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Acts on Squatters: Government Takes Over Camps

GOVERNMENT TAKES OVER CAMPS

The State Government has taken over squatter-occupied buildings at former service camps, making the squatters worried. They will evict occupants if they do not pay their rents.

The buildings taken over were formerly part of the R.A.A.F. command in Victoria Park, the military hospital at Holland Park, and the accommodation center at Camp Muckley, Archerfield. The Housing Commission took over all three camps as temporary housing areas within the past 12 or 18 months, but in converting the rest of the premises into tenements for rent-paying occupants, ignored certain portions which squatters had occupied. It is this bypassed section of the camps which is now being taken over.

Make Tenements

The Housing Minister, Mr. Power, announced the Government's decision last night when questioned on the request of Wednesday night's meeting of Victoria Park squatters that the State Housing Commission accept rent and legalise their position. He said that buildings occupied by squatters within the areas previously taken over by the Commission had now been acquired from the Disposals Commission at the three camps mentioned and would be converted into tenements.

The squatters on the premises would have to comply with the conditions laid down for the Commission's tenants and pay the same rent. Mr. Power said that the Commission had completed the conversion of all Commonwealth buildings acquired for temporary housing and, as there was still a demand for such accommodation, was now in a position to take over the balance occupied by squatters.

House 130 Families

When converted, these extra buildings would accommodate 130 families, Mr. Power said. The necessary advice had been given to the squatters. He was unable to say how many squatters were on the premises, as Commission officials were still checking up. Rents paid by Commission tenants range from 13/ to 19/ a week.