record its appreciation of the services given by Archdeacon Bott.

4. As Acting Director of Child Welfare during the Director's absence on a Churchill study tour, Mr. E.P. Milliken represented the latter at the September 1966 meeting of the Council.

The membership of the Council is now :

Chairman	Bishop J.P. O'Loughlin
Secretary	Reverend G. J. Symons
Director of Child Welfare	Mr. H. C. Giese

- 4 -

Members	Pastor P. G. Albrecht
	Mr. C. G. Le Cornu
	Mrs. S. O'Reilly
	Mrs. V. Pederson
	Dr. H. M. Phillipps
	Reverend A. E. Shepherd
	Mr. B. Sutherland
Welfare Officer	Mr. M. C. Taylor
	Sergeant R. I. Textor

FUNCTIONS OF COUNCIL

4. The functions of the Council are -
- (a) To advise the Director on child welfare in the Northern Territory;
 - (b) To report to the Director on any child welfare matter referred to the Council by the Director;
 - (c) Where the Council has reason to believe that a child may be in need of assistance or control under the provisions of this Ordinance, to request the Director to investigate whether the child is in need of assistance or control and report to the Council at the next meeting the investigations he has made in respect of the request and the conclusions he has drawn from these investigations;
 - (d) Where at least eight members of the Council are satisfied that the case of the child apparently in need of assistance or

- 5 -

control under the provisions of this Ordinance should be considered by a Children's Court to recommend to the Director that appropriate proceedings be taken to bring the case before a Children's Court.

- (e) To furnish an annual report to the Administrator, for presentation to the Legislative Council for the Northern Territory, on or before the first day of August in each year, on -
 - (i) (a) the working of the Ordinance; and
 - (b) any other matter relating to child welfare in the Northern Territory,
 - (ii) on any occasion on which the Council sees fit on any matter relating to child welfare in the Northern Territory; and
- (f) Such other functions as are prescribed.

MEETINGS OF COUNCIL

5. In the period under review meetings have been held quarterly. All except the March 1967 meeting in Alice Springs, have been held in Darwin. Dates and places of meetings were as follows :

14th September, 1966	-	Darwin
23rd November, 1966	-	Darwin
29th March, 1967	-	Alice Springs
13th June, 1967	-	Darwin

- 6 -

MATTERS CONSIDERED BY THE COUNCIL

6. The major matters considered by the Council have included :

- (a) Affiliation proceedings
- (b) Marriage Guidance Counselling
- (c) Work with Handicapped Children
- (d) Welfare Branch Cottage Homes
- (e) Adoption Legislation
- (f) Children committed to care.

AFFILIATION PROCEEDINGS

7. The Council has been advised that action has been taken to use the provisions of the Child Welfare Ordinance to initiate proceedings against putative fathers for the maintenance of their illegitimate children. Steps have also been taken to prosecute fathers who have defaulted in their maintenance payments.

MARRIAGE GUIDANCE COUNSELLING

8. A paper on this subject was presented by Mrs. G. Ryan, a Counsellor from Perth, now resident in Darwin.

Mrs. Ryan pointed out that a Marriage Guidance Council, subsidized by the Government exists in all states. These Councils employ both full time paid officers and some voluntary counsellors. The work is very highly specialised making great

- 7 -

emotional demands on the counsellor who must undergo a period of intensive training to qualify for the work. It is understandable that only about one third of those commencing the course complete it. Apart from this training, many personality factors must be considered regarding selection of a counsellor, such as motivation, attitudes, intelligence, etc.

Clients are sometimes referred by Doctors, Judges or Clergymen, but the vast majority come of their own accord. They are first interviewed by the Director and then referred to suitable counsellors. All interviews take place at the Marriage Guidance Centre and may be held with husband and wife separately or conjointly. Sometimes children, particularly teenagers, are brought to the Council for therapy. Group discussions, courses in sex education for children attending with parents' consent and for engaged couples are also organised by the Council.

WORK WITH HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

9. The Council considered some information on this work, presented by Mrs. Kirkpatrick, Teacher in Charge of the Child Occupation Centre.

A centre such as this is helpful not only for the child concerned but also to allow parents to discuss common problems and to accept the fact that their child needs special care and training.

- 8 -

The objects of the work are simple. They are -

- .. to assist towards emotional stability and the development of skills for which the child has some talent
- .. to develop in the child the ability to communicate, to care for and to think for himself
- .. avoidance of competitive work - the object being for each child to improve on his own standard.

An attempt is made to reproduce a "home" atmosphere in the teaching situation. Mrs. Kirkpatrick commented that results are usually slow but that the effort is rewarding.

WELFARE BRANCH COTTAGE HOMES

10. The Council was advised that tenders had been called for the erection of three cottage homes in Darwin (two in Rapid Creek, and one in Stuart Park). Cottage Parents would be placed in charge of the homes and a maximum of seven or eight children could be housed in each cottage.

There has long been a need for such a scheme in Darwin where foster homes of suitable standard are scarce. The Council was advised also that as funds are available, homes will be built in other centres in the Territory.

- 9 -

ADOPTION LEGISLATION

11. The Council noted that the Adoption of Children Ordinance, 1964-1967 came into effect 22nd March, 1967. The provisions of the Ordinance were discussed at some length by the Child Welfare Council as long ago as 1963 and 1964, and some of the suggested amendments were incorporated into the new legislation.

One of the principal effects of the new legislation has been to make the Director of Child Welfare guardian ad litem in all adoption proceedings in the Northern Territory.

Another important provision is that the Director may apply to the Court for permission to dispense with the consent of a parent who unreasonably refuses to allow a child with whom he has had no contact to be adopted. This application may be made to the Court even before adoption proceedings are initiated.

CHILDREN COMMITTED TO CARE

12. At the March 1967 meeting, the Council had before it a report indicating the increased number of juvenile offences over the Christmas holiday period in all centres. Police investigation had revealed that the children concerned were without any or adequate supervision by a responsible parent or adult.

- 10 -

The Council noted that during the period since the last meeting of the Council on 23rd November, 1966, 27 children had been committed to the Director's care. There were 17 boys and 10 girls and of these, 8 were committed as a result of offences, 13 were committed as neglected children, and 6 as uncontrollable children. Another 11 children were placed on probation.

These figures were contrasted with a similar period in 1966 which were :

Seven committed to the Director's care (only two of these as a result of offences), and no children placed on probation.

In Alice Springs it had been found that approximately 95% of children coming before the Children's Courts were Part-Aboriginal or Aboriginal children. The possibility of the foundation of clubs or discussion groups for the different ethnic groups was discussed, but no positive course of action was recommended.

Reports of teenage drinking and drug taking were considered, but the information was not sufficiently clear to warrant suggestions for further action.

- 11 -

LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS CONCERNED WITH THE
LEADING ASTRAY OF A CHILD BY ANOTHER PERSON

13. At the meeting of June 1967, the Council recommended that the Director of Child Welfare be advised to consider the addition of a new section to the Child Welfare Ordinance in order to meet the case of a child being led astray by another person who is not the legal guardian.

The proposal is still under consideration.

14. Appended are tables relating to :
- (a) Regulations under Adoption of Children Ordinance, 1964-1967.
 - (b) Commencement of Child Minding Regulations.
 - (c) List of gazetted Probation Officers.
 - (d) Institutions in the Northern Territory approved under the Child Welfare Ordinance, 1958-1967.
 - (e) Statistics relating to committal and discharge of State Children for year 1966/1967.
 - (f) Statistics relating to Ages of Children Committed.

For and on behalf of the
Child Welfare Council,

(sgd) J.P. O'Loughlin
Chairman

(sgd) G.J. Symons,
Secretary

APPENDIX I.

Regulations under the Adoption of Children
Ordinance, 1964-1967.

By notice in Gazette No.19 of 22nd March, 1967, His Honour the Administrator approved Adoption of Children Regulations to come into effect from that date.

Under the new regulations, the Director of Child Welfare has been made guardian ad litem in all adoption proceedings in the Northern Territory.

Power is also vested in the Director of Child Welfare to apply to the Court for permission to dispense with consent of a parent who unreasonably refuses to allow a child with whom he has no contact to be adopted.

The Council noted that since the regulations came into effect, nine applications for adoption have been filed with the Supreme Court.

APPENDIX IICOMMENCEMENT OF CHILD MINDING REGULATIONS

Following notice in Gazette No.36 of 27th July, 1966, regulations concerning the operation of Child Minding Centres was introduced as from 1st September, 1966.

The regulations provide for high standards of hygiene, safety, surveillance, etc. and limit the numbers of children to be placed in each Centre with regard to size of playing and living areas, number of responsible persons in attendance and general suitability. Registration of the Centres is subject to close inspection, following which a report and recommendation is presented for consideration by the Director of Child Welfare.

The Council noted that five Child Minding Centres have been registered in the Darwin area and one in Alice Springs. Places for 72 children in Darwin, and 8 in Alice Springs are thereby approved. Most Centres are functioning with maximum numbers.

APPENDIX IIIPROBATION OFFICERS

Mr. C. C. Allom
Mrs. M. I. Ballagh
Mr. B. Damaso
Mr. E. O. Harvey
Miss E. Heath
Mr. T. C. Lovegrove
* Mr. V. B. Pederson
* Mr. J. R. Ryan
Mr. M. Ivory
Mr. R. W. Connors
Mr. T. J. Millikins
Mrs. H. Lane
Mr. M. C. Taylor
Mr. J. R. Weinman
Mr. G. L. Munro
Mrs. M. M. Wensley
Mr. D. A. Orr
Mrs. M. Cook
Miss C. J. Dunn
Mrs. M. E. Gowty
* Mr. J. O'Reilly
Miss N. C. Linsell
* Mr. T. E. Gaffney
* Mr. B. A. Clarke
Mr. C. Clague
Mrs. K. Bottcher

* Honorary Probation Officers

APPENDIX IV.INSTITUTIONS IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY
APPROVED UNDER THE CHILD WELFARE
ORDINANCE, 1958-1967.

Palmerston House Adolescent Girls
Receiving Home,
2 Kahlin Avenue,
Darwin, N.T.

St. Mary's Hostel,
Alice Springs, N.T.

Garden Point Catholic Mission,
Melville Island, N.T.

Retta Dixon Hostel,
Darwin, N.T.

Croker Island,
Methodist Overseas Missions,
Darwin, N.T.

Dundas House Receiving Home,
Darwin, N.T.

Finke River Mission Cottage Homes,
Alice Springs, N.T.

Essington House Adolescent Boys
Receiving Home,
Darwin, N.T.

APPENDIX VCOMMITTAL AND DISCHARGE OF STATE CHILDREN1st JULY, 1966 to 30th JUNE, 1967.

	State Children 30th June, 1966.	Move- ments 1.7.66. to 30.6.67.		State Children 30th June 1967.	Reasons for Commitments										
		Discharged	Committed		Neglected	Uncontrollable	Destitute	Stealing	Break Enter and Steal	Unlawful Possessions	Receiving	Illegal Use of Vehicle	Assault	Carnal Knowledge	Vagrancy
Boys	123	19	41	145	20	7	-	5	9	-	-	-	-	-	-
Girls	79	14	32	97	21	8	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	202	33	73	242	41	15	-	8	9	-	-	-	-	-	-

APPENDIX VI.AGES OF CHILDREN COMMITTED

Ages	Neglected		Uncontrollable		Destitute		Offences		Total		Grand Total
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	
0 - 5	9	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	5	14
6 - 12	6	9	4	1	-	-	2	-	12	10	22
13 - 17	5	7	3	7	-	-	12	3	20	17	37
Children Committed											73