

Land rights fight for Sherbrooke

By GRAHAM ECCLES

Victoria's aboriginal population hasn't had much of a voice over the years. In fact, it has been little more than a squeak.

Although the aboriginals' situation has certainly improved in recent years, they are still sadly forgotten in the whirlpool of progress.

To their credit they have generally tried to get better deals by using the accepted methods — political lobbying, public meetings that have now practically dwindled to a handful of supporters, and scores of resolutions that have usually fallen on deaf ears.

But tomorrow some of our part-aboriginals are taking their first bold step for greater recognition.

It will not meet with the

approval of everybody in the community.

At 9 a.m. a party of between 30 and 40 Koorlies (part-aboriginals) will set up camp in Sherbrooke Forest just off Monbulk Rd.

This is not simply a weekend "show-the-flag" affair.

The group plans to stay there until Australia's aboriginal population is given land rights. Good-

ness knows, that could be forever.

Land rights is a very hot issue with aboriginals at the moment. The Federal Government seems unmoved by the outcry.

My first reaction to the news this week was that camping in Sherbrooke Forest would be illegal.

But the young part-aboriginal behind the "forest take-over" scheme, Lin Onus, 22, of Deepdene, says there are no regulations covering campers.

"Which is a pity," he said today. "We were hoping it would infringe things just a little so that we would attract a little more attention."

Well I have no doubt that Lin Onus and his pals are going to get more publicity than they bargained for.

Camping in Sherbrooke Forest might not be illegal, but a lot of people

on the
SPOT



LIN ONUS gets ready at his Deepdene home today for the Sherbrooke outing.

that yesterday the league was forced to sack all its employees.

Mr Onus said there would be a meeting of the league's management

dorsement from the National Tribal Council.

"They are becoming quite a powerful group in aboriginal affairs.

"The idea gradually caught on here in fact."

much of a smack in the face. We're right in the public eye; this thing worth a dozen Lin Onus Roses to our cause."

He says that at fir