

New plan to set up 'embassy'

SYDNEY — An Aboriginal 'embassy' may soon be re-established on the lawns of Parliament House in Canberra, an Aboriginal activist said in Sydney yesterday.

Mr Gary Foley said: "There is sufficient discontent with the way in which the National Aboriginal Consultative Council is being set up, and with the Woodward Commission, to justify the re-establishment of the Aboriginal embassy."

The Federal Government set up the Woodward Commission to inquire into Aboriginal land rights.

Mr Foley, who is the race relations officer at Melbourne's Monash University, was speaking after a conference which discussed the setting-up of the council.

Critics speak

At yesterday's conference, attended by 68 Aboriginals representing groups from most parts of N.S.W., Mr Foley and a Sydney Aboriginal law student, Mr Paul Coe, strongly criticised the proposed council and the plans for electing it.

The council, an advisory body, was proposed by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs (Mr Bryant) in Janu-

ary.

It involves putting Aboriginals in Australia on a special electoral roll to vote for 41 Aboriginal representatives throughout the country.

Mr Foley and Mr Coe called for all candidates to be given financial help with their election campaigns.

"Aboriginal people don't have enough money to feed themselves, let alone campaign," Mr Coe said.

"What's the point of an election if it doesn't take into account that basic fact?"

Power lacking

"We must ensure that these people are given every opportunity to get around. That should be the first priority," he told the conference.

Mr Foley said that the council, as merely an advisory body, would have no real say in matters affecting the day to day lives of Aboriginals.

Its recommendation would have to go through a white advisory body before they even got to the minister.

"Surely it should have a real say in policy making, rather than just advising," he said.