

Govt. Inquiry Into Native Grievances

CANBERRA, Wednesday. — The Federal Government has agreed to the appointment of a Parliamentary Select Committee to inquire into the grievances of the Yirrkala aborigines of Arnhem Land. *Sept 1922 63 Age*

The Yirrkalas last month sent two petitions to Federal Parliament protesting about the excision of part of

their reserve for bauxite mining.

An Opposition front-bencher, Mr. Beazley, (Lab. W.A.), who visited Arnhem Land during the winter recess, gave notice in the House of Representatives of a motion for appointment of the select committee.

The Government informed the Opposition today that it would support the motion.

An area of 140 square miles has been excised from the 35,000 square miles Arnhem Land aboriginal reserve and leased to a subsidiary of the Pechiney Aluminium Company of France.

Trust Fund

When he announced the excision last April the Minister for Territories (Mr. Hasluck) told Parliament the lease documents contained provisions protecting the water supply of the Yirrkalas.

The terms of the lease provided for continued access of the aborigines, mission staff and Government officials to the leased land.

Mr. Hasluck added that royalties from the bauxite mining would be paid into a trust fund which might eventually total £4 million to be spent on aboriginal welfare.

Mr. Beazley and Mr. Gordon Bryant (Lab., Vic.), who accompanied him to Arnhem Land, claimed the aborigines had not been properly consulted about the disposal of the land, and that the mining operations would impair the hunting economy on which the Yirrkalas depend.