

# ***We can eliminate poverty***

ON *FOUR CORNERS* (ABC TV, July 9) Tony Abbott maintained, that we can't abolish poverty He's wrong.

The Government can ensure that every household, employed or not, has an income above the poverty line.

Relative poverty exists only because of low social-security payments, the ineligibility of some needy people for income support, and due to the Government's policy of imposing a harsh penalty on anyone who breaks a social-security rule.

Mr Abbott argues that some lower-income people spend their money imprudently. However, provided their income is above the poverty line, these people are not poor in statistical terms.

A lack of income could be solved by Mr Abbott's Government within months.

The state could also do more to help those who have trouble managing their financial affairs by improving education, support and rehabilitation for people with lower intelligence, mental-health problems and addictions.

BRENT HOWARD  
NSW