

The 1967 referendum in australia assignment



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The 1967 referendum was held by the Menzies (I think?) government. It was held after 10 years of Aboriginal activists fighting for their rights for suffrage, equal rights and fair treatment. This involved removing TWO offensive clauses in the Australian Constitution. I'm pretty sure (but you'll have to google to check) that these were Section 51 Clause 127, which listed Aborigines as animals protected under the Flora and Fauna Act, rather than human beings.

The other clause referred back to this one — speaking of rights that were entitled to; “ all humans except the Indigenous peoples of the land” — but I'm not sure what or where it was. State wide voting had been granted for Aborigines in 1961, and although it's a common misconception, the right to vote was not a major point in this protest — it was predominantly about the principal of the matter, that everyone had the right to be named human. Aborigines had also been granted the rights to pay offs such as unemployment and “ The Doll”, so that had nothing to do with their desire for a title as human.

The 1967 referendum gave Aborigines the right to vote in nationwide elections. It was one of two referendums to be passed in Australian history, and they won by a landslide. 90. 7% of the Australian public voted “ Yes” in the poll, which read something like: “ Do you support the removal of the offensive clauses pertaining to the indigenous peoples of this land and their right to human treatment? ” (Look it up, that's a vague memory). THE POINT OF THE 1500 WORD ASSIGNMENT is to “ celebrate” the fact that about 90% of white Australians were in support of this change to the constitution, so don't focus too much on the mistreatment aspects.

Look up a few of the white supporters who helped the Aborigine protestors (who are really easy to find on wikipedia — they started protesting in 1957).

RELEVANT INFORMATION The 1956 Olympics brought international attention to Australia's Aborigines, and many countries began to enquire as to the Anglo-Celtic governments treatment of the traditonal owners of the land. This put strain on them to show the world that they were a multicultural society (with the White Australia Policy BEGINNING to break down at this time).

No more than a few sentences need be said about this, but it could serve as a good introduction. SO, TO SUMMARISE; 1957: four main Aboriginal Rights Activists (who were all Aborigine themselves) began to protest against the racism and discrimination brought upon their peoples). 1961: the Australian Government allowed state wide voting for Aborigines, land rights (although they had to get government permission to marry, move and seek employment). 1967: Referendum held, 90. 7% of the population voted yes. This granted Aborigines the title of Human Beings and the right to vote on a national scale.