

# The Herald

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## ACT clash was warning to all

**M**OST Australians will probably find in themselves a conflicting mixture of emotions over the aboriginal "embassy" incident in front of Parliament House, Canberra, yesterday. It is partly an indefinable loss of self-esteem, partly a conviction of being right and realistic, and partly a feeling of guilt and defensiveness that goes back to 1788. In laconic Australian: "It's a pity it had to happen in the way it did".

For the truth is that the embassy could not continue to take up public space in a very public place. No group in the community of whatever color or set of beliefs has the right to occupy national property. This is one of the realistic rules by which everyone is restrained, including aboriginals who are entitled to campaign, vigorously but legally, for the land rights which they believe the law has denied them.

Physical confrontation inevitably brings violence and the inflaming of emotions. The Government must do everything possible to avoid unnecessary confrontations.

Violence can only damage the progress of de-tribalised aboriginals whose best hope is in a united Australian community life. A cool-headed, hard campaign in tough debate and politics must take over from the ugly antagonisms of violence.

The only final solution is education and job opportunities for aboriginals. Canberra and most state governments have started to respond, but they have much more to do, and quickly.