

Cavanagh backs Dexter in row with Blacks

THE Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Senator Cavanagh, said yesterday he did not want the resignation of the head of the Aboriginal Affairs Department, Mr B. Dexter.

Mr Dexter walked out of a meeting of the National Aboriginal Congress after a 15-minute argument on Friday. He later offered to resign.

Senator Cavanagh said in Adelaide yesterday: "I have complete faith in Mr Dexter.

"I think he is one of the most sincere and hard-working men in the public service."

Senator Cavanagh said he was aware of the work pressures on Mr Dexter, whose department was short-staffed, and of the unrealistic demands made by some Aboriginals.

He said the National Aboriginal Congress was led by a group of part-Aboriginals who thought their main function was to criticise.

They were prepared to brand as racists those who did not agree with them in order to justify their existence, but they could not put forward sound proposals for future action.

The senator said he thought this group had no real desire to improve the lot of Aboriginals.