



Australian 12th November 1988

Call to free all black prisoners

ALL Aboriginal prisoners except those convicted of the most serious crimes should be immediately released, Aboriginal activist Mr Michael Mansell said yesterday.

Speaking on *The Australian Public Opinion Hotline*, Mr Mansell says Aboriginal people should have the right to determine their own future, elect their own government, run their

own land and operate their own legal system.

Mr Mansell, a barrister and solicitor with the Tasmanian Aboriginal Legal Service, says the Australian legal system denies justice for Aborigines.

Mr Mansell says Aborigines have the highest rate of deaths in this country and "there is enough evidence to suggest that some Aboriginal people have

simply been murdered in police custody".

But a spokeswoman for the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr Hand, said yesterday that the Federal Government would not support Mr Mansell's proposal. She said the Muirhead Royal Commission was looking at what could be done to reduce the high number of Aborigines in custody.