



## PRIME MINISTER

FOR PRESS :

PM. No. 87/1972

RELEASE OF LAND FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF LIVING AND  
OTHER AREAS FOR RESIDENT ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES IN  
THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

Statement by the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. William  
McMahon, CH, MP.

12 OCTOBER 1972

Following discussions I have had today with Lord Vestey, the Government has accepted with pleasure the offer by Lord Vestey to give some 35 square miles of land (about 22,400 acres) from the Vestey lease of Wave Hill Station in the Northern Territory.

The offer by Lord Vestey has been taken up in the context of the Government's acceptance of the recommendations of the Gibb Committee that a policy be adopted to enable community living areas for aborigines to be established on land in pastoral properties and under the control of the aborigines themselves.

In accordance with this policy, the area of Crown land on which the Government welfare centre at Wave Hill is located will be extended to include land at Wattie Creek which has been the site of a camping area for aborigines for some time.

The offer by Lord Vestey includes an area of 10 square miles near Wattie Creek which the Gurindji people have asked be leased to them for use in a cattle mustering project. Government officials will be discussing with the people at Wattie Creek in the near future their proposal for a lease and the sort of financial assistance they would need to enable the best use to be made of the land.

The land to be released by Lord Vestey will enable the site at Wattie Creek to be further developed with Government assistance and made available for leasing to the local community.

.../2

1944-1945

... ..  
... ..  
... ..  
... ..

... ..  
... ..  
... ..  
... ..

... ..  
... ..  
... ..  
... ..

... ..  
... ..  
... ..  
... ..

... ..  
... ..  
... ..  
... ..

... ..  
... ..  
... ..  
... ..

... ..

The area includes the site of the new bores which will provide additional supplies of water to Wattie Creek and the Wave Hill centre. Water is now being piped to Wattie Creek from these bores and this has overcome the water supply problem experienced there in recent months.

I am pleased to be able to say that a number of other pastoralists in the Northern Territory have also agreed in principle to the release of land for the development of living areas for resident aboriginal communities. These pastoralists have responded to the Government's announcement of the acceptance of the Gibb Committee recommendations.

Further discussions about implementing recommendations of the Gibb Committee report will be undertaken at a meeting of the Northern Territory Pastoral Lessees Association at Katherine next month.

---

CANBERRA,  
12 October 1972