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Aboriginal print journalism and the Koori Mail newspaper

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**ABORIGINAL PRINT JOURNALISM
and the *KOORI MAIL* NEWSPAPER**

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of the degree

Honours Master of Arts (Journalism)
by Research

from

University of Wollongong

by

Michael Edward Rose; BA, BJ (Hons)

Faculty of Arts
Graduate School of Journalism
November 1994

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma at any university, and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously written or published by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signed,

Michael Rose,
November 1994

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the history, operations and content of the *Koori Mail*, a bi-weekly, nationally-distributed newspaper jointly owned by a group of Aboriginal communities in the area around Lismore, NSW. It places that newspaper into a broader historical, cultural and theoretical context, examining the question of the place of Aboriginal print journalism in the development of contemporary Aboriginal communications and media and in the ongoing transformations of contemporary Aboriginal culture. It does so in light of the related theoretical notions that traditional Aboriginal culture was primarily oral in nature, and that the adoption by such cultures of printed-word materials is a highly significant phenomenon with potentially profound consequences.

The thesis shows that the appropriation of print journalism by Aboriginal people has been much more energetic and began much earlier than previously thought and that, along with contemporary Black creative writing, it has played an important part in the development of Aboriginal political and social activism. The thesis examines questions of the "authenticity" of certain forms of Aboriginal media production, including newspapers, and addresses the question of the authenticity of the *Koori Mail* as an Aboriginal "text". It argues that while the *Koori Mail* is a highly significant and noteworthy example of Aboriginal print journalism, in several important respects it is not achieving its full potential, its full authenticity, under the editorial and management regime in place at the end of the period examined.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of Peter and David Brune, and Walter George Arthur, Australia's first Aboriginal print journalists, who in producing the *Flinders Island Chronicle* were forced to practise their craft under the most oppressive of conditions.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis examines the history, operations and content of the *Koori Mail*, a bi-weekly, nationally-distributed newspaper jointly owned by a group of Aboriginal communities in the area around Lismore, NSW. The thesis also places that newspaper into a broader historical, cultural and theoretical context, examining the hitherto little-researched question of the place of Aboriginal print journalism in the development of a contemporary Aboriginal communications and media "system" and in the ongoing transformations of contemporary Aboriginal culture.

Much has been written by communications researchers and ethnographers about the appropriation by Aboriginal people of European broadcast media techniques for their own cultural needs and, therefore, their increased empowerment -- what Eric Michaels termed the "Aboriginal invention of television" -- but almost nothing has been written specifically or in a sustained way about Aboriginal use and production of newspapers and other periodicals. This thesis, then, in order to properly contextualise the *Koori Mail* initiative, describes the production -- past and present -- by Aboriginal people of newspapers and other periodicals, as well as the use of print journalism techniques. It does so in light of the related theoretical notions that traditional Aboriginal culture was (and in some remote communities still primarily is) "oral" in nature and that the adoption by such cultures of printed-word materials is a highly significant phenomenon with profound consequences for the nature of that culture. The thesis shows, however, that the appropriation of print journalism by Aboriginal people has been much more energetic and began much earlier than many White researchers and government communications policy-makers have apparently imagined and that, along with contemporary Black creative writing, it has played an important part in the development of Aboriginal political and social activism.

My interest in the *Koori Mail* project grew out of my work in Australia as a journalist and as a journalism lecturer and researcher. While working as a journalist in Canada, I had become interested in indigenous media, and in particular the numerous examples of newspapers which Canadian and American Native peoples had produced over the years. Not long after arriving in Australia in 1989 I encountered the *Koori Mail* newspaper, subscribed, and began to read it regularly. I was particularly interested in the fact that the *Koori Mail* was a national newspaper; i.e. that it was aimed not at a small Aboriginal community in one part of Australia but at Aboriginal people (and, as the owners readily acknowledged, non-Aboriginal people) across the continent. This "national" nature of the publication seemed to me to fly in the face of repeated suggestions -- which I encountered, for example, in

researching for a Canadian newspaper an article about the struggle by Aboriginal people for land rights -- that Aboriginal people had never really developed a tradition of having national representatives in their political struggles, or of speaking with "one voice".

I was also interested in the fact that the *Koori Mail* was being run as a commercial enterprise. This allowed the project at least the hope of escaping dependence on, and the related problems of being under a form of control as a result of dependence on, grants from Australian government or other sources. And I was intrigued by the repeated suggestions, mainly by White bureaucrats and researchers, that there simply was no significant history of Aboriginal newspapers or print journalism in Australia because Aboriginal people, as an "oral culture", had a limited interest in such things.

I set about, therefore, to gather more information about the *Koori Mail* operation and the reasoning behind the decision by its owners to set it up as a commercial enterprise and to make it a "national" newspaper. I also began to look into the question of whether it indeed was the case that there was no history of Aboriginal print journalism in Australia. My initial interest in a particular Aboriginal newspaper, then, had to be opened onto several other fronts and a number of fundamental issues and research questions had to be addressed before the *Koori Mail* could be examined in any meaningful way. What was the nature of communication in "traditional" Aboriginal society? How have European media methods been appropriated by Aboriginal people for their emerging contemporary communication needs and how have those methods been transforming Aboriginal culture? What is the place of printed-word materials in Aboriginal communication and media? What effects does the adoption of print communication have on a culture which has traditionally been oral in nature? What is the history of print journalism among Aboriginal people in Australia? Have Aboriginal writers and editors faced the same problems of control and the same problems of the "authenticity" of their output as have those Aboriginal producers and broadcasters who are working ("inventing") in the area of European-style television and radio?

Only after addressing such fundamental questions could I begin the task of studying the *Koori Mail*. In much of my efforts to address those questions, the work and perspectives of a number of Australian and overseas researchers have been particularly helpful, and helped form the framework into which this thesis has been, as it were, inserted. The work on indigenous broadcasting and filmmaking and

related questions of cultural threat, empowerment and authenticity by such researchers as Eric Michaels (1986), Tom O'Regan (1993), Michael Meadows (1994), Helen Molnar (1990), Marcia Langton (1993) and Elihu Katz (1977) helped focus my thinking as I considered the issues as they related to print. The work of Adam Shoemaker (1989), Mudrooroo Narogin (1990), Stephen Muecke (1992) and others on Aboriginal creative writing, and the relationship between such writing and political activism, helped guide my thinking on questions of the place of printed word communication in Aboriginal culture, and the development of Aboriginal print journalism in particular.

In a more general way, the work of Marian Bredin and others helped guide my thinking on the question of White journalists or researchers "approaching" indigenous media. Bredin, in particular, lays out some of the pitfalls which must be avoided in research work of this kind, and throughout this thesis I have attempted to overcome the methodological and conceptual problems stemming from what she has termed the "will to explain" among non-indigenous researchers:

[Methodological] relativism confines itself to the empirical cataloguing of differences. The weakness of the relativist approaches lies in their emphasis on description, without recognising that description necessarily involves comparison, and failing to theorise the social and historical grounds upon which observation, description and comparison can be carried out (1993, p.300).

It is for this reason that I now explicitly "identify myself" in this introduction as a White, male, Canadian, journalist, lecturer, researcher now living in Australia and attempting to approach the *Koori Mail* newspaper operation. While all of what comes in this thesis will naturally have to be from my personal and cultural perspective, it has been my aim and my effort to observe and appreciate without, as far as is possible, falling prey to the unconscious imposition of values and standards to cultures and cultural productions which are not my own.

I have also taken to heart several other of Bredin's warnings, among them that:

A dialogue must be established between academic notions of communication and cultural politics and the multiply grounded and

experienced notions of indigenous peoples engaged in media use (1993, p.311).

and

The fragmentation of anthropological discourse and of Western representations of difference allow the articulation of marginal and oppositional voices. Ethnographies of communication need to concern themselves with the practical politics within which images, texts and meanings are produced. Access to and control of the media is one of the grounds upon which these cultural and interpretive politics are being contested (1993 p.310).

The thesis which follows, then, is descriptive in nature, but is also concerned, as was indicated above, with placing Aboriginal print journalism and the *Koori Mail* into a larger historical and theoretical perspective. In addition, the "practical politics" of the production of Aboriginal newspapers, and the *Koori Mail* in particular, are closely examined. It is important to note that an understanding of such practical politics must, in the case of the *Koori Mail* as for many other Aboriginal media products, involve an examination of the role of non-Aboriginal advisers and editors in the activity in question. As O'Regan has observed in the context of Aboriginal television, in a statement of a problem which can be usefully applied to Aboriginal newspaper production:

What is the impact of this non-Aboriginal involvement in producing Aboriginal television ? Aboriginal television is not non-Aboriginal bricklayers building houses for Aboriginal people, it is non-Aborigines actively participating in the production and therefore definition of Aboriginal cultural artefacts as they are hired, in the 'interim', to direct, edit and write an "Aboriginal" television program (1993, p.187).

Accordingly, this question is also given a thorough examination in this thesis, both in general, as it relates to Aboriginal writing and the editing by non-Aboriginal people of Aboriginal print texts, as well as how it relates to the production of the *Koori Mail* which, while owned by Aboriginal people and in theory controlled by an Aboriginal Board of Directors has never had an Aboriginal editor making day-to-day decisions about style or content.

Only after such general and theoretical matters are addressed thoroughly is any attempt made to study the organisation and content of the *Koori Mail* and then to draw some conclusions or make statements about the place and possible significance of newspaper in the ongoing efforts by Aboriginal people to empower themselves through adoption of European media forms and methods.

The thesis is organised into six chapters. Chapter 1 outlines, as far as is possible, the nature of so-called "traditional" Aboriginal culture and communication practices. Chapter 2 examines the evolution of these communication practices after White invasion and relates these changed practices and needs to the adoption by some Aboriginal communities and individuals of European broadcasting techniques. Chapter 3 examines the place of printed-word communication in evolving contemporary Aboriginal culture, as well as the more general question of the implications of the transition from an oral culture to one which uses the printed word. Chapter 3 also provides an outline of the history of the Aboriginal press in Australia from 1838 -- when the quite remarkable *Flinders Island Chronicle* was hand-written and hand-copied by some young English-speaking Aboriginal clerks -- to the present, when more and more Aboriginal people are becoming interested in and skilled at producing community newspapers and newsletters in English and in Aboriginal languages. In Chapters 4 and 5, the history, organisation, staffing, editorial policy and content of the *Koori Mail* are examined in detail; from its founding in early 1991 to late 1994, when this thesis was completed. The final chapter places the *Koori Mail* back into the more general context established in the first three chapters and attempts to address the complex question of the significance of this national Aboriginal newspaper and its role in Aboriginal culture.

While I have used, as all academic researchers must, a long list of books, journal articles, conference papers, etc -- by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people -- as sources, I have also consulted a good deal of primary material which was made available to me at the offices of the *Koori Mail*. As well, I have conducted a large number of interviews with the main players in the *Koori Mail* project, including many of the Aboriginal people connected with the founding, development and current management of this enterprise. For the examination in Chapter 5 of the content of the *Koori Mail*, I surveyed all editions of the newspaper between May 1991 and November 1994, selecting and commenting on articles which illustrated key editorial, organisational, personnel or commercial concerns of a chosen period. A quantitative content analysis was deemed inappropriate for a thesis of this sort. A comparative content analysis was also ruled out because the *Koori Mail* is the only

example of a national, commercially-organised Aboriginal newspaper at this time and, therefore, such comparisons are impossible. The methodology adopted, and described more fully, in Chapter 5 is like that employed by a number of other researchers into community and ethnic newspapers in Australia (Ata & Ryan 1989).

As Lewins (1993) has observed, a phenomenon, an event, or a series of events in the world are clearly sufficient and justifiable starting points for an extended piece of academic research. In this case, an interest in an Aboriginal newspaper, the *Koori Mail*, led me to a sustained examination of the newspaper itself and, perhaps more importantly, of the array of theoretical and cultural questions which surround the *Koori Mail* "event". In my contextualising of the *Koori Mail* I have been able, I hope, to come to a better understanding of Aboriginal culture and Aboriginal communication, and the relation of these things to what O'Regan and others have called the dominant "settler culture" of Australia. It has also assisted me, as a newcomer to Australia, to reach a better understanding, or the beginnings of a better understanding, of "Aboriginality" and of the relationship between indigenous and colonial cultures. As Langton (1993, pp.31-32) points out:

"Aboriginality" arises from the subjective experience of both Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people who engage in any intercultural dialogue, whether in actual lived experience or through a mediated experience such as a White person watching a program about Aboriginal people on television or reading a book....
Moreover, the creation of "Aboriginality" is not a fixed *thing*. It arises from the intersubjectivity of Black and White in dialogue.... Aboriginality only has meaning when understood in terms of intersubjectivity, when both the Aboriginal and the non-Aboriginal are subjects, not objects.

It is my hope that this thesis will assist those reading it to come to a better understanding of the phenomena and ideas described, and of the positive personal and social consequences of employing the "intersubjective" approach put forward by Langton, and others.

CHAPTER 1
TRADITIONAL ABORIGINAL CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION

As indicated in the Introduction, before attempting any examination of Aboriginal print journalism in Australia or of the *Koori Mail* newspaper project in particular it is necessary to step well back and place these phenomena in a broader context. A possible analogy is of the decorative wooden boxes of various sizes which fit one inside the other. The *Koori Mail* operation can be seen to "fit" into the context of efforts over the years to produce Aboriginal newspaper and magazines. That, in turn, can be seen as fitting into the larger context of Aboriginal writing in this country. In turn, those elements fit into the larger context of present-day Aboriginal communication mechanisms and networks which are being established, the best-known of which may be argued to be radio, television and video production. Finally, this contemporary communication must be fitted into an understanding of contemporary and traditional Aboriginal modes of communication and of the general nature of contemporary and traditional Aboriginal societies.

Accordingly, this Chapter will first examine some aspects of traditional Aboriginal culture and the way in which that culture has been, and is still being, transformed in Australia by many factors. As part of that examination, traditional Aboriginal modes of communication will be addressed, as will the question of the content and function of some aspects of that traditional communication. These matters will then be linked to the questions of what sort of Aboriginal culture is being shaped now and what sort of communication needs and activities are developing among Aboriginal people.

At least two points must be made before beginning any survey of this sort. First, it should be kept very firmly in mind that Aboriginal culture before the European invasion of Australia was extraordinarily rich, and the expression of a sophisticated and highly-organised means of adaptation by a small population to a very large and unforgiving continent. There can be no suggestion that traditional Aboriginal culture was "primitive" or "basic" or any of the various racist or ethnocentric terms which are still applied in some quarters to such indigenous cultures. Second, it should also be kept in mind that traditional Aboriginal culture in pre-invasion Australia was not monolithic or homogeneous: there were many important differences in the way Aboriginal people lived in various parts of the continent, in the relationship they had to their immediate surroundings, in the languages spoken, and in the precise content of their myths, stories and other cultural expressions (Berndt & Berndt 1988; Hiatt 1978). Despite this rich diversity, certain general statements can be made about traditional, pre-invasion Aboriginal culture. But the pitfalls open to outsiders who wish to make such statements are many.

According to Yami Lester, former Director of the Institute for Aboriginal Development in Alice Springs:

From the first time Aboriginal people and Europeans came together there were difficulties.... Early explorers, historians and anthropologists wrote books about Aboriginal culture. But as they didn't have interpreters, how could they get clear messages and understand? How could these Europeans be sure that their questions were understood, and that the responses they were getting were in fact answers. It is very hard for non-Aboriginals. Some of their statements turn out to have been right, but others have been proved wrong by Aboriginal people (in Menary 1981, p. 2).

Indeed, obvious misrepresentation of Aboriginal people can be observed as far back as 1770, in a drawing executed by the Cook expedition's artist, Sydney Parkinson, of the reaction of two Aborigines to the appearance of Cook's ships. The drawing, later the subject of an engraving printed in the artist's journal of the voyage, showed the Aborigines "as if they emerged from an illustrated *Iliad* rather than the Antipodes. Carrying swords and posed as Greeks, they are the first two in a long line of misrepresented Aboriginal Australians appearing in the history of the media over the next 200 years (Leigh, in Horton 1994, p. 681)."

Despite the obvious difficulties and past failures in representing traditional Aboriginal culture accurately, a number of basic statements can be made by those trying to understand and appreciate that culture from the outside. A first, and possibly the most fundamental, observation which can safely be made about traditional Aboriginal culture in general is that it was inextricably linked to the land, to the relationship of Aboriginal people to their land. According to Lester:

Aboriginal culture cannot be separated from the land. The land holds people together. The people lived there together and they enjoy the land and know the stories of the land. They know where the rock holes and the water holes are and they go hunting on the land. The relationship with the land is part of their life. They feel sad and get sick if something happens to their place (in Menary 1981, p.2).

Linked to this are the notions of "belonging to country" and "owning country". According to Widders and Noble:

Belonging to country is both a political idea (like the western concept of nation) and a cultural idea (giving the individual a specific identity). While "country" uses landforms to mark territory, because it serves to link people to place it is not a purely geographic concept. Therefore, "country" can be territorially specific ... with its own clan, language/dialect, ritual/religious sites, etc.... On the other hand, "country" can be theoretically as broad as the Western Desert, an area 1/5 the size of Australia...(1993, pp.102-104).

It is important to understand these fundamental concepts of the relationship of Aboriginal people to the land before one attempts to understand the equally fundamental role of knowledge or information in traditional Aboriginal society. As Widders and Noble point out:

The basis for holding country comes from having knowledge about the powers that exist in the country (ritual knowledge) and this knowledge is, in turn, the basis of political authority. From these flow responsibility and authority for country (1993, p.104).

Clearly, knowledge was highly valued in traditional Aboriginal culture (Edwards 1987, p.107; Michaels 1985, p. 506). And, therefore, understanding the position of knowledge and information in that culture is fundamental to a thorough understanding of the significance of the communication networks established in traditional Aboriginal society and in the process of being established by contemporary Aboriginal people. "Belonging to country" or "owning country" is linked to a stewardship of that country. Part of that responsibility of stewardship is knowing, safeguarding, and transmitting to appropriate individuals under appropriate circumstances the stories, law, lore and the other information elements of culture which are linked to that country.

Lester writes:

On the land are stories, Aboriginal stories that explain why people, rock holes, the hills and trees came to be there. The land is full of stories. Every square mile is just like a book, a book with a lot of pages, and it's all a story for the children to learn. The old people

always tell stories about it and at an early age the children start learning from the land (in Menary 1981).

In this context, Hill and Barlow have observed that:

Some traditional narratives may be regarded as a kind of moral philosophy. Not only do they provide an explanation of how things came into being, the narratives provide the laws and guidelines by which people organise their lives. The tenets of the past fixed the pattern of social life; it was a time when the main institutions of mankind began. Through the stories, Aborigines discover how their world is organised and how it can be understood (1978, p. 71).

The totality of these stories about how the land and its resources were created and about the proper relationship of Aboriginal people to the land has been designated as "the Law", which, according to Michaels, "sums up a great deal of knowledge about local resources (water or food), customs and conduct, Aboriginal philosophy and science. It is a practical and a social guidebook of what one needs to know and do to live as an Aborigine" (1986, p.3). Transmission of these stories as carried out by appropriately authorised and initiated members of the group, yields (or used to yield in traditional Aboriginal society) "a reflection of reality and ... a guide to action" (Berndt & Berndt 1988, pp. 448).¹

What was it that was communicated? What sort of stories and ceremonies are we referring to? Berndt and Phillips (no date, p.34) provide a useful categorisation of "primary mythology", "secondary mythology", and so-called "ordinary stories". Primary mythology includes "sacred and secret-sacred mythology, which is re-enacted in ritual". Secondary mythology "has no ritual accompaniment, although some does border on the sacred". Ordinary stories include what others have termed "camp stories", as well as "historical and pseudo-historical tales... and very large repertoires of songs, perhaps better called 'song-poetry'..." (Hill & Barlow, 1978, p.34). The category of "ordinary stories" is especially useful for the discussion

¹ In a thesis of this type, concerned with the media, transmission of news, etc., it should be noted that the distinguished American journalist and author Walter Lippmann argued in his classic 1965 book, *Public Opinion*, that one of the functions of the modern news media was to "create a picture of reality on which men could act". This is a function apparent in the traditional Aboriginal communication networks and the content of those networks. This observation will serve as a link, later in this thesis, between traditional Aboriginal communication and the more recent use by Aboriginal people of communications technology for their evolving "news" and media needs.

which is to come later in this thesis of the communication of "news" in traditional and contemporary Aboriginal societies.

However, it should be noted here that while mythology, lore, camp stories, etc were all highly valued in traditional Aboriginal society, and while transmission of that knowledge was considered a duty fundamental to social maintenance and the spiritual life of that society, there were very definite constraints on communication of certain information in traditional Aboriginal society (as there are today among traditionally-oriented Aboriginal societies and individuals). Not all knowledge was available to all members of the society (Hill & Barlow 1978; Michaels 1985). Certain older initiated men, for example, spent much of their lives acquiring religious/ ritual knowledge and only they would have had the right to tell or hear these narratives or to perform related rituals. Some of this information would be highly secret, while some would be transmitted to other initiated men or to boys during initiation ceremonies. Some women, on the other hand, would also have had secret stories and rituals from which men and children would be excluded (Bell 1993, p.64). Elaborate restrictions also existed as to use of certain words and names under specified conditions.

As well, some groups of Aboriginal people would "own" stories related to a particular piece of territory and would be the only group allowed to tell them. "An entire story," as Hill and Barlow note (1978, p. 71), "is unlikely to be possessed by one particular group; the story would probably be broken into segments with each of the segments being linked to the relevant piece of territory associated with the feats of ancestral beings."

Michaels sums up the "constraints on knowledge" in traditional Aboriginal society situation in the following way:

In traditional society, owners of sacred lore have a clear responsibility to communicate that lore through song, dance and design. The circumstances in which this can be done and those who may witness and learn from the event may, however, be restricted (1985, p. 507).

These restrictions are of obvious significance in any discussion which attempts to trace the links between traditional Aboriginal communication and the development of contemporary communication modes, either in broadcasting or print.

They are of significance also in arguments which have been made that certain forms of modern communication, particularly satellite television signals, are in fact a threat to the constraints on knowledge which had traditionally been in place. This thesis will address such issues more fully in later chapters. However, from the brief survey above of some of the content of traditional Aboriginal communication, of the function of that communication, and of the well-defined circumstances in which it is carried out, we may now move to the issue of the "mode" of some of that communication.

What is by now clear is that traditional Aboriginal culture was very much "oral" in nature; that it was a society without writing as European society understands that word and one in which information was transmitted through the spoken word or through a combination of spoken words, song, dance or other art or performance forms which were highly developed.

Of course, there is a variety of ways aside from writing in the western, European sense in which information in any culture can be "inscribed". "Text" does not always have to refer to words written on a page, and Aboriginal people have, or had, a number of ways of inscription and creating texts, as Clunies-Ross (1983, p.16) and Muecke (1992, p.4), among others, point out. These ideas will be elaborated below, and further in the discussion which is to come on the complex transition from an oral culture to one which uses writing. But for the moment it should be noted that in traditional Aboriginal society most information was transmitted orally and that none was transmitted in "written" form:

The Australian Aborigines had no tradition of writing or keeping written documents. They depended on an oral (and aural) tradition: on word-of-mouth (and word-of-ear) transmission. This was a mode of communication suited to a small-scale society with its own conventional arrangements for drawing on and using and representing the past. It did not accord nearly so well with the outlook and values of the invading Europeans, who sought something more tangible, less elusive than what they found among the Aborigines (Berndt & Berndt 1982, p.39).

That the oral literature, or, as Muecke has called it, the "verbal art", of Aboriginal people was rich, diverse and significant is beyond doubt. Also clear is the important, even pivotal, role it played in maintaining traditional ways of life and spiritual well-being. Accordingly, the role of story-tellers and "song men" would

have been vital, as various researchers have demonstrated (Berndt, in Davis & Hodge 1985). A key element in this verbal art would have been that of "performance", which involved an interplay between story tellers, or song singers, and their audience/ listeners (Tannen 1985; Clunies-Ross 1983). Another element would have been the various memory aids and devices, and the speech patterns adopted, which Aboriginal story tellers would have employed in their work.

Related to this is the slight change in content and emphasis which might have eventuated with each performance. "Myths and stories handed on in this [oral] way are even more vulnerable to personal interpretation than in the case of written material," according to Berndt and Berndt. "This is true for sacred and secular stories alike, although it is likely that song rhythms and tunes have a conventionalising effect on the transmission of ideas in song form (1988, p.387)." This then yields an oral literature which would have been in some ways constant and in other, less crucial ways, fluid and changing with the years, and, importantly, incorporating new events in the culture which were to be remembered and transmitted (Berndt & Berndt 1988, p.387).

The notion of such incorporation of new material into oral literature, has important consequences in a consideration of the tradition of what may be termed "reportage" in both traditional and contemporary Aboriginal communication, a consideration which is one of the central concerns of this thesis. That is, Aboriginal oral literature was fluid enough that it did not always simply tell and re-tell the "old" stories about the creation of the world and the place of Aboriginal people in it. It also told, and tells, of events -- i.e "news" -- of a more immediate sort. Story tellers were also, in a manner of speaking, journalists, or, at the very least, record keepers.

A number of writers have noted, for example, that early contacts in remote parts of Arnhem Land or the Cape York peninsula between Aboriginal people and Bajini or Macassan traders who arrived by boat were recorded ("reported") in camp stories told later. "There are songs and actions associated with them; and 'play stories', like the tale of ... Djuraindjura, who rejected the matches and other benefits the Macassar men offered him (Berndt & Berndt 1988, pp. 494-495)." Elsewhere, the Berndts have noted:

Songs can be a traditional medium for expressing content that from the viewpoint of a given community is untraditional, or foreign. In the east Kimberley in the early 1940s, travelling songs were about

Afghans (Punjabi traders) and their camels, Chinese fishermen and small traders in the Wyndham area, the individual habits and peculiarities of European pastoral station people, and difficulties between Aborigines and police....

Song sequences revealed in dreams to individual songmen have been travelling in various directions for at least forty years, probably more, and new sequences or versions are still current; many report experiences with motor vehicles, station homesteads and towns, though the songman may still "fly" to such places in his dream (Berndt & Berndt 1988).

A recent documentary film by Trevor Graham, entitled *Aeroplane Dance*, also shows this phenomenon in action. In 1942, the Yanyuwa people living near the southeast corner of the Gulf of Carpentaria took part in a search for a crashed American bomber plane. They found a burned out wreck but no airmen. Four months later some of the fliers were found alive and this story was made by a Yanyuwa songman into an elaborate corroboree dance, which included a giant replica of the American plane. Dancers also used wooden replicas of the plane's steering mechanism as part of the paraphernalia of the dance. The dance was performed for the last time in 1993, after the death of the man who "owned" the song (Graham 1994).

In a thesis concerned with the evolution of contemporary Aboriginal use of communication media in general, and of print journalism in particular, this capacity of the traditional oral literature to become transformed by elements of reportage is of considerable interest, as is the apparent willingness of Aboriginal storytellers and songmen to observe and report events as they impacted on Aboriginal groups in various places and at various times.

Stephens (1988) has noted in a more general and theoretical way this apparently quite fundamental "need for news and the urge to tell" among indigenous people, and people living in non-literate societies. Reportage activity, Stephens argues, is as old as human society itself and "the news" manifests itself in a variety of ways, according to the storytelling and other conventions of the culture in question:

The desire to pass on tales of current events could be found even in cultures that did not have writing -- let alone printing presses or computers -- to whet or satisfy their thirst for the news. Observers

have often remarked on the fierce concern with the news that they find in pre-literate or semi-literate peoples (1988, p.14).

Stephens also remarks on the extraordinary speed and accuracy with which the "oral news systems" spread the word of significant events. He notes, in his general analysis, that "in an oral society, news moved for the most part as people moved" (1988, pp. 22-23), an observation which can also be applied to the way in which information in traditional Aboriginal society moved along well-defined "songlines" or "dreaming tracks" which crisscrossed the continent (Michaels 1985, p. 508; Berndt & Berndt 1988, p. 530).

Stephens' work provides a useful framework for examining the communication activities of Aboriginal people, and his analysis eliminates the possibility of any suggestion that in the contemporary efforts by Aboriginal people to develop media organisations and networks and to report "news" which was of interest to their own communities there is anything which does not have deep roots in traditional culture. "This particular amalgam of anecdote and information that people call the news," Stephens argues, "undoubtedly reflects some of the most basic categories and standards by which the human mind evaluates phenomena in the world (1988, p.34)."

The Berndts have also observed that much of Aboriginal expression through the arts had a communicative function:

In Aboriginal Australia ... a man does not paint or carve simply for enjoyment or self-expression. He does it with a purpose in mind, and what he does will need to be understood by other people (1988, p.444).

These themes will be explored further below.

In addition to the examples noted above of songmen and story tellers incorporating "news" into their repertoire, Aboriginal people had other mechanisms of transmitting information of the more immediate variety; i.e of transmitting information other than the sacred or semi-sacred mythology and the "law" of the culture. Among those which should be noted in a thesis of this sort are

messagesticks, smoke signals, and other devices which were regularly used (Jones, in Horton 1994, p. 216). Messagesticks are particularly interesting when viewed in the context of a discussion of Aboriginal communication, and the evolution of Aboriginal media and journalism.² These objects were widespread in traditional Aboriginal society and served as an aid to the transmission of information between neighbouring clans or tribes. They varied in shape and size. Those from the Broome region, for example, were "cigar-shaped in polished wood and carried fine incisions; Melville Island message sticks were flat, with serrated edges and painted, rather than incised, markings", but generally they were intended to "give notice to other groups of an impending ceremony or to relay news of a past event" (Jones, in Horton 1994, p. 216).

Because traditional Aboriginal society had no writing as the term is understood by European society, the inscriptions on the sticks were usually to be interpreted by the messengers who carried them; the marks were aids to memory for messengers who might be called upon to relate the content of the message to a neighbouring tribe or to another messenger who might take the messagestick to carry it further afield to spread the news (Jones, in Horton 1994; Berndt & Berndt 1988, p.443). "The final transmission of the message," according to Jones, "might involve a considerable period of 'debriefing'. Other messages, on the other hand, might be quite simple and mundane."

Jones notes that smoke signals were also widely used to convey messages, as were "small stone cairns, and branches or grass tussocks broken or twisted in particular ways" (1994, p. 215). Clunies-Ross, too, notes that even though Aboriginal culture was fundamentally oral in nature Aboriginal people "developed other complex systems of communication by means of visually perceived standardised symbols in a variety of media: sign language using various body parts, messagesticks, sand pictures, ground sculptures, paintings on rock, bark or earth (1983, p.16)."

² It is significant that some of the Aboriginal newspapers to be discussed in Chapter 3 were named after such traditional Aboriginal communications devices. For example, the *N.Q. Messagestick*, a significant example of Aboriginal print journalism from Queensland in the 1970s and *Smoke Signal* from the same era. The founders of the *Koori Mail* also saw that newspaper as potentially a "modern day message stick" for Aboriginal people (Wilson 1993, personal communication), as will be discussed in Chapter 4. In general, it can be said that the place of these traditional communication tools in the history of the development of the contemporary Aboriginal media was not lost on some Aboriginal editors and journalists.

It was, therefore, through a unique combination of sacred and non-sacred stories and songs, dance, visual arts and these just-described signs and symbols that Aboriginal people communicated to each other in a swift and efficient way. As Davis (1985, p. 11) sums it up:

We, the Aboriginal people have, been recording our history for thousands of years. Our medium has been stone, hair, wood, the walls of caves; and the flat surface of rock has been the canvas of our ancestors. Hair string manipulated by fingers can tell a myriad of stories and the land was our drawing board. Despite the well-documented cruelties inflicted by the European, our culture has survived the onslaught of the iron age.

It becomes useful at this point, as the discussion moves closer to consideration of more contemporary Aboriginal culture and communications, to consider Michaels' characterisation of traditional Aboriginal society as, among other things, an "information economy" (1985, p. 509), in which "knowledge was the currency" (1986, p. 2). It is worthwhile to quote Michaels at length on this fundamental concept:

Pre-contact Australia appears to have been a land abuzz with information, travelling sometimes quite rapidly along the traditional "dreaming tracks" which networked the continent....

Secret and sacred knowledge is the major exchange item between Aboriginal people and communities. Knowledge (songs, stories, dances and designs) are traded between neighbouring groups in ceremonial gatherings. The result of this sharing over the epochs of Aboriginal habitation of Australia was the creation of a vast, dynamic network of linkages between all groups, similar to a broadcasting network.

Aborigines represent this network as "dreaming tracks", along which people moved in their annual travels. Where tracks intersect, ceremonies and exchanges are held. In this way, information (a new ceremony, new technology or simply "news") originating in one location could move across and throughout the continent, quickly when necessary ... more slowly where elaborate exchanges accompanied ceremonial transmission (1986, pp. 2-4).

The sum of these lines is a network, a vast grid of tracks and attendant special sites that enmeshes the entire continent, linking every Aborigine within it to every other Aborigine and to the landscape.... At the risk of disassociating form and content, one might suggest that the maintenance of tracks -- that is, the

transmission system -- is critical for the maintenance of Aboriginality (1985, p. 508).³

It is on Michaels' theoretical construct of an Aboriginal "information economy", in which Aboriginal people living the traditional lifestyle frequently acted as so-called "information foragers" (1985, p.509), that one can begin to build an understanding of the antecedents of the well-documented eagerness with which some Aboriginal people began to use modern communications technology and media in recent years. Primarily, in the early stages, this has been the "broadcast" media of radio, television, video, and telephones but also, as I will argue later, writing and print journalism when that was considered appropriate to specific communications needs.

Michaels' argues persuasively that:

Media and other novelties are never introduced into a vacuum. Instead they come into an existing setting where culture, society and in this case, prior communication systems are operating. This setting influences what will happen in the course of introduction. Explanation of the adoption, or rejection, and subsequent impact of the new media proceeds best from an examination of existing facts of traditional life (1986, p.2).

This perspective will be one of the underpinnings of the analysis of the nature of Aboriginal media which follows in subsequent pages of this thesis, and of the place in that media system of printed word communication, print journalism, and the *Koori Mail* newspaper.

However, before moving on to this discussion of the contemporary Aboriginal media (in Chapters 2,3 and beyond) it is first necessary to note some other basic matters related to traditional Aboriginal life, and its transformation. It was stated in passing above, but bears repeating here, that traditional Aboriginal society was not an homogeneous mass⁰ in which people all lived and communicated in precisely the way which has been sketched out to this point. On the contrary, there was a considerable diversity in traditional Aboriginal culture in pre-invasion times

³The notion of "damaged" songlines or tracks, and the possible role of modern media technologies in restoring them, will be explored further below.

(and there is also such diversity, it should be noted, among Aboriginal communities in contemporary Australia).

Various communities, depending on their physical surroundings, the availability of food and other resources, etc. would have different ways of daily life:

The way in which they were forced to obtain their daily sustenance pervaded their whole economy -- not only the process of food gathering and hunting, but indeed their whole life, for it involved special techniques, special ways of living. Religious experience with its substantiating mythology varied too from one area to another (Berndt & Berndt 1988, pp. 22-23).

Adding to this diversity, and perhaps a product of it, was the very large number of traditional languages and dialects on the continent. The number of Aboriginal languages in traditional society has been placed at approximately 250 (Schmidt 1990; Taylor 1993, Mattingly 1992); perhaps only a third survive in some form (although very often a rather precarious form) today (Schmidt 1990; Fesl 1984; Meadows 1993). The Berndts have noted that while there would have been similarities in structure and vocabulary in these languages, "similar" did not always mean "mutually intelligible" (1988, p.21). "People of one tribe might be unfamiliar with the language spoken only a few miles ... away. Even where one language covered a very wide area, everyone in that area might need to speak or at least understand more than one dialect (p.22)."

There was, in short, no *lingua franca* which could immediately link Aboriginal people from various parts of the continent. In post contact times, English, or Aboriginal English, served to fill this role but with varying degrees of damage inflicted on traditional languages and expression. One result of the invasion was development of "Kriol", which, according to Taylor, took on the sound system and grammar of traditional languages but with its word-base derived from English (1993, p. 2). As well, many Aboriginal people speak so-called "Aboriginal English" as opposed to Australian Standard English. Aboriginal English, Taylor argues, has very few structural similarities with Kriol and the two "cannot be considered different stages of the creolisation process. Aboriginal English is a non-standard variety of English that appears to have some continent-wide similarities".

Mattingly has noted that:

Most non-Aboriginals have tended to look down on Aboriginal English as debased or corrupted, giving it a pejorative label of "pidgin" or "Kriol"....

Aboriginal usage of English developed in a chequered pattern. It reflected local conditions and was very much influenced by the temperament and disposition of the invaders, ranging from authoritarian and patronising in the main, through ignorant and indifferent, to rare instances of respect and understanding... (in Myers 1992, p.20).

Any diversity which was observed in the pre-invasion groupings of Aboriginal people on the continent would have continued, and in some cases would have been accentuated, by the varying degrees of contact and dislocation which particular clans or tribes experienced after the arrival of White invaders. Indeed, it would be a grave error, in general or for the purpose of a thesis of this nature, for non-Aboriginal observers to assume that there is anything still existing "out there" of a pure or untouched Aboriginal nature. Keen notes that "neither the social and economic conditions nor the culture of Aboriginal people in 'settled' Australia is homogeneous. We can distinguish a variety of Aboriginal styles of life" (1988, p. 7).

Hodge, in his critique of some of Eric Michaels' assumptions about Aboriginal culture, cultural maintenance, and the role in this to be played by Aboriginal media, goes further. He warns of the dangers in assuming some sort of "ethnographic present" where Aboriginal people are concerned. Hodge's view warrants serious attention in any discussion of Aboriginal media, whether broadcast or print:

The foundation premise of Aboriginalism is the construction of Aboriginals as "primitive", in a binary opposition to "civilised". As primitives they become an endlessly fascinating object of the White gaze, able to generate unlimited discourse, but never able to participate in it on any terms.... This closed universe guarantees their authenticity and identity as Aboriginals, as worthy of Aboriginalist reverence, but any departure from its terms condemns them to angry denunciation for having betrayed their essential identity as inscribed in their culture (1990, p. 202).

In short, one must strive to avoid the error in discussing Aboriginal communication and communication media of assuming too much in the way of a single or "pure" Aboriginal culture or tradition which may be (allegedly) informing it.

Wilmott, for example, distinguishes between the lifestyles and concerns of Aboriginal people now living in remote, rural or urban Australia, and describes the further differences which become apparent when people from these categories interact with each other (in an Aboriginal "diaspora") and with the dominant white culture and its cultural products and tools (1984, p.11).

Langton, too, has addressed this issue:

Aboriginal cultures are extremely diverse and pluralistic. There is no one kind of Aboriginal person or community. There are regions which can be characterised, however, with reference to history, politics, culture and demography. The approach I have used ... recognises two broad regions.

The first is "settled" Australia, stretching from Cairns around to Perth in a broad arc. This area is where most provincial towns and all major cities and institutions are located, and where a myriad of small Aboriginal communities and populations reside with a range of histories and cultures. The impact of the particular frontiers in this arc and the outcomes are diverse.

The second region is "remote" Australia where most of the tradition-oriented Aboriginal cultures are located. They likewise have responded to particular frontiers and now contend with various types of Australian settlement (1993, pp. 11-12).

The Law Reform Commission has also produced a valuable discussion of the current face of Aboriginal culture (or cultures) in contemporary Australia, as part of its effort to determine how the laws of the dominant White society interact, or fail to interact, with "traditional" Aboriginal modes of thinking. The Commissioners suggest that it is useful to "distinguish Aborigines living in remote areas, whose life is still predominantly traditionally oriented, from those who have been living for some considerable time in and around cities or larger country towns, and who have modified their ways of life and social organisation to a greater or lesser extent ... (1983, p. 26)."

This perspective yields the three categories of 1) traditionally oriented Aborigines, 2) fringe-dwelling Aborigines and 3) urban Aborigines. For the purposes

of this thesis, and in any discussion of Aboriginal media, these categories are helpful. On the subject of "traditionally oriented Aborigines", the Commissioners note that while "for practical purposes there are no Aboriginal people who have not had at least some contact with Australian society ... it is possible to suggest that there has been a revival, in some areas and in some respects, of traditional ways (p.27)." The Commission cites a submission in this regard made by Berndt (p. 29), in which he noted that "...[while] change is proceeding at a rate greater than ever before, what passes for a traditional Aboriginal lifestyle continues and is still significant in a number of areas. However, while Aboriginal identification, among other things, has sustained the continuing importance of this lifestyle, it is substantially different from what it was in most areas, say, two decades ago".

"Urban Aborigines", according to the Commission, are those living in towns or capital cities who make general use of the elements of white culture, but with varying degrees of success and adaptation (p.30). "Fringe-dwellers" (or "town campers"), the Commission notes, are those people who more or less permanently "had been forced into fringe settlements by loss of employment opportunities or lack of facilities in their home communities, by the effects of government policy, by the pressures of urban life, or possibly in an attempt to flee from tribal authority and laws".

In contemporary Australian society, then, it is clear that the only useful way to examine and understand Aboriginal culture or cultures is through use of the notion of a "continuum". Clunies-Ross has quite usefully extended this concept to the communications practices by Aboriginal people in contemporary Australia. She writes:

Many Aboriginal people today find themselves somewhere along a communications continuum. At one end stand societies like some in Arnhem Land who maintained an intact system of orally transmitted standardised forms, largely untouched by the written traditions of education and enculturation in use in non-Aboriginal Australian society. In various intermediate positions stand many Aboriginal communities which, while adopting some aspects of alien traditions into their own communication system, will perform and transmit the core of their culture in traditional ways. Others again may have retained many of their cultural concepts, but have largely lost the conventional forms of expression, and still others may have inherited very little of their culture, with respect to both form and content (1983, p. 16).

As Narogin puts it:

Aboriginal ... cultures alone ... are indigenous and rooted in the soil. They, like every culture on the globe, are subject to change and are changing constantly. I want to emphasise that such a thing as a stone age culture (static and unchanging) is a myth created by those who should have known better and still put forth by those who should know better... (in Davis and Hodge 1985, p.2).

And Langton's position, that "Aboriginality" is also defined in a dynamic process of intersubjectivity involving Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, has already been noted above.

However, as a final note before embarking, in Chapter 2, on a discussion of the nature of contemporary Aboriginal media, it should be added that there appears to be developing in Australia what many observers have termed a "pan-Aboriginal" consciousness in a variety of discussions and contexts (Berndt & Berndt 1988; Keen 1988; Shoemaker 1989; Wilmott 1984). While in pre-invasion circumstances the conditions and customs and languages of Aboriginal people varied widely, and while in contemporary Australia that is also true in a different and even more complex way, some Aboriginal people, whether urban or rural, are moving beyond the "local" in their thinking and in their endeavours, including the media.⁴

Shoemaker argues that this "pan-Aboriginal identity" has begun to emerge as a result of the land rights movement, and the other protests by Aboriginal people about the conditions which have oppressed them all over the continent, no matter what local traditional customs might have prevailed at some point in the past. He suggests (1989, p. 121) that this emerging identity is one which incorporates "a marked ideological dimension: of respect for traditional culture, pride in Aboriginality, and awareness of the existence of a symbolic Aboriginal nation".

Keen refers to this phenomenon in his discussion of the ways in which Aboriginal people have had to adapt in what he, like Langton, calls "settled Australia":

⁴For this reason, and others which will be discussed below, the notion of a "national" Aboriginal newspaper like the *Koori Mail* becomes particularly interesting and directly relevant to the most recent changes which are occurring in Aboriginal culture and society today.

Since the 1970s Aborigines have become incorporated into sectors of the Australian economy and administrative structures to an unprecedented degree, especially in the welfare sector. People in these occupations have to possess or learn many of the basic requirements of being a public servant, yet they must identify as different. At the same time Aboriginal people of settled Australia are seeking bases of identity in various ways. Economic and political changes have begun a process of constructing a continent-wide Aboriginal consciousness (1988, p.21).

The development of this consciousness has been accelerated by recent events, notably the Mabo land rights decision and its aftermath, which was a clear indication to Aboriginal people of many backgrounds and places on the "continuum" of Aboriginal experience that there was some value in working in a united way for fairness and justice. The decision taken in August 1993 at Eva Valley, NT to form a national group of spokespersons and Elders to negotiate with governments on Mabo-related matters (Nason 1993, p. 18) was a further step along the path described by Shoemaker, Keen and others.

It is in this historical, cultural and social context, then, that the development and importance for the future of an Aboriginal media may be better understood. The Law Reform Commission points out that "non-Aboriginal Australians have consistently tended to understate the continuity and flexibility of Aboriginal traditions and patterns of living, including their capacity to adapt to changing circumstances". One of the important means and results of that adaptation has been the rapid incorporation into the lives of many Aboriginal people of modern media forms and techniques.

CHAPTER 2
ABORIGINAL COMMUNICATION AND BROADCAST MEDIA

The primary focus of this thesis is the *Koori Mail* newspaper in Lismore, NSW and the place of that newspaper in the context of Aboriginal print journalism in general. But the significance of the *Koori Mail* project can only be properly understood after an examination of the development of the Aboriginal media and some related issues. One major issue in such an examination is why an Aboriginal media structure has developed in Australia at all: i.e., to what has this been a response? Another issue is the current function of the contemporary Aboriginal media. What are some of the aims of those media? What communities -- geographic and sociological -- do they serve? And what are the benefits and dangers to Aboriginal communities and cultures of the introduction of modern media technology?

Another important issue -- indeed a crucial issue in terms of the specific aims of this thesis -- is why, apparently, Aboriginal people who adopt contemporary media techniques generally embrace broadcast media more energetically and easily than print? This raises complex related issues of language use and literacy in Aboriginal communities, the implications of the "orality" of traditional Aboriginal culture, and the process and potential dangers of a transition from an oral culture to one which uses the printed word. Only with such questions properly addressed can a discussion begin (in Chapter 3) of the use in general of the print medium by Aboriginal people and the historical development of Aboriginal newspapers and periodicals, followed by (in Chapters 4-6) an examination of the specific history, characteristics and significance of the *Koori Mail*.

On the question of why an Aboriginal media has developed, two major matters must be noted. One is the long-term effects on Aboriginal people and their traditional communication patterns of the invasion of the continent by Whites and the subsequent upheaval of Aboriginal life. The second is the well-documented failure of the contemporary media of the dominant White culture to adequately or accurately reflect Aboriginal culture and society.

Reference has already been made in the preceding chapter to the concept of traditional, pre-invasion Aboriginal society being, as Michaels puts it, "abuzz" with sacred and non-sacred information; information which Aboriginal people moved quickly and efficiently, when required, along so-called "dreaming tracks" or "songlines" which crisscrossed the continent. Michaels (1986) has argued, and a number of Aboriginal people have either tacitly or explicitly agreed with this analysis (Arley 1993, personal communication) that one far-reaching effect of the

invasion was the fundamental damage it inflicted on traditional communication patterns and practices. According to Michaels, modern media technology can be, and is being, used by Aboriginal people to repair this damage:

European invasion, depopulation, resettlement and removal of Aboriginal people destroyed whole segments of the traditional information network. Some areas still function, however, especially through the Centre, the Top End and the northwest. Anthropologists have noted the transmission of cults [sic] along these networks even today, and noted the place of communications technology (Toyotas, radios) in restoring and facilitating traditional information exchanges and ceremonies (1986. p.5).

Elsewhere, Michaels notes:

The great interest in radio, telephone and other electronic communication systems in present-day Aboriginal Australia is, then, explained as culturally continuous, not a novelty. The isolation of remote communities may be a post-contact effect, one which can be offset by new communication technologies, appropriately designed... (1985, p. 509).

As for the possible content of the cultural information which may get transmitted via any "repaired" songlines, R.M. Berndt and E.S. Phillips have made an intriguing suggestion from their perspective as anthropologists. They suggest that traditional "myths" about the meaning of life and the individual's place in it will inevitably be changed by contact with alien culture. But they argue that traditionally-oriented Aborigines, whose cultures have been severely disrupted, now "are moving away from a passive acceptance of their role in the nation's affairs to a more realistic appraisal of it":

The myths in these new circumstances are likely to consist, much more obtrusively, of charters and guides validating this changed approach, even while they make use of traditional Aboriginal features to suit their purpose. They will, almost certainly, be myths of protest (no date, p.90).

Perhaps one function of the developing Aboriginal media songlines can be seen as the transmission of such new, "modern" myths via new media technology in a process which may give renewed, rejuvenated meaning to Aboriginal experience in Australia.

Here, then, is one possible driving force behind the development by Aboriginal people of modern media systems for their own needs: re-establishing communication systems disrupted by the history of White settlement and by government policy which ignored traditional Aboriginal communications and cultural requirements.

Another important force in the development of Aboriginal media has been the well-documented failure of the mainstream Australian media to adequately tell the Aboriginal story, either to members of the dominant culture or to Aboriginal people themselves. There has been so much written recently about the narrow, incomplete, stereotyped and racist media coverage of Aboriginal people and so many conferences staged on the subject that there is an embarrassment of riches when one goes to choose references to the problem. One disturbing and quite comprehensive appraisal of the way Aboriginal people are portrayed in the mainstream media appeared in the final report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody:

On the one hand, Aboriginal interests are often ignored [in the media], and hence become invisible to the broader community.... A second, and perhaps more widespread, approach to Aboriginal issues in the media is the construction of Aboriginal people in the media as a 'problem'. The most common issues dealt with are, on the one hand, matters of welfare such as health, education, housing and employment. On the other hand are law and order issues ... the representation of Aboriginal people as a dissident, disruptive or criminal element.

[As a result] Aboriginal people had, and continue to have, an extremely negative view of the functioning of the media as a whole (in Eggerking & Plater 1992, p. 21).

While Royal Commissioner Elliott Johnston acknowledged that there had been some improvements in recent years in the coverage of the Aboriginal story by White media organisations, he accepted the contention by Aboriginal people that they were often still treated inadequately and unfairly by the mainstream media, and

that racist and stereotyped reporting of Aboriginal people could be seen as a factor contributing to violence against, and other mistreatment of, Aborigines. He noted, however, the growing number of Aboriginal media organisations, and their success in redressing some of the failings of the White media.

That theme was taken up by Lois O'Donoghue, Chairperson of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, at the 1993 Media and Indigenous Australians Conference:

Aboriginal people have become more politically aware and politically astute and will no longer accept the media setting the agenda on Aboriginal issues We should not underestimate the role that Aboriginal media organisations have played in bringing about a change in attitudes of the media in reporting indigenous issues and in bringing about a better understanding of Aboriginality by the wider community. There has been a tremendous increase during the last decade in the number of indigenous broadcasting groups establishing themselves in urban, rural and remote areas of Australia. They have done a marvellous job against enormous odds informing their communities about important issues and the directions they are taking and also promoting indigenous languages and culture. The indigenous media network is expanding and taking an ever increasing important role in contemporary Aboriginal society (conference proceedings 1993, pp. 4-5).

Various observers have noted the growing appetite among Aboriginal people for news about themselves and their communities to be reported and mediated by members of their own community (Michaels 1986; Meadows 1993, 1994; Law Reform Commission 1983; Goddard 1990; Muecke 1992). Michaels for example, notes the eagerness with which Aboriginal communities will view and pass along "newstapes" (audio or video taped news digests) about issues related to their lives and about decisions affecting their lives, decisions often made in Canberra or other distant cities:

...[The] great distances between communities in Aboriginal Australia means that people are often having decisions made for them in distant places by others; their lives are affected constantly by endless rounds of meetings which only a few representatives can attend. The taping of meetings enables the whole community to become involved in the decision-making process and makes their representatives accountable (1986 p. 72).

But while the process of satisfying Aboriginal communications needs through modern media technology appears to be gaining momentum, it is by no means a very recent phenomenon. As Macumba and Batty, representing the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association, argued more than 14 years ago:

Aboriginal society ... needs to be able to incorporate the media as such into the fabric of their total society, and it is an absolute prerequisite that Aboriginal people do this entirely on their own terms. It is quite possible that the uses to which Aboriginals put the media, and the content and form of the media in Aboriginal society, would be very different from that of White European society (1980, p.9).

Langton has noted in this context that such differences and different uses will be accentuated by the wide differences between Aboriginal communities themselves. Urban Aborigines would have different communications needs and modes than would traditionally-oriented Aborigines living in remote areas:

In a very general sense, the film and video productions by Aboriginal people in these two regions [remote and settled Australia] are quite different. They are grounded in different cultural bases, histories and socio-political conditions....

[Remote] Aboriginal people have their own production values, aesthetics and concerns (1993, pp. 12 & 14).

Before any attempt is made to survey the current forms of the rapidly changing Aboriginal media landscape, it is necessary to make one preliminary point. In spite of the fact that the primary focus of this thesis is on a contemporary example of Aboriginal print journalism, the *Koori Mail*, and despite my interest in the Aboriginal print media in general, it must be acknowledged that most of the early media activity in Aboriginal communities was, and much of the significant current activity is still, in broadcasting. The cultural and other reasons for this apparent preference for broadcast tools of communication will be addressed below, but it is important that this issue be noted here. Accordingly, the following sections will leave aside for the moment a consideration of print; first surveying the development of Aboriginal broadcasting, and then addressing the issue of why print, at least at first glance, may appear less suited to Aboriginal media needs and may pose special

problems for certain communities. Only after those matters have been dealt with, can an examination of contemporary Aboriginal communication in print appropriately begin, in Chapter 3.

Dot West, Chairperson of the National Indigenous Media Association of Australia, noted in her 1993 Boyer Lecture on ABC Radio that for Aboriginal people, as for non-indigenous Australians, radio was a part of the cultural landscape from the early decades of this century. However, West points out that initially and in general it was not radio designed with Aboriginal listeners in mind. Only in 1976, according to West, well after the first radio station began broadcasting in Sydney in 1923, did "Melbourne's station 3CR broadcast the country's first Aboriginal radio program". West continues:

Though it took 53 years for our own voice to be heard in our own programs ... there are now more than 100 licensed community radio stations, 30 of which have some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs. We have more than 500 hours a week of indigenous radio produced by indigenous people (1994, p. 21).

Wilmott (1984, p.21) points out that generally in the past Aboriginal programs on community radio were broadcast in major urban areas as a supplement to normal radio and television programs broadcast to the general community:

As well as providing Aborigines with access to air time, these programs ... sought to reinforce Aboriginal identity within the general community. These programs ... provided not only a voice for Aborigines but also a resource for the further development of Aboriginal broadcasting.

Meadows and Rielander (1991, p. 87) agree that "public radio has proved to be particularly accessible for Aboriginal media associations in regional and urban Australia". But they also note that most Aboriginal staff at such stations "are volunteers and funding, through ATSIC or through the Public Broadcasting Foundation's Aboriginal Grants Advisory Committee, is uncertain".

Television, on the other hand, and in the words of Dot West, "presents a different story". West notes that "less than one percent of Australia's television

programs are produced by indigenous people". Still, she and other observers acknowledge that Aboriginal TV broadcasting and production has made significant strides in recent years and is expanding. But that expansion is a quite recent phenomenon. Writing just a decade ago, Wilmott (1984, p. 22) noted that "there is currently no production of Aboriginal television programs by Aboriginals except for the limited activities of CAAMA [the Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association] to date, and television broadcasters have paid little attention to Aboriginals in their programming".

That situation has changed substantially since 1984, and in particular after the launch in 1985 of the Aussat satellite, which, among other things, was to provide extended broadcast and communications services to Aboriginal people. Partly as a result of concerns about the effect on traditional Aboriginal culture and languages of TV (and additional radio) signals being received in remote communities, the Federal Government instituted the controversial Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme. BRACS, as Molnar (1990), Meadows (1993, 1994) and others have reported, was to provide more than 80 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities with the means to interrupt incoming TV and radio signals, alter and rebroadcast them, or to produce and then broadcast to local audiences their own material when and if they wanted to do so. As Meadows points out, however, the "hastily-prepared" BRACS program has been plagued with difficulties since it began:

In an overall sense, BRACS has been little more than an experiment since it began in the late 1980s. Problems like lack of community consultation and inadequate funding have haunted the program since its inception, with some suggesting it has been set up so that it will fail despite the empowering possibilities. A continuing lack of appropriate funding, and ineffective training and support services help to explain the varied indigenous community responses to the potentially innovative program throughout Australia (1993 p. 14).

Still, Molnar has noted some success with the program, and its potential for the future:

Despite the shortcomings of BRACS it appears that many Aborigines are enthusiastic about the scheme.... But there are varying levels of commitment.... Communities that have

established media associations are producing the most successful BRACS programs because they know what they can do with the equipment, and have the experience to put this into practice. These communities are using BRACS to provide local radio and/or television news services and community information and are videotaping community events such as sport, council meetings, ceremonies and interviews with visitors to the community (1990, p. 153).

In general, there is more Aboriginal television production now than ever before. One major source of that production which must be included in any survey of Aboriginal broadcast production is the Aboriginal-owned commercial service in Alice Springs, IMPARJA Television, a subsidiary of CAAMA. This is one of three of the government-subsidised Remote Commercial Television Services (RCTS) stations. Only two of these three engage in any Aboriginal program production, and only IMPARJA is Aboriginal-owned (Meadows 1993, p.11; Molnar 1990, p. 148). IMPARJA and CAAMA are at the forefront of that effort, producing Aboriginal TV, video, radio, and music cassette materials. But, as Molnar notes:

IMPARJA is caught between having to service a European audience and advertisers and a commitment to its Aboriginal audience.... But the cost of running a commercial station with a small viewing audience, combined with satellite costs, has made it very difficult for IMPARJA to produce Aboriginal programming... (1990, p. 148).

In addition to IMPARJA/CAAMA, other Aboriginal organisations in the country -- such as The Western Australia Aboriginal Media Association (WAAMA), the Top End Aboriginal Bush Broadcasting Association (TEABBA) the Townsville and Islander Media Association (TAIMA) and the Torres Strait Islander Media Association (TSIMA) -- are producing video programs (and radio) for broadcast in remote areas (Molnar 1990 p. 148).

Despite the problems, the interest among Aboriginal people in creating indigenous broadcast media outlets and indigenous programming has remained high. West notes that the future may hold exciting new developments with, for example, ATSIC planning to invest several million dollars into the system in a three-year program which began in 1993. West suggests that the next logical step would be a national indigenous media network:

[Such a network] should have the capacity not only to be televised from a capital city, but also to be broadcast nationally from a region such as the Kimberley. We need to provide local services like the remote scheme [BRACS] and enable communities to televise their own local programs. That local service would be crucial in recognising our cultural diversity and the language differences within Australia's indigenous nation (1994, p. 28).

West's warning that Aboriginal broadcasting must be sensitive to issues of local culture, local concerns and local languages is a recent expression of longstanding fears among some Aboriginal people that the widespread adoption of broadcast technology, especially if the content and presentation of programming is not under community control, may have very negative effects on cultural and language maintenance. That is, not all observers agree that the use by Aboriginal communities of modern communications technology is uniformly positive in its effect, despite the obvious shortcomings of coverage of Aboriginal concerns by the mainstream media and despite the need to repair or reinstate damaged traditional communications patterns and practices.

Eve Fesl has gone so far as to label satellite television as a "cultural nerve gas" (cited in Meadows 1993, p. 12) unless broadcasts are in community languages and help to preserve local traditions and social relationships. Christie agrees:

[Modern media techniques] can be very destructive of Aboriginal identity when these things are controlled by the imagination of White educators and media makers.... Aboriginal knowledge cannot be cast in the framework of White media, because it refuses to be split off as a straight logical line from the complex fabric of Aboriginal meaning-making (1989, pp. 27-28).

Much of Eric Michaels' work was an examination of these issues and of ways that local video production, for example, could help counter the worst of the effects of open access to non-Aboriginal culture in the English language through satellite TV. One danger that he and others have repeatedly pointed to is the possible subversion by uncontrolled TV and radio access in traditionally-oriented communities of lines of authority, the spiritual power of Elders, and control over secret and sacred information:

Mass media are logically and practically the inverse of the personal Aboriginal information system. Broadcast television and radio make information equally accessible to audiences everywhere, instantaneously, and at no apparent cost....

Where Aboriginal information is broadcast, especially when it is broadcast in English, a truly subversive and potentially "culturecidal" situation is created. Here the authority for "Blackfella business" is wrenched from the appropriate local Elders and the information made freely available to the young. This may occur whenever Aboriginal cultural material is used for national broadcast (1986, p. 5).

Among the potential dangers cited by Michaels and others are public display of secret knowledge, appearance of images of dead relatives, program presenters who may be seen as speaking for "country" and on issues over which they have no traditional rights, and so on.

On the dangers of broadcast technology and programming to surviving Aboriginal languages much has also been written and many warnings sounded. Pre-invasion Australia had approximately 250 Aboriginal languages and dialects, many spoken by quite small tribal groups in particular parts of the continent only. Today, perhaps two thirds of those are extinct, and many of the others are spoken by only a handful of people (Schmidt 1990). Part of the problem historically was assimilationist/ integrationist policies which required Aborigines to attend schools where English was the only language of instruction. But that problem was compounded, and is becoming critical, as a result of access to an array of English-language broadcast materials, via radio signals, satellite or on video tape. "It is extremely important, therefore," Fesl writes (1984, p. 34) "that a community has access to television and radio programs in order to broadcast in the language of the community."

That the developing Aboriginal broadcast media and the widening access by previously "remote" Aboriginal communities to non-indigenous English-language programming pose a potential threat to traditional culture and traditional social relations is in no doubt. The issue of whether that threat is potential or actual can be decided, at least in part, on the basis of local control of the production and distribution process (Meadows 1993, 1994, Michaels 1986). It also depends, of course, as Hodge (1990) has indirectly pointed out in a critique of some of Michaels'

ideas, on whether one supposes that the only sort of Aboriginal culture worth preserving or encouraging is some form of "traditional" life from the past which really no longer exists. Such a lifestyle may be of limited consequence for the thousands of Aboriginal people living urban or semi-urban lifestyles and creating, daily, a new Aboriginal culture which combines old and new, "Aboriginal" and non-Aboriginal.

And, indeed, there are those who believe that sensitive and imaginative use of broadcast technology by appropriate people can actually enhance cultural maintenance for indigenous people. This is a theme often seen in Michael Meadows' work. In recent papers (1993, 1994), he describes the development by four Tanami Desert communities of a state-of-the-art videoconferencing and satellite network to improve ceremonial and family links in their remote location and notes:

The development of such a telecommunications network by an indigenous community has profound implications for community broadcasting. The appropriation of media in this way clearly demonstrates the possibility for empowerment inherent in such technology. The technology itself is not a threat -- it is how the technology is used which is at the centre of this debate (1993, pp. 14-15).

Katz has also argued this case strenuously in his often-cited examination of the issue of whether so-called "authentic" cultures can survive introduction of new media. "One idea," Katz suggests (1977, p. 120), "is to make certain that producers have a deeper grounding in their own cultural traditions and not only in the traditions and technology of metropolitan broadcasting." (Katz's theme will be developed further in Chapter 6, in relation to specific questions of the authenticity of Aboriginal print media and how to achieve this.)

From this survey of developments in Aboriginal broadcasting and of the issues raised by increased Aboriginal access to non-indigenous broadcasting techniques and productions the discussion may now turn to the place of the print medium in Aboriginal communities. Where does print fit into the developing and increasingly sophisticated structure of contemporary Aboriginal communications media? This question has received almost no attention by media researchers in Australia or by most Aboriginal leaders and spokespersons in their public statements about the Aboriginal media. It appears that generalisations -- often outdated and unwarranted -- about the "oral tradition" of Aboriginal people cause some people,

Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal alike, to ignore or forget about the important place which printed-word communication, including newspapers and magazines, now occupies among many Aboriginal people and communities.

Some examinations of the Aboriginal media contain no reference to print at all. In others, print is referred to only briefly, or in passing, as if radio and TV were the only media worthy of serious consideration in this context. Lois O'Donoghue, for example, in her speech to the Media and Indigenous Australians Conference in 1993, said:

Broadcasting has enabled Aboriginal people to use modern technology to carry on our oral tradition of securing our heritage through the spoken rather than the written word (conference proceedings, p. 5).

O'Donoghue did not once mention print journalism by Aboriginal people in her address, even though it intended to introduce a major day-long conference on, among other topics, the challenges and problems facing Aboriginal media in Australia.

Molnar has written that "since the 1970s. Aborigines in remote areas have used radio and, to a lesser extent video, *leaping over the print generation*, to begin recording their languages, stories, music and culture" (1990, p.148). Leigh contends that print has been "eclipsed" by other Aboriginal media (in Horton 1994, p. 901), while Heatley has suggested in his survey of Aboriginal media developments in the Northern Territory that "the realm of electronic media has been the pacesetter of change; the print segment ... has progressed much more slowly" (1985, p.57).

Such views of the place of print in Aboriginal media and communication, while accurate from a certain perspective, are misleading when viewed from another vantage. While it is true that traditional Aboriginal culture (certainly in pre-contact Australia, and afterward in some remote areas) was an oral culture with no written language and "printed" materials (in the narrow sense of the term), such a general statement can no longer be made. It has been indicated above that there is a wide range of Aboriginal cultures around the country; from traditionally-oriented Aboriginal communities in remote areas or on outstations, to fringe-dweller communities near town or city centres, to Aboriginal communities and families

inside large cities, most of whose members are literate, relatively comfortable with the English language and with the complete range of contemporary communications and media tools, including print. The suggestion has already been noted, above, that Aboriginal people in Australia today live on a cultural and communications "continuum" and that Aboriginal people have displayed a remarkable ability and willingness to adopt various elements of the dominant White culture for their particular needs.¹

As the Aboriginal playwright Jack Davis has remarked:

I don't believe that culture died ... when Captain Cook landed on the eastern seaboard. I believe that culture is a growing thing, it's a growing entity and what we're talking about today is just as important as the culture of our forefathers, before the White man came here, because that culture is still growing (in Davis & Hodge 1985, p. 17).

Although this appropriation and adaptation of European culture has taken many forms and involved many cultural practices and products -- including printed word materials -- broadcasting apparently was, and is, for many Aboriginal communities and individuals, the preferred channel or medium of contemporary communication. One cannot deny that many Aboriginal people still feel uncomfortable with printed materials and prefer the oral, face-to-face style of communication, despite increased literacy and the availability of printed-word materials in some communities in English and in local languages resulting from

¹The 1991 census showed 257,000 people identifying themselves as Aborigines in Australia, with the biggest populations in NSW and Queensland. (The only published report on detailed census findings for the Aboriginal population nationally was for the 1971 figures. National reports are underway for the Aboriginal data from the 1986 and 1991 censuses. Other sources (Schmidt 1991) indicate that approximately 20 percent of the Aboriginal population have a language other than English as their first language. That figure moves to almost 100 percent in some remote areas. The 1986 census showed 5.4 percent of the Aboriginal population nationally had little or no competency in English at all. Several sources indicate that literacy rates in English for Aboriginal people still lag far behind the general population, although there appears to have been no comprehensive survey of Aboriginal literacy conducted. On the other hand, the largest single concentration of Aboriginal people in Australia is in the Western suburbs of Sydney, where some 20,000 members of the community live and work in English in an urban setting (Gibson 1993). The 1986 Aboriginal census report for the NT showed that 65 percent of "urban Aborigines" did not use an Aboriginal language, compared with only four percent in rural localities, an indication of strong differences in lifestyles and concerns between urban Aborigines and those living in rural settings. The above facts indicate there may be some residue of an "Aboriginalist" conception in the minds of some people regarding how Aborigines in present-day Australia actually live, and what use they are making of certain elements of the dominant culture, or, for that matter, of their own.

bilingual education and publications programs which have been implemented in a number of areas (Marshall-Stoneking 1983; Goddard 1990).

Davis et al, in their anthology of Black Australian writing, observed that:

Many Aboriginal people are suspicious of the written word. They are conscious that the transmission of oral culture involves the maintenance of the means of communication, the specific techniques of storytelling and the contexts (family, ritual) which involve person-to-person contact and the warmth and liveliness that always go into keeping cultures alive. In that sense, putting an oral culture into books [or, one may add, newspapers and periodicals] is like embalming it for posterity (1990 p.1).

Christie goes so far as to make the following somewhat questionable assertion:

In order to preserve their Aboriginal identity from the intrusion of individualistic European teaching methods, Aboriginal children everywhere have been actively resistant to learning to read and write. We could not see how our classroom assumptions and methods pressured these students to somehow compromise their Aboriginality by acting independently as individuals, mentally detaching themselves from the group of their Aboriginal peers who share with them the knowledge system which creates the meaning of their lives (1989, p. 28).

Clearly, for people with such concerns, broadcast media would pose less of a threat, and require less adaptation, than printed-word communication. Goody, whose analysis of the far-reaching consequences of literacy will be examined more fully below, notes:

[In] traditional or non-literate societies radio, cinema and television ... derive much of their effectiveness as agencies of social orientation from the fact that their media do not have the abstract and solitary quality of reading and writing, but on the contrary share something of the nature and impact of the direct personal interaction which obtains in oral culture (1968, p. 63).

The implications of such a view for a discussion of the development of an Aboriginal media are obvious.

What other factors may have contributed to the more easy adaptation by some Aboriginal people to the requirements of broadcasting than to print? One obvious factor is that English literacy rates in some communities lag behind those of the Australian population in general. It has been suggested that, in general, literacy and use of print requires a different set of interests and skills than those which some Aboriginal people either were interested in acquiring or given the opportunity of acquiring. Indeed, as Fesl has pointed out, "Aboriginal society has survived throughout time without the need to resort to literacy" (1984, p. 69). Before assessing the "success" of some Aboriginal people in adapting to literacy, Fesl argues, one must first ask the questions of "literacy for what purpose, and literacy in which language" (p.70).

Other researchers have taken up this theme in the context of Aboriginal media. Wilmott has argued that one must distinguish between "technical literacy", which allows individuals to function reasonably well at a superficial level in an alien language, and "cultural literacy", which allows people to thrive and truly succeed because they are able to read more complex cultural forms and adapt accordingly. "The total useful acquisition of English literacy," according to Wilmott (1981, p.10), "does appear to require a distinct and substantial change in certain forms of human behaviour, if not a change in culture."

Marshall-Stoneking (1983), Muecke (1992) and Michaels (1986), among others, have more recently taken up this theme in their analyses of Aboriginal culture and communication. Indeed, Michaels has suggested that in order to better understand the developments in Aboriginal media, including "the observed rapid adoption of video and TV by traditional people who largely rejected print", one should perhaps apply an "electronic literacy model". It is worthwhile quoting Michaels at length on this concept, which is important to the concerns of this chapter and this thesis in general:

Books [and, one could justifiably add, periodicals] are difficult to learn how to read. It takes a well-developed tradition of literature, and an extensive pedagogical apparatus in the form of churches, schools, libraries, printshops and so forth to produce and reproduce a print reading public. By contrast, TV and video appear easy to learn, certainly to viewers, and now, even perhaps to produce with

the recent availability of inexpensive home video cameras and low-power community transmitters....

[Aboriginal] people's rapidly coming to video literacy is contrasted to books and print not only because of the inherent properties of these media themselves, but because there simply wasn't much interest or intervention from Europeans. Preachers and teachers do not just teach reading and writing. They teach it alongside and as an integral part of a moral order.... Such people are not dragged kicking and screaming to the TV set, as they were, in fact, to Bibles and schoolbooks (1989, pp. 511 & 517).

While one may argue that not all Aboriginal people are "dragged" to the print medium as Michaels suggests, it must be acknowledged that the process of acquiring print (versus electronic) literacy involves some profound cultural adjustments. Of course, electronic "literacy" does as well, but the changes required for people with an oral tradition are, it can be argued, somewhat less fundamental.

Such observations lead to a more general and theoretical consideration of the effects on a culture, and individuals, of the transition from an oral culture to one in which the printed word is paramount. Goody, in particular, documents persuasively the profound changes that occur when "traditional" societies (i.e. non-industrial cultures with oral traditions) move to adopt the printed word. Among them: the threat posed to oral narratives and songs when writing begins to be used for the same purposes; the effects on the role of "memory" when printed words and written records are introduced; the fundamental shift which occurs between a word and its referent -- "a relationship which [becomes] more general and abstract" -- and so on (1968, p. 27).

Another major change, according to Goody, is that societies which adopt writing soon begin to distinguish between members of an elite which can read and write, and those individuals who have not acquired such skills. Wickert has also documented this social stratification effect in the Australian Aboriginal context (1993, p.30). Perhaps most importantly for Goody, however, is the following:

The mere size of the literate repertoire means that the proportion of the whole which any one individual knows must be infinitesimal in comparison with what obtains in oral culture. Literate society, merely by having no system of elimination, no structural amnesia, prevents the individual from participating fully in the total cultural tradition to anything like the extent possible in non-literate society (1968, p. 57).

This was also a concern of McLuhan, who, like Goody, produced a variety of comprehensive analyses of the effects on culture of the move to printed word communication. "Print," McLuhan said (1962, p. 157) , "is the extreme phase of alphabet culture that detribalizes or decollectivizes man in the first instance.... Print is the technology of individualism". The implications of such observations for traditional Australian Aboriginal culture, in which oral modes of communication and collective tribal concerns were paramount, are obvious. McLuhan, Eisenstein (in Olson et al 1985, p. 22) and others have also studied the further profound changes which occur in a society when it moves from the written word produced by hand -- eg by scribes -- to one which uses the printing press; i.e. the "Gutenberg effect". Their findings are a further indication of just how powerful are the forces at work when oral traditions are displaced by other communications technologies.

For Aboriginal people, and other indigenous people elsewhere in the world with a large number of languages and dialects, there is an added danger in the introduction of print. That is the weakening, or even the disappearance of those languages, as English becomes a *lingua franca* spread through books and later through other media products. As well, various observers have noted how much is lost when oral material, especially narratives, in traditional languages, or even in Kriol, is rendered from their "multichannel" form into printed form (Clunies-Ross 1983, p. 22).² And there are the additional quite practical difficulties of standardised spellings of Aboriginal languages, and so on, to consider. Marshall-Stoneking (1983, p.23) has pointed out that, whether in an Aboriginal language or in English, transcription of oral material is not always easy to execute: "Decisions about paragraphing, punctuation and the like have to be made so that the story can be read in a way that does justice to the original". McGregor (1989, p. 48) has also pointed out the difficulties -- practical, social and political/ideological -- involved in deciding which language is best used when stories or other communications are to be rendered in printed form. Should it be in a traditional language, with a somewhat limited use beyond a particular community? Should it instead be in Kriol? Aboriginal English? Australian Standard English?

² Narogin, Michaels and others have suggested that audio and video tapes can be used in conjunction with printed materials to replicate, in some ways, a multichannel mode of communications for Aboriginal people living in "settled Australia". This theme, of using the latest audiovisual and possibly even multimedia technology for Aboriginal communication needs, will be examined further in Chapter 6.

Diana Eades has pointed out that:

Growing numbers of people in "settled" Australia who identify as Aboriginal speak varieties of English as their first language. The fact that such people speak little or none of their traditional Aboriginal languages is often used by non-Aboriginal people as evidence that these people are "not really Aboriginal". Thus the choice of language variety plays an important role in questions of Aboriginal identity, and therefore in issues of needs and rights in such areas as politics, land rights and education (cited in Keen 1988, pp. 97-98).

Narogin (1990) has also argued this point strongly in relation to the question of the discourse selected by Aboriginal writers and editors, an issue which will be taken up more fully in Chapter 3.

The complexity and implications of the process of moving from an oral tradition to a new one which uses printed-word communication would be enough in themselves to account for the relatively slow (or, as has been argued by some, the reluctant) adoption of print for contemporary communications by Aboriginal people. But there are some other factors to consider, specific to the Australian social and media context. One issue is the role of government involvement and subsidies in facilitating the use of broadcast technologies by Aboriginal communities. Broadcasting is much more highly regulated than print communications. Australian politicians and bureaucrats have involved themselves deeply, or have attempted to do so, in the development of Aboriginal broadcasting, ostensibly for altruistic reasons but arguably also to control what is happening on the airwaves of remote Australia.

One consequence of that government involvement, no matter what the motivation, has been substantial subsidies being granted to Aboriginal communities for access to broadcasts or to produce and/or distribute programs. Millions of dollars have been spent in this way in Australia. According to Wilmott:

One of the most important factors influencing the development of Aboriginal broadcasting and its supporting resources is funding. Such funding as has been available for Aboriginal broadcasting has come from a variety of sources (1984, p. 95-96).

These include, Wilmott notes (1984), grants from government directly, from the Aboriginal Arts Board, from SBS program subsidies, and from purchases of programs by the ABC. He argues that the *ad hoc* nature of such funding has made it difficult for Aboriginal broadcasting to have a coherent general direction. Meadows (1993) has estimated the 1992-93 budget for community broadcast production at \$6.4 million. West has pointed out that substantial amounts -- \$1.25 million in 1993 alone -- are to be spent by ATSIC on such Aboriginal broadcasting activity in a three year program to 1995. The effects of such subsidies extends to training: while some have argued that broadcast training related to BRACS, for example, is inadequate, it has at the very least helped some Aboriginal people to acquire the skills required for broadcasting.³

In view of the discussion above of the solid reasons for the apparent general preference for broadcast over print among many Aboriginal people, and in view of the clear dangers and effects of a transition from an oral culture to one relying on the printed word, it might be surprising to find any Aboriginal newspapers and periodicals at all in the developing Aboriginal media structure. However, there is very definitely this sort of production, and, as this thesis will show in the next chapter, it has been going on in Australia for much longer than most analysts of the Aboriginal media may have imagined. In general terms, there can be no doubt that there is an appetite for increased literacy, print communication and print journalism among Aboriginal people.

Walton (1993), and Marshall-Stoneking (1983), for example, have noted that many Aboriginal people accepted the usefulness of English language literacy skills after realising that, as Walton puts it (p. 43), they are "needed for negotiating with non-Aboriginal Australia.... A group without access to literacy in our society is relatively powerless, unless trusted 'brokers' exist to act on their behalf". According to Marshall-Stoneking, reporting on the rise of bilingual literacy programs:

³ It should be noted here that there has been no similar government interest in directly subsidising Aboriginal newspaper or magazine production (O'Dwyer 1993, personal communication; Arley 1993, personal communication) although, indirectly, production of Aboriginal printed materials has been fostered through community literacy programs and the related literacy materials production projects, as well as through Australia Council support for Aboriginal writing, etc. There have been no similar government-subsidised efforts to train Aboriginal people at the community level in the techniques of print journalism. The *Koori Mail* consistently runs into difficulty when it tries to find Aboriginal cadets for its operation in Lismore, and the newspaper's owners argue that the scarcity of Aboriginal journalists with the required level of skills in print is a major factor in their still employing a White Editor as of late 1994.

Aboriginal parents, realising the importance of having to communicate and interact with 'Whitefellas', while at the same time wanting their children to grow stronger in their sense of themselves as Aboriginal people, living under Aboriginal law and custom, have been highly supportive of the teaching of literacy and numeracy (1983, p. 50).

On the growing appeal of writing and print journalism for Aboriginal people, there is a long list of Aboriginal publications (Langton & Brownlee 1979) produced now and over the past decades which attests to that. This appetite for print journalism can be found in various Aboriginal communities, remote and urban, around the country, even quite isolated and traditionally-oriented communities and even those reasonably well-served by broadcast media. Goddard, for example, has recorded the eagerness with which members of a Pitjantjatjara community in Central Australia used a small monthly bilingual newsletter, the *Amataku Tjukurpa*, produced as part of a literacy materials program (1990). He quotes a member of the literacy project, Jill Steel, on how people reacted to the paper:

I don't think [Steel wrote] that over the 21 months of its production the air of excitement ever declined when the newspaper was distributed. Everyone would be singing out to get one, waving, stopping what they were doing ... and poking their heads into the newspaper. The folks who couldn't read would take a paper and 'read' the photos and drawings. People would sit down in groups and read to each other (c. 1989, p. 32-33).⁴

Heatley has observed (1985, p. 55) in another part of Australia a "burgeoning" of print media efforts among Aborigines since the 1970s (while

⁴Goddard's study of use of the print medium, and the emerging genres of reportage, by the Pitjantjatjara is extremely important for the purposes of this thesis, and will be examined and evaluated in much more detail in Chapter 6 in which, among other things, some possible future scenarios for Aboriginal periodical production in Australia are proposed and discussed. Gale's work on the development of writing in Aboriginal languages, and the role played by newsletters in that development, will also be an important element of Chapter 3. Goddard's study also raises important issues of the "authenticity" (or its opposite) of Aboriginal publications; of bilingualism in Aboriginal newspapers; of handwritten as opposed to printed pages; of replicating certain features of oral communication on a page of newspaper copy; of "message-based" printed-word communication, etc. It should also be noted here that the quotation from Steel above indicates that Aboriginal people not able to read were still able to enjoy the newspaper, either by simply "browsing" or by having it read to them. It will be shown later in this thesis that this is exactly how the *Koori Mail*, which is distributed nationally, is used in some remote communities where literacy is not universal. Goody and others have argued that print and oral communication can quite often complement each other in this way in traditionally-oriented societies.

acknowledging, as has been noted above, that broadcast was the "pacesetter"). Snow and Noble have produced a rare study of the preferred media and the preferred source of news among a sample of urban Aborigines which found that respondents actually picked newspapers over television as the preferred source of media news about other Aboriginal issues in their locality. For news about Aboriginal matters from other parts of Australia, newspapers eclipsed television and even information from other Aboriginal people. Snow and Noble also found that 95 per cent of those Aboriginal people surveyed (in a large country town in the northern tablelands of NSW) read newspapers (1986, p. 187).⁵

What should be clear from the foregoing, then, is that it would be a serious error to exclude from any serious consideration of the Aboriginal media the role of print and print journalism. As Marcia Langton has pointed out in the introduction to her listing of Aboriginal publications:

My own experience working on various Aboriginal newsletters and newspapers has made me understand the importance of simply having the resources and skills for self-expression in an often hostile White environment, which, because it has the power and resources, has historically defined us.... As bilingual education and literacy are brought to more communities, especially remote ones, we can look forward to exciting and diverse expressions (in Langton & Brownlee 1979, p. 121).

The following chapter will survey some of the very exciting and diverse expressions of Aboriginal experience which have been produced to date in the medium of print.

⁵ The study found that of the Aboriginal people who read newspapers the highest percentage read the sports sections, with only 8 percent saying they read the news. However, about half the sample felt that newspapers generally printed too little news about Aborigines, and about a third said that news about Aborigines was not presented from an Aboriginal perspective. These findings are particularly interesting when one attempts to explain the growing popularity of the nationally-distributed *Koori Mail*, with its declared intention to report thoroughly on Aboriginal issues from an Aboriginal perspective.

CHAPTER 3
ABORIGINAL COMMUNICATION AND PRINT

Despite all of the difficulties and dangers involved in the transition from an oral to a written culture, and despite the very heavy bias in government subsidies and other support for Aboriginal broadcasting over printed word communication (O'Dwyer 1993, personal communication; Meadows 1993), there is a significant history of Aboriginal writing in English. Until recently it has primarily been in the realm of what White culture calls "creative" writing (ie. poetry, short stories, novels, plays).

Indeed, there has been a burgeoning of Aboriginal writing -- primarily in creative writing, and to a lesser extent (until recently) in print journalism -- since approximately the mid 1960s, for reasons which will be outlined below. One sign of the increasing vitality of Aboriginal writing was the staging in 1983 of the first National Conference of Aboriginal Writers, held at Murdoch University in Perth, WA. Forty Aboriginal delegates attended the week-long discussion and a national organisation of Aboriginal writers was founded as a result. "Among the outcomes ... [was] a new sense of cohesiveness, purpose and direction among Aboriginal writers," according to Davis and Hodge (1985, p.1). "Only a decade ago [ie 1973], 'Aboriginal writing' hardly existed as a significant element in Australian literary and cultural life."

A more recent indication of the increasing maturity of Aboriginal writing, again as an artistic as opposed to a journalistic medium, is the 1993 NSW Literary Awards, at which five of the eight awards were won by Aboriginal people or by works which addressed Aboriginal themes (Collins 1993). In her address to the awards gathering the Aboriginal writer Faith Bandler pointed out that most of the early Aboriginal writers did their work "against the odds", producing work under difficult personal and social conditions and despite the traditional lack of experience of Aboriginal people in using the written word. "Perhaps viewing the discrepancies between themselves and those who controlled them stirred them to write on," Bandler suggested (1993, p. 3, p. 40). "The transgressions against them have been portrayed in their writings."

Bandler raises what will be a key issue in the discussion of the development of Aboriginal writing (and print journalism) which follows: the very clear link which exists between such writing and social and political activism. This link has been documented by a number of researchers and attested to by Aboriginal writers themselves. As the Aboriginal writer and activist Kevin Gilbert pointed out more than a decade ago:

An onus is on Aboriginal writers to present the evidence of our true situation. In attempting to present the evidence, we are furiously attacked by White Australians and White converts, whatever their colour, as "going back two hundred years ... the past is finished". Yet cut off a man's leg, kill his mother, rape his land, psychologically attack and keep him in a powerless position each day -- does it not live on in the mind of the victim? Does it not continue to scar and affect the thinking? (in Davis & Hodge 1985, p.41).

Shoemaker, too, notes the very close relationship which has developed between Black political activism in Australia and writing. On the subject of Aboriginal "writing" in general (but generally excluding, as almost all discussions of Aboriginal media and/or Aboriginal writing have done, the issue of Aboriginal journalism in newspapers and magazines) perhaps the most comprehensive reference is Shoemaker's 1989 book-length study *Black Words, White Page*. In it, he observes that many of Aboriginal Australia's most important spokespersons and contemporary leaders have been writers:

As Black Australians have made political and social advances over the past twenty-five years in Australia, they have embarked far more frequently upon projects of creative writing in English.... In 1961, no Black Australian had published any works of creative writing for approximately 30 years. By 1988 ... twelve plays... eighteen collections of poetry (and many more individual poems) and seven novels - all written by Black Australians had appeared.... I contend that a fundamental relationship exists between the sociopolitical milieu and Aboriginal creative writing in English.... Amongst the Black Australian community, public spokespersons far more frequently are writers, or are influenced by them (p.3-4).

This phenomenon, what may be called the "social action" component of Aboriginal writing, also has important implications for an examination and understanding of Aboriginal print journalism in Australia, but, as noted above, researchers have all but ignored this area. That Aboriginal artistic production generally has a base in "social" or "community" action is something that has been noted in examinations of traditional Aboriginal society as well, and alluded to in Chapter 1 of this thesis. As Berndt and Phillips point out:

[Traditional oral literature] was not an aesthetic frill, or something removed from the practical working out of daily events. It was not simply a commentary on events and trends, or a reflection of social values and 'actualities', although it was, in fact both of these too. It was directly involved in shaping and influencing the behaviour of people, starting with children and continuing right through to old age.... [It] represented a program for action not only in regard to religious rites but also in regard to social relationships, and relationships between human beings and other living things (no date, pp. 73-74).

There is a strong element of this apparent in contemporary Aboriginal literary output, and, as will be argued later, in some examples of Aboriginal print journalism. As Michaels (1986) has observed, new communications practices are never introduced into a cultural vacuum.

The brief survey of Aboriginal writing which follows will begin with "creative" writing or "literary" output, and then move on to a consideration of print journalism. Indeed, it is the names of significant Aboriginal novels, autobiographies, plays, poems -- not Aboriginal magazines and newspapers -- which over the years have started to be more and more familiar to Aboriginal people and to White Australia. And any discussion of Aboriginal writing, again as opposed to Aboriginal print journalism *per se*, must begin with the name David Unaipon.

Many White Australians know the name of this man, who is considered the first published Aboriginal writer (Shoemaker 1989; Beston 1979). Unaipon, born in 1872 on the Point McLeay Mission in South Australia, was a brilliant mission-educated Aboriginal person who became a musician, an inventor, and, eventually, a writer. As Beston (1979, p. 42) notes, Unaipon "came from a people with a purely oral literature, and wrote in a vacuum, with nothing to instil confidence in him". Shoemaker argues that the inter-denominational mission group, the Aborigines Friends Association (AFA), became "the most important formative influence on his life and career: it made possible his education, it provided him with employment, it sponsored his travels and speaking engagements, and it financed most of his publications".¹

¹ It has been noted by various researchers (eg, Narogin 1990, p. 9) that while many missionaries did not accept Aboriginal culture and saw it as something to be eradicated through Christianity, mission teachers did play an important role in teaching reading and writing skills to Aboriginal people. Mainly this was in English, but, again as noted by Narogin, some missionaries even saw the value in using local Aboriginal languages, and played a role in developing written forms of such languages. It will be indicated later in this chapter how various mission magazines also helped develop an appetite for printed word communication and print journalism among Aboriginal people in some communities.

Unaipon's retellings and reworkings of Aboriginal stories, which were the main body of his output as a writer, appeared first in periodicals and pamphlets, but his main work was *Native Legends*, thought to be first published in 1929. That book, "more properly termed a booklet" (Shoemaker 1989, p. 42), was, according to Beston, cheaply produced and "not designed for a wide audience" coming as it did "before the public interest in Aboriginal writing that developed after ... 1964" (1979, p.336).

Shoemaker and Beston differ sharply on the extent of Unaipon's literary output and on its significance and authenticity. There is no doubt, however, that Unaipon's treatment of native legends and his writing style were heavily influenced by his contact with Christianity and Christian missionaries, and were directed at a White readership (Shoemaker 1989, p.46). Indeed, Shoemaker argues that "evidence seems to indicate that [Unaipon] was so fully indoctrinated by the AFA that an Aboriginal world view was permitted only so long as it did not conflict with Christian religious tenets" (p.44).

Still, the important place of Unaipon in the history of Aboriginal writing is clear. According to Shoemaker:

[Unaipon's] story-telling is uneven, inconsistent, and is frequently fraught with tension between the Aboriginal and White Christian worlds. One receives the impression that Unaipon did not have a very great knowledge of traditional Aboriginal matters and this might partly explain why his legendary stories often take such a sanitised European form....

His literary shortcomings presage some of the successes and destructive consequences of assimilation. [But] at a time then full-blooded Aborigines were commonly believed to be dying out, Unaipon's work exemplified an inventiveness, a vigour and a vibrancy which paralleled those qualities in his personal life (1989, pp. 49-50).

Simon During (1993) has argued that it was William Ferguson, an Aboriginal activist and a leading figure in the 1930s Aborigines Progressive Association, who in writing the "Nanya" story was the first Aboriginal person to produce "Koori literary prose in print that is not a transcription of a traditional narrative"; ie, not the sort of

writing which Unaipon had been doing in approximately that period (1993, p.1).² "Nanya" was instead what During describes as "borderline fiction". It is based on an actual event, During states, but is transformed into "quasi-fiction by grafting White onto traditional Barkindji [tribal] concepts". The story is about a young Aboriginal couple who break a tribal taboo in the 1800s, but are not punished according to customary law because tribal Elders encounter White men in their pursuit of them, and give up the chase. The couple are punished by having deformed children, and eventually by the family being captured by Whites and brought into "civilisation", where their descendants forget the old Aboriginal ways.

"Nanya", says During, "is directed toward a readership for whom Dreaming narratives are no longer true: they have become fictionalised It fits into narrative practices associated with contemporary cultural globalisation" and, as such, must be seen as a significant event in the development of Aboriginal writing in Australia (1993, pp. 8-9).

While Unaipon and Ferguson wrote far earlier than perhaps any other Aboriginal writers, it was, Shoemaker argues, only in 1964 that a "new phase in cultural communication began in Australia" with the publication of Oodgeroo Noonuccal's (Katherine Walker's) first collection of poetry, *We Are Going*:

Not the content, but the very fact of Noonuccal's *We Are Going* was important as, effectively for the first time, one of the best qualified to do so was commenting creatively upon her own race, its aspirations and fears.... Noonuccal's book ushered in an era of self-reflexive literary self examination by Black Australians (1989, p.181).

Noonuccal, like so many Aboriginal writers, was an activist who fought for justice for Aboriginal people on a number of fronts. She was Queensland State Secretary of the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (FCAATSI) in the 1960s, and, as Shoemaker notes, "it is hardly coincidental that the first volume of poetry ... was published in 1964 at the height of her political involvement" (1989, p. 181). Her poems did not just express her political views in an different way: they were, various commentators agree,

² Ferguson's name will come up again later in this chapter in connection with the production of one of the earliest examples of an Aboriginal newspaper, *Abo Call*, six issues of which were produced in 1938.

expression of the cultural pride of Aboriginal people which was encouraged by the political struggle of the time. Initial reaction to the quality of her verse (among White critics) was very harsh (Narogin 1990, p.39): it was dismissed by many as simply "protest verse". Her writing is still considered by some to be "uneven" in quality (Shoemaker 1989, p.183). She has also come under scrutiny by Aboriginal critics for adopting, like some other early Aboriginal writers, "White " forms. Narogin observes that Noonuccal (and other poets like Jack Davis) "to get their message across to the majority community rely on the past sign systems of the majority community which are accepted as being poetic" (1990, p. 36).

What is beyond debate is that she became one of the leading Aboriginal writers and Aboriginal figures of the period between the mid-60s and her death in 1993 (Shoemaker 1989; Bandler 1993; Davis & Hodge 1985). Noonuccal was for a time the most purchased Australian (ie, not just "Aboriginal") poet next to C.J. Dennis and achieved international recognition for her poetry (Shoemaker 1989, p.181). This is partly to do with the fact that poetry was, and is, according to Shoemaker and others, the most popular written form for Aboriginal creative writers and Aboriginal readers, likely due to its affinity with traditional modes of verbal performance/ storytelling. A number of Aboriginal writers have, like Noonuccal, made serious efforts in the poetry genre.

However, from 1964 to the present, Aboriginal people have been producing significant amounts of writing in English (and, to a lesser extent, in written forms of Aboriginal languages or a combination of the two) not just in poetry but in a variety of genres. After Noonuccal's book of poems, for example, the next significant work to be published was Colin Johnson's novel (Johnson later changed his name to Mudrooroo Narogin), *Wild Cat Falling*, the first Aboriginal novel. There is a growing number of prose writers now producing novels, short stories, essays, life stories and autobiographies, as well as playwrights and scriptwriters.³ Many of them are still also political activists and leaders in the Aboriginal community. As the Aboriginal dramatist and filmmaker Gerry Bostock has pointed out, "we know that to do the job that has to be done involves struggle on many fronts, and you can't devote yourself to one area" (in Davis & Hodge 1985, p. 4).

Shoemaker makes a persuasive case that it is not just government subsidies such as those provided by the Aboriginal Arts Board, established by the Federal

³ There are also more Aboriginal people producing journalism, either for White papers, as Muecke notes (in Horton 1994, p. 900), and for their own papers, as will be indicated below.

Government in 1973, which can account for this increasing output. "It would be naive to claim," Shoemaker writes, "that higher budgetary allocations to Aboriginal affairs and improvements in the autonomy of Black Australians completely explain the upsurge in Aboriginal writing. It must be remembered that the first collections of Aboriginal poetry appeared in print without any government subsidy, and even now some of the most talented and influential Black authors publish without the assistance of the Aboriginal Arts Board" (1989, p.4).

Some of the newest Aboriginal writers are attempting to move beyond a replicating of White Australian or European literary forms, to experiment with works in Aboriginal languages, or in Aboriginal English. Narogin suggests that his own *Doin Wildcat, a Novel Koori Script*; Robert Bropho's *Fringedweller* or *The Great Journey of the Aboriginal Teenagers*; and the poems of Lionel Fogarty can be seen as examples of this emerging concern for authenticity of Aboriginal written expression. Narogin writes:

Lionel Fogarty is the forerunner of those Aboriginal poets who seek to establish a discourse of Aboriginality not based on European patterns and, in refusing to be sucked in by those patterns, his verse sometimes approaches the surrealism of African writers such as Césaire or Senghor, though fractured and changed by the blight of Australia. Even Aboriginal writers of the sixties have trouble coming to grips with his verse. It is not the product of assimilation...(1990, p.50).

This observation leads us to the more general problem of what Shoemaker (1989) has called "Black words, White page". It is one which is highly relevant to some general concerns of this thesis; ie. the question of where print journalism fits into the overall scheme of contemporary Aboriginal communication, as well as the significance and authenticity of the *Koori Mail* newspaper inside such a scheme. There are those, of course, who maintain that there is something fundamentally dangerous or inauthentic about Aboriginal people adopting an alien medium such as writing to communicate their experience. Muecke (1992, p. 196) notes that using White writing forms can be a "trap" set by the dominant culture. Others, like Jackie Huggins, point to the danger of White editors acting as "filters" of Aboriginal experience:

I think the first premise we have to start off with is that Aboriginal people have a literary style and cultural and oral modes which are different genres to those of non-Aboriginal people.... The Aboriginal writing style is so different, and whilst having an editor can help the situation, having a White person actually co-author the book with you can act as a filter, in a sense, to how White people will be viewing the book and who will be reading it (1990, p. 142).

This is a theme also explored in depth by Narogin, who points out that a number of Aboriginal writers, including himself and Kevin Gilbert, had the experience early in their writing careers of having work heavily edited by White editors and publishers so that it could be marketable to mainstream White audiences. "If we consider ourselves as existing in an Aboriginal cultural matrix, then we must know that part of our culture lies outside European conventions," Narogin argues (1990, p.170-171). "It is precisely this part, this Aboriginality that is missed by the European editor who ... finds it wrong ... to construct a narrative prose work ... according to an unfamiliar structure."

McGuinness goes so far as to suggest that only if Aboriginal people control the means of literary production can they hope to produce an authentic Aboriginal literature:

We maintain that unless Aboriginal people control the content, the publishing, the ultimate presentation of the [piece of writing] then it is not Aboriginal.... If it's going to be legitimate Aboriginal literature then it must come, flow freely, from the Aboriginal people, from the Aboriginal communities without any restrictions placed upon them (in Davis & Hodge 1985, pp. 44-45).

McGuinness sees as a positive step the development of Aboriginal publishing ventures such as Magabala Books in Broome. Narogin has also supported the development of independent Aboriginal publishing ventures, pointing out that *avant garde* Aboriginal poets such as Lionel Fogarty are only likely to get published in this way.

Still, there are those in the Aboriginal community who argue that Black writing must not be seen as so "fragile" as to be unable to withstand the hands of editors, Black or White. The key issue, according to this view, is whether those doing the editing work are sympathetic to the aims of the writers, and whether they

have sufficient knowledge of and sensitivity to Aboriginal history and culture to do the job properly:

Editing is not an evil in itself, any more than a transformation from oral to written forms is necessarily fatal to the qualities of traditional Aboriginal works But editing does need a deep understanding and respect for the traditional oral form, which most Whites do not have (Davis & Hodge 1985, p. 3).⁴

Of course, most of the foregoing has been concerned with Black writing in English. Indeed, most of the Black writing which has been published by mainstream White organisations and most of what has been labelled "creative writing" has been in English. But, it would be a mistake to assume that there is an insignificant production of writing in Aboriginal languages. There has been a burgeoning in recent years of written materials in Aboriginal languages (Gale, 1993; Gale 1992), and the indications are that this production will increase as Aboriginal people in communities around Australia see the empowering possibilities of producing written material, for educational purposes or in the form of newsletters and other periodicals, in their own languages.

Gale (1993) has identified three phases in the history of writing in Aboriginal languages in Australia. The first was the "Christianising phase, which began in the early part of the last century with the work of missionaries, some of them trained as linguists, who wished to provide Aboriginal people with Biblical materials in local languages. Gale notes that the missionary Lancelot Threlkeld arrived in the Lake Macquarie district of NSW in 1824 to evangelise the Awakbakal people. He, with the help of an Awakbakal man, Biriban, completed the Gospel of Saint Luke in the Awakbakal language as early as 1830. Materials produced in Aboriginal languages in this period "included translation of Scripture, catechisms, prayers, hymns, and other Christian materials as well as student booklets for the classroom and published grammars and word lists" (Gale 1993, p. 3).

In what Gale terms "the educating phase", production of written materials in Aboriginal languages increased with the introduction of bilingual education

⁴ This theme will be taken up later in this thesis in a discussion of the role of editors of Aboriginal newspapers, and of the issue of White editors overseeing Aboriginal newspapers; and via Katz' arguments about the necessity of having "culturally-grounded" producers for authentically indigenous media production.

programs in NT in 1973. "Prior to this," she notes (p.3), "the assimilationist policies of the Federal Government had caused all government and many mission schools in Australia to adopt English as the medium of instruction." This new phase inspired production of primers, readers, transcriptions of oral histories, as well as community newsletters and newspapers, all of which were used in community and classroom to encourage literacy or, as Gale puts it, "getting the children and hopefully the adults, hooked on reading in order that they would succeed ultimately in the classroom". However, many of the people involved in organising such programs were not Aboriginal, and forms often mirrored what could be found in English in mainstream English schools of the era.⁵

Since the late 1980s, when Gale's third phase begins, Aboriginal people have been gaining more control over the running of schools and literature production centres. "As a result, the production of written materials emanating from the printing presses and photocopiers ... now reflect what Aboriginal people themselves see as worthy of reproduction" (p.4). Forms and content vary widely, according to what communities decide they wish to produce, and why. Gale argues that:

[Much] of the emerging Australian "Black literature" of today (including production in Aboriginal languages or diglot vernacular-English productions, and multilingual or bilingual productions) is to a large extent politically motivated, with the choice of an Aboriginal language medium being very much part of that message. By choosing to write in an Aboriginal language, the Aboriginal writer is placed in a position of authority and power when addressing an English-only-speaking audience (1993, p. 8).

This observation is significant for general aims of the present thesis, as many of the smaller newsletters being produced in Aboriginal communities have at least some of the text produced in local languages. I will argue in Chapter 6 that the

⁵ I am indebted to Gale for pointing out to me (personal communication, 1993) that one of the main reasons for the apparent flurry of activity in producing newsletters and small community newspapers -- in Aboriginal languages, or in English and Aboriginal languages -- was a report in 1974 on bilingual education in the NT. The report, by O'Grady and Hale, suggested that Aboriginal communities should be "flooded" with literature and literacy materials, and they specifically recommended newsletters or "news sheets" should be started throughout the Territory. Gale argues that the lead for bilingual education in other states was taken from NT after 1974, and the idea of using newsletters for such purposes was taken up in many other communities outside the Territory. Gale is doing important research into, among other things, the role of such community newsletters in literacy programs and in cultural self-realisation for Aboriginal people, as well as into the more usual function of such newsletters for informing people of remote communities about news and issues affecting them.

language and style choices made by editors of such local newsletters, and, indeed, of such larger English-language papers as the *Koori Mail*, must be seen in a much larger linguistic, political and social context, and in light of the historical development of Aboriginal writing. Questions of the "authenticity" of Aboriginal newspapers must be addressed in this light.

Aside from linguistic considerations, it is also significant for this thesis that much of the local production of written materials -- in English or other languages -- is in the form of newsletters and other periodicals which aim, as part of their function, to inform members of the community of "news" of relevance to them (Goddard 1990; Gale 1993; Heatley 1985). It has already been noted, above, that traditional Aboriginal verbal art has always had a relatively strong "reportage" function. Shoemaker and others have also noted such a socially-relevant, or "activist" reportage function in much of the more recent Aboriginal "creative" writing. This notion allows for a clearer understanding of the forces at work in the development of some Aboriginal newsletters, newspapers and magazines in Australia over the years, whether in English or in other languages. In other words, there should now be nothing startling in the observation that there is a significant history of Aboriginal print journalism, i.e. reportage in print, in Australia.

Before turning to a survey of that Aboriginal print journalism output, it must be noted that "reportage" in print for Aboriginal communities in Australia often also took the form of letter writing and petition writing, and other variations on these. That is, there are some important examples of written reportage (usually in English) which were not periodicals *per se*, but which, when they were distributed among Aboriginal or White people, and possibly later published by White mainstream newspapers, functioned as news reports or descriptions of Aboriginal life and issues in this country.

Narogin records the use as early as 1882 of a petition compiled by residents of the Aboriginal station at Coranderrk in Victoria in order to protest at their living conditions. The Aboriginal Protection Board, according to Narogin (1990, p. 19), was so unwilling to imagine that Aboriginal people "were capable of using the pen" that officials employed a detective to prove that the letters and petitions were forged by Whites. The detective found that the materials were indeed produced by an Aboriginal person, Thomas Dunolly, and were "genuine expressions of the feelings of his people". McGuinness and Walker argue that much written material produced by Aboriginal people in the form of position papers, letters and briefs to support land

rights claims, and which are now stored away in government files, should also be seen as "reportage" in print because these documents record living conditions and grievances of Aboriginal people (in Davis & Hodge 1985, p. 46).

Davis et al (1990) also note a famous bark petition sent to Canberra in 1963 by the Yirrkala people of the NT. They contend that the nature of such petitions indicates that what we call "writing" need not always be defined by the Gutenberg tradition of script on paper which has been reproduced by the printing press. They also note the petition sent from the people of Nepabunna in 1966, asking that the SA Government take over control of their station from the United Aborigines Mission. That petition, which contained 35 signatures, provides significant reportage of living conditions, including the following details:

Over the years there has been a severe lack of water in Nepabunna, there is also a shortage of rainwater tanks on the houses. The only time that water is really pumped is when someone is coming to visit, and when the people go back the water goes back. The bores as such are not deep enough to cater for the needs of our people, our supply at present is insufficient and inadequate....
We want action immediately, not in the future but now (1985, p.36).

These few examples of Aboriginal reportage in print, in English, will serve as a means to turn a general discussion of Aboriginal writing to a more direct examination of Aboriginal newspapers and magazines. It must be made clear at the outset, however, that there has been next to no research in this area. The most extensive attempt was by a German researcher, Benno Wagner-Pitz (1984), who produced a survey and content analysis of a number of Aboriginal newspapers for an MA thesis for a German university. That document remains untranslated on the shelves of the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) in Canberra. ⁶ Goddard (1990) has produced a most helpful and detailed article on efforts to produce newsletters among the Pitjantjatjara people and the emerging genres of print reportage in that region. But most other references to Aboriginal newspapers and newsletters are found in passing in other works about Aboriginal writing, or Aboriginal literacy programs, or Aboriginal use of electronic

⁶ I am indebted to Dr. Olaf Blis of Sydney, NSW, a retired university lecturer with a 30-year interest in Aboriginal culture, who volunteered to translate key summary and conclusion sections of Wagner-Pitz's work for citing in this thesis

media. The archives of AIATSIS contain many rare and historically significant examples of Aboriginal publications, however, and the Institute's archivists do attempt to gather contemporary publications (in English or Aboriginal languages) as they are produced. A list kept by the Institute, "Serials Currently Produced by Aboriginal Groups and Communities Held in the AIATSIS Library" contained, in late 1993, 22 titles produced in English, in local languages or a combination of the two. But librarians there note that many of these titles appear irregularly, are of very uneven quality, and some may in fact have ceased publication without their editors having notified the Institute (Triffett 1993, personal communication).

Langton and Brownlee (1979) have produced "A Listing of Aboriginal Periodicals" for the *Journal of Aboriginal History*. That list is an attempt to provide a record of Aboriginal publications from the 1830s to 1979. The section "Journals Published by Aboriginal Communities and Organisations" includes 44 titles, many of them of publications in Aboriginal languages, and many, of course, now-defunct. The list stops at 1979, and other titles have been launched since then, but Langton and Brownlee have produced an extremely useful and historically interesting resource. Such lists, other archival research, and interviews with Aboriginal leaders, writers and journalists, can begin to produce an adequate picture of the extent and type of production of print journalism by Aboriginal people over the years.

It will be clear at this stage why terms must be carefully defined in any discussion of Aboriginal print journalism. For the purpose of the review which follows, an "Aboriginal" newspaper or magazine will be taken to be one which is controlled (i.e. "published") by an Aboriginal individual or group and edited by either White or Aboriginal people with the principal aim of informing readers (either White or Aboriginal) of news primarily of interest to or significance for the Aboriginal population. That is, an Aboriginal newspaper could be controlled by a group of Aboriginal communities and employ a White editor and/or manager to assemble reporting by both Aboriginal and White journalists about Aboriginal matters. This is the case at present with the *Koori Mail*, and no one could imagine that this is not an Aboriginal newspaper. (The broader, and more complex, questions of what constitutes "Aboriginality" *per se* -- and addressed recently by such researchers as Langton (1993) and O'Regan (1993) -- and of the degrees of "authenticity" of Aboriginal publications, will be examined more fully below.)

Aboriginal publications in Aboriginal languages will, of course, also be covered by such a working definition, but these publications are still usually very

local and irregular "newsletters", produced for the most part by language centres in remote communities to assist teachers who have little other material to use in classes in Aboriginal languages (Gale 1993; Goddard 1990; Heatley 1985). What will generally not be considered Aboriginal publications are the newspapers, magazines and newsletters controlled, published and edited by departments of White government, whether or not the articles are almost exclusively about Aboriginal issues and events and even if certain articles are written by Aboriginal contributors. (This rules out, for example, the *ATSIC News*, and the various publications of that genre put out by governments and other agencies). Nor will the various publications put out, often for many years, by missions and other "helping" organisations as reading material for Aboriginal people be considered Aboriginal publications.

It should be noted, however, that early examples of Aboriginal newspapers and magazines are sufficiently rare that such a working definition may have to be stretched somewhat in order to avoid the error of eliminating historically significant publications from any list to be considered. This is the case, for example, with the *Flinders Island Chronicle*, or with *Dawn*, a magazine produced for two decades by the NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs, both of which will be described below. And it would be an error to argue that missionary publications played no significant role in providing written materials and even some elements of reportage in Aboriginal communities. The titles and content of some historically significant missionary publications will need, therefore, to be noted in passing.

It appears, then, from various sources (Langton & Brownlee 1979; Stone 1974; Rae-Ellis 1988) that the first Aboriginal newspaper in the Australian colony was *The Aboriginal, or Flinders Island Chronicle* produced between September 1836 and December 1837. This extraordinarily interesting publication -- handwritten and handcopied in English -- was ostensibly the work of three Aboriginal clerks in the employ of G.A. Robinson, the controversial figure who served as Commandant of the Aboriginal settlement on Flinders Island in the Bass Strait. A group of about 56 Aboriginal people had been transported from Tasmania to the island after White Tasmanian settlers complained they could not remain unless the military took steps to collect the Aboriginal original inhabitants together and isolate them (Rae-Ellis 1988).

There is no debate about whether the Aboriginal clerks actually wrote the newspaper, which was to be sold for two pence. The debate is over what influence Robinson had over the content, and whether any other than a handful of Aboriginal

people on Flinders Island at the time were capable of reading it. Rae-Ellis, in her scathing biography of Robinson, notes that he regularly falsified records of his stewardship of the settlement, and falsely claimed great achievements in his drive to transform the Aboriginal people there into "civilised Christians". Rae-Ellis notes of the *Flinders Island Chronicle*:

A solemn statement signed by Robinson and attached to the first edition [Sept 10, 1836], a hand-written original, confirmed that the publication was written solely by Aborigines. The declaration was intended to protect him, if necessary, in future.

The newspaper was an admirable idea, theoretically sound but useless in practice. The only Aborigines capable of reading it were the three teenage boys who wrote it, Peter and David Brune and Walter George Arthur who, with Mary Cochrane and Bessy Clark, may have learned to read and write at the Orphan School in Hobart Town before they set foot on the island (1988, p 66).

Whatever the circumstances of its publication, however, and whoever may have actually been able to read it at the time, the newspaper is an extraordinary document. (Many editions, though not all, are available for examination on microfilm in the Mitchell Library in Sydney amongst Robinson's many volumes of personal papers and administrative records.) Wagner-Pitz (1984, p. 98) notes that 29 editions were published. This coincides with the records of Langton and Brownlee (1979). Whatever control Robinson may have attempted to exert as "publisher" over his young Aboriginal journalists, there are clearly elements of straightforward reportage amidst the frequent and laudatory descriptions of Robinson's various projects, and the Christian exhortations which one can only imagine were demanded by Robinson.

Just a few examples of such reportage must suffice. The edition of 31 October 1837 notes, in an article by Thomas Brune:

The Commandant distributed the Mutton birds yesterday to all the Natives and sick people and the market was held upon that day and I saw some natives in the garden getting the thistles out of that garden.

The boat hast [sic] arrived on 31 of October with four sheep and Mutton birds.

Another example, also by Thomas Brune, from 14 November 1837:

The native men play too much at marbles, they don't attend to their books. I did not see the Natives carrying wood this morning.

And from 17 November 1837, this item of reportage and commentary from Thomas Brune, which, one must presume, slipped through whatever censorship system may have been instituted by Robinson:

The brig Tamar arrived this morning at Green Island. I cannot tell perhaps we might hear about it by and by when the ship boat comes to the settlement we will hear news from Hobarton. [sic] Let us hope it will be good news and that something will be done for us poor people. They are dying away. The Bible says some of us shall be saved but I am much afraid none of us will be alive by and by as there is nothing but sickness among us. Why don't the Black fellows pray to the King to get us away from this place.

After the last recorded date of publication of the *Flinders Island Chronicle*, 21 December 1837, there is a very definite hiatus of about 100 years in production of Aboriginal newspapers or magazines. In that period, however, a number of missionary publications appeared, and, as has been pointed out above, these served to provide some printed reportage for and about Aboriginal people, although contributions to these early mission publications by Aboriginal people would have been extremely rare. Wagner-Pitz argues that "the aim of the mission publications was to publicise their own efforts to succeed in Christianising Aborigines, and to get support for their efforts" (1984, p.98). For the period 1836 to approximately 1939, Wagner-Pitz lists the *Malgoa Aboriginal Mission Station Report* (1878-1889); the *Story of the Manunka Aborigines Mission Home* (1902-1910); the longstanding magazine of the Aboriginal Inland Mission, *Our Aim* (1907 to 1961, when it became the *Australian Evangel*). He also notes the *Aborigines Protector* (1935-1946), *The Ladder* (1936-1939) and *Uplift* (1939) as other missionary publications. Langton and Brownlee (1979) also record these titles. Mission publications continued to be reasonably widely produced and available to Aboriginal people throughout the 50s and 60s, at which point Aboriginal people themselves began to take an increasing interest in producing print journalism, as will be indicated below.

It appears that after the demise of the *Flinders Island Chronicle* the next Aboriginal publication of which there is a clear record is the *Australian Abo Call: the Voice of the Aborigines*, six editions of which were produced between April and September 1938. *Abo Call*, a professional quality tabloid sized newspaper and, like the *Flinders Island Chronicle*, of great significance in the history of Aboriginal print journalism in Australia, was produced by the Aborigines Progressive Association.

The Association was founded in 1837 to fight for justice for Aboriginal people in NSW, including the repeal of discriminatory legislation and the granting of full citizenship rights. The Association's first secretary was William Ferguson. The decision to launch *Abo Call* caused a split in the Association between Ferguson, and the president John Patten, who objected to the title and to the fact that the paper was financially supported by the right-wing Australia First Movement (Howie-Wills, in Horton 1994, pp. 26-27).

Even though it lasted for only six issues, *Abo Call* is a fascinating journalistic record of the era, and the only significant example of Aboriginal print journalism of the period. In edition No. 2, May 1938, it ran a front page report about the infighting between Ferguson and Patten at a meeting held to draft a constitution and rules for the Aborigines Progressive Association. The edition also contained reports on a scandal involving leasing of Aboriginal reserves in NSW to White graziers; the problem of tuberculosis in Aboriginal communities; and the policy of the Queensland Government of segregating Aboriginal people on offshore islands.

Page 1 of Edition 6 was entirely devoted to reporting of debate in the NSW Parliament which had been inspired by *Abo Call's* reporting in an earlier edition of 24 Aboriginal children at Collarenebri being barred from a local public school. The article includes some strongly-worded attacks on misrepresentations by ministers of the situation in the community. Other editions of the newspaper included excerpts from a book by a Supreme Court justice which provided evidence of the massacre of Aboriginal people at Myall Creek in 1838, and an article providing more historical evidence of massacres of Aboriginal people in the Port Phillip district of Victoria.⁷

⁷This filling in of lacunae in the official histories of Australia is a function occasionally served by Aboriginal newspapers, including the *Koori Mail*, as will be indicated in Chapter 5. There appears to be more "history" reported in the *Koori Mail* and other Aboriginal-controlled newspapers than in comparable, or even in larger, White publications.

In one issue of *Abo Call* (April 1938) is a call for agents to distribute copies of the newspaper, an indication that at the outset its publishers had long term plans. The various editions also included letters to the editor, some of which contained valuable elements of reportage about living conditions for Aborigines. The letters indicate as well some enthusiasm among Aboriginal people for having a newspaper which reported on their concerns. One correspondent, Reuben Cooper, who wrote a letter dated 15 April 1938 to ask to be appointed Darwin representative of the Association, states:

I received five *Abo Calls*. I could have distributed fifty. It gladdens our hearts to know we have a paper. May it continue to live.

Another letter to the editor, from Doug Nicholls, dated 5 April 1938, says:

Thank you for sending me the *Abo Call*. I feel quite proud of such a paper. I feel sure it will arouse the interest of people who know not yet the disabilities our people are suffering under the current administration. You can send me as many as you can spare. I'll do my best to sell them.

Unfortunately, the newspaper died with the September 1938 edition. In an "Important Announcement" published in that edition, the editors noted:

[The newspaper] will now suspend publication temporarily. The issue of a regular monthly Aborigines' newspaper has involved financial loss, owing to the difficulty of distributing the paper among Aborigines and the public. Until such time as the Aborigines Progressive Association is on a stronger footing, numerically and financially, it will not be possible to conduct our propaganda by means of a monthly newspaper.⁸

The scope of the present discussion does not allow for a detailed treatment of subsequent significant examples of Aboriginal newspapers and magazines. It should be noted, however, that after the demise of *Abo Call*, there appears to have been no

⁸*Abo Call* is of such historical interest that it really merits a complete study of its own, including details of its relationship with the Australia First Movement, its production process, distribution, readership and the exact reasons for its demise.

other significant or recorded attempt to produce Aboriginal print journalism until the 1950s. And even then, the production was rare. Langton and Brownlee note only the *Westralian Aborigine*, published by the Coolbaroo League in 1956 and 1957, and the *SA Aborigines Advancement League Newsletter* which commenced in 1959.

The *Westralian Aborigine* was a professional quality tabloid, with a consistent masthead and appearance. It reported on issues and events of interest to "natives" and "coloured people" in Australia and overseas. But its editorial line generally urged Aboriginal people to emulate a White middle-class lifestyle and to adopt a rigorous self-help attitude. An editorial in the May 1957 edition is indicative:

Whilst it must be acknowledged that many natives are establishing themselves in the community by their own efforts and by the assistance afforded them as well as White people by State and private instrumentalities, it is unfortunate that many of our people are apparently content to live in sub-standard and unhygienic camp conditions on the outskirts of towns and outlying suburbs. The fact that they evidently make no attempt to seek anything better is interpreted by the general public to mean that they are quite satisfied with their lot.... Whilst we are not entirely to blame for this state of affairs, in view of the number of definite disadvantages under which natives must labour, such as illiteracy, economic instability and lack of legal status as a citizen, together with the attendant difficulties which go hand in hand with these disadvantages, it is considered that we now have the scope and freedom to considerably improve our lot if we genuinely desire to make the attempt...(p.2).

The *SA Aborigines Advancement League Newsletter* was one of several of its type produced by the various advancement leagues for Aboriginal people which were set up in Australia from the 1930s onward. Howie-Wills notes that these Leagues fought for justice and citizenship rights for Aboriginal people:

[However] memberships often included a large proportion of non-Aborigines, who dominated the leadership. Not surprisingly, although Aboriginal people joined the leagues, their views were not always heard, and so some leagues themselves embodied society's paternalistic attitude towards Aborigines (in Horton 1994, p. 25).

This attitude is apparent in much of the copy in the *SA Aborigines Advancement League Newsletter*, none of which seems to have been written by Aboriginal people. However, by the 1960s, according to Howie-Wills, Aboriginal people began to take control of the leagues. This coincided with a burgeoning in the 1960s, and in particular the 1970s, of Aboriginal groups around the country which began to get seriously involved in print journalism.

Before moving on to a survey of titles from that period, however, one other publication from 1950s requires noting, despite its having been published and edited by White bureaucrats in the NSW Aborigines Welfare Board. *Dawn* magazine was aimed at, according to a statement from the Board's Chairman in the first edition (January 1952), "enabling the Board and the Aboriginal people to learn to know one another better and with a greater measure of understanding" and to "fulfil a useful purpose in the exchange of news and views".

It became, according to Bostock (personal communication 1993) and others familiar with Aboriginal life in NSW and elsewhere in Australia in the 1950s, a very popular and very widely-read magazine among Aboriginal people despite its paternalistic tone and its clear aim of assimilating Aboriginal people into some approximation of a White suburban Australian lifestyle. The letters to the editor section was apparently eagerly read by Aboriginal people seeking some news of relatives or friends, and a regular section of photographs of people and events in Aboriginal communities was also popular, as were the children's and sports pages.

Dawn apparently helped develop the habit among some Aboriginal people of relying on print journalism for at least some of their communication needs, even though the magazine was produced for the most part by non-Aboriginal people. The magazine was published in various forms and eventually under the title *New Dawn*. In its later incarnations, it would occasionally include some journalism by Aboriginal people. Volume 5, Number 2, for example, published in July/August 1974, included an article by Black activist Gary Foley on his trip to the People's Republic of China. The magazine ceased publication in July 1975.

As Aboriginal-controlled newspapers and magazines started to be published relatively frequently in the 1960s and 1970s and afterward, quality and regularity varied according to the resources of the publishers and the print journalism skills of the editorial staff and contributors. Some newsletters and even newspapers were typewritten, roughly reproduced and laid out, and had a very small circulation.

Others were more "professional" in appearance and had relatively regular publication dates, advertisements and at least some form of organised local distribution. (This important general issue of the wisdom or desirability of Aboriginal editors replicating established White, European forms for newspapers will be addressed in Chapter 6.) Most often, the publishers were legal aid services, land councils, or self-help community groups. Many of the publications in the 60s and the 70s had a radical tone and style derivative of Black Power groups in the United States.

Heatley has observed:

Although much of the progress has taken place in the electronic field, the output of print media, specifically tailored to the needs and/or affairs of Aborigines, has burgeoned since the mid 1970s. Vernacular newsletters are published (albeit their titles, frequency and quality vary) in many communities by local councils, progress associations, regional groups or schools. A second notable expansion has been in publications from official sources and from Aboriginal pressure groups, institutions (like the land councils) and support organisations. Much is written in English, and is directed at a non-Aboriginal audience (1985, p.55).

Among the various notable English-language Aboriginal publications launched in the 1960s/1970s period (and afterward) were *Smoke Signal*, *Black Knight*, *Churinga*, *Alchuringa*, *Koorier*, *Koorier 2*, *Koorier 3*, *Koori-Bina*, *AIM*, *Black Action*, *Black News*, *Black News Service*, *Black Liberation*, *N.Q. Messagestick*, *Palm Islander*, *Bunji*, *Harmony*, *Origin*, *Nunga News*, *Koorakookoo*, *Identity*, and *Aboriginal and Islander Forum*. Langton and Brownlee (1979) also list a number of newsletters in Aboriginal languages launched in that period, and Gale's research (1992) indicates a growing number of such Aboriginal language or bilingual community newsletters in recent years.

Churinga, a quarterly appearing between 1965 and 1970, and *Alchuringa*, 1972-73, were put out by the Aboriginal-run Aborigines Progressive Association (which in an earlier incarnation, in the 1930s, had produced *Abo Call*). Some editions of the *Koorier* series (*Koorier*, *Koorier 2*, *Koorier 3*) of papers had a particularly radical, "Black Power" tone in much of the copy. *Koorier* was produced, beginning in 1969, by the Aboriginal artist Lin Onus and the activist

Bruce McGuinness (whose views on non-Aboriginal editing of Black writing have been noted above). The militant tone was also evident in newsletters like *Black News* and *Black Action* (billed as "the only Aboriginal newsletter in Tasmania" of that era), *Black Liberation*, and the more professional-looking *Black News Service*, which was produced by the Black Resource Centre in Brisbane. *Smoke Signal*, produced in the troubled Palm Island community, was a very basic typewritten news sheet put out by three Aboriginal residents, including the author and oral historian Bill Rosser. This later became *Black Knight*, again involved Bill Rosser, and had a similar appearance.

The Palm Islander, started in 1976, was the newsletter of the Palm Island Education Centre. Its editorship was assumed the following year by Shorty O'Neill, who later became editor of the long-running *N.Q. Messagestick*. This was the newsletter of the North Queensland Land Rights Committee, and progressed from a typed foolscap-sized newsletter in the 1970s to a professionally printed tabloid newspaper by the mid-1980s. Later editions of this paper often included reprints from other newspapers (Australian and overseas), and occasional news and letters about North American Indian matters.

Origin began in 1969 as an "independent" publication "circulating throughout Australia - to cities, country centres, reserves and missions". Its initial backing is unclear: early editions appear to have been produced by a group of concerned people in Adelaide, most of them probably non-Aboriginal. However, these early editions included journalism by such prominent Aboriginal figures as Kath Walker (Oodgeroo Noonuccal) and Doug Nicholls. Langton and Brownlee place *Origin* on their list of "journals published by White -controlled advancement associations and institutions". By late 1971 *Origin's* masthead began billing its aims as "to assist in the welfare of Aboriginal children and wildlife". An editorial in that period noted the paper's new policy:

[To] preserve the natural Australia. Its original people, with a history of more than 30,000 years; its unique animals and birds; the rocks, trees, seas and rivers and the air we breathe -- all of which are threatened with destruction.

Harmony, a professional quality paper produced briefly by the Aboriginal Advancement Council of WA in 1976 had a more moderate tone than some of the other titles published in this era. Its editors noted its aims in the first edition:

[To] see harmony and understanding between different Aboriginal organisations, harmony between such organisations and other kinds of groups and if we can print the right kind of stories we should be able to see increased harmony in the relationship between the Aboriginal people and the government; between Aboriginal people and the police; between all such groups who do not know enough about each other at present....

Despite these high aims, *Harmony* lasted for only three quarterly editions.

Nunga News was an interesting and relatively long-running effort by the Aboriginal Community Association in Adelaide to provide news and commentary for that community. Early editions appeared linked to the newly-established Nunga Radio project, and later incarnations -- by the mid-80s a much more professional-looking publication called *New Look Nunga News* -- took on an advocacy role for local people having troubles with housing, health, social security and the law.

Koorakookoo was the newsletter of the NSW Aboriginal Land Council, and, as with many newsletters of this type in the mid-to-late 70s era, was almost entirely focussed on land rights and land acquisition issues.

Koori Bina was an unusual publication in that it was produced by the Black Women's Action Committee in Redfern, between 1976 and 1978. It is also interesting because Marcia Langton, who worked for the newspaper in that period, makes explicit reference, in the preface her listing of Aboriginal periodicals, to *Koori Bina's* roots in the *Abo Call* project of 1938:

In Redfern in 1976, the Black Women's Action Group began to envisage *Koori Bina*. We firstly needed some means of reply to the racist slander published in Sydney's afternoon press. Secondly, we were inspired by *Abo Call*.... The descendants of these activists were in 1976 working in Redfern for the same aims articulated in *Abo Call* almost forty years previously (in Langton & Brownlee 1979, p.121).

Koori Bina was later incorporated into *AIM*, the newsletter of the Aboriginal/Islander Skills Development Scheme, which was published into the 1980s.

Identity magazine, a quarterly started in 1971 and edited for more than six years by the Aboriginal writer Jack Davis, has been described by Shoemaker as "the single most important and influential Aboriginal periodical in the country" (1989, p. 231). Narrogin (1990 p. 86) says it "has now assumed the status ... of a historical icon or artefact". It was initially produced in WA by the Aboriginal Publications Foundation (which depended on private and government sources of finance) and became a forum for both Aboriginal journalism and creative writing in English. It ceased publication in June 1982, after going through a number of changes in editors, and in editorial style and policy. Narrogin, for one, is critical of the way an important Aboriginal publication such as *Identity* was allowed to develop without explicit consideration of the language and discourse in which it should be produced, or, he argues, of the editorial stance in its later incarnations. "The magazine had been cast," Narrogin argues, "into the shape of a conventional periodical and then floated on the world." He adds:

The direction of the periodical was supposedly controlled by a managing committee of Aborigines, under a chairman, George Abdullah: but this direction, owing to constant changes in committee membership, coupled with a lack of experience in framing an editorial line, was haphazard. Constant changes meant that no continuing policy could be developed or adhered to, and the lack of experience meant that no decision could be taken on whether an Aboriginal means of communication be favoured or developed (1990, p.87).

Narrogin argues that after Charles Perkins decided to move the editorial office of *Identity* from Perth to Canberra, it "became an adjunct of the educated Aboriginal elite assimilated into the central government bureaucracy" (1990, p. 105). It became an occasional publication, rather than a monthly, and literature was made secondary to pictorial arts and articles about politics. Despite its alleged failings in its latter years, Narrogin admits, "it is still missed by many" (p.106).

The publishers of *Identity* also launched a somewhat more newspaper-like publication in 1975, *Aboriginal and Islander Forum*, which lasted until early 1979. This newspaper, according to a note by editor Jack Davis in the first edition, asked readers to send articles:

We would like you to be fair and unbiased in your judgment of the Black and White situation in Australia. Then we would ask you to relay the information to us as quickly as possible.

Land Rights News is another important newspaper started in the same era as *Identity* (and still being produced in late 1994). Appearing in late 1994 approximately quarterly, this professional-quality tabloid newspaper of the Northern Territory Land Councils began as a typewritten newsletter in July 1976. That first edition announced simply that "this is a new newsletter - it will be sent out each month and will tell you about what is happening with Aboriginal Land Rights". Griffin (1993) has observed that the newspaper concentrated on the land rights issue, but also published articles on other topics related to the Aboriginal community. The stated readership of the *Land Rights News* was 20,000 in 1994, so as Griffin puts it, "it is a force to be reckoned with" in Aboriginal print journalism:

This is not to suggest that the *Land Rights News* is simply the Northern Territory Land Councils talking to White politicians and public servants and telling them what's what. It is obviously playing a big role in distributing information and ideas to Aboriginal readers, and providing them with a 'voice' -- a politically astute and activist voice

This is admittedly something of a generalisation, but it seems to me... the *Land Rights News* is oriented toward more specific political outcomes and goals, not just for Aboriginal people as a whole, but for distinct and different Aboriginal groups and communities (Griffin 1993, p. 24-25).

The *Torres News* does not, strictly speaking, fall inside the definition of Aboriginal newspapers established for this thesis as it was not, in late 1994, owned and controlled by Aboriginal (or in this case, Torres Strait Islander) people. However, it bears mentioning because it has been in existence for so long -- since 1888, in one form or another, but always owned by Whites -- and because in late 1994 it appeared likely that the latest incarnation of the newspaper would be purchased sometime in 1995 from its White owners by a community organisation to be funded by the newly established Torres Strait Regional Authority. In late 1994, the *Torres News* was being run as a commercial operation by two white entrepreneurs based on Thursday Island. The paper, published weekly in a 36-page A4 format, covered news in the Torres Strait area and was, according to its

Managing Editor, Jaki Gothard, a profitable enterprise. Gothard said that various attempts had been made over the paper's history to hire and train Torres Strait Islanders as journalists, but that none of those hired had ever stayed on for an extended period. It was not clear whether a Torres Strait Islander person would be installed as Editor if the newspaper were to be purchased as expected by the local community, or if a White editor would be invited to carry on as a salaried employee. The *Torres News* also bears mentioning here because of its arrangement to exchange copy with the *Koori Mail* (Gothard 1994, personal communication).

Possibly the most recent addition to the growing list of Aboriginal periodicals, aside from the nationally-distributed *Koori Mail*, is the *Palm Island Voice*, launched in late 1992 and owned by the Palm Island Aboriginal Council. This newspaper was initially edited by a White employee of the Council, but in late 1994 was being produced by a local Aboriginal employee. It was a highly-professional publication produced in the Council office, with colour artwork and photos, on desktop publishing equipment. A monthly, and usually 8 pages in tabloid format, the paper had a print run of approximately 1,000, with most copies being sold locally (Morgan 1994, personal communication).

The editors of many of the Aboriginal publications noted above were clearly aware of the potentially empowering role of print journalism for Aboriginal people. In the first edition of *Koorier* 2, (July 1983), the editor noted that this "statewide Victorian Aboriginal Community Newspaper" is published "in the belief that the more Aboriginal managed and controlled print media the better, for it then ensures greater circulation of accurate information between Aboriginals". Any uncertainty about the suitability of print journalism as a communications tool for people with a long oral tradition appears to have been put aside.

But as recently as May 1989, the editor of the latest incarnation of the *Koorier* series of papers -- *Koorier* 3 -- observed:

It has not been a tradition for Koori people to commit their ideas, comments and stories to paper for any great length of time in our history. It is, of course, a gub [i.e., "White "] tool of communication, one that has been used with devastating effectiveness to subjugate and oppress Koori peoples and communities....

Newspapers generally report biased sensational negative inaccurate stories about Koori people. Over the past years there has been

minimal improvement in this type of reporting, but nothing like what is needed in this country.

How do we improve this situation? Simple. WE write produce and control the content of our community newspapers and distribute them far and wide.

Such sentiments express the awareness that print journalism is perhaps alien to traditional Aboriginal culture but an important present-day tool of empowerment for Aboriginal people living in White Australian society. They are clearly sentiments which inspired many of the editors of the early and the more recent Aboriginal newspapers and magazines. They are most certainly among the sentiments which inspired the owners of the *Koori Mail*, the most important recent addition to the list of Aboriginal publications and the first one to make a serious attempt at comprehensive coverage of Aboriginal matters around the country, a national distribution, and commercial viability.

CHAPTER 4
THE *KOORI MAIL*: HISTORY AND ORGANISATION

It is really only with the foregoing lengthy examination of related historical, cultural and theoretical matters in mind that a detailed look at the objectives, history, organisation and content of the *Koori Mail* newspaper can be sensibly attempted. The *Koori Mail* is arguably the most ambitious attempt to date by Aboriginal people in Australia to use the medium of print journalism for their communications needs and as such it deserves careful attention. The problems and the successes which this newspaper has experienced are instructive for researchers in the area of Aboriginal media and for other individuals and groups who may one day wish to launch similar publications. This chapter, then, will lay out in detail the origins of the newspaper; the early attempts to establish it in Lismore, NSW; the organisational, personnel and financial problems which it encountered; and its gradual development into a viable commercial entity and a significant media voice for Aboriginal people.¹

The "history" of the *Koori Mail* which follows in this chapter is based on interviews with various individuals associated with its founding and operations, as well as on a close examination of whatever related documentation was available.² The account will be, for the most part, descriptive and chronological, with some brief sections devoted to more specific topics and problems, such as the early statements of editorial philosophy; the distribution system for the newspaper; its small network of freelance contributors, and so on. The picture which emerges represents my best effort as a journalist and an academic researcher to provide a complete and accurate account. It is a composite picture, however, and some individuals may differ slightly on minor details.

The development of the *Koori Mail* to late 1994 can be divided roughly into four periods. The first would be from its launch in early 1991 by an Aboriginal person named Owen Carriage, and some others, to approximately November of that

¹ The following chapter will examine in detail the editorial content and style of the paper and the relationship of that content and style to its stated editorial philosophy, and to its intended clientele/readership. Then Chapter 6, the final one in this thesis, will place the *Koori Mail* project back into the larger context of Aboriginal media and Aboriginal communication, and attempt to assess in a more general way the success or failure of the *Koori Mail* to meet its stated objectives. Chapter 6 will also examine related theoretical questions of the "authenticity" of certain forms of indigenous media and will lay out some possible questions, issues and avenues for the future development of an authentically-Aboriginal form of print journalism in Australia.

² A list of those people interviewed is included in the Bibliography. In general, early records of decisions related to the foundation of the paper and records of its early operations are scarce. However, I am indebted in particular to the newspaper's former General Manager, John Toohey, for the generous access which he granted me to whatever documents and records were available, including consultants reports which he commissioned in early 1993 and a formal, detailed business plan which was submitted to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission in mid-1994.

year, when ownership of the paper was briefly taken over by the White-owned *Northern Star* newspaper of Lismore, NSW as a result of non-payment of some outstanding printing and related debts. The paper was edited in this first period by a White journalist named Janine Wilson. The second period began after a group of five Aboriginal communities in the region took control of the paper (with the *Northern Star* retaining a 20 percent stake) in late 1991-early 1992 with the help of a substantial grant from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC). This second period, during which Carriage departed and the paper continued to be edited by Janine Wilson, lasted until February 1993 when Wilson was sacked by the Board of Directors. The third period, in which a White part-time Editor, Dona Graham, was hired to work closely with the White full-time General Manager, John Toohey, to put out the newspaper, began after Wilson's departure and continued to mid-1994, when The *Koori Mail* was able to buy out the *Northern Star's* remaining 20 percent stake using an ATSIC loan. The fourth period began on a note of uncertainty, caused in part by strains over introduction of new desktop publishing equipment and procedures, a changed relationship with the White-owned *Northern Star* operation, and the abrupt departure of John Toohey in August 1994. Throughout its development, however, the *Koori Mail* suffered from various setbacks and crises large and small, most of them financial or related to personnel, but managed to survive. By mid-1994 it had started to become a relatively stable and commercially-viable proposition.

Any description of the *Koori Mail* operation must begin with the idea developed by Owen Carriage to launch an Aboriginal newspaper serving, it was originally thought, a relatively large area of northern NSW and southern Queensland centred around Lismore, NSW. Carriage was, according to the first edition of the paper dated 23 May 1991, a former employee of "several Aboriginal organisations and government departments". The first edition noted as well that Carriage's "dream" of launching an Aboriginal newspaper was a result of his "wide knowledge of Aboriginal issues and culture". According to Carriage himself (interview 1994), he had had no experience as a publisher, editor or journalist:

I had been talking to a lot of people in the Aboriginal community, and often people had said it would be a good thing to have our own newspaper for Aboriginal people in this country. I could see there was potential for a newspaper like that, and I didn't think there would be any trouble making it a commercial success as well, because a lot of organisations and government departments would want to advertise in it.

Carriage used as working capital a loan of \$15,000 secured by his wife, who was working in the Lismore office of Telecom, from the Richmond-Tweed Post-Tel Credit Union. Carriage used the borrowed funds to rent office space at 125 Union Street, Lismore and to assemble some basic used office and computer equipment. Carriage had talks with the Lismore Enterprise Development Agency and other local government and educational agencies about his project, and received advice and support from various other quarters. His main working partner in the early days of the project was a White freelance journalist named Liz Tynan, but she left before the first edition was completed. Eventually, and just prior to the first edition, Carriage had assembled a team comprising himself; John Toohey (whose only journalism experience of any sort was as publisher of a small photocopied "singles" newsletter in the area) as Sales Representative; Vicki Payne, a White trainee Office Manager; and some Aboriginal part-time and casual clerical and reception staff who, like most of the others, were either irregularly paid or received training allowances or work-experience allowances from government sources such as the Department of Employment, Education and Training.

Carriage, Toohey and others close to the project at the time describe the period leading to the first edition as "chaotic", with a quite haphazard seeking after advertisers and editorial copy from contributors and press releases. Equally haphazard were the attempts to organise those materials into a newspaper. At first, it was thought the paper would be printed by the *Northern Star*, a local daily owned by the Australian Provincial Newspapers Group. However, the *Star* lost interest in the project, and Carriage and Toohey approached Colourfast Graphics in Ballina, NSW to have it typeset in A4 format. Thirty-two pages was the objective for the first edition. The typesetter at Colourfast was willing to help organise the layout and appearance of the first, and presumably subsequent, editions. He was to print, according to Toohey, 10,000 copies based on promises of approximately \$3300 in advertising revenue which Carriage and Toohey had managed to secure.

However, management at the *Northern Star*, on seeing that the *Koori Mail* project appeared ready to actually go ahead, became interested again in a potential new and long-term printing contract, and sent a representative to speak to Carriage about providing printing and related editorial services for a tabloid-format newspaper. This began a heavy and long-running involvement of the White-owned *Northern Star* with the finances and production of the *Koori Mail*. When Carriage

agreed to this new arrangement, the *Star* sent one of its casual editorial staff, Janine Wilson, a White former employee of the *Newcastle Herald*, to help finish organising 24 tabloid-sized pages of copy for a 23 May 1991 first edition. The *Northern Star* also helped organise the services of a local graphic artist, John Picone, to design an attractive masthead and a general layout style for the publication.

Wilson agrees with Toohey's assessment that the situation was extremely chaotic in the days leading to the first edition, and notes that most employees, if they were paid at all, were paid irregularly. Against these odds, the paper appeared for the first time on 23 May 1991. The ambitious initial print run was, as planned, 10,000 copies, but no firm arrangements had been made for distribution and most copies were transported around the region by Carriage and friends or colleagues in cars. Many were sent out by mail at no charge to potentially interested parties and many others given away to Aboriginal organisations or to news agencies from which most payments were never collected.

The content of the first edition, and others, will be examined more closely in Chapter 5, but it should be noted here that the first *Koori Mail* consisted of 24 pages with a banner front-page headline which read "Racist Violence: The Hidden Facts" and pointed to a two-page report inside the paper on the findings of the National Inquiry into Racist Violence. Other stories included the unveiling on the Gold Coast of a memorial stone for Aboriginal war veterans, a guide to voting regulations in NSW, news of a new NSW ambulance service, an article about an Aboriginal job creation unit in NSW (all almost certainly rewrites of press releases), excerpts from a book on tracing one's Aboriginal heritage, and some local sports reporting. Almost all of the ads in the first edition were from ATSIC, which had promised heavy advertising support for this Aboriginal business and journalism venture, or from Aboriginal Hostels Limited. Some businesses in the Lismore area also purchased small advertisements in the first edition, but many of these were never paid for.

Toohey and Wilson have argued that in the chaos leading to the first edition, little discussion took place about the general editorial objectives of the paper or about the news values which would be adopted. (Indeed, Toohey and Wilson have argued that Carriage's main objectives were commercial in nature and that he had neither the experience nor the inclination to devise a coherent editorial philosophy for the paper. Carriage denies this, saying he had a long term plan and vision for the way the paper should develop editorially.) They acknowledge, however, that Carriage and Liz Tynan did spend some time together before she left the project,

developing a formal statement of editorial philosophy. This did not appear, however, until the second edition. In the first edition, on Page 1, a boxed article provided this statement of objectives:

The *Koori Mail* has arrived and will now appear in news agencies on a fortnightly basis. The first edition of the *Koori Mail* is a positive step for Kooris everywhere. It aims to provide information on issues important to Kooris. The paper is striving to give a Koori perspective and greater detail that [sic] is generally available in the media, providing information for both the Koori and the non-Koori population. Apart from current issues, the *Koori Mail* will carry a range of features, personality profiles highlighting Koori achievements, book and film reviews, children's pages and sport. The first edition will be distributed throughout New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria, with plans to go national as soon as possible....

Furthermore, on Page 2, the boxed feature about the team which put out the first edition noted that the founder's "vision is for an unbiased and non-political paper.... [A]s well as providing an Aboriginal paper, the paper provides information for people wanting a more comprehensive understanding of a culture often misunderstood by the majority of Australians". Another Page 2 item urged readers to write with suggestions about issues which should be "investigated" or with news about "happenings in your community". The aim of the paper, the item noted, "is to provide Kooris with a voice to express their views ... and to give all Australians information about Aborigines, their culture, their achievements and their problems".

By the second edition, two weeks after the first, the editorial objectives of the paper had been packaged as a boxed statement of "The *Koori Mail* Philosophy", which made a number of important commitments. As the fullest and most explicit statement of the aims of the new publication, it is worthy of reproduction in full here. Indeed, it was reprinted frequently in the newspaper in the early months:

The *Koori Mail* is a unique independent newspaper which examines may [sic] issues from a Koori perspective.

It is the first time in Australia that Aboriginal people will have an undistorted source of information, and an outlet for their own views. It is also expected to have an impact on the general community, with the aim of redressing prejudices and introducing non-Aboriginal Australians and ultimately the whole world to our culture and our beliefs.

The following principles will guide production standards and procedures:

- 1: The reporting of news and views without fear or favour.
- 2: The maintenance throughout of Koori beliefs and standards.
- 3: The highest level of production values, to produce a quality newspaper.
- 4: The training of Aboriginal staff to ensure they are instilled with professional skills to give them a high level of employability in the future.
- 5: The dissemination of the maximum amount of relevant information from government agencies and statutory bodies, with the proviso that this information is not merely propaganda and is viewed critically.
- 6: The presentation of a wide range of issues, not necessarily only traditional Aboriginal issues but also other important matters which impinge upon the lives of Aboriginal people.
- 7: Increased positive interaction between Aboriginal communities and individuals throughout Australia.
- 8: The inclusion of lighter items, such as a children's page, cartoons, sport, crosswords, games, art, film and book reviews, historical features and human interest stories and photographs.
- 9: A classified advertisement section offering the full range of classifications such as employment, births, deaths, marriages, In Memoriam, etc.
- 10: Display advertising not exceeding 50 percent of newspaper content.
- 11: The inclusion of a responsible but daring editorial column in each issue, addressing matters of importance.
- 12: The promotion of the overall well-being of Aboriginal Australia.

Things moved very quickly for the paper after its first couple of editions. Reaction around the country was immediate and apparently almost entirely positive. An editorial in the 2nd Edition, dated 6 June 1991 thanked readers for their initial support:

Although we anticipated community interest and support, we were unprepared by [sic] the widespread interest that flooded in from the moment the *Koori Mail* reached the news stands. Thank you for the numerous phone calls from throughout Australia, from Sydney to remote central west New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria and the Northern Territory.

Almost as swift as the positive reaction to the paper, however, were financial problems due to sporadic cash-flow, and the problems of distributing the newspaper efficiently.

The newspaper had been paying fees to the *Northern Star* for desk space and office support services, and for the editorial services of Wilson (who worked part of the time out of the *Koori Mail* office and part of the time at the larger newspaper's offices) and others in the *Northern Star* layout and typesetting departments. There were printing costs to meet, which, like the other costs noted above, were generally added to an account owing to the *Star*. The cost of Wilson's salary was also added to the printing bill for the paper. These costs all very quickly began to mount to a substantial sum. However, the highly favourable reaction to the *Koori Mail* from many quarters encouraged all parties, including management at the *Northern Star*, to stay with the project and see where it would lead.

It became clear to those involved that to achieve the real potential of the paper as a new advertising vehicle for the Aboriginal community, and in particular those government and para-government agencies attempting to reach Aboriginal people, a national distribution was crucial. However, national distribution of such a small paper and one aimed at both major urban centres and remote Aboriginal communities would be a major difficulty. From the start mail subscription sales, which were logistically easier to handle than news agency distribution, were encouraged: the first edition called on readers to subscribe for \$25 a year and a number of people responded immediately. Among the early subscribers, according to Toohey, were many Aboriginal organisations, education and literacy centres.

However, it was also clear from the start that the special clientele of the newspaper -- which included Aboriginal people in remote or rural areas who in many cases would not be accustomed to using newspapers for information and who would not be accustomed to subscribing to periodicals -- would not subscribe in large numbers to the paper and that news agency distribution would be required to get sales to the point at which national advertisers would be prepared to pay substantial rates for space. Accordingly, Toohey arranged with the Sydney-based Internews organisation to distribute the paper nationally after the fifth edition. Internews was primarily a distributor of ethnic and community papers, and small numbers of copies of the *Koori Mail* began to be inserted into bags of other publications destined by air for small news agencies around Australia. This was expensive, troublesome -- papers had to be shipped from Lismore to Bankstown, NSW and then moved out on various flights to remote communities -- and the related revenue collection and accounting complicated.

Meanwhile, Wilson was attempting to develop sources of stories and the beginnings of a network of stringers -- Aboriginal and White -- around the country. It can be said that from the earliest editions the paper used a combination of locally-written stories, items from stringers (some paid, others not), press release material, and "public service"-style features related to health and education obtained for the most part from local health workers and/or government departments at various levels. There was also, in the early stages, always a children's page and some regular sports coverage. After approximately November 1991, the paper had access to wire copy via the *Northern Star's* subscription to the AAP news service, but Wilson was reluctant to use it except in substantially altered (and unattributed) form because she was unsure about the contractual implications of the *Koori Mail* using material to which it was not itself a subscriber.

By July 1991 strains had already appeared in the project. A large bill had been run up with the *Northern Star*, and there were conflicts between staff members. According to Carriage, to Toohey (who was by then Advertising Manager) and to Wilson, relations in the office were difficult as people struggled to get the paper edited and distributed every two weeks, to establish a subscription list, and, perhaps more importantly, to decide who would be in charge and which decisions would be made by whom. Toohey maintains that the original intention was that Wilson would be primarily a sub-editor or production editor. However, Carriage says he was in regular conflict with Wilson over both production and the editorial content of the paper:

She didn't like to consult with me about what was going to go in to the paper. She said that I, as the owner, shouldn't be involved in that and that she was the Editor and had the experience and had to have the freedom from interference to put the paper out. So there were a lot of problems between us over things like that.

By September of 1991, according to the *Northern Star's* General Manager, John Howard, (interviews 1993, 1994), management at the *Star* began to get concerned about payment of the outstanding debts, and the general situation at the *Koori Mail*:

This paper was a goldmine waiting to be managed properly.... We were willing to carry them for the first couple of issues to see what developed and we were surprised to see the ease with which

revenues came in. It became a priority for some advertisers in Australia, and became lumped in with *The Australian Financial Review* as a national buy. Rates were higher than they were really worth in circulation. [It was] a niche market, obvious to advertisers.

It is particularly significant that at this point in the development of the *Koori Mail* the White-owned *Northern Star* took a series of steps which were to radically transform the ownership structure of the smaller paper. Howard and other *Northern Star* executives approached a number of Bundjalung tribal Elders and Aboriginal community leaders in the Lismore area, describing the potential of the newspaper, its financial problems and the risk of closure. Some of the key Aboriginal people approached were the Reverend Charles Harris, Pastor Frank Roberts, and Charles Moran.

According to Howard, Toohey and Wilson, it was the *Northern Star* managers who proposed that local Aboriginal communities approach the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) with a business plan to take over the *Koori Mail* from Carriage, pay off most of the *Northern Star* debt and put the paper on a sound financial footing using a one-off special grant. The idea did not originate with the Aboriginal communities themselves. Accounting and management personnel at the *Star*, in consultation with Carriage and Toohey, drew up a budget with sales and revenue projections for the community Elders to give to ATSIC. The *Star* was initially seeking, according to Howard, a 20 percent stake, with 49 percent to go to local Aboriginal communities and 31 percent to Carriage. "We saw it," Howard said, "as a prestige thing for our company to be involved in, but we wanted to avoid any sign of White paternalism so we sought no seat on the Board." Howard also acknowledges that the *Star* saw the potential for a lucrative long-term printing client and the possibility of providing consultancy and editing services.

At this point the *Star* had formally taken over the *Koori Mail* and the rights to the masthead in return for unpaid debts. The *Star* was owed approximately \$70,000. According to Toohey and Wilson, Carriage only very reluctantly gave up rights to his newspaper and its masthead by signing a so-called "deed of assignment" to the *Star*. The deed of assignment allowed for Carriage to buy back the rights to his masthead with-in 12 months in return for payment of outstanding debts. Carriage says he had been attempting to negotiate as an individual entrepreneur with DEET and with ATSIC for money to keep the newspaper running. He says he received

verbal assurances at this time from a local DEET official that a substantial sum would be forthcoming to support the endeavour as a training ground for Aboriginal people, but this deal fell through. According to Howard, Toohey and Wilson, the *Star* decided that Carriage's formal involvement should be ended completely because ATSIC would be unlikely to provide a large grant to an individual. However, the local communities apparently wanted to continue to have an Aboriginal person heavily involved in the day-to-day operations, so it was agreed, for a time in the negotiations and in a plan which was drawn up, that Carriage would be given the salaried post of Circulation Manager. For a time as well, it was agreed that he would continue to have a 31 percent stake, but with no ownership of the title and no control. (This plan was substantially altered some time later and Carriage ended up with no percentage of the ownership.)

Charles Harris and Frank Roberts have since died, but according to Wilson, Toohey and local Aboriginal Elder Fletcher Roberts (Frank Roberts' brother), the local communities responded positively to the idea of operating a newspaper. Fletcher Roberts (interview, 1993) said that Elders agreed it was "important to have the Aboriginal story presented according to the community":

When people read the *Koori Mail*, they got a real idea.... People really liked that paper [at the time of the *Northern Star's* approach to the communities].... Just having a newspaper acknowledged Aboriginal things.... They liked seeing Black faces looking out at them from a newspaper.... Aboriginal people are connected, in spite of clans and tribes, and they're quite interested in reading about other people, other mobs.

Elder Charles Moran (interview 1993), who was involved in the negotiations with the *Star* and ATSIC, points out that Aboriginal people in his community and other Aboriginal communities were very receptive to the idea of using a print medium for news and other information. He argues that even though Aboriginal culture is "oral" in nature in its traditional form, that culture is changing rapidly and Aboriginal people wish to use whatever means are available and efficient to communicate with each other and to learn about what is going on:

When I was a lad, [Moran said] I spent a lot of time in the bush and my uncle told me a lot of stuff orally.... Not everyone depends on that sort of thing nowadays. City Aborigines are used to English

and things written down. A lot of story-telling still goes on, though....

But radio and TV is too flash-in-the-pan. If you don't understand it, you can't go back over it or show it to someone to talk it over and get an explanation....

Things are happening so fast, Aboriginal people sort of aren't taking an interest. But in a newspaper, people can study things better and think about them.³

A series of meetings of local community leaders took place, and, according to Wilson's notes taken at some of these meetings, Pastor Roberts pointed out the potential of the paper as a "much-needed modern messagestick" for Aboriginal people. Aboriginal ownership would, Roberts told a meeting at the time, "give the newspaper strength" while the *Northern Star's* involvement "would give it know-how". He emphasised, Wilson's notebooks indicate, that this would be "the first time Aboriginal people would have a national voice", and he spoke of the "need to penetrate to all our people at all levels throughout this nation". At a meeting on 18 November 1991 it was decided to form a company comprising four, and later five, local communities. The company, called Bygal Weahunir Holding Company, was formed to apply to ATSIC for funds totalling \$226,000, and, more importantly, to be the legal entity to which those funds would eventually be released. The following communities were involved: Buyinbin Aboriginal Corporation of Casino, NSW; Bundjalung Tribal Society, Lismore; Bunjum Aboriginal Cooperative, Cabbage Tree Island; and Kurrachee Aboriginal Cooperative, Coraki. Nungera Aboriginal Cooperative, Maclean, was the fifth community, but joined later in the process.

ATSIC agreed to provide the grant money but the funds were not released until early 1992. According to Toohey and Wilson, because the *Northern Star* now legally owned the paper, \$110,000 was used to pay off the outstanding debts to buy most of it back. The *Star* was to retain a 20 percent stake, however, and Bygal Weahunir was to control 80 percent. Bygal Weahunir was to have at first an interim Board of Directors of three Aboriginal people, and then a permanent 11-person

³ Such observations about the "orality" of Aboriginal culture and its relation to printed-word communication are very important for the purposes of this thesis. Moran's views were echoed by five other Aboriginal people involved in the *Koori Mail* project and interviewed for this research: Carriage, Rob Cameron, Harold Love and Malcolm Hunt (all eventually members of the *Koori Mail*'s Board of Directors) as well as Fletcher Roberts. Hunt also pointed out that in many Aboriginal communities the pattern of TV watching and radio listening does not lend itself to regular monitoring of news bulletins and current affairs programs. A newspaper, he argues, can be "left lying around" even very remote communities and people can pick it up, read it -- or have it read to them, or have stories summarised -- when the time is convenient.

board; all Aboriginal people. The *Star*, while acting in what Howard describes as an "advisory role", did not seek to have a seat on the Board. Even though it was first planned that Carriage would retain 31 percent, his interest in the paper was bought out at this time for \$41,000. Toohey and Wilson claim this was due to a falling out which he had with the interim Board. Carriage shares that view of events. He was invited to stay on as Circulation Manager but he says he was unhappy with the new arrangements and left in February 1992 after further dispute with the Board. Most of the remainder of the ATSIC grant money was used to pay off other debts and to buy some needed equipment and other materials.

The changes were recorded in a front page item in the 21st edition, dated 11 March 1992, soon after final arrangements had been made and the full Board was in place. The article called the purchase of the *Koori Mail* by the five Aboriginal communities "a step forward in self-sufficiency and self determination" and noted that it employed "Aboriginal clerical staff, an Aboriginal advertising salesman, Aboriginal journalists based throughout Australia a recently-appointed Aboriginal sales and marketing manager, Aboriginal clerical staff and is now seeking an Aboriginal cadet journalist". Gary Martin, a former employee of DEET in Lismore, was the Aboriginal sales and marketing manager noted in that article. He joined the staff in March 1992. Stuart West was the Aboriginal advertising salesman: he had been hired in November 1991. However, it was clearly an editorial liberty to suggest that Aboriginal journalists were "employed" and that these were employed "throughout" Australia. There was a developing network of casual stringers, but according to Wilson, not all of them wrote for payment and not all areas of the country were covered. It is also noteworthy that the article did not point out that the Editor, Wilson, was a White Australian.

The article quoted Board Chairman Robert Cameron, of Casino, NSW, at length:

The paper is an important voice for Aboriginal people, providing the best opportunity we have ever had to present a true picture of Aboriginal issues and achievements. As well as serving Aboriginal people it enables the non-Aboriginal population to get a proper perspective of the matters affecting Aboriginal people and their beliefs, as well as correcting the negative stereotyping and myths that have prevailed for the past 204 years.

The period after November 1991/March 1992 -- that four month hiatus covered the process of application for and eventual receipt of the ATSIC grant -- begins what for the purposes of this study is being termed the "second phase" of the *Koori Mail*'s development. The main editorial and administrative figures were Gary Martin, Sales and Marketing Manager; Toohey, Advertising Manager; and Wilson, Editor. Clearly, however, most day-to-day editorial decision-making was carried out in this period by White people.

According to Wilson, she was generally left alone by the Board to make editorial decisions and to try to expand the paper's coverage of Aboriginal matters in Australia and its network of stringers. She admits that until her involvement with the *Koori Mail* her knowledge of and experience with Aboriginal people was limited. However, she claims that she made a special effort to learn about Aboriginal culture very quickly and that she often consulted with members of the Board -- in particular Frank Roberts, with whom she had a close working relationship -- about how to approach complicated stories involving Aboriginal customs and sensibilities. Wilson said in an interview in 1993:

I always tried to imagine things from a Koori perspective when I was editing. I tried to choose stories which would be interesting or significant for Aboriginal people and I tried to edit the copy, which sometimes came in from stringers or contributors in very rough shape, in a way which Aboriginal people could accept.... Sometimes this meant leaving things said the way they were said, and not trying to change speech or the structure of a story in a way which Aboriginal people would find odd or offensive.

However, Toohey argues, and Wilson acknowledges, that she was often in serious conflict with Martin about who was actually "in charge" of the paper. (This conflict was to be a factor in Martin's eventual decision to resign.) Despite this, it can be argued that this period began a sustained attempt by Wilson and her correspondents to provide a more-or-less national coverage of Aboriginal affairs with a very limited staff and budget. However, financial, personnel and interpersonal problems marred this period, and would lead to Wilson's sacking by the Board approximately a year later.

All staff began to get paid regularly after this point and a small budget of \$600 per edition was available on a regular basis for freelance contributions. Print runs were generally between 6,000-10,000 per fortnight. Circulation was

approximately 2100, of which 500 were mail subscriptions and approximately 1,600 were sold through Internews or Lismore-area news agents. Readership, however, far exceeded that figure. Indeed, whereas most community newspapers count on approximately 3 to 4 readers per edition, (Howard interview, 1993) readership of the *Koori Mail* was estimated to be between 10 and 20 readers per issue. This was, according to Wilson, Toohey and Howard, due to the unusual way in which some Aboriginal people tended to use the paper and to the pattern of its subscription sales. From the earliest part of its history the *Koori Mail* was seen to be passed around from hand to hand in communities or read by people who came into the offices of whatever Aboriginal or White organisations subscribed. As well, it was apparently being read by others to those members of remote Aboriginal communities who could not read in English or read at all. Howard and others saw a potential readership of 100,000 to 200,000 people, based on the estimated potential paid circulation and news stand sales of 10,000. While circulation in this period was nowhere near that projected figure, the potential was clear, according to those producing the paper, and that potential could be seen equally clearly by advertisers.

While this was a period of editorial and organisational consolidation for the paper, it was also a period of conflict. Next to nothing in the way of minutes of meetings of the Board of Directors from this period is available, but according to interviews with many key players, there were important and unproductive clashes between Wilson and Martin, and between Wilson and Toohey. Some of these appear to have been basic personality clashes (Toohey interviews 1993, 1994; Wilson interviews 1993, 1994) but there were also serious differences over money, administration and production procedures. There is also some indication, but this is difficult to confirm with hard evidence, that one of the sources of problems was that Martin believed, along with some Board members, that it was time to have a Black Editor for such a newspaper, now that it was becoming firmly established and that its profile in the Aboriginal community was rising.

It had always been the Board's long-term plan, according to Wilson's notetaking at Board meetings before the ATSIC grant was arranged, to hire an Aboriginal Editor as soon as the *Koori Mail* was well-established and if a suitably experienced and trained Aboriginal print journalist could be found. A young Aboriginal person named Tim Paden was hired as a cadet in March 1992, but stayed only until September of that year. In December 1993, Todd Condie was hired as a Aboriginal cadet, and was still at the paper when this thesis was completed in late 1994. In neither case, however, did either of these young men have the depth of print

journalism experience which the Board and other members of the project considered necessary for the Editor. Carriage, too, in his original vision for the paper, foresaw an Aboriginal person as Editor but he says he always knew this would take some time. "I had no problem with the idea of a White Editor while things were getting established, as long as the Editor agreed to consult with me about things," Carriage said (interview 1994).

One indication of the currency of the question of whether the paper should be seeking a Black editor was Wilson's controversial decision to run an editorial in the 36th edition, dated 7 October 1992, in which she confronts the issue more or less directly. The piece carried the headline "Should Colour be the Main Criteria [sic] for Employment", and is a discussion of whether someone should be hired for a job simply because he or she is Aboriginal. Wilson points out, apparently for the first time in print, that she is "a White journalist working in Aboriginal affairs" and adds: "I am aware that there are many jobs I would never be considered for even though I have the qualifications, simply because I am White". In another section of the long editorial, Wilson wrote:

I am becoming increasingly alarmed at untrained Aboriginal and Islander people in certain jobs.... It is simply the case of people without training being put in jobs on the basis of colour when they are not qualified for the position they fill.... To put untrained Aboriginal people in high responsibility jobs with inadequate training is irresponsible and detrimental to the image of indigenous people. Let's stop worrying about people shouting 'racist' if these jobs are not always given to Aboriginal or Islander people because of lack of training.... [I]t's keeping the seat warm until the Black bum is ready to sit firmly on it without the risk of falling off.

The quite extraordinary piece was published at a time when Wilson admits there were rumours afoot about the possibility of her being replaced by an Aboriginal Editor, if one could be found. Wilson insists that the editorial was her attempt to address a general question and was not inspired by her own position or difficulties at the newspaper. However, this was also a time when she was in more or less open conflict with the most senior Aboriginal staff member, Gary Martin. According to Toohey, at least some of that conflict also had to do with her style of working, her alleged difficulties putting the paper out on time and on budget, etc. But Toohey has acknowledged as well that there was talk at the Board level of whether an Aboriginal Editor should be sought -- possibly from among some of the more experienced Aboriginal stringers who were regularly providing stories -- at this

stage of the newspaper's evolution. Wilson's editorial, then, quite naturally caused a stir in the editorial offices of the paper, on the Board and among readers, who began to write a number of letters to the Editor either in support of or attacking Wilson's position.

Many letters arrived in response to this article. One letter in the next edition, from a self-described "Aboriginal journalist", expressed cautious support for Wilson's position and thanked her for her "dedication in working with indigenous people". But another letter in the same edition asserted that "the tone of [Wilson's] article ... is one of utilising her position to justify her position.... Nowhere does she say, or discuss, where the training of her Aboriginal colleagues will take place to allow him/her to have the qualifications that make someone like Janine Wilson the most suitable White person to edit a fortnightly national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander newspaper". In Edition 38, another letter attacked Wilson's editorial:

Aboriginality is a qualification, one that your editor would know nothing about.... How much longer by your standards do we have to wait before you feel we are qualified with your little piece of paper.

The letter went on to criticise Wilson's alleged "sensationalist" coverage of some recent Aboriginal stories which, the writer argued "is no different to mainstream papers".

While this controversy was developing, the paper's financial and organisational problems were once again increasing. In August 1992 the five communities which controlled the paper had to put up an emergency injection of funds totalling \$12,000 to keep it afloat. According to Toohey and Howard, editorial costs related to payment of stringers were rising and overtime costs for production were rising because Wilson allegedly often got material to the *Northern Star* late and made last-minute changes to copy. Wilson argues that any delays and cost blow-outs were related to layouts and other materials often being provided to her at the last minute and that cash-flow problems were related to inefficient collection of revenue from news stand sales, inefficient handling of subscription renewals, and the heavy costs incurred in the production arrangements with the *Star*. Whatever the cause of the problems, the atmosphere at the paper was deteriorating badly at the time Wilson wrote her controversial editorial.

At that point, October 1992, Gary Martin resigned. Toohey suggests that this was the result of an ultimatum which Martin unsuccessfully put to the Board to the effect that either Wilson go, or he would go. Toohey and Wilson agree that there was a division on the Board between those supporting Wilson as Editor and those who did not. Toohey, who took over as Acting General Manager after Martin's departure, said he became convinced that the atmosphere at the paper had reached a dangerously low ebb, that the future of the paper was in question for a variety of personnel and financial reasons, and that Wilson should be replaced. Throughout this period, Wilson had been negotiating for a legally-binding contract with the Board, having previously been working without a formal contract of services. These negotiations reached an impasse in December 1992 and she went to her union, the Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance, and to a lawyer for advice. This was a move that, according to Toohey, upset some Board members further.

At this stage, Toohey decided to seek the services of an outside consultant to examine the problems at the paper. Toohey engaged a White Sydney-based former media manager, Ian Snell, who in his retirement had been doing consulting work to a volunteer group called Aesop, which offered management expertise at nominal cost to community organisations which needed it. Once again, at a crucial stage in the development of this newspaper, an analysis of the paper's operations and future course was undertaken by a White Australian. The previous significant example of this occurred when *Northern Star* management approached the five Aboriginal communities with a business plan which they suggested should be sent to ATSIC in a grant application. It can be argued that at such important junctures an Aboriginal perspective and a more explicit reconsideration of the fundamental Aboriginal objectives of the paper were lacking if not entirely absent.

Snell's brief written report on the operations of the paper, dated 13 January 1993, tended to concentrate on financial and organisational matters but it did address editorial content as well. [Appendix III.] Snell recommended that more attention be paid to getting ad sales representatives working effectively around Australia. He recommended that more attention be paid to subscription sales and subscription renewals, and that promotional giveaways and gimmicks be implemented to encourage people to subscribe. On the topic of the paper's editorial content, Snell said that "it doesn't appear to be satisfactory in meeting the philosophy of the publication". He also wrote that the controversial editorial which Wilson published on 7 October 1992 on the topic of discrimination against Whites working in

Aboriginal jobs "should never be allowed to happen". He was critical of the paper's lack of "national flavour" and suggested instituting "interstate briefs, to make each state feel they are part of the paper". He added:

The paper has been advertised as covering Aboriginal lifestyle and culture, and to this date it has not done the job. It is essential that history and culture should appear in every issue as they are areas that will appeal to schools and tertiary institutions.... I would suggest an outside editorial opinion on the way the direction of the *Koori Mail* should go.

He also noted:

The paper should certainly be a training ground for Aboriginal people. An editorial cadet would be ideal. The person should be under the control of the *Northern Star's* training scheme.

In his concluding section, Snell provided brief summaries of his impressions of most of the staff. John Toohey, he noted, was "enthusiastic" and "must control all monies, budget and staff matters". Four other staffers were discussed, but there is a significant failure to discuss Janine Wilson directly. In its totality, however, the report put Wilson in a bad light. However, Toohey has revealed (interview 1994) that Snell provided an off-the-record briefing to the Board about his concerns over Wilson's performance as Editor. Toohey claims that a first draft of Snell's written report was "toned down" because it was feared to be defamatory of Wilson and useable by her in any subsequent union or legal fight over a dismissal. Nonetheless, Toohey used the formal consultant's report (and presumably Snell's private briefing of the Board) as ammunition in making his subsequent case before the Directors that Wilson be replaced. Toohey argues that his view and eventually the Board's was based solely on Wilson's alleged failure to deliver the paper on time and on budget and to her style of working and relating to others in the office. It had nothing to do, he insists, with her being a White person.

Wilson disagrees. She argues that the Board had decided it wished to hire a Black Editor and saw Toohey's commissioned consultant's report as a way to get rid of her. Whatever the real story, Wilson was dismissed in February 1993. The brief dismissal letter, signed by Board Chairman Rob Cameron, alleged she was "not

fulfilling the editors [sic] role as envisaged which should be in accordance with the intended philosophy of the paper". Wilson immediately took her case to the MEAA and from there to the Industrial Relations Commission, in a process that was not resolved for many months. The Commission eventually found that the Board had been within its rights to sack Wilson but that the required procedures had not been followed. It was not recommended that she be re-instated but the Commission ordered that she be paid \$11,200 in back wages and other funds related to award conditions for her position which had not been met over an extended period.

Wilson also took her case to the Anti-Discrimination Commission, arguing that she had been dismissed on the grounds of race. That case was still not resolved when this thesis was completed. However, her argument had clearly been weakened by the fact that an Aboriginal Editor was not hired subsequently and had still not been hired to replace her almost two years later.

Board Chairman Rob Cameron has acknowledged (interview 1993) that it was always the intention to secure the services of a qualified Aboriginal Editor, but that in the interim no one had any problem with the notion of the Editor being a White Australian. He denies that Wilson was sacked because she was White, and points out that the next Editor, Dona Graham, was also a White Australian. "Eventually," Cameron said, "we want a completely Aboriginal staff, but you can't run before you can walk."

Toohy, with Board approval, later commissioned a follow-up report by Ian Snell to compare the newspaper and its production processes under Wilson's editorship and under the subsequent regime. That report, carried out at Snell's request by a Sydney-based "author and journalist" Robert Wilson, was submitted in June 1993. (In his first report, Snell had suggested that another "outside" editorial opinion would be useful.) The second report compared the 13 January 1993 edition (i.e before Wilson's departure) to the one dated 19 May 1993. It suggested that there had been significant improvements in content and procedure:

Overall the impression is given of a newspaper [13 January 1993 edition] which is slabby [sic] with stories given more length than they deserve, lapses in attention to detail, a number of instances of stories being unstructured and lacking in journalistic shaping or sub-editing. Pages are boring and present little to attract the reader, who is given little encouragement or help.

On the quality of the 19 May 1993 edition the report's author stated he had found a "much busier paper with more stories and pictures than the previous edition". He wrote: "It is a tighter, more professional and better-produced paper, but there is still some careless lack of attention to detail".

Here again, the editorial views of a White journalist were applied to this Aboriginal newspaper, with little attention apparently being paid to the fundamental question of whether the *Koori Mail* should simply be emulating White community or "ethnic" newspapers. The consultant does not, for example, address the issue of whether the Aboriginal people controlling or reading this newspaper wish it to be one with the "busy" selection of short, tight stories which he clearly favoured. This is yet another example of how seldom such fundamental questions about the "authenticity" or "Aboriginality" of the newspaper were addressed by those non-indigenous people in charge of its actual production.⁴

Thus began what can be seen as the third distinct stage in the newspaper's evolution. It was decided that Dona Graham, who had had experience as a production editor for suburban newspapers, should be hired on a part-time basis to keep costs down at a difficult time for the *Koori Mail's* finances. Toohey had argued strenuously that a 24-page bi-weekly newspaper could be edited in less time than Wilson had been taking to do the job. This new arrangement led to a quite significant change in editorial quantity and content, and, some would argue, in editorial quality. Bylined stories by stringers were fewer, for example, in the period immediately after Wilson's departure and much more use was made of AAP wire copy.

What the new production arrangements meant in practice was that Toohey became the most senior full-time staff member and in Graham's frequent absences was making significant editorial decisions as well as trying to solve the paper's revenue and distribution problems. It was a period in which, apparently, questions of production, organisation, promotion, and financial survival were seen to take precedence over editorial direction and the breadth and depth of coverage of Aboriginal issues. With Edition 43, for example, the number of pages dropped from

⁴ Katz (1977) and O'Regan (1993), in examining such questions have suggested in the context of indigenous broadcasting that there is usually an initial period of emulation of non-indigenous forms, particularly if there is heavy involvement of non-indigenous producers, managers or editors. These issues will be taken up more fully in Chapter 6.

24 to 20 for the first time since the paper's founding. It was not until Edition 53 that the number of pages reached 24 again.

Toohy began to concentrate on building advertising revenues, particularly through producing special education supplements which would allow many tertiary institutions to advertise and promote their courses among Aboriginal people. Such education supplements had been attempted before this -- in late 1991 and mid 1992, for example -- with mixed results. But Edition 57, dated 11 August 1993, contained the biggest-ever education supplement and pushed the total number of editorial pages for that edition to 56. Toohy says that the 36-page supplement in that edition yielded \$28,000 in revenues and "really put us on our feet for the first time". Plans were quickly made to follow up with similar supplements. In this period as well early problems with subscription renewals appeared to be on the road to solution. Sales through Internews at mid-1993 were approximately 1500, through local news agents 300, and mail subscriptions were 1900, yielding an audited total circulation for the period of 3700.

Dona Graham, meanwhile, established her own pattern of editorial decision-making and production processes, and these were still in place at late 1994. She generally worked three days per week editing copy from a variety of sources, including the AAP wire (via the *Northern Star*), press releases, some stringers (although fewer than in the Wilson editorship), advertising features, public health and education features, etc. Copy was to be assembled at the *Koori Mail* offices (by now at 173 Magellan Street, Lismore) and then typeset and laid out at the *Northern Star*. As was the case with Wilson, Graham was generally left free by the Board of Directors to make editorial decisions, along with Toohy, without any apparent regular interference. However, this also meant that there was little input from Aboriginal people as to what sort of coverage was appropriate and desired, what direction the paper should take in its content and style, and so on.

Board member Malcolm Hunt said in an interview in late 1994 that there were occasional discussions of editorial content at Board level at that time and that such matters were discussed with Graham. He agreed, however, that there was little day-to-day control by Aboriginal people of the newspaper's content and that the attention even at Board level was mainly on commercial issues and problems. Most attention was being paid in this period to consolidation of the paper as a going commercial concern and establishing ongoing relationships with advertisers. Carriage, the founder, argues that by 1994 the paper had lost its direction, and had

become too concerned with advertising revenues and the commercial side. He suggests this was at least partly due to the lack of editorial "vision" of the Board of Directors.

Graham saw her role as being, in effect, a copy-editor or sub-editor in the first instance. She generally did not cover or write stories, as Wilson had often done, but for the most part simply edited wire copy, stringer copy and other sources of material for inclusion in the paper in any given week:

I think it is an advantage for the paper to have a White Editor. I am not involved in Aboriginal politics, and I purely coordinate without bias. If a story gets in the paper it gets in because it is newsworthy, not because I have some tribal axe to grind or some local cause to champion... (interview 1993).

Graham did not appear to have addressed the basic question of whether her judgement of an event's newsworthiness coincided in any fundamental way with that of the Aboriginal people who owned or read the newspaper.

There is no doubt that this period did see a marked increase in concern about a "mainstream" newspaper activity: seeking after advertising and revenues. In addition to the advertisements from such government agencies as ATSIC which had been the mainstay of the paper's finances from the beginning, in this period there were frequent display ads from other sources. Universities around Australia had clearly seen the potential of the paper to reach students, both in special Education Supplements and in regular editions. Ads from both White-run and Black-run business ventures also began to appear regularly. For example, "Chris Jones, Machinery Broker" of Adelaide was a regular advertiser of used heavy equipment for possible purchase by Aboriginal communities. "Koori Wholesale Suppliers" also began taking out regular display ads, as did "Koori Travel World" and the "Black Books" shop in Sydney. In other words, the number and variety of ads began to increase significantly in this period and the revenue base was expanded from the ATSIC ads which had helped launch the paper.

By late 1993 the paper had started to turn a small profit. For the 1993-94 tax year, profit was approximately \$40,000, according to Toohey. Cost of putting out the paper at mid-1994 was approximately \$12,000 per edition, of which \$4,500 was for printing costs. Bi-weekly ad revenues were usually in the vicinity of \$13,000, and

much higher in editions with supplements. The financial picture for the paper had never looked better, despite the fact that editorial content had changed markedly and, some would argue, for the worse.

Toohey and the Board of Directors had for some time been hoping to buy out the remaining 20 percent interest in the paper held by the *Northern Star* and to buy the desktop publishing equipment necessary to produce camera-ready copy in-house. The objective was to reduce reliance on the *Star's* expertise and equipment and to be free to seek less expensive ways to have the newspaper laid out, typeset and, possibly, printed. There was also a desire to make the project 100% Aboriginal-owned. As well, Toohey felt there was a potential market for other desktop publishing and printing jobs from Aboriginal sources and that any equipment bought to produce the newspaper could also be used for purpose. Accordingly, in early 1994 a detailed business plan was submitted to ATSIC for an \$80,000 loan. (Originally, it was thought \$86,000 would be sought, but the final figure was \$80,000.) The application documents [Appendix III] indicated that \$54,000 would be used to pay off remaining debts to the *Northern Star*, after which the larger newspaper would relinquish its 20 percent share for a token payment of \$20. The additional \$26,000 would be used, along with other funds, for purchase of DTP equipment.

The business plan (using figures from the 1993-94 year-end audit) indicated that the *Koori Mail's* masthead was estimated to be worth \$116,000, its existing equipment and furniture worth \$40,000, and outstanding revenues -- the so-called "debtor's register" in accounting parlance -- approximately \$70,000-\$100,000. This capital was to be used as collateral for the loan.

The application noted, in an unmistakable tone of optimism for the paper's future, that:

The Board of Directors feel that by repaying the *Northern Star* loan and becoming 100% Aboriginal-owned and managed they will become role models for other Aboriginal business enterprises....

The *Koori Mail* has now been operating for 2-and a half years and has become recognised as the national voice of Aboriginal Australia. This was recently recognised by the awarding of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation Special Award for the Aboriginal enterprise most advancing relations between Aboriginals and the wider Australian community....

Advertising revenue for the foreseeable future is virtually guaranteed as the *Koori Mail* occupies a niche market, this is recognised by government bodies and advertising agencies.⁵

ATSIC granted the *Koori Mail* its loan in May 1994 and steps were taken immediately to negotiate an end to the *Northern Star's* direct involvement in the paper's ownership. The objective was to have the shares formally transferred by the end of 1994. Desktop publishing equipment worth approximately \$36,000 was purchased and installed and plans established for training staff in its use. The 6,000 bi-weekly run of the paper was to continue to be printed at the *Northern Star*. Actual circulation in late 1994 was slightly lower than this figure, with approximately 2,800 copies sold through Internews and local news agents, and 3,000 posted to subscribers. However, these ambitious and rapid changes in production routines and the reduced ability to depend on the *Northern Star's* production facilities and personnel began to create new strains among staff at the newspaper. Those strains apparently led to a struggle between Toohey and Graham for the ear of Board members about the best way to manage the enterprise, and were at least part of the reason for the sudden decision by the Board to dismiss Toohey in August 1994. Toohey, in September 1994, filed a wrongful dismissal action with the Federal Industrial Commission and this was still unresolved when this thesis was completed.

After Toohey's departure, Vicki Payne briefly took on the role of Acting General Manager before she too left the paper in October 1994. These changes left the Editor, Dona Graham (still working only on a part-time basis) with effective day-to-day control of both the editorial content and the administration of the paper, at least until a new General Manager could be found.

With this examination of the *Koori Mail*'s somewhat tumultuous history and organisation to late 1994 complete, a closer look at its objectives, readership and content may now be attempted.

⁵The special award given to the *Koori Mail* was presented at the National Indigenous Business Economic Conference at Alice Springs in early 1993. Board Secretary Harold Love said in the newspaper at this time that the award meant "we're finally being taken seriously.... We're still striving to be absolutely self-sufficient, and we're aiming for more growth, but we're well and truly on the map as a valuable asset for indigenous people all around Australia".

CHAPTER 5
THE *KOORI MAIL*: EDITORIAL POLICY AND CONTENT

This Chapter is organised around some straightforward but fundamental questions about the *Koori Mail* as a publication. Who is reading the *Koori Mail*? What is actually in the newspaper and what news values, and other values, are applied to content decisions? Has the newspaper delivered to its intended readers material which meets the editorial and related objectives of its owners?

It should be noted here that while addressing such questions will involve a close examination of the content of the newspaper, it is not a proper aim of a thesis of this sort to attempt a quantitative content-analysis. Nor will any comparative analysis be attempted, if for no other reason than the fact that the *Koori Mail*, as a nationally-distributed, commercially-organised Aboriginal newspaper, is *sui generis* in Australia, and such comparisons would be impossible. Instead, the methodology adopted involved searching out key articles and key coverage of ongoing issues at various stages of the newspaper's development.

"Key" articles, for the purposes of this thesis, were those which appeared after a thorough and critical evaluation to be clear indicators of the editorial approaches and processes working in those periods. These were articles which clearly demonstrated the news values in play in any period, or articles which were good examples of emerging genres of reportage, particular concerns, unusual treatment of certain material, or attempts to report news from an authentically Aboriginal perspective. This methodology for examining the content of community and ethnic newspapers has been successfully employed by a number of researchers; for example, in the studies of Australia's Spanish-language newspapers by Herrera-Keightley; of Maltese newspapers by Frendo; and of Macedonian newspapers by Radis et al (Ata and Ryan 1989, pp. 93-107, 125-136, 207-221).

To begin, then, the question as to the intended readership or clientele of the newspaper can be answered using information gathered in interviews with people closely associated with the newspaper and the explicit statements on this subject published in the pages of the newspaper itself. The first of these appeared when the paper was owned by Owen Carriage, in the Edition 1 description of the origins and intention of the newspaper, and in a detailed statement of "The *Koori Mail* Philosophy". Most of the content of those statements has been reproduced in Chapter 4. However, a close examination of the sections referring to intended readership makes it clear that Carriage intended the newspaper to be read by "Koori's everywhere" and by "the Koori and non-Koori population":

As well as producing an Aboriginal newspaper [i.e. a paper for Aboriginal people] the paper provides information for people wanting a more comprehensive understanding of a culture often misunderstood by the majority of Australians [i.e. non-Aboriginal people] (p. 2).

Carriage has confirmed in an interview (1994) that he always intended the paper to be aimed at and read by Aboriginal people in both urban and rural Australia, as well as non-Aboriginal people in urban and rural Australia. He also acknowledged that this was an audacious undertaking and one which would clearly be fraught with difficulty.

The more lengthy and detailed statement of the paper's philosophy which appeared in the 2nd Edition restated this aim, noting that "Aboriginal people" would have such a publication for the first time and that it would also "have an impact on the general community" (Edition 2, p.4).

After Carriage lost control of the *Koori Mail* in late 1991, it was, as indicated above, owned for a brief period by the *Northern Star*. At that time, there were no stated or apparent changes in the readership to be targeted. But soon afterward control was purchased by five local Aboriginal communities in the process described in detail in the previous chapter. Notes taken by then-editor Janine Wilson at some meetings of the Aboriginal Elders of those communities when the purchase was being discussed indicate that the paper was still seen as aimed at Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal readers in urban and rural communities around Australia. Indeed, Wilson's notes also show that there was some discussion at those meetings of the paper eventually being distributed overseas to other indigenous people with an interest in the situation of Australian Aborigines and to anyone else with such an interest. After the Bygal Weahunir company officially took over the paper a front page item in Edition 21 (11 March 1992) provided a statement of objectives and philosophy which included references to intended clientele. Its aim was to serve "all communities throughout Australia.... As well as serving the Aboriginal people it enables the non-Aboriginal population to get a proper perspective..." (p. 1).

Interviews with Aboriginal people associated with the purchase and control of the paper confirm this objective of serving an Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal readership. Importantly, this was not to be confined just to the Lismore, NSW area where the paper was based but to extend throughout Australia in urban as well as

rural communities. There had been, then, no apparent fundamental reconsideration by the new Aboriginal owners of the intended readership of the newspaper.

Subscription records, lists of news agencies where the *Koori Mail* was available, and interviews with people closely associated with the newspaper indicate that the readership patterns of the paper were quickly established and did not vary greatly from the early days of publication. The June 1993 mail subscription list indicates that the paper was being sent to addresses in all states of Australia (and to a few addresses in Europe and North America). The Australian postcodes and place names indicated a mix of urban and rural addresses in all states. By far the largest number of subscribers on that list were in NSW, with most of the rest reasonably evenly distributed between Queensland, Northern Territory and South Australia. Western Australia and Tasmania had the lowest state totals for subscriptions, according to these records.

A significant feature of this, and other, *Koori Mail* subscription lists is the number of institutional subscribers. There are dozens of names of schools, libraries, churches, health centres, land council offices, and other Aboriginal organisations represented on the list. According to the former General Manager John Toohey, who was with the newspaper from its inception in 1991 until late 1994, this had always been the case. "Institutions and groups around the country subscribed right away, and they told us that the paper got read by a lot of people who come in, and who might not otherwise subscribe or pick it up at a news stand," Toohey said (interview 1993).

The July 1993 Internews distribution list for the newspaper indicates that by that time the paper was being shipped to dozens of news agencies, large and small, across Australia. Some of these news agencies, according to addresses and place names, were clearly in urban centres, while others were in very small communities. Numbers of sales in news agencies were generally very low: in many cases only two or three copies were sent out to the small rural agencies and not all of these were being bought in every publication period. The largest news stand trade in the *Koori Mail* was apparently in places like Murray's Interchange News, Canberra (20 sent out per edition); Goodwin's News Agency, Ballina, NSW (15); Brewarrina, NSW (39); Snare's Newsagency, Dubbo, NSW (20); Black Books, Glebe, NSW (25); Chadwick's News Agency, Kempsey East, NSW (27); Aboriginal Medical Services Agency, Redfern, NSW (50); Hammond News Agency, Walgett, NSW (20); Rockey's McWhiters News, Fortitude Valley, Qld (12); Townview News, Mt Isa,

Qld (10); Charlie Carter's, Broome, WA (15). Cumulative totals of papers actually purchased (i.e. not the number sent out) at news agencies, by state, for the period examined in June 1993 were: ACT, 80; NSW, 980; NT, 54; Qld, 180; SA, 89; Tas, 16; Vic, 124; WA, 86.

It is interesting that the highest sales per news agency were not necessarily in the largest centres (although the highest number sold in any one agency in this period was in Redfern, NSW). The statistics generally indicate a reasonable mix of urban and rural subscribers and readers. The news agency sales figures, and the subscription list figures and addresses cannot, of course, show in detail whether most readers were Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal people. However, Toohey and others associated with the newspaper are convinced that a large majority of readers was Aboriginal. They base this on their knowledge of which addresses and town names of subscribers and news agents indicate readership in areas with a high concentration of Aboriginal people, as well as on letters which arrived at the newspaper and anecdotal evidence from Aboriginal people.

The unique pattern of subscription and use of the *Koori Mail* led to early problems in increasing the number of subscriptions. An unusual editorial appeared in Edition 14 lamenting the fact that "the Aboriginal cultural trait of sharing has provided an interesting dilemma for The *Koori Mail*". This situation was created by the fact that a single copy of the paper was being read by a high number of people:

While a degree of sharing was anticipated, the *Koori Mail* staff was totally unprepared for the degree of sharing that was becoming evident.... The resulting lower circulation figures could hamper the paper, a private enterprise dependent on advertising sales for survival. We have no desire to change Aboriginal tradition, or stop our many interested White readers from bringing the paper to the attention of others. A solution might be to purchase an extra edition for the person you want to send it to, or even take out an annual subscription for the recipient...(p.2).

The foregoing examination of whom the *Koori Mail* is aimed at and who appeared to be reading the newspaper leads to the question of what was actually in the newspaper. The editorial philosophy of the paper, which would, if editors and production personnel faithfully executed this philosophy in practice, ordinarily shape decisions about what should be in the paper, has already been noted in Chapter 4. However, some elements of that philosophy bear restating briefly here. Owen

Carriage's stated "vision" for the *Koori Mail*, it should be remembered, was outlined in articles and boxed statements in Editions 1 and 2. (The statement of "*Koori Mail* Philosophy" reappeared regularly for the first months of the paper's existence, apparently as a layout filler item.) The aim was "providing a voice" to Aboriginal people, "to give a Koori perspective and greater detail than is generally available in the media" on matters of importance to Aboriginal people. The early statements of aim promised the paper would be "unbiased" and "non-political" and would cover a "wide range of topics to suit all age groups" (Edition 1, pp. 1 -2). In the statement of "*Koori Mail* Philosophy" which appeared in Edition 2, the aims were made even more explicit. This ambitious list of 12 aims is reproduced in Chapter 4 of this thesis but in summary the aims were to provide comprehensive national coverage of any matters "which impinge on the lives of Aboriginal people" and to foster "Koori beliefs and standards" and the "overall well-being of Aboriginal Australia". Aboriginal "achievements" were to be highlighted. The "maximum amount of relevant information" from government agencies was also to be disseminated, though not just as propaganda. Also promised were high production values and training of Aboriginal staff (Edition 2, p.4).

In March 1992, the *Koori Mail's* new Aboriginal owners had clearly not changed the fundamental objectives of the newspaper. Their *de facto* statement of editorial philosophy appeared on Page 1 of Edition 21, in an article which described the new ownership arrangements and the ATSIC grant which had facilitated the purchase. Like Carriage, the new owners promised a "voice" for Aboriginal people and an opportunity to "present a true picture of Aboriginal issues and achievements". The paper would also aim at "correcting negative stereotypes and myths [about Aboriginal people among non-Aboriginals] that have prevailed for the past 204 years". The owners also promised to start "training Aboriginal people in all aspects of the newspaper industry" (Edition 21, p.1). In the cases of both Carriage and the subsequent group of owners, the objectives as stated were ambitious, idealistic and a major challenge.

Before beginning an examination of the paper's content and coverage, it should be described as an object or "media product". After its inception, the newspaper did not change very much in physical appearance or basic layout design. It was a tabloid format publication with pages generally ruled into variations of four-column justified copy. Typeface was 10 point Helvetica, for the most part. The masthead is eye-catching: to the left is a three-colour Aboriginal flag, unfurling, which runs hard up against the name *Koori Mail*. The orange, red and yellow of the

flag are repeated underneath the title and across the entire upper part of Page 1, giving the page a distinctive look. [Appendix II] In general, however, in terms of basic layout and physical appearance there is nothing much to distinguish the newspaper from many other community or ethnic weekly and bi-weekly papers appearing around Australia (Ata & Ryan 1989, p.3). The most obvious distinguishing physical feature of the paper, aside perhaps from its colourful and bold masthead design, is that many Black faces appear in photographs on Page 1 and inside, something that is not seen often in mainstream Australian newspapers, or the ethnic press (Ata & Ryan 1989; Royal Commission into Black Deaths in Custody 1991).

A detailed look at content is best done by dividing editions into groups which roughly correspond to the periods in the newspaper's evolution which are being examined in this thesis, and described in Chapter 4: i.e., the period of Carriage's ownership, from May 1991 to approximately November 1991; the period of ownership by the co-op of five Aboriginal communities from early 1992 to the sacking of Janine Wilson as editor in February 1993; and the period from Wilson's departure to Toohey's departure in late 1994. Wilson acted as Editor, on a full time basis from the earliest days of the first period of the paper's development. But the Aboriginal founder, Owen Carriage, was in control of the paper in that time and regularly in the editorial offices with Wilson, so his input would have to have been a factor in decision-making even though he says that he was often in conflict with Wilson and that she often did not consult with him on significant editorial decisions. In the period after November 1991, and through the "interim" period in which the *Northern Star* was in control while negotiations were underway with ATSIC for a grant which would be used to regain Aboriginal ownership, Wilson's role as full-time Editor appears to have become more clearly defined and entrenched. Certainly by March 1992, when news of the purchase by Bygal Weahunir was announced officially, she was very much the Editor of the newspaper and her ideas on what stories should be covered and how they should be covered were, generally speaking, the main shapers of content.

In general, it can be said that the *Koori Mail* attempted to address a similar range of issues and even, in many cases, of specific stories throughout the entire period examined. For example, stories about ATSIC received prominent play from the first days. Similarly, stories about land rights or Aboriginal health or deaths in custody were a mainstay, as might be expected. As well, throughout the history of the paper, there was always at least some sports coverage, almost exclusively on the

back page, and always letters to the Editor. Early editions always had an editorial (as promised by Carriage in his statement of editorial philosophy) and a children's page of cartoons and puzzles, but these two features were dropped in the paper's later incarnation. Despite the general superficial similarities of most of the editions of the paper throughout the period from May 1991 to late 1994, however, some important differences in concerns, emphasis, and approach can be discerned in the three periods established for examination.

The first 14 editions of the paper, i.e. those produced between May and November 1991, set, it can be argued, the pattern of things to come. Front pages of all of those editions carried prominently-displayed photos of Aboriginal people, or of Aboriginal art. Banner headlines on each of the front pages dealt with major stories of obvious interest and significance to the Aboriginal community: for example, racist violence, land rights protests, the Coronation Hill mining dispute, Aboriginal health problems, a plan to close Traegar Park School in Alice Springs, and controversies and debate related to ATSIC. The paper appeared to be paying particularly close attention in that period to stories about mining on Aboriginal land; for example, coverage of the controversy over the proposed Dominion Mining Ltd nickel mine at Yackabindie, WA.

A major front page item, under a banner headline and with Janine Wilson's byline, introduced readers to the ongoing three-way dispute between that mining company, and two groups of local Aboriginal people; those supporting the proposed \$360 million development and those opposed due to its alleged disruption of local life. Wilson quotes mine spokespersons, and an Elder from the local community which supported the development, but says in the item that she had not been able to reach the third party, Ngalia Heritage Research Council. In subsequent editions several other major stories appeared on the subject of the Yackabindie dispute. In Edition 8, a front page item with Wilson's byline reports what she found on a trip to WA to investigate the story. Other stories on the dispute and Wilson's trip (paid for by the mining company, according to Wilson), appear inside. Wilson's story reports that things had "deteriorated" to the point where there had been traditional "singings" and "shootings" reported between the opposing Aboriginal sides. She suggests in her reports that the issue would likely have to be decided by the then-Federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Robert Tickner.

In subsequent editions in this period, other reports on the Yackabindie dispute, ATSIC matters, and other major "Aboriginal" issues are given prominent

play; a clear indication that from the earliest days of the newspaper's development an attempt was being made to provide coverage far removed from the north coast NSW area where it was being produced. No one could suggest that coverage of national Aboriginal issues was "comprehensive" in this period, but it would be equally difficult to argue that the *Koori Mail* was devoted primarily to local North Coast NSW issues.

However there was clearly also a good deal of attention paid to events in the Lismore area and to statements made by such local Bundjalung Elders as Rev. Charles Harris and Pastor Frank Roberts, who were also Aboriginal rights "activists". Page 1 of Edition 1 carried a story by Wilson about the call by Roberts for "a curfew for Aborigines in trouble areas". The story was extended coverage of a meeting of Bundjalung Elders at Tabulum, NSW at which there was a discussion on how to curb Aboriginal alcohol abuse and related violence on the North Coast of the state. However, the story reported as well that "Roberts described the move as an initiative by North Coast Elders that the Elders hoped would flow through to the whole of Australia". Coverage of this local story continued in subsequent editions (eg Edition 8, p.4), but with some attempt to place the problems described into a larger Australian context. Clearly, while the paper had early on been declared "national" in scope, easy access to local Elders, their close involvement with the *Koori Mail* even before their having taken control of it, and Wilson's good working relationship with Roberts meant that comments and ideas from the Bundjalung and North Coast NSW perspective were very much in evidence in the columns of the paper.

The front page of Edition 9 was entirely devoted to an opinion item by Frank Roberts about the "crisis" faced by Aboriginal people:

Aboriginal people are facing their worst crisis in living memory....What is now apparent and conspicuous is that overt and covert [sic] racism is a dominant factor in mainstream Australia and is here to stay. Australia in its present racist mood and its political ideology can never create spiritual, moral, political and social norms that are exemplary to our people.

Roberts goes on to argue that the recently created ATSIC might provide a national focus and leadership which Aboriginal people need.

An equally prominent local leader, Rev. Charles Harris, was also given column space for an opinion piece in Edition 8. Harris called for all Aboriginal people to support the fledgling *Koori Mail* because "the national White Press and media have always presented the negative side by presenting a distorted picture of own [sic] community to non-Aboriginal Australia". He notes the founding of a local organisation called "Black Power Analysing Task Force" and says "we [the task force] would call on the Aboriginal and Islander nation to give whole-hearted support to the *Koori Mail*".

In Edition 13, the paper gave banner headline and front page treatment to Harris' comments on the Federal Government's moves to achieve national reconciliation with Aboriginal people. The long story was almost entirely composed of quotations from Harris' remarks and turns onto Page 2, where a picture of Harris appears. Harris is reported to have called on White Australia to make a full admission of "the wrong that has been done to the indigenous people of Australia" before any further moves toward reconciliation could be made.

It is interesting that another prominent Elder, Charles Moran, also was given space for what in the White press would be called "opinion pieces". Moran's article in Edition 14 (p.4) was an attack on the newly-formed ATSIC organisation. This attack was in contradiction to an article written by his fellow Bundjalung Elder Frank Roberts in Edition 9, in which Roberts treats ATSIC much more favourably. ATSIC, Moran states in his article, is a "farce" because "the only thing ATSIC has done is to create a way to spend Aboriginal money and give the White bureaucrats the whip to whip us with.... Why would a White man do the dirty work on a Black fellow when he can get Black fellows to do it for him by giving him money so he can dictate to him".

Wilson acknowledges that her ease of access to such local Aboriginal Elders as Roberts and Harris (and to a lesser extent Moran) was a factor in the amount of coverage their ideas received. But she contends that there were sound journalistic reasons for this and that their views were clearly of interest to readers outside the Lismore area. She notes that Roberts and Harris were nationally known activists on Aboriginal rights and had been so for many years (interviews 1993, 1994).

Moran was also an occasional contributor of historical material such as descriptions of his own life as an Aboriginal person growing up in the Lismore, NSW area. An article entitled "A Matter of Survival" in Edition 2 (p.10) is a good

example of this genre. It is particularly interesting in that it does not attempt to emulate the regular style and structure of articles in White newspapers. It begins as a straightforward chronological narrative:

My mother was born in North Queensland up near the Gulf of Carpentaria. Mum's mother died when Mum was really young, so when Grandma passed away Mum was sent to Deebing Creek mission outside Ipswich....

The *Koori Mail* published in this period some other examples of this type of "life-history" narrative; for example, extracts in Edition 9 (pp. 12-13) from a book by Jack Mirritz entitled *My People's Life*. Other Aboriginal newspapers, magazines newsletters had used such articles devoted to storytelling, family history and cultural history from time to time -- examples can be found in everything from *Abo Call* in the 1930s through more recent publications like *Churinga*, *Alchuringa*, *Identity* and *Land Rights News* -- and this may have influenced this occasional practice at the *Koori Mail*.¹

In addition to treatment of major Aboriginal "news" such as mining disputes and ATSIC matters and to detailed coverage of the views of local Bundjalung elders, the newspaper in this period also ran a large amount of what could be termed "public service" material, much of it culled from press releases (Wilson, Toohey; interviews 1993, 1994). Such stories dealt, for example, with risks of hepatitis, about new ambulance services available, about a training program for potential Aboriginal police officers in NSW, etc. There was always sports coverage, much of it devoted to the accomplishments of Black athletes and teams. There were also fairly regular "good news" profiles of Aboriginal people who had achieved successes in various ways. Edition 3 (p. 18) carried a profile of the "first Aboriginal archaeologist". Edition 4 (p. 7) carried a profile of a "Koori cop" from Bathurst, NSW. Edition 4 also contained a profile (p. 8) of Sabu Dunn, a former drover from far-western NSW who had been appointed to a Liaison Officer's position in the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service.

¹ The significance of articles like this in the development of the *Koori Mail* and of what might be called an "Aboriginal style" of print journalism -- as well as the role of a White Editor in their production -- will be discussed, along with related historical and theoretical matters, in Chapter 6.

The children's pages -- "The Koori Kids Club", usually prepared by a White staff member, Vicki Payne -- generally carried comics, puzzles and other visually interesting games for young readers in this period. They are unusual because the stories and images were usually Aboriginal. Cartoon figures, for example, would often be Aboriginal children at play or trying to solve puzzles or mysteries and a typical story would be like that in Edition 1 (p. 20) which described traditional cooking and eating practices of Aboriginal people. There were also a large number of photos of what must be called "cute" Aboriginal children throughout the pages of editions published in this first period of the *Koori Mail's* existence. Often, these photos appeared as self-contained features with short "stories" appearing in the photo captions. Edition 2, (p. 1 & p. 5) is a good example of this practice. Such children's photos were apparently chosen because the children were "pretty" or because the Editor simply wished to run more pictures of Black children or because "filler" material was required or a combination of these factors (Wilson interview 1993).

In a more general way the large number of photos of Black people run at this time (and throughout the history of the paper) was a major factor in beginning to give it a distinct visual appearance, since mainstream and even ethnic newspapers rarely ran pictures of Aboriginal people, except in negative stories (Royal Commission 1991; Meadows 1987; Ata & Ryan 1989) and since the *Koori Mail* in layout and general appearance was not really much different from other community newspapers in Australia.

As promised by Carriage in his "Statement of *Koori Mail* Philosophy" the paper regularly carried editorials, though not all could be said to be as "daring" as Carriage had hoped. Most, if not all, were written in the first two periods of the paper's history by the White Editor, Janine Wilson. She made an apparent effort to see things from a "Koori perspective", although some readers may have questioned how well she was able to do that (Wilson interview 1993). A typical editorial of this period appeared in Edition 6, (p.2), in which Wilson asks whether one small faction of Aboriginal people in the Yackabindie region should be able to block a proposed \$350 million mining project which was supported by other Aboriginal people in the area:

This is not a Coronation Hill, with Aboriginal people protecting a sacred site. This is a major project which would offer financial benefits for the nation and welcome employment opportunities for Aboriginal people....

This is not a fight about mining in a disputed area, but a dispute between two groups of people, one the traditional Aboriginal people from the area and another a group led by a White man who was born in Victoria and has an Aboriginal wife.

(Those readers critical of the idea of a White person editing an Aboriginal newspaper would probably point out to Wilson the irony of her noting a person's race as a factor in his or her suitability to become involved in issues such as the Yackabindie Mine dispute.)

In another editorial, in Edition 6, Wilson writes of her reaction as a White journalist to what she has "discovered" during her time at the *Koori Mail*:

When I look into my notebook for the *Koori Mail*, I could not have anticipated the tragic accounts I would be told. A door opened onto unknown achievements, but more than anything I have encountered unbearable pain and silent tragedies in a sea of deep pain. As a journalist I was not prepared for what I found.

Whether Wilson was prepared or not for what she "found", it must be acknowledged that for a time under her editorship -- some would argue, for a rather brief time -- the *Koori Mail* apparently began to find its feet as a newspaper which attempted to cover stories of major importance for and of interest to Aboriginal people around the country.

In this thesis, the period from approximately November 1991 to March 1992 has been identified as an "interim" period in which details of the assumption of 80% control of the paper by the Bygal Weahunir company and the ATSIC grant to finance this were being arranged. The second period in the paper's administrative or organisational evolution has been identified as that from March 1992 to the sacking of Janine Wilson in February 1993. However, despite the fact that there was some turmoil and conflict in the November 1991-March 1992 period, this period and the one which follows can usefully be taken as one unit for the purposes of the current examination of content and readership. Janine Wilson was editor of the paper in both parts of this long second period and had already started to consolidate her position and to develop her own style of the paper's coverage of Aboriginal issues in the earlier part. For these reasons, the two will be examined together in the next section of this chapter.

From late 1991 until the first anniversary of the *Koori Mail's* founding -- an event celebrated in June 1992 with a special issue and a major conference in Lismore on Aboriginal employment issues -- a close reading shows some obvious effort being made to provide thorough and regular coverage of at least several on-going issues. It will be shown later in this chapter how that coverage began to change somewhat in the months after June 1992, with further major changes developing through late 1992 up to the point at which Wilson was forced to leave and continuing to late 1994. Major issues of concern for the paper at this point were such things as the findings of and debate over the reports of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody; the development of the Aboriginal Reconciliation Council (and related debate and controversy); and the further development of ATSIC and its budgetary decisions and allotments. As well, the paper paid close attention to charges of deep-seated racism at the Casino, NSW High School (coverage clearly influenced by the proximity of the school to the paper's Lismore, NSW home base), to controversies over alleged mismanagement of funds by the NSW Land Council, and to the protests in Canberra to mark the 20th anniversary of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy. Such stories made the front pages of the paper in this period and were generally written by either Wilson herself, or by a small number of regular Aboriginal stringers. A small number of non-Aboriginal stringers was also contributing, often without bylines.

Coverage of the deaths in custody issue and the plight of Aboriginal prisoners in Australian jails was particularly heavy throughout this period. Indeed, it can be argued that this general issue received more sustained attention than any other, except possibly for ongoing coverage of Aboriginal bureaucracies such as ATSIC and the Reconciliation Council.

In addition to somewhat routine coverage of the findings and aftermath of the Royal Commission itself, front page stories in the paper examined other aspects of Aboriginal experience in Australian jails. Edition 18 carried a story about allegations of mistreatment of an Aboriginal prisoner in a Brisbane jail in the week before he hanged himself in December 1991:

A prisoner has come forward with accusations that Glen Hill, 17, was subjected to brutal treatment in the week before he died at the Sir David Longland Corrective Centre in Brisbane....[Aboriginal inmate Derek] Sinden says it was known among the prisoners that Glen Hill had been trying to get letters out to his mother and sister.

It is believed the letters were complaining about the brutality in custody... (p.1).

Significantly, the item contains no comment or rebuttal from prison officials, and no indication that one was sought. Another front page story, in Edition 20, provided detailed coverage of a study by Sydney University's Institute of Criminology into the disproportionate number of Aboriginal people in Australian jails. Somewhat later, Edition 29 provided detailed coverage of the allotment of some \$250 million to be spent meeting recommendations of the Royal Commission into Black Deaths in Custody.

In this period, an occasional feature called "From the Inside" began to appear. It attempted to provide a picture of the problems facing Aboriginal prison inmates. Wilson says (interview 1993) that she became troubled by what prisoners' letters to the paper were indicating about their experiences and she began to see the *Koori Mail* as a voice and an advocate for their concerns. The paper was becoming popular among Aboriginal inmates: a number of institutions in the Department of Corrective Services had subscribed and when this happened an additional copy of each edition was generally sent without charge to the prison in question (Toohey interview 1994). Wilson was asked at this time by Black activist Mum Shirl to provide free subscriptions to large numbers of Black inmates (interview 1993). In an editorial in Edition 20 (p. 2), Wilson writes that giving free copies to prisoners was financially impossible but that the paper was "hoping to establish closer links with the prisoners and provide a place in the paper for contributions from the prisons". Such a link, the editorial continued, "is particularly important for the Aboriginal prisoners who have been separated from communities by imprisonment hundreds of kilometres from home".

Another example of the *Koori Mail's* increasing involvement with the Aboriginal community and an indication that some Aboriginal people were beginning to see the paper at that time as their advocate was evident in the coverage of the occupation of the old Parliament House in Canberra by Aboriginal people who declared the building an "Aboriginal embassy". Wilson travelled to Canberra to cover the occupation and her story was front page in Edition 19. The coverage was made particularly interesting by the fact that she was the only journalist allowed inside the building by the Aboriginal protesters (who included such prominent figures as Charles Perkins, Mum Shirl, and Kevin Gilbert). Wilson says (interview 1993) that Shirl insisted the Wilson be allowed to stay so that there would be a

witness when the police arrived to end the occupation. This exclusive access to a breaking story provided strong material:

Police had turned out in force for the removal of the protesters. Inside, the outlines of police could be seen behind glass [sic] doors to the hall where the protesters had established themselves.... As protesters gathered their bedding and other belongings, police stood shoulder to shoulder at the front door....

[Later] A group of about 60 people gathered at the court in support of the defendants.... One woman, who was refused entry because all the seats were taken, shouted: "This is our history".

Early 1992 also saw the introduction of stories produced regularly by a small group of Aboriginal stringers which Wilson had begun to assemble. This increased the breadth and depth of the coverage of many stories and, it can be argued, provided the paper with a needed genuinely-Aboriginal perspective in its journalism.

Aboriginal journalists Katrina Power of South Australia; Britta Lyster, based in Sydney; and Kirstie Parker of North Queensland (and to a lesser extent other Black journalists) became regular contributors with stories from their regions. This was the first time, it can be argued, that the paper could be seen to be trying to provide a regular and genuinely-Aboriginal perspective on some of the stories of the day.

Edition 22, published two weeks after the announcement of the purchase of the paper by the Bygal Weahunir co-op is a good example of the *Koori Mail's* style and content at this time. The front page story, with banner headline, described a Federal Government's decision to temporarily stop a \$20 million dam from being built close to sacred sites near Alice Springs, NT. Inside, the edition contained bylined stories by Kirstie Parker (who filed several items, including coverage of a Brisbane anti-racism protest march and of the return to Queensland by the Australian Museum of 90-year-old remains of an Aboriginal girl), Britta Lyster (who also filed several stories, including her report on reaction in the NSW Police Service management echelons to news that a racist video was shown by two NSW police officers at a party in Queensland; another on the public allegedly being misled about the NSW Land Council; and a third about Aboriginal juvenile offenders in WA), and Katrina Power (who provided coverage of the Aboriginal and Islander Music Festival and a review of a new work by an Aboriginal playwright). Edition 22 also reported on a police raid on an Aboriginal home in Redfern, NSW and provided an unusual feature story on current facilities to care for elderly Aboriginal people. An

Editorial in this edition called for action on White racism, as exposed in recent mainstream media reports. While Edition 22 had perhaps more stories by stringers than most of that period, its general content and the type of coverage attempted were not untypical.

The three stringers mentioned here were by far the most prolific contributors of the time but other Aboriginal people and some White freelancers provided articles from time to time as well. Often, stringers other than main regular contributors were not given bylines, and Toohey has indicated that there were complaints from contributors at this time about that and about delayed payment. Wilson at this time had been given a budget of \$600 per edition for stringer copy and was clearly using it. Power was a freelance reporter based in Adelaide. Lyster worked for the ABC in Sydney. Parker was working at that time as Editor of the *Atherton Tablelander* in Cairns, but she was soon to be hired as the Press Secretary to Aboriginal Affairs Minister Robert Tickner and so stopped providing stories to the *Koori Mail*. (Wilson says that subsequently having this contact in Tickner's office was very useful as well.)

Other Black journalists and commentators made contributions occasionally. A bylined story by the prominent activist Roberta Sykes, for example, appeared in Edition 24. It outlined working conditions for older Aboriginal people who may not have been able to arrange superannuation schemes for themselves:

Black organisations need to look closely at the working and retirement conditions of staff in their operations. Younger and increasingly better educated Blacks stand to gain from the progress being made.... But older Blacks remain disadvantaged from the ongoing effects of the discrimination that is part of Australia's modern history (p. 22).

Some other elements of the paper's coverage in the period November 1991 to June 1992 merit particular attention. Wilson had made a special effort to cover serious allegations of racism at Casino High School, where White teachers had been accused of calling Aboriginal students "vermin" and where relations generally between Whites and Aborigines were badly strained. The paper provided very close coverage of this controversy, from the first allegations through to the transfer of a number of teachers. Also noteworthy were stories which did not shy away from "negative" reporting about Aboriginal people or organisations. Controversy over

alleged mismanagement of funds by the NSW South Coast Regional Land Council was Page 1 on Edition 23, while Edition 35 carried a front page report on call by a Kempsey, NSW Aboriginal community for an Australian Federal Police investigation into alleged irregularities between the ATSIC office in Lismore, a North Coast engineer, and three firms involved in administering a \$2.46 million building grant:

The Aboriginal community says it is the victim of bureaucratic empire building, and bias surrounding the appointment of project supervisors. The dispute highlights the increasing cry from Aboriginal people to have the right to make decisions about matters that affect them.

After approximately June 1992, however, the intensity of the effort to provide such coverage and the reliance on Aboriginal stringer copy began to fall off noticeably. This is due to several matters addressed in the preceding chapter. Chief among the problems which led to reduced reliance on stringers and more use of wire copy were financial constraints which led to each of the five owners of the paper having to contribute about \$2500 each in mid-1992 to keep it afloat. As well, there was increasing conflict in the *Koori Mail* office between Wilson and Aboriginal Sales and Marketing Manager Gary Martin over control of the day-to-day operations and other matters. The unproductive financial and personnel situation led to an increasing reliance on AAP wire copy (though stringers were still contributing) and less attention being paid to larger questions of editorial stance and direction (Wilson 1993, 1994; Toohey 1993, 1994). As well, there were plans to begin relying more heavily on Tim Paden, a young Aboriginal cadet journalist who had been hired in March 1992. However, for the most part in the period after his hiring Paden filed only a small number of minor feature stories from the Lismore area and then left the paper in September 1992 (Toohey interview 1994).

Content of the paper from mid 1992 to February 1993 was clearly less engaged as far as Aboriginal issues were concerned. There was a marked decrease, for example, in stories about Aboriginal prison inmates and related issues and not every issue carried an editorial. Still, Wilson was apparently continuing to provide as comprehensive a coverage of Aboriginal affairs as possible within the limits of her now-reduced budget and by using more AAP wire copy. Edition 29 carried on its front page, for example, news of the innovative Tanami satellite communications project at a remote community in NT, but the edition was only 20 pages instead of

the usual 24 and the stories inside were no match for the energetic, imaginative and often exclusive coverage which was common six months earlier. Use of coloured inks inside the paper (though not on Page 1) was reduced, making for a less visually-appealing publication. By Edition 43, just a short time before Wilson was sacked, there were just five bylined stories: three by Wilson herself and two other minor items by non-Aboriginal stringers Rory Medcalf and Charles Johnson. Aboriginal stringers such as Power and Lyster were apparently no longer contributing. That issue contained no editorial, but letters to the editor were still included (as had been the case since the first edition of the paper) as well as features on Aboriginal health issues, the Koori Kids Club page, and the back-page sports item.

The next period to be examined runs from mid-February 1993, when Wilson left the paper, to mid-late 1994, when full control of the *Koori Mail* was purchased by the Bygal Weahunir holding company from the *Northern Star* and steps were taken to eliminate reliance on outside layout and typesetting services by purchasing desktop publishing equipment. A local White journalist, Dona Graham, was hired by Toohey on a contract basis after Wilson's departure to work approximately three days a week editing copy and overseeing layout and production. Toohey felt this would decrease production costs but would still allow him enough time to devote his attentions to solving the paper's recurring financial difficulties. The estimate of the number of days a part-time sub- or production editor would need to put out a 24-page edition every two weeks was arrived at by Ian Snell, the White consultant who had provided a report to Toohey at around this time (Toohey interview 1994).

Graham's attitude to the job was markedly different from Wilson's. She saw herself, in effect, as a production editor or copy editor rather than someone who wished to break new ground in coverage of Aboriginal affairs (interviews, Graham 1993; Toohey 1993, 1994; Wilson 1993). Accordingly, it can be argued that under her part-time editorship the *Koori Mail's* content did not achieve the significance in scope or quality which was apparent, briefly, in the late 1991-mid 1992 period under Wilson. The salient features of Graham's editorship were heavy use of (usually unattributed) AAP wire copy and on the more positive side a very clear attempt to make sure that all parts of the country were "covered", even if this coverage was generally through the eyes of White AAP journalists. Much of the subject matter in the newspaper in this period is quite similar to what it had always been but the source of that material and its treatment are quite different than had been the case when Wilson was making a serious attempt at original and varied coverage of important stories.

Graham made less use of Aboriginal stringers or of stringers in general after her arrival. In this period bylined stories were a rarity, in marked contrast to Wilson's editorship even when budgets were limited. By December 1993, another Aboriginal cadet, Todd Condie, had been hired and it was hoped that from that period he would be able to provide enough stories to reduce dependence on stringers even further. Stringer copy, when it appeared, was of the lighter feature variety or arts and music reviews. Many articles arrived at the paper by mail or fax unsolicited, according to Toohey and Graham (interviews, 1993), but most of this was not useable. Typical of the stringer copy which did get used in this period is a Page 2 feature in Edition 47 by Colin Cowell on a new health centre for an Aboriginal community in Victoria. Cowell also provided a profile of singer Archie Roach for that issue. There are a few stories in this period by Kempsey-based Aboriginal freelance journalist Natasha Morse (for example, in Edition 44) and one in Edition 56 on an Aboriginal cricket team by the once-prolific Aboriginal stringer Katrina Power. A very rare item covering matters related to the Torres Strait area and people appears in Edition 48 (p. 19) under the byline Ephraim Bani. The item describes traditional Torres Strait dancing and is labelled "Strait Talking: News, Views and the culture of the Torres Strait Islands", but what looked like a possible regular feature never appears again. (This, according to Toohey, was taken from the *Torres News*, under an agreement between the two papers to occasionally exchange material.)

Stories, either minor or major, with Editor Graham's byline were rare as well. Her only by-lined contribution in this period was a two-page paid-advertising feature or "advertorial" in Edition 56, describing Aboriginal affirmative action employment initiatives by the Pacific Power company. Nor did Graham or anyone else directly connected with the paper write editorials in this period. In only a very few editions after February 1993 did editorials appear: if they did, they were almost always reprints from other sources. Often -- and this is surprising for a paper ostensibly the "voice" of Aboriginal people -- they were from mainstream White Australian newspapers. Edition 51 contains a reprint of an editorial from *The Age* on Prime Minister Keating's historic "Redfern Statement". Edition 60 contained a reprint of an editorial from *The Australian* on the "encouraging" signs that Aboriginal people were becoming interested in business and entrepreneurship. Graham usually preferred to use long letters to the editor in place of editorials. These came most often from readers or from prominent Aboriginal people around the country. An open letter on the Mabo land claims issue from the Acting Chairperson of ATSIC, Sol Bellear, constituted the editorial comment in Edition 56 (p. 2). This practice of

using "editorials" from sources other than the paper's own staff, Aboriginal or not, makes it difficult to assess the paper's editorial stance in this period: in effect, it had none of its own.

Graham, and Toohey, who also had a strong input into editorial decision making in this period, did go to some lengths to head off any suggestion that the newspaper was too concerned with NSW issues. In early 1993, small dinkuses of state maps were introduced as a layout feature so that readers interested in Aboriginal stories from a particular state could quickly find them when skimming the pages. As well, some, but not all, issues carried items labelled with something along the lines of "nationwide round-up" either on the front page or inside the paper. These featured wire copy briefs on "Aboriginal" stories from around Australia. "There had been suggestions that we were not obviously a national paper," according to Toohey, "so we started using these state map dinkuses and other little features like that, and they were well-received.

As minor new features and approaches were being adopted, other elements of the paper from its early days were quietly dropped. The children's pages disappeared early in 1993. Toohey argues that the financial constraints under which the paper was operating made it uneconomic to devote one or two pages per issue to a feature which generated little reader response and no related advertising. The regular and once-popular "From the Inside" feature on Aboriginal experience in prisons was also dropped in this period. On the other hand, new elements were gradually introduced. In Edition 55 a feature called "*Koori Mail* National Calendar" began to appear, which laid out for readers various meetings, conferences and entertainment events around Australia which were presumably of interest to Aboriginal people. Another feature added at around this time, but which seemed to run counter to the effort to appear to be providing a national focus was "Bush Community Notes". This was a long (usually full-page) feature which provided detailed news of issues and events in western NSW rural Aboriginal communities to allow people there "to have a greater voice". The paper invited readers in this area to write or phone "local correspondent" Charles Johnson in Lake Cargelligo, NSW, with information which he would compile and deliver to the newspaper in Lismore by deadline. Plans to eventually make this a national "bush notes" feature had not come to fruition by late 1994.

The major stories "covered" by the *Koori Mail* in this period were, as always, such things as ATSIC matters, Aboriginal health and education, and to a lesser extent the continuing fall-out from the Deaths in Custody Report. But this was

also the period when the Mabo land claims story had generated a full head of steam in the mainstream media, and the *Koori Mail*, too, responded strongly to this issue. However, it cannot be said that the paper in any sense led the way on coverage of the Mabo decision or its aftermath. Like most of the mainstream media in Australia, the *Koori Mail* appeared not to take notice of the original High Court decision of June 1992 (when Wilson was still at the helm, but when the paper was in particular financial and organisational difficulty). Not until Edition 51, in May 1993, did the first item referring to a "Mabo-style claim" appear. After that of course, as was the case in most Australian media of the time, Mabo stories became a regular feature.

However, Graham did not appear to be attempting to provide a fresh or distinctively-Aboriginal perspective on this historic issue. Her approach was to compile wire service stories on Mabo and related issues into packages or "updates" and cluster them together on one or two pages inside the paper on a regular basis. When major events related to Mabo took place these were placed higher in the paper or on the front page but were almost exclusively wire service reports. Edition 51's front page reported, with an unattributed, unsigned item, on a major "Mabo style claim" to be launched by Aboriginal people on Watarraka Park land. Edition 53 also carried Mabo on the front page: a banner headline said "Land Claims Sweep Over the Nation: More to Come". This unattributed, unsigned piece reported that:

The issue that is creating history on a daily basis, the Mabo saga, continues to grow with the declaration that Torres Strait Islanders plan to lay claim to the whole region between Australia and Papua New Guinea under the Mabo precedent and seek \$5 billion compensation.

The item included a large map of the Australian continent illustrating "where the claims could fall". Inside, a special feature called "Mabo Maze" provided reprints of various public statements made recently on the Mabo issue. Those quoted included Lois O'Donoghue, chairperson of ATSIC; Patrick Dodson, Chairman of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation; Senate Leader Ron Boswell; John Ralph, then-President of the Business Council of Australia, and the *Koori Mail's* "resident cartoonist" Danny Eastwood (who warned against "outlandish" claims). This began a regular series of such digests of Mabo stories or statements, usually labelled "Land Claims Update" or "Mabo Update". These comprised, almost exclusively, wire service dispatches culled from the offerings of the two weeks preceding the *Koori Mail* deadline. Any editorial comment on the Mabo issue was in the form of letters

to the editor, or reprints of mainstream media editorials and statements by politicians or spokespeople of various sorts. There was no original coverage or content on the Mabo issue by *Koori Mail* staff in this period, despite it being one of the most important issues in the Aboriginal community in decades.

This was a period, on the other hand, when a great deal of attention was being paid to generating lucrative advertising supplements, a practice which in previous periods had helped put the paper on a more sound financial footing. Several large educational supplements appeared in this period, in editions which sometimes went to 56 pages. (It should be remembered that this was a period when, for a time in early 1993, it was not uncommon for a regular edition to fall to 20 pages from the regular 24.) Edition 57 is a good example of this sort of publication, which was mainly devoted to an education supplement. The education supplements contained a great deal of feature material -- very little written by *Koori Mail* staff, with most being provided by advertisers -- on programs from various Australian universities which might be of interest to Aboriginal people. The supplements also contained, of course, a great deal of related display advertising. Indeed, quite early in the newspaper's development Australian universities had begun to be regular advertisers and this increased steadily until the introduction of full-blown educational supplements.² As well, in this period the Department of Employment, Education and Training began to place large supplements in the *Koori Mail* called "Making the Message Stick": these contained feature material, and advertising, about various training programs and opportunities for Aboriginal people.

In general it can be said of this period of the paper's evolution that much attention was paid to elements in the paper which would attract advertising (interviews, Toohey 1993, 1994; Graham, 1993, 1994). An innovation of this sort was the "Walkabout Travel" feature which began to appear with Edition 71. This two-page item became a regular part of the paper after this time (and until late 1994): it comprised feature material, some of it clearly from press releases or tourist agency handouts, extolling the virtues of various Outback or "Aboriginal tourism" attractions. Prominent on these pages was always a display ad by Koori Travel World, an agency owned by Aboriginal entrepreneur Tom Kellner, whose company

² A letter from the then Acting Head of University of Wollongong's Aboriginal Education Unit, Bill Harris, appeared in Edition 18 and was "by way of congratulating you and your newspaper on the results of a recent advertisement we placed.... From a survey carried out among our potential students we were pleasantly informed that an extremely high percentage ... of applicants to our programs were informed of its availability through your publication.... [We] were somewhat surprised at just how far into Aboriginal communities your newspaper was being distributed.

was billed as a "specialist in conference and business travel for Kooris". Toohey acknowledges (interview 1994) that the decision was made in this period to court advertising contracts by providing editorial features which would generate interest in various sectors of the Aboriginal (or White) business community. This accounted, for example, for a new emphasis on full pages devoted to record reviews, arts and entertainment features, and so on. However, in the latter part of the period in question, the fact that more and more pages were being devoted to regular travel and entertainment features and columns meant that less space was available for news and commentary. Such news and commentary as did appear toward the end of the period just examined was, as was the case in the earlier part, almost exclusively wire copy.

Toohey himself, with the approval of the Aboriginal Board, had initiated this search for an advertising-driven financial security for the paper and he argues as any newspaper manager must that without a secure revenue base no paper can provide regular editorial content to readers. This, as Ata and Ryan point out (1989), is one of the perennial problems facing community or ethnic newspapers. However, even Toohey had apparently become concerned at the end of this period -- i.e. by approximately mid-1994 -- about the very close relationship which Graham wished to develop between herself and potential advertisers. She had proposed in a formal letter to Toohey and to the Board of Directors that in addition to her part-time duties as Editor she fill in the rest of her work week by acting as an advertising sales representative. Toohey became alarmed at the ethical and professional implications of such an unusual arrangement and sought the advice of the Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance, of consultant Ian Snell, and of at least one university journalism educator before making a strong case to the *Koori Mail's* Board that Graham should not be allowed to sell ads and put out the newspaper at the same time (Toohey interview 1994; text of Graham letter, Appendix III).

In a memo to Toohey dated January 1994, Graham makes this case for her working to sell advertising space, particularly in the increasingly frequent special features or supplements:

From experience John you know that if the "Editor" rings a potential client to participate in a Feature their response will far outstrip anything the Advertising Manager can do because the Editor is in a stronger position to bargain. The Editor can use the lure of free editorial space to secure ads -- which costs us nothing -- whereas the Advertising Manager can only negotiate on money and that means discounting ads....

[The] relationship between Editorial and Advertising at the *Koori Mail* is its greatest strength....

Toohy's concern about the newspaper's image and editorial direction at mid-1994, some may argue, was understandable. Indeed, Graham's memo was an unmistakable indication that much more attention was being paid in the current period of the newspaper's development to revenues than to editorial content. Toohy confirms this and also reveals that fundamental discussions of editorial content and direction were rare at meetings of the Board of Directors (interview 1994). Clearly, the statement that the advertising considerations were the paper's "greatest strength" would be a cause for concern among those who saw the paper as having a special role to play in the Aboriginal community. From its beginnings as a committed but financially-insecure venture aimed at giving Aboriginal people a new print media voice, the *Koori Mail* had three years later apparently established itself on a far firmer financial footing but had become a very different sort of newspaper than that envisaged by its founder or by those Aboriginal people who had overseen the takeover of the paper in late 1991 (interviews, Carriage 1994; Wilson 1993). These important issues -- the achievements of the *Koori Mail*, its place in the developing Aboriginal media structure of Australia, its "authenticity", and possible future directions -- are among those which will be dealt with in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

This final chapter will place the foregoing detailed examination of the history, organisation and content of the *Koori Mail* into the related cultural and theoretical contexts established in earlier chapters. In doing so it will also raise, and put forward some possible answers to, relevant questions about the significance of the *Koori Mail* project in light of the ongoing efforts by Aboriginal people to empower themselves through appropriation of European media forms and methods. Prominent among these issues will be that of the *Koori Mail's* "authenticity" as an Aboriginal newspaper, its "Aboriginality", especially insofar as many key editorial and organisational decisions have been made by non-Aboriginal people. The issue of future directions for the paper as it was poised in late 1994 to enter a more developed and possibly more mature stage will also be examined.

Such issues are to be addressed, however, with a keen awareness of the difficulties inherent in having a White researcher attempt such a task. The methodological matters raised by, among others, Bredin (1993) and Langton (1993) -- and referred to in the Introduction to this thesis -- will continue to be useful as guides. And a statement made by Hodge in relation to his work on Aboriginal broadcast media is to be kept firmly in mind. Hodge wrote:

I do not wish to fall into the Aboriginalist fault of using an analysis of Aboriginal language and culture as a basis for telling Aboriginals what they should think, about media policy or anything else (1990, p. 218).

It is not my intention to tell the Aboriginal owners of the *Koori Mail* or anyone else associated with the project how they should go about the business of producing this newspaper. However, it is a legitimate and, I believe, potentially valuable research task to examine as I have done the process of establishing and producing the *Koori Mail* and to now attempt to place those efforts into a broader context in a way in which Aboriginal people and others may find interesting or useful.

Some of the questions which shape the content of this chapter are the following: Has enough attention been devoted by the Aboriginal owners of the *Koori Mail* to the fundamental issues of its aim, the community and readership it wishes to serve, the style and discourse adopted, its editorial stance? Could this newspaper be considered authentically "Aboriginal" without having had a Black

Editor and if almost all of its content and style in the first years of its existence were decided upon by non-Aboriginal people? Is Black ownership of the means of production of this newspaper sufficient for genuine "control"? How does the experience of producing this newspaper compare to similar media ventures in the Aboriginal filmmaking, television and radio sectors? What might be the result if an Aboriginal Editor, well-grounded in Aboriginal cultural and aesthetic traditions, were to take over the newspaper and set about to realise its full potential as a media tool for empowerment? What content, style and modes of delivery might be adopted which better take into account the interests, needs and lifestyles of Aboriginal people around Australia?

The close examination of all aspects of the *Koori Mail* project which has been undertaken in this thesis leads to the conclusion that while the newspaper is arguably the most significant attempt ever by Aboriginal people to use the medium of print journalism, its potential was not being fully realised by late 1994. On the face of it, the *Koori Mail* project was a most promising development for Aboriginal people concerned about media empowerment: an unprecedented and apparently unrestricted opportunity to produce print journalism of the sort they felt appropriate. However, I maintain that after more than three years of operation of the enterprise the Aboriginal Board of Directors of the newspaper was in the paradoxical position of owning the means of journalistic production without exercising any genuine editorial control of the content of the newspaper or of the image of Aboriginal people it has presented. I am also arguing that with the organisation and personnel at the *Koori Mail* as they were in late 1994, the possibility of comprehensive coverage of Aboriginal issues around Australia from a genuinely Aboriginal perspective was greatly reduced. And I maintain that with the decision to adopt what is in effect a replica of the common style of European ethnic or community newspapers in Australia the owners of the *Koori Mail* did not take full advantage of a valuable opportunity to create a media product which is more genuinely "Aboriginal", more authentic in style and approach.

A number of Aboriginal activists, writers and commentators have addressed the fundamental question of the role and effect of White editors "filtering" Black writing -- either creative writing or journalism -- and these views have been referred to in Chapter 3. McGuinness in particular has argued strenuously that unless Aboriginal people control the means of literary production at all levels, from idea conception through writing, editing and publication, a piece of writing is not truly Aboriginal:

It's no good for Aboriginal people to be writing what white publishing companies, white governments, white government agencies decree they ought to write. If it's going to be legitimate Aboriginal literature, then it must come, flow freely, from the Aboriginal people, from the Aboriginal communities, without any restrictions placed upon them (in Davis & Hodge 1985, p. 45).

While McGuinness was discussing creative writing, his observations can be usefully applied to all media production and to the *Koori Mail* project in particular because of its extended use of White editors and managers.

Langton, too, has argued that it is better for Aboriginal people to control the means of production of media images and content than to try to police and improve the representation of Aboriginal people and issues in the mainstream, non-indigenous media:

It is clearly unrealistic for Aboriginal people to expect that others will stop portraying us in photographs, films, on television, in newspapers, literature and so on.... Rather than demanding an impossibility, it would be more useful to identify those points where it is possible to control the means of production and to make our own self-representations (1994, p.10).

There are those, of course, who would argue that if the Board of Directors of the *Koori Mail* were to become dissatisfied with the work being done by its White employees and by a White Editor in particular then changes could be ordered or new personnel hired. Indeed, one White Editor, Janine Wilson, and one White General Manager, John Toohey, have been sacked by the Board in the past. However, these sackings were not clearly linked to disputes over editorial content or approach: in both cases they were related to personality conflicts, production problems, budgeting, or management styles. But even if it is acknowledged that the Board of Directors could make decisions about who was to run the *Koori Mail* operation, media gatekeeping theory also makes it clear that just as important as what is allowed into a publication or broadcast is what is *not* allowed in; i.e., which stories or issues do not get covered, or which angles and elements get accentuated at the expense of others. The Board of Directors of the *Koori Mail* may have felt that the product created by a new Editor or General Manager was an improvement, but they

would not have been in a position to know what issues and events might have been covered more fully or covered from a more genuinely Aboriginal perspective because neither they nor an appropriately qualified Aboriginal journalist were making key editorial decisions on a daily basis during the period examined.

This problem is compounded by the fact that the White Editor of the *Koori Mail* not only had daily control over which stories to commission or accept from which stringers -- Aboriginal or White -- and how these were to be edited and presented in the paper, but also could and, in the most recent period of the paper's history which has been examined, very frequently did use Australian Associated Press wire service copy in the paper's coverage of Aboriginal affairs. Very little, if any, of this wire copy is written by Aboriginal people or even from an Aboriginal perspective. So in many instances articles which appeared in the *Koori Mail* in late 1994 differed little from those which may appear on any given day in the mainstream White press. The sheer number and placement of "Aboriginal" stories in any issue of the *Koori Mail* did, of course, far exceed the number generally seen in non-indigenous daily or weekly community newspapers. But the fact that many of these were AAP items (or articles written by White stringers) meant that readers were not assured of a truly or consistently Aboriginal viewpoint.

The Aboriginal critic and writer Roberta Sykes has noted in a general way the problems created by the dominance of non-indigenous wire services in worldwide reporting of Black issues:

... [A] very large portion of the world population, that is the entire Black population, is not served by an existing news service. Not only does this inhibit the ability of Black writers to make a living, but more importantly it maintains our isolation from each other (in Nelson 1988, p.112-113).

Wagner-Pitz also argues that for Aboriginal newspapers and magazines to really begin to do significant work for their communities and to cover Aboriginal issues in a comprehensive way a Black news service is required in Australia (1984, p. 305).¹

¹ The National Indigenous Media Association (NIMA) has been examining for some time the possibility of establishing a form of Aboriginal news service, primarily for its member community radio and TV stations. In 1994, NIMA had acquired rights to use the fourth channel on the OPTUS satellite for its National Indigenous Radio Service (to be carried on the satellite alongside SBS, Community Radio News and the BBC World Service) and planned to begin using the data-transmission facility of that channel to circulate transcripts of Aboriginal community radio and TV

These observations about the potentially empowering nature of an Aboriginal news service and about the limitations imposed on Aboriginal journalism by dependence on White news services should also be seen in light of the emerging tradition (discussed in detail in Chapter 3) of Aboriginal writers being in many cases activists in the Aboriginal community, or associated with activist organisations and causes. It would appear that this tradition of activism through the written word was not being continued in the *Koori Mail* in its late-1994 incarnation, except in rare instances. It has been noted that for a brief period (late 1991-early 1992) when the paper was edited by Janine Wilson the newspaper seemed to be attempting to take the lead in debates on Aboriginal issues, with strong editorials and close, original coverage (often by experienced Aboriginal stringers working for other media organisations such as the ABC) of such stories as Aboriginal deaths in custody, prison conditions for black inmates, etc. This period was cut short by the serious personnel and financial problems which came to a head in mid-1992. It is also apparent that advertising and commercial considerations had by late 1994 become the main preoccupations of the then Editor and General Manager and that these preoccupations were tacitly endorsed by the Aboriginal Board of Directors.

On the other hand, Langton, for one, has argued that simply having Aboriginal people in control of a media enterprise -- whether they are "activists" or not -- is in itself no guarantee of better or more complete or more authentic representation of Aboriginal people or issues:

There is a naive belief that Aboriginal people will make "better" representations of us, simply because they are Aboriginal, simply because being Aboriginal gives "greater" understanding. This belief is based on an ancient and universal feature of racism: the assumption of the undifferentiated Other. More specifically, the assumption that all Aborigines are alike and equally understand each other, without regard to cultural variation, history, gender, sexual preference and so on. It is a demand for censorship: there is

news bulletins and current affairs broadcasts among its members. Initially, such copy was to go to major Aboriginal community broadcasters such as CAAMA. But NIMA also had a budget to purchase small satellite dishes for its smaller member stations, which would allow them to also receive such "wire service" copy by mid-to-late 1995. Other Aboriginal media outlets, including print operations such as the *Koori Mail*, were to be invited to join the emerging news service network and to provide additional copy at that time. The AAP had previously expressed interest in the idea of providing a "custom service" Aboriginal news wire with a focus on Aboriginal stories produced by AAP journalists and by Aboriginal broadcasters and print journalists. But the plan by NIMA to use the OPTUS satellite to develop an independent service meant that the AAP proposal was set aside (Arley 1994, personal communication).

a "right" way to be Aboriginal, and any Aboriginal film or video producer will necessarily make a "true" representation of "Aboriginality" (1994, p. 27).

In light of Langton's comments, it should be noted that I am not arguing that a Black editor or Black journalists or less reliance on a mainstream wire service such as AAP would have necessarily ensured that the *Koori Mail* produced "better" coverage or representation of the Aboriginal story in this country. I am pointing out that with the organisation and personnel established at the *Koori Mail* by late 1994 the possibility of comprehensive coverage of Aboriginal issues from a more genuinely Aboriginal perspective was greatly reduced. This had almost as much to do, of course, with the relative lack of journalistic/publishing experience of members of the Board of Directors and their concern with solving the paper's commercial problems as it did with who may have been sitting in the Editor's chair. But it should be re-stated here that at no point in almost three and a half years since its founding in 1991 did the paper have an Aboriginal person acting as Editor and making important day-to-day decisions about content, approach, or editorial stance on issues important to the Aboriginal community.

In the earliest days of the project the Aboriginal founder, Owen Carriage, had significant input into the development of a formally-stated set of editorial objectives. But he acknowledges, and others confirm, that his subsequent involvement with editorial matters was limited, partly due to his own interests and work practices and partly due to the personality and practices of the paper's first Editor, Janine Wilson, a White Australian.

Nor has there been an Aboriginal journalist of any significant experience working for the newspaper as a full time employee in the Lismore office where the paper is assembled. Aboriginal stringers -- many of them inexperienced and/or "part-time" journalists -- were used since the first days but their stories were commissioned and edited by non-Aboriginal people. It has been noted above that between 1991 and 1994 two young Aboriginal people were hired in different periods to work as cadet journalists: Tim Paden, who worked as a cadet from March to September 1992, and Todd Condie, who was hired in December 1993 and was still working as a cadet in late 1994. Paden was a 22-year-old Lismore-area Aboriginal person with an interest in journalism, but he filed only minor stories before deciding to leave the paper. Condie had a degree in media production from Griffith University and gradually assumed more editorial duties after his arrival. He

was "graded" as a journalist (in the MEAA cadet journalists scale) in July 1994, shortly before the departure of John Toohey. But like Paden, Condie generally contributed articles of what would have to be seen as of the minor or feature variety and had no significant input into editorial policy or planning (interviews, Toohey 1994; Hunt 1994; Payne 1994). Condie's training was to have been the responsibility of the Editor, Dona Graham, but in practice and with her part-time status there was little time for training or supervision (Toohey 1994). Members of the Board of Directors indicated on numerous occasions that they intended, when an Aboriginal person of suitable training and experience became available, to put in place an Aboriginal Editor. Indeed, Aboriginal board members said that Condie, with substantially more experience and training, was a possible candidate for this important post. But in late 1994 the prospect of an Aboriginal person taking over the editorship from the current White Editor of the paper still seemed remote.

Despite all of the issues addressed above, the Aboriginal owners and directors of the *Koori Mail* appeared for the most part satisfied with the editorial performance of the newspaper and especially with the fact that it was becoming commercially viable. They acknowledged that while they intended to put a Black Editor in place in future and to increase the scope of the paper's coverage of Aboriginal issues they viewed the project as still being in its early days. The Chairman of the Board of Directors, Rod Cameron, said in an interview that he and his colleagues were pleased at owning any newspaper at all and that more complex questions of "authenticity" of form and content would have to wait. Indeed, Cameron said that the very similarity of the paper to existing non-Aboriginal community or ethnic publications was a source of satisfaction:

A lot of our readers say they are proud of how professional the paper looks, how much it looks like a White newspaper. They think it's a good thing to show people that we can produce something that's just as good as a White paper (interview, 1993).

Such attitudes among indigenous people working on media projects have been examined in a more theoretical way by such communications researchers as Katz (1977). Katz has observed in the context of indigenous filmmaking and television production that indigenous producers learning new media skills will often emulate the forms most often used by the dominant culture:

Modernisation brings in its wake a standardisation and secularisation of culture, such that the traditional values and the arts -- those that give a culture its character -- are overwhelmed by the influx of Western popular culture (1977, p. 113).

The Aboriginal writer and critic Mudrooroo Narogin has also remarked on this phenomenon. He notes:

[The] presentation of television images and the reading of them are part of culture. For Aborigines to be educated in this culture means that, too often, they learn how Europeans present images, and then re-present their own images according to this model (in O'Regan 1993, p. 191).

Katz and Narogin were writing primarily about broadcasting but their views are clearly also applicable to print journalism and publishing generally. Indeed, Ata and Ryan, in their examination of the ethnic press in Australia, have expressed similar views about the standardisation of forms adopted by editors producing newspapers for local ethnic communities. "The press in any community," they write, "tends to adhere to a common mode of presentation, including the editorial, news (in various categories), advertising, entertainment and detailed information of a more practical sort (1989, p.3)." The fear, whether well-founded or not, that traditional or indigenous cultures will be overcome by mass media forms and content is well-known and often expressed (Michaels 1986). However, Katz asks whether this has to be necessarily so, and whether there can be certain conditions under which "authentic" and more culturally-relevant media forms may be devised by indigenous producers.

In answering this question, Katz notes that there have been many attempts by indigenous broadcasters around the world to head off the trend toward cultural homogenisation and irrelevance and to produce "programs which give expression to cultural authenticity and continuity" (p. 117). He suggests that one promising strategy is to ensure that the best writers and artists of a community are actively involved in any media endeavours:

[Producers and writers working on media projects must have] a deeper grounding in their own cultural traditions and not only the traditions and technology of metropolitan broadcasting.

Informants in several countries told us how ill-informed broadcasters are about the traditional arts of their own societies and about ceremonies and values of their own cultures. A society concerned over the use of broadcasting for cultural continuity might try to experiment with the establishment of an "institute for the translation of tradition" whose members would give serious thought to traditional forms and content, on the one hand, and the language of the media, on the other....

Obviously, the answer is not to be found ready-made in traditional sources, but rather in a creative moulding of the old and the new (p.120).

On this topic, Ata and Ryan, despite their concerns about a certain homogenisation of ethnic newspapers, note that:

With-in these bounds there is opportunity for considerable flexibility, expressed, for example, in terms of space and the placing of material; and this may in itself be a powerful conveyor of meaning. Considerable structural differentiation of this sort may be observed even among papers in a particular ethnic or linguistic community (1989, p.3).

The notion developed by Eric Michaels of the possibility of an "Aboriginal invention of television" becomes useful here. In his work in Central Australia with Aboriginal people making television programs and videos Michaels observed certain culturally-specific and "authentic" ways of using the tools and forms of broadcasting (Michaels 1986, pp. 62-65). Others, like Meadows (1993, 1994), have made similar observations in Australia and have extended them to Inuit broadcasting in far northern Canada. I am arguing that just as indigenous film makers and television producers and radio broadcasters are "inventing" forms of culturally-specific and relevant media so too may the owners, directors and staff of an Aboriginal newspaper attempt to "invent" a form of their choosing. As Katz suggests, this would require both the will among those involved to do such work and an appropriate grounding in Aboriginal culture. What is particularly useful about Katz' views is that they do not preclude the possibility that non-indigenous people, with suitable inclination and "grounding", may continue to be involved in such an "Aboriginal invention of newspapers". This would also head off any difficulties of the type

raised by Langton in her remarks about the notion that just because someone is Aboriginal he or she will always make better or more authentic representations of Aborigines. In all cases, in the framework established by Katz and Langton, it would be the objective and cultural awareness of individuals which are the more important factors.

Clearly then, Aboriginal people who have operated newspapers and newsletters in the past and who are today in control of such projects as the *Koori Mail* can be seen to be part of the process of appropriating -- of "inventing" -- this particular medium for their use and potential empowerment. Some examples may appear more like relatively straightforward emulations of the forms provided by the dominant culture; others less so. The handwritten and handcopied *Flinders Island Chronicle*, produced in 1838 by some English-speaking Aboriginal clerks, is a unique example of Aboriginal print journalism (despite its obviously having been overseen by the White Governor of the Flinders Island concentration camp where the newspaper was produced). Other publications of the activist ("Black Power") variety produced in the 1960s and 1970s in Australia by Aboriginal individuals and organisations would occasionally include innovative or culturally-specific ways of using the medium. The roughly-typewritten *Koorier* newsletter of 1968-70, for example, often included hand-drawn and hand-coloured illustrations, and did not attempt to emulate the mainstream press in its concerns, content, discourse or distribution practices.

One of the most interesting and instructive examples of a local "invention" of the newspaper form by Aboriginal people has been examined in detail by Goddard (1990) and has already been referred to briefly in Chapter 2. Goddard describes, in the context of a discussion of Pitjantjatjara literacy programs, the development of a community newspaper *Amataku Tjukurpa* (Amata News/Times) in 1985-86. This project was enthusiastically supported by local community members (Goddard 1990; Steel c. 1989) and illustrated what can result when a community begins to creatively adopt and adapt the print medium for their own use and concerns. The newsletter was a truly eclectic mix of content, styles, and forms. It was produced in English and in the local language; partly typewritten and partly handwritten; filled with both hand-drawn illustrations and photos; and an example of exuberant and idiosyncratic use of typography. [Appendix IV] Goddard notes in his discussion of the newsletter's layout and typography that Aboriginal writers and editors appeared to be employing, whether consciously or not, some of the modes of oral communication. He refers to a Page 1 story on a meeting of local council, from the 7 September 1985 issue:

As can be seen ... it was handwritten. Darker borders separate the various points and there is a nice touch of expression in the way the word "policeman" has been written larger and bolder. In a mass media society, where presentation of the written word is largely standardised by typography and professional designers, it is easy to overlook the expressive and personalising potential of a handcrafted product. Indeed discussions of the differences between oral and written language often identify punctuation alone as the substitute for oral prosodies (p. 36).

The style of reporting is also shown to be closer to that of local and/or traditional storytelling than the terse, impersonal, inverted-pyramid style of print news writing which is generally seen in most mainstream papers and many of the community or ethnic newspapers which try to emulate them (Ata & Ryan 1989; White 1991). The article on the Council meeting begins:

I'm going to talk now about what we spoke about at the Council meeting the other day. The Council said this, some people are starting to work in the store or the office, without knowing how they should go about it. This isn't good at all (p.36).

Goddard documents what he terms the "emerging genres of reportage" in this Aboriginal publication. Reports of facts and events played an important role, as did a form of "advocacy" journalism which urges community members to avoid certain behaviours or to adopt others. (Chapter 1 of this thesis illustrated how such aims were an important element in much of traditional Aboriginal oral communication and storytelling.) Significantly, stories with "people news" accounted for almost half of all articles, according to Goddard. In general there is a marked difference from the reportage in metropolitan dailies:

Much of the difference can be summed up under the rubric of greater personal orientation: e.g., the use of first person pronouns and the way in which, sometimes, the reader is directly addressed, or more generally, as displaying a greater focus on "involvement".... Not only do the handwritten scripts literally display the personal touch, the writers make no attempt at all to efface their identities and produce objective or "autonomous" texts. If anything, the credibility of a piece seems to be enhanced by the firsthand, eyewitness quality. Often there is an undertone of

persuasion: certainly there is no attempt to separate "fact" from "comment" (p.39).²

Goddard is of the view that *Amataku Tjukurpa* was a highly significant example of the creative adaptation of the print medium by one Aboriginal community for its own concerns and ends. While a certain influence has to be attributed to the non-Aboriginal people in beginning the newsletter as a TAFE adult literacy project, there can be little doubt that the local community very obviously shaped content, style and organisation in an authentic way; i.e., that they "invented" the newspaper form for themselves. Goddard believes that in producing these newspaper texts:

[The] newspaper workers and other writers are taking a considered form of social action.... In any case it is plain that the "meaning" of these texts goes far beyond their literal content as apparent reportage. Adapting a well-worn phrase, the use of the medium is part of the message (p. 39).

This discussion of one distinctive Aboriginal publication takes us closer yet to the fundamental issue of the *Koori Mail*'s "authenticity" or "Aboriginality". Clearly, the owners and editors of the newspaper saw fit to adopt a form and style which generally emulates non-Aboriginal community or ethnic newspapers. This, as has been demonstrated, is not unusual. But where, precisely, does this place the *Koori Mail* in the growing array of Aboriginal media endeavours? What, in Goddard's terms, is the "meaning" of the *Koori Mail* as a cultural phenomenon, as a text?

With so little having been written about Aboriginal print journalism, a theoretical framework must be sought again in the context of Aboriginal broadcasting. O'Regan's analysis of "Aboriginal television culture" is useful here, and may be applied to the *Koori Mail* and to Aboriginal print journalism generally. O'Regan argues that Aboriginal television and radio are playing a crucial role in Aboriginal self-determination and political development in this country. Standing in the way of furthering that process, however, are problems with development of sufficient competencies and opportunities for Aboriginal producers, writers,

² Goddard notes, as I also have done in Chapter 1 of this thesis, that this "focus of involvement" is a general characteristic of traditional Aboriginal oral communication modes. This is documented in a more general way by such researchers as Tannen (1985).

directors. Into the partial vacuum created by these shortfalls in training and experience comes the involvement in media projects of non-Aboriginal people at various levels of production or management (1993, p. 170). All of this, it can be argued, applies equally to the *Koori Mail* project and to its owners and directors.

O'Regan suggests that four levels of Aboriginal control of Aboriginal television production are possible:

- Aboriginal Television which entails Aboriginal control in most television functions of production, distribution and financing....
- Aboriginal programming on mainstream television which has significant Aboriginal participation and control in program production....
- Aboriginal organisational control of a television license or production company which entails varying levels of control over programming and a particularly Aboriginal point of focus (eg CAAMA Productions and IMPARJA; and
- programming involving Aboriginals where there is some Aboriginal negotiation of the terms of representation and where overall control varies (p. 172).

The *Koori Mail* clearly falls into the third category above. That is, the Aboriginal owners of the newspaper were, in late 1994, in a similar position to the owners of the IMPARJA TV license. They may have owned the operation but had to depend on non-Aboriginal technical or editorial assistance and to deal with commercial considerations which were not limited to those in Aboriginal communities. To this extent, the control and the "Aboriginality" of such enterprises -- broadcast or print -- are in danger of compromise. O'Regan notes:

Aboriginal television is, as Michaels suggests, a particular invention of television; but this invention is formed from the available materials, only some of which are Aboriginal and over which Aborigines have only limited control (p. 190).

The issue of training, or development of Aboriginal competencies, has become as important for print journalism, then, as O'Regan has argued it is for Aboriginal broadcasting and film making. As competencies develop in these areas,

the "Aboriginalising" of either the personnel or the content or the style of the production (or all three) can be increased. And with this increase comes an increased possibility of self-determination or empowerment through media use. However, O'Regan points out:

....[The] Aboriginalising of crewing, creative direction and management in Aboriginal television is limited by the lack of appropriately qualified people. Consequently, the Aboriginal organisational control cannot lead to the kind of Aboriginalising of positions and functions expected by those organisations and Aborigines (1993, p. 175).

Unfortunately, in the case of print journalism training opportunities for Aboriginal people are even more rare and competencies even more limited than in the broadcasting sector. Indeed, unlike the broadcast sector, which has at least some formal training opportunities in the form of community radio projects, the flawed BRACS system, enterprises like CAAMA or IMPARJA TV, and some government support through such institutions as the ABC, SBS and the Australian Film Television and Radio School, the print sector has next to no resources devoted to training and certainly no direct government support (ATSIC Media Policy 1993; O'Dwyer 1993; West 1994). The rare cases of journalism training aimed at Aboriginal people are to be found in places like Batchelor College in NT or James Cook University in Queensland, but much of this training is in the area of broadcasting. And, in general, the number of Aboriginal journalists enrolled in other university journalism schools is very small (Arley 1993, personal communication).

The issue of training for Aboriginal broadcasters comes up frequently in conferences and policy papers: a recent example is the Media and Indigenous Australians Conference in Brisbane in 1993 (conference proceedings 1993). But similar discussions of the potentially empowering effect of having more trained Aboriginal print journalists are rare. ATSIC's 1993 statement of media policy, for example, contained no reference to print journalism in general or to the training of Aboriginal print journalists in particular. This is despite the clear popularity of the *Koori Mail* and its forerunners and, perhaps even more importantly, despite the steadily-increasing number of small newsletters and desktop-publishing projects being established in Aboriginal communities around Australia (Goddard 1989; Steel c. 1989; Gale 1993; Marshall-Stoneking 1983).

In fact the Chairperson of the National Indigenous Media Association, Dot West, has identified ATSIC's preoccupation with Aboriginal broadcasting -- at the expense of print journalism -- as a problem to be rectified:

To some extent, the new [ATSIC broadcasting] policy is reflective of what is happening within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander broadcasting, and what will be developed in future. However, there are still some areas of concern. The major one is the use of the word "broadcasting" when, in actual fact, we in the industry also include our newspaper outlets, but the policy paper doesn't recognise this form of media (1994 p. 26).

It should not be surprising then, in light of the present discussion of emulation, authenticity and training in indigenous media, that for the *Koori Mail* there would be a long wait for an Aboriginal Editor and a significant relinquishing of editorial control to non-Aboriginal staff members. Neither is it surprising that there was also an apparent unease among members of the Board of Directors in traversing fundamental questions of editing procedures, editorial stance, discourse to be adopted, layout, style, distribution, and so on. The answer to the question raised above -- i.e., of where the *Koori Mail* stands in the overall structure of Aboriginal media in Australia, of its meaning as a text -- is that like many Aboriginal broadcasting ventures before it, it had when this thesis was completed some considerable way to go before becoming a more authentically Aboriginal cultural product.

Given a certain increase in competencies among Aboriginal print journalists, editors and publishers, however, and given the "Aboriginalising" of functions and concerns which might well have occurred, a more authentic form might have resulted for the *Koori Mail* or, for that matter, for another Aboriginal newspaper. In other words, given a certain set of circumstances those responsible for the *Koori Mail* or the owners of another Aboriginal newspaper enterprise might have been in a better position to "invent" a more genuinely Aboriginal form of print journalism.

The first thing that must occur for this to happen in an Aboriginal print journalism venture is a wide-ranging discussion and some conscious decisions being taken by the owners about the editorial goals of an Aboriginal newspaper, its editorial mandate and stance. What stories must be covered regularly and comprehensively? How are these stories to be handled and what prominence do they

deserve in the paper? Might it be desirable for certain editions or articles to adopt a form of journalism somewhat more akin, although likely much modified, to the "development communication" of indigenous people in North America or in Third World countries. (Kunczik 1988; Shafer 1993; Murphy, 1981).³ Discussion should also occur about the desired level of Aboriginal staffing, the number and use of Aboriginal editorial contributors and stringers, and the appropriate use of a "White" wire service such as AAP. The desired discourse for such a paper should be examined and a decision taken about whether all stories be written in standard Australian Standard English or whether, at least in part or for certain articles, Aboriginal English or even Kriol might be adopted. ⁴ Styles and genres of reportage would also have to be addressed: do all stories in an Aboriginal newspaper have to replicate the conventional European news and feature structures or could elements of local storytelling and certain "oral" modes be incorporated in a different way?

Questions of an "Aboriginal way" of using typography, layout, illustrations and of an Aboriginal "style" generally could be addressed (taking as inspiration, perhaps, such examples as the *Amataku Tjukurpa*). Do all stories have to be conventionally typeset and ordered into columns? What might be the place of occasional hand-written copy or of the incorporation of traditional Aboriginal art or design motifs into illustrations, page design, layout?

Given the exciting new developments in electronic and digital communications, multimedia and hypertext, editors might want to consider how an Aboriginal newspaper is best packaged and delivered. Is it still appropriate to use aircraft and trucks to deliver conventional hard copy versions of a newspaper to all areas of the country, including very small Aboriginal communities in remote regions? Consideration might be given to solving difficult distribution problems, for example, by using fax editions, electronic mail or satellite to get the paper, or an electronic version of it, quickly to isolated communities.

³ Kunczik quotes Quebral's succinct definition of development communication as being "the art/science of human communication applied to the speedy transformation of a country from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth that makes possible greater economic and social equality and the larger fulfilment of the human potential" (1988, pp.83-84).

⁴ The failure by editors of the long-running Aboriginal magazine *Identity* to make firm decisions about the appropriate discourse to be adopted has been pointed out by critics such as Narogin (1990), who argue that this failure made for a significantly less authentic publication, one which was less relevant to the large proportion of the Aboriginal population which did not speak Australian Standard English.

Multimedia, CD-ROM and hypertext technology allow for a potentially effective and culturally-relevant use of printed word and sound together. Newspaper editions delivered onto a computer screen could, for example, have hypertext "stacks" which allow readers to hear copy as they read it, to hear translations into local languages, to have dictionary definitions of unknown English words available immediately. Type sizes could be enlarged for those with eyesight difficulties or reading problems. Articles referring to traditional stories or songs could have these electronically stacked in hypertext mode so that songs and music could be heard as copy is being read. Such a mixing of "oral" and "print" modes has been observed in other, non-electronic contexts by linguists such as Goody (1968), who argue that printed word production in formerly oral cultures often contains what is termed "oral residues" (p. 14). These electronic modes of delivery of newspapers would also come closer to the "multichannel" nature of traditional Aboriginal oral communication, as discussed by communications researchers such as Clunies-Ross (1983, p. 22).

Employing such technologically-advanced possibilities in a genuinely Aboriginal "invention" of print journalism is not at all farfetched: the Tanami Network established by four desert Aboriginal communities and using computers, satellite and videoconferencing facilities indicates how willing certain Aboriginal communities are to adopt the latest communications for their needs. According to Meadows:

The development of such a telecommunications network by an indigenous community has significant implications for community broadcasting. The appropriation of media in this way demonstrates the possibility for empowerment inherent in such technology (1994, p. 67).

Meadows' observation clearly can also be applied to adoption of high technology solutions for problems related to print production and distribution, as well as to more fundamental issues of control and authenticity. It was indicated above, for example, that NIMA was in the process in late 1994 of organising at least the beginnings of a satellite-distributed news service.

Such editorial and technological issues could also be considered on a much smaller scale by Aboriginal communities wishing to produce local newspapers or newsletters. The ease of use of the new desktop publishing technology and the

falling costs make it possible for almost any Aboriginal community with the inclination and a modest amount of funds to begin a publication, with obvious media empowerment implications. Desktop publishing, in fact, could be the print medium equivalent for Aboriginal communities of the BRACS local television scheme. Fax, modem and electronic mail would make it possible and relatively inexpensive for such community papers to link themselves into a rudimentary Aboriginal community news service if desired. The potential of electronic mail as a news medium has already been examined by communications researchers (Pearson 1993). This technology also would allow small communities access to various networks such as Internet or to alternative news services such as Pegasus should local editors decide such information may be useful to their publication efforts. Of course, training issues would have to be carefully addressed even for such smaller-scale publication projects, or the problems plaguing the BRACS initiative would be repeated in the medium of print.

The foregoing discussion, however, is not at all meant to suggest that the *Koori Mail* is not a valuable and noteworthy media enterprise by Aboriginal people. It is highly significant, (as well an obvious source of some of the *Koori Mail's* difficulties) for example, that the newspaper was designed as a commercial enterprise. This situation had the empowering potential -- one which was gradually being realised as the paper began in late 1994 to turn a small profit -- to free the owners and directors from dependence on government funding and from being buffeted by the vagaries of government media policy. As O'Regan has observed in the context of Aboriginal broadcasting, serious inhibitions are frequently placed on Aboriginal producers by this relationship with government funding sources:

This dependence has consequences for the type of programming, its self-understanding, its positioning on Aboriginal and governmental horizons, and the kind of political lobbying that takes place with regards to it. The dependence upon policy and funding ensures a "public service", non-commercial, community development orientation to these Aboriginal initiatives.....

This public service character is both enabling of Aboriginal enterprise and disabling....

But what is perhaps critical with regards to Aboriginal television initiatives is that there is not much Aboriginal television initiative outside this government axis, unlike the case of commercial networks and their infotainment and ongoing series programming in television, or the non-government supported ethnic press (1993, p. 190).

These ideas about the potentially liberating effects of commercially-organised media initiatives -- difficult though these projects may be to sustain -- can be usefully applied to indigenous newspapers as well. It has been shown how Canadian Indian newspapers, for example, burgeoned in the 1970s and 80s as a result of the Canadian Government's Native Communications Program (NCP) funding for Indian newspaper production (Demay 1993, pp. 89-90). However, when that funding was abruptly cut off in 1990 as part of the government's deficit reduction strategy, Indian newspapers were sent reeling: many closed altogether and only gradually did some start to emerge from uncertainty as re-organised commercial enterprises similar to the *Koori Mail*. Demay notes:

[Canadian Indian] newspapers are fighting hard to survive in the post-NCP era. A fund-raising and profit-making orientation has become standard for Aboriginal press ventures. The same editors who not too long ago worried about the government's commitment to next year's funding, now worry about advertising base and competition (1993, p. 98).

American Indian newspapers, too, have suffered from this relationship to government funding bodies, but are in many cases far more established and resilient than their Canadian counterparts (Murphy 1981).

The *Koori Mail*, of course, was the recipient of significant levels of ATSIC funding after its launch: \$226,000 in 1992 and another \$80,000 in 1994. However, in both cases the funds were provided only because the project was commercial in nature. The 1992 amount was a one-off grant for the five Lismore-area Aboriginal communities to firmly establish the struggling paper as a business venture. And the 1994 infusion of funds was in the form of a repayable business loan secured against the paper's assets. The effect of these commercial arrangements at the *Koori Mail* was that no one was able to tell the owners and directors either explicitly or implicitly what sort of publication they were to produce.

Another highly significant aspect of the *Koori Mail* initiative is the fact that it was organised as a national publication. The founder and the subsequent owners believed that the Aboriginal community in this country and other residents of Australia could benefit from a nationally-distributed Aboriginal newspaper. Such a

publication, of course, is extremely difficult to organise and produce. Distribution in such a large country and to both urban and remote areas is, as has been demonstrated above, difficult and costly. As well, attempting to meet the anticipated needs and tastes of a wide range of Aboriginal communities in settled and remote Australia and, to a lesser extent, of a wide range of non-indigenous readers and advertisers is an obvious challenge.

However, the national nature of the *Koori Mail* clearly had tremendous empowering possibilities. It was the first time such a national publication had been attempted by Aboriginal people but it coincided with a time when there was a developing pan-Aboriginal consciousness centred around certain issues (Shoemaker 1989; O'Regan 1993; Langton 1993). In addition to providing a potential national forum for reporting and debate on Aboriginal matters, the *Koori Mail* may also be seen to have made a contribution to the task of repairing what Michaels has called the "damaged songlines" of Aboriginal culture in this country. Indeed, the notion of such damaged or altered traditional communication networks has been fundamental to much of the thinking about the cultural role of contemporary Aboriginal media initiatives. In this general context, the *Koori Mail* can be seen to occupy a crucial place in the history of the Aboriginal media and of Aboriginal print journalism, as well as in the struggle by Aboriginal people to use such media tools to negotiate a new power relationship with non-indigenous Australia.

APPENDIX 1
HISTORICAL SELECTION OF ABORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS

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The
c. Aboriginal
Hindlers Island Chronicle
under the sanction of the Commandant.

The object of this Journal is to promote Christianity
Civilization and Learning amongst the Aborigines ⁱⁿ inhabiting
at Hindlers Island.

The Chronicle professes to be a brief but accurate register
of events of the Colony Moral and Religious This
Journal will be published weekly on Saturdays the
copies to be in Manuscript written exclusively by the Aborigines
the size half foolscap and the price two pence

The profits arising from the Sale of the Journal
to be equally divided amongst the writers ^{which it} is hoped
may induce Emulation in writing ~~which~~ ^{which} a desire for
useful knowledge and promote Learning Generally
Proof sheets are to be submitted to the Commandant
for correction before publishing.

Persons out of the Colony may subscribe:

Walter Julia Martin

Thomas Dorney

The Aboriginal

or

Hindlers Island Chronicle

Under the sanction of the Commandant
 (101) Saturday 10 Sept 1836 June 2^d

In commencing our Journal agreeable to the
 prospectus we cannot look back on the Events
 connected with our history this we leave with the
 Divine blessing to the heart and head that
 has been instrumental in uniting us together and
 providing us with instruction and guiding us into
 the habits of civilized life. The enjoyment of security
 from the oppression of bad men we date our history
 of Events from the month of October 1835 when our
 beloved Father made his appearance among us dispelling
 the darkness and covering us with a down of hope
 Freedom in happier days we had time to do those little
 things we looked for in better days and it has arrived
 what a contrast between the present and the past
 if market was established on the settlement in
 August last for the sale of articles which we
 require and to purchase our skins and manures.
 After the market we were regaled with adaman
 of Mutton and pudding. we are learning the use
 of money. Events of the week. H. M. Colman
 Schooner Eliza arrived at Green Island and the

Commandants is to proceed in her to Hobart town
we feel even his loss for a day from us and hope he
will soon come back again

published at the Bathurst of the writers

to Hinders Island

I certify that this paper was
written by one of the
Aboriginal youths at
a Station. I signed
J. H. H.

W. Thomas Hume

1766

Flinders Island
weekly chronicle

The Brig Tanna arrived on the 18th of October 1837.
I can't tell you what Brig it is it arrived on the 18th of October.
but by and by we shall hear all about what things have occurred
in this ^{very} alarming land and now my Dear friends what was that
kept you out so long now you what good what was you do
in the Bush such a ^{long} time ago in the Bush and now you see
what good have you got by staying out so long if had come home
sooner along with Alexander you would not be ^{unhappy} ~~unhappy~~ it was a long
time ago since you first left the Settlement - Thomas Brune song
and said sailors here come from Coppen Bushmen coming
in from the Bush it will be a long time before the command
will let you go again I am certain of that and I went out side
of the Commandant Office and looked towards Mount Franklin and
I behold the men making a field that in the direction
of Mount Franklin on 17th of October 1837.
you and know nothing at all about these things the good
as many things at all now you see there is more in the good
people than there are all dead and gone which I hope is all
gone to glory and when you are dead perhaps you will
see them again which have gone before you if that is the case
I would like to see my Brothers and sisters which have gone
before us to glory and now you see this afternoon some of the
Coppen claim Native have arrived again to the Settlement
and I saw to people saying something and Thomas Brune
has got a way of saying Days to the Commandant's Office
and the Clerk is always making a note what I saw Mr
Thomas Brune come this morning to me a wheel Harrow
and I asked him where was he going too long but he would
not take anything till he was satisfied by thanks he was then
sent him for the wheel Harrow that was on the
Settlement and I also saw a man ^{settling} his head tick all
the summer and the afternoon evening and the people was
told to go the longest for to get some boards and
there was no and there was one cut and we brought
home I quartering and has we was come down the hill
we saw the same on the road W. W. asked him how
is it that there is no Boards cut the Board they saw
it grow all come this afternoon you can have them
then and now you heard that you that he has being always
telling you not to sleep on the ground and not sleeping
upon the bed Bunk and where you have heat all round
that's the way to it. now many people out of the color
subside.

W. W. Waller, George. L. H. H.
A. Original Youth
A. Editor and writer

Representing

80,000

Australian

Aborigines

ABO CALL

THE VOICE OF THE ABORIGINES

EDITED BY J. T. PATTEN

MITCHELL LIBRARY
30 MAR 1938

SYDNEY

MONTHLY, 3d.

Education,

Opportunity,

and

Full Citizen

Rights



APRIL, 1938

No. 1.

To all Aborigines!

"The Abo Call" is our own paper.

It has been established to present the case for Aborigines, from the point of view of the Aborigines themselves.

This paper has nothing to do with missionaries, or anthropologists, or with anybody who looks down on Aborigines as an "inferior" race.

We are NOT an inferior race, we have merely been refused the chance of education that whites receive. "The Abo Call" will show that we do not want to go back to the Stone Age.

Representing 60,000 Full Bloods and 20,000 Halfcastes in Australia, we raise our voice to ask for Education, Equal Opportunity, and Full Citizen Rights.

"The Abo Call" will be published once a month. Price 3d.

The Editor asks all Aborigines and Halfcastes to support the paper, by buying it and also by acting as agents for sale to white friends and supporters.

Please send postal note when ordering copies.

Address all letters to:—

J. T. Patten, "The Abo Call", Box 1924 KK.

General Post Office, Sydney, N.S.W.

OUR TEN POINTS

Deputation to the Prime Minister

The following is a full copy of the statement made to the Prime Minister at the Deputation of Aborigines on 31st January last.

The Prime Minister was accompanied by Dame Enid Lyons and by Mr. McEwan, Minister of the Interior.

The Deputation consisted of twenty Aborigines, men and women, and Mr. Lyons gave a hearing of two hours to the statement of our case.

Please read these "ten points" carefully, as this is the only official statement of our aims and objects that has yet been made.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THE PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA.
MR. J. A. LYONS, P.C., C.H., M.H.R. Sir,

In respectfully placing before you the following POLICY FOR ABORIGINES, we wish to state that this policy has been endorsed by a Conference of Aborigines, held in Sydney on 30th January of this year. This policy is the only policy which has the support of the Aborigines themselves.

URGENT INTERIM POLICY

Before placing before you a long-range policy for Aborigines, and while the long-range policy is under consideration, we ask as a matter of urgency:

That the Commonwealth Government should make a special financial grant to each of the State Governments, in proportion to the number of Aborigines in each State, to supplement existing grants for Aborigines. We ask that such aid should be applied to increasing the rations and improving the housing conditions of Aborigines at present under State control. We beg that this matter be treated urgently, as our people are being starved to death.

The following ten points embraces a LONG RANGE POLICY FOR ABORIGINES, endorsed by our Association.

A LONG RANGE POLICY FOR ABORIGINES.

1.—We respectfully request that there should be a National Policy for Aborigines. We advocate Commonwealth Government control of all Aboriginal affairs.

2.—We suggest the appointment of a Commonwealth Ministry for Aboriginal Affairs, the Minister to have full Cabinet rank.

3.—We suggest the appointment of an Administrative Head of the proposed Department of Aboriginal Affairs, the Administrator to be advised by an Advisory Board, consisting of six persons, three of whom at least should be of Aboriginal blood, to be nominated by the Aborigines Progressive Association.

4.—The aim of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs should be to raise all Aborigines throughout the Commonwealth to full Citizen Status and civil equality with the whites in Australia. In particular, and without delay, all Aborigines should be entitled:

- (a) To receive the same educational opportunities as white people.
- (b) To receive the benefits of labour legislation, including Arbitration Court Awards, on an equality with white workers.
- (c) To receive the full benefits of workers' compensation and insurance.
- (d) To receive the benefits of old-age and invalid pensions, whether living in Aboriginal settlements or not.
- (e) To own land and property, and to be allowed to save money in personal banking accounts, and to come under the same laws regarding intestacy and transmission of property as the white population.
- (f) To receive wages in cash, and not by orders, issue of rations, or apprenticeship systems.

5.—We recommend that Aborigines and Halfcastes should come under the same marriage laws as white people, and should be free to marry partners of their choice, irrespective of colour.

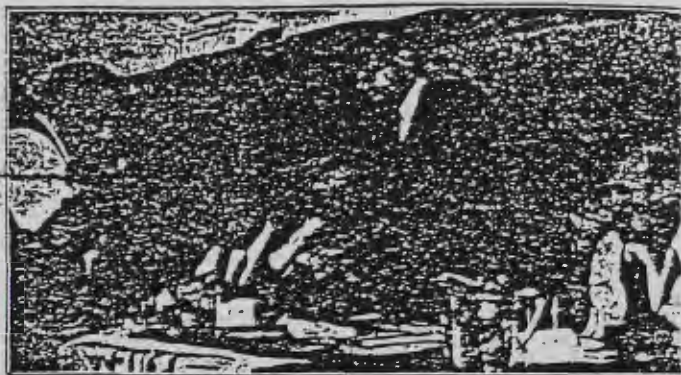


Photo by courtesy "Men" Magazine

AT THE CONFERENCE OF 26th JANUARY.

T. Foster (La Perouse), J. Kinchela (Coonabarabran), W. Cooper (Melbourne), D. Nicolls (Melbourne), J. T. Patten (La Perouse), W. Ferguson (Dubbo).

6.—We recommend that Aborigines should be entitled to the same privileges regarding housing as are white workers.

7.—We recommend that a special policy of Land Settlement for Aborigines should be put into operation, whereby Aborigines who desire to settle on the land should be given the same encouragement as that given to Immigrants or Soldier Settlers, with expert tuition in agriculture, and financial assistance to enable such settlers to become ultimately self-supporting.

8.—In regard to uncivilised and semi-civilised Aborigines, we suggest that patrol officers, nurses, and teachers, both men and women, of Aboriginal blood, should be specially trained by the Commonwealth Government as Aboriginal Officers, to bring the wild people into contact with civilisation.

9.—We recommend that all Aboriginal and Halfcaste women should be entitled to maternity and free hospital treatment during confinement, and that there should be no discrimination against Aboriginal women, who should be entitled to clinical instruction on baby welfare, similar to that given to white women.

10.—While opposing a policy of segregation, we urge that, during a period of transition, the present Aboriginal Reserves should be retained as a sanctuary for aged or incompetent Aborigines who may be unfitted to take their place in the white community, owing to the past policy of neglect.

EASTER MEETING

A general meeting of Aborigines will be held at La Perouse Reserve on Easter Sunday (17th April).

The main purpose of the meeting is to adopt a Constitution and Rules for Aborigines Progressive Association, and election of officers.

Please make a big effort to attend this important meeting, which will put fight for Citizen Rights on a proper footing.

SELECT COMMITTEE

The Select Committee upon the administration of the Aborigines Protection Board (New South Wales) took a vote of evidence, and then dissolved without making a report.

The Select Committee was a farce most of the evidence concerned the dismissal of Manager Brain from Brewarrina, and there was no time to present full evidence about the conditions of 10,000 Aborigines and Halfcastes in New South Wales.

Parliament was more worried about one white man than about ten thousand blacks.

We call for a Royal Commission to investigate Aboriginal Administration N.S.W.

We have a big lot of evidence, some of which will be published in "The Call" in future numbers.

MR. BRUXNER'S PROMISE

In his policy speech in the N.S.W. elections, the leader of the Country Party, Mr. M. F. Bruxner, promised "a deal for Aborigines."

This is the same Mr. Bruxner who said to the Millions Club, Sydney, a month ago, that "Jacky-Jacky is no good advertisement for Australia."

In Mr. Bruxner's own electorate, Tabulam, N.S.W., the Aborigines living in dreadful conditions, which is a very bad advertisement for Mr. Bruxner.

We hope that his "New Deal" will be a better deal than we have had for past 150 years.

PACKSADDLE

Our friends in Darwin inform us a white man also was charged with at the same time as Packsaddle, but mention was made of this in either Darwin or Sydney papers.

DAY OF MOURNING

White people immediately realised that we Aborigines have no reason to rejoice at the 150th Anniversary of white settlement in this continent.

"THE ABO CALL".

Send us your order for a dozen copies of "The Abo Call" and give or sell them to friends and supporters.

Price to agents
2/- per dozen
post free

Send cash with order to:

"The Abo Call",
Box 1924 KK,
G.P.O., Sydney.

OUR HISTORIC DAY OF MOURNING & PROTEST

ABORIGINES CONFERENCE.

Held at Australian Hall, Sydney, 26th January, 1938.

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS.

About 100 persons of Aboriginal blood attended the conference.

Proceedings were delayed at the start owing to the Official Sesqui-Centenary Procession.

TELEGRAMS

Telegrams were received from West Australia, Queensland, North Australia, and also a very large number of letters from Aborigines all over Australia, expressing support of the Conference.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

1.30 p.m.

Mr. J. T. Patten, President, said: On this day the white people are rejoicing, but we, as Aborigines, have no reason to rejoice on Australia's 150th birthday. Our purpose in meeting today is to bring home to the white people of Australia the frightful conditions in which the native Aborigines of this continent live. This land belonged to our forefathers 150 years ago, but today we are pushed further and further into the background. The Aborigines Progressive Association has been formed to put before the white people the fact that Aborigines throughout Australia are literally being starved to death. We refuse to be pushed into the background. We have decided to make ourselves heard. White men pretend that the Australian Aboriginal is a low type, who cannot be bettered. Our reply to that is, "Give us the chance!" We do not wish to be left behind in Australia's march to progress. We ask for full citizen rights, including old-age pensions, maternity bonus, relief work when unemployed, and the right to a full Australian education for our children. We do not wish to be herded like cattle, and treated as a special class. As regards the Aborigines Protection Board of New South Wales, white people in the cities do not realise the terrible conditions of slavery under which our people live in the outback districts. I have unanswerable evidence; that women of our race are forced to work in return for rations, without other payment. Is this not slavery? Do white Australians realise that there is actual slavery in this fair progressive Commonwealth? Yet such is the case. We are looking in vain to white people to help us by charity. We must do something ourselves to draw public attention to our plight. That is why this Conference is held, to discuss ways and means of arousing the conscience of White Australians, who have us in their power, but have hitherto refused to help us. Our children on the Government Stations are badly fed and poorly educated. The result is that, when they go out into life, they feel inferior to white people. This is not a matter of race, it is a matter of education and opportunity. That is why we ask for a better education and better opportunity for our people. We say that it is a disgrace to Australia's name that our people should be handicapped by undernourishment and poor education, and then blamed for being backward. We do not trust the present Aborigines Protection Board, and that is why we ask for its abolition. (Applause). Incompetent teachers are provided on the Aboriginal Stations. That is the greatest handicap put on us. We have had 150 years of the white men looking after us, and the result is, our people are being exterminated. The reason why this conference is called today is so that the Aborigines themselves may discuss their problems and try to bring before the notice of the public and of parliament what our grievance is, and how it may be remedied. We ask for ordinary citizen rights and full equality with other Australians. (Approved resolution.)

2.0 p.m.

legislation. The Aborigines Protection Act applies to any persons having "apparently an admixture of Aboriginal blood." We have been waiting and waiting all our lives for the white people of Australia to better our conditions, but we have waited in vain. We have been living in a fool's paradise. I have travelled outback and I have seen for myself the dreadful sufferings of our people on the Aborigines Reserves. The most terrible thing is that the dreaded disease of T.B. has made its appearance among our people, and is wiping them out, right here in New South Wales. Surely the time has come at last for us to do something for ourselves, and make ourselves heard. This is why the Aborigines Progressive Association has been formed. I held a meeting in Dubbo originally, and the way the people responded made me feel that much could be done. I held meetings in other western towns, and finally came to Sydney, where the press helped to draw national attention to our grievance. We now have a Committee who are bringing before the public the injustices which our people have suffered. Our revelations have astounded many white people, who did not realise that such conditions as we describe could possibly exist in a free country. Now let me explain that our object is to abolish the Aborigines Protection Board. (Applause.) We are going to abolish that Board, no matter how long it may take. Everything points to the fact that, within a short while, many people will support us among the white citizens of Australia. Our first objective is to organise the whole of the Aborigines of New South Wales into our Association. For days at the Parliamentary Select Committee we have had to listen to slanders against our people, especially against our women. Can anyone wonder why we revolt against persons who suppress our people and then accuse us of being "backward"? If our young boys and girls were given proper education, they would be able to take their place with other Australians in the community. Unless we get proper education and opportunity, our people in a very few years will be extinct. Mr. Cooper of Melbourne will tell you that he has had no reply to a petition addressed to the King. I say definitely that we do not want an Aboriginal Member of Parliament. We want ordinary citizen rights, not any special rights such as that. It is because we ourselves have begun to organise that public opinion at last is being awakened. We ask for the right to own land that our fathers and mothers owned from time immemorial. I think the Government could at least make land grants to Aborigines. Why give preference to immigrants when our people have no land, and no right to own land? We ask that the Government should give us some encouragement to make progress. It is progress we want, not to be pushed back further and further under the present Aborigines Laws. I say that most of our people in New South Wales have a good practical knowledge of farming, and could make a living as farmers. If not, then the Government should teach our people the principles of Agriculture, and help them to settle on the land, just as they teach and help immigrants from overseas. We are backward only because we have had no real opportunity to make progress. We have been denied the opportunity. In many parts of Australia the white people on the land are helped by Aborigines to such an extent that they could not carry on grazing occupation without Aboriginal aid. The Aboriginal is producing wealth, but not for himself. Yet he is not even allowed to have money with which to buy clothes, and food. If the Aboriginal can help the

original race to go out and help those who are living in darkness. If white people can be trained for this purpose, why not train our own people? The Aborigines Protection Board system of apprenticing girls for domestic labour is nothing but slavery. All Aboriginal Legislation today is intended to drive our people into the Aboriginal Reserves, where there is no future for them, nothing but disheartenment. From many hundreds of letters I have received from Aborigines all over Australia, I am satisfied that the Aborigines are with us in this movement for progress.

2.35 p.m.

Mr. Doug. Nicholls (Victorian Aborigines League): On behalf of Victorian Aborigines I want to say that we support this resolution in every way. The public does not realise what our people have suffered for 150 years. Aboriginal girls have been sent to Government Reserves and have not been given any opportunity to improve themselves. Their treatment has been disgusting. The white people have done nothing for us whatever. Put on reserves, with no proper education, how can Aborigines take their place as equals with whites? Now is our chance to have things altered. We must fight our very hardest in this cause. After 150 years our people are still influenced and bossed by white people. I know that we could proudly hold our own with others if given the chance. Do not let us forget, also, those of our own people who are still in a primitive state. It is for them that we should try to do something. We should all work in co-operation for the progress of Aborigines throughout the Commonwealth.

2.55 p.m.

Mr. W. Cooper (Victorian Aborigines League): After struggling for so many years, we are going to continue struggling. "Protect" should mean "protect from injury", but the Aborigines Protection Boards do not live up to this idea. They do not act in accordance with British Justice. I have written to Mr. Lyons, who still owes me a letter. We must continue our struggle until we win our objectives.

3.5 p.m.

Letters and Telegrams were read by the President and Secretary.

3.15 p.m.

The President, (Mr. Patten): I will read the resolution as on the notice-paper convening this Conference:

"We, representing the Aborigines of Australia, assembled in conference at the Australian Hall, Sydney, on the 26th day of January, 1938, this being the 150th Anniversary of the White-man's seizure of our country, hereby make protest against the callous treatment of our people by the whitemen during the past 150 years, and we appeal to the Australian nation of today to make new laws for the education and care of Aborigines, and we ask for a new policy which will raise our people to full citizen status and equality within the community."

I want to explain that, in advocating abolition of the Aborigines Protection Board, we understand that there must be some stepping stone. The people can not be thrown out of the reserves and expected to live like white men, when they have not had a white standard of education. We recognise also, as regards the primitive people who are still uncivilised, that there must be some stepping stone from the jungle. Education is the key to our problem. We want education and equal opportunity for Aborigines. Our movement is practical. We do not want to be held up to ridicule, by asking something impossible. We want a policy of progress and education, in addition to abolition of the Board. We want a stepping stone to modern civilisation.

Mr. Ferguson: Full citizen rights means the equality of our people with the white man. I think every one here has been in contact with civilisation, and

support the resolution, and not too much about the stepping stone. That will take care of itself if we have full citizen rights. If the Government can build houses for white people, why not build them for our people? If we have full citizen rights to own property and to own houses in which we live, we could not be turned out as at present.

3.35 p.m.

Mr. Connelly, (South Coast): In 150 years the white men have taken away the hunting grounds and camping grounds of our people, and left us with nothing. We must have unity among ourselves or we will not succeed in the uplifting of our race. Under present laws Aborigines of good character are ordered off certain Reserves, and are hounded from place to place. How can the Board honestly call itself a Protection Board? In La Perouse you have a special Reserve, where people have some citizen rights, but on the South Coast things are not the same. Our people are not given a chance to enjoy life. They are not given a chance to express themselves. On behalf of the Aborigines of the South Coast, I want to thank the men who have started this great movement of Aborigines Progress. If we are to succeed we must be united. Let us fight on to a successful end.

3.50 p.m.

Mr. Johnston (Bateman's Bay): As a Vice-President of the Aborigines Progressive Association, I want to say that we must work full hearted to win our objective. Nothing done half hearted is a success. We should all work together to arouse the mind of the white men and women of Australia to our awful conditions.

Mrs. Ardler (Nowra): Ever since we have been children we have had to listen to white people saying what is good for us and what is enough for us, and with no education, how could we find things out for ourselves? We can do nothing for progress until we get education for our children. I am sure that all Aborigines in Australia are behind us in this great movement.

Mr. Tom Foster, (La Perouse): The Aborigines have three enemies. The first is the Aborigines Protection Board, which has meted out most callous treatment to our people, and has forced us to do as the white man wishes. The second enemy is the white missionary, who preaches to our people. Some of these are disgraceful. The third enemy is liquor. White men brought liquor for us, and it has helped to destroy our people. We should stand shoulder to shoulder to destroy these three enemies.

4.10 p.m.

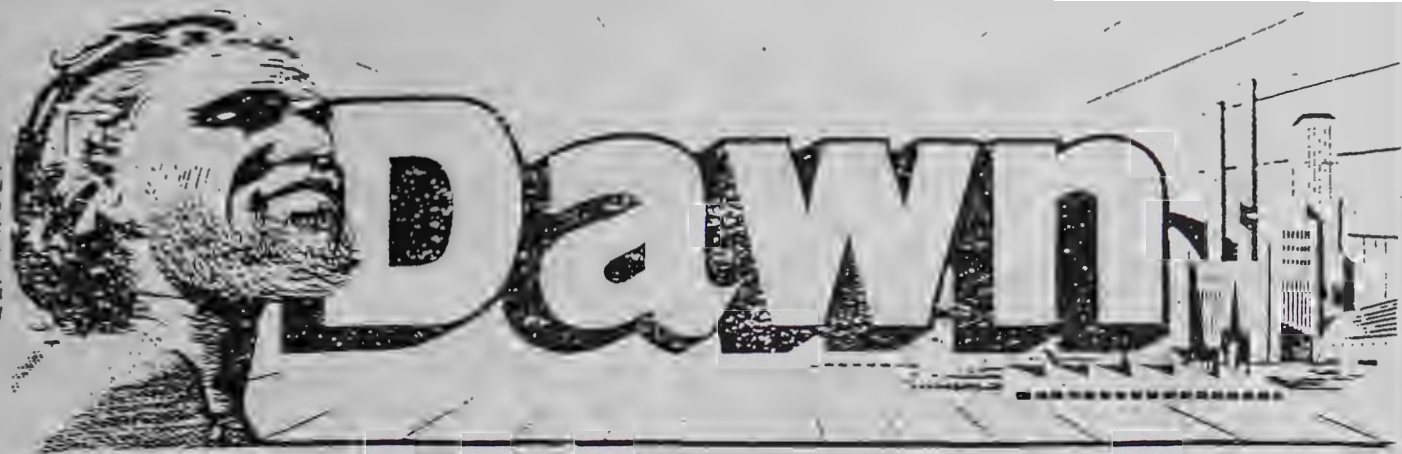
Mrs. Gibbs, (Brewarrina): Conditions on all the Aboriginal Stations are a disgrace. They are all very much alike. At Brewarrina the children are taught by a man who is not a qualified teacher. Two old men on that station, one blind, the other a cripple, are left by themselves in a half-starved state. The Manager of the Station and others get milk from five cows, but the old men get only condensed milk. I spoke to these old men, and when they told me how badly they were treated it made me cry, and pray that this movement will be a success. These old men are absolutely neglected. Though on the Reserve, I know that no manager visited them for ten days. They had no milk even for their porridge. I explained the meaning of full citizen rights to these old men, and they knew that they would be better off with full citizen rights than under the Protection Board, because they would get Old Age Pension and proper medical attention.

4.20 p.m.

THE RESOLUTION WAS PUT TO THE VOTE AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

4.30 p.m.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS RE SULTS AS FOLLOWS.



Vol. 1, No. 1 Ser. No. 1 A MAGAZINE FOR THE ABORIGINAL PEOPLE OF N.S.W. January, 1962



THE BOARD'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

With the first issue of this new Journal for the Aboriginal people, the Board felt that it would like to send you all a message to convey the goodwill and affection of its members towards you all.

You are no doubt aware that this monthly publication—which is to be called “DAWN”—is intended to serve as a means of enabling the Board and the Aboriginal people to learn to know one another better and with a greater measure of understanding. It will fulfil also a useful purpose in the exchange of news and views and should prove to be a valuable source of interest and information.

The Board is a body of persons appointed by the Government to watch over the interests and welfare of the aboriginal people of this State. The Government expects the Board to carry out certain duties in accordance with the law, but all its members would like the aboriginal folk to know that we wish to be regarded as their friends and helpers.

We extend to you all the right-hand of fellowship and brotherly love. We look forward to the day when the aborigines will be regarded equally with all other members of the community and the need for a Welfare Board will no longer exist. We want you to be good citizens, independent and reliable.

The Board hopes that this newspaper will be the means of disseminating knowledge and understanding. The title “Dawn” is appropriate, for it expresses the need and the desire of the aborigines to achieve a better standard of living. In your efforts to reach that goal you must not forget to develop a spirit of pride and independence. On behalf of the Board I extend hearty good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'J. H. Smith', written in a cursive style.

Chairman.

N.S.W. Aborigines Welfare Board.

NAMATJIRA COMES TO PERTH

Albert Namatjira received one of his greatest welcomes when he visited Perth last month. It was W.A.'s greatest welcome since the Royal visit.

Thranging crowds fought and pushed frantically to obtain a glimpse of him. Many tried to touch him. Hundreds besieged him for autographs.

Namatjira was simply puzzled at all the fuss.

His Perth visit was sponsored by the West Australian Native Welfare Council to promote wider interest in aboriginal welfare.

On his arrival on Easter Monday Namatjira was met at the airport by Council President, Mr. E. C. Gare, and Coolbaroo League President, Mr. G. Harwood, members of both organisations and milling crowds trying to catch their first glimpse of the great Australian artist.

The 16-stone artist was a homely, colourful figure as he strode from the aircraft in stockman's clothes and wide-brimmed hat.

His plump, weather-beaten face creased into a friendly grin as he exchanged greet-



ALBERT NAMATJIRA

Lord Mayor and attended a civic reception.

- A visit to the University and the Teacher's Training College.
- The Perth Art Gallery, Kwinana and the Darling Ranges.
- Many dinners and luncheons in his honour.

NAMATJIRA - IMPRESSED

A function which impressed Albert Namatjira more than any other, and that he said he would never forget, was the Coolbaroo Perth Dance on April 27, the last evening of Namatjira's visit.

In a packed hall he was welcomed with joyous enthusiasm.

Namatjira looked more relaxed than he had when attending previous functions in Perth—he was with his own people, and what a friendly lot they were.

He was officially welcomed by the League President.

Albert beamed with delight as he was presented with a life membership card to the Coolbaroo League by Mr. G. Harwood in appreciation of his efforts in raising funds for the Native Hostel and Social Centre.

Namatjira was glad to meet W.A.'s aborigines, talked and joked with many and enjoyed his supper.

Before departing Namatjira was circled with people who sang "For he's a jolly good fellow," "Why was he born so beautiful" and "Auld Lang Syne."

As he left the hall smiling happily, he waved. Outside the hall he was still smiling

but something else was noticeable out of his deep thoughtful eyes came little drops of glistening moisture.

Bank Robbery Getaway



A member of the bank robbery gang, aborigine stockman Johnny Cadell, J. Arthur Rank's new film star discovery, is seen here in the heart of Buckinghamshire, England, rehearsing the bank robbery getaway scene for the film "Robbery Under Arms" which is now being completed at the Pine-wood Studios.

It is an indefinable quality which asserts itself as Albert Namatjira walks with head erect beneath his huge 10-gallon hat.

"In Sydney they called me the cowboy from Central Australia," he said with a laugh.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The Falling Stones Message

Dear Sir,

I must congratulate you on the extremely interesting and detailed report on what you describe as "W.A.'s most baffling phenomena." I have followed closely the reports of this and the previous happenings, and I repeat, your report is a real credit to you and is an example of reporting that could with great advantage be followed by certain other papers.

The phenomenon is perfectly natural and yet is super-natural in the fullest sense of these words.

You rightly asked "Is there a message in the falling stones?" I answer, "Yes, most undoubtedly." But, what that message is depends on individual observers, and readers, and thinkers. But let us get hard hold of this fact.

This wonderful phenomenon is not produced for fun, nor is it to be scoffed at. Those workers in the Spirit World go to a lot of trouble over these manifestations, they even require an individual or individuals with certain characteristics, to enable them to break through earth conditions.

The message to me is this. A joyful reminder of the reality of God, the reality of another World, the reality of Eternal Life, not the extinction by death. This phenomenon fortifies the Great Message of Easter. It blows to atoms the materialist philosophy. It leaves the sceptic in a hopeless position. The variation in the items comprising the phenomenon are staggering.

A possible message is that the ancestors of the aborigines in that part of W.A. were showing their joy at the fact that at long last the terrible plight of their race is being put on a national level, and it looks as if something in the shape of Justice is going to be their lot.

H.J.

Are you getting married, or is there a local native couple getting married in your town? Then write and advise us of details, names of each of the couple and the Minister officiating, dates etc., or get someone to write a report to us about it so that it may be included in the next issue of "Westralian Aborigine."

The "Coolbaroo" ABORIGINAL SHOP

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Aborigine-designed and produced articles, including genuine Weapons and other items used in aboriginal tribal life.

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- A visit to Fremantle, port workings, called on the

EXCLUSIVELY for WOMEN

that genteel look

... REVIVAL of 1912

The fashion story for winter is redolent of 1912 with its femininity of soft draping and generous capes.



Sheath of silk and cotton with white collar and cuffs; front panel is lined to retain its fit.

Cocktail sheaths have a pretty look with soft draped skirts often with an elevated bustline. There is infinite variety, for every occasion, to suit every woman.

Extreme simplicity as exemplified by the moulded and beltless sheath is the keynote, but new ways of softening the slim silhouette are stressed at the waistline which is higher or normal. This is clearly defined or suggested by midriff treatments. In addition, emphasis is placed on side or front drapes that fall from the bustline. The effect given is a "short-waisted look" rather than a high Empire line.

The "bloused look" which has emerged in the fashion news is approved as a popular way of softening the straight silhouette. It shows up for every occasion—in dresses, coats, suits and "blouson" blouses.

Skirts have released fullness over the hip line and taper down slimly giving the Dutch Boy or peg-top look. It is shown with short jacket suits, in dresses both for day and evening wear.

There is a diversified selection of capes, suits, semi-fitted coats and wider coat treatments. Necklines are small, collars and sleeves have a new prominence in either their dropped armholes or the bloused shape, tightened at the cuff.

Aboriginal Design Scarves

Australia's latest fashion trend which is quickly spreading overseas are the attractive aboriginal designed and produced ladies' scarves made by Aboriginal Enterprises.

The smart aboriginal designs and motifs make them adaptable for any occasion all the year round and are available in 4 delightful colours, yellow, blue, green and brown.

The designs and motifs are genuine reproductions of aboriginal art and are exclusive.

They can be purchased for only 20/9 at the Coolbaroo Aboriginal Shop, now re-open at the new address, 42 Pier Street, Perth. Mail orders will be promptly attended to.

COOKIE CUDDLES' COOKING RECIPES FEED THE BRUTES

Girls, the surest and easiest way to make a man happy and contented is to feed the brute with something really tasty and "out of this world."

With tasty recipes you can really get the upper hand on that man of yours.

How do I know? Well, I have tried it on my hunk of man—a real stinking glutton for tasty food.

I have many proved recipes for all types of cooking and through "Westralian Aborigine" shall give you a recipe each month that will trap and hold any man. You will like them too.

This month I have chosen a "Minute" recipe I am sure you will be crazy about. For the cold winter months ahead...

MINUTE-STEAK STEW

Once in a blue moon you run across a recipe like this. Makes a simply delicious stew—quick and easy as snapping your fingers!

Wonderfully adaptable, too! Use tinned or leftover vegetables. And make any amount you like. The only musts are the minute steak and tomato sauce. The meat to brown and start a gravy.

- 4 minute or cube steaks, about 1lb.
- 2 tablespoons flour.
- 2 tablespoons butter.
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped onion.
- 1 cup cooked peas and carrots.
- 1 cup vegetable liquid.
- 6-8 small cooked potatoes.
- 1 tin tomato sauce.

Cut the steaks into 1in. strips. Season flour with 1 teasp. salt and 1-8 teasp. each pepper and paprika; roll the steak strips in flour mixture. Heat butter in skillet until bubbling. Add meat and brown well on both sides. Stir in remaining ingredients. Cover skillet and simmer 10 minutes. Makes 3 to 4 servings.

Girls, you must try this recipe and see the delightful results—on the platters and in your man.

Bye till next month.
COOKIE

Editorial

Standard of Living Precludes Social Acceptance

Whilst it must be acknowledged that many natives are establishing themselves in the community by their own efforts and by the assistance afforded them as well as white people by State and private instrumentalities, it is unfortunate that many of our people are apparently content to live in sub-standard and unhygienic camp conditions on the outskirts of towns and outlying suburbs. The fact that they evidently make no attempt to seek anything better is interpreted by the general public to mean that they are quite satisfied with their lot. Too, there is, unhappily, much evidence to indicate that this group display a complete lack of any sense of responsibility in the matter of earning and spending money.

It is because of these conditions—the camp conditions under which many are apparently quite satisfied to live and the fact that too many of them apparently make no effort to improve their position or show some sense of responsibility in the handling of money—rather than the bogey of racial prejudice, that they are generally unacceptable socially in the white community.

It might be said that acceptance, whether social, legal or economic, is conditional upon their acceptance of a way of life which embraces a standard of living acceptable to the general community.

Whilst we are not entirely to blame for this state of affairs, in view of the number of definite disadvantages under which natives must labour, such as illiteracy, economic instability and lack of legal status as a citizen, together with the attendant disabilities which go hand in hand with these disadvantages, it is considered that we now have the scope and freedom to considerably improve our lot if we genuinely desire to make the attempt. The white community are looking to us for some sign of an effort on our part to improve our position in the community, hence we must make a tremendous effort not only to overcome the more apparent difficulties, but also to put ourselves on a plane of living that will demand the respect and approbation of everyone with whom we may come into contact.

The first step to this end is a pleasing personal appearance, the prerequisite for which is the acquisition of some dress consciousness—an awareness of the importance of your apparel. Once you've acknowledged the importance of dress you will find that it demands all-round cleanliness and care—cleanliness of body and property and the proper care of the clothing you have acquired. These are fundamental requirements for social acceptance, but their importance lies in the fact that they compel you to establish some type of permanent residence. When both you and I have conceded to these demands it will have indicated that we have embraced a way of life which should then qualify us for unconditional acceptance in the social, cultural, economic and legal spheres of white society.

In future let's not be too sensitive about social non-acceptance, especially when the conditions are so favourable for more constructive thought and effort.

Let us remember that the average white Australian forms his basic assumption of our worth, not from propaganda, but from his observation of the social behaviour and conduct and general living conditions of the vast majority of natives with whom he comes into contact.

In the outlying suburbs of the metropolitan area and in various country centres in W.A., the association of the word "Aborigine" and to a less extent "native," are formed by the sight of people, so labelled, who are usually dirty, smelly, in tatters and surrounded by clouds of flies. So that even when a coloured family rises to a better social level, the decrepitude of those wandering aimlessly about in a dirty and smelly condition still sets the standard on which all natives are judged; and this view of the primitive and insanitary man is always an obstacle to the acceptance on merit of other aborigines.

So long as the term "aborigine" connotes for large numbers of people, a state of dirtiness, lack of hygiene, low standards of housing, lack of education, poor economic opportunity and, in general, a standard of living far below that which is customary in the white community we shall always be faced with social ostracism. It seems obvious therefore that if we are to overcome social ostracism we must set about to remove the conditions which give the term "aborigine" its peculiar connotation.

Westralian Aborigine
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Letter from the President;

This first Newsletter will, I feel sure, be the first to be read and if after reading it, we hand each copy to a friend many new members will be enrolled.

In 1959, each of us must make a great effort to ensure that the sum of £5,000 is raised for the addition to the Aborigines Hostel. We are grateful that the Government has granted us £1 for every £1 collected.

In writing this my mind hies back to earlier days. In 1911 on my way home to Scotland after visiting Australia I read about the aborigines in the Year Book of the Commonwealth given me by the Prime Minister, Mr. Andrew Fisher an Ayreshire Scot like myself. But it was not until 1914 I actually saw Aborigines. They were living among sand-dunes in a galvanised-iron shed—neither wind-proof nor water-proof. Several had coughs and one was suffering from advanced tuberculosis of the lungs. I reported the plight of these people to the proper authorities but was told aborigines would not live in decent houses. Nothing was done. Housing for most aborigines in Australia today is better by far since 1914 but there are still places where our darkest brethren live in hovels of rusty galvanised-iron and sacking on the fringe of white civilisation. No member of an Aborigines' Advancement League can rest while these insults to human beings remain.

Charles Duguid. 10th. May, 1960

The Newsletter.

We are making an experiment which we hope will prove successful. To keep League Members in closer touch with activities, in place of the usual notice of coming events. This gives us twice as much typing space, so that we can tell members what has happened in League affairs, as well as what will happen.

The Building Appeal.

Dominating our activities this year is the plan for the extension of the Hostel. Our Appeal Secretary is Mrs. H. Banfield, who is doing a grand job. Our target is £5,000, and our purpose is to extend sufficiently to have six more girls and another resident member of staff. Many of you will have seen the splendid articles with which the "News" has sponsored the Appeal. League Members and business organisations have responded so generously that already the £1,000 mark has been passed. Members will be pleased to know that the Government has agreed to back our appeal on a £ for £ basis. This means that we are already nearly half-way to our goal from straightout giving. This is very heartening indeed, but we cannot slacken on the job for most of the balance of the money to be raised must now come through money raising functions, several of which are now being planned. The response to the Appeal has made us realise once again how much public sympathy is with the cause of Aboriginal welfare.

National Aborigines' Day.

National Aborigines Day is to be observed on July 12th. Mr. A.C. Bullock is the League's Representative on the S.A. Aborigines Day Committee, which is organising a series of activities from July 10th to 12th, including a concert on July 11th.

News Items in Brief.

The League has been left £168 by the late Miss Matilda Player. This money was voted into the Building Fund.

Miss Hollidge and Miss Sorrell, together with the president, were appointed to represent us at the annual Conference in Melbourne of the Federal Council for Aboriginal Advancement. A report of the Conference will be made at the next General Meeting.

The Committee was sorry to say farewell to Mrs. Gooden, representative on our Committee for Y.W.C.A., who has to resign owing to pressure of other duties. We welcome Miss McLeay who has taken her place.

The Aborigines Protection Board visited the Hostel in March, and following the visit, our Matron, Miss Glen accompanied the Protector, Mr. Bartlett, on a visit to Point Pearce.

Seminar.

We are just in time to inform Members that we have been invited to send two representatives to the Seminar on Local Government being organised by the League of Women Voters and the University of Adelaide. It is to be held on the 29th and 30th. Two places are to be reserved for the League until Wednesday 20th May. Cost is £1.1.0. If you would like to go, please contact the Director of Adult Education, Adelaide University, for particulars, mentioning that you are a League Member.

Subscriptions.

Do you know that since last A.G.M. subscriptions to the League are 5/- per annum, instead of 3/-? Are you financial? Our financial year runs from October to October since that is the month in which we hold our Annual General Meeting. - The Treasurer is Mr. W.W. Paris, 443 South Rd., Black Forest.

COMING EVENTS.

GENERAL MEETING of the Aborigines Advancement League.

Members are invited to Willard Hall Lounge room (upstairs) at 8 p.m. on Monday June 1st. to hear a series of short talks on events of current interest in connection with Aboriginal Affairs. (including reports by delegates to the recent National Conference), It will be an informal evening and sufficient time will be allowed for questions and discussion. Speakers will be Miss Hollidge, Miss Sorrell, Mrs. Bart, Dr. Duguid and Mr. Paris.

CONCERT.

The ANNUAL ABORIGINES CONCERT organised by the National Aborigines Day Observance Committee will be held at the Freemasons Hall, North Tce., on Saturday 11th July at 8 p.m. Tickets are 2/- for Adults and 1/- for Children. They may be obtained from Mr. A.C. Bull, 73 Queen St., Norwood.

Corresponding Secretary: Mrs. K. Schulz,
48 Green St.,
St. Morris.

11 APR 1968 AS/S
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MR. HERBERT S. GROVES
President of the Aborigines' Progressive Association.

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF

Editorial . . .

ABORIGINES' PROGRESSIVE ASSOCIATION'S DAY OF MOURNING

Twenty-eight years after the founding of A.P.A., The dedicated members met at the home of a good friend of the Aborigines on the day that Australia was once again celebrating the 178th Anniversary of the Colonial settlement. This historical day is not a day of rejoicing for the remnants of a once proud race of people who were disinherited; we could be excused for regarding it as a day of mourning.

Mr. Charles Perkins and his charming wife Eileen were guests of honour. A.P.A. members are proud of Mr. Perkins' success in acquiring a Bachelor of Arts degree, and his appointment as Manager of the Foundation for Aboriginal Affairs' Centre. An appropriate presentation of a beautiful book produced by the U.N.E.S.C.O. that illustrates the Arts and Crafts of our ancestors was made to Mr. Perkins. Two poems composed by our President were dedicated to both Mr. and Mrs. Perkins. Those present were deeply touched with emotion when Mr. Groves outlined the trials and tribulations that A.P.A. has to face up to in our struggle for dignity and human justice.

Quoting from historical Document No. 1 that was presented to the Australian public on 26th January, 1938, Mr. Groves said our people lived under conditions that were revolting and repulsive to the standards of human decency. There was no equality of opportunity in EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, and HOUSING. He also played tribute to the founder of A.P.A., the late William Ferguson, a dedicated man who gave his life in the cause of Justice for his people.

In the presentation of the case for the Aborigines,

from an Aboriginal's point of view, one of the requests was that a Royal Commission be set up to inquire into all aspects of Administration of Aborigines' Welfare in the Commonwealth of Australia. Aborigines had collected evidence of mal-administration and were prepared to testify on oath at any inquiry. This Royal Commission was denied us. Mr. Groves went on to point out that 1966 was not without hope, as the State Government at long last has set up a Parliamentary Committee comprised of Members of the Upper and Lower Houses to investigate Aborigines' Welfare in this State of New South Wales, and A.P.A. was requested to make submissions to this Commission, and in the near future A.P.A.'s submission would be available. It will be referred to as Historical Document No. 2.

We are proud of the prestige that A.P.A. has built up since it was reformed in 1963. We are grateful to the loyal supporters who have identified themselves with the Aborigines' Progressive Movement. We are proud of the ever-increasing number of Aboriginal men and women who have passion, philosophy, and plans for the future welfare of our race. It is time for us to take the initiative and look forward and go forward, to seek an equal place in the Community; integration is our objective and with the full support of all sections of the community, we must arrive at our goal.

Mrs. Isabel McCallum.
Convenor of Social Activities.
ABORIGINES' PROGRESSIVE ASSN.

Mr. Herbert S. Groves

A pioneer in the field of Aboriginal Advancement, Mr. Herbert S. Groves, J.P., is well known for his work in successfully presenting the case for Aborigines before gatherings of branches of such bodies as Rotary, Junior Chamber of Commerce, Returned Soldiers' Leagues Clubs, Church Clubs, and Women's Organisations.

Mr. Groves was born in Walhallow in 1907. This is now known as Caroon Aboriginal Station on the Mooki River, New South Wales. He went to school at Coonamble where he was educated to the fourth standard, and was prevented from obtaining further education, by a racist policy adopted by schools at that time.

As a youth he adopted a correspondence course and became an apprentice plumber. His employer was the late Mr. M. G. (Matey) Hitchen, son of Mr. Dick Hitchen who led the platoon of "Coo-ees" in the first World War. In fact, the late "Matey" Hitchen was responsible for giving Bert his first start in life. At the completion of his apprenticeship, Bert came in contact with Mr. Bill Ferguson and from then on his life took on an entirely new concept. Mr. Ferguson brought Bert face to face with reality as to what it really meant to be a member of the Aboriginal race, and the solutions to the problems posed seemed to be ever

evasive until Bert familiarised himself with the Constitution of the Original Aboriginal Progressive Association, as set down by Mr. Bill Ferguson.

Every effort has been made to separate A.P.A. and the life of Bert Groves on the part of the writer of this article, but it has been found, quite remarkably, that one has given strength and life to the other; in other words to talk of A.P.A. is to talk of Bert Groves' life, and vice versa.

Bert and his wife Susan have raised a family of six children, all of whom have reached the Intermediate standard of education, and have taken their places as responsible members of the community. It is to his wife that Bert owes much of his success. She has been patient and self-sacrificing, as she encouraged Bert to pursue his line of activity. Mrs. Groves has obviously been successful in creating a harmonious domestic environment.

Bert holds the following positions:—

Chairman of the Board of Directors, Foundation for Aboriginal Affairs.
President and Life Member, 'Aboriginal Progressive Association.
Trustee and Executive Member, Aboriginal Children's Advancement Society.
First President and Life Member, Aboriginal-Australian Fellowship.
Foundation Member, Federal Council Aboriginal Advancement.
Member, Legion of Ex-Servicemen.

The above list is surely an impressive one, and indicative of the way in which Bert has successfully taken on the responsibility of living in a community.

He is truly a man with whom not only Aborigines, but the whole of Society is very proud to be associated.

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CHURINGA, March, 1966

IDENTITY

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IDENTITY

Vol. 1 No. 1 July 1971

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Editor: BARRIE OVENDEN

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Identity, July 1971



THIS IS THE first issue of our own magazine, *Identity*. It is produced mainly by and for the indigenous people of Australia. It strives for identification for the indigenous people and a true, sincere understanding of their situation.

With the support of the Australian people, *Identity* must develop into a loud and clear voice of the indigenous people. For this we need articles, stories, reports and photographs coming in regularly so that we can maintain an interesting and worthwhile quarterly magazine.

An invitation is extended to all the indigenous people of Australia to contribute articles, etc., from your own particular fields.

Are you interested in airing your views on land rights, housing, education, legal aid, employment?

Can you write down a legend? Do you know any stories about your own people? What is the history of your own tribe? We would like to know as would a lot of fellow Australians.

Do you think the Aboriginal committees set up by the Federal Government are helping in the field of Aboriginal affairs? If not, why not? Write and tell us what you think they should be doing. We want to publish your ideas. Let us have them.

Identity can only function if it is supported by all indigenous people.

Remember, the Aboriginal Publications Foundation was formed so that indigenous people could air their views and express their grievances. This is your chance to say what you think in your own magazine.

A door has opened. Let your pen keep it open. Let the voice of the indigenous people be heard from one end of Australia to the other and even overseas.

Let us know what you think of our first issue of *Identity* and how it could be improved.

Identity will grow strong with your support. Help us to help you help yourself.

KATH WALKER

THE

KOORIE

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 Published Fortnightly. Chief Reporter; Lin Onus 12 Cole Avenue, Belgrave 3160,
 Telephone 75 3762. Editor Bruce B. Mc Guinness 45 Summerhill Road Reservoir,
 Telephone 47 2773....

Hi, White Friends, welcome to the world of colour. Previously this was to have
 been an exclusive paper but due to an overwhelming demand we will now make this
 available to non aboriginals for a small fee...

Editorial; What is an Aborigine?

Quite often I have heard people ask, just how do you define an aborigine? Well,
 I have decided that for my editorial this issue I would try to explain as clearly
 as possible my feelings on this subject.

Primarily I feel very proud of the fact that I belong to a race of people whose
 culture has been definde by anthro pologists as one of the most advanced in the
 world, also to know that my people have been living in this country for more than
 30,000 years gives me a deep sense of ownership even though I possess nothing of
 material value.

When people talk of Aborigines with respect I feel as though I have been person-
 ally praised, this makes me glow with pride. On the other hand when the word
 Aborigine is spoken with Disrespect the hairs on the back of my neck start to
 stand on end, filling me with anger, and the need to strike back in some way,
 which as often as not is to tell this person or persons exactly what I think of
 them.

Overall I think these emotions plus my knowledge entitle me to the name Aborigine

Editor.....

There are certain items require by the Koorie Klub, anyone wanting to assist
 should phone the Editor as soon as possible as the items are rather urgently
 needed.. Ed....

Mrs Hazel Dovlyn has volunteered to assist at the Klub with Cosmetic Lessons for
 girls...

Er Nat Finklestein has also consented to give instruction in small business man-
 agement...

Unfortunate Crisis at Purnim, local resident ^{husband 44 yrs} ~~John Carr~~ (w/ 2 kids) had a Heart Attack on
 Christmas Day and is in a serious condition in Warrnambool District Hospital...

For the information of those who don't know, Cummeragunga Mission is under the
 jurisdiction of the N.S.W. authorities, not Victorian...

The Koorier 29/12/68 Page 4

Keep your eyes on the television set, our old friend Harry Williams and son B are at present working on television series in Sydney. Due to be released soon.

Can you imagine a cemetery with over 300 graves yet only one headstone? If you find it hard to believe, go to Coranderrk Cemetery at Healesville. There, after negotiating a track with no signpost and which is virtually impassable after slightest bit of rain you will find a half acre of land covered with Brambles, weed, broken down fences and various assorted animals walking through.

That is Coranderrk cemetery, the resting place of a proud people the Yarra Ya tribe. If ever a race deserved a fitting memorial it was they, the original owners of the land that Melbourne now stands on. Yet their remains are left to rest in a plot which is regarded by the local residents as a joke. WHY? ...

Joe Alberts of Purnim is moving to a house at Warrnambool with Ministry assistance.

Now that Terror of the Wild West, Ravel Cooper is Chauffeur to a very high member of the Ministry...

Mode of Harrigarrn...

I wish to express my thanks to the Editorial staff of the Koorier for the chance to write for this Newsletter which I feel is making its presence felt throughout the whole of Australia for its message directly from the Koorie.

For my first task I would like to bring forward a point to the reading public, the need for Education, an education to the non Aboriginal of the culture and practices of the indigenous people of Australia.

What does the average Australian know of our culture? Not very much I can assure you. The general teachings of the Koorie being on one side a nomadic (through necessity of survival) and lazy (for seven dollars pay I would be somewhat late) people, and on the other a primitive wanderer, yet consisting of a society so far advanced in its social structure as to leave the community gasping, simply due to the fact that no Koorie leader needs Body-guards to protect him from his own people.

The knowledge that the Koorie has of his environment can be of great benefit to all in this land, so why in God's name should knowledge be swamped by a culture that no-one can appreciate.

Let us now advocate a need for knowledge of the Koorie so we all can begin to understand each other...

Any truth in rumor re; Discrimination at certain Hotel in Pitzroy? ...

Good to hear Donny Mc Guinness is now in a satisfactory condition and may possibly be allowed to return home soon ...

Cont....

ALCHURINGA

INCORPORATING CHURINGA A.P.A.

Vol. 1, No. 1

DECEMBER, 1971 - FEBRUARY, 1972

S21
4



OFFICIAL JOURNAL
OF THE
RECENTLY FORMED
NATIONAL
ABORIGINAL THEATRE
FOUNDATION
AND THE
ABORIGINAL TOURIST
AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
ASSOCIATION



The Aboriginal Family Education Centre Project is sponsored by the Bernard Van Leer Foundation and a grant of \$250,000 from this Foundation is being matched by government sources.

AFEC philosophy is based on the realization that the Aborigines must ultimately make their own choice as to how they want to live, given certain aid in establishing some quality in whatever style of living they may choose. The premise "Educate a man and you educate an individual, educate a woman and you educate a family," seems to carry the seeds of a realistic policy and so far is the only logically constructed pre-school system yet advanced to meet the special needs of Aboriginal family education.

Interested Aboriginal family groups are invited to contact Mr. Lex Grey, Project Director, Mackie Building, Sydney University, for literature or for aid in establishing a Centre.

THE METHO DRINKER

Goomee Goomee Goomee
They call me Goomee Jack
Forty years of nothings worth
Have I got on my back
Forty years of nothing, mate
For I don't own *these* rags
I picked 'em up and wore 'em
Got 'em from the rubbish bags
Goomee Goomee Goomee
What else is there for me?
Except a bottle full of Goom
A fire, an old gum-tree?
What else is there on offer?
Indeed, what can I earn?
My will my pride spurned from me
Where else, man, can I turn?
Goomee Goomee Goomee
This bottle will do me
It hides the pain, ignores the rain
Upon this human sea.

—Kevin J. Gilbert

Best wishes from . . .

J. J. H. TAYLOR
156 FOREST ROAD, HURSTVILLE, 2220

Phone: 57-4146

FOR ALL VINYL SHEET OR TILES

Inspection Invited

WHAT IS ALCHURINGA?

ALCHURINGA is a re-development of a magazine well-known to the Aboriginal people of N.S.W.—CHURINGA. CHURINGA, as the official journal of the Aborigines' Progressive Association, has long been identified in the public mind as the only really Aboriginal journal produced in this state. It has always stood for a positive policy in Aboriginal affairs. After the sad death of its Editor and President of the A.P.A., Mr. Herbert Stanley Groves last year, CHURINGA lapsed.

Now CHURINGA has been re-born as ALCHURINGA. The title is derived from the sacred Alchuringa symbol of the Dreamtime. Like its predecessor, ALCHURINGA aims to fulfill a very obvious need—the need to serve as a channel of communication between the Aboriginal community and the state. It is intended that the magazine will reflect Aboriginal opinion in all its aspects. We believe that CHURINGA'S friends and supporters of the past will accord the same level of support and active participation to this new development of the magazine.

ALCHURINGA is the official journal of the recently formed National Aboriginal Theatre Foundation and the Aboriginal Tourist and Economic Development Association. It aims to stimulate Aboriginal cultural revival as well as practical measures to further Aboriginal welfare and progress. The *active* support of both Associations by interested and sincere people is invited.

APPLICATION FOR SUBSCRIPTION TO ALCHURINGA

ALCHURINGA will be published quarterly, in January, April, July and October. Have your copy posted to you direct. Take out subscriptions for your friends who wish to support and read about Aboriginal progress. Subscribe now!

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION is \$1.50 including postage (Overseas \$2.50).

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KOOKA~ BINA

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 1

A BLACK AUSTRALIAN NEWS MONTHLY

JUNE 1976

20c

LYNCH FRASER NOT BLACKS

What we have all expected since November 11th has finally happened! Fraser's election policy of "getting the economy - back in shape" (or, in other words, making the poor pay for the rich's profits) suddenly became very clear after May 17 with his "address to the nation. What he really means is this:

- * Massive cuts in government spending to the tune of \$2,600 million. These cuts will have a drastic effect on every aboriginal organisation.
- * The dismantling of Medibank, effecting in particular all our medical services
- * The abolition of income tax rebates for children.
- * Taxing social services.
- * The setting up of machinery for the implementation of a wage freeze.

The economic crisis has already hit black workers hardest - 30% of Aboriginal workers are officially registered as unemployed. This means that Aboriginal workers are hit SIX TIMES AS HARD AS WHITE WORKERS! Unemployment is the most obvious symptom of the sickness of capitalism - the system CAN'T GUARANTEE WHITES THE RIGHT TO WORK AND A LIVABLE INCOME AND IT WON'T GUARANTEE BLACKS THE RIGHT TO WORK AND A LIVABLE INCOME. Black workers, women workers, and migrant workers are always the last hired and first fired so that the bosses can make sure that there is always a large unemployed population that they can use as scabs or that they can make accept the lowest wages and worst conditions, and overall keep the wages of white workers down. But the people who must take responsibility for this kind of racism are the trade unionists and the political leadership of the working class - THIS MEANS YOU, TOO, HAWKE!

Hawke and his ilk have already weakened their own cause by not defending the rights of blacks - by not getting rid of discriminatory clauses in trade unions long ago (the AWU only removed its discriminatory clauses in 1973) and by not making sure that the trade unions defend-

ed aboriginal interests (the AWU campaigned for a one cent rise per hour for cotton chippers in 1973, and believe it or not they got it).

Because Hawke and his ilk won't defend their own interests by fighting racism, you can be sure that they won't defend our interests - full employment and a decent living standard for all aboriginals. We have to call on all our supporters in the trade union movement to defend our right to caucus in the trade unions around the problems of racism - against the last hired, first fired syndrome, against The Queensland Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders Acts (1971) which denies blacks the right to unionise and receive award wages and against the Fraser-Lynch-Bland horror budget.

Just look at Fraser's so-called reforms and see what it really means:

* **FAMILY ASSISTANCE:** Child Endowment is to be increased for the first time since 1950. But at the same time income tax rebates for children are to be abolished. Not only will we lose out, but every working class family will lose out. For example, a family with four children will lose \$33.00 a year on the deal. The only ones to gain will be those who do not pay tax anyway. A family with four children on the minimum wage of \$93.00 will get \$15.00 extra per week. This won't take them out of poverty conditions.

* **TAX INDEXATION:** Fraser has hinted that he will grant full tax indexation. This would mean a net gain of \$1,200 million for wage earners. However, at the same time he has threatened to introduce a tax levy for Medibank. Reports put this levy at 2.5 per cent. This means an increase in tax of \$1,400 million! A NET LOSS for wage earners of \$200 million. But besides this loss, we face the threat of DOUBLE TAXATION. Fraser is going to make the state governments raise revenue through a state tax to cover the losses not covered by the Medibank levy!

MURDOCH SLANDERS ABORIGINAL HOUSING COMPANY

Murdoch slandered the Aboriginal Housing Co. and the whole Aboriginal race in his Sydney gutter paper THE DAILY MIRROR on Thursday, May 20. The headlines read: "\$1 MILL HOMES 15 tiny cottages". He goes on to say: "Fifteen tiny cottages in Redfern have been given a \$1 million facelift - eat tax payers' bread". The seven-square-dwellings is costing up to \$70,000 each. The homes are part of a \$2.5 million Aboriginal housing plan backed by the former Federal Labor Government.

The gist of this is essentially lies, a two pronged attack on "niggers" and "nigger-lovers", the Labor government. But more importantly, it is a press campaign after the style of the "dole-bludgers" campaign to soften public reaction to Fraser's horror budget, and in this case to justify the cutbacks in Aboriginal housing throughout Australia to the tune of \$1,951,000! When housing is as abominable as it is for Aborigines, and is one of the causes of health, social and employment problems, Fraser's cutbacks can only be described as criminal.

THE SUN also carried a similar story. So, Fairfax is also behind Fraser and his draconic measures.

The real truth is this: The Aboriginal Housing Co. started in 1973. Homeless alcoholics were living in the houses then, and they found out that the houses had been bought by IBK for redeveloping. A group started up, consisting of the alcoholics, concerned Aboriginal people and friends who occupied the houses in protest against the horrific lack of housing for Aborigines.

Life wasn't easy for the squatters - they were stoned.

how we hear it

The year 1972 wasn't a great year for blacks, but it was a helluva lot better than the previous 23. In 1972 a labor government led by Gough Whitlam was elected on a platform of reforms, particularly reforms for Aborigines, and Australia began to emerge out of the dark ages.

After 1972 Aboriginal demands for equal rights, land rights, decent housing and health services became legitimate. Aboriginal services, covering housing, health and legal services, were funded, if sometimes in a stingy way, and were able to meet needs that Australian governments in the past would not.

Three years under a labor government was a very enlightening experience for blacks, especially for those trying to build the Aboriginal services. For most of us, by virtue of being able to compare our lives now with our standard of living in the past, racism became a very tangible and identifiable thing. We knew that things were better if just because we were allowed to, and given funds to do things our own way.

But on November 11th, the Governor-General, Sir John 'Our', dismissed Gough and with him all the reforms that had changed our lives. Every Australian, black and white, (excepting Fraser and his cronies, the CIA, ASIO and all the agents of the State) knew that their rights had been ripped away from them - especially the right to a democratic government.

Since then, every action that Fraser has taken has lowered our standard of living, physically and politically. And to back him up, Murdoch has waged a relentless racist war of "yellow journalism". The vicious 'dole-bludgers' campaign was opened officially by his article in THE DAILY MIRROR about black families receiving \$400 a week from social security benefits. In the country issue of that paper the figure was \$700 a week. Ironically, the information for these

a week. Ironically these lies were fed to the press by a blackfellow.

We saw more racist lies with the article on May 2nd 1976 in THE SUNDAY MIRROR about a vice ring allegedly involving Aboriginal prostitutes to raise money for the black movement. At first this seemed to be a direct piece of police propaganda, but with not much research we found out that the "information" had been obtained from a black "militant" and swooped upon by Murdoch's vultures and transformed into the kind of racist slurs that we hadn't seen for a long time.

And then again there was the slanderous attack on the Aboriginal Housing Co. which we deal with in this issue.

The time has come for all honest and principled blacks who want to see justice done to deal with Fraser and his hatchet man Murdoch. We have decided to produce Kooka-bina as a start.

KOOKA-BINA IS PUBLISHED BY THE BLACK WOMEN'S ACTION COMMITTEE

KOOKA-BINA PAGE 2



dexation a disguise for lowering our standard of living through cutting our buying power, but it is also a disguised way of killing Medibank slowly...making it what it was never intended to be. We have lost the one reform of the Labor government which meant anything.

* CUTS IN GOVERNMENT SPENDING: The treasury's axe has fallen on government spending. Lynch has announced that expenditure will be cut by \$2,600 million. The Department of Urban Renewal and Development set up by the Whitlam government will be abolished. Education spending will be slashed by \$80 million. The ABC will be impoverished. WE WILL GET VIRTUALLY NOTHING.

The cuts in Aboriginal Affairs will be in the following:

Housing	1,951,000
Health	603,000
Education	429,000
Employment	130,000
Welfare	167,000
Enterprises	788,000
Town Management and Public Utilities	1,875,000
Recreation	106,000
Conferences and Consultation	148,000
Travel	317,000
- other	123,000

As you can see, the most savage cuts will be in housing. Because of the shocking housing conditions Aborigines we have devoted the middle pages to describing these conditions in NSW.

Of course, this won't effect the graziers' (land stealers') superphosphate bounty or the capitalists' 40 per cent investment allowance and deferred company tax, or any of the perks available to Fraser's friends - the rural and mining aristocracy. It is aimed at US, the most deprived sector of Australian society already! And it will throw thousands more out of work!

* TAXING SOCIAL SERVICES:

If you receive more than \$93.00 per week for a pension you will have to pay tax!

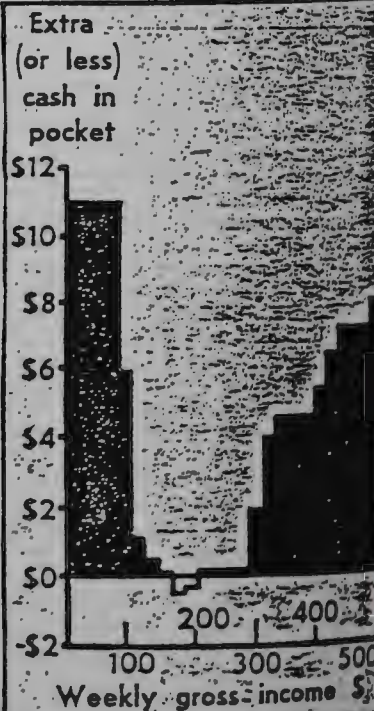
* WAGE FREEZE: Fraser wants wage indexation cut in half. This means that even if wage indexation kept pace with the cost of living (and everyone knows it doesn't) then only half of the rise of the cost of living will be passed onto wage earners. This is a wage cut. Fraser's wage freeze legislation if carried through would be backed up by vicious penal powers

Clarrie-O'shea period.

What people like Hawke and Egerton are actually doing now is playing right into Fraser's hands, selling out the labor movement, the aboriginal population and other oppressed groups in Australia - pensioners, migrants etc.

We have got to stop this march back into the Dark Ages! We have got to bring down the Fraser government, by exposing his cheap tricks, by challenging the rotten leadership of Hawke & Co., by organising and being prepared to act. Hawke lost his cool last November, when he should have called a general strike. But when Australians, black and white, really start to feel Fraser's bite they will also start to realise the need for a political leadership that acts in our interests.

FAMILY OF 5



Taxpayer, dependent spouse, three children

IT'S TIME HARMONY

What is it?

Yes!! it sure is — long overdue as a matter of fact. The Aboriginal Advancement Council through "HARMONY" can now offer our people and sympathisers the opportunity to express their desires, needs, frustrations and criticisms in bold print and we hope that this may help to achieve tolerance and Harmony in the Community.

This, the first issue is to co-incide with Aboriginal week.

NATIONAL ABORIGINAL WEEK — JULY 5 - 10, 1976

TRUCANINI 1876-1976

The focus of this year's celebrations is on the last of the now extinct race of Tasmanian Aborigines, Trucanini, who died on the 8th of May 1875, but whose remains were not finally buried until 1976, one hundred years later.

In an atmosphere of public controversy, Trucanini's body was buried in a private ceremony a few days after her death and then exhumed and placed in the museum of the Royal Society of Tasmania in December, 1878. The Society had tried unsuccessfully on two previous occasions to be given custody of it on the grounds that it was a scientifically valuable specimen.

Despite the availability of the skeleton very little scientific research has in fact been carried out, and there have been a number of controversial attempts to have the remains of Trucanini cremated or buried, encouraged perhaps by the knowledge of her own fear of mutilation after death.

In June 1974 the Tasmanian

Government finally agreed to representations by the Aboriginal community in Hobart for Trucanini to be buried during 1976, the centenary of her death.

1976 - LAND RIGHTS

It seems a curious coincidence that in the same year that Trucanini is finally laid to rest in the earth, and that land rights for some Aborigines in Northern Australia are also to become a reality, after two hundred years of dispossession.

Many would agree that the development towards self-determination seems to have levelled off, or still appears so far away and many dreams remain unfulfilled. At such a time, the granting of land rights in the Northern Territory will be seen as a beacon of hope for all Aborigines and those who are sensitive to their desperate situation.

Nobody could deny the continuing necessity for funds for housing, education, economic projects, etc. However, such funds have proven to be inadequate substitutes for the full recognition of the rights of the Aboriginal people to land, as the original inhabitants. Without this symbolic undergirding of the recognition of Aboriginal heritage and identity by other Australians, the provision of funds only retains the air of handouts.

A start has been made in the Northern Territory. Let us all celebrate together the 20th celebration of National Aboriginal's Day 1976, on July 9th, in memory of Trucanini and in anticipation of land rights at last for Aborigines.

R. J. Denham,
for the National Committee of
N.A.D.O.C.

Harmony is distributed free. It is a new paper with new ideas. It is intended to be the means of giving Aboriginal people a voice of their very own. It will be a newspaper that prints what Aboriginal people themselves want to see in print. It will not willingly lay itself open to charges of libel and it does not want to just abuse everyone. No, what it wants is just to see that there is one paper, at least, that will print the kind of stories that Aboriginal people want to tell; the kind of things that need to be known but which people are not likely to learn from any other newspaper.

There have been newsletters around for a while and some of these are very good. But here in Perth there is no newspaper that can be relied on to publish what Aboriginal people want to make known, that represents Aboriginal opinion as a whole. Harmony hopes to do that.

We are calling this new paper Harmony, a name which we will try to live up to in all ways. We want to see harmony and understanding between the different Aboriginal organisations, harmony between such organisations and other kinds of groups and if we can print the right kind of stories we should be able to see increased harmony in the relationship between the Aboriginal people and the government, between Aborigines and police;

between all such groups who do not know enough about each other, at present to achieve proper harmony. Harmony will be right there trying to live up to its name, trying to increase understanding and to strengthen relationships between Australians generally, whatever their ethnic origins or creeds.

Harmony can only succeed in doing what it wants to do if it has the help of those it is trying to assist. Please send us your stories, your articles, your letters. Tell us what you want to see in print. Help us to help you. You won't be charged to have your say — you may not be paid for it either — but so long as we can sell advertising space we can keep publishing the things you want to say so keep them coming in to us.

For a start, Harmony will only be published quarterly. If it proves popular enough there is nothing to stop it from coming out more often. Advertising is its life blood. Buy from those who advertise in it! Send in articles that others will want to read! Watch how soon Harmony can become the newspaper Aboriginal people and their friends have been wanting for so long!

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HARMONY — defined in Webster's Dictionary
as "JUST ADAPTATION OF PARTS TO ONE
ANOTHER, SO AS TO FORM A CONNECTED
WHOLE"



Elders

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Commends the Aboriginal Advancement Council
of W.A. (Inc.) on this their first publication of
"Harmony" — a newspaper making a practical
contribution towards better understanding and
co-ordinated living between all Australia's people.



SOME RANDOM THOUGHTS ABOUT ABORIGINES & OTHERS

By WODGILA

How many people really care about Aboriginal people and their problems? Of those who do care, how many properly understand the difficulties that beset an individual or a group of Aborigines? Can Aboriginal people themselves have a proper perspective of a situation in which they are so closely involved? The Aboriginality of so many metropolitan dwellers has been adulterated and Europeanised to their confusion, too.

Like most other people I have been writing as if Aborigines were always one people. Even when they have read enough anthropology to know about the different tribes and the divisions of territory between them, most folk fall into the trap of referring to the Aborigines as if none of this had been learned. Certainly there were large areas of similarity but there was always that question of territory, the territory that meant survival and which was therefore guarded against trespassers whose trespass might mean loss of vital food supplies or interference with increase.

If the trespass of similar people was a threat to survival, how much greater threat was the threat of invaders from another land? Of invaders, moreover, who seemed immune from the evils that would befall Aborigines were they to break the many laws broken by those others despoiling the land and even desecrating its sacred places.

It was, of course, far simpler for the newcomers to suggest that an Aboriginal was a primitive, ignorant savage than it was to admit that a fellow human was being killed off or ill-treated while his land was being misappropriated and put to unnatural uses.

Before European settlement began in Australia the balance of nature was maintained by adherence to laws which governed all aspects of daily life, immutable laws laid down by the first beings who had created the features of the land and established patterns of living essential to their maintenance. Such laws were all-embracing and by European/Australian standards would need to embrace federal

and state statutes, local government as well as religion plus the combined force of all these.

The incoming settlers not only made it impossible for Aboriginal people to keep up their rituals and traditions but by breaking all the laws with apparent immunity, could not have failed to weaken Aboriginal faith in their systems. It was quite a while before the settlers knew or cared just how cruelly destructive they had been, before it was realised just how much a part of a man's very life was his land and his totem. Today there are still plenty of people who neither know nor care.

Is it any wonder that no compensation has ever been paid to Aboriginal land owners? What money could ever repay the loss of that indivisible land/life unity that was so brutally wrenched apart? Is any proper compensation likely to be attempted now when, even at this time, when people have begun to understand what really happened be-

fore, it is still considered more important to make money for mining magnates who don't need it than to protect sites of great sacredness, sites that have been sacred for tens of thousands of years?

Aborigines were non-literate and did not build permanent houses. But they had a well-maintained oral tradition, an understanding of their environment that enabled them to survive in even the harshest conditions and a harmony with all about them that could have been an example to anyone with the wit to learn from it. They understood and practised conservation. It took white settlers to introduce erosion on a large scale, pollution and kindred ills along with a greedy desire for material goods. And of course, alcohol.

It is altogether too easy to cast a contemptuous look at some unhappy Aboriginal reeling along a street and call him names. Take away any man's means of subsistence, his law, his religion and his faith in it, treat him as no better than an animal — and then give him alcohol in which to drown his sorrows. How many would not do as some Aborigines now do? The wonder is that so many have been able to retain their dignity and integrity despite what has been done to them and is still being done today.

Aboriginal marriage laws were complex, ensured there was no weakness due to inbreeding and were a suitable means of keeping the system going. Here again the impact of incoming settlers did inestimable harm. Here again, what money could possibly compensate in any way for the wrongs done? Wrongs are still being done. In these days of women's liberation is it possible that even Aboriginal women will be able to assert their rights? Or will it still be considered fair to scold, insult, use and abuse an Aboriginal girl simply because her skin is not white?

When there were no suitable job opportunities for educated Aborigines there was no incentive for Aboriginal parents to see that their children attended school. Things are a little better now but it will take another generation or two to produce the Aboriginal lawyers and doctors so sadly lacking today. To study properly, young people need to have decent homes, homes that have rooms for books, for quiet study areas and parents that understand and encourage their use.

And there the impossible seems to have crept in. What

a travesty the housing of Aborigines has been. Small wonder that the present federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs wants to do away with reserves.

Just how he proposes to do this while he persists in obeying the Prime Minister's orders to cut all funding is a mystery. But there is no mystery about his wanting to get rid of monstrosities that should never have been inflicted on Aboriginal people.

There was a time when it was believed that Aboriginal Australians should and would want to join all other Australians and live in boxes in the suburbs, becoming slaves to a system and its machines busily producing goods to further enslave those silly enough to get caught up in it.

The system and its faults are becoming altogether too obvious for anyone to insist on forcing outsiders into it. It is just possible that here and there someone or other may begin to realise that perhaps the Aborigines had a system that was superior to ours and might, even now, be successfully applied to ameliorate conditions all round. The values that gave the Aboriginal a perfect adaption to all around him, that led him to common ownership seem to now be approached by those who today talk of right sharing of world resources.

Is it possible that in the larger time scale of this ancient land the first Australians had hold of an absolute truth that really does still apply today? May it conceivably be that those who made the land and its laws still have the power to see that laws are carried out? Can it be that despite all the outrages and interferences the land, given time, will right itself and us with it?

If people are an integral part of the system and the system relies on their co-operation it might be a good idea to start studying our part and the plan as a whole. I'm sure that for one would rather be related to a tree than be blown away in atomic dust particles because I didn't think such a thing was possible. What do you think?

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ABORIGINAL - ISLANDER - MESSAGE

★ **LAND RIGHTS**

★ **NEWS**

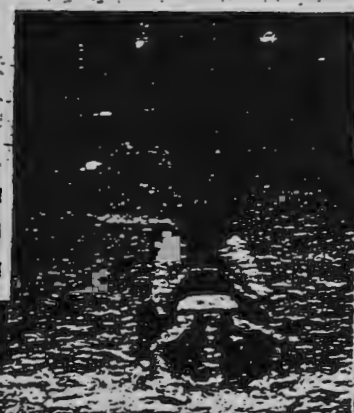
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★ **DANCE**

★ **POETRY**

★ **POLICE**

★ **ARTS**



AIM HIGH...

What do you do when you see so many things happening which will be bad for the Black community, and as an individual, or even as a group such as ours, you can do so little to prevent them?

What do you do when you can see the Government making new laws and changes which will bring havoc to the Black community, and you know you can't stop them?

What do you do when there are so many things happening that make you feel small and ineffective?

How can you let Black folks everywhere know what's happening, and how you and many others are ready and willing to help when you can?

Our group, the Aboriginal/Islander Skills Development Scheme, decided to start a newspaper to effectively help organize to publicize what changes will come about from the Government's new laws, to let people know what other people are doing, who needs help, and who is willing to help.

We would like to put our newspaper at the service of the Black community. If you let us know what changes you would like to see in our paper, in our format, in our articles, we will endeavour to do anything within our power to oblige. So this is not really our paper, but yours - and we need your help, your support, your ideas.

We were going to start with a Roneo-ed sheet, but we thought - AIM HIGH. So we borrowed a typewriter, begged paper, got a loan for our first print expenses, and we are in hock to start. But, with you behind us, we'll make it through, come good, and go from strength to strength.

We need articles about what's happening in your community; because there are people everywhere who would like to know. We would like to have photographs - which we will return to you in good order - so we, and others, can see who you are, our readers, and can say 'Hi' when we see you in the street or in your town.

We also need for you to need our paper, to send in your subscriptions so we can plan ahead about how many copies we can get printed, and the best method of getting the papers to you.

Our AIM is to provide the Black community with up-to-the-minute coverage of news events that affect us, articles to entertain, stories about us, Black images to show to our children with pride. We AIM to provide a place to publish your poetry, your art-work, your stories of events good and bad. We AIM to tell you what's happening where, in sport, in entertainment, in the community, and in the political arena.

If we are AIMing high, it's because we know we can do it, and we know you can do it, and we know that - for the Black community, there is no other way but up....SO, AIM HIGH!!!!

PLEASE SEND YOUR ARTICLES, LETTERS, IDEAS, NEWS
-OR EVEN JUST WRITE TO SAY 'HI' - TO:

THE EDITOR, AIM,
P.O. BOX 4,
POST OFFICE GLEBE,
N.S.W. 2037.

Views expressed in AIM are not necessarily the views of the Editor nor of the Aboriginal/Islander Skills Development Scheme.

This issue was put together by Regina Choolburra, Steven Christian, Lois Cook, Theresa Creed, Rosemary Evans, Darren King, Paul Kyle, Libby Morgan, Lesley Randell, Wendy-Sue Roberts, Lindsay Saunders, Sharon Smith, Bronwyn Thompson, Kerry Upkett, John Williams, Shane Williams.

AIM - Page 2.

URANIUM MINING FOR N.S.W.

Black organizations throughout Australia have, for years, angered and upset about the prospect of uranium mining in the N.T., particularly on Aboriginal Land. Recent events in the N.T. highlight how little effective action is preventing the pressures which have forced the Northern Territory Council into appearing to support uranium mining.

However, uranium exploration has already taken place in N.S.W., quietly and with no publicity, and uranium has been found in the Broken Hill area, central and southern New South Wales and the New England district. Just which towns and areas of Aboriginal Land Claims will be disturbed by the mining has not, of course, been released.

The Premier, Mr. Wran, has refused to comment on the matter, which was brought to light by Mr. Mulcahy, Minister for Mineral Resources and Development, who put the matter to Cabinet that it adopt the policy of:

- (a) Permitting the exploration for uranium ores in N.S.W. so that, in the context of the continuing assessment of the State's overall energy resources, the extent of their occurrence may be known; and
- (b) Not permitting the mining or treatment of uranium ores in N.S.W. at the present time.

State Government sources continue to claim that they are opposed to uranium mining, however, this opposition has never prevented this State from allowing the export of uranium from container terminals within N.S.W.

Members of the Black community fear that exploration which has already taken place, the results of which have been very secret, severely jeopardizes their chances for a fair hearing in regard to Land Rights in this State.

Organizing to oppose uranium mining in N.S.W. at some future time may be too late. Mr. Wran must be imposed upon to come out in the open and let people know what is happening when it is happening - not at some future date when, as in this instance, the opportunity for public debate on the issue of uranium exploration in this State has been denied to the people.

HEALTH CUTS - Closures -

There has been a virtual blanket of silence since the announcements in the media of drastic cuts in N.S.W. Health expenditure, at the time called 'rationalization'.

Apart from a few words about how it would all be looked at again, because of public protest, there has been no real follow-up on this vital information.

The proposed cuts would have had a devastating effect on the Black community. With the closure of the only 24-hour alcohol detoxification centre, McKinnon Ward, there would be no after-hours service available at all.

In plain terms, this would mean that people would die. At present, it is possible to take people who have passed out to McKinnon Ward - but if it were closed, they would be left where they fall, and probably at the mercy of the elements, hooligans, and the police.

McKinnon Ward, with 20 beds, has admitted about 1000 patients a year for an 8 to 10 day stay.

Two other centres for alcohol and drug addicts, opened during the Labor Government era, have already been closed. The Bellevue Centre for alcoholics, in Surry Hills, was closed in 1976. The Erskine Clinic was closed in 1978. The Brisbane St. drug clinic was also closed down, leaving the workload of 20 to be carried by Bourke St. Clinic, with a staff of eight.

It is likely that the same thing that happened to Community Health Centres will happen with all the other proposed changes. Instead of closing them down with a resounding thud, they will be gradually closed down one member after the other, being moved or resigned, not being replaced, and there just isn't anybody left there anymore.

ISLAND

4-5-74



Smoke Signal

WHOLLY COMPILED AND
PRINTED BY---

Bill Henson & Ima Clay.

EDITED BY Ima Clay.

This material is distributed to:

N.A.A.C.C., Canberra.

Race Relations, Sydney.

Black Community Centre, Brisbane.

B.M.I.U., Brisbane.

Metal Workers' Union, Brisbane.

Storemen & Packers' Union, Brisbane.

Washington Post, U.S.A.

New York Herald, U.S.A.

Chicago Tribune, U.S.A.

Senate Standing Committee
on Aboriginal Environment

Trades & Labour Council,
Townsville.

No. 1

B

...IN ALICE SPRINGS... HIGHLIGHTS...

There's been a bit of a flap on up Alice Springs way in the last day or so. I have learned that the action of police in some recent violent incidents up there were described as "hair-raising".

Mr. Barry Dexter, (Aboriginal Affairs Head) said that if white people were involved the police would not have acted the way they did.... Apparently a truck loaded with Aborigines were being taken to the South Australian border under a police escort. They were on their way to a ceremony. They were taken from the truck and lined up. Mr. Dexter said that the police would not have done this if whites had been involved. He also said, "I think Alice Springs people have assumed there is a situation existing which does not, in fact, exist. There is no sudden move by Aborigines in Alice Springs". Maybe not. Let's just say, "the natives are restless to-night".

...THAT MAN AGAIN!

Senator Neville Bonner would have to renounce the Opposition's policy on mineral and timber rights for Aborigines reserves if he wanted the support of Queensland Aborigines. Mr. Cavanagh said this in Brisbane yesterday. He also said that leaders of the major Aborigines organisations have decided to support Labor and are urging all Aborigines to do the same. He said that Senator Bonner's Party's policies were not

in the best interests of Aborigines. Aborigines in Queensland were worse off than in any other State especially on discrimination.

How right he is.

...DID SOMEONE SAY "DISCRIMINATION"?

In Ipswich yesterday a publican refused to serve Aborigines in his bar. He said, "I won't serve them because they are not the type you can tolerate" Apparently, he received a phone call and when he answered someone said "Black Power here". Aboriginal Legal Aid field officer, Sam Watson accompanied the Aborigines into the Commonwealth Hotel.

...Capital misfortune.

Ampol Exploration Ltd.'s profit fell from \$1.33 MILLION to \$1.3 MILLION during the last 2 year. Fancy making ONLY 1,300,000 profit in 6 months! My heart bleeds.

...REGULARITY IN OPERATION.

I have been informed by my spies down in Brisbane that the going rate of pay for a general labourer is \$72.00 per 40 hour week. Plus, of course, 4 weeks annual leave and 8 days paid sick pay. What is the going rate here on Palm? Did senetocy say \$35.00 per week? Oh, but I forgot. We're "slow" workers are we not?

AUGUST

13 MAR 1979

11-8-75

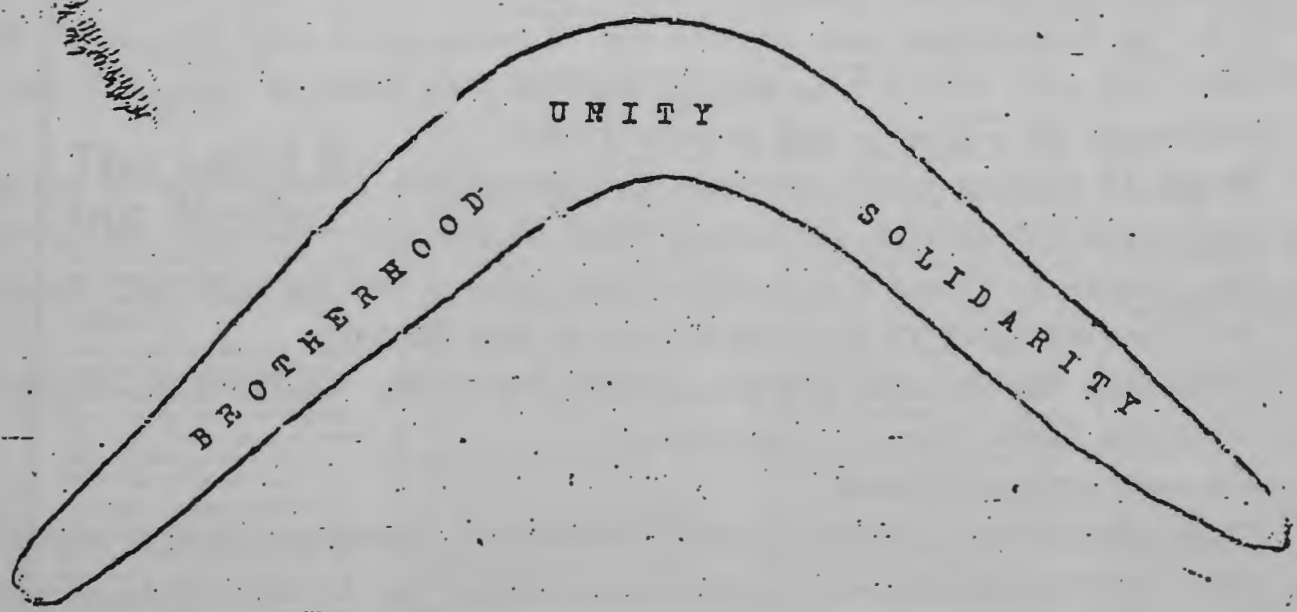
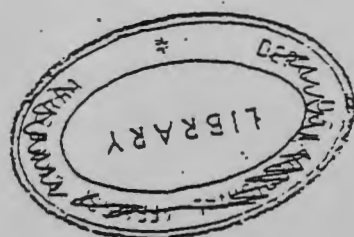


DARY (2)



(1)

BLACK KNIGHT



(Formerly "Smoke Signal")
(From Island)

Dear Sisters and Brothers.

Hi there. It seems like a million years since I last wrote for you. It feels good to be back in harness again. Actually, I've been trying to get a paper going again for the last 6 months. I made submissions to the Aboriginal Publication Foundation asking for help. But that was 6 months ago. I still haven't heard from them! I then put in a submission to the Aboriginal Arts Board. I did everything right. I formed an Editorial Board, furnished an itemised list of what I needed and the cost, sample issues of "Smoke Signal", the whole bit. That was 4 months ago. I haven't heard from them either! It's a strange thing. The Aboriginal Publication Foundation solicit articles for their magazine and also for people to write on black affairs, yet when someone eager and willing to do this sort of work, they take months to make up their mind. Let's hope they haven't become too lordly or complacent that they can afford to ignore the efforts of the common street black. I approached the top banana here in Brisbane and asked if he could help me. Reg. Worthy, the man I asked, said he could not. I asked him if there were any vacancies in his department to enable me to get some bread. "Oo no," answered worthy Reg., "You'll have to watch the ads. in the papers. I don't want anyone who has to be 'spoon fed'!" I bit my tongue very hard at that one! I had a young lady with me at the time. The only reason I am able to produce this issue is because I had the assistance of a likeable and practical man.

We got to talking and I mentioned in passing that I would like to write but that I was out of work and broke. "What do you need?" he asked me. I told him. "Write it down." I did. Three days later I had the material! Wouldn't you know, he works in the same office as Reg. Worthy!

It is this man who must get full credit for making the birth of "Black Knight" (formally "Smoke Signal") possible.

His name is Chris. Berry.

"Black Knight" will not be playing favourites. There are too many black projects not working the way in which they should and too many white people in black affairs not doing the right thing. They need exposing. Take, for example, the Aboriginal Legal Service. The Health Service. Aboriginal Hostels. I don't know about you, but I'm tired of whites getting into a huddle and deciding what's best for we blacks. I realise that there are some top hole white around. But not too many! Some of the things I will be telling you will make your hair curl.....Bye now.

Bill... Ross...

LAND RIGHTS NOW! FREE THE BRISBANE TH WE ARE FIGHTING



Conference in Cairns: The Land is our Mother

Cheryl Buchanan and Lionel Lacey talk about the Land Rights Conference in Cairns (November 28 to December 1):

A lot of people always ask "What rights have we got to the land?" We have got every right. We all know that the land is our Mother. The Trees, the dirt, the birds, everything on the land is put there to protect us, to look after us:

But what is happening now? All these things that were there to protect us — they were taken over by rich people who built their cities and concrete jungles to push us right down. These cities have made killings, rape and murders. We always wanted to escape from these

things.

We tried to get out of the shit by agreeing to the government, agreeing with the rich people. What we mean by agreeing is that we promise to keep our mouths shut if the government will give money for our community services — Aboriginal Medical, Legal, Housing, Hostels, etc. We promise not to talk about the shit conditions, the pigstys we have to live in, our babies getting murdered because some racist doctors hate us blacks, our women getting raped, our men getting jailed for nothing. Now brothers and sisters, think for a while — where is the land? Is it inside you? It is around you to protect you — to keep the pigs off your back. It is inside all of us. Don't ever think it's not. The managers on reserves and the pigs and all the other bastards who push us down, they want us to be scared, to feel like we are lower than animals, to feel down all the time.

They want us to do this because this keeps them in power, in control

of our minds, in control of our bodies, and most of all to control our land.

But you know, brothers and sisters, that a lot of us are fighting against this, are fighting against the rich people controlling us and fighting their violent society. We are coming together. We are going to talk about the land, work out about how to get our land. There's going to be a big meeting about our land in North Queensland. A lot of blacks will be there from reserves like Aurukun, Palm Island, Cherbourg, Mapoon etc. and blacks from other States too. We have to raise money for this meeting for air fares and buses, and of course tucker. So we need your help and support and we want you to come too. There are committees in all cities. So, brothers and sisters, it is important you think about land because it is the guts of everything we are fighting for. Get in touch now with the committee in your area.

MELBOURNE: Black Resource Centre, 330 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy.

The Defence Campaign Legal racism in Queensland

Denis Walker, Lionel Lacey and John Garcia have been framed by the Bjelke-Petersen Government in an attempt to smash the Queensland black movement. Here Lionel Lacey and Cheryl Buchanan explain why.

There has been a defence committee set up about Denis Walker, Lionel Lacey (known also as Fogarty) and John Garcia. Many different sorts of people, black and white, have come together to hand out leaflets, discuss what happened, take part in support demonstrations, etc.

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But one thing that must happen is for people to really understand why these three have been picked by the Queensland pigs and what it means to the black movement.

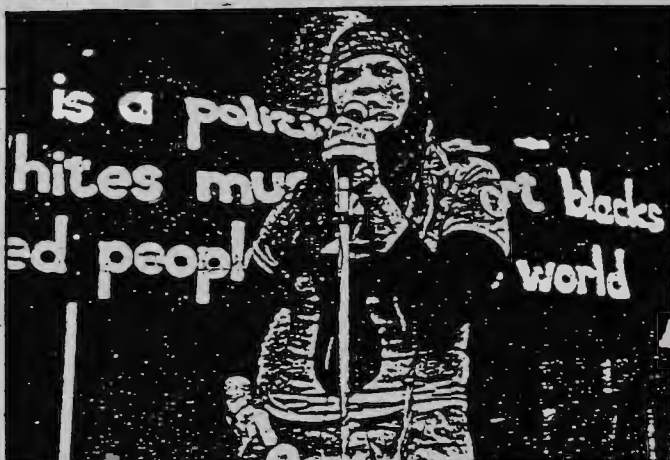
Firstly, the three were involved in educating people about how the racist Queensland Acts work. They told how blacks are forced to live on reserves and work for shit wages, how black babies die because they haven't got anything to eat. They really spoke straight and honest about all the things that keep us put down. The Queensland pigs do not like this and so they had to crush any chance of blacks getting together. They know how Denis, Lionel and John work for the people and are willing to die for the people.

Palm Island is a stinking concentration camp for blacks; like all reserves are, and they needed a school. Denis went to ask Jim Varghese (President of Queensland University Union at the time) about getting \$10,000 for a school for Palm Island and said it would be a good idea to have a black festival to raise the money. But Varghese wasn't interested in the blacks at Palm Island. He was too interested in making Denis angry, so he kept talking shit and asking Denis what he'd do if he didn't get the money. Denis kept thinking about the nice bed that Varghese sleeps in, about the three meals he has every day, and then he thought about our brothers and sisters in Palm Island and the fact that they've got nothing. So Denis went off at Varghese. Denis did not know that Varghese had a tape recorder turned on while he was going off. This is how cunning Varghese was. As soon as Denis had gone, then Varghese got the pigs in.

Varghese felt good now because he could put a black power guy into jail — he'd show all those black militants what a smart guy he was. Even though he is black, Varghese acts ashamed of it. He would be more pleased that the pigs will take notice of him and not a 'black power shit stirring nigger'. This is because he acts in a way that pleases the pigs.

But one thing he forgot. That is the strong feeling that black people have to get all the pigs and pig lovers off our backs. That feeling that goes deep inside you that makes you feel strong about all your brothers and sisters, especially those brothers and sisters who have given their lives to the struggle. This is what all those pigs forget. Even if they bash us nearly to death they cannot destroy our spirits, our souls, our blackness. We know about the Queensland Acts and the managers on the reserves, and the pigs who work on the reserves and in the cities to keep us down — and one day we will smash all of them and their system.

The land and the blood of every one of our people before us who were murdered and raped — this is breathing underneath us. It is going up inside us and giving us



Cheryl Buchanan speaking at a Brisbane Three Defence Campaign demonstration in Melbourne

strength.

Denis and Lionel and John are prisoners of this society. *We are all prisoners of this society.* The key to our freedom is inside every one of us. Denis and Lionel and John, they began to turn this key. But we can't be free until this key is turned the whole way. Don't let them turn the key right back again, brothers and sisters. Keep thinking and fighting until that key is in your hand and you can throw it away.

The pigs framed up Denis because he knew about the Queensland Acts and spoke out against them. Denis was involved in setting up the community services too. They framed up Lionel to scare all the young blacks who want to do things, who want to speak out open. They framed up John to show any white militants that they should not come together with blacks.

It is important to support the Defence Campaign and to stand up against the pigs. Remember that we are all prisoners, no matter where we live, until we find that key!!

Power to the People!!!

Mapoon land claim

The way ahead

The struggle of the Mapoon people has inspired black people everywhere. Here Lionel Lacey talks about the first land claim in Queensland.

There have been many struggles for our people since white man came — against discrimination in the courts, blacks not getting proper medical care, poor housing — the list has no

end. Let us look at something, though, which has been here from the beginning and will be here until the end — and this is the land. Our people lived on this land for centuries and even though a lot of people like to look at us as a thing of the past, we are showing them we are alive and fighting for our rights.

Mapoon in North Queensland is the land claim in Queensland and I want to talk about this to show you the tricks that the bosses use to keep us down. The power these government people have. They have come to understand that the blacks at Mapoon have a feeling that they can't kill. The government knows a lot of tricks and can buy off people.

There was an instance not long ago where an old blackfella had a horse for six years. Black stockmen, men who had been born at Mapoon, came out here to look for the old fella. Then the Department of Aboriginal Affairs took him to court. They said that the horse was not his. But when he got to the courthouse one of his own people got up in court and said that he did not own it. This is how the State Government uses blacks against blacks and it stops the blacks at Mapoon from getting their land or the cattle back.

Another thing that the government says which is really sick. They are saying that the Mapoon area is not "economically feasible". In other words, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs is saying that if you were to come out here to live — you would end up dead. They say the water is not drinkable and the land is not fertile enough to grow any kind of food to eat. But come on, the government people don't know what land is and what comes out of the land. This land was never a land of death. How can the government say this shit when they have never been there.

They said they are going to close down the land. They don't give a fuck about 20 old people or more

who have lived here, built their homes here without any white man's help. So why does the government want to move them off? Their home is not at Weipa or anywhere else. Their home is at Mapoon. Think for a while how cunning they are.

Blacks on reserves have seen land as the basis of our struggle. If they give land rights to Mapoon, then the government will have to give land rights to other black communities and this is a very frightening thing for the government. They want to keep the control of blacks. They don't want us to be standing strong and fighting for our rights. Do you want to die while crawling to the whites for what is ours? No!!! We want to live. But you can't live unless we come together now.

The infamous Act: Australian apartheid

The Queensland Act is almost as bad as the apartheid laws of South Africa. This tells how Bjelke keeps the blacks down:

Queensland's Aborigines and Islanders Acts of 1971 not only blatantly contravene some of the basic Articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but also effectively maintain Aborigines and Islanders communities in a state of complete dependence on the oppressive paternalism of the State Department of Aboriginal and Island Affairs.

Residence on a reserve is a privilege, revocable at any time by the Administration. Teenagers who have left the reserves to seek wider opportunities in urban centres require a permit to visit their relatives. Members of the National Aboriginal Consultative Committee (NACC) are refused entry on reserves, even when the residents of the reserve have elected the representative and the purpose of his visit is to investigate complaints.

This is a direct contravention of Articles 9, 12 and 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which recognise freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.

Article 17(1) "Everyone has the right to own property . . . (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property" are infringed by the Acts' provisions for departmental management of property and earnings and disposition of estates of deceased and missing Aborigines or Islanders.

Article 23 (2) "Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work . . .

(3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration" is blatantly contravened by Section 56 of the Acts, which permits regulations to be made with respect to employment which are inconsistent in any respect with

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20 JUL 1982
Vol. 11 No 3
June 1982

BUNJI



Many Tribes — One People

P.O. Box 3743
DARWIN N.T.

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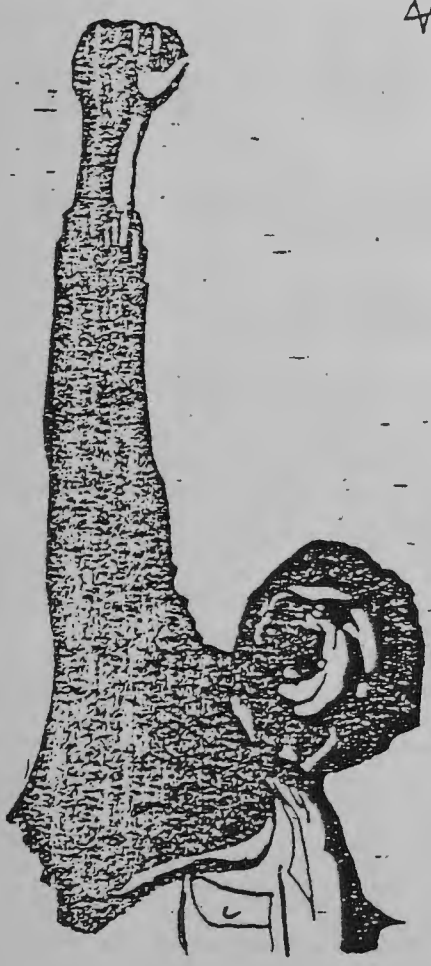
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Penny

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a

LAND RIGHTS

LAW CHANGES WILL TAKE US BACK TEN YEARS.

We are told that the Land Rights Act will be changed again. Mr Fraser is to help Everingham stop any more land claims. Our brothers and sisters on cattle stations will never have land rights if the law is changed. These are people who have suffered more than any others. Stand by our people without lands!

There have been several changes to the Land Rights Act already. With every change the Northern Territory gets closer to Queensland and West Australia, where Aborigines cannot even buy their land back.

A VICTORY FOR BLACKS

The High Court
Decision that
frightened Everingham

As the Utopia land claim in the Northern Territory progressed, an important decision was made which will affect the future direction of some NT claims.

The Australian High Court handed down a decision which enables Aborigines to buy ordinary pastoral leases and then, by establishing a traditional claim to the area, to convert them to inalienable Aboriginal land.

The decision was handed down on 6 February.

The hearing of the Utopia land claim began in September 1979, when the Aboriginal Land Commissioner Mr Justice Toohey heard an application by Anmatjira and Alyawarra Aborigines claiming to have a traditional claim to an area which included the pastoral lease known as Utopia Station.

The lease had been held by the Aboriginal Land Fund Commission since 1976. On 12 September 1979, the Commission resolved "to make a grant of interest in the above property to the Utopia Aboriginal Land Corporation".

The Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 allows a traditional land claim to be made to unalienated Crown land and to alienated Crown land in which all states and interests are held by or on behalf of Aborigines.

The Northern Territory Government opposed the claim.

from "Aboriginal News"
Vol. 3 No. 9 1980 page 15

UTOPIA - from Cattle Station to Community

Utopia Cattle Station was bought for the Aboriginal Community of that land. These people then claimed their land with the Land Commissioners. The NT Government fought against the land claim to Utopia Cattle Stations. The Land Council won the right to claim cattle stations owned by Aborigines. This was a decision of the High Court of Australia (see box on the left). Utopia now belongs to Aborigines as traditional freehold land. The people turned the cattle station into a black community. No more white boss in the big house and black slaves in humpies. The community makes the decisions. They have a school, a clinic and a shop. They have security and they continue to care for the cattle.



Vincent Forrester - NAC

"TAKE OUR PROTEST
TO BRISBANE" SAYS
VINCENT FORRESTER

The NAC member from the centre is fighting hard against any change in the Land Rights Laws. Vincent says we should join our brothers and sisters in big protests at the Commonwealth Games in Brisbane.



Koorakookoo

A word suggested as a name for this newspaper. It means a small bird with a piercing whistle. Seen as a messenger bird, warning that people are on the way or that something important is going to happen.

P.O. Box 94
Chippendale 2008

SOUTH COAST ELDERS DEMAND LAND RIGHTS



This is part of a statement made by South Coast Aboriginal Tribal Elders to the NSW Parliamentary Committee inquiring into the condition of Aborigines:

There is only one real problem facing N.S.W. Aborigines - and that is Land Rights. All other things can be sorted out in time once we have our land. We want to be given back enough of our land with the guarantee that white people can never again take it from us. And we want enough compensation for the rest of our land and for all the other criminal acts committed against our people, so that we can live independent of government hand-outs.

Before any white people came to our land we were free and independent. We had our pride and dignity. We had no social problems and no need of welfare services. We managed our own economy without any help from outsiders. Our land gave us everything we needed and we had trading routes that covered the whole of Australia.

This land is ours. It was invaded by white colonisers who took it by force. No treaties were ever made. They forced their laws upon us and used their guns, their army and police force to do so. The situation is not much different today. It seems the only way we can get justice is to break the white man's laws and get into trouble with the police.

It is ridiculous and stupid to talk about black-white relationships as though it was some kind of welfare problem. It is not a welfare problem at all. It is a **POLITICAL** problem between the black owners of the land and the white invaders and destroyers. And the key to solving that problem is not better welfare, etc - it is Land Rights, Self-Determination and Just Compensation. Nothing else will work. Nothing else can work!

We believe that almost every Aboriginal person in N.S.W. wants to live on his own land among his own people. Some might not talk about it much, especially to white people, but the feeling is there and it is getting stronger all the time. We know this is true because we have travelled over much of N.S.W. and have met people from all parts of the State. The feeling is strong and deep within our people.

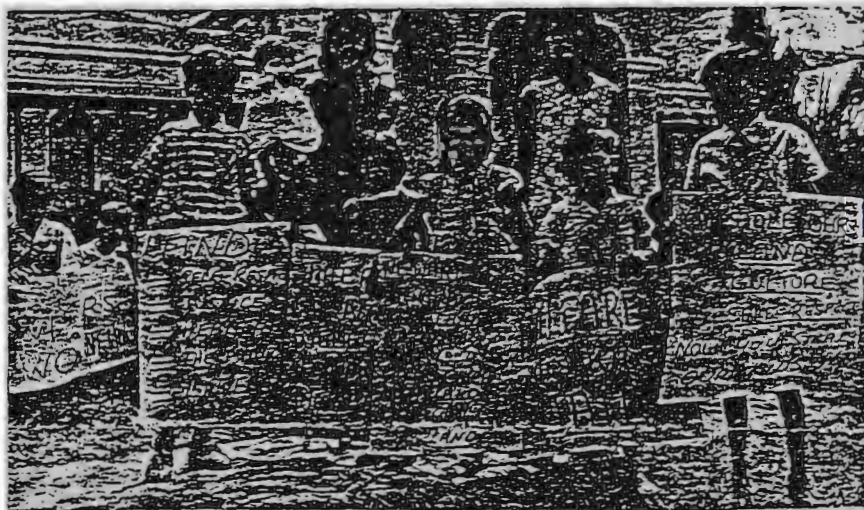
Another reason why it is so important that we get Land Rights is so that we will get enough land to live the way that suits us best. There is one thing you can be sure of: No matter how hard he tries the white man will never assimilate us into his ways, because we can see how bad his ways really are.

**WE WANT OUR LAND AND
WE WANT IT NOW !**

True Land Rights and true Self-Determination mean that each Aboriginal community must be given the **BEST POSSIBLE GUARANTEE** within the white man's system that it will possess its land in perpetuity. This can only mean that each community be given inalienable title deeds to its land. Nothing less than this is satisfactory. Anything less than this is a denial of true Land Rights and Self-Determination and will be suspected by us to be yet another of the white man's tricks to rob us of our land and our heritage, our traditions and our culture - and of any hope for the future.

The Labour Party has declared itself to be in favour of Land Rights for some years now. This is the reason why so many Aborigines, especially those who are strongest in the Land Rights struggle, have supported the Labour Party up to now.

— continued on page 2



Aboriginal culture was nearly destroyed by the whites
We will rebuild it by preserving our heritage.

Labor policy ignored — Bob Bellear

Speech at the Opening of the
Aboriginal Medical Service,
10th November, 1978, Redfern

by Bob Bellear

Brothers and Sisters,

The opening of the Aboriginal Medical Service today highlights what we blacks in Australia have known for a long time - that the only means of achieving real gains for blacks is through Aboriginal Controlled Organisations. The Government agencies responsible for Aboriginal health in New South Wales failed dismally in their attempt to do what the Aboriginal Medical Service has done.

The success of Aboriginal controlled organisations like the Aboriginal Medical Service sharply contrasts with the long history of failure of white government agencies that have tried to control Aborigines.

At this very moment, whilst we are celebrating the opening of the Aboriginal Medical Service, the Wran

government is setting up two new bureaucracies which will try to control our lives.

NEW BOSSES

In the last few weeks the New South Wales government has secretly manoeuvred to establish two new bosses for blacks. This week the ALP State Caucus established a Parliamentary Select Committee to again enquire into the situation of blacks in this state.

This Committee will look into all the things that many other government committees have enquired into, documented and then done nothing about.

We are all too familiar with the past record of government enquiries.

But the really destructive feature of this committee is that it is being set up to head off the demand for an independent commission which will hear and grant land claims in New South Wales.

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SOUTH COAST ELDERS DEMAND LAND RIGHTS continued

But what we now want to know is this:- If the Labour Government in South

Australia can give Inalienable Land Rights to the Pitjantjatjara People, why can't the Labour Government in N.S.W. give inalienable Land Rights to the Jerringa People of Roseby Park, to the Yuin People of Wallaga Lake, to the Gamilaray People of Terry Hie Hie and to any other People that asks for its land back.

We have waited so long for Land Rights that our patience is running out. We can see that if we don't get Land Rights soon then we will have to take to the streets again and put up our tents outside Parliament House. All we seem to be getting is promises, committees and recommendations. We don't want any of these - we want our land. And we want it now!

ELDERS SAY HOW COMMITTEE MUST WORK

The Parliamentary Committee must concentrate on Land Rights, Self-Determination and Compensation. It must concentrate on how best to help all Aboriginal people of N.S.W. to get true Land Rights.

It can only do this if it is prepared to spend a lot of time listening to us, the Aboriginal people of N.S.W., and to work with us - and this means involving all the Aboriginal people of N.S.W. in the working of the Committee.

Too often in the past, committees have flown into a place, talked with a few Aborigines and more than a few white people, then flown off again. This is not good enough. We want you to go to the riverbanks and the slums and to listen patiently to the



real Aborigines - not just to a few 'white-washed' Aborigines and a few self-appointed spokesmen who are often more interested in pushing their own private concerns and pet ideas than getting justice for

For us, justice can only mean Land Rights, Self-Determination and Compensation. That is what we want, and we want it now! the Aboriginal people of N.S.W.

Yours sincerely,

Percy Mumbler
Jack Campbell
Guboo Ted Thomas
Aboriginal Tribal Elders,
South Coast of New South
Wales

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How You Can Have Your Say on Land Rights to the Parliamentary Committee

If you are an Aboriginal or involved in Aboriginal issues we would like to hear from you.

The NSW Parliamentary Select Committee has been appointed to inquire into and make recommendations on:

- Land Rights
- Conditions that Aborigines live in (including housing, health, education, employment, cultural affairs etc).
- The causes of the socio-economic deprivation and disadvantages of Aborigines in NSW
- Current Commonwealth-State relations.

MAKE A SUBMISSION

The Select Committee would like to receive written submissions in the first instance on land rights, from Aboriginal groups or individuals and also from non-Aboriginals who are involved.

The Select Committee intends to visit Aboriginal communities to hear verbal evidence, particularly on land rights.

Already the Select Committee has visited three Aboriginal Communities - Wallaga Lake, Roseby Park and Nowra.

The hearings at Wallaga Lake and Roseby Park were in the opinion of those involved, exciting and successful.

Valuable evidence was received and will be very useful to the committee in its preparation of a report to the NSW government on land rights.

At Wallaga Lake, people from Bega, Bodalla and Cobargo as well as Tribal Elders from many parts of the South Coast gave evidence.

Mr. Percy Mumbler from South Nowra opened the proceedings with a stirring speech. He said that Aboriginal people were "treated like dogs" and called on the younger people to speak out about the question.

Mr. Ted Thomas from Wallaga Lake explained the land claim of the Yuin tribe and answered questions from the Committee on a range of issues including Aboriginal decision-making, rights of entry to proposed Aboriginal-owned land, fishing and hunting rights, proposed economic ventures, such as oyster leases, caravan parks, motels and market gardens. They also discussed the kind of land title they wanted.

Mr. Merwyn Penrith gave evidence on the difficulties Aboriginal people face in Housing for Aborigines (HFA) housing.

Mr. Max Harrison spoke about alcoholism and Mrs. Anne Thomas, a teacher's aide at the nearby Bermagui Primary School gave evidence on the need for more teachers aides, more training and responsibility as well as the success of the Aboriginal Education Centre Scheme.

The community held a barbeque during the evening after the hearing and showed visitors slides of significant sacred sites in their area.

Young traditional dancers from Boorooloolo and Palm Island performed short pieces to the didgeridoo.

The meeting at Roseby Park was held in the Jerinjah Tribal Housing company warehouse and most of the community was able to attend.

Mr. Jack Campbell gave evidence on the Jerinjah Tribal Land Claim, particularly on the significance of

sacred sites, the dealings of the local Aboriginal community with the local Council and the nature of Aboriginal law and decision-making.

Ms. Delia Lowe, a resident of Roseby Park, gave detailed evidence on Aboriginal opposition to assimilation and demand for self-determination.

Mr. J. Moore gave evidence on the need for accommodation within Aboriginal areas for children who had been previously institutionalised.

Several other witnesses spoke on Aboriginal unemployment, the need to recognise Aboriginal culture and ways of decision-making.

The meeting at the Nowra Aboriginal Cultural Centre was unfortunately disrupted. However, Aboriginal organisations in Nowra have been invited to make written submissions, and if they wish to give evidence in Sydney at a date to be announced by the Select Committee.

The Committee will be holding its next hearings to Moree on the 6th and 7th of March to hear the Terry Hie Hie land claim and any other evidence relating to land rights. The Committee will visit Narrabri on the 9th of March and hold a hearing if the community wishes it.

The Committee is expecting submissions from more Aboriginal groups and will make recommendations on land rights to the NSW Government as soon as possible after receiving submissions and hearing evidence.

For further information contact:

Marcia Langton, Research Officer, Parliament House, Sydney, NSW 2000. Telephone: 230.2111. OR:

Kevin Gilbert, Liaison Officer, Parliament House, Sydney, NSW 2000. Telephone: 230.2111.

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The Palm Islander

11.4.1976

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PALMS COUNCIL VISITS TOWNSVILLE MAYOR

On the personal invitation of Mayor Percy Tucker of Townsville, the Palm Island Council flew to Townsville on Tuesday 26th October for a 'social call' which included a tour round Townsville and lunch in the Council Chambers. The Palm Island Councillors were impressed by the Townsville Council's 'built-in' bar where they were asked by the Mayor to 'name your poison'. The Chairman said he enjoyed a can of 4X and felt that the day as a whole had been very enjoyable.

SIGHTSEEING TOUR

On arrival at Townsville Airport the Councillors, Mr. Jacob Baira Jnr, Mr. Les Foster, Mrs. Mona Wyles and Mr. Jim Julian were met by the Mayor in a chauffeured car. Their tour included the city dump, to inspect new methods of garbage disposal, the Aitkenvale Library where two girls from Palm Island, Mary Coleman and Sylvia Seaton had recently completed 6 weeks training, and the proposed site of a new shopping plaza and the Ross River Dam.

All the Townsville Council, including Mrs. Sheila Keefe, were present at the lunch held for the Palm Island Council, as was the Mayor's wife, Mrs. Tucker.

After lunch the Palm Island Council were shown round a kindergarten at Vincent Village and the Townsville Botanical Gardens. Mrs. Wyles was most pleased with the plant she was presented to take back to Palm Island.

RETURN VISIT SUGGESTED BY PALM ISLAND COUNCIL

Chairman, Jacob Baira Jnr, commented that it had been 'a worthwhile visit' and said he

hoped the Mayor and the Townsville Council would take up the Palm Island Council's open invitation to come to Palm Island on a return visit.



Jacob Baira Jnr, Chairman of Palm Island Council

Water Shortage Severe

There has been little let-up in the dry weather on Palm Island with the result that water restrictions which have been in force since early August were further reduced on 13th October from 6 hours to 4 hours each day.

It is now a regular feature on Palms to see mothers up at 6 or 7 in the morning doing the family's washing to catch the water before it goes "off" at 8.30 a.m. At night the water is on from 5.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m. for the family to have their showers and do the cooking.

SHOULD NON-RESIDENTS STAY ON PALMS?

Council Chairman, Jacob Baira Jnr, stated that the Island needs between 10 and 12 inches of rain to ease the

(Cont. on page 2.)

50

EDITORIAL

THE PALM ISLANDER is a community newspaper and one idea we would like to put forward in our first issue is that a community project should be started.

A community project is something started by a community, paid for and built by the community.

The PALM ISLANDER would welcome suggestions for projects and would help in every way possible in organizing an appeal for any project.

Our suggestion is for a swimming pool which could be used by both schools for recreation and sports. It could also be used by sporting bodies such as the footballers for training purposes, and by the community at large.

Palm Island could hold its own swimming carnivals, it could invite teams over from the mainland for swimming or diving competitions. It could start up new sporting interests on the Island, such as water-polo and octopush (underwater hockey). The pool could also be used as an all-weather training place for skin-divers and tank-divers.

Well - that's our idea!

Anyone with other suggestions, please contact Shorty O'Neill, Jacob Bairra, Mary Twaddle, Les Foster, or Andrew Waterworth.

Grades 7A and 8 Tour Brisbane

From late May to the end of September the Palm Island community was at the mercy of hot-dogs and ice cups. The Grade 7A and 8 students at the State-School were out in force selling these luxuries thereby contributing to the general food requirements of the community. In the end the children raised almost \$950. Added to this, the parents gave \$1000, while the Council gave us another \$100. When the ten day tour ended the total cost for the twenty children and four adults was almost \$4700.

One of the main reasons for the tour was to give the children an opportunity to see as many places, occupations and styles of living with which they had never come into contact before.

When the tour officially began in Brisbane, the children were shy and very uncomfortable. Some of them refused to eat at the hotel's restaurant. The usual complaint was, "too many whiee fella". However, by the end of the tour, the children were the first people at the dinner tables and were demanding to be served.

Many humorous things happened on the tour. At the wrestling, badman Steve Rackman called the

audience "Jungle Bunnies". However the Palm Island children replied with some well chosen words. At Lone Pine one of the boys got carried away and started chasing a kangaroo. He thought it would make (to quote his words) "good murray tucker there la." However, the animal caretaker was not impressed. At the Arnot-ts Biscuit Factory, Estelle Mudd and Marcella Walsh stuffed themselves with a variety of biscuits, while at the Northgate Golden Circle Cannery we all made ourselves sick, drinking pineapple juice

and tast-ing the delicious Pineapples. The boys particularly enjoyed the Army Barracks where they showed their agility by climbing long ropes.

The girls were given grooming and make-up lessons at a School of Deportment. Naomi Geia and Elizabeth Webster were made up like fashion models. Anybody would have thought they were from London.

One of the best things at the Gold Coast was swimming in the surf where Gibson Woola, Rodney Cannon and Marlene Walton were swamped by huge waves. At Marineland, Claudelle Doomadgee and Edna Mathieson stood on a diving board holding a fish. Suddenly a dolphin jumped out of the water and snatched the fish from their hands. They were scared that the dolphin was going to bite off their fingers.

Without doubt the most entertaining night was at the Roller Skating. The children ripped into it. Many of them made friends with some of the skaters. In fact I'm sure a couple of the boys fell in love with their partners.



Last week we had an open day, with dinner provided for the parents and other parents in the community. This gave them the opportunity to see the photographs taken on the tour and the work experiences of the children since that time.

The names of the children who were on tour are as follows: Gibson Woola, Rodney Cannon, Tony Seaton, Patrick Seaton, Clifford Nardoo, David Price, Alan Gardner, Edna Mathieson, Marcella Walsh, Elizabeth Webster, Estelle Mudd, Claudelle Doomadgee, Anne Archibald, Susan Prior, Naomi Geia, Algon Ketchup, Thomas Lenoy, Yvonne Walton, Marlene Walton.

Christos Campanaris.



3 NOV 1976

THE ONLY ABORIGINAL NEWSLETTER
IN TASMANIA

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ABORIGINAL
INFORMATION
SERVICE

STATE SECRETARY'S REPORT

Well Newsletter time again and I find it difficult to tell members everything that has happened in previous months.

Some important issues concerning Tasmanian Aborigines are coming up soon. One of these is Land Rights. Too often I have heard Tasmanians both black and white say that we don't need land rights here in Tassie. Yes we do! The mutton bird islands which our ancestors, the Tribal Aborigines, worked for thousands of years are retained traditionally by us. Even today, how many blackfellers go mutton-birding? So, seeing as we've been traditionally involved non-stop for thousands of years mutton-birding, why should white people make us do all the work while they get all the money?

Also where our ancestors left their mark on rock carvings and the like why should the white man own that land. Give it to us the descendants of these tribal blacks and let us preserve it so our kids can always be reminded that their heritage is something to be proud of and unique.

Going back to the mutton bird islands I intend holding, a meeting of interested Aborigines in Launceston in early December to decide whether or not we want to push for possession of the Islands. All Aboriginal people should be there as it concerns them. More on that later.

Also we could talk of that meeting about the difference between "half-caste" and Aboriginal. To me as I've previously stated the term half-caste is meant to degrade us, make us feel inferior. The term Aboriginal means we are all part of our race, we can be proud of it and it means we're all in it together, standing alongside each other.

Housing Department: At the time of going to press I along with Heather Sculthorpe had a meeting with Mr. Terry Lockhardt who is in charge of Aboriginal housing.

Mr. Lockhardt listened to us (unusual compared to what we're used to) and he agrees that self-determination - Aborigines doing things for themselves - can be operated in the Housing Department.

Previously one aboriginal and two white people allocated Aboriginal houses. Now it will be two Aborigines and one white person. Also we are to draw up a policy guideline for Aboriginal tenants.

This is a step in the right direction.

Last Saturday I spoke at the opening of Tiagarra at Devonport on behalf of the Tasmanian Aborigines. I do not want all the limelight. I hope others will try to speak on behalf of our people and anyone who would like to but is a bit nervous about it should see me and discuss it. You'll soon get over it. We need more voices in Tasmania to spread our words around.

MICHAEL MANSELL

Overheard that Royce and Des Mansell were taking turns to mow their mothers lawn (Clyda Mansell) and it still took them three days to do it. Des' comment when attacked by Cheryl Mansell "We're not like the white people, blackfellers take a little bit longer."

Who's the person that went to Queensland for a holiday, bought a pineapple and asked was it locally grown.

ORIGIN



ABORIGINAL EDUCATION 'SERIOUSLY DEFICIENT'

REPORT DISAPPOINTS EDUCATION FOUNDATION

The education of Aborigines in South Australia was seriously deficient, it was stated in the Select Committee report on the welfare of Aboriginal children which made far-reaching recommendations for the promotion of education and welfare.

The Committee, which travelled throughout the State, heard 146 witnesses and considered numerous written submissions.

The chairman, Mr. H. J. Kemp, noted that it was generally recognised that early education was essential for all underprivileged children, and commented: "In South Australia, however, there is a lack of

disappointed that the committee has seen fit to ignore the fact that 50 Aboriginal children of preschool age, in the metropolitan area, and several country towns, are attending kindergartens because their fees and transport are being paid by these generous members of the community who contribute to the foundation's funds.

scholarships, even on its present budget.

The Select Committee registered concern at the very low standard reached by many Aboriginal children at reserve primary schools.

Recommendations included special equipment for Aboriginal schools where necessary, an active counselling

foundation endorsed the Select Committee's recommendations about the need to have kindergartens established on inhabited Aboriginal Reserves, and staffed by trained teachers.

"But the fact is," said Mr. Lawrence, "that many pre-school age children of Aboriginal blood — probably 1000 — are living outside reserves." In Adelaide and country towns, where kindergartens — where they exist — are only available to parents who can pay around \$1.30 a week, and compulsorily join in fund-raising functions.

NO CHANCE

As a result, most of these 1,000 children had no chance of the important socialising opportunity which kindergartens could provide before school days, said Mr. Lawrence.

The foundation aimed to help Aboriginal parents over this financial hurdle, but many more kindergartens were needed, for both Aboriginal and white children.

"What the State Government might do is to at least provide kindergarten buildings and extra teacher training facilities, so that some of the \$850,000 Kindergarten Union grant now spent on subsidising kindergarten buildings and training staff could go to paying salaries, and thereby reduce the fees paid by parents," said Mr. Lawrence.

REMEDIAL

He said this would also help the "Aboriginal Education Foundation to provide more kindergartens

rigorous policy of expansion of remedial classes for all children with educational deficiencies with particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal children.

The high drop out rate of secondary students was attributed to this need to add to the family income and the fact that suitable employment could not be guaranteed on completion of courses.

The committee considered that all children who had the potential to benefit from a secondary course should be able to do so, and should be assisted financially and encouraged in other ways to continue their study.

Homework centres should be provided on all reserves where children were able to attend neighboring secondary schools.

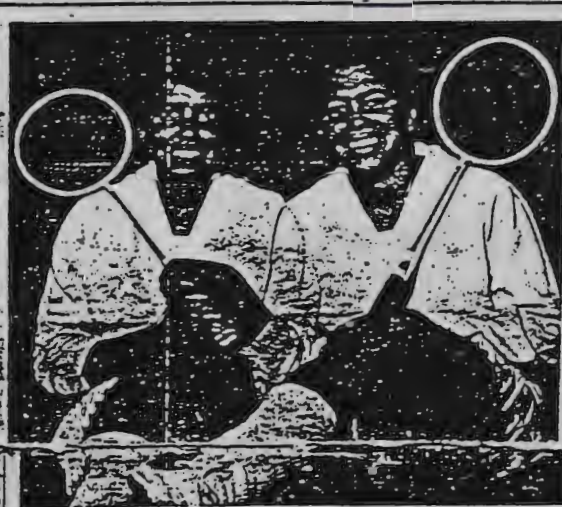
ABSCHOL BRAISED

Hostels, with Aboriginal involvement in their management, should be established in Adelaide and in centres such as Port Augusta and Whyalla.

The committee commended the Abschol scheme of coaching in private homes and considered that official recognition should be given to the organization.

More generous financial assistance should be given to Aboriginal families established in towns with education facilities to board students from other areas.

Because of social or emotional reasons, many secondary Aboriginal students were doing primary school work in special classes, a reflection on earlier environmental handicaps, stated the report.



Seventeen-year-old Cheryl Mullens, right, and her sister Sandra, 15, were the first Aboriginal sisters to be selected in a Victorian badminton side and the youngest women players chosen in an interstate side in Australia.

They live at Jandivick and play badminton with Labertouche in the Mid-Gippsland Association.

Cheryl and Sandra won the Australian junior doubles title and Cheryl is

the country and Victorian mixed doubles champion. Sandra is the Australian under 17 singles champion, Mid-Gippsland singles champion, and Tasmanian junior singles champion.

Sandra attends Drouin High School and Cheryl is a typist with the Water Trust in Drouin.

Picture supplied by the Herald & Weekly Times Ltd.

ORIGIN

There are already numerous publications produced by groups active in Aboriginal affairs. This one will not supplant any of them.

Origin is independent. Circulating throughout Australia — to cities, country centres, reserves and missions — it offers every individual and group a common meeting ground for the exchange of ideas and opinions.

Anyone who has something to say is assured of the chance to say it.

There have been many developments during the past weeks. One of the most pleasing is that in some areas Aborigines who are unable to write what they want to say will be helped by other Aborigines and by white friends.

Offers of voluntary help have been almost embarrassing. It has not yet been possible to give personal thanks to all these people who have sent messages of encouragement for this enterprise.

TRUST FUND:

At the end of 2 months the profits from Origin will fund a trust fund.

Aboriginal readers will be asked to nominate trustees to represent them, and, through the trustees, express their wishes as to the most useful ways of using the fund.

When the trust fund is begun all future profits will be paid into it. — Ed.

LOOK FOR

- 2 Keith Walker — letters
- 3 Art and craft class
- 4 Mary Smith — Caring for children
- 5 Children's story, novel
- 6 Doug Mitchell — The map
- 7 Leonard Carter —



— By courtesy of The Australian

When Captain Cook discovered Australia in 1770 the British invaders defined Australian history as beginning from that date. White Australians have yet to recognise the problems which arose with the discovery of Australia.

They are quick to deny that racism exists. Unless they are prepared to recognise the existence of racism and take genuine steps to combat it the Australian white society as it is today will cease to exist.

RACISM: DOUBLE-THINKING, COMPLEX STATE OF MIND...

By KATH WALKER, Queensland representative on the executive committee of the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Island

The developments in white Australia's past have been definite in creating racist behavior and attitudes responsible for the present situation.

The expansion of the white Australian society and its ignoring of the Aboriginal Australians who were "in the way" and the "disturbance" to the "new nation" were the first, most obvious, and most deliberate act in Australian history when they refused to recognise as human beings. They accused their violent acts by claiming the Aborigines as pests who stood in their way.

Because of this violent act the Aborigines came close to being exterminated. They dropped in numbers from 300,000 to 80,000 in a very short time.

The white man's attempt to genocide involved murder by the gun, poisoned waterholes and flour bags, and the rape of women and children.

The trend to genocide was not exclusively Australian. Whenever white men invaded and stole the land from the blacks the white man's violence took a terrible toll on the indigenous people all over the world.

There are few, if any, in New South Wales and Victoria now, and they will be exterminated in Queensland within the next 20 years, I think.

Their usefulness will be over, and they can be done without, which it would have been difficult to do in the earlier occupation of this country.

White racism and white violence still play a major role in Aboriginal affairs. From a dying race in the late 1880s they were destined to become slaves of the white Australians because of the policy of racism which separated black men and women and their children from one another at any time; which denied black parents the right to control their own children; which denied the black the right to his own culture and language; which denied the black the right to vote or drink, and which denied the black the right to work.

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Such thoughts are but a few of the sentiments used by white Australians to obscure themselves of the responsibility for racism.

FEW BENEFIT

Most whites believe sincerely that they do not discriminate against black people. Indeed, institutionalised, anonymous racism means that many white Australians are not even aware of their discrimination.

White Australia employs a number of "dirty workers" to do the actual discriminating. (For reasons of survival or opportunism, even some black Australians are employed as "dirty workers.") It is the responsibility of these people to separate black people as quickly as possible.

The "dirty workers" are supported financially, psychologically and ideologically by other whites. Racism is a tangible economic or political force from the continued oppression and exploitation of black Australians.

Because many white Australians do not directly participate in the discrimination against, or exploitation of, black Australians they are sustained in the belief that discrimination does not exist.

Thus white Australians believe that failure by white Australians as well as black, is the fault of the individual or the work of God as punishment for sin, in other words the problem is an individual one.

THE VICTIMS

The more white Australians are of the conviction in which black people live, the more they tend to be convinced that this is what black people want, or what they deserve.

As part of the institutionalised racism process they have become experts in making the victim the victim and the victim the victim, particularly when the victim is black.

Black Australians, they believe, are always "going too far," or "hurting their own cause," or "are stages of communism."

Individual racism can be seen where white Australians expect to black Australians living in the same area as white Australians.

Institutionalised racism is seen from the high mortality rate of infant Aboriginal children down to the attitude of police and politicians and public workers towards black Australians.

All Australian white institutions are racist or, worse

will, white supremacist; and all operate to perpetuate white privilege.

In the past it was necessary for missionaries to certify that the Australian Aborigines were unevolved. Then, when evangelists, politicians, soldiers and the missionaries themselves could sleep more in the knowledge that the only good Aborigine was a dead one.

This kind of double-thinking is used today to justify and defend the white man's past and present behavior.

Black Australians are expected to believe that the Aboriginal victim is prevented from formulating his own policy for his own good.

SUPREMACISM

Attempts to ignore the problem of racism mean failure by the white man to recognise that the roots of racism are in the white community.

Control of the institutions which deny people of color "dignity" and "equality" rests in the white community. White supremacist attitudes are learned in the white community.

Exact as the highest level "supremacy" has failed.

The majority of Aborigines still live in appalling conditions on the fringes of Australian society. Aborigines have suggested that the criteria for what is "good" is that which is white.

Aboriginalism has generally meant that to gain physical access to white Australia, black Australians must abandon their blackness.

If an Aborigine does more good in the Australian society there is a probing and measuring of how much white man's money through his work; and so his goodness is assessed or judged in this way.

FIRST STEP

White Australians have always been willing to accept physical pressure by black Australians when it suited their purpose; for example, the nursing, under slave conditions by Aboriginal domestic workers of the white child; the tending to the white Australian family's needs etc. in their homes; and the white man's desire to sleep with Aboriginal women even, in most cases, where his own white woman was available as a sleeping partner.

These white men have used children by Aboriginal women, but have refused to recognise their responsibility for them.

Aborigines have been given the vote in order to vote for white politicians. Yet, in attempting to break into politics the black Australian has shown very clearly that white Australians are not prepared to allow a black Australian to speak for their behalf in Parliament.

Rather than vote for an Aborigine there were those who deliberately threw their vote, or gave it to the white candidate least expected to be elected.

If the Aborigine moves towards independence then white Australians feel betrayed by the very declaration of independence of black Australians.

White Australians must recognize that the present system is a destruction to them as it has been for black Australians.

WRITTEN OFF

Towards the mid-1880s white Australians had written off the Aborigines as a dying race.

They used their conversion to Christianity during the work of God and that the Aborigines should be allowed to die out as humanity is complete.

The white man's religion, handed to the Aborigines, was another form of white violence, for the act of charity transformed a once-dignified and proud black race of people to beggars without any authority to speak or think on their own behalf.

The act was clearly called "the writing off of the dying pillow" etc.

In spite of the attempts to genocide the Aborigines lived on, and the "writing off the dying pillow" etc. itself died a natural death.

White Australians turned from one form of violence to another. They recognised that the Aborigines were not a dying race, so they left him to struggle practically alone for existence, food and shelter by white violence.

The rest these people were expected to play was to keep the Aborigines alive and out of the way of the white settlers.

No plans were formulated for their future as it was expected that the Aborigines would die by dying out within the next 50 years.

USEFULNESS OVER

By recognising the Aborigine as inferior, whose existence was defined in terms of usefulness.

Yet they were dependent upon the Aborigines for their very existence in the early occupation of this country as is seen from a tract written by a settler, R. D. Brown, in 1817.

"A very few more years will see the last of the blacks in Queensland."



MORNING MILK TIME at the Port Lincoln pre-school welfare centre run by the Save the Children Children Fund.

SCF centre is first for SA

Port Lincoln, on Spencer Gulf, has the first pre-school centre for Aboriginal children to be established by the Save the Children Fund in South Australia.

Sixteen pre-school welfare centres have been opened by the SCF in Australia, where the work is mainly aimed at Aborigines.

The Port Lincoln centre was opened in 1966, at the suggestion of the S.A. Department of Aboriginal Affairs, and caters for pre-school Aboriginal children as well as other children recommended by the Mother and Infant Health Association.

There is no segregation of the 20 children now attending in the care of a welfare officer. They are taught mainly hygiene and social behaviour. Mrs F. Goldworthy, welfare officer in charge of the SCF centre, said that several children had already graduated to the Kindergarten Union kindergarten at Port Lincoln.

A new site is needed for the centre. It is situated now alongside a fertilizer plant which has grown considerably in the past two or three years and needs considerable expansion.

Making the new site functional is a very costly project and \$4,500 is still

needed to cover the cost of a new toilet block, fencing, a covered way, deep drainage and removal expenses.

Portion of this year's Fresh Day proceeds will be added to the Save the Children Fund.

Donations towards the project are tax deductible.

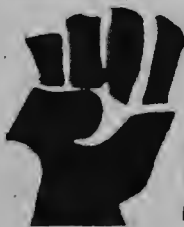
A branch of SCF has been formed at Port Lincoln and Mrs. M. B. Bamham, honorary secretary, Box 288 P.O., Port Lincoln, 5608, would be pleased to hear from anyone interested in the work of the fund.

This year the Save the Children Fund is celebrating its Golden Jubilee. It is a British Commonwealth Organisation and for 50 years has helped to relieve suffering caused by natural disasters, wars and diseases.

Internationally in outlook, it helps children everywhere. Since 1919 the fund has worked in more than 90 countries - always helping people to help themselves, and training them to take over when the SCF moves out.

At present SCF is working in 28 countries.

AP/5



BLACK NEWS SERVICE

Number 5 August 29 1975

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Subscribe to Black News Service see form on page 2.

A Townsville policeman had said the way to solve the Aboriginal problem was "to line them up against a wall and shoot them," a Senate inquiry was told in Sydney yesterday.

Another witness at the inquiry claimed that Aboriginal prisoners who misbehaved at a Queensland jail were placed in "iron birdcages" in the open as punishment.

The two witnesses, both Townsville officers of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Legal Service, Miss C. Brock, and Mr A. Min, told the Senate Standing Committee on Social Environment that the Queensland Police Force generally had a negative

Attitude to Aborigines

Miss Brock, who told the inquiry of the "shoot them" attitude, said that some of about 100 police attached to the Townsville station were friendly with Aborigines, and that in the community it was widely considered abnormal to be on good terms with black people.

Fishcuffs

She said: "The local police say, 'you're a

good-looking chick - what are you doing with all these buggers?"

Miss Brock claimed police resumed the activity of the legal service in providing Aborigines with representation, especially in cases of grievances against the police.

"They ask me out on dates to tell me that the legal service is upsetting their routine," she said.

"They say they were having a good time before."

Mr Min told the com-

mittee that once an Aboriginal was arrested, "if the police want to use a bit of fishcuffs, they do."

Another witness, a council plant operator from Clooscurry, Queensland, Mr D. Paul, told the inquiry that he recently saw a Queensland police officer beating an Aboriginal youth over the head with handcuffs outside a hotel in Clooscurry.

The inquiry will resume tomorrow.

Sydney Morning Herald, July 20

YARRALIN COUNCIL REPORT

Yarralin,
Via V.R.D.,
Northern Territory.
2/7/75

To Whom It May Concern,

We have been fighting for our land for a long time now and it hasn't come through. We need help from our friends to push this for us.

We give our authority to:

Jean Culley and the Gurindji Friends down South,
Wesley in Darwin,
The Northern Land Council

to act on our behalf and push our claim for us.

Big Mick Kanginang	Riley Young Winbilly
Charcoal Dulong	Georgey Dalmulga
Daly Bulgara	Peter Narina
Snowy Kulmilya	Paddy Yanbi
Little Mick Inuinma	Morgan Yarrinjangmo
Tobacco Jack Wunamagu	Bobby Caro Namiargo
Wallaby	Johnson
Big Wallaby	Alan Young
Laidy Papidariu	Barry Young
Slim Marro	

This is a report from Yarralin Council.

We like to keep one man, well we want Patrick to come over here, because we want him to hold the books for the Yarralin People. We will put most of the word through. And I believe that the Hooker is going to take the land back, still I've been talk to him, Mr. Michael, and at the Aboriginal Affairs, Alec (Bishaw) and Jack Doolan, face to face to Mr. Shaw, and I've been ask him for that 90 sq. mile and he did agreed.

We had meeting at Yarralin and he did give me the bore, tank and this yard and fence, and Sugarloaf Pocket, and show me that map, he did put it on the paper from the land pocket to Yarralin Waterhole. We been come back to the Yarralin across the river, take him right back to the corner, and from there and from there we been show him Mosquito Blood.

I've been wait for him, for the Mr. Shaw, he should put his signature. Well I can run the fence, then I can have my

own block, one side for the Hooker and the other side for Yarralin. I like to see Government can buy this land and give it back to the Yarralin. Let the Government like to see Yarralin. This is the old people wandering because they are worrying about the land, to get the little block first. Well after that this area going to be big. We will own this 850 sq. miles. We will go for that, when he agree this 850 sq. mile, the area, my place we still going to fight for it slowly for the place, we can't let it go the area. My place is for the Wattie Creek and Yarralin, for the Gurindji and the Ngarinman and other people, and Mudbura come together for the Dreaming. That way they think if we give it to the white people they might put the truck and all that and knock the Dreaming. We are careful for the Dreamings. Two Aboriginal Affairs been coming in here. I been agreed that two Aboriginal, they went to V.R.D. to see Gilbert McAntee for this 90 sq. mile, he said No, I can't give him this land, I don't want any idea from Aboriginal.

Signed by:

- | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. Doug | 2. Daly | 3. Snowy |
| 4. Little Mick | 5. Charcoal | 6. Wallaby |
| 7. Big Mick | 8. Tobacco Jack | 9. Alan Young |

*Present Manager of V.R.D. Ian Michaels resigned in August 1974

BASHING THE BLACKS IN BRISBANE: THE OPAL CENTER AFFAIR

(BNS)

For years now the racist attitudes and actions of the Bjelke-Petersen regime in Queensland have become well known. The great defender of white supremacy left Australians with no doubts as to where he stood when the Springboks arrived. He declared a state of emergency. On his own front, a series of repressive laws have been enacted and enforced with unremitting intensity against the black population in Queensland. In doing this he has the support of an underlying racial prejudice of many whites, particularly in the rural areas. What gives him further force is the enthusiastic activity of the Queensland police. In recent years, their brutal attacks on the black population have gained a nationwide reputation amongst people who have an involvement in black affairs. However, the most recent example, on Friday, 26th July at a dance hall in Brisbane, must go down as one of the paramount examples of systematic brutality and repression against blacks in a long time.

Since April of this year, the Nations-Rockball Clubs in Brisbane have been using the O.P.A.L. Center of a Friday night as a venue for a dance with the purpose of raising finance for the club. Over several months the organising committee had run the function efficiently, obtaining a

ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER

FORUM

Vol. 1, No. 1, April 1975

PRICE 30c

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PUBLIC INQUIRY
URGENT

Skull Creek Incident

Future of N.A.C. (p. 3)

F.C.A. A.T.S.I. moves (p. 4)

The pinkbook (p. 2)

Members of the Committee of the Aboriginal Publications Foundation are as follows:

President: MR. G. ABDULLAH.

MR. M. MILLER, Qld.

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Office Manageress: MRS. L. RILEY.

MISS G. BRENNAN, W.A.

Secretary/Stenographer: MISS S. STACK.

MR. B. RANDALL, S.A.

EDITORIAL

Aboriginal and Islander Forum is the second Aboriginal publication produced by Aboriginal Publications Foundation Inc.

To launch this source of news we have had to overcome tremendous difficulties too numerous to quote here.

Firstly, we want you to send us articles concerning Aboriginal and Islander people.

We would like you to be fair and unbiased in your judgement of the black and white situation in Australia. Then we ask you to relay the information to us as quickly as possible.

Initially this source of news will be monthly, but we are aiming to bring it to you twice a month.

This is your journal. We ask you to support it by buying it from your local newsagent. Price 30c per copy. A joint subscription for *IDENTITY* and *ABORIGINAL and ISLANDER FORUM* costs \$6.00 per year. Thus guaranteeing postage of the two journals to your home address.

Wish us luck. Because like you, we need it.

The Editor.

☆

☆

☆

The Age (Melb.) printed an article on the 6th February, boldly headed "Let's go on the offensive P.M. urges".

In this article Mr. Whitlam attacked most of the State Premiers for holding back progress. It is time the Aboriginal and Islander people got on the offensive also, for too long we have been on the defensive.

We have tried unsuccessfully to gain our rights as the indigenous people of Australia, by demonstrations and countless meetings.

We have been defeated time and time again by the glib tongues of the politicians.

We have been balked into a position in having accepted so-called land rights.

No mention has ever been made in Parliament concerning Compensation, except a pathetically weak attempt by Aboriginal Senator Neville Bonner.

Most of the Aboriginal Intelligentsia is now working for the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and National Consultative Committee.

The principles of democracy are good, but not always correct in application.

History proves that indigenous people throughout the world, suffer under democratic rule.

Therefore to gain status, power bases, and cultural bases, we the indigenes of Australia must have 99% control of our own affairs.

FRONT COVER — *One of the Skull Creek police victims with cigarette burns on his chest.*

Since the article on pages 3-5 was written, it has been announced that a Royal Commission will investigate the incident.

KOORIER

2

10 NOV 1983

NEWS PICTORIAL



July 1983

NO1

A STATEWIDE VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER.

It seems appropriate that this, the 'Year Of Communications' is the year that our own community newspaper should finally get off the ground. This is the first edition and by no means will it be the last.

With the Victorian Aboriginal Land Rights debate currently being fought, now more than ever there needs to be maximum communication and co-operation between Aboriginal communities throughout the entire state. A statewide Aboriginal community newspaper is one way in which we can achieve this.

We are not here to compete against existing Aboriginal newsletters, magazines, newspapers, etc. rather, we are here to complement them. We act on the belief that the more Aboriginal managed and controlled print media, the better, for it then ensures greater circulation of accurate information between Aboriginals. The overall goal of the newspaper is to provide information dissemination to Aboriginal communities and agencies on a statewide level, increased communication and co-operation throughout Aboriginal communities in Victoria and southern N.S.W., Advertising of Govt. and non Govt. services to Aboriginals, Coverage of Aboriginal issues and community activities, Publication of Aboriginal views and opinions.

Supporting through donation subscription charges and advertising revenue so that eventually there will be no need to rely on government funding.

The primary aims of the newspaper service is to provide:

- information dissemination to Aboriginal communities and agencies on a statewide level
- increased communication and co-operation throughout Aboriginal communities in Victoria and southern N.S.W.
- Advertising of Govt. and non Govt. services to Aboriginals.
- Coverage of Aboriginal issues and community activities.
- Publication of Aboriginal views and opinions.

KEVIN WHYMAN.

The Spirit of Musgrave Park is the Spirit of our Land and her People

POLICE ATTACK ON GRAHAM AUSTIN.

The Police document, which is shown below;-

COLLINGWOOD.
AUTHORISED BY

J. MARTIN
SNR. SGT.
14946.

Because Mr Austin did not receive an apology for this outrageous behaviour, he has decided to sue for defamation.

The least citizens should expect is that he take action said Mr. Foley. Mr. Foley concluded by saying that it is obvious that Mr. Matthews is trying to give the police time to cover up the incident, as he lacks the political courage and honesty to act in a forthright manner.

26th January, 1943.

POLICE - CONFIDENTIAL

Authorized by:

Son. Sgt. 14946

TOP SECRET - WAITED FOR INTERVIEW

1. The head on the right belongs to a poor unfortunate by the name of [REDACTED] born 21. [REDACTED] and recorded on Docket 1101/77. The Homicide Squad would like to have a word with [REDACTED] regarding the whereabouts of [REDACTED] (18-60).

We hope that whatever jobs the Premier gives to the successful applicant, that the person represents the KODIE COMMUNITY in the best possible manner.

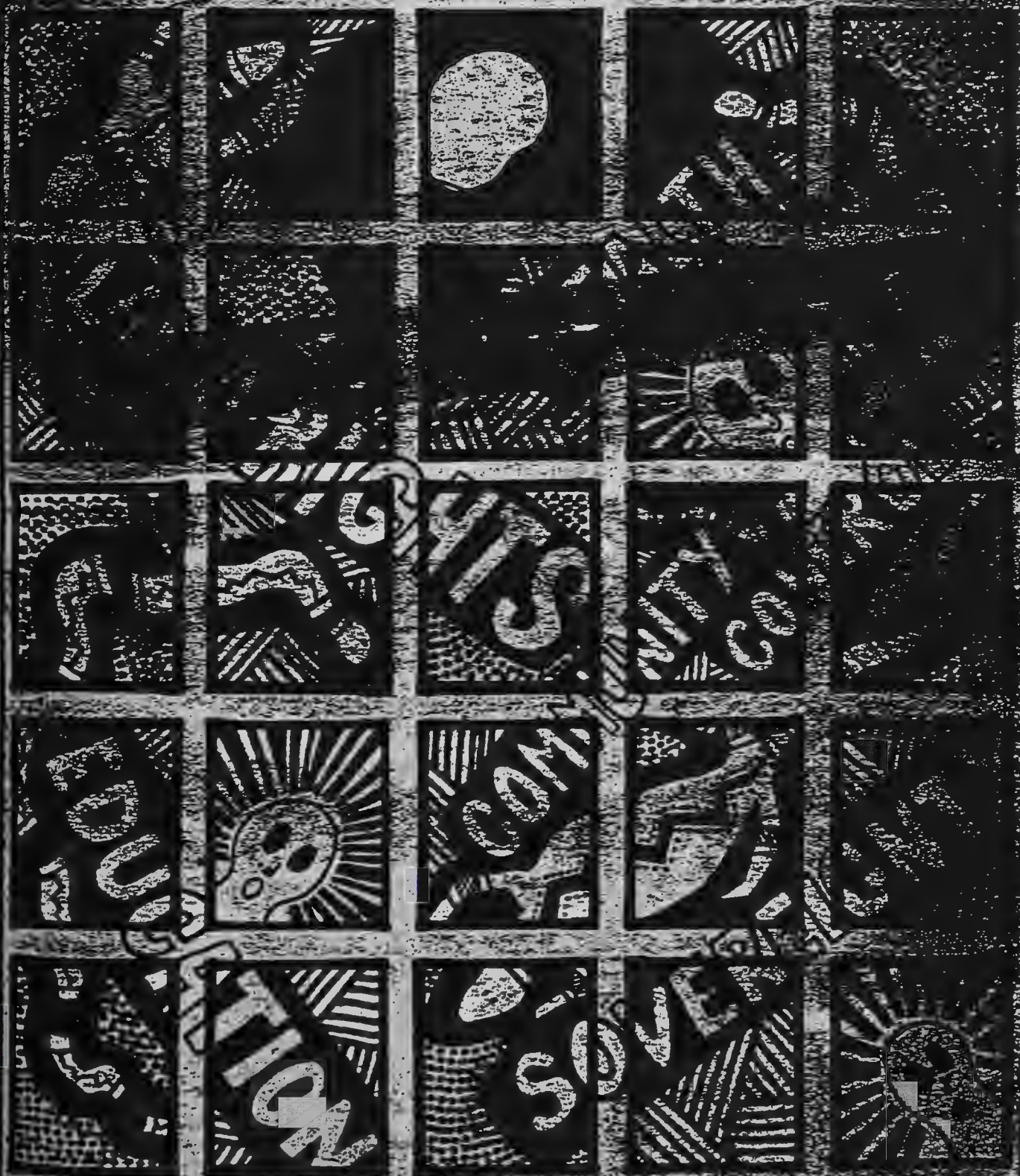
Applicants marked "Yamamoto and confidential" giving personal and professional particulars, current phone number, and submitting three references should reach the Personnel Manager, Department of the Premier and Cabinet, 3rd Floor, 1 Victoria Street, Melbourne 3000 by 22 Jan. 1988.

Koorie Health Crossword Solution

S	F	E	T	H	A	S	C	O	R	P	E
L	S	A	T	V	A	I	R				
G	R	A	L	E	A	I	R				
M	T	E	V	E	R	Y					
L	B	E	F	E	E	Y					
U	B	E									
U	O	M	A	S	K						
R	W	V	P								
N		R	A	R	E						
N	M	A		S	E	E					
X	R	A	T	I							
D						N	A	I	L	S	

KOORIER 3

OUR CULTURE IS OUR WELFARE



Editorial

It has not been a tradition for Koori people to commit their ideas, comments and stories to paper for any great length of time in our long history. It is of course, a gub tool of communication, one that has been used with devastating effectiveness to subjugate and oppress Koori peoples and communities.

It started 200 years ago with the invasion forces who wrote their reports back home to the "old country" about the "savage naked blacks, who roam aimlessly about the land," to the present day vast volumes of literary excreta

that pours forth about Koori peoples, our ideas, our communities, our ways, and written by experts on Aboriginal people.

Newspapers generally report biased sensational negative, inaccurate stories about Koori people. Over the past years there has been minimal improvement in this type of reporting but nothing like what is needed in this country.

How do we improve this situation? Simple. WE write produce and control the content of our community newspapers and distribute them far and wide.

Used correctly it is an effective creative tool that will provide us with the opportunity to inform our people in other communities and our own with accurate positive accounts about what is happening.

It will forge greater links of unity and it will be an additional barrier to the divide and rule process.

It is a medium for expression of our accounts, reports, ideas, constructive criticisms, feelings, hopes and aspirations.

It is a tool that we need to maximise to its fullest potential OUR way, to ensure the important issues that we need to address are canvassed widely.

I invite Koori people from all over to contribute, be it politics, culture, sport, poems, stories, whatever — it is YOUR newspaper. I am proud to present the first edition, of what I know will be an important communications link in our community — KOORIER 3.

Your comments, criticisms, suggestions, letters to improve KOORIER 3 are welcome. Please contact the editor.



COVER DESIGN:

Lyn Thorpe

ARTISTS:

Maryanne Sam,

Gavin Moore,

Stephen Thorpe,

Lyn Briggs,

Students from Koori-Kolij,

Unidentified Others.

Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency

HISTORY

Since the 1890's, large numbers of Aboriginal children have been removed from their families by welfare authorities and brought up in white homes and white institutions. They were taken forcibly in the past and then later, through the legal processes of adoption and wardship. This has meant that many of our people have been lost from our community, often permanently.

The policy of the governments of those early days was "assimilation", the common belief being that "when children were placed in a first-class private home, the superior standard of life would pave the way for absorption of these people into the general population". (Aboriginal Protection Board NSW, 1926.)

Koori children were alienated from their own people and culture and families were dispersed and destroyed with devastating effects on personal lives.



Even though, since that time, laws and rhetoric have changed, the process still continues unabated not only through the legal processes but through informal placements of children agreed to by Aboriginal parents with white families.

Education concerning cultural identification is needed to combat this situation in

both the Aboriginal and wider communities.

Past assimilationist government policies have left their mark and continue in the same way today, perpetuating the integration of Aboriginal people into the wider community.

The result is loss of cultural identity — chronic cycles of alcoholism, jail and further family disintegration.

Statistics available for Victorian Aboriginal children were limited and extremely difficult to find. But until 1977, 90% of Aboriginal children placed in non-Aboriginal foster care and adoption were ultimately returned to the care of the State and institutionalised.

Why did this situation happen?

The answers have their roots in the conquest and dispossession of Aboriginal people, but some current causes can be seen:

(a) Assimilation (i.e. Aborigines will be absorbed into the dominant white culture)

continues to be the policy of the Victorian Government.

(b) Child Welfare Laws which:

(i) deny Aboriginal communities control over their own culture and

(ii) are insensitive and even contrary to Aboriginal values, eg. the nuclear family orientation of community welfare which cuts across the operation of Aboriginal extended families.

(c) The failure of Government to restore resources to Aboriginal people and communities so that they have the basis to develop and support all their children. This does not only mean land rights, employment, housing, health and education services, but also the funding of Aboriginal run programs for family support and child welfare.

AIMS OF VACCA

VACCA was funded by the Department of Social Security, Office of Child Care, in January 1978 and is managed by a Board of Directors, who are elected by members of the Co-operative. The Agency operates by the following aims and objectives:

1. Preservation of Aboriginal families and prevention of child institutionalisation.
2. Locating siblings and families of children in institutions and reuniting families.
3. Community education.
4. Development of self-help programs and the development of resources which are supportive of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities.
5. Development and consultative mechanisms between Federal, State and Local Governments and voluntary agencies.
6. To assist in the development of a close working relationship with ACCA's and Aboriginal Children's Services around Australia.
7. Developing culturally relevant legislation and policies for Aboriginal



The N.Q. Mesasackstick



Newsletter of N.Q. LAND RIGHTS COMMITTEE

16 (1) 19/5

Sept 1970
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ALLS
LIBRARY

AURUKUN ABORIGINES TAKE OVER MINING AIRSTRIP

The front cover shows Aboriginal people at Aurukun making a stand for their tribal land. They have just put up a sign saying "Aurukun Land No Mining Allowed. Keep Out. By Order Chairman." This sign was put up during a takeover of the mining company airstrip on December 5th.

The Aurukun people are a peaceful people but they are prepared to stop any mining on their land by force if necessary. Just as they pushed the Dutch back from Cape Keer-Weer (Turn Again) on the Gulf of Carpentaria, they are prepared to push out Billiton Aluminium Australia B.V. part of the Royal Dutch Shell empire.

They decided to take over the Billiton airstrip to let the company know that it wasn't going to walk over them like the uranium companies had done to Aborigines in the Northern Territory. The two mining company representatives decided to flee. Signs were put up at the airstrip saying "Aurukun Land - Keep Out Without Permission of Chairman and Community".

Of course, the Aboriginal Advancement Minister, Mr. Wharton, denied there was trouble in the Aurukun Community. He said in the Courier-Mail 6/12/75 P.1 "that under the agreement with the mining company Aurukun Associates, the Aboriginal people had been asked to take over the airstrip and camp as caretakers." He must think people are myalls!

Mr. Whitrod, the Police Commissioner, said that Sergeant Rook of Weipa and the Aurukun Council were in control of the situation.

WHY? NO CONSULTATION!

On the 21st November, the Qld. Government announced that three foreign companies would mine and refine bauxite at Aurukun. The legislation rushed through Queensland Parliament during the Fraser "caretaker" administration.

The Qld. Premier, Mr. Bjelke-Petersen, used the December 13 election as a smokescreen to push the Bill through Parliament, a bill which would

have been thwarted by the Whitlam Government because Labour policy provides that all future mining projects are to have a majority of Australian capital. Aurukun Associates is completely foreign-owned.

Fraser's "caretaker" administration was legally bound to uphold this policy until the elections and two Aurukun people will be going to England to see the Queen to protest this fact and to draw international attention to the Aurukun situation.

Since 1965, The Qld. Govt. has told the Aurukun people, their solicitor, Frank Purcell, and the Presbyterian Church there would be no discussion about mining without their being consulted. This promise has been repeated many times. In 1974, the companies themselves told Frank Purcell that such consultations would take place. These promises were broken. There was no consultation to the Aurukun people by the Company or Queensland Government.

The Australian Presbyterian Board of Missions called on the Qld. Government to withdraw the Aurukun Mining Bill. He said the cause was part of the August 1968 agreement between Tipperary Land Corporation and the Aurukun which had been mentioned in the Third Schedule of the Bill on page 51.

The clause, No. 11 provided, "Should Bauxite prospecting lead to Tipperary Land Corporation seeking a mining lease over portion of the Aurukun reserve, further negotiations between Tipperary Land Corporation, the Mission, and the Community will take place to ensure adequate safeguards and compensation in the interests of the Aboriginal people."

He said that key issues in negotiations with the Company would be training of Aborigines for employment, a share by Aborigines in the success of the industry, equality with white settlers, and seeking an answer to the alcohol problem.

NO MINING UNDER ANY CONDITIONS

Where the position of the Presbyterian Church and the Aurukun community differs however, is that the Church is asking for consultation of the Company with the people and for a better deal for them. What the Aurukun people want however,

LAND RIGHTS NEWS



This is a new newsletter - it will be sent out each month and will tell you about what is happening with Aboriginal land rights.

ABORIGINAL LAND:

Judge Woodward made the report to the Government about Aboriginal land. The old Government started to make a law about Aboriginal land but it was stopped when the Government lost its power last year. The new Government said it would make the same law, according to the things Aboriginal People told Judge Woodward. There has been a lot of argument about this since then and a lot of time has been wasted. Mr. Viner the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, now has a Bill before the parliament but it is not the same as the one last year.

THE NEW LAW:

The Aboriginal Lands Rights Bill is not a law, yet. It has still got to be passed by the Australian parliament; the Minister says this will be done later this year. The Bill gives title (ownership) to some land in the Northern Territory to Aboriginal people. It also says how much power Aboriginals will have in owning the land under Australian law.

LAND OWNERSHIP:

Aboriginals will own the Aboriginal Reserves and some other land in the Northern Territory under Australian law. Authority to own their own land, known as the title, will be given to Land Trusts.

LAND COUNCILS:

The Bill provides for Land Councils to administer some of the matters relating to the land. They are to take their orders from the traditional land owners. A few people have had something to do with Land Councils already. The Land Councils need money to run, to employ staff, hold meetings and things like that. The Bill says they will get their money from mining royalties.

MINING:

Australian law says that the Government owns all the minerals in Australia but the Bill says the traditional owners can say yes or no to mining on your land. If you say yes then you can make an agreement with miners on your land. The agreement can say what you want the miners to do, where not to go, how much you want and things like that. You have to do this through the Land Councils who can get lawyers to talk to the miners and argue for your wishes.

Miners also have to pay royalties to the Government. The Government pays the Royalties to the Aborigines Benefits Trust Fund. Some of it goes to the Land Councils for their running expenses. If the Land Councils have any of their money left over they can pay it to the traditional owners.

If you say no to mining the Government doesn't have to agree. If it thinks the mining might be too important for Australia then it can send a person to find out. If he says, yes, it is too important then the Minister can tell the Government to let the mining go ahead.

ABORIGINAL LAND COMMISSIONER:

The Bill says the Government can appoint an Aboriginal Land Commissioner - he has to be a Judge of the Northern Territory. For the time being it is Judge Ward. The Land Commissioner can hear arguments for claims for traditional land not on Reserves but it can only be on land that other people don't use - vacant crown land. He can't give land to people - he can only say they ought to have it. The Government has to say yes or no.

DIFFERENT LAWS:

The Bill allows the Legislative Assembly to make laws for some things to do with Aboriginal land. These things are:

PERMITS: The Assembly can make laws for people going on to your land. It has sent out some proposals (ideas) for you to think about. These suggest that Mr. England, the Administrator of the Northern Territory, can allow certain people to go to Aboriginal land - people like police and other Government employees. He can also allow other people to go to your land 'for a particular purpose'. Politicians can, too. The other proposals allow you to decide what other people, black and white can go onto your land. You are allowed to put one of your own people off your land but if you want anyone else to go you have to ask Mr. England.

THE SEA: The Legislative Assembly's idea is that you can ask for the sea areas to be 'closed' close to your communities. It doesn't mean that you own these areas - it means that you can ask Mr. England to stop people coming into those sea areas.

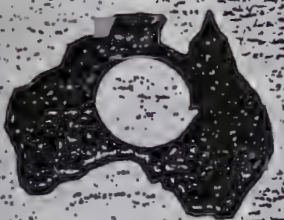
SACRED SITES: The Legislative Assembly's idea is that it will look after sacred sites. You can look after your own sites on your own land (if you own it under the Bill) but if you have problems you can ask the Police to help you.

WILDLIFE: The Legislative Assembly's idea is that it will help you look after the wildlife on your land. If you don't think you can look after it yourself you can ask them to help.

CATTLE STATIONS: The Legislative Assembly's idea is that it will allow you to use your land on stations, providing you do it in the custom way (for example not by driving around it in vehicles or things like that). Station managers have to allow you to use the land this way or they will be fined (\$10,000).

ROADS ON ABORIGINAL LAND: The Bill allows the Legislative Assembly to make laws for roads (for other people to use) across your land.

YOUR LAW: This is what the Lands Bill does for you. You will have to decide if it is okay for you and whether or not it gives you enough power under Australian law. Talk it over and tell people what you think - Mr. Viner, because he says he wants to know - the Legislative Assembly, too, because they say they want to know.



LAND RIGHTS NEWS

ONE MOB • ONE VOICE • ONE LAND

Published by the Central and Northern Land Councils

Vol. 2 No. 33 August 1994



- **Ideas for a Social Justice Package**
 - Amanbidji set for handback
 - Councils meet on road funding
 - NT election divides community
 - Arrernte dictionary released

OUR LANGUAGE

Parlez vous Ngaanyatjarra?

An Introductory course in Ngaanyatjarra, one of the Western Desert Aboriginal languages of central Australia, is now being conducted at a French university as a result of a longstanding collaboration between linguists from vastly different backgrounds.

The course, the first in Ngaanyatjarra ever to be conducted anywhere, has been held over three weeks in July at France's Besançon University, south east of Paris.

It is being co-presented by Elizabeth Markkilyl Ellis, a language teacher at the Institute for Aboriginal Development in Alice Springs, and Professor Jacques Montredon at the Department of Applied Linguistics, using Professor Montredon's methodology.

Ms Ellis, a fluent speaker of a number of western desert languages, grew up near Warburton in Western Australia. Ms Ellis teaches courses in Pitjantjatjara, a central Australian Aboriginal language, at the IAD in Alice Springs. She is also a

qualified interpreter/translator and is currently studying linguistics herself.

The Institute for Aboriginal Development is a multi-disciplinary Aboriginal education organisation based in Alice Springs. As well as providing educational opportunities for Aboriginal students, one of IAD's primary functions is the maintenance of Aboriginal culture and language.

IAD conducts courses in Aboriginal languages, runs cross-cultural awareness courses and provides an interpreting and translation service. The Institute also has a publication section which has produced the first dictionaries of a number of central Australian Aboriginal languages.

Professor Montredon first made contact with the Institute for Aboriginal Development in 1990 when he attended an introductory Pitjantjatjara course. Since then IAD has assisted with several language projects, including recording of narratives in Aboriginal languages and a comparative study of hand signs and

gestures between French, Japanese and Ngaanyatjarra speakers.

Ms Ellis said she was very pleased to be teaching her own language for the first time.

"It's a wonderful opportunity to promote understanding of our languages and our culture," Ms Ellis said.

"A lot of people overseas are really interested in Aboriginal culture but many don't realise that there are many distinct Aboriginal languages here. Even some Australians aren't aware of that."

Ms Ellis said she was also looking forward to the opportunity of learning about French culture and language.

IAD Deputy Director Donna Ah Chee said Ms Ellis's participation in the project was a valuable way to increase awareness overseas of Aboriginal language and culture.

"To have Lizzie sharing her knowledge of her language and culture is important in



Elizabeth Markkilyl Ellis — teaching her own language in France

raising awareness of the living culture of the Ngaanyatjarra people," Ms Ah Chee said.

NEW DICTIONARY FOR A TOWN LIKE MPARNTWE*

The first Arrernte to English dictionary, documenting the Aboriginal language of the Alice Springs area has been published by the Institute for Aboriginal Development in Alice Springs.

The dictionary was launched at a special ceremony held at Santa Theresa, around 100 kilometres east of Alice Springs, in late May.

The dictionary covers both Eastern and Central Arrernte languages which are spoken by an estimated 1,500 to 2,000 people in the Alice Springs region. This is one of the largest Aboriginal language groups, but there has been no comprehensive reference dictionary until now.

Charles Perkins, the Deputy Chair of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, an Arrernte man, said "this dictionary is a landmark publication. It stands as a testimony to the strength and resilience of Arrernte culture."

The dictionary is one of the most sophisticated Aboriginal language dictionaries ever produced. It includes a unique flip card system to illustrate the extensive use of hand signs in the Eastern and Central Arrernte language, and a wealth of ethnographic information. A pronunciation guide is included, along with abundant illustrations and a detailed introduction to the Arrernte language and culture.

For non-Arrernte speakers with a desire to learn more about the Arrernte culture of the region, the dictionary provides a wonderful and comprehensive insight into the Arrernte names not only of places, but of local birds, plants, animals species and even edible grubs.

The dictionary is the culmination of ten years' work by Arrernte speaker and

teacher, Veronica Dobson, and linguist, John Henderson.

Speaking at the launch, Veronica Dobson said:

"Nhenhe artle akngerre anthurra Arrernte mapeke.

"Kwementyaye Henderson, Theresa Ryder and ayenge dictionary nhenheke amule amule renhe mpwareke.

"Artle lyete anweme arange arange mapeke imememe apmere inekenhenge. Anweme akangkeme anthurra dictionary nhenhe altywere itemele.

"Anwerne angkentye nhenhe anyetele-ike ampe ingkenetye mapeke and angkentye tierke akwete angketye, amukwentye mape ateke."

"This is a very special day for Arrernte people.

"Kwementyaye Henderson, Theresa Ryder and I worked on this dictionary for a long long time.

"Now today we are showing our grandfathers on our grandfathers' land what has happened, we are very very happy to open this dictionary. We brought the language back together, by putting on paper for the later generation and to keep it strong and speak like the old people used to speak."

Wheelchair Ross, a senior Arrernte man who was one of many informants who contributed to the dictionary, spoke about the importance of documenting and maintaining Aboriginal languages which are under increasing pressure:

"Ayenge akangkentye aneme arranenthemene anyetke.

"Lyete anweme uyame angkerleke aweme, apale angkerleke aweme.

Alakenhenge akwete anweme mwemintye akwete akaltyle anthetyeke."

"I am happy to see you all here. Today we can't hear clearly, only other different ways. That's why we should still teach properly so they can keep speaking it.

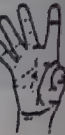
The Central and Eastern Arrernte to English Dictionary is the fourth dictionary to be published by IAD Press, the publishing arm of the Institute for Aboriginal Development in Alice Springs. IAD Press is one of only three Aboriginal publishing houses in Australia. Its other publications include oral histories, autobiographies, children's titles and language materials.

*Mparntwe is the name for the area where Alice Springs now lies and now also means the Alice Springs town area.

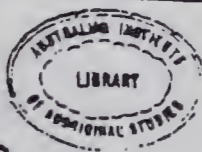


Nora Wheeler, her father and Veronica Dobson at the launch of the first Arrernte to English dictionary, documenting the Aboriginal language of the Alice Springs area

sherra a red kangaroo (Macropus rufus).
= urte-nyememe. See also urte, orange, arrow. The hand signal for sherra is below.



NEW LOOK MUNGA NEWS



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JULY / AUGUST 1987



The South Australian Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement : An Introduction

SEE PAGES 4 AND 5

graphic and cover design: polly sumner

EDITORIAL

The response to Nunga News is growing - people are reacting to articles and for me that is a good indication that the newsletter is being read and that the work done in compiling it is not wasted.

Obviously some people are going to be upset by what is written, whether it is done by myself or someone else. Those people should realize that they are at liberty to reply to any article which is printed in Nunga News.

Readers also have the right to make a valid complaint whether it is in regard to housing, health, education or their social security.

A number of people are becoming increasingly frustrated at the services (or lack of) which they are receiving. Telephone calls are continually made to no avail or letters are written without reply.

My advice to anyone with a problem or complaint is to do any of the following:

1. Put your complaint/problem in writing and send to the appropriate person/department.
2. Keep copies of all correspondence - this is proof that you have made contact.
3. Keep a record of telephone calls e.g. date of call, time of call, name of person to whom you spoke and the organization/department with which you made verbal contact.
4. Find out if the Organization/department has a management committee or in the case of a non-aboriginal department e.g. Department for Social Security, ask if Aboriginal Liaison Officers are present who could help you.

These are a few hints which could help you get the service you require.

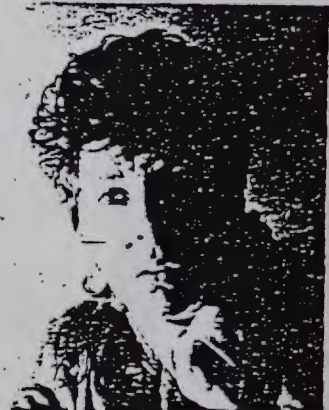
If this approach fails there are of course other avenues to take.

One of them is to contact Nunga News and I will print any complaint providing you present records of all correspondence and telephone calls.

This request for a record is a safeguard against being presented with a libel suit.

Finally, through TAP (Training for Aboriginal Programme) and liaising with Rodney O'Brien of the CES monies have been made available to make a training position available for the Nunga News/Radio position with the Centre.

Marten Pascoe will be taking up this position and will be doing his training under my supervision.



Polly Sumner
Editor.

point of view

BICENTENNARY SET TO ATTRACT UNWANTED PUBLICITY FOR AUSTRALIA.

As white Australians prepare for their Bicentennial Bash, Australian Aborigines are making their presence felt especially in the media, where there has been increasing attention on the issues of Black Deaths in Custody as well as the recent riots and protests in the N.S.W. town of Brewarrina.

From probing the media lately, it is clearly apparent that 1988, especially from an international point of view, is shaping up as the Year of the Aboriginal such is the attention that Australia is receiving in the international media and that, that particular attention is surely of concern to the Australian government.

One such happening of late was the report shown on British television recently depicting Australia not as the "lucky country" at all, but as a nation that has continued to hide behind it's "fair go" image, and hide the inexcusable injustices inflicted on its indigenous ones. This media attention shocked many in Britain and was produced by an all British team of journalists who came to Australia to pick up some interesting stories in conjunction with the Bicentennial.

The same programme will be aired to U.S. television and potentially could tarnish the image that Americans have for Australia at the moment. Most clearly, the Australian government is in a delicate dilemma right now. The Bicentennial is being advertised around the globe and Australia and is being portrayed as THE place to visit in '88, but the dubious international media could prove to be a very decisive 'thorn in the side' of all of this.

The media will print articles portraying Australia's treatment of the Aborigines and never before has attention been riding at such an all time high as right now with the alarming amount of Aboriginal deaths whilst in custody, which has resulted in the calling of a Royal Commission.

It all boils down to recognition (or lack of it) and whether this Bicentennial really will come off untarnished, for surely it already is not. To suggest it will divide or unite Australia and one would ultimately favour the former.

Aboriginal people have been often vocal but seldom heard and now more than ever before is the time for them to be heard as they ultimately deserve to be.

MARTEN PASCOE

TORRES NEWS

THE VOICE OF THE ISLANDS

14 - 20 October, 1994 • Thursday Island • Tel. 691 531 • Fax 691 561 No. 105

Kaurareg Elders Outraged at Development of Sacred Site

Tribal elders of the Kaurareg tribe are outraged at the removal of sacred stones from the proposed development site for the Thursday Island Childcare Centre.

Chief elders, Billy Wasaga and Whap Charlie, said they discovered the stones had been removed on Monday when they brought an anthropologist to the site to assess

its significance.

The Kaurareg Land Council is trying to block the development of the site which it claims is crossed by an invisible line that is used by

Kaurareg ancestors to swing on at night.

The tribal elders are outraged that they were not consulted regarding the proposed development of the site, which has now been cleared of top soil, or the removal of the sacred stones.

Kaurareg Land Council director, Richard Aken, said no members of the Kaurareg tribe were consulted when a survey assessing the suitability of the site for a childcare centre was undertaken in 1992.

The survey was carried out by the Port Kennedy Association, the Department of Family Services, and Q Build.

Anthropologist Michael Southon, who is acting on behalf of the Kaurareg Land Council, said he would seek to stop the development by appealing to the Commonwealth Heritage Act or by applying for native title rights to the site.

He said the site had native title value as it was a water reserve and, if this was recognised, its development could not proceed before the traditional owners of the land were consulted.

(continued on page 3)



On sacred land (back l to r): Cape York Land Council anthropologist Michael Southon, Kaurareg Ranger Den Gagai, Kaurareg Land Council Director Richard Aken, Kaurareg Ranger Andrew Nowie. Front: Chief Elders Billy Wasaga and Whap Charlie

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CAIRNS EXPRESS

JARDINE SHIPPING RING MIKE TREASURE 692 009 (Horn Is.) OR FRANK MARKERT 35 1900 (Cairns)

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NEWSPAPER

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Continuing the fine
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Printing: Dave Cranmer, Graphics:
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Gwen Moloney, the Rt. Rev. Tony
Hall-Matthews, Bishop of
Carpentaria*

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responsibility of ensuring that all advertising in "Torres

News" complies with Section 52 and 53 of the Trade

Practices Act.

Police News

Wednesday 05.10.94

0745hrs: A Break and Enter
complaint was received from R &
F Self Service Store in Douglas St.
TI, where several drums of fuel
were stolen.

1140hrs: Falcon Airlines ad-
vised one of their pilots had spotted
what appeared to be an overturned
dinghy about 7 nautical miles west
of Murray Is. Police instigated
their Search and Rescue procedures,
however no dinghy was found.
Checks of Yorke, Stephen, Darnley
and Murray Is. communities re-
vealed that no person or vessel was
reported missing. The Search was
stood down. Further information
came to hand two days later when
the same pilot stated that a float was
anchored on a reef near where his
first sighting was and indicated that
this was possibly what he had seen.

1555hrs: COURT RESULT
FROM CAIRNS - Johnathan
Benjamin BANA, 19 of Horn Is
appeared in the Cairns Magistrates
Court after being remanded into
custody in the TI Magistrates Court
for breaching his bail conditions.
He was convicted with no penalty,
and remanded into custody on as-
sault charges and will appear in T.I.
Magistrates Court on 18/10/94.

1830hrs: Police were called to
the flats above Island Rooster after
Iokabeda MAST had been found
passed away. There are no suspi-
cious circumstances surrounding Ms
MAST's death and Police pass their
condolences to her family and
friends.

Thursday 06/10/94

1100hrs: Police attended a dis-
turbance at the Court House and
spoke to one person there and an-
other at a residence on T.I. No
action was required by Police.

1200hrs: Information was re-
ceived regarding 4 persons abusing
others in Douglas St. Police at-
tended but found no disturbance.

1300hrs: A complaint was re-
ceived from a Horn Island resident
regarding the unlawful use of her
motor vehicle and inquiries are
continuing.

Friday 07/10/94

0210hrs: Police received infor-
mation regarding persons yelling
and swearing in Outie Street, Horn
Island. Police were unable to at-
tend due to transport problems.

1830hrs: Police assisted Hospi-
tal staff with admitting a mental
patient.

2030hrs: A disturbance was
attended at the Royal Hotel, how-
ever two women who had been fighting
had left.

2040hrs: The mental patient
earlier admitted to hospital had left
the hospital and she was located
and returned to the hospital.

2130hrs: Residents in Douglas
Street complained that a drunk had
walked into their premises where
they were having a wake. The
drunk left prior to police arrival.

Saturday 08/10/94

0030hrs: Police attended the
Bowls Club where a 24yr old man
was arrested with Behaving in a
Disorderly Manner, Obstructing
Police and Assault Police.

0225hrs: Police attended a dis-
turbance at Aplin and another
person drove the trouble maker

home.

0336hrs: Police attend an argu-
ment in Summers Street but the
suspect had left the premises prior

(continued on page 4)

Crime Stoppers

Police are requesting mem-
bers of the public who have any
information on the following
crimes or other matters to tel-
ephone Crime Stoppers on Free
Call 008 800 400. Remember all
names are kept confidential and
rewards up to \$1000 are avail-
able if the information leads to an
arrest. These are just some of
the recent crimes reported to TI
Police:

A dinghy was stolen on
about the 5th or 6th October
1994 from the beach in front of
TI Travel. It is a 14ft DeHavilland,
yellow on the inside, with a white
exterior, fitted with a new 20hp
Suzuki, dark grey in colour.

Wednesday 05.10.94

0745hrs: A Break and Enter
complaint was received from R
& F Self Service Store in Dou-
glas Street, TI, where several
drums of fuel were stolen.

Tuesday 11/10/94

0820hrs: A Break and Enter
was reported at the TAFE Caf-
eteria where some food was
taken.

CRIME STOPPERS



008 800 400

Mayoral Column



It is not about dominance,
subservience, giving up rights
or the old excuses preventing
communication and agreement.
It is about working together to
improve the whole community.
It is simply about what local
government is, about meeting
people's needs.

In July this year, the Council's
commitment was sought via a
workshop funded by Australian
Local Government Association
(ALGA).

This workshop was
facilitated by Coopers & Lyland
and ALGA representatives. It
was attended by Council
members and other Torres Strait
Islander residents to discuss
issues of common interest.

From this workshop a
Council sub-committee with

community representation was
formed with the challenge of
finding common goals for our
multicultural community.
Several meetings have already
been convened by the
subcommittee with all members
agreeing that these meetings
were not only to be used to
identify common goals but also
practical ways to make them
reality.

Two special events are
planned next month. November
12 will be a "Clean Up Day" for
the Shire to clean the TI cemetery
- the theme will be "Working
Together".

The second event will be a
"Family Reconciliation Day" to
be held on 129 November. Using
the theme of "Playing Together"
a town picnic is planned for the

whole community to enjoy a
day of fun together.

This event will be sited at the
Anzac Park and Victoria Parade
where mini market/exhibition
stalls will be displayed. Games
will also be arranged for the
children.

An update will be provided
in the near future via TSIMA
and the Torres News.

In conclusion, a "big esso" to
everyone who has committed
themselves to this project. I am
certain with your determination
and enthusiasm it will continue
to encourage others to BUILD
A BETTER COMMUNITY.

DATE OF NEXT
MEETING: Tuesday 8
November.

Please come along and give
us your support.

Reconciliation Committee Update

For those who are not aware,
a Reconciliation Committee has
been formed on Thursday Island.
Reconciliation can mean
different things to different
people but most would agree it
is simply about indigenous and
other Australians working
together.

The Palm Island Voice



Number 21

September 1994

Palm Island Aboriginal Council Cleared Of Graft.

The Queensland Criminal Justice Commission has found no evidence of corruption on the previous Palm Island Aboriginal Council after an extensive two-year investigation.

In a five-page letter to the council, the CJC's Acting Officer Ian Robinson detailed each of the Council, finding no evidence of impropriety.

The CJC's one area of concern was in the Council's purchasing practices, which involved marked up prices of up to 570 per cent and suggested "major inefficiency".

Palm Island Council spokesman Jacob Baira said he wanted "all of Australia" to know his Council was not corrupt.

Mr. Baira said the two years investigation had clearly exonerated the Council and its Chairman of any wrongdoing.

A spokesman from the CJC confirmed investigations were complete on Palm Island and no more action would be taken. The allegations levelled against the council and their findings were:

That the funds allocated to the council for the construc-

tion of a fire station was not used for that purpose and had not been accounted for.

The CJC found the funds had been used for their intended purpose.

That the council funds and equipment were used to maintain a road to an area where the only full time residents were the sister and the brother in-law of the Council Chairman.

The CJC found the road served a number of residents as well as a number of huts owned by the Catholic Church, and was also used for access to a recreational area.

That the council funded major extensions to the service station leased by Council Chairman Tom Geia and the chairman used his position to obtain accommodation for a service station employee.

The CJC found the Council approved and paid for the extension, but there was no clear evidence the Chairman improperly

used his position to obtain the approval.

That major extensions were made to the Council's chairman house possibly at council expense. The Council found no evidence the council paid for the renovations.

That the sister and sister in-law of the chairman were employed in administrative position for which they were not qualified for and the chairman's cousin was appointed to the position of project officer with CDEP scheme.

The CJC found the chairman had taken no part in the selection process and found no evidence of impropriety on his part.

That the lease of the Palm Island butcher shop was given to a non-Aboriginal brother in-law of the Council Chairman.

The CJC found the Department Of Family Services and Aboriginal and Islander Affairs selected the chairman's brother in-law for the lease after a ten-

dering process.

That council CDEP employees work in the private enterprise snack bar operated by David Geia, the Chairman's brother.

The CJC found some of the people working in the snack bar were employed under CDEP.

But confusion had existed on Palm Island and other Aboriginal communities for some time about what use could validly be made of CDEP workers.

The commission did not believe any action could be taken in respect of the matter.

That the Council purchased equipment from Remart Agencies at grossly inflated prices in circumstances which suggested corrupt purchasing practices.

The CJC found the Council had purchased a wide range of equipment and supplies from Remart agencies with some of the items marked up between 9.93 per cent and 569.10 per cent.

Ministerial directions provided that written quotations should be obtained for purchases over \$3000.00, but the Council Clerk considered these directions as "recommendations only," the CJC found.

However, investigations revealed no direct evidence of the supplier making corrupt payments to any person connected with the council, and it is not possible to build a case on circumstantial evidence because of the laxity in the ordering process that council followed for much of the period in its dealing with Remart, the CJC found.

A spokeswoman for the Department of Aboriginal and Islander Affairs Minister Anne Warner last month said the minister had yet to be informed of the CJC findings.

Note: This is an excerpt reprinted from the Townsville Bulletin.



Left: Twin Toddlers Ralph & John Watson. Right: Bygoonman Community School Rugby League Team with Coach Sidney John Charles



Letters To The Editor

Governor Thanks Palm Islanders

The Governor of Queensland - Her Excellency Ms. Leneen Forde has sent a letter of thanks to the Palm Island Aboriginal Council for the hospitality that was shown to her and her party during the recent visit to Palm Island.

The letter reads as follows:

"Dear Councillors, Her Excellency and Mr. McDonald have asked me to thank you for your hospitality during their time spent on Palm Island in July.

They both had an interesting tour of your Island and were impressed with the facilities and services offered to the residents on the Island.

Also the Governor asked me to thank you for the beautiful bouquet of flowers presented to her by the Palm Island Council and the Bwgcolman Community School students.

Yours sincerely,
Captain Kim

Health Team Writes

"Hello to all Palm Islanders,

For those of the community who haven't already met me, I'm Stella the physiotherapist who visits the Island every Tuesday.

A Physiotherapist service commence in April this year, and has so far proved to be a very successful and needy service.

You may be wondering what a physiotherapist really does?

Well a physiotherapist treats all kinds of people from new-born to the elderly, and cover a wide range of health problems, including neck injuries and back pain, joint problems, arthritis, sports injuries, chest conditions, walking difficulties, exercises programmes for ante and post natal ladies, and general advice on prevention of injuries.

I am based at the health team and I am available for out-patient appointments between 10.00-12.30 and 1.00-2.30pm. It is preferable for you to obtain a doctor's referral for physiotherapy.

If you would like an appointment the staff at the health team or phone 701132 or 701144.

Thank You for supporting the service"

Stella Esdale

Charmaine Writes ...

Just a short note about the health team for this month. We will be asking all visiting specialist and services that come through us to write a bit about themselves so we can put it in the paper.

So that the community know and you can come and see us. Also we have a new telephone service through the hospital on 701144 ext 228, as well as our old number 701132.

Thank-you,
Bye for now
Charmaine...

Letter of Thanks To Spring Fair Workers

Dear Michael,

This is a short note to congratulate you on your wonderful efforts.

Friday was indeed an enjoyable day and I really appreciated what you and your team did for our community.

Congratulations to you all!

Keep up the good work...

Sister Geraldine Kearney
Principal - St. Michael's School

Spring Carnival

I would like to 1st thank the Palm Island aboriginal Council for approving the Spring Carnival day holiday and for the huge amount of monies which was distributed right across the board.

The days started of quite but ended off with a big bang at the mall, with guess star Jimmy Little. Secondly the helpers and organisers of this day. A day everyone loved and enjoyed. From report's the people of this Community would like to see this event happening at least twice a year. Three cheers to you all for a fabulous day.

Chicko Has His say

Congratulations to all the people involved in football for this year.

Maybe a start to get the fearsome look in that great Barracuda's sides of days gone by.

A special thank's to the Palm Island Referee's Association, President Mr. Raymond Sibley, Mr. Henry Miller, Mr. John Ollife and Grand Final referee Mr. Anthony Bourne.

Thanks to all football players and supporters.

We must all remember that we have had our up's and downs, winning and losing, but the main thing we must do is to work together in improving this sport for our young generation.

Give yourselves a pat on the back, because we all finished the season with I must say "a strong contingent of finalists teams".

The Mighty Butler Bay bulls "A grade side was as some would say "the No.1 side all year" but sadly not making the Grand Final.

Also for the mighty Skipjacks A & B Grade sides for making the Grand Final. The superbly outfitted Jets B grade side being a thorn in everyone's side all year and last but not least the Mighty Federals A grade side playing their best football when it mattered most (Finals Time) and claiming the No.1 title in 1994.

A side that is made up with a combination of Hurricanes & Mt. Bently Raiders players.

A special mention must also go to all the older men who graced the football field this year leading the younger men with their vast experience and also for starting a new saying

"The old man down the road".

These old warriors are:

From Jets :
Mr. Algon Walsh jr
Mr. Edward Luff

From : Federals :
Mr. David Baira
Mr. Raynard Baira
From Bulls :
Mr. Mr. Archie Fraser
Mr. Tom Curley
Mr. Ray Georgetown

From Skipjacks :
Mr. Robert Castors
Mr. Stanton Friday
Mr. Robbie Cummins

Keep it up fellows as we still need your experience in the game of Rugby League in this day and age. See ya next year.

Congratulation again to everyone who helped out in 1994.

Chicko

Congratulations

On behalf of me and my family, I would like to congratulate the Jets B grade and the Federals A grade for their wins in the Palm Island grand final.

Good on ya fellows you are now No.1 and "Simply the Best"

Jets Fan

Dear editor

I have been a league fan all my life and I do enjoy watching a good game.

I don't support any particular team, but in regards to the football grand final on Palms, I and a lot of other spectators will agree that we saw a really good team in action.

The team I am referring to wore the maroon and gold jersey, it seems to me that the ref. was against them from the start. (how this guy became a ref is beyond me)

Congratulations to the Skipjacks side for their efforts, being down 20 points at one stage but didn't quit, they showed guts and determination to come back only to be beaten by the time.

I was amazed how the opposition was able to dictate terms to the ref, any quires made to the ref by the Skipjack boy's fell upon deaf ears.

If a neutral ref had controlled the game, I and alot of others know the result would have been different.

Any way the skipjacks team should hold their heads up, although beaten they were the better side.

(I wonder if the ref's and the linesman gotta share of the prize monies)

Throughout the nyear I've noticed a lot of occurrence in the league and they are :

1. Bad refereeing
2. Certain players showed bad sportmanship and were able to get away with it.
3. Linesman missed or ignored some incidents.
4. Some spectators were rude and abusive to players
5. Certain clubs were able to manipulate the rules and regulations of the game.

The
"Palm Island Voice"
is published
by the Palm Island
Aboriginal Council
Staff :
Michael Friday
Alex Morgan Jr
contributions
are welcome

Articles and Letters published in the "Palm Island Voice" do not necessarily reflect the views and opinion of the Palm Island Aboriginal Council or the editor.

We encourage any submission and all view points and are happy to publish them as long as they are within reason.

Original works in the Palm Island Voice are subject to copyright and will remain the property of the Palm Island Aboriginal Council

The administration showed lack of commitment to certain matters.

If football is to be a success the committee should not listen to teams who wants to dictate terms.

It's been happening since football began on Palms and it is sickening to see it still continues and the committee allows it.

League lovers are hoping one day to see a good honest Competition.
Rugby League Fan

Simply the best

Better than all the rest

I would like to congratulate the Federals A grade side on their magnificent win in the Palm Island rugby league grand final recently and also to the Jets B grade side.
Top effort guys

You are no.1 here on Palm Island
up the mighty Federals

Boom Boom games over

see you all next year

Federals no.1 fan

APPENDIX II
SELECTION OF FRONT PAGES AND ARTICLES
FROM THE *KOORI MAIL*

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Koori Mail

FIRST EDITION

THURSDAY, MAY 23, 1991

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RACIST VIOLENCE: THE HIDDEN FACTS

A report by Marcelle Muldoon on the findings of the National Inquiry into Racist Violence in Australia appears on Pages 3 and 4.

Elders to call for curfew

Following the release of the report into racist violence in Australia, Bundjalung Tribal elder Mr Frank Roberts, of Lismore, spoke of a need for curfews for Aborigines in trouble areas.

By JANINE WILSON

Mr Roberts said that when North Coast elders met at Tabulam on Saturday, a major consideration at that meeting would be the call for a curfew.

He said it was a drastic move and was something that was being contemplated in an attempt to prevent deaths and murders among the 'children'.

He said it was an extreme measure to give Aboriginal youth and children maximum protection and safety under an Aboriginal-instigated umbrella.

"The three deaths of Aborigines at Bowraville has revealed a dangerous situation in Aboriginal history," Mr Roberts said. "There could be a breakout in violence against Aboriginal youth."

Mr Roberts described the move as an initiative by North Coast elders that the elders hoped would flow through to the whole of Australia.

He said the need for such a consideration had arisen because the situation had become desperate. Mr Roberts said an "undercurrent of racism always existed, and that this should not be tolerated."

Mr Roberts was also critical of the role of churches in the suppression and degradation of Aborigines.

He said that "90 percent of police and politicians belonged to the church".

"In the final analysis churches are to blame for the present situation," Mr Roberts said.

He agreed that Aborigines had low self-esteem due to suppression, exploitation, racism, and said that they were the recipients of the worse treatment in Australia.

He said Aboriginal people had been indoctrinated to such an extent that they lost their esteem, which deteriorated until they were a non-entity.

"At a low ebb, this gives away to depression," Mr Roberts said.

He said Aboriginal youth needed an anchor. "The ball is in the Aboriginal court," he said.

Mr Roberts spoke of the new generation and optimism, moves by the Human Rights Commission to look at the Australian Aboriginal situation but realised that should new legislation be introduced, that did not provide an instant answer.

He recalled the words of former captain of the West Indies cricket team, Sir Frank Worrell:

"Legislation won't change a man's heart, but it will change his behaviour towards me."

FIRST EDITION

The Koori Mail has arrived and will now appear in newsagencies on a fortnightly basis.

The first edition of the Koori Mail is a positive step in providing a voice for Kooris everywhere. It aims to provide information on issues important to Kooris.

The paper is striving to give a Koori perspective and greater detail that is generally available in the media, providing important information for both the Koori and non-Koori population.

Apart from current issues, the Koori Mail will carry a range of features, personality profiles highlighting Koori achievements, book and film reviews, children's pages and sport.

The first edition will be distributed throughout New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria with plans to go national as soon as possible.

The Koori Mail is based in Lismore and is printed by The Northern Star at Goonellabah.

The Koori Mail wishes to acknowledge the valuable assistance provided by The Northern Star so that we could take our first step, and the help provided by John Muldoon, of Lismore Enterprise Development Agency, and the Koori Mail staff.

★
LOOKING
FOR
A JOB

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PRACTICAL
ADVICE ON
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YOUR
FAMILY TREE

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KOORI-KIDS'
CLUB

★
Page 20

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RUGBY
LEAGUE
PROFILE

★
Back page

Memorial-stone for Aboriginal soldiers

Australia's first memorial to Aboriginal servicemen and women is a large rock painting, which was unveiled recently at an ancient Bora Ground on the Gold Coast.

The memorial was organised by descendants of the Gold Coast's traditional Aboriginal owners, the Kombumerri clan.

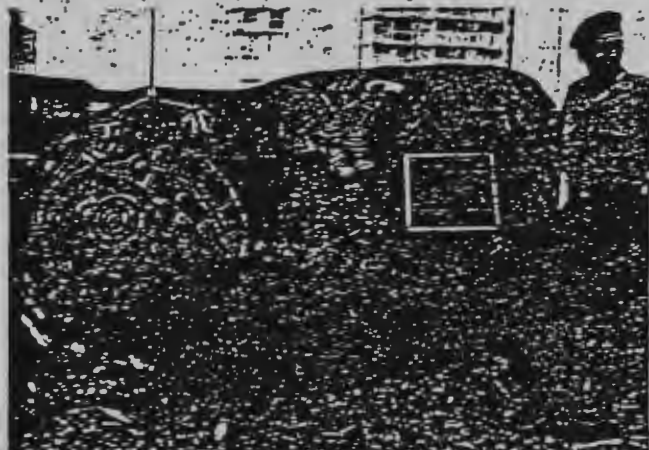
Kombumerri Aboriginal Corporation for Culture (KACC) spokeswoman Ysola Best said the memorial paid tribute to servicemen and service-women from more than six clans who lived in the extreme south-east corner of Queensland.

The clans were known collectively as the Yugambeh tribal group.

Many Aboriginal people had to fight for the right to defend their country according to author David Huggonson, who has traced more than 400 Aboriginal servicemen and servicewomen in every major campaign since the Boer War.

The names of more than 80 Yugambeh ex-servicemen and women have been recorded. In his address to about 400 guests Huggonson, of Canberra, said there were many reports of Aborigines being rejected from the recruiting office because they were "too Aboriginal".

To avoid rejection some Aboriginal people hid their ancestry by claiming they were Maoris or Islanders, he said.



Captain Wesley Aird, the only Aboriginal graduate from Duntroon, at the unveiling of the Aboriginal memorial stone at Burleigh Heads. The stone was painted by Aboriginal artist Michael Bell.

Aboriginal lore says the bora site symbolises the fighting waddy of the giant creation spirit Jabreen, who made us human.

As Jabreen, the boomerang maker, came out of the water and picked up his huge fighting waddy he caused a rocky outcrop now known as Little Burleigh.

For Aboriginal people bora sites were specially preserved areas used for initiation and learning ceremonies.

The Jebbribillum Bora ground on which the memorial stone stands has been returned to the custody of the Kombumerri people by the Gold Coast City Council.



EDITORIAL

Shame Australia!

As the report into racist violence in Australia has shown, violence against Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders is rife and should be a matter of concern to all Australians.

The report says Aboriginal people have become the most disadvantaged group in Australia.

Shame Australia!

The report indicates the high level of abuse during police interview. Have non-Aboriginals been subjected to

the same blatant racism?

It is this discrimination that flows over into our daily lives that has prompted elders like Frank Roberts of the Bundjungk tribe to talk about the need for curfews to prevent a potentially explosive situation leading to deaths or a repeat of the Bowraville murders.

It is time for the Aboriginal community to speak out and be heard, to earn the respect we deserve and to regain our self-esteem after 200 years of brutal victimisation.

Let us work for understanding by the non-Aboriginal community and for the day that the original Australians can regain their pride and live by the rules of their own culture.

The day has passed when we can return to the traditional Aboriginal way, but let us save what has not already been lost, and work to remove 200 years of brutality and discrimination so that our children can have a better world than their grandfathers.

We want to hear from you

The aim of the Koori Mail is to provide Kooris with a voice to express their views and tell us about the happenings in your community and to give all Australians information about Aborigines, their culture, their achievements and their problems.

To do this we want to hear from you.

If you have a point of view you want to express, to us, or if you have an issue you want us to investigate, ask us and we will endeavour to research and provide a comprehensive article on the subject.

Use us, we are your voice!

Write to:

The Editor,

PO Box 117,

South Lismore,

New South Wales 2480

THE KOORI MAIL TEAM

The fledgling Koori Mail is the result of a dream of Owen Carriage, a Koori with a wide knowledge of Aboriginal issues and culture.

From a childhood on a reserve, Owen has worked with several Aboriginal organisations and government departments, gaining an insight into what is needed for the self-determination of his people.

Owen's vision is for an unbiased and non-political paper.

With hard work and the help of the Lismore Enterprise Development Agency (LEDA) and The Northern Star he has been able to achieve a quality tabloid paper covering a wide range of topics to suit all age groups.

And as well as producing on

Aboriginal paper, the paper provides information for people wanting a more comprehensive understanding of an culture often misunderstood by the majority of Australians.

The fledgling Koori Mail became a reality with the dedication of a small team of workers, now established at South Lismore.

Janine Wilson has joined the team as editor. She began her career in journalism on The Newcastle Herald, taking up a position with The Northern Star, Lismore, in 1984.

John Toohey, who previously published his own specialist magazine, has joined the team as the advertising manager.

John brings financial expertise

to the enterprise with 10 years in the banking industry and in small business.

Karen Yates and Vicki Payne have worked tirelessly gathering information, typing, and coping with the inevitable hurdles of a first edition, honing skills at a multitude of tasks.

The future dream is an Aboriginal paper with Aboriginal people trained in all aspects of the print media.

The Koori Mail starts with distribution in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria, and national distribution is anticipated within a year.

It is available in selected news-agencies and by subscription.



KAREN YATES



VICKI PAYNE



JOHN TOOHEY



Owen Carriage and Janine Wilson plan the first edition of the Koori Mail.

A fund for Aboriginal children in sports



The Koori Mail plans to establish an Aboriginal children's sports fund.

It is proposed that such a fund be established and that it be established as a non-profit organisation for exemption from income tax.

It would also be afforded charitable organisation status so that tax deductible donations could be made to the fund.

The object of the fund would be to further the opportunities for individual sporting achievement by Aboriginal children and underprivileged non-Aboriginal children.

Initially, it is proposed that 3 percent of the Koori Mail's taxable income be set aside with the fund for the first 10 years of

operation and that arrangement be reviewed at the end of that period.

To ensure proper accountability it is proposed that the fund be administered by a voluntary board and that a proper accounting system be established.



Ken Dickson is the unofficial Koori Mail overseer and 'critic' — always ready to provide guidance and help.

KOORI MAIL SPORT

ORDER FORM

If you live in an area where the Koori Mail is not distributed, ensure you get the most recent edition by filling in the subscription form on Page 19.

Complete the subscription form and return to Koori Mail, PO Box 117, South Lismore, New South Wales 2480.

GIFT

The Koori Mail could make an ideal gift for a friend or relative for a special occasion.

Simply fill out a subscription form on Page 19, tell us what the occasion is, 'a gift for you', birthday, or some other occasion and we will send the Koori Mail with a card from you.

Mark Hill: Schoolboy star to big league

By KAREN YATES

Name: MARK HILL
Age: 20 years
Height: 176cm
Weight: 93kg
Club: Western Suburbs
Previous club: Forbes
Education: Forbes High School

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN COUNTRY, CITY FOOTBALL

- More professional
- More training (harder, longer)
- More discipline
- Games harder, faster
- Players are of equal standard
- More team participation

ADVICE FOR TALENTED YOUNG KOORIS

- Finish school to HSC level
- Be prepared to train hard
- Be on time for training, match
- Not too many social activities

A Kangaroo Tour or a State of Origin jumper remain dreams for many young aspiring footballers, and for many league-playing Kooris only a few get the opportunity to show their ability in the Winfield Cup.

Former Forbes footballer Mark Hill, 20, is one of those talented young sportsmen who has made the grade.

Mark, who plays President Cup for Western Suburbs as a centre or lock forward, showed his talents on the football oval during his school years when he represented New South Wales in the school boys' team and was awarded the Commonwealth Bank Medal for his outstanding performance.

With the medal in his possession, attention turned to Mark as a player of the future and he received many offers from Sydney clubs.

Mark took a huge step in his football career when he moved from Forbes to take his place in the Sydney league scene.

As well as the changes from a country centre to State capital, Mark faced many changes in his preparation for the game, training as many as six times a week.

His schedule is hectic with intensive training and a full-time job at the Department of Employment and Education Training.

He has also seen changes to standards and the technical side of the game with the introduction of the 'interchange' and the 'draft system', neither affecting Mark who had signed before the draft began and had played a full game in each game played.

Mark says he discovered that a lot of dedication and skill was needed to play in the Winfield Cup, but Western Suburbs President Cup team coach Wayne Ellis can build up players' motivation for a game.

He says nerves do play a part in a lot of players' game and firmly believes the home crowd is an advantage, "It seems to get you going a bit more".

And although Western Suburbs is his home crowd now, some of his staunchest hometown supporters follow him to his games in Sydney.

Mark's family still lives in Forbes, but he makes the trip to Sydney often as possible to see him play.

As the hectic training and preparation schedule extends over a 22-hour period there is little time to relax. But Mark has found his relaxation in television comedies, and when he gets the opportunity, he enjoys going out to a party or the clubs with his mates.

Mark says he has always loved the game of Rugby League, he played since he was eight years old but his schooling was a priority. He completed his HSC and recommends that any young Aboriginal student should further their education.

Being the modest young man he is, he will not comment on how far he thinks he can go, but that to make first grade would be a great achievement — any more than that would be a bonus — and he would consider an off-season in England or Zealand in a few years if he given the opportunity.

"All I want to do is play foot," Mark said.

ATSIC

ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMISSION

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Applications from Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders are encouraged.

The successful applicant should possess the ability to communicate effectively with Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders and a knowledge and understanding of their cultures.

**SENIOR PROJECT OFFICER
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE OFFICER CLASS 6
POSITION NO. 1109**

\$34,560-\$39,700 Per Annum

TORRES STRAIT ISLAND REGIONAL OFFICE

DUTIES: Assist the Regional Manager with the development and review of the Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP) at Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities within the Region. In consultation with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities, assess and recommend, as appropriate, project activities for inclusion in the communities AEDP program. In conjunction with other sections of the Commission, monitor and review the effectiveness of AEDP and ensure compliance with grant administration procedures.

CONTACT OFFICER FOR INQUIRIES: TIM CORNFORTH (070) 69 1247

It is in the interest of applicants to obtain the selection criteria and to frame their applications accordingly. Selection documentation for the abovementioned position is available from Chris Renouf on (07) 234 4222 for a copy of the duty statement and selection criteria.

Applications marked "Confidential" should address the selection criteria and be forwarded to:

**STAFFING CO-ORDINATOR
ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMISSION
G.P.O. BOX 2472
BRISBANE QLD 4001**

Applications for this position close on May 31, 1991.



Former Forbes footballer Mark Hill is on his way towards first grade as a berth in the Western Suburbs' President Cup team.

Published by the Koori Mail, PO Box 117, South Lismore, 2480. Printed by The Northern Star Ltd, Bruxner Highway, Goolleebah.

THE KOORI KIDS' CLUB

The runaway Johnny Cake

Uncle Dessy was making Johnny Cakes at school when a Johnny Cake jumped off the desk and ran out the door right away down the road.

All the dogs chased it but it ran in and out between their legs and got away.

The lathers got their guns and tried to shoot it but they wasted all their bullets and it got away.

The hungry rats chased him but he hid in the tank down at Macky's.

Rusty saw him and chased him but he jumped on Rusty's back. Rusty bucked him off. He landed on an ants nest and they tried to eat him and take all his bits home but he stomped on them.

All the children at Jali Playgroup saw him and chased after him but he ran real fast and they couldn't catch him.

A big red-bellied black snake slid up to him and he jumped in the river down the back at Uncle Doug's place.

He got caught in Uncle Suss's net.

Uncle Suss asked him if he would like to go home with him and get dry in his nice warm oven.

The Johnny Cake climbed into the oven and Uncle Suss slammed the door closed and turned the heat right up and cooked him, put butter and golden syrup on him, and ate him all up. He was YUMMY.

By K2, Cabbage Tree Island School

R U S T Y Z T Q
J V W A R M A J
V O H O M E N E
E X V C V B K H
R U N E Y E S I
Y A E K N I N J
A N T S F N E T
C H I L D R E N

Find these words from the Runaway Johnny Cake story

RUSTY RUN YUMMY WARM
ANTS TANK HOME OVEN
CHILDREN RIVER FISH NET

Hi kids,
Each issue of this paper will have puzzles, activities, and fun things for you to do.

In future editions there will be competitions with great prizes to be won.

We would be very interested in any stories, poems, jokes or pictures you have drawn and would like us to put on the Koori Kids' page.

Send them to:
THE KOORI KIDS' CLUB,
PO BOX 117,
LISMORE,
NEW SOUTH WALES 2480.

FIND-A-WORD

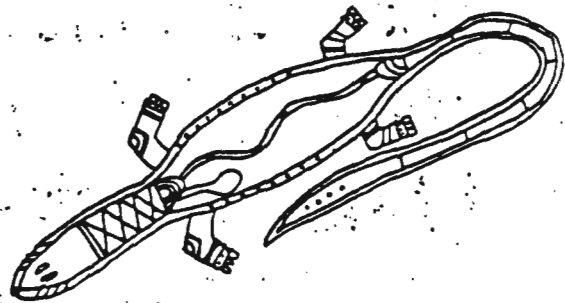
A S T N A R A G U S F
N O L T U R T L E I L
D R E N T K I E S O Y
I S N A K E R H A L I
H P O Y S T E R S I N
C G S N W A R P B Z G
E O S E I B B A Y A F
K A N G A R O O A R O
O N U A F R U I T D X
U N T B E R R I E S E
L A S E E D S Y M S

Kooris ate lots of different foods.

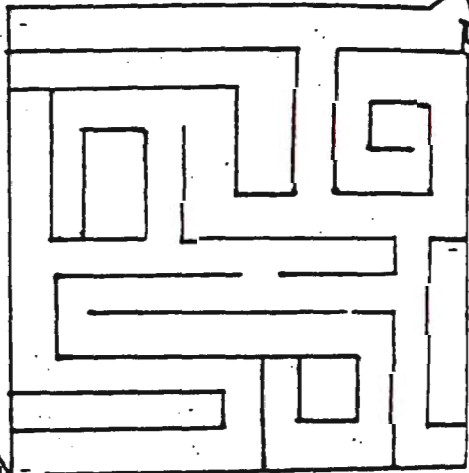
They depended on what was available.

See how many of the following words you can find.

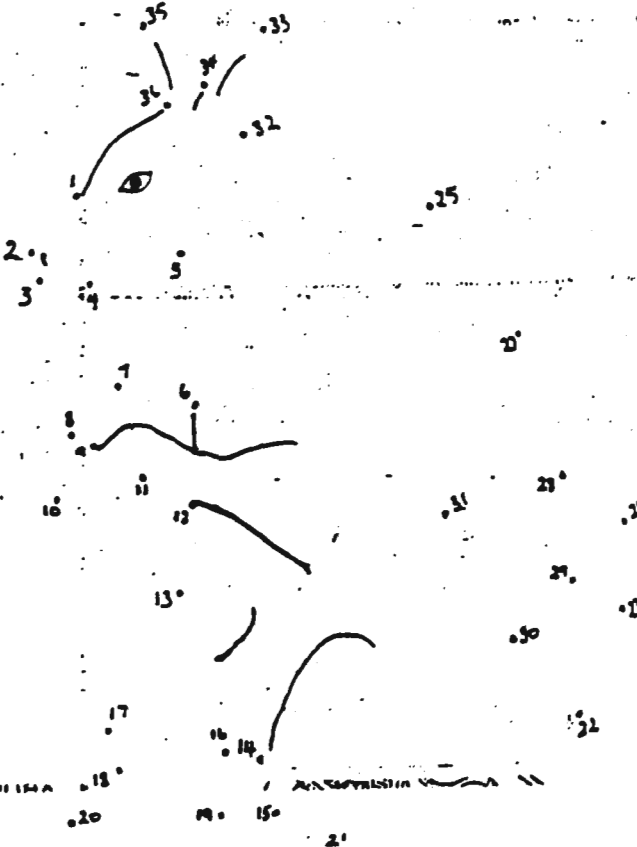
ECHIDNA SEEDS
KANGAROO BERRIES
FISH TURTLE
YAMS LIZARD
GOANNA SNAKE
PRAWNS
FLYING FOXES
OYSTERS
YABBIES
SUGAR ANTS
NUTS
FRUITS



Help Tidda find her way home



JOIN THE DOTS



CAMPFIRE COOKING

During the early days of white settlement in this country, escaped convicts and lost explorers often starved to death.

These newcomers (yirahli) did not know what was edible, where to find it or how to cook it. Meanwhile, the native Australians fed well and ate anything that was not poisonous or taboo.

They had fire (waybari) and their utensils were provided by nature and their own clever ways of using it. Food was buried in hot ashes and stones or grilled over coals.

They would not eat a carpet snake killed by whites. They would kill it before it bit itself. It was called around several times, bound in position, then buried and baked in the hot ashes.

The baked snake was removed with a digging stick (ganey), cut to be shared. Its flesh is said to taste like chicken.

Echidna or spiny anteater (Bunhny), which tastes similar to young pork, was killed by a sharp blow to the nose. It was then rolled in clay to

remove the spines. Flying foxes or fruit bats (girman) were singed, flattened out and toasted.

Turtles (bingling) were baked in the shell, which also served as a plate. Eggs (mangarahm) were also done on the hot ashes.

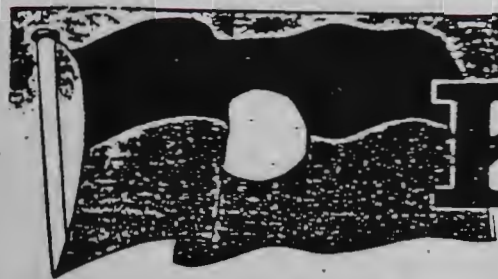
Possums were singed and cleaned out, then cooked on top of the coals.

Small Wallaby (gulabi or gulambi) were also prepared this way, while the larger kangaroos (guruman) were cleaned out and buried in hot ashes, paws upwards.

Eels (wardam, which can also mean a shark), water lizard (magli), blue-tongued lizard (bandahndjam), frill-necked lizard (nyaram), goannas (ngamahli or dirwang) and koalas (barbi) were all done on the coals.

Only the made with pipe sticks was used to cook these animals and no cooking was done on a fire where rubbish had been burnt.

When cooked, the ashes were often used to treat wounds.



Koori Mail

SECOND EDITION

THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 1991

Editorial, Advertising Phone (066) 222 666
Fax (066) 222 600
Recommended and maximum price \$1.00

Aboriginal flag flies at Parliament House

Forget about negotiations, says Goss

Last week, Aboriginal landrights protesters took the Queensland and Australian flags from their masts in front of Parliament House in Brisbane and replaced them with Aboriginal flags.

The protests were against new land rights legislation.

At an earlier demonstration about 500 Aborigines staged an angry protest against the legislation, which they say is 'for the white man'.

After the latest demonstration when iron gates were wrecked and eight people, including three women, were arrested Queensland Premier Wayne Goss said Aborigines could forget about negotiation and consultation.

About 250 Aborigines and supporters chanting demands for immediate landrights broke into the grounds of Parliament House protesting the State government landright's legislation.

Some scaled walls and sat in the grounds while others surged against the locked iron gate until it ripped from its hinges.

About 50 police formed a human barricade across the entrance to the building and several attempts were made by the group to break through.

Scuffles broke out as police held them back. Violence broke out as a line of police surged forward to remove them from the grounds.

Amid shouts of abuse, egg and stone throwing, police pushed them out of the courtyard and eight were arrested.

Parliamentary speaker Jim Fouras said he had asked police to remove the protesters.

He said people should have the right to protest

but this was 'sheer vandalism'.

Mr Goss later said the behaviour and vandalism was unacceptable and would not budge the Government's position one inch.

"I'm extremely disappointed in the so-called leadership of the Aboriginal community," Mr Goss told a news conference.

"I think they have let their own community down very badly."

"People who behave in this fashion can forget about negotiation, they can forget about consultation."

"Until they learn to behave in a responsible way, they are not going to advance their cause at all."

Mr Goss said that the land policy for Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders approved by Cabinet on May 20 was 'modest, balanced and responsible'.

He said that the only land available for claim would be unused Government land, which totals just 1 percent of the State.

"This is on top of the 1.12 percent of Queensland already granted by deeds in trust under the National Party legislation and the 0.71 percent covered by the Aboriginal Shire Leases and Reserves," Mr Goss said.

"We have put together a package which realistically addresses the issues of providing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders with real opportunities for managing their land and recognition of the legitimate rights of existing landholders."

March organiser Bob Weatherall said there had been no reform in Queensland and Premier Wayne Goss 'had stooped lower than low'.

He said they were prepared to send in a delegation to see him but Mr Goss would not accept them.

We gave them a lickin'



A Wardell B Grade supporter.

My daddy's team lost



A Tabulam B Grade supporter. The faces tell which side these kids were on when the outcome of the Group One second division Rugby League Timber Cup grand final was decided at Wardell. See Page 24 for story and pictures.

INSIDE: A STORY OF SURVIVAL

Charles Moran gives a comprehensive account of his life as a Koori child in the 1930s and the years of survival as a youth. He also tells of the struggle as a married man to make ends meet in a white man's world.

Charles was born at Kempsey, New South Wales, but spent a lifetime wandering around New South Wales and venturing over the border into Queensland in search of work.

It was in Ipswich where Charles met and married Rita. But before they could marry they needed permission from the Aboriginal Protection Board (APB). Aboriginal people in Queensland had to have their exemption before they could marry.

Aborigines living on settlements up until the late 1960s were looked after by the government. Young people were housed in dormitories.

"I clearly remember young boys and girls had to have permission by way of a piece of paper saying they were allowed to visit their parents, if they were removed from their care of their parents," Mr Moran said.

Today, Charles Moran, who spent four years working at the asbestos mine at Baryulgil, near Grafton, has asbestosis and is on an invalid pension.

For Charles Moran's story see Pages 10, 11.

EDITORIAL

Thank you for your support

Thank you for your support!

Although we anticipated community interest and support we were unprepared by the widespread interest that flooded in from the moment the Koori Mail reached the news stands.

Thank you for the many phone calls from throughout Australia, from Sydney to remote central west New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria and the Northern Territory.

The immediate move by large institutions to work with us to provide information can only help us move forward into a worthwhile role.

The interest shown by other sectors of the media has also been encouraging.

The information of past and future events which has begun to come to us from our own doorstep in Lismore and from Aboriginal communities throughout Eastern Australia and the Northern Territory has strengthened our resolve to provide unbiased and comprehensive reports on Koori issues.

There was a definite need for an Aboriginal newspaper such as the Koori Mail.

We will endeavour to provide unbiased coverage on Koori issues from the suburbs to remote settlements, and hopefully do our bit to improve understanding between Koori and gubba.

STILL NO DECISION ON CORONATION HILL

A Federal Cabinet decision on Coronation Hill was postponed last week when the issue was overtaken by a leadership battle between Prime Minister Bob Hawke and Federal Treasurer Paul Keating.

So the future of the controversial gold and palladium mine planned for the 42 sq km conservation zone inside the Kakadu National Park in the Northern Territory remains undecided.

Federal Cabinet had been split on whether to allow the mine to go ahead, overriding the objections of the Aboriginal Jawoyn people and environmentalists in what has become a battle between Aboriginal heritage or a gold mine.

Prime Minister Bob Hawke had indicated publicly that he was sympathetic to the Aboriginal case against mining.

Cabinet will consider a total ban on mining or a proposal allowing the mine to go ahead with the approval of the Jawoyn.

Business interests have campaigned to persuade the government to allow mining to go ahead, despite environmental and Aboriginal opposition to the project.

The mine site is in an area inside Kakadu National Park which is open to mineral exploration. It is a sacred site and home to Bula.

Jawoyn elders say any large scale

mining at Coronation Hill will disturb Bula, unleashing forces that will destroy the world.

Cabinet deferred a decision on the mine 19 months ago to allow an assessment of the mine's environmental impact.

The report by the Resource Assessment Commission (RAC) indicated Aboriginal concerns.

The commission said the Jawoyn had a legitimate case for protecting the area under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act.

Aboriginal people will ask the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr Robert Tickner to declare the Coronation Hill conservation zone a sacred site if Cabinet rejects a mining ban on the area.

The Jawoyn Aboriginal people, the traditional owners of the area, said last week they would ask Mr Tickner to step in if the government did not prevent the mining.

Jawoyn elder Sandy Barroway said his people did not want to be pressured by mining companies any more.

"We want this finished now," he said. Executive officer of the Jawoyn, John Ah Kit, said if there was not a total ban, Mr Tickner must protect Aboriginal interests by declaring the area a sacred site to stop mining.

Mr Barroway said earlier mining activity in the sickness country in the 1950s

had aroused Bula and resulted in a whooping cough epidemic which killed 100 of his people.

He said the Jawoyn people did not object to mining outside the sickness country.

GRADUATE ART



Pottery with Aboriginal motifs was made during a arts course conducted by ARIL. LA. See page 21 for more pictures.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A CATHEDRAL IN THE DESERT

A cathedral in the desert would have no chance of drawing a packed Sunday service, neither would the Olympic sports stadium at Tabulam ever attract an international competition.

Would the cathedral just be fiction; by ATSC demand the Olympic stadium is just a fact.

From social and economical viewpoints both, in fact and fiction, are ludicrous.

The provision of adequate sporting facilities enhances healthy lifestyle and generates a more disciplined social structure, therefore a must to any community.

Yet one can exaggerate! A building of such formal requires costly maintenance, upkeep and running expenses. When such a building has no financial return, the cost becomes a burden to the organisation and its tenancy. Sooner or later, due to lack of funding, the venture becomes dilapidated.

When the Gungyah directors planned their sporting complex there — occurring cost, the employment and training factor, and the ultimate use of such project were of immense importance.

Structural impression and presentation of the proposed design has been a combined effort by the directors, a technical adviser and ATSC. Lismore. Within four months of hard work and co-operation of the

regional manager in Lismore, \$5000 was released to have plans and specifications drawn up.

When they arrived the pride and joy of directors and members reflected on the whole community. Like everyone wants to see a newborn baby except this time everyone wanted to see their sporting complex.

A pride well deserved too!

They created a sporting complex containing a day-care centre (with financial return), arts and craft room (financial return), administration block and catering kitchen for functions (financial return) and in accordance with State and Interstate regulations.

The financial return was estimated at \$6000 annually, sufficient to maintain the building and replace or increase sporting equipment. The saving to ATSC in the future would be in the vicinity of \$200,000.

Any town planner, any business which was efficient minded, would have congratulated such effort. Sadly ATSC, 'new in name' is carrying on with the same old game. The old guard cannot and apparently will not distance itself from the 'Do as you're told' system. And why should they? They are the untouchables!

When ATSC, Tamworth, the new regional management for Tabulam, torpedoed Gungyah's plans, not only did it infuriate the directors it also destroyed the confidence and their pride

It must have been humiliating and

painful for the chairman to be pushed aside in the presence of a non-Aboriginal, and all authority handed over to an architect under the directors of the ATSC Tamworth office. One cannot help but think that the old parochialism of the ADC-DAA feud continues under the umbrella of ATSC.

It needs some explaining that one regional manager hands over \$5000 only to be wasted by another regional manager in refusing to accept the decision and sending everything back to the drawing board.

Almost a cat and mouse game. Economical suicide, costing the taxpayer tens of thousands of dollars and a dead loss to the Aboriginal people.

So far almost \$50,000 of the allocated grant for the sporting complex has been swallowed-up into the white men's coffers and only because no one really understands the words 'Gungyah Ngallingnee' which simply means 'listen and hear'.

Listening to what the people need, what the people want and hear their pleas. Stop destroying the pride, stop being authoritarians.

ATSC needs no castle in the clouds. ATSC needs no sporting complex. The people of Tabulam do!

They have shown commonsense in their approach. Departments should take note.

Individual managers or project officers should not veto proposals on grounds of personal like or dislike.

The first step to self-determination, to restore pride back into our peoples hearts and minds is to work with the Aboriginal communities.

There can be no tomorrow when division destroys today!

NAME AND ADDRESS SUPPLIED

Elders postpone meeting on curfews

The meeting of tribal elders to discuss the introduction of curfews for Aboriginal youth which was to be held at Tabulam, New South Wales, on May 25 was postponed, Bundjalung elder Mr Frank Roberts said.

The meeting was postponed so that a bigger meeting of elders from a wider area could be held to discuss the proposal.

He said it was likely that the meeting would be held in Lismore on June 8.

OOPS, WE WERE WRONG

In the caption to the front page picture of the memorial stone in our first edition we incorrectly identified Aboriginal artist Marshall Bell as Michael Bell.

THE KOORI MAIL Philosophy

The Koori Mail is a unique, independent newspaper which examines may issues from a Koori perspective.

It is the first time in Australia that Aboriginal people will have an undistorted source of information, and an outlet for their own views. It is also expected to have an impact upon the general community, with the aim of redressing prejudices and introducing non-Aboriginal Australians and ultimately the whole world to our culture and our beliefs.

The following principles will guide production standards and procedures:

1: The reporting of news and views without fear or favour.
2: The maintenance throughout of Koori beliefs and standards.

3: The highest level of production values, to produce a quality newspaper.

4: The training of Aboriginal staff to ensure they are instilled with professional skills to give them a high level of employability in the future.

5: The dissemination of the maximum amount of relevant information from Government agencies and statutory bodies, with the proviso that this information is not merely propaganda and is viewed critically.

6: The presentation of a wide range of issues, not necessarily only traditional Aboriginal issues but also other important matters which impinge upon the lives of Koori people.

7: Increased positive interaction between Aboriginal communities and individuals throughout Australia.

8: The inclusion of lighter items, such as a children's page, cartoons, sport, crosswords, games, art, film and book reviews, historical features and human interest stories and photographs.

9: A classified advertisement section, offering the full range of classifications, such as employment, births, deaths, marriages, in Memoriam, etc.

10: Display advertising not exceeding 50 percent of newspaper content.

11: The inclusion of a responsible but daring editorial column in each issue, addressing matters of importance.

12: The promotion of the overall well-being of Aboriginal Australia.

NCADA tackles alcohol abuse

Many people in Australia use alcohol socially, sharing it with friends, to have a good time. Some people abuse alcohol; they become depressed, violent, sick.

This can become so bad that families and communities suffer and may break up. This happens among all groups of Australians, including Aboriginal people.

In 1988, the National Aboriginal Health Strategy said:

"Most Aboriginal people agree that the health of too many Aboriginal people and the lives of their families and communities are being damaged and often dominated by alcohol. Many communities believe alcohol is the most significant (health and social) issue facing them."

In 1985, at a Special Premier's Conference, it was decided that the problem of substance abuse was taking a huge toll on Australian society, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, both economically and socially.

Something needed to be done to overcome those problems. As a result of that meeting, the National Campaign Against Drug Abuse (NCADA) was set up.

The main aim of NCADA was to minimise the harm caused as a result of the abuse of drugs. This includes legal drugs, like alcohol and tobacco, and illegal drugs, like heroin, amphetamines, cocaine, etc.

Aboriginal people, women, young people, prisoners and people of non-English speaking backgrounds form some of the special target groups of NCADA.

Because of the damage caused to people and communities by drinking too

much alcohol, Aboriginal alcohol abuse has been a major concern and has been given a lot of attention by both NCADA and programs funded under the former Department of Aboriginal Affairs, not the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATISC).

During the last few years some Aboriginal communities have been developing their own programs for dealing with alcohol abuse. People talked about these programs at the recent 'Healing Our People' forum held in Alice Springs. Many are having a high level of success.

Some programs start very slowly as people gradually learn how to use alcohol responsibly.

Through NCADA and ATISC, the Federal Government is supporting the development and operation of prevention and education programs to address substance abuse in Aboriginal communities, especially alcohol abuse. In the last financial year, at the request of the Aboriginal community, NCADA used some of its funds to support:

• Workshops put on by Canadian Indians, Eric Shurt and Phyllis and Andy Chel-sea, which dealt with the different ways in which the indigenous people of Canada are dealing with their grog problem.

• A feasibility study for a treatment centre in Nowra, New South Wales, which is to be carried out by Eric Shurt for the Doonooch Self Healing Centre.

• The conference in Alice Springs, Healing Our People: Aboriginal Community Justice and Crime Prevention Forum, which brought together more than 200 Aboriginal

people to talk about how they were dealing with the grog problem in their own communities.

The Commonwealth Government has also funded a Central Planning Unit through the Community Organisations' Support Program in Alice Springs to co-ordinate the Grog Strategy in Central Australia.

NCADA is also currently considering alcohol education, prevention and treatment projects in the Alice Springs region that form part of the co-ordinated Grog Strategy.

Aboriginal people know what the problems are and have shown they can contribute to the development of solutions. The Commonwealth Government and State and Territory Governments want to hear from Aboriginal people about how to fix their problems and is now asking Aboriginal communities 'How can we help you with your solutions?'. This is an important step for governments and for the Aboriginal community.

If you want more information about the Self Healing Centre study, the Central Australian project in Alice Springs or about NCADA, contact Martin Darkley on (06) 289 7816 or write to him c/- NCADA Management, PO Box 9848, Woden ACT 2606.



CHARLES STURT UNIVERSITY -MITCHELL-

BATHURST, NSW 2795 AUSTRALIA — PH: (063) 31 1022

MANAGER 'WAMMARRA' ABORIGINAL CENTRE

The Aboriginal Centre at Bathurst was established in 1982 to increase the participation of Aboriginal people in higher education. The Centre recruits Aboriginal students to University courses and provides appropriate academic and support services to enhance their prospects of graduating from the University. Currently there are 88 students using the Centre which has a staff of four.

Applicants must be Aboriginal (this is a genuine occupational qualification and is authorised by section 14(d) of the Anti Discrimination Act, 1977), have administrative and cost control experience; effective leadership abilities; proven skills in communication at the community and professional levels; the ability and experience to deliver a range of support services to young adults and mature age clients.

Educational experience at the post-secondary/tertiary level and knowledge of the cultural issues relating to Aboriginal people are desirable.

The appointment will be for an initial three year term with the possibility of extension.

Salary: Within the range \$34947-\$38203 subject to qualifications and experience.

For further information contact the Personnel Manager (063) 332615.

Applications setting out personal data, qualifications and experience (related to the criteria) plus three referees should be sent to the Employment Officer, Charles Sturt University, Private Bag 29, Bathurst 2795 by Monday, 10 June 1991.

Equal opportunity in employment is University policy.

Australian Catholic University New South Wales

ASSOCIATE DIPLOMA IN ABORIGINAL EDUCATION / DIPLOMA IN TEACHING (ABORIGINAL EDUCATION) 1992 INTAKE

Australian Catholic University (NSW) is now receiving applications for the 1992 intake in the Associate Diploma in Aboriginal Education / Diploma in Teaching (Aboriginal Education). This community-based program is currently offered at three Regional Centres in NSW: Moree, Kempsey and Mt. Druitt.

The 1992 intake will be at the Kempsey Regional Centre, and is very likely to be the last intake at this Centre.

Applications from mature age (over 21) women and men, and HSC School leavers will be welcomed. People who wish to enrol under Mature Age Entry may need to have reached Year 10 or the equivalent. Tertiary Preparatory Courses at TAFE are a good preparation for the course.

This course is offered in two phases:

- 1) Associate Diploma in Aboriginal Education (equivalent of four semesters of fulltime study) focuses on the Community Liaison and Aboriginal Education Assistant role.
- 2) The Diploma phase (equivalent of a further two semesters of fulltime study) concentrates on studies and skills for teaching in Primary Schools.

The two major strands of this course are the Aboriginal History, Culture and Spirituality strand and the Professional strand.

At the Diploma level, graduates are qualified to teach in both Catholic and State schools.

The design of this community-based program acknowledges participants family and work commitments, and community responsibilities. Requirements include:

- 1) While at home, working through course material packages prepared by the University staff
- 2) 2 x 2 weeks compulsory Residential schools per year, in Sydney
- 3) 2 weekend workshops per semester, at the Kempsey Regional Centre
- 4) Field Experience (2 weeks)

From 17th to 21st June 1991, the Aboriginal Liaison Officer — Janice Wilson, will be available at the venues listed below, to talk with people interested in seeking admission into this program in 1992.

17th May 1991	9.30 am-12.00	Lismore TAFE
18th May 1991	10.30 am-12.30	Berrinbin Co-operative, Casino
	2.30 pm	Grafton TAFE
19th May 1991	10.00 am	Port Macquarie TAFE
20th May 1991	9.30 am-12.30	Tuncurry TAFE
	2.30 pm	Cabrilla Land Council, Foster
21st May 1991	10.30 am	Kempsey TAFE

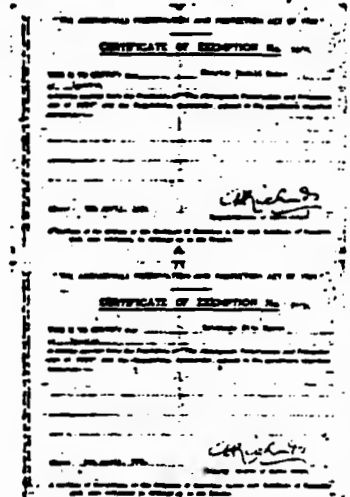
Inquiries about this course can be directed to:

Aboriginal Education Support Unit (02) 954 2018 / 954 2014 / 954 2028
Or The Program Co-ordinator (02) 954 2020

Consideration is given to Koori / Muri Applicants for all courses at the Australian Catholic University (NSW).



Charles Moran during his army days.



The Certificates of Exemption that Charles and Rita Moran needed before their marriage. Such certificates were necessary for Aboriginal people to marry until the 1950s.

A matter of survival

By CHARLES MORAN

My mother was born in North Queensland up near the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Mum's mother died when mum was really young, so when grandma passed away mum was sent to Deebing Creek mission outside Ipswich about 35 miles from Brisbane.

At Deebing Creek a couple adopted mum and took her over the border to a place called Stoney Gully outside Kyogle.

Mum was looked after by an old couple until she married Walter Williams, who was a tracker with the police force at Casino.

"When mum explained why she had jumped the train the police let us go with a warning."

When Walter Williams died mum married Charlie Moran from Kempsey. Charlie was my father, but soon after I was born mum left my father, and travelled north to Tabulam.

Mum took me to Pretty Gully near Tabulam.

Although I was a young boy I remember mum fossicking for gold so we could buy food.

Mum had had a family to Walter Williams but they never spent much time at Pretty Gully and I was the 'man' about the hut.

We lived in a bark hut. We were poor but happy, as mum was very loving towards me.

Once every two weeks we had to

walk 12 miles into Tabulam to collect rations.

We would walk back to Pretty Gully the next day, carrying the rations all the way back to Pretty Gully as we had no other means of transport.

Although I was very young at the time I can recall being at Casino.

One of my sisters was at Woodenbong, and she had had a child, so wanted to get to Woodenbong to see her.

Charles Moran, of Goonellabah, tells of his life from his earliest memories to years on the move in search of work, his marriage and family, to his last job before he retired on an invalid pension as a result of his years working at the Baryulgil asbestos mine. His account gives a rare account of a Koori's life as a child in the 1930s to family man and survivor.

We had to jump a train to Kyogle and walk from Kyogle to Woodenbong.

At Casino mum got talking to a couple of hobs who were going to jump the train to Brisbane. When mum told them her problems they promised to help us.

The train stopped at Casino station and we climbed into one of the railway trucks with a tarpaulin over it.

The train pulled up at a place called Fairy Hill where someone from the railway station spotted us and rang the police Kyogle, which was the next stop.

When the train stopped at Kyogle the police were waiting there to grab us and to lock us up, but when mum explained why she had jumped the train the police let us go with a warning.

"I went to Kempsey where I met my dad for the first time."

My sister was transferred to Kyogle and we did not have to tramp all the way to Woodenbong to see her and baby.

When sister was well enough we went back to Pretty Gully, where mum looked after the baby as well as looking for gold.

Sister and I went to a place called Tingah up on the New England Tablelands to see her older brother and to ask him to come home to help mum, who had a handful looking after baby as well as looking for gold.

While we were away mum had a daughter so sister and I had to rush home to look after baby and the hut.

From Tingah we went to Guyra to catch a bus to Tabulam and then walked to Pretty Gully to see mum.

Later on we went to Tabulam to stay

and I went to school at Turtle Point. It was a mission with houses and a schoolhouse of some kind.

When I had a break from school it was back to Pretty Gully for a holiday. Mum left me with my step-brother so I could go to school, and mum went back to Pretty Gully to Tossick for gold.

At school I was really dumb except for doing sums and spelling.

Needless to say I wagged school a bit to stay with mum.

At Pretty Gully I used to go hunting a lot, sometimes I would go with some of the other boys whose families were living like us. They came from Tabulam for the holidays as well.

"My mother always told me not to take advantage of people."

Weekends we used to get together. In summer a whole gang of us boys used to go camping along the river and go fishing and swimming for turtles. We became quite good at catching turtles.

In winter we would spend time hunting kangaroos, rabbits, and looking for wild honey.

We had dogs for hunting to chase and catch kangaroos and rabbits. We would carry the animals home.

When I was 12 years of age I went to work for one of the local farmers who tried to educate me about dairying and farming.

"My uncle showed me that you had to really work at it to make a go of it in life, so I tried to do my best about making something of my life."

I had to get up early to milk cows and feed pigs, and go farming all day. I was getting \$1 a week and keep. I used to eat on the verandah.

Being ambitious by now I left that farmer to go harvesting corn. The farmer I went to work for was a reasonable sort of chap and I was earning \$2 a day.

I used to load corn into a tray and cart to a shed and unload it. I was getting 25 cents for every load I took to the shed.

That was winter work. In the summer I used to plough fields and plant corn. This was all done with two horses and a plough.

One day after work I went to Tabulam. I was standing in front of the shop when the local policeman came along. When he saw me he asked me why I was not at school.

I told him I had just come in from work but he told me to go to school or he would kick me in the backside. I bought some cake and a bottle of drink and started walking along the road to Baryulgil where mum was staying.

Continued on Page 11

ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMISSION

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Applications from Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders are encouraged.

The successful applicant should possess the ability to communicate effectively with Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders and a knowledge and understanding of their cultures.

**ASSISTANT MANAGER — AEDP SECTION
SENIOR OFFICER GRADE C
QUEENSLAND STATE OFFICE
POSITION NO. 1104
\$40,906-\$44,435 Per Annum**

DUTIES: Provide advice and assistance within the State on policy issues as they relate to Aboriginal Employment Development Policy (AEDP) and ensure a balanced co-ordinated approach consistent with national policy to the Commission's AEDP programs and policies. Through the State Manager, provide policy/program advice to Regional Offices and Central Office. Assist the State Manager with the development and review of AEDP projects operated within the State. Provide advice and assistance to Regional Offices staff in the planning, implementation, review and ongoing monitoring of the AEDP scheme.

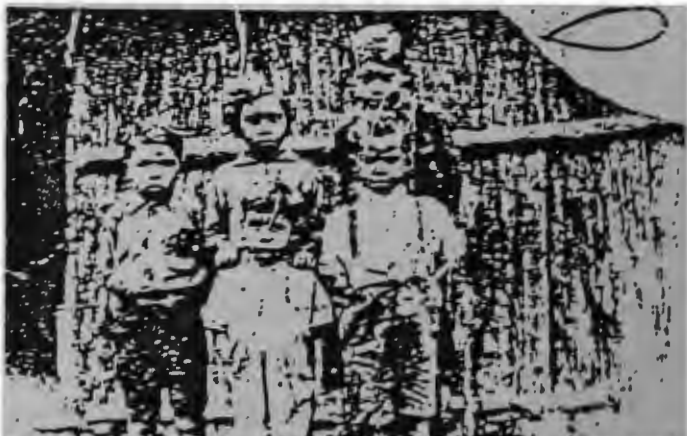
CONTACT OFFICER FOR INQUIRIES: TONI MALAMOO (07) 234 4222

It is in the interest of applicants to obtain the selection criteria and to frame their applications accordingly. Selection documentation for the abovementioned position is available from Chris Renouf on (07) 234 4222 for a copy of the duty statement and selection criteria.

Applications marked "Confidential" should address the selection criteria and be forwarded to:

**STAFFING CO-ORDINATOR
ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMISSION
G.P.O. BOX 2472
BRISBANE QLD 4001**

Applications for this position close on May 31, 1991.



This 1937 picture was taken in front of the bark hut that was Charles Moran's childhood home at Pretty Gully. Pictured are, from left (back), Charles Moran, Betty Walker, Larry Walker, and front from left, Lence Walker and Lenne Brown.

A matter of survival

© Continued from Page 10

The mail truck driver gave me a ride to Baryulgil.

At Baryulgil I went to school for a few months but I could not handle having to walk to school from Yulgilbar station. I had to walk about 10 miles a day.

I struck a job as cowboy on Yulgilbar station where I worked for a while until I went back to Tabulam where I worked around some of the farms.

Wages were very poor, so I went to Casino and went working for a farmer at Tatham (outside Casino).

When my step-brother came over from Billinudgel I went back with him and got a job banana chipping. Wages were poor so went left to go to Cabbage Tree Island. I went cane cutting and did other jobs on the cane farms.

'I had been a shy young fellow and I always felt white people were superior to us, but this bloke made me feel welcome in his home.'

I staying with my uncle at Cabbage Tree Island. He was a hard man.

My uncle showed me that you had to really work at it to make a go of it in life, so I tried to do my best about making something of my life.

My mother had passed away after I had left Baryulgil. I was about 18 years old by this and had never seen my father. This was probably why I decided to travel.

I went to Kempsey where I met my dad for the first time. He did not seem very impressed.

In Kempsey, I worked in a brickworks. It was pretty good, the work was pretty good and the wages were not too bad because now I could buy some decent clothes. Until then I used to wear old clothes that had been given to me because I never had enough money to buy good clothes.

Everywhere I stayed I used to pay my way, I was always told by my mother 'do not take advantage of people', if someone is good to you, show your appreciation with payment or try to help in some way — so when I was working I used to pay board.

I hardly ever drank, because grog did not interest me. Because mum never ever drank or smoked I was pretty well the same.

'Without registration and without a licence, we set off for another town 110 miles away. The journey took us three days. On the way we had 16 flat tyres or punctures.'

After a while at the brickworks, I lost a couple of toe nails and could not turn up to work. The manager put me off.

Then I struck a job working on the railway, it was really good, plenty of hard work and good wages.

My mistake was leaving that job. I always say how stupid I was to leave the railway. But I left Kempsey and went back to Tabulam and stayed for a couple of weeks, but the old place didn't seem the same and I went back to Kempsey.

I got a job in a sawmill for a while but the whine of the circular saw was too much for me so I joined the army.

After rookie training at Wagga Wagga, we were sent to an army camp at a place called Kapooka, and later to army engineering base at a place called Casula in Sydney. At Casula I met this bloke and we became good friends.

Until then I had been a shy young fellow and I always felt white people were superior to us, but this bloke made me feel welcome in his home. His family were really nice. They thought I was OK.

After leaving the army I went to Queensland where I met up with a wonderful woman.

We 'eloped' to a small town out west after a brief courtship. We stayed with friends until such times as I found a job ring barking.

I didn't even have boots to wear, so I had to walk to work through the frost.

'We had nothing to sleep on except the bare floor and no table to eat off.'

When the weather was warmer and death adder snakes started to come out of hibernation our boss got scared and we had to leave there.

I went to Ipswich, where I struck a job on the Ipswich City Council. I worked for a while and Rita and I got married. But before we could get married we had to get our exemption cards.

We stayed in Ipswich for a while before moving out west again where I got a job fettling on the Queensland railway. We stayed for awhile, but eventually returned to Ipswich where I got a job working on the main roads.

We stayed there for a while until the contractor finished us all up.

South over the border at Woodenbong, I got a job working in a sawmill, but I could not stand hearing those circular saws cutting through timber so we left and went out west again to work on a sheep station.

It was good work but I did not like riding horses so we went into town and I got a job working on the railways again. They used to put men on for about three to four months and then put them off.

'I didn't even have boots to wear, so I had to walk to work through the frost.'

When they put me off I brought my first vehicle. The De Soto ute was a real old vehicle, without registration and without a licence, we set off for another town 110 miles away. The journey took us three days. On the way we had 16 flat tyres or punctures.

When we arrived we stayed at a camping area and I got a job cutting fence posts for a contractor.

We stayed out in the bush, sometimes going into town at the weekend.

By now Rita was to have a baby so she stayed in town while I worked out in the bush. A son was born three days after Christmas.

The bush work finished and I went ring-barking for a while.

We returned to Ipswich where I got a job on the railway. When that finished we went up north.

By now we had two boys, I had a driver's licence and an old Chev ute.

We travelled to a small town where I got a job ringbarking and suckering. We moved on to Tabulam stopping when I could get work ringbarking.

From here we went to Baryulgil and got a job working on the asbestos mine, where I had the longest stay at any one job.

After Baryulgil, we went to Ipswich and then to nearby Mitchel. By this time we had two boys and two girls. The girls had been born at Grafton near Baryulgil.

At Mitchel they were putting a new road through and I got a job on the 'mainroads' until the road was finished.

On the move again I got a job on the Ipswich City Council, but accommodation was hard to find and I put an application in for a job on the New South Wales railways.

A letter arrived telling me to go for a check-up in Briabens. I checked out and struck a job on the NSW railways again. The good part was that a railway house went with the job.

So we moved once again. We loaded our belongings onto my old Ford ute and we moved out.

We had nothing to sleep on except the bare floor and no table to eat off.

For the first six months we were very badly off, with a house to live in no

furniture at all. But we started to get things together, first a fridge then second-hand furniture.

The boys started school there. Our neighbour used to take them to school. After about five years I was offered a job as a railway ganger. I accepted it and handled it pretty well, I thought. But our railway inspector had other ideas because he use to get on my back a bit when he used to come through.

I got fed up with him giving me a hard time so I left to work for Beaudesert Shire Council.

Included in this was the grave digger's job. It was really hard work as I was getting old by then. I had a home to pay off so I had to stay with it.

The place I had bought was only small, so I had to add a couple of more rooms, as the family had begun to grow up and we had furniture.

'Before we could get married we had to get our exemption cards.'

We got a loan from the government to buy a house, so we shifted out of the place that I had added the two rooms to. By now the boys had left school and had got work at a meatworks near town. Living in Beaudesert gave me the dry horrors.

I left, and went away which is something I am really sorry about because I lost my job on the shire and almost lost my family.

I returned to Beaudesert and started working in a quarry. My eyesight was failing badly and I was scared of heights.

When I reported for work after being off with the flu for a week, the boss said someone else had taken the job. I was unemployed once again.

I soon found another job labouring for a construction mob, the job was good the money was OK but it soon finished. When the contract was finished I was unemployed again.

My doctor said I would have to go on an invalid pension.



Walter Williams was a tracker for the police at Casino and was Charles Moran's mother's first husband.



This picture at Rain Tree in Northern New South Wales shows Charles Moran's eldest sister Ida, from the Williams' family, with nephew Edward Smith and his mother, Hazel, on the horse. Hazel is Charles' youngest sister.



This group shows Harry, Raymond Michael and Elizabeth Walker at the Aboriginal settlement at Turtle Point.



Charles and Rita Moran with their eldest son Charles.



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JUNE, 1991

Thursday 27th
Friday 28th

AT

THEATRE NEPEAN
UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY
SECOND AVENUE
KINGSWOOD

TIME

9.00 am-4.30 pm



SPONSORED BY ATSIC

CONTACT: J. SOUTH (047) 360 640

Early school-leaver now first Koori archeologist

The announcement of a \$4000 grant for an Aboriginal ethno-history study of the Maclean area earlier this year brought to light a remarkable achievement by a member of the Lower Clarence Aboriginal community.

The grant made through the Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra will allow Mr Ron Heron to complete the study as part of his thesis for his Bachelor of Letters.

Quietly spoken Mr Heron became Australia's Aboriginal archeologist when he graduated from the ANU last year.

He took the three-year course as a mature age student and completed it in four years.

Before attending the ANU he took an associate diploma course in Aboriginal history in Adelaide, picking up his formal education which had ceased at primary school.

He attended college for the last 3½ months of the course and graduated in 1985.

Mr Heron, whose father was from the Richmond River area and married a Yamba girl from the Laurie family, is one of a family of three boys and girls.

"When I went to school there was little encouragement to go on past primary school as many teachers believed Aborigines were only good for labouring work," he said.

Although he had little to say about his early days (despite admitting to be 'a bit wild' at times), he was appointed by the Department of Health as a drug and alcohol counsellor attached to the Grafton community health centre in the early 1980s.

He worked there for more than five years before the burn-out syndrome appeared.

During this time he saw many less practically qualified people, people with degrees appointed to senior positions.

And so he determined then that he would obtain a degree, and achieve one of these senior appointments.

Mr Heron was accepted by the ANU Department of Prehistory where he began studying for a degree.

His main subject was anthropology.

"But I found that I was getting far better marks in archeology so I switched my emphasis," he said.

As part of his studies he has travelled to Townsville, Kakadu, the Kimberleys where he collected Aboriginal art and artefacts and has established a private collection.

He worked at the National Museum in Canberra on a voluntary basis, strengthening

a better understanding of Aboriginal art.

The course was not always smooth sailing.

"Some lecturers do not like to be questioned by students when they interpret a theory from the European point of view when there is a quite different interpretation from the point of view of the Aboriginal," he said.

"With my degree I can now argue with them on an equal basis."

During the time of his study the number of Aboriginal men and women seeking university training at ANU jumped from four to more than 30 people in a variety of disciplines.

Mr Heron is already well into his research for his thesis among the Aboriginal community.

The work involves interviewing the older members of the community and recording their memories of their childhood and stories and traditions passed down from their parents and grandparents.

"Some of this history and pre-history is already recorded but it is very fragmented and written and interpreted through the eye of Europeans," he said.

"I have had considerable assistance from the museums at Yamba and Maclean and will be seeking help from similar places in the Richmond area."

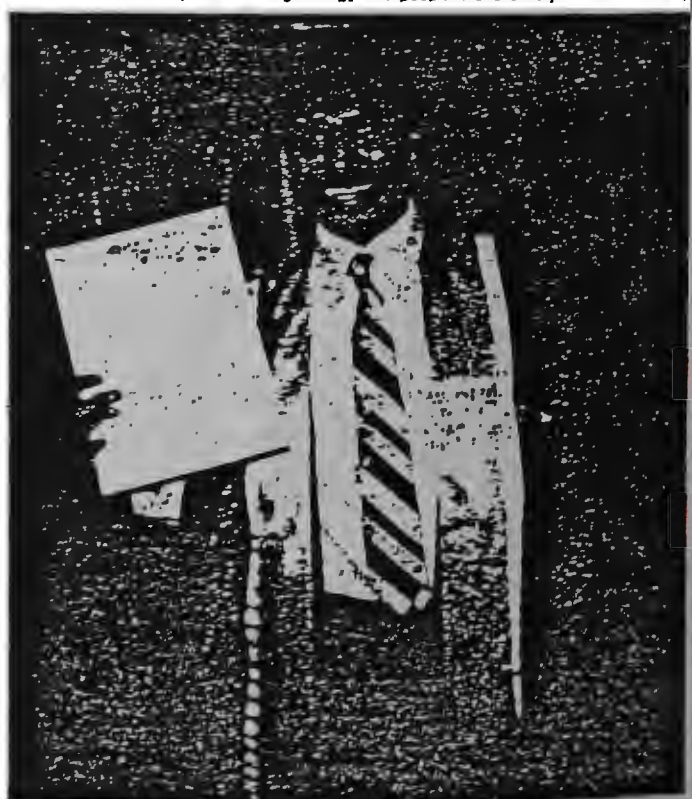
"The interviews will not be confined only to Aboriginal people but I will be talking to some of the oldest people in the area recording their memories of associations with Aborigines."

And where will all this knowledge and experience lead him to?

Mr Heron said that he has already been offered senior positions with the Northern Land Council based in Darwin but believes that the Clarence Valley and particularly the Lower Clarence is where his heart and future lies.

"Aboriginal pre-history of the North Coast is assuming a greater and greater importance and I believe I have a role to play at a senior level," he said.

With his dedication, perseverance and obvious extensive knowledge and empathy with his people this is a very true statement.



RON HERON — the first Aboriginal archeologist.

Koori Mail

EIGHTH EDITION

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 28, 1991

Editorial, Advertising Phone (086) 222 666
Fax (086) 222 600
Recommended and maximum price \$1.00

TICKNER TO DECIDE: \$350m MINE, OR SACRED SITES

Koori Mail Journalist Janine Wilson travelled to Western Australia to talk with the people involved in the row over the proposed Yakabindie nickel mine at Leonora, north-east of Kalgoorlie.

Two Aboriginal groups have become embroiled in a public wrangle over sacred sites in the area. The project came to a standstill months after it had been approved by the Western Australian Government and preliminary work had begun.

This dispute became a row over who had the right to speak for the land, with the situation degenerating into claims of 'singing' on both sides and a shooting.

At first glance, the Western Australian government's decision last week to accept an ethnological report for the proposed \$350m nickel mine on the Yakabindie sheep station, north-east of Kalgoorlie, Western Australia, would seem to have cleared the way for the stalled mine to go ahead.

The project had been stalled, despite the approval of the Western Australian Government and the traditional elders of the area, when a second group, the Ngalia Heritage Research Council, had claimed they were the 'custodians' of the area.

They argued that the Yakabindie people had 'dissociated' themselves from the area and argued that the ethnological report that the Yakabindie people had been associated with was incomplete.

They Ngalia council said the previously unidentified sites were related to the legend about the travels of four snakes and a dragonfly from Central Australia through the Yakabindie area.

The Yakabindie people remained adamant that they were satisfied with the modified mine proposal and that it would not affect sacred sites.

They welcomed the project because of the employment opportunities. In fact, they wanted the project to go ahead as quickly as possible.

In reply to the arguments over the 'incomplete' ethnological report, the government had called for a new report, but while the second report was still awaiting

By JANINE WILSON

clearance from the Aboriginal Cultural Materials Committee, the government announced that a new report would be done.

But as quickly as the WA Government had announced the new ethnological survey was to be done, an announcement was made that it was off again.

The government moved quickly, stepping back and accepting the previously disputed report, with the announcement that all the Aboriginal sites issues relating to Yakabindie had been resolved.

The recent move by the WA Government, which has an ailing economy and is anxious for the mine to go ahead, have cleared State obstacles but federal obstacles remain.

The WA Premier, Dr Carmen Lawrence, the WA Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Dr Judyth Watson, and the managing director of Dominion Mining, Peter Walker, held a joint Press conference last week to say the government had accepted the first report by anthropologist Rory O'Connor.

Dr Watson said the State Government would now advise the Federal Government that all Aboriginal sites issues relating to Yakabindie had been resolved.

With the WA Government's acceptance of the report the ball has now fallen into the court of the Federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr Robert Tickner, who now must act to resolve the dispute.

The Premier of Western Australia, Dr Carmen Lawrence, is acutely aware of the need for a clear Federal statement on the Yakabindie project, and has written to the Prime Minister advising that Dominion could not proceed until the threat of federal intervention was removed.

She said this could be only be achieved by a public rejection of an application from the Ngalia Council made to the Commonwealth under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act to protect sacred sites.

The protection application covered an area that included the two ore bodies at Yakabindie and most of the plant site.

Dr Lawrence said last week that the WA government would advise the Commonwealth that an application already made through the Aboriginal Legal Service under section nine of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act should be rejected.

A Press release from Dr Watson's office said that this would be consistent with the Federal Government's stand that the issue was one for the State Government to settle.

The managing director of Dominion Mining, Mr Peter Walker, welcomed the Government's firm action in advising Mr Tickner to reject the application.

"Dominion will be completing its feasibility study of the project as soon as the application has been formally rejected and the last legal impediment to the project removed," Mr Walker said.

Peter Muir and Dolly Walker from the Ngalia Heritage Research Council, vocal Aboriginal activist Robert Bropho who joined the fight, and the facsimile-active Senator are not taking the decision lightly. Within hours of the Government decision being handed down, Press releases had been prepared and issued from the Valentine office.

The settlement of the dispute now rests unavoidably with Mr Tickner and his decision on whether the second group, the Ngalia Heritage Research Council, is a valid application.

A nervous mining sector has also called for a statement on his intentions over the State decision so as to settle doubts among potential investors.

Mr Tickner can no longer stay out of the dispute, which is being hailed as bigger than Coronation Hill. Ultimately his decision will decide on the validity and importance of sites recently identified by the Ngalia group and their protection and thus the fate of the multi-million-dollar project important to the ailing WA economy.

At the centre of the row is whether the Ngalia group's claim as custodians can supersede the Yakabindie agreement.

Instead of ending the dispute and clearing the way for the mine to go ahead, the WA Government decision to accept the O'Connor report at the centre of the row between the Yakabindie people and the Ngalia group has only turned the heat up on a pot already on the boil.



The Land Manager for Dominion Mining Ltd, Pat Spinner, discusses the location of the mining project in relation to sacred sites at a meeting of the Yakabindie people held at Leonora on August 13. Anthropologist Rory O'Connor, whose report the Ngalia people said was incomplete, is standing at the rear.

Aborigines facing their worst crisis: Elders

Aboriginal people are facing their worst crisis in living memory.

We are now compelled to highlight fundamental issues that are diabolical in essence, deliberate in intent, in policies, also en masse by some segments of the Australian Community, including the electronic and print news media.

What is now apparent and conspicuous is that overt and covert racism is a dominant factor in mainstream Australia and is here to stay. Australia in its present racist mood and its political ideology, can never create spiritual, moral, political and social norms, that are exemplary to our people.

Its pretence in areas of justice, equality, policies, religion and economic, is a major thrust in these areas of which our people are the prime victims.

Racism exerts itself on a massive scale on a national front to destroy the very fabric of the Aboriginal society.

Racism is a power bloc inflicted on our people in the name of God, queen, country and democracy.

The Aboriginal people are in dire peril of losing their identity and dignity. Signs are now distinct as proven facts that the Aboriginal sporting world, and the Aboriginal bureaucratic component, closely allied to their counterparts, can never be participants in issues at grass-roots levels.

Some individuals are, and do champion the cause of their people, but in the main they are subjected to their superiors.

It is then a prelude to what?

At a conference, convention and rally, held recently on the North Coast of New South Wales, there were issues of grave concern to those assembled.

Priorities were given priorities that culminated in a course of actions considered paramount, in the light of developments that would erode further the bastions of Aboriginality, culture, Aboriginal youth and Aboriginal children.

The course of action referred to cannot pre-empt the role of ATSIC.

They have a mandate that embodies the rights to Aborigines at all levels, and must be a powerful force to strike at the root causes of political suffocation, economic depredation, and injustice in all forms.

Aboriginal ATSIC must exert its spiritual, moral, and political ascendancy as the dominant power in its encounters with white Australia and be dynamic in its leadership, cohesive, united and strong.

'Our identity and dignity is at risk'

ATSIC must be in the forefront to create a new era for our people.

We hope that Aboriginal members and councillors of ATSIC, as an Aboriginal entity, will never be manipulated, or monopolised by insidious forces outside its perimeters. If this is allowed to happen, it would signify the last nail in the Aboriginal coffin.

RECONCILIATION

The Australian Government is in the forefront for reconciliation.

It is ironic that at this point in time the combatants are called to the peace table, and in theory it seems good, but is there a catch?

Reconciliation is now an advocating ministry addressed to the Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal community nationally.

The non-Aboriginal people of this multi-cultural society must become aware of the far reaching effects on this nation as a whole; and any overtures to the Aboriginal people as a base for reconciliation must take into account the historic past of the Aboriginal people as the prior owners of this continent.

The initiatives of reconciliation at this point in time are not coming from the Aboriginal people; if it was we would expect reconciliation on our terms.

The conference as a whole had in depth discussion and rejected outright the concept of reconciliation at this point in time, believing it is mistimed and premature and would put unborn Aboriginal people in jeopardy and be only a token gesture.

It is premature for there has been no consultation on a massive scale throughout Australia with the Aboriginal people.

The Australian Government is wrong in its approach.

The proposed Multi Racial Committee will be made up of Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals to explain and propagate what will be an absolute in an attempt to get our people to accept reconciliation.

It 'pre-supposes' on such issues it should be taken for granted, while pretending sincerity, but manipulating Aborigines for its own end.

We recommend that all Aborigines give serious consideration before any decision is made for or against reconciliation.

for or against reconciliation.

We hope for the sake of our people, that might will prevail against all odds, hopefully for the first time, and 'united we will stand, because divided we will fail.'

To even contemplate reconciliation now, would be an act of betrayal.

If we reject reconciliation, then a treaty is a must.

As we begin a new phase in our long history,

© Continued Page 2

This report was prepared by Bundjalung elder Pastor Frank Roberts after a recent meeting of the Far North Coast NSW Aboriginal Elders Council.

Dreamtime backdrop



This striking piece of artwork was made during the Bundjalung Women's Program in Lismore. See story Page 16.

Win a holiday for two to

Central Australia

Competition Page 5

EDITORIAL

While Mr Tickner remains tight lipped over the stalled Yakabindie project in Western Australia, uncomfortable rumblings are still happening behind the scenes.

The Ngalla group continues to campaign, facsimile messages continue, and it is business as usual for Ngalla.

The Yakabindie people are not saying that much, why should they. And Dominion Mining sits back nervously twiddling its thumbs.

So all eyes are turned towards the Federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Robert Tickner, who has yet to make a decision on the heritage protection claim lodged by Ngalla.

We haven't heard as much as a murmur about his stand, a distinct contrast from his persistent lobbying on the Coronation Hill issue.

Now there is talk of the matter going to Cabinet.

This could neatly take the decision out of Mr Tickner's hands, but that is not the way to deal with the problem.

As a Federal Minister holding a portfolio as significant as Aboriginal Affairs, the day when a decision that is not popular with everyone will have to be made by the Minister.

He can't avoid contentious issues for ever.

The Aboriginal people want decisions, not unsolved problems that linger and cause discontent among Aboriginal people.

A decision is needed, quickly.

Surely, Mr Tickner, who spends considerable time among the Aboriginal people and has a genuine concern for the Aboriginal people, is more likely to make a better informed decision than a Cabinet which has not become as close to the Aboriginal issues as Mr Tickner.

And if Mr Tickner wants some reassurance, elders insist that Aboriginal people cannot be 'disassociated' from their land, as the Ngalla people claim the Yakabindie people have been.

Coranderrk Cemetery handed back to Wurundjeri people

The Victorian Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr Tom Roper, last week handed over the title of the Coranderrk Cemetery at Healesville, Victoria, to the Wurundjeri Aboriginal Council. The site in the foothills north-east of Melbourne contains the remains of 200 Aboriginal people and is one of the most significant sites in Victoria.

The cemetery is one of the few remaining areas of Coranderrk Station, a major Aboriginal settlement during the last century.

Ownership of the site was transferred from the Victorian Government to the Wurundjeri Aboriginal Council under the new Aboriginal Lands Act. Mr Roper said that the site was at last being returned to its

rightful owners after 130 years, when the first Aborigine was laid to rest in the cemetery.

"The Aboriginal Lands Act legislation, which enabled this ceremony, is one of the rare occasions where the State opposition he supported the handover of title to the Aboriginal community," Mr Roper said. He said the number

of graves reflected the history of Victoria's Aboriginal missions, where people were moved from one to the other as each was closed.

"This ceremony is one of the few remaining areas of the original 1964-hectare Coranderrk Station, which was officially established in 1863 after a Parliamentary inquiry recommended it be

set aside as compensation for what the Aboriginal people had lost," he said.

"The site was settled after two Aboriginal leaders, Wonga and Barak, led more than 40 people across the Great Dividing Range.

"This was their chosen site. They built their own huts, a school and dormitories for orphans and deserted children.

"These industrious people were largely self-sufficient. In fact there was scarcely a year when the hop they grew did not command the highest price on the Melbourne hop market. And they won several gold medals at royal agricultural shows."

Aborigines facing worst crisis

Continued from Page 1

it is imperative that the entire Aboriginal nation awake to a new consciousness of its destiny, its role and unused power, that up to now has been dormant, due to two centuries of oppression, suppression.

Hatred and mass murder, including infanticide of Aboriginal children cannot be put 'under the carpet' nor 'out of sight, out of mind' any longer.

With the historic past relating to our people, we have a mighty weapon to use in rocking this nation to its very foundations, but it will take concerted action by our people to write a new chapter for the future of our children and their children's children.

According to the United Nations and the international judiciary, with their conventions and resolutions, the Aborigines of Australia are still a sovereign people by virtue of the fact we have never signed a treaty.

This then impels us to initiate a universal demand for a treaty at an appropriate time and on our terms.

To achieve this end, it will require Aboriginal

leaders dedicated, and devoted first and foremost to their people, and Aboriginal public opinion must come alive en masse, perhaps for the first time in history, to make inroads into the citadels of white Australia, in particular the Australian Government.

Exponents for such a treaty would suggest it necessitated a series of conferences at grassroots levels, regional conferences, State conferences, and whatever may be deemed essential to bring about a national conference to discuss and formulate in concrete terms, details of such a treaty to the government of day, for implementation to the satisfaction of the Aboriginal people.

All segments of the Aboriginal population must become involved and motivated, so that a universal approach be made as the entire Aboriginal nation.

This will take time and money, and to test and expose the sincerity of the Commonwealth Government, an effective mechanism must be set up to work towards the desired end: The signing of a treaty that is long overdue, and ultimate victory for the Aboriginal people.

CORRECTION

In the eighth edition of the Koori Mail an article incorrectly said that Dominion Mining had paid Peter Muir's telephone bills and travelling expenses.

It has been pointed out that he was paid some expenses through the consultant preparing an ethnological survey, but Dominion Mining had not paid the extra 'out of pocket' bills he claimed.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TIME TO REMEMBER

With a snap election quite on the cards after Hawson makes public details of his proposed consumption tax, I hope unmarried mothers don't forget that it was a Labor government led by Gough Whitlam that first recognised them as being normal members of society, not sinners and paid them a pension.

Prior to that they lived on a diet of snide remarks and sanctimonious lectures from the church, prominent pillars of society were known to shun their own daughters.

In the so-called 'good old days', it was not uncommon when a daughter became pregnant for mum to take her away to visit a distant aunt, and when they returned, surprise mum had a new baby and the daughter was still eligible to become a cheaps bride. Finding a husband for her was of more importance to the hypocritical parents than the daughters broken heart.

In the unlikely event of me being invited through the pearly gates, I'd be checking with Peter to make sure some of the alleged Christians I have met had not passed through, as I wouldn't want to associate with them.

— REG COMBO, Kurri, NSW.

RESOURCE MATERIAL

Congratulations on your great paper. We use it as educational resource material for our schools Aboriginal Studies Programme.

It has great value for non-Koori kids as well as our own keen Kooris.

— JAN CAMERON, Sec ASSPA Program, Irymple, Victoria.

KOORI MAIL FOUND ON WAY

Congratulations to all involved in Koori Mail from the Aboriginal Education Curriculum Unit of the South Australian Education Department.

On a recent trip to visit our schools on the Pitjantjatjara lands, Mr Barry Riddiford (Superintendent of Aboriginal Schools) and myself discovered your paper at the Maria Hotel in the north of South Australia.

A few days later when we stayed overnight at Uluru, we also found the next edition of your paper in the newsagency there.

It was extremely interesting for us to be able to read the extensive range of articles and information contained in your publication.

For a long time, many of us in the Aboriginal movement have talked about how good it would be to have our own newspaper publication, for us to be able to share information across the nation.

Until your paper came along no one really got it going and from all of us

here in South Australia we offer our congratulations for a job well done and hope that we can contribute copy for your future publications.

— DR PAUL HUGHES, Co-ordinator, Aboriginal Education Curriculum Unit.

SKIN COLOUR A RECENT STIGMA

Just a small note to say during my schooling days Aboriginality wasn't a stigma in the community of Waikato, where after living a fairly travelled life with my family we finally settled.

It was only after I had four sons of my own and they started school that all these names that are associated with having coloured skin came to light and in our small community it had an effect that still carries now they've left school.

I don't mean to sound naive or anything but the old saying, 'we are all tarred with the same brush' has an adverse effect when it comes to crime in the district.

I know it's not only here but individuals

who socialise once in a while shouldn't have to be the centre of attention where the town's clown prince vocally advertises his dislike of us by publicly making everyone know, there was a 'coon', as he put it, mixed up with the break-in or car-theft or whatever is going on.

Aboriginality has its compensation but the drawbacks outweigh the advantages in a community that 'tarred with the same brush'.

Without prejudice is there an community that had these experience at a late stage or am I the only one that had a rude awakening.

V GREEN, Waikato



MY PEOPLE'S LIFE

A STICK MESSAGE

(Or, A letter From Jack Mirritji)

I am a full-blood Aboriginal who came from forefathers living in tribal villages in the bush, but who thinks differently from them — a new breed...

I am writing about my life story.

I have seen the sandflies and mosquitoes in the bush way back in time, and I have followed after my grandfathers and great grandfathers who have lived on the hillside and in the scrub for many, many wet seasons, and who believe in the stories of the Dreamtime, and the totemic waterholes.

Then the Dutch came from another part of the world and named Arnhem Land.

Next, the grandfathers brought a huge number of tamarind trees and coconut palms and planted them all over the islands and the mainland.

Later on World War II started around Australia.

After the war, English settlers started missions and stations and towns, and they met the bush Aborigines.

Many other balanda (white) men and women have come and taught the Aborigines about the balanda way of life.

— JACK MIRRITJI,
Maningrida.

WHERE I WAS BORN

My name is Mirritji. I was born at Wanggibimiri.

One day I asked my 'ateplather' (my father's brother — uncle) to explain to me where I was born. He told me this story.

It happened on one of my parents' fishing trips that he killed a big water goanna. That night, back at the camp, he had a dream of me. I came to him and said: "Father, you killed my spirit when you caught that water goanna. That goanna was me."

When he had that dream he woke suddenly and ran to my mother, telling her that she was going to have a baby soon. She didn't believe him at first, until he told her about the dream.

Afterwards she became very sick, and about nine months later I was born.

My grandmother cut my cord when I was born, and carried me in her dilly bag for about two months. Later she gave me to another related tribe, Ganabinggu, for my birth ceremony.

Then my father took me to a paper bark tree and cut a wooden cradle with a whiteman's axe for me to sleep in.

My grandmother looked after me while my mother was out hunting — gathering yams, fly roots, bandicoots, and many other things to eat.

I did not know where I was born until my second father (father's brother) had explained it to me. Wanggibimiri is about 15 kilometres south of the Aralura homestead (Murrumbidgee). The homestead has been gone for many years.

In the beginning I lived in a small place called Japirdjapin near a creek, surrounded by mountains.

Our camp had belonged to all my ancestors before me, and it was situated about 12 kilometres south of the old Aralura homestead (now called Murrumbidgee), in the eastern part of the area we called Djimuru (Arnhem Land).

All around there are cliffs, jungle, swamp, billabongs, springs, waterholes and rivers running into the sea.

This was the time of my life in the bush country, when I lived on my tribesmen's land, and in the village of my countrymen. We were moving around all the time, visiting relatives in different parts of the scrub, and in different bush shelters.

I moved with my parents and friends, making camp in places where we met other groups of people — sometimes two or three.

My name is Mirritji; my skin is Balang; my tribe is Jinang; my moiety is Dhuru; my group is Marrangu — this means I am of the sugar bag (honey) people Yarnpany.

For all of the time when I lived in the bush, we lived by the law of the Mardayin (the old time Aboriginal law) and the rules made by custom and tradition (Juburt).

BUSH FOOD: Honey, worms and clay

In this story I'd like to tell something about the good food we take from the bush.

Aboriginal people in Arnhem Land eat a fruit called gampila. It grows on a creeper. The fruit is dark blue and its stem leaves are dark green. The fruit tastes like wine.

The honey bee collects the nectar from the flower of this plant. It takes it to its hives among the rocks or in a tree, either in the tree tops, at its roots, or at the end of a broken branch. The honey formed from the nectar of the gampila flower tastes like syrup.

Another good food found in these hives consists of the eggs of the honey bee. Though the honey bees sting people who break into their hives, the stings are usually not painful enough to drive people away.

In order to find the hives of the honey bee, Aboriginal people cut a hole in the bark of a particular tree whose freshly cut wood attracts the honey bees.

When the bees come, the people attach the 'cord' of a spider's web to the tail of a bee. When the bee is released the white 'cord' is easy to see, and the bee can be followed to its hive.

The men bring their dilly bags to fill with the food from the hives. They use a stone axe to cut into the beehive. These stone axes are not easy to use.

For many years Aborigines have been using brown ant beds for food. The brown ants build their nests against the trees. They make them a bit over a metre high.

When Aboriginal women are looking for food, they can easily find these ant beds anywhere on the mainland and often they find an anteater at the same time.

The women collect pieces of the ant bed and take these home to their families.

The ant beds taste like the meat of the coconut. The anteater and the pieces of the ant bed are eaten together in the same way as fish and chips are eaten.

White clay can also be eaten, as well as being used for painting.

This white clay is mainly found in wet ground, but sometimes it can be found in dry soil.

When eaten, white clay tastes similar to 'dry milk powder', and like milk powder it can be mixed with water. Then it is used for painting. People of the North Australian centres still eat white clay just as people of the olden times did.

The mangrove tree worm can also be eaten.

This worm is about a 30 cm long and about a centimetre wide. It has a blunt tail with a 'lid' similar to an army cap and many sharp teeth. They eat wood from the mangrove trees. The worm can be found in dead or living trees.

Before eating them, you have to cut off the head and the tail. Then the insides can be sucked out and swallowed.

There are two different sorts of mangrove tree worms. One is smaller than the other and the bigger one must be boiled. When eaten raw, it causes sore throat.

The smaller one is the 'father' of the sandfly and dreaming of the Aborigines belonging to the Yirri moiety. The dance of the mangrove tree worm is danced today.

These are just a few examples of the bush food we eat.

WILD HONEY AND WATER

Another time when I was still living at Japirdjapin many wet seasons ago I went with my father to get sugar bag (wild honey).

He used to climb on top of the trees and look for the bees going into or coming out of the cutting where the sugar bag is. He would make a cradle out of paperbark to get the honey syrup.

We also used grass for drinking water dew and we tested the honey syrup which is like sugar. It is too strong and sour when you drink it straight so you have to drink it with water dew. It makes you thirsty if you drink it straight so you have to mix it with water like balanda (white people) do with rum or whiskey.

In the dry season we walked to the inland away from the coast. All the waterholes and billabongs were dry and people from the islands like Milingimbi, who were visiting relatives in the inland, were dying for water but we and other hill country people knew how to get water from the paperbark tree.

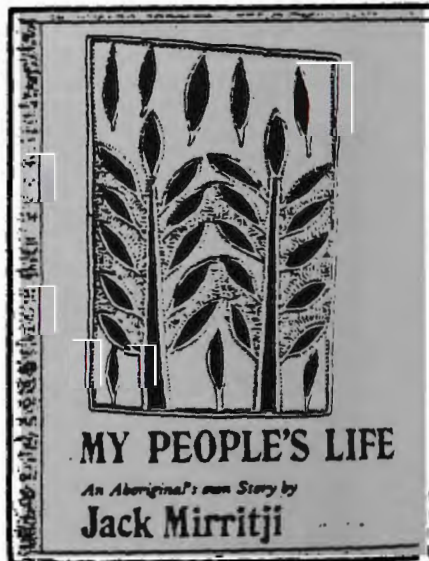
These trees stand near the billabongs or swamps. When we cut the flat part of the tree all country men can drink the water juice coming out of the tree. It is salty water, not very delicious but when you are dying for water you are too glad to drink it.

In Jinang we call it tree water (maraca, paperbark water).

When we were camping near a beach, river or dried out billabong during the dry season, we knew another way of getting water. That is by making a hole with a digging stick near these places.

It takes a long time to dig a hole deep enough for the water and the first water will be dirty. But after a while it will become cleaner and it is all right for drinking. However, it still tastes strong.

In the wet season there is plenty of water and you can drink fresh water at every place.



LEARNIN

One day my father, my brother Baraywu, went to the hillside and father taught us how to throw the wooden hook spear with barbs along head called madjalunggu — just as he had been taught by his father — my grandfather.

Father had five hook spears. He gave two to brother and kept two for himself, so I had one.

We watched him very carefully. He crept up to the tree very slowly, then he put his left leg in the tree. He pointed the hook spear and threw it. It flew great distance, passing perhaps 18 stringy b trees.

Then brother Baraywu, who was second father, sneaked up in the same way as father. The spear went flying past about eight or nine palm trees. Last, I sneaked up in the same way as they had, and my spear went whistling through the air like a bird over about four stringy b trees.

Father and brother were laughing at me, as I said to them: "What's so funny?"

Father said to me: "That's not the way to throw a hook spear. You won't be able to catch kangaroo that way, when you throw the spear that."

I just stood there quietly thinking that I



by Jack Mirritji

THE MACASSANS IN ARNHEM LAND

Before World War II they came — but after the borigines had been living in Arnhem Land for many years.

This story was told to me by Mick Makani, Charles Umbuna, Ray Baku, Charlie Djarrabili, Bob Bilinyarra and Mary Bambalarra.

The Maringa people from the island of Walada near here Rapuma is today (north of Milingimbi) were taking a corroboree of the Morning Star and a special pole for it, when the Macassans (Indonesians) came sailing from the south and then to the east.

The Macassans came and saw some smoke coming from the beach and they sailed there and dropped anchor.

When the Maringas saw the Macassans coming, they gathered in a group and had their spears made from mangrove wood and their fighting sticks ready.

Six men went down to the beach to meet the Macassans while the other stayed behind. The two groups met, but they were talking different languages.

By making signs the Macassans told the Maringas that they had come from a long way off and they were looking for land where they could get food and water, shells, trepang and pearl shells.

The Maringa people explained that this was their country and it was called Darkarra. They told the Macassans they would give them yams, fish and water, and the six Maringa men led the Macassans up to the camp.

The Macassans had left their guns behind in the boat, and as they came to the other groups who had stayed in the background, the Macassans mentioned why they had come.

The head man of the village, who was also head man of the Morning Star pole and ceremony asked: "Who are these men? Are they mokays (devils)?" "We don't know," the men answered.

The Maringas gave the Macassans food and water, and showed them their spears made from the teeth of longtom fish, axes and knives made from pearl shell, fighting sticks made from dry tree stumps, and many other things that they had made.

While they were there, the Macassans showed the Maringas how to make better canoes, canoes that could go out to sea. They also showed them how to use a herpoon to catch turtles and crocodiles.

As the Maringas were making the Morning Star pole — in Jinang the Morning Star is called Barnumbur of Guyurlun — and in exchange they gave the Maringas tobacco, billy cans and grog.

The Maringa men became drunk, and during the night the Macassans took the Morning Star pole and sailed away to a place called Gambungur between Elcho Island and Yirrkala missions.

The people from Gambungur sent a message by message stick to the Maringas telling them that the Macassans were using the string from the Morning Star pole as a fishing net.

The Maringas were very angry, about two things — stealing the women and using the string for a fishing net.

A group of men went in a canoe to make war against the Macassans, and they joined up with the people from Gambungur. A big fight followed, and many men were killed.

The Maringa men cut down the sails of the boat during the fight. Only two Aborigines came away from the fight, but they brought with them a prisoner — a small Macassan boy. This boy grew up among the Gupapuyngu people and became one of the tribe.

Many years later, a large group of Macassans came to Gambungur looking for the boy. There followed another fight in which many Gupapuyngu people were killed.

The boy was taken back by the Macassans, along with the two men who had captured him, and who had since become the boy's fathers.

They were taken back to Macassar, and years later, one of the Gupapuyngu men came back, after being in prison. When he returned home he was an old man. His other countrymen died in prison.

LEARNING ABOUT LEECHES

When I was a little boy about 10 years old my father would often take me hunting and fishing in his bark canoe.

Whenever we arrived at a likely place he left me sitting in the canoe while he waded through the marshes looking for wild game.

One day while looking for geese father told me to climb a tree and wait for him otherwise the leeches would eat me. At that time I did not believe him so I went to swim after him in the water.

When father saw this he came towards me and said "Look at yourself, Mirritji!" It was then I noticed all the leeches hanging from my body.

I started to cry and tried to pull the beasts off. Whenever I took one off lots of blood came out of the wound. I looked to my father for help. Then I saw many more leeches hanging from his body because he had to go into the water to help me.

Father quickly took some leaves and paperbark and made a fire. He told me to stand in the smoke and while I was doing this I saw the leeches drop from my body one by one.

At first father did the same but then he remembered the bark canoe so he had to go into the water again to retrieve it. When he came back he stood in the smoke for a second time.

Afterwards we went back to the canoe to go home. My father had made a platform of branches and leaves to cover the goose eggs so that I could sit on them without breaking them. But I was feeling too sorry for myself to ride home in the canoe. However, I had learnt yet another lesson.

Father finally had to carry me all the way back home with the result that he could not carry the goose eggs and had no food for my mother and grannie or the other kids. And it was all my fault.

Still they were not angry with me. In fact they started to cry when they saw the condition I was in. All I could do was huddle down near the fire to get warm and to stop shivering, as all this happened during the wet season.

When my father told everyone there was much food in the bark canoe, they all forgot about me and rushed off to where the canoe was to carry the goose eggs, tortoises, snakes, ducks, barramundi, flying foxes, catfish, and many other things back into the camp.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jack Mirritji was born at Japirdjapin in northern Arnhem Land some time in the 1930s. At that time Aborigines in the area had virtually no contact with Europeans.

The nearest settlement was Milingimbi, a mission station on an island 30 kilometres to the north of Japirdjapin, about 480 kilometres east of Darwin.

Mirritji had his first prolonged contact with Europeans when he was about 15 after he had sailed to Darwin. It was in Darwin that he taught himself to speak, read and write English.

The majority of these stories were written in the 1960s when Mirritji was living at Maningrida. Some of the stories have appeared in the "Maningrida Mirage" and "Identity". They were first published in book form at Mirritji's request by the Milingimbi Literature Centre in 1976.

The present edition is based on that published in 1976. (Extracts reprinted with permission)

TO THROW A SPEAR

rowing the hook spear quite well, but what made a spear throwing different to theirs was that I was only a small boy about 12 years old.

After throwing the hook spears, we went back to camp to find that mother and grannie had come back from their hunting with goannas, bandicoots, possums, blue-tongue lizards, bulbs, lily roots, blood lilies, cheeky yams (which must be cooked as they cause vomiting if eaten raw), fruits, grapes, and other things to eat.

We all raced to mother, but all my brothers and sisters beat me to her and got all the big yams first. I was too late, and I got nothing from mother. I started to cry and cried making lots of noise like a red parrot, until father picked me up and sang the song of the honey bee to stop me crying. Then he said to me: "Mirritji, listen to me. If I give you these three biggest yams, will you stop crying?"

I stopped crying when I had seen the three big yams.

After eating the food everyone went to sleep beside the bush shelter, but I did not go to sleep. I stayed outside by the fire and dreamed that I was a good hunter.

When my father saw me still sitting by the fire at

night, he called my skin. He said: "Balang, aren't you going to come inside?"

I asked: "Why should I come inside or stay out here?"

Once again he called my name, and said: "Mirritji, if you come in here you'll be okay, but if you stay out there the merri (devil) will come and it will grab you."

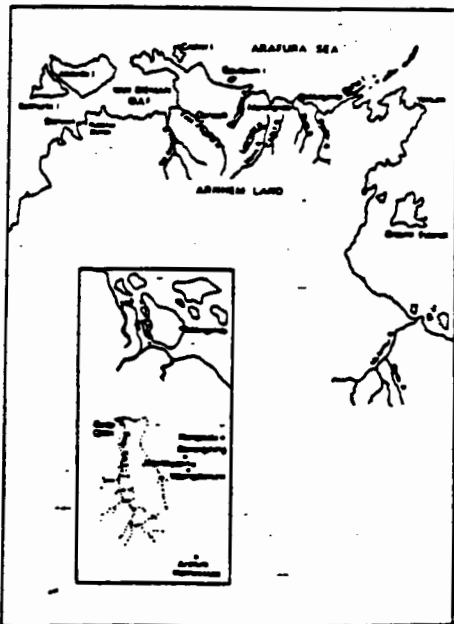
When I heard that I went into the shelter and lay down to sleep between mother and father because I was scared of the merri.

When I was lying there, I asked my father to tell me a story about my old countrymen — about how they used to learn to hunt and to live in the bush. So father told me a story about a long time ago.

He told it like this: "Our tribesmen have always lived in the bush and the scrub, and have hunted in the old Aboriginal way."

When the people of a village had no water, during the dry season they had to move from one place to another, but when the wet season came they could stay in one place.

Then father said to me: "Now, boy, we better go to sleep. Every one else is sleeping, and they might get angry if we wake them up."



RECONCILIATION OR WHITEWASH

Aboriginal leader calls for recognition, confession and action

By JANINE WILSON

The Government proposal for reconciliation with Aboriginal and Islander people is a farce unless the church and government admit the wrong that has been done to the indigenous people of Australia, according to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leader The Rev Charles Harris.

He says that the proposal for reconciliation by the Year 2001 could become another cover up of the criminal actions of the past, "another way of whitewashing the past".

Retired minister and activist, Mr Harris has slammed the state and church for their 'criminal and scandalous' treatment of Aboriginal and Islander people while whitewashing the facts.

Present talks about reconciliation may remain just that until there is recognition of more than 200 years of unacknowledged disadvantage and suffering.

"The church has never proclaimed the truth on a national platform and in

the international arena," Mr Harris said.

In hiding the facts, the church and state had perpetrated one of the major national crimes and scandals throughout the world, Mr Harris said.

"The crime has been to cover up the truth and the scandal and to hide the real facts of the history of the nation."

"The government has always continued to whitewash the real facts on the national scene and in the international arena."

"The result has been that 95 percent of non-Aboriginal Australians are totally ignorant of the facts and that 99 percent of the world's population had been totally oblivious to the truth."

He says the truth that our homeland was taken, there was large scale massacre, and that we have been disadvantaged since Australia was colonised, must be recognised.

"Until the secrecy is removed and the true facts are told, talks of reconciliation will not succeed," he said.

"Aboriginal people have been victimised, but they have not retaliated despite victimisation from bodies such as the police force, a fact supported by the recent Racism in Violence Report."

Instead of recognising and admitting the wrongs of the past, Mr Harris says politicians tend to paint a rosy picture that everything is well and happy at home.

"Politicians go abroad with a tendency to present the Australian life as the best race relations in the world, turning world focus on a false picture of a 'successful' multi-cultural society," Mr Harris said.

"It is a false picture because Aboriginal people are not recognised as part of the multi-cultural society. This multi-cultural society does not include or acknowledge indigenous people."

"When the government talks about jobs for migrants to build a better Australia, it is not talking about jobs for indigenous people."

"Migrants are recognised as part of Australian society, but indigenous people not included — they are on the bottom of the scale."

He says these are a continuation of attitudes of the past 200 years.

"History has got to be rewritten in relation to dispossession, massacres, genocide, the destruction of a culture and the denial of rights," Mr Harris said.

"The legal lie of terra nullius must be

exposed to all concerned, nationally and internationally."

"The true facts must be written before consideration of a written proposal of reconciliation."

"Unless the true facts are told the proposal will not be worth the paper it is written on."

Mr Harris says the first step towards reconciliation is the righting of the wrong that has been done, rectifying the past with compensation for the damage that has been done through recognition, land rights and reparation.

He says the proposed reconciliation can be likened to reconciliation in the home.

In the same way, grievances have to be brought out, thrashed out and aired before reconciliation can be achieved.

© Continued next page.

Inhumane crimes worse than Jewish Holocaust

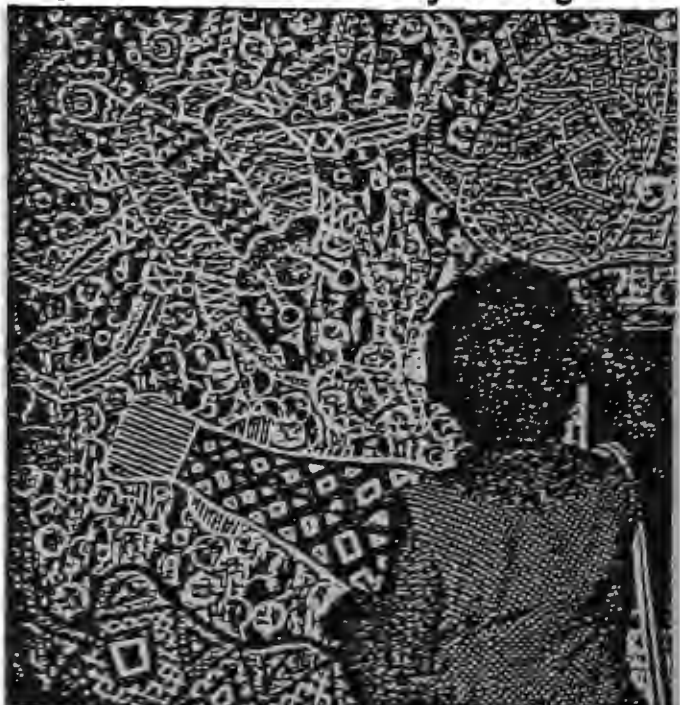
Mr Harris said the inhumane crimes against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can't be compared to Jewish deaths in the Holocaust.

He says the ignored and inhumane atrocities perpetrated against Aboriginal people were even worse than the horrific but well-documented crimes against Jewish people.

Mr Harris cited examples of Aboriginal babies being buried alive up to their necks in sand, and their heads being kicked off, men's genitals being cut off and the men watched as they died a painful death; and spears being inserted in the women's vaginas, as well as the many massacres throughout Australia.

He said he believed these deaths were worse than the deaths that resulted from the flick of a switch in the gas chambers.

Contribution of elderly recognised



Dorothy Buckland Fuller admires an Aboriginal mural at the Murawina Child Care Centre in Sydney during a visit to the centre to mark the first International Day of the Elderly. See story and more pictures on Pages 12 and 13.

Page 5

COMPETITION



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EDITORIAL

MESSAGE STICKS OF A NEW AGE

As the Koori Mail has struggled through its early days to establish itself against the odds, many letters have made us aware of the urgent need for the determination to produce an Aboriginal paper such as the Koori Mail that belongs to the indigenous people.

One recent heartfelt telephone call from an Aboriginal man told of his belief that the Mail was an important 'message stick', reinforcing the same sentiments of letters we have received from throughout Australia.

An early letter from Ivan Connors, of Tingah in New South Wales, said the Koori Mail made him feel proud to be an Aboriginal, pointing to the long overdue and urgent need for a public and positive medium for indigenous people where the achievements of Aboriginal people are recognised.

As we are about to go to print for our 13th edition, I have beside me a letter from a young offender who is spending some of the most important years of his life in a detention centre.

It brings home the reality of that caller's perception of the Mail as a 'message stick', and the role the Koori Mail plays for the indigenous people in the prison system, keeping them in touch with their own people.

The Koori Mail has also had a request for the Koori Mail to be sent to James Savage who is imprisoned in Florida in the United States. It can also be an important message stick for James, who is now rediscovering the culture to which he rightfully belongs.

While it is gratifying to realise that this paper can in some small way fill a gap in their lives, and in the lives of many, many more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people it is a sad reflection of the attitudes of non-Aboriginal Australia.

It is our duty to correct those attitudes that had been nurtured by the Australian media, providing a more accurate picture of Aboriginal Australia, the balanced picture that includes achievements as well as the stories about the down trodden and drunk indigenous people, who have been helped into their dilemma by white society.

While we are providing positive stories, let us not overlook the others who are doing just that. There are a handful of Aboriginal radio stations around Australia, such as WAAMA and CAAMA, and such programs as 'Speaking Out' on ABC Radio, and let's not forget the important role of SBS Television — taking positive steps to right wrongs and provide the message about the true face of the indigenous people.

We can overcome those pitiful down-trodden stereotypes that have dominated for so long, particularly on television.

It is our duty to ensure that non-Aboriginal Australia realises that all indigenous people do not belong to that pitiful stereotype.

Aboriginal achievements despite adversity are highlighted by the achievements of the 1991 Aboriginal Sportsman of the Year, Karl Fellar, who, although he was born without a foot, did not let the disadvantage handicap him or prevent him from becoming a gold-medallist athlete.

Like Karl, Aboriginal and Islander people are capable of overcoming the inheritance of disadvantage, and showing the world that Aboriginal and Islander people are people with ability and a lot to offer a new Australian culture where all races are equal.

Confession necessary for reconciliation

Continued from Page 2

"Before this issue is dealt with, a confession has to be made in the international arena," Mr Harris said.

"Confession has to be made before the Aboriginal and Islander nation can even consider proposals by the government and church," he said.

"The Uniting Church has already acknowledged its part at the Assembly of the World Council of Churches held in Canberra last year, but this is just one, all churches must do so.

In the next 10 years, the Australian Council of Churches must bring all churches together to make a unified confession, nationally or internationally.

"Such confession is vital otherwise reconciliation will just be a farce.

"By the Year 2001, when reconciliation is to have been achieved, 'reconciliation' must not become political ploy for politicians' personal gain."

Mr Harris says the just demands must be met if Aboriginal people are to take part in reconciliation and for it to succeed.

"The church and state must give Aboriginal and Islander people recognition, then heed and act on it just demands of the people. Land right sovereignty, etc must be dealt with," he said.

"If it is just political mimicry everything has been in the past Aboriginal people involved in the reconciliation process will be guilty of betraying and selling out the Aboriginal people."

Mr Harris says there is a risk that Aboriginal people will be used as pawns on the chess board of national and international grandstanding by politicians, and that while ATSIC could play a role in reconciliation, it also risks becoming a pawn in the struggle.

He says there is a possibility that reconciliation will simply become Band Aid measure.

"The proposal could become another cover up of the criminal actions of the past, another way of whitewashing what has happened to get attention away from what has happened in the past."



THE REVEREND CHARLES HARRIS.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A MESSAGE FROM DREW

Hi! I'm in an institution at Gosford near Sydney.

Well, I'm from Lismore. I'm one of those young lilies who Uncle Frank Roberts was talking about in Edition 10, walking around the streets, all hours of the night and day, drunk.

I think he was talking about me when he cited various incidents: the accidental death, a fatal bashing.

But that's not what I wanted to talk about.

I wanted to say that the Koori Mail is one of the best things that's happened to Lismore.

I wanted to say hello to my family, the King and Roberts families, and my mates in Casino, Matty Knight, Andy Knight, Jason Davis, Duane Davis, Joey Dalton, James Lister and Johnny Roberts, whom I haven't seen for 14 months.

DREW,
Secure Unit, Karlong,
Via Gosford.

A.T.S.I.C. 'FAILS TO ACT'

Alcohol abuse in the Aboriginal community is in epidemic proportions. The high death rate and general suffering caused by alcoholism is both tragic and unnecessary. It is also increasing.

The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Death in Custody in 1988 recommended that a national task force to combat substance abuse be established.

In May 1990, I submitted a proposal for an Aboriginal task force to the Federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Mr Robert Tickner, who passed my proposal on to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC).

The Chairperson of ATSIC wrote to me in March 1991 expressing 'awareness and concern' about the 'tragic consequences' of excessive drinking and assured me that our proposal would be

brought to the attention of the ATSIC commissioners and the National Aboriginal Health Council.

I was told that the establishment of a national working party on substance abuse would be given a high priority.

— Having heard nothing further I wrote to ATSIC again in May 1991 suggesting that the matter should be given urgent attention. ATSIC replied that the development of a national strategy against substance abuse had been delayed to allow consideration of the final report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, and also (paradoxically it seems to me, but perhaps not to them) to consider my suggestions, made in 1990, on urgently needed action.

The final report of the Aboriginal Deaths in Custody Commission has been out since March 1991. I wrote to ATSIC again on October 2, 1991, asking whether they were going to deal with this problem or not, and if so when and how. I have had no response to this letter.

There are continued debates about the problems of drug abuse including Alcoholism in Aboriginal communities.

Several ad-hoc programs are running and ATSIC receiving funding, but there is

no evidence of monitoring to judge the effectiveness and accessibility of these so-called treatment facilities.

ATSIC has acknowledged the need for action at a national level but has failed to come up with anything concrete.

Funding should not be a problem as the government purse would benefit from reduced prison and hospital admissions following a reduction in rates of alcoholism. A failure to act upon this issue could even be regarded as short-sighted from a monetary point of view if the government is unmoved by the large issue of genocide.

Why has ATSIC not taken up the challenge?

— H HUNT (JP),
Substance Abuse Counsellor.

'IGNORANCE BREEDS CONTEMPT'

I am a new subscriber of the Koori Mail and have to say that it is just brilliant.

In relation to your article in Edition 11 titled 'Woodenbong Students Appreciate Aboriginal Studies', I believe that this should be a compulsory part of every school curriculum in Australia and don't understand why it is not. After all,

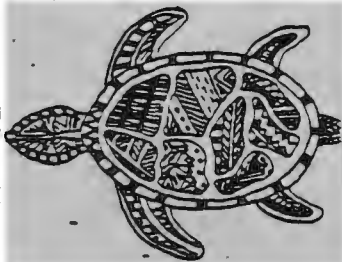
does not the saying go that 'ignorance breeds contempt'.

Secondly, I was wondering if you could assist me. I am getting married, February 1993 and although I am not Aboriginal, I feel that it is of great importance to include some Aboriginal tradition in our wedding ceremony.

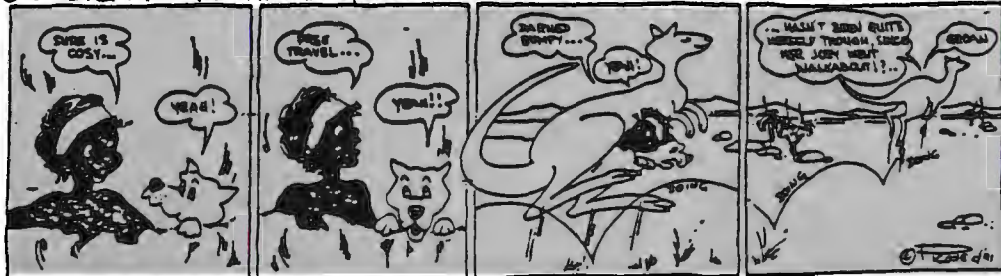
My problem, however, is the difficulty in finding such information.

If you could assist me with this information, it would be much appreciated or alternatively a place in Adelaide, phone number or a book, etc.

— JENNY SAIN
— Brighton, SA



DOOLIGAR & MIRRIGAN by TROUS



Koori Mail

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SACK ATSIK CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER: REGIONAL COUNCIL



NSW Land Council reps elected

An election to elect regional representatives to the NSW Land Council from the 13 regional Land Councils was held on Saturday.

As the Koori Mail went to print, the confirmed seats were:

Central — Neita Scott
Central Coast — Manuel Ritchie
Far North Coast — Dave Brown
Far South Coast — (unconfirmed)
Murray River — David Clarke
Northern — Jock Allen
Northern Tableland — Neville Kim
North Western — Tombo Winters
South Coast — Roger Brandy
Sydney-Newcastle — Jenny Munro
Western Metro — Robert Lester
Western — William Bates
Wiradjuri — Cecil Lyons
The majority of David Clarke's supporters were not re-elected.

Lack of consultation angers Sydney councillors

Councillors of the Sydney Regional Council have called for the instant dismissal of the Chief Executive Officer of ATSIK, Mr Bill Gray.

On November 11, an unanimous vote by the council, passed a no confidence motion in Mr Gray.

A letter was sent to the Prime Minister, Mr Bob Hawke, calling for Mr Gray's instant dismissal citing a lack of consultation with the regional councils over the recent Organizational Staffing and Structural Review.

In the letter it said the council had grave concerns over recent events affecting the dignity of Aboriginal people as a result of certain actions by senior administrators.

It also said that the regional council had censured the Senior Executive

Service of ATSIK for their failure to properly inform and consult with regional councils and Aboriginal communities.

The Sydney Regional Council noted that the councillors and commissioners were ignored in recent developments relating to the establishment and conduct of the Organizational Staffing and Structural Review and in subsequent discussion on the report of the review.

"Proper efforts to incorporate the views and concerns of regional councils were again ignored," the letter said.

The Council declared that such failure and avoidance represented a fatal paternalistic flaw in the operation of the Commission, which struck at the heart of the Commission's potential to advance the well-being of Aboriginal

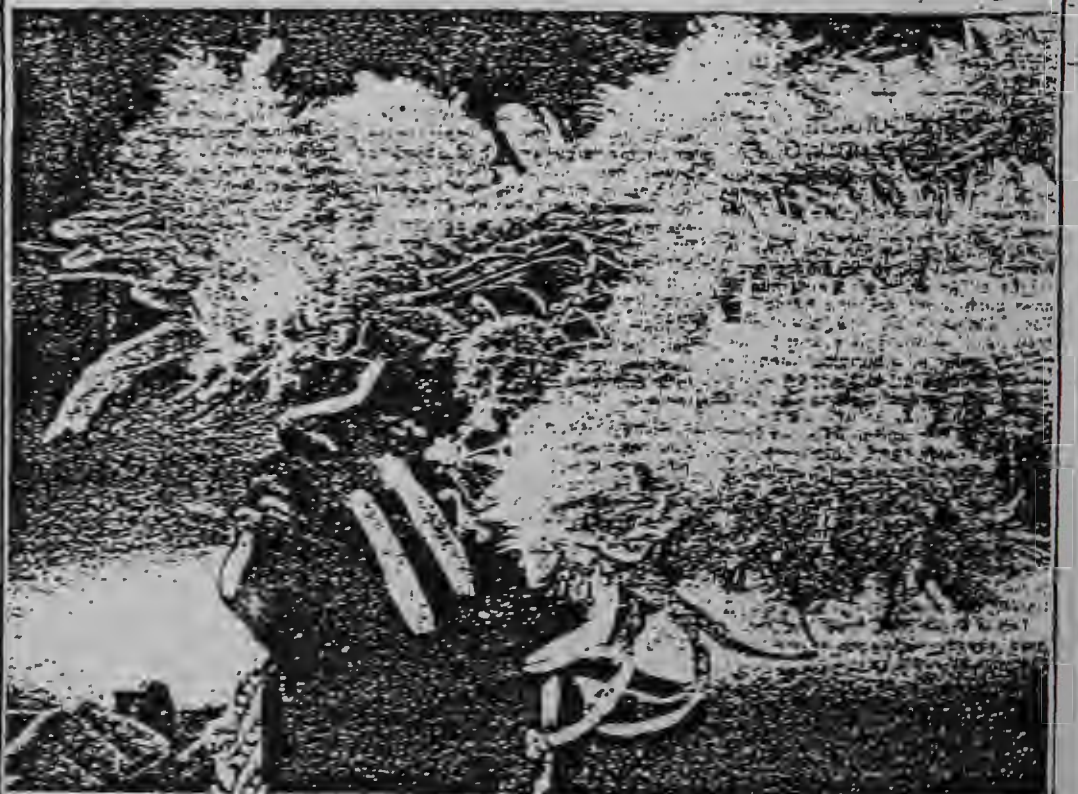
people and jeopardised the future public support for programs of Aboriginal advancement.

The letter said the resources necessary for 'informed consultation' between the regional councils and the management had always been available to the management but that the Chief Executive Officer (Mr Gray) had failed to ensure proper consultation with commissioners and regional councils on the Organizational Staffing and Structure Review.

The chairperson of the Sydney Regional Council, Mr John Delaney, said the councillors were concerned about the review's list of offices in key centres throughout Australia which it proposed should be closed, including the Bourke office.

Mr Delaney said such decisions without consultation were a move to take local responsibility away from the communities.

Dancer with a feather in his cap



A member of the Bangarra Dance Group, Torres Strait Islander Jensen Warusam, in traditional dress for a performance at Casino, Northern New South Wales. See story on Page P2.

(Picture by The Northern Star, Lismore, New South Wales)

Page 5

COMPETITION



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EDITORIAL

An unexpected dilemma

The Aboriginal cultural trait of sharing has provided an interesting dilemma for The Koori Mail.

Early indicators have shown that the Mail is frequently passed on from purchaser to friend or relative, leading to an understated readership assessment, an important statistic to a fledgling newspaper.

Early indications are that each paper is being read by up to 10 people, a much higher figure than those found in surveys for non-Aboriginal newspapers.

While a degree of sharing was anticipated, the Koori Mail staff was totally unprepared for the degree of sharing that was becoming evident.

Although this shows a great interest in the Koori Mail, it had also proved to be an unexpected hurdle for the Mail at this early stage.

The resulting lower circulation figures could hamper the paper, a private enterprise dependent on advertising sales for survival.

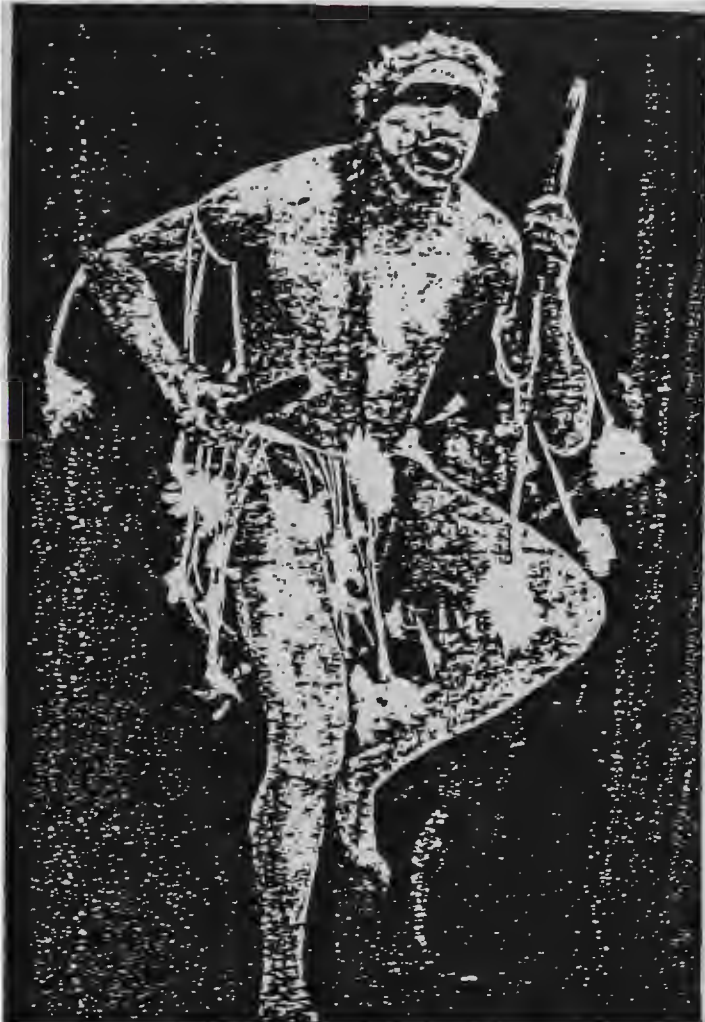
The greater the circulation statistics the greater the likelihood of attracting the number of advertisers that are essential for the Mail's survival.

We have no desire to change Aboriginal tradition, or stop our many interested white readers from bringing the paper to the attention of others.

A solution may be to purchase an extra addition for the person you want to send it to, or even take out an annual subscription for the recipient.

It could make an appreciated Christmas present and assist the Mail to get over its early setting up hurdles, providing the necessary finance to get through this initial expensive phase and help to firmly establish the Mail. Every little bit helps.

Dancers with message of cultural survival



A dance troupe from the Bangarra Dance Theatre Australia was in Casino last week.

There are few opportunities to see traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island dance on the North Coast, so it was rare treat for the the Koori and non-Aboriginal people when it performed its production of 'Up Until Now'.

'Up Until Now' is a celebration of cultural survival looking at the experience of indigenous people in an urban environment and the issues that affect not only their lifestyle, but who they are.

This is interwoven with traditional dances from Yirrkala in Arnhem land and the Torres Strait Islands to present a lively program. The members of the company who come from traditional communities are guardians of their dance and ensure the dances are performed to their satisfaction.

The Bangarra Dance Theatre is traditional and contemporary.

The talented dancers that comprise the Bangarra Dance Theatre are Jimmy Gagai, Pineu Gee, Patricia Handy, Douglas Munyerryn, Banula Marika, David Page, Russell Page, Monica Stevens, Ilona, Tim and Jensen Warusam.

'Up Until Now' has been conceived, directed and choreographed by Stephen Page, formerly a dancer with the Sydney Dance Company.

Creating cultural awareness and building bridges is a valuable part of the work Bangarra Dance Theatre does and it benefits all the community.

The word bangarra is form the language of the Wiradjeri people, and means fire.

● A Bangarra dancer performing a traditional dance.

(Picture courtesy The Northern Star, Lismore, New South Wales)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LET'S ENCOURAGE OUR SPORTSMEN AND WOMEN

I've just finished reading your article in Edition 13 of the Koori Mail regarding Aboriginal sportsmen and women of the past.

Although Tony Mundine was not mentioned, I would like to say how proud it makes all Aborigines of Australia to have such great sporting heroes as Tony, Lionel Rose and the Sands brothers.

They make all Aboriginal fans extremely proud.

I believe there are young Aboriginal boxers on the way up who will be just as good as them, given time and financial help. These four boys are from the North Coast. They will be travelling to Adelaide on the November 28 to 30 to participate in the Australian Amateur Boxing League titles.

These boys are: Daniel Hoskins, of Kempsey; Norman Harvey, of Yamba; Steve Lardner, of Kempsey; and Trevor Harvey, of Bonalbo.

Two of these boys, Norm and Trevor, have already won gold at these tournaments in the past.

I'm not sure, but I believe that Steve and Daniel have also, and I believe that they are well on their way to high rankings in the boxing world.

I also have another son Patrick, who boxes, and is considered by his trainers as promising for the near future in the sport of boxing. He is 13 years old at present.

The reason for my letter is to let the public and Aboriginal organisations

know that to get these boys to tournaments such as these, takes money, which the large amount of Aborigines haven't got.

To raise money for their fares and accommodations, these boys walk from house to house asking for donations. Is there some organisations out there that will sponsor them?

If so, it would be nice to know, as I don't know of any.

There will be other Aboriginal boys participating in these titles from all over Australia, and I write this letter not only for the North Coast boys, but for them too.

Come on Koori organisations, get behind our children and help them achieve their ambitions. Who knows, maybe they will be representing Aboriginal people in the Commonwealth and Olympic games in the future, like Kathy Freeman.

All they need is plenty of encouragement and financial help from our people to achieve this.

If anyone out there can help, please contact Ross Smith, Kempsey trainer, Norman Harvey, Yamba (066) 46 1843, John Cooper, Grafton trainer, (066) 42 2898.

MARGARET HARVEY,
Bonalbo.

A FORGIVENESS SONG?

I usually read 90 percent of your newspaper each time it arrives and learn a lot.

The poem 'Roped Off' is excellent, could you tell me who wrote it please?

I have Archie Roach's tape and enjoy it very much. I also love his song 'Summer of my Life'. It's very moving like 'Took the Children Away'.

I'm sorry Archie and the other children were taken from their families. I hope one day God uses him to write 'The Forgiveness Song' as he has a voice that brings healing to the heart and we white people need forgiving for taking him and other children away from their families.

I have put him on my prayer list that one day he will be inspired to write such a song.

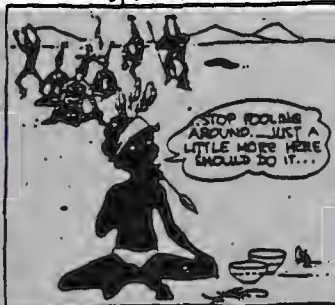
After reading your interesting newspaper I forward it on to Sister Bernadine who works with Aboriginal people in Perth. She reads it and also passes it on.

Like myself, she thinks it is great that you have your own newspaper.

MARY PRICE.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The poem was written by Cec Fisher

DOOLIGAR & MIRRIGAN by PEGUE



Koori Mail

EIGHTEENTH EDITION,

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29, 1992

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ALLEGATIONS MADE OVER PRISON DEATH CIRCUMSTANCES WERE ABNORMAL — PRISONER

A prisoner has come forward with accusations that Glen Hill, 17, was subjected to brutal treatment in the week before he died while in custody at the Sir David Longland Corrective Centre in Brisbane.

Glen Hill was found hanged in his cell on December 22.

Derek Sinden, who is an inmate at Boggo Road maximum security prison, was one of several prisoners on day leave to attend an Aboriginal community conference on Aboriginal Deaths in Custody held at Inala, a Brisbane suburb.

Sinden says it was known among the prisoners that Glen

Hill had been trying to get letters out to his mother and sister. It is believed the letters were complaining about the brutality in custody.

Glen's mother said she had not received any letters.

Sinden said Glen had been subjected to brutal treatment and solitary confinement.

He also claimed that Glen had been handcuffed in an unusual way while he was being shifted inside the prison in the company of an unusually large number of prison officers.

"One of the boys had seen six custodial officers with Glen," Sinden said. "He was handcuffed little finger to little finger with his arms in an upward position behind his back."

Sinden says the usual method of handcuffing is thumb-to-thumb with hands in front of the person.

He claimed that anti-depressant drugs were frequently used on prisoners to make them co-operative and prisoners believed that they had been used on Glen.

© Continued Page 2

NEXT EDITION

Pictures,
reports
from

SURVIVAL '92 CONCERT

at La Perouse

and

the 20th
anniversary

TENT EMBASSY
in Canberra

Old Corrective Services Commission responds

The following letter was received by Koori Mail journalist Janine Wilson in response to a list of questions relating to the week before Glen Hill's death.

I refer to your letter (fax) to me dated 21 January 1992 in which you listed a series of questions concerning the late Glen Hill.

As I mentioned in a telephone conversation the death of Mr Hill will be the subject of a coronial inquiry. It would therefore be legally and morally improper for the Commission to comment on events surrounding the incident.

While it disturbs me that a variety of allegations can and have been made publicly, I cannot see any way for us to answer these claims without pre-empting the findings of the inquest. It appears Commission personnel have to sit back and suffer personal and professional assassination with no form of redress. This is, in my opinion, most unfair.

I fully appreciate your position as a journalist and would not in any way try to influence the way you do your job.

I believe you when you say you are trying to present a balanced picture and congratulate you for doing so. I am sure you can also appreciate our position.

It is a most difficult and sensitive situation and one which should not be clouded or inflamed by unnecessary, provocative or ill-conceived comment.

— ROGER PLASTOW

Director, Communications,
Old Corrective Services Commission.

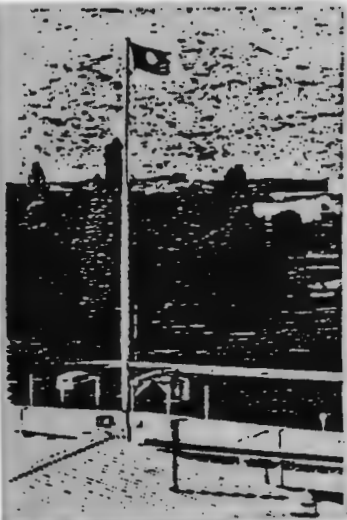
MEETING PLACE FOR KIDS



Rachel Ferguson, 9, Mia Marlowe, 9, Judith Roberts, 10, Cheryl Kelly, 9, Leon Kelly, 5, and Wayne James, 7, were having a ball when they got together at the lagoon near Boundary Creek in Northern New South Wales. Their families were meeting over a proposed resort in the area, which is a traditional Aboriginal meeting place. © See story Page 7.

PROTESTERS ESTABLISH ABORIGINAL 'EMBASSY'

Four arrested in sovereignty bid at 20th anniversary protest



About 40 Aboriginal protesters camped in old Parliament House on January 27, claiming it for an Aboriginal 'embassy'.

The Aboriginal flag was hoisted above the building — the bold red, black and yellow flag flying at the old Parliament House while the European Union Jack and Southern Cross flew above the new Parliament House a short distance up the hill.

The previous day, the protesters had set up a tent embassy on the lawns outside the building to mark the 20th anniversary of the tent embassy set up on Australia Day in 1972 to protest against the McMahon Government's rejection of land rights claims.

That embassy had lasted several months until police removed protesters.

Original protesters re-established the 1992 'embassy' at the original

By JANINE WILSON

site at the now disused old Parliament House.

Aboriginal protester Bill Craigie said the action was a 'sovereignty land claims on behalf of the indigenous people of this country'.

He said they would petition the United Nations for recognition and presented police and journalists with a declaration calling for a self-government and self-determination.

Bindi Williams, who was also part of the 1972 tent embassy, said the occupation was to show displeasure with the lack of advance in Aboriginal rights.

The protesters, including Charles Perkins, Mum Shirl, Kevin Gilbert and Lyle Munro, called for Federal Government recognition of Aboriginal sovereignty over Australia.

The following evening, all but four of the group which had swelled to about 100 people left the building voluntarily when police read a statement asking the people to leave or they would be charged with trespassing.

Police had turned out in force for the removal of the protesters.

Inside, the outlines of police could be seen behind glass doors to the hall where the protesters has established themselves, an Aboriginal flag draped over a statue of King George V.

As protesters gathered their bedding and other belongings, police stood shoulder-to-shoulder at the front door of the 'embassy' to bar re-entry to the building.

Outside, the protesters gathered on the front steps ready to cheer the group, only to discover after a long delay that they had been whisked away through a back entrance.

The four protesters who remained in the building were taken to the city police station and charged with trespassing and refusing to leave the building.

They were Isabel Coe of Cowra (Wiradjuri), Sonya Laughton-Brown of Alice Springs (Arrernte), Ian Williams of Cowra (Wiradjuri), and Harold Williams of Canberra (Ngunawal).

A group of about 60 people gathered at the court in support of the defendants when the matter began.

When the public gallery could not accommodate everyone wishing to hear the proceedings, Magistrate Mr Peter Dingwall instructed all those not seated to leave the court room.

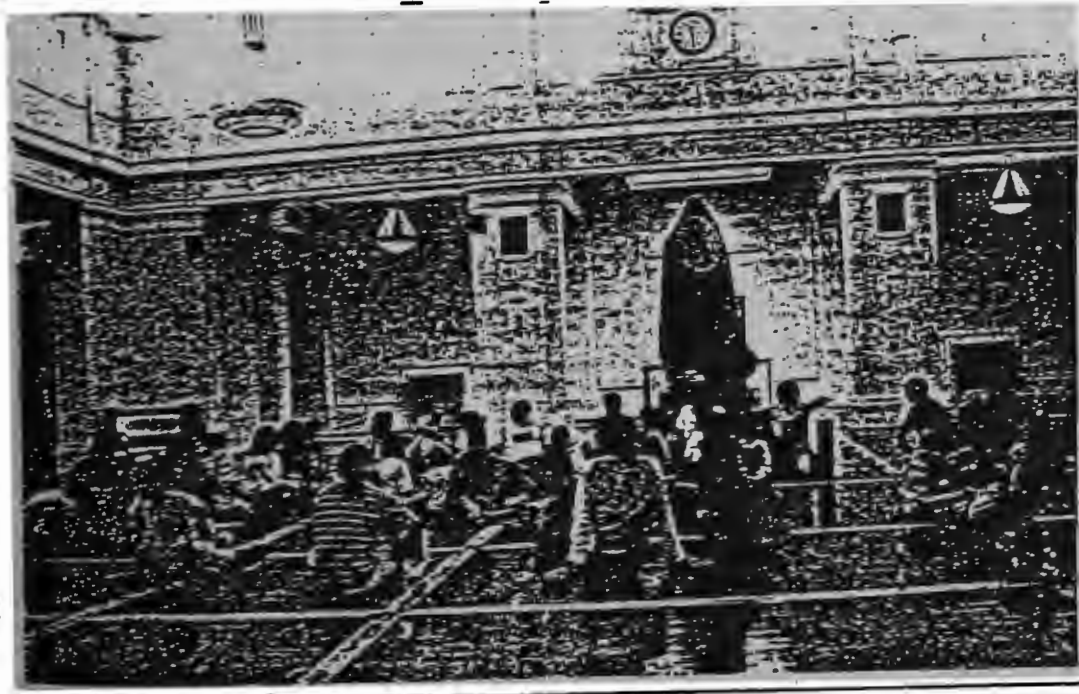
One woman, who was refused entry because all the seats were taken shouted: "This is our history."

In court, an ACT magistrate declined an application for a temporary stay of proceedings to allow four Aborigines charged with trespassing on Commonwealth property to take their case to the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

Magistrate Peter Dingwall adjourned the matter until April 6, to give the defendants time to raise the matter of jurisdiction with the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP).

The protesters' solicitor, Charles Kilduff, said the distinction between a stay of proceedings and an adjournment was important.

● Continued Page 5



EDITORIAL

Plea for prisoners

Mum Shiri, known nationwide for her assistance to Aboriginal prisoners, has appealed for people to pay the subscription of a Koori Mail for a prisoner.

Mum Shiri and Bev Spiers who also works in the jails as an art instructor and with Mum Shiri, say the prisoners have very little money and have little likelihood of being able to pay for a subscription individually.

Although we at the Koori Mail wish to assist the prisoners, because the Mail is still a young newspaper it is not feasible for us to provide papers free of charge, and to carry the considerable burden of freight charges.

To survive as a business and as a voice for Aboriginal and Islander people we need to work within strict budgetary constraints at this early and critical stage of the Mail's life.

While we cannot assist with free papers we can help by providing a link through the Mail's pages.

The Koori Mail is hoping to establish closer links with the prisoners and provide a place in the paper for contributions from the prisons, whether it be poetry, essays, drawing or community greetings.

A link is particularly important for the Aboriginal prisoners who have been separated from communities by imprisonment hundreds of kilometres from home, making it difficult for their families to visit, so if it you can help with a paid subscription, give Mum Shiri's plea some thought.

EASTWOOD COMMENT



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Reconciliation council should be 'shut down'

It is indeed a big effort by the Rev Charles Harris, who is expressing a point of interest for many Aboriginal people across Australia.

No doubt the new idea for the reconciliation will use a lot of the funds in the handout for the reconciliation direction and the lead up work for the Year 2000 which would have gone to help Aboriginals achieve the aims that have been set out.

It will mean a lot of meetings and five-star motels and airfares and car hire and fees for travel allowances for the reconciliation council.

It seems the concepts put by the Rev Charles Harris are very good, and the Government approach is to waste a lot of money on things we already know.

The reconciliation council must be shut down immediately, and the funds directed to save the real people, for interest a fund payable by Commonwealth Government for \$10 million for the retention of culture and law and the song and dances coming from Uluru across all points of Australia and allowing the Aboriginal people to grasp their rights to maintain their roots and religion and understand that the land and land rights is indeed a real concept, which can only be won by the real people for the people.

A law and culture centre should also be built in Central Australia to help in the process for the flow of this culture.

Then and only then will the people and the land become rich and survive and develop, it is indeed real but the grassroots people can make this happen not a few selected Aboriginals and white people, they hold no dreaming, listen to your elders and law people and learn and understand it is real, not plastic like the government concept.

Aboriginal people have been here for 50,000 years, the facts are true, the children must learn for the survival of the race. The creator message is richer

than all the money in the royal mint, the decision is for the people.

The States, and this is all States, must introduce a land rights Act, land rights and land. Excisions for culture and law made available to them, and funds be given to them, or Paul Coe, Billy Craigie and Irene Watson can focus attention on the neglect in this country, and people like the Rev Charles Harris and Charles Nelson Perkins can provide help also.

We must now all work together and save our culture and country. The need for an Aboriginal Embassy is a major point which must happen.

The wealth of knowledge of our next generation can direct moves to follow the path set by the people of 1992. We are born to die and so we shall, we must not let our culture die or we are finished as a race of people, and drug/drugs/crime is not the answer to survival.

The people on the reconciliation and ATSI, they are weak people, silly mob, they all got a price and have been set up by the Government to act for the Government, and the Minister's wishes.

We in Queensland, are not keen to sell out and Mr Bob Weatherall, Mick Miller and Clarry Grogan are still sane and work for the people. I have seen much and many sell out and destroy people and groups and all for the dollar.

They may try to destroy us, they can never destroy our spirit, it is in our blood to search for our roots and culture. We are hungry and we shall reap our rewards by being real to our own ancestors and culture.

Please consider the views put up by the Rev Charles Harris and the Aboriginal Embassy. A role we all must march towards is saving our culture, and allowing our children a future and dreaming stories to make them strong.

You are the people you must make a decision, look at yourself in the mirror, think and understand you are an important person you are an Aboriginal, one of the Pacific's oldest races of people, be proud and strong.

We are members for the NFLC and NACCO, but we have never been invited to any meeting for three years. Must be because we do not suck up to the Government for jobs for the Jacky and Marys. We are not lost, we survive, we still continue our struggle for survival.

JAMES TAYLOR,
co-ordinator of the
NW Old Land Council,
Mount Isa, Queensland.

PS: To the Rev Charles Harris — I am proud of you and do continue your struggle, remember Ingham in the 1970s, you are an inspiration to many and your work is real and needed. Take care brother/cous, kind regards old mate.

Housing or language?

Community Broadcasting is a very important way for people to find out about culture and language, as it works on many levels.

Language broadcasting helps adapt vocabulary to the rapidly changing world. The aims of language broadcasting are to extend language into areas of contemporary life and experience and to give children who lack firsthand experience of lifestyle pre-European contact and understanding of their history.

Because of present lifestyles many traditional skills are not being passed on therefore the language used to describe these things is not being learnt or used by children.

Satellite television broadcasts expose children in traditional communities to more European culture and language to the exclusion of their own.

Schools, too, use a lot of video in instructional and recreational programs, this very powerful influence needs to be balanced by videos in the speakers first language about things that are relevant to them.

Many common instructions are presented in English first making language

description redundant, hence there is a tendency for children to speak these things in English. This has considerable impact on the way that children see themselves and their society.

Community broadcasting helps children maintain their cultural identity.

BRACS (Broadcasting in Remote Aboriginal Communities) is a scheme put in place by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC). The philosophy of (BRACS) is to support indigenous people in their right to tools and training for the preservation and nurture of language and culture and concomitantly to provide for educational needs, enhance self image and provide training and employment opportunities.

BRACS in the central region of Australia has not been achieving these goals, on the contrary, because of a lack of vision and support from ATSIC on a regional and Commonwealth level.

BRACS is working to defeat its very philosophy. Unmanned BRACS equipment is rebroadcasting culturally inappropriate programming to remote communities across Australia.

There is little if no support for communities to produce and broadcast language programs. This fact in combination with a lack of language support programs, is increasing the rate of language breakdown in remote communities.

Communities with BRACS cannot get adequate funding for broadcasting cultural maintenance programs. This is because ATSIC has failed to recognise the importance of community broadcasting in cultural maintenance.

Broadcasting is not separate from other community necessities, but is lumped together with housing and infrastructure. For this reason community's are faced with the choice of Housing or language. No one should have to make such a choice.

This untenable situation is due to a lack of priority ascribed to broadcasting by ATSIC. Recognition of broadcast-

• More letters Page 18

WA Aboriginal heritage laws to be amended

The WA Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Dr Judyth Watson, said legislative amendments to be put to State Parliament next month would streamline procedures for approvals and improve the protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

Major changes to Aboriginal heritage laws in Western Australia have been designed to improve the approvals procedure for major projects while providing protection for Aboriginal cultural heritage.

A revamped system of site clearances would be administered by a new Aboriginal Heritage Authority and the establishment of an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Commission.

Dr Watson said the amendments to the Aboriginal Heritage Act, foreshadowed in the Premier's economic development statement recently, would answer criticism from Aboriginal people and potential developers that the current processes were not clear enough.

"The new site clearance process will include a dispute resolution system which should avoid the need for legal action in many instances," she said.

"Too many issues have ended up in court because there is no proper system in the present heritage laws for resolving disputes."

Dr Watson said the new Aboriginal Heritage Authority would be responsible for consulting with Aboriginal people about the identification, evaluation, recording and protection of Aboriginal sites in Western Australia.

It would replace the existing structure

which, included the trustees of the Western Australian Museum, the Aboriginal Cultural Material Committee and the Department of Aboriginal sites.

"Developers will need a heritage clearance certificate from the authority before any Aboriginal site can be damaged or destroyed," she said.

"The Minister will have the final say on whether a certificate should be issued if there is an appeal against a decision of the authority.

"The authority will have a full-time chairperson and four Aboriginal members appointed by the Minister and will be responsible for consulting with relevant Aboriginal people and assessing information about areas in which development is proposed.

"It will be able to establish regional offices to assist developers and Aboriginal people to consult on projects.

"Regional Aboriginal advisory committees will be able to help with the identification of traditional owners and custodians and advise on matters of local heritage concern.

"Aboriginal sites cannot be damaged or destroyed unless those involved have a clearance certificate and the penalties for damaging a site will be substantially increased."

Important aspects of the amendments include:

- Time limits to streamline the consent procedure

- A requirement for full consultation early in the process between developers and the appropriate Aboriginal people

- The right of appeal for all parties against a decision of the authority

- The option for the Minister to appoint an independent arbitrator to hear objections raised by either developers or traditional owners/custodians.

Dr Watson said a new Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Commission would be established to allow Aboriginal people to make decisions about their own culture and heritage.

The commission would be made up of seven Aboriginal members appointed by the Minister and it would aim at improving the protection, maintenance and promotion of all aspects of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

"The commission will develop a co-ordinated Aboriginal heritage policy for Western Australia," she said.

"It will look at the need to rationalise traditional and contemporary Aboriginal heritage matters which are currently administered by a number of different Government agencies such as the Western Australian Museum, the Department of the Arts, the Art Gallery, the Western Australian Heritage Council and the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority.

"The commission will be established by amending the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act and it will report direct to me.

"The objectives and functions of the commission will be reviewed in two years.

Dr Watson has written to Aboriginal communities throughout the State to explain the changes.

4 in hospital, 7 jailed after Adeline clash

Four people were in hospital and seven were jailed after an eight-hour clash between two Aboriginal families in Adeline, near Kalgoorlie, last Wednesday.

Police said machetes and baseball bats were used in the fighting which at its height involved 40 people, many of whom had come from distant parts of the State.

Fourteen 14 people were charged with offences ranging from possession of canebats to causing grievous bodily harm and unlawful wounding.

Among those arrested was a 15-year-old who was charged with occasioning bodily harm and causing grievous bodily harm. His 16 year-old sister was charged with unlawful wounding.

One person who had a fractured skull had been transferred to Perth in a critical condition, suffering a fractured skull.

Police said it appeared the fight began when a member of one of the families breached a restraining order.

When the fighting had virtually stopped, police said retribution was being carried out by some of those involved in the original violence.

Police deployed a number of Aboriginal police aides in an attempt to reconcile the situation.

Police in Kalgoorlie said feuding between the two families involved in the brawl had been going on for 15 to 20 years.

A plea from James in Florida for information about his dad

James Savage, who is serving a life sentence for murder in the Florida State Prison, is asking for information about his father, James, who was taken away from his mother as a young child, was taken to the United States by his adoptive family while he was a child.

Reunited with his natural mother while he was on death row, he is now discovering his Aboriginality. James' sentence was later changed to life imprisonment.

Anyone who can tell James about his father should write to James at the address shown below.

James Savage
#083475, W-2-N-1
Florida State Prison
Box 747
Starke, Florida 32091

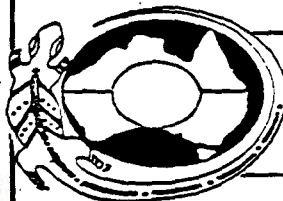
USA



Dear Janine,
Thank you for the Koori Mail papers.
If this isn't too much of a bother I'd like to ask a request. Could you put a small ad in your paper? I would like anyone that knew my father to write me and tell me about him. His name is Frank Whyman.

Sincerely,
James

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Koori Mail

TWENTY-FIRST EDITION

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 1992

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Recommended and maximum price \$1.00

5 Aboriginal co-ops buy Koori Mail

Our best opportunity to provide the true picture — chairman

The purchase of the Koori Mail by five Northern New South Wales Aboriginal co-operatives has been hailed as a step forward in self-sufficiency and self-determination.

Five Aboriginal co-operatives from the Far North Coast of New South Wales have purchased the Lismore-based national Aboriginal and Islander newspaper.

The co-operatives are the Bundjalung Tribal Society, of Lismore, The Buyinbin Co-operative, Casino, The Kurriches Co-op (formerly Box Ridge Co-op), Box Ridge, the Bunjum Co-operative, Cabbage Tree Island, and the Nungers Co-op, Maclean.

The buy-out was made possible through a \$226,000 grant from ATSC.

A regional daily newspaper, The Northern Star, also based in Lismore, will hold a 20 percent share.

The Koori Mail, established by NSW South Coast Aborigines, Owen Carriage, and his wife, Sue, went to Press on May 23, 1991, with an initial print run of 5000.

It was planned to distribute the Mail in Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria only, but due to

demand, the paper officially went national with the fourth edition.

The Koori Mail is committed to providing a voice for Aboriginal people and training Aboriginal people in all aspects of the newspaper industry.

The paper employs Aboriginal clerical staff, an Aboriginal advertising salesman, Aboriginal journalists based throughout Australia, a recently appointed Aboriginal sales and marketing manager, Aboriginal clerical staff and is now seeking an Aboriginal cadet journalist.

The chairman of the board of the parent company, Bygal Weahunir Pty Ltd (Bundjalung for Aboriginal go forth), said the community purchase of the Koori Mail brought the paper into line with Aboriginal tradition, with the Koori Mail now being community based 'as all Aboriginal activities should be'.

'The \$226,000 grant will enable the paper to get a firm footing and to achieve its aim of serving all communities throughout Australia.'

'The paper is an important voice for Aboriginal people, providing the best opportunity we have ever had to present a true picture of Aboriginal issues and achievements.'

'As well as serving the Aboriginal people it enables the non-Aboriginal population to get a proper perspective of the matters affecting Aboriginal people and their beliefs, as well as correcting the negative stereotypes and myths that have prevailed for the past 204 years.'

'The paper marks a new era in Aboriginal self-sufficiency and self-determination.'

'Treaty' scoops top song award

Aboriginal group Yothu Yindi from Arnhem Land has won the record industry's award for Australian Song of the Year with its single 'Treaty'.

The Australian Record Industry Award (ARIA) was accepted by Mandawuy Yunupingu.

Speaking first in Aboriginal and then in English, Mr Yunupingu, the group's lead vocalist, thanked the group, Mushroom Records and his manager Alan James, saying 'without his guidance we would not have been here'.

The presentation of the sixth annual ARIA presentation, at Melbourne's World Congress Centre on Friday night, was shown live in Australia and to an estimated 20 million viewers overseas.

© Yothu Yindi bar incident angers Aborigines — Page 3

Stepping out in turtle territory



Dancers from Tabulam wait for their cue for the corroboree to begin at the ordination of the Rev Harry Walker, of Tabulam, Northern New South Wales. Mr Walker is believed to be the first Aboriginal person to be ordained in the Uniting Church in New South Wales. As a special gesture acknowledging the turtle (binging) totem for the area, Mr Walker's stole has an appliqued turtle as well as the Uniting Church's red dove on a cross.

A report and more pictures appear on Pages 12 and 13.

\$226,000 grant assures paper's future



Executive board members, from left, vice-chairman Russell Kapeen, of Box Ridge; chairman Robert Cameron, of Casino; public officer the Rev Charles Harris, of Lismore; and secretary Charles Moran, of Goonellabah.

120 take to streets to protest racist attacks

About 120 people took part in a rally and march through Brisbane streets last Friday to protest about a perceived increase in the number of racist attacks on Aborigines.

Highlighting the recent fire bombing of the home of Brisbane Aboriginal activist Don Davidson, the marchers also demanded a more community-based response from the Federal Government to funding for recommendations stemming from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

Vice-president of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service Sam Watson said the marchers proceeded peacefully along Roma and Albert

By KIRSTIE PARKER

streets to Tower Mill on Wickham Terrace, the site where two Aboriginal warriors were hanged in 1871.

Police kept a low profile as a series of speakers addressed the crowds, wreaths were laid and a service was conducted.

"We had a ceremony to commemorate the deaths of all Aboriginal warriors, both men and women, who have fallen since the coming of the white invader," Mr Watson said.

He said the marchers voiced their dissatisfaction at what they saw as insufficient emphasis given to Aboriginal input in the Federal Government's response so far to the Royal Commission's recommendations.

"They are awarding highest priority to police departments and other State government agencies rather than channeling funds through community-based organisations such as legal services," Mr Watson said.

The march followed the fire bombing earlier in the week of the home of Mr Davidson.

A co-ordinator of the Brisbane Tribal Council, Mr Davidson reported receiving several racist phone calls prior to the attack.

It was the third attack in five weeks and prompted Mr Davidson to complain to Federal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Minister, Mr Robert Tickner, about inaction by Queensland police.

However, police have continued to dismiss Mr Davidson's claims that the attack was racially motivated and have refused to introduce a 24-hour surveillance. Instead, Deputy Police Commissioner of Operation Jim O'Sullivan said patrols in the area had been upgraded.

NSW introduces policy to combat racism in schools

Racism will be confronted in New South Wales' schools and grievance procedures developed as part of a school education department policy launched on Friday by the NSW Minister for Education, Mrs Virginia Chadwick.

An anti-racism policy would provide the framework for everyone involved in NSW public education to implement anti-racist strategies, she said.

It establishes responsibility for schools, principals, teachers and departmental personnel in dealing with racism, she said.

Grievance procedures were being developed along with regional implementation strategies, support documents and an education campaign for the wider community as a part of the policy, she said.

"Silence and denial encourage racist attitudes and behaviour so I urge anyone at schools or in the department who has experienced racism to come forward," she said.

"Anti-racism education is incorporated in all curriculum in NSW Government schools and many other initiatives are in place to help combat racism."

Those included anti-racism principles in the 'values we teach', a copy of the prejudice project kit in every government school and a pilot program looking at whole school approaches to combating racism.

Australians agree Aborigines have been treated badly

Most Australians agree that the reason Aborigines get into conflict with the law is that they have been badly treated by society for a long time, a poll has found.

However, two-thirds of those surveyed disagreed that the legal system treated Aborigines more harshly than non-Aboriginal Australians and an even greater majority believed Aborigines should not expect special treatment if they broke the law.

The Sautwick Poll published in Friday's Age and Sydney Morning Herald was based on a telephone survey of 1000 people on March 16 and 17 who were asked three propositions about Aborigines and the law.

• The reason Aborigines behave in

a way that brings them into conflict with the law is that they feel they have been badly treated for so long.

Two-thirds of respondents agreed and support was stronger among women, the young, and people in capital cities.

• The law treats Aborigines more harshly than non-Aborigines;

Two-thirds disagreed with no major difference in outlook between men and women, country or city.

• Aborigines who break the law should accept the consequences and not expect special treatment.

An overwhelming 92 percent agreed and 80 percent of the small number of Aborigines interviewed agreed, according to the survey.

Cooma bones dated at 7000 years old

Human bones found at an Aboriginal burial site uncovered recently near Cooma have been carbon dated at almost 7000 years.

A kangaroo-tooth necklace, only the third necklace ever found in Australian Aboriginal archaeology, was discovered at the site with hammer stones and bone implements.

Confirmation last week of the age of the bones by the Australian National University's radio-carbon dating laboratory establishes the burial site as the oldest in south-eastern New South Wales, according to NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service archaeologist Sue Feary.

"It's very unusual to find sites older than 5000 years because after this period much of the bone and organic matter has decayed beyond recognition," she said in a statement.

"So we have been quite excited by the date of 7000 years, (which) places the site in a period that predates the arrival of the dingo on mainland Australia by some 2000 years and when the sea level was about 10 metres lower than it is now."

The bones will be returned to the Marrimans Local Aboriginal Lands Council, based at Wallaga Lake on the south coast on New South Wales, for reburial.

He was critical of reports that friends of Mr Davidson were conducting their own surveillance of the property.

"We don't encourage vigilante-type activities because they are not trained people and things tend to get out of hand," Deputy Commissioner O'Sullivan said.

"There's no need for that. We have plenty of police activity in the area."

When the Koori Mail went to Press, police had confirmed they had identified a number of suspects regarding the fire bombing but had yet to conduct interviews.

Deputy Commissioner O'Sullivan said he hoped charges would be laid some time this week.



Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation

SEEKING COMMUNITY VIEWS

A Council of 25 Australians has been given a task by the Federal Parliament to promote a process of reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and the wider community.

The Council is developing a Working Plan to promote reconciliation and is looking for examples involving Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and other Australians working together for positive change, at the local level.

YOU KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY

The Council would like to hear from you, from where you live, from where you work, about what is happening in your community, your suburb, your town, or your workplace.

The Council is seeking examples of community members working together to:

- improve community relations
- share knowledge about local Aboriginal history, language, culture
- give local recognition to Aboriginal issues

The Council is especially keen to hear of projects involving:

- community organisations
- young people

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES

The Council wants to share these experiences with other communities across the nation.

The Council will include the best ideas for community action in its Working Plan which it will put to the Federal Parliament in June 1992.

The Council needs your ideas by Monday 13 April.

Please send details of your project to:

Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation
Locked Bag 14
Queen Victoria Terrace
PARKES ACT 2600

Further information may be obtained by phoning Alison Richens on (06) 271 5108. Facsimile (06) 271 5168.

For information on the reconciliation process, please write to the above address.

Australia unites in cry for justice

Australia has united in its cry for justice following the screening last week of horrifying home video footage depicting our boys in blue at their absolute lowest.

The footage shows two officers in the Queensland town of Eromanga painted black, obviously trying to look like Aborigines, with nooses hanging around their necks, poking their tongues out and calling themselves David Gundy and Lloyd Boney.

To make matters worse, the charity party was in aid of a bus to transport Kooris to proper medical facilities.

Both young Aboriginal men died in police custody, Gundy the result of a bungled raid, Boney, supposedly died when he hung himself in a Brewarrina police cell. Both men were the subject of the much publicised Royal Commission into Aboriginal deaths in Custody.

The airing of the footage, shot by an unknown person in 1989, came barely a week after the controversial ABC documentary, 'Cop it Sweet', which attracted national attention when Redfern police officers were filmed swearing, telling dirty jokes and making openly racist comments.

Both incidents have left the general public wondering what our boys and girls in blue are really on about. The incidents have attracted tight-lipped responses from the hierarchy of the police force.

However, families of both men have expressed outrage at the footage, one family even plans to take legal action. There was no warning for either family who caught the horrific footage totally unaware.

The New South Wales' Police Commissioner, Tony Lauer's, official response was to express his apologies to the family and friends of the two men for the conduct of his officers, (both men were from the NSW police service), as depicted in the amateur video. He went on to say that the Koori people had every right to feel deeply hurt and outraged about the footage.

In a statement to the media he assured us that the appropriateness of the officers' demeanor was now the subject of an urgent inquiry. He went on to say the two officers had already been placed on restricted duties.

Many people, however, are not particularly surprised at the police behaviour, many members of the Aboriginal community are saying no more than 'I told you so'.

The video raises serious questions about the training and attitudes of our police officers and the question of

By BRITTA Lyster

whether or not these people should be singled out individually for departmental action or should the problem be addressed at its roots.

They were the sentiments of the Federal Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Mr Robert Tickner, who stated on the ABC's '7.30 Report' that any fair-minded Australian should be nothing else but appalled at the behaviour of the officers.

It may also leave a lot of people wondering how we can possibly begin a reconciliation process between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people when the supposed leaders in the community carry such attitudes.

The New South Wales State Opposition leader, Bob Carr, was also appalled at the officers' behaviour and renewed his call for the NSW Premier, Nick Greiner, and Police Minister, Ted Pickering, to take urgent action. He described the indecent behaviour as very 'un-Australian' and wondered how any young Aboriginal child in the area would feel if they saw such hatred expressed by our police officers.

Tony Day, of the NSW Police Association, however, was quick to defend the action of his officers. He told the ABC that there wouldn't be any difference if someone came dressed up as Ned Kelly, the only difference being that the family of Mr Gundy and Mr Boney were still alive.

He described the airing of the footage as one of 'poor and sensational journalism'.

Lyall Munro of the Aboriginal Legal Service has however described it as institutionalised racism, when only days later he was pulled up in the inner-Sydney suburb of Redfern for driving in a late model red car.

In 'Cop it Sweet', one officer had said that he thought Aborigines driving a red Laser were considered suspicious. His partner barely out of the academy stated that many Aborigines didn't own cars.

Mr Munro told the ABC that he believed Redfern Kooris were suffering for the documentary which had been screened only days earlier, before he was pulled up by the police with sirens blaring, armed, with dogs and dressed in riot gear.

At the time of writing this article, Mr Munro had plans to speak to the police internal affairs.

An official statement from the Aboriginal Legal Service has accused Com-

missioner Lauer of making the same mistake as his predecessors and their approach to corruption by seeing it as a few rotten apples rather than institutionalised behaviour.

The Legal Service says that until he attacks it as institutionalised racism, the high rate of Aboriginal imprisonment will continue at flash point and more Aboriginal people will die at the hands of police.

The Legal Service has responded angrily to the Police Associations' latest idea of setting up a task force to consider the future of police Aboriginal relations in Redfern. Mr Munro says it is nothing more than whitewash and has dubbed it as a token gesture.

The Police Association suggests that Royal Commissioner Hal Woolen and Aboriginal magistrate Pat O'Shane sit on the committee to address race issues.

Whatever the outcome and however people feel about either of the unfortunate pieces of footage, it has left many Aboriginal people wondering where Aboriginal and police relations really stand.

Are Australia's police officers really committed to improving relations that so desperately need mending or are we just going to wait for the outcome of yet another inquiry?

Is the restriction of duties imposed on the two officers by the State's highest ranking policeman really going to stop the racism so blatantly obvious.

Is it going to stop the indigenous people of this country dying, at an alarming rate, at the hands of our boys and girls in blue.


THE KOORI MAIL Philosophy

The Koori Mail is a unique, independent newspaper which examines may issues from a Koori perspective.

It is the first time in Australia that Aboriginal people will have an undistorted source of information, and an outlet for their own views. It is also expected to have an impact upon the general community, with the aim of redressing prejudices and introducing non-Aboriginal Australians and ultimately the whole world to our culture and our beliefs.

The following principles will guide production standards and procedures:

- 1: The reporting of news and views without fear or favour.
- 2: The maintenance throughout of Koori beliefs and standards.
- 3: The highest level of production values, to produce a quality newspaper.
- 4: The training of Aboriginal staff to ensure they are instilled with professional skills to give them a high level of employability in the future.
- 5: The dissemination of the maximum amount of relevant information from Government agencies and statutory bodies, with the proviso that this information is not merely propaganda and is viewed critically.
- 6: The presentation of a wide range of issues, not necessarily only traditional Aboriginal issues but also other important matters which impinge upon the lives of Koori people.
- 7: Increased positive interaction between Aboriginal communities and individuals throughout Australia.
- 8: The inclusion of lighter items, such as a children's page, cartoons, sport, crosswords, games, art, film and book reviews, historical features and human interest stories and photographs.
- 9: A classified advertisement section, offering the full range of classifications, such as employment, births, deaths, marriages, in Memoriam, etc.
- 10: Display advertising not exceeding 50 percent of newspaper content.
- 11: The inclusion of a responsible but daring editorial column in each issue, addressing matters of importance.
- 12: The promotion of the overall well-being of Aboriginal Australia.



NEW SOUTH WALES ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL

Journalist/Information Officer

The NSW Aboriginal Land Council seeks a dynamic Aboriginal person with a solid journalistic background to work in the public relations section of this organisation.

S/he must have the ability to work both under direction and unsupervised when necessary, and be able to travel occasionally within NSW for publicity purposes. It is essential that s/he must have a good understanding of Aboriginal culture, organisation and all issues affecting Aboriginal people.

The 'Information Officer' has the task of ensuring relevant information about Aboriginal Land Rights is circulated throughout the community and to generate positive publicity about Land Councils and Aboriginal Affairs through the media and NSWALC publications.

Full details available in duty statement from Doreen Maher, Publicity Officer, NSWALC.

Phone (02) 602-0689 or (02) 601-4677 b/h.

Aboriginal people are urged to apply.

Salary level - Grade 3 - \$28,418 per annum.

Apply in writing to: The Deputy Director
NSWALC
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Liverpool, NSW 2170

Deadline for applications Thursday, 9th April, 1992



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Traditional burial for returned bones

...but artefacts on five-year 'loan'

The return of historic remains of a young Aboriginal girl to tribal elders in North Queensland has been marred by the Australian Museum's insistence that accompanying artefacts are only on a five-year 'loan'.

The handover of the remains, taken from the Yarrabah area near Cairns

By KIRSTIE PARKER

about 90 years ago to make up part of the Roth Collection, has been hailed as a breakthrough in Aboriginal and museum relations.

W E Roth was the 'protector' of Aboriginal people in the Cairns area at the turn of the century and his collection in the Australian Museum in Sydney includes more than 3000 separate items.

The Yarrabah remains were given a traditional burial on Saturday at a pioneer cemetery in the hills near the community with a service performed by a local minister.

The curator of Yarrabah Menmyny community museum Elvirina Mungha said the Kungganji people were also thrilled to have received 15 artefacts but hoped the initial five-year loan period would be extended at a later date.

"It was amazing to watch the expressions of their (The elders) faces when they saw these things. Some of them just cried," Ms Mungha said.

Kungganji woman Henrietta Fourmile demanded the objects be handed over

permanently.

"It took five years to get the remains and artefacts back and there is still a lot of negotiating to take place," Ms Fourmile said.

"We are going to have to win this one legally because, under current legislation, all artefacts in the Museum belong to the Crown, including remains."

Ms Fourmile said the artefacts would allow Kungganji elders to pass on their knowledge.

"The objects themselves actually bear our designs. It is our birthright. We need these things back to see where we come from," she said. "The fight is still on. We have got to get ownership."

Ms Fourmile said she believed mounting public and legal pressure rather than goodwill had brought about the handover.

She said hundreds of artefacts and several sets of remains from the Cairns area, including those of the Yindindji people, were being hoarded by the Australian Museum as well as State museums, notably those in South Australia, Victoria and Queensland.

Weatherall calls for referendum on one or dual nation

With the government now showing more concern for Aboriginal people, would be timely to allow Aborigines vote on whether they wish to go the own way or remain as part of one nation, one Australia, Aboriginal Provincial Government Chairman Mr Bob Weatherall said.

"It is time for us all, black and white to make some hard decisions. The increase in imprisonment rates since the winding up of the Black Deaths in Custody inquiry shows that despite the best intentions of the authorities, there remains an ongoing suffering in the Aboriginal communities which has to be fixed," Mr Weatherall said.

"New ideas and a new approach are called for. We feel for the ordinary Australian who watches helplessly as the plight of Aborigines is continually thrust at them.

"We also feel for our people who can no longer be expected to endure this suffering. We do not condemn the genuine attempts by politicians to help.

"A referendum among the Aborigines people will determine once and for all the future of the two peoples. A choice for blacks to take complete responsibility for their communities, providing the own form of government, raising the own finances from royalties and enterprises, must be put to them.

"We can no longer afford to presume that the well-meaning but inadequate approach is what the Aboriginal people want.

"Once a referendum is over, any future plans would have the informed consent of the Aboriginal people and therefore would be easier to implement. The time-wasting reconciliation process could end saving millions of dollars which could go directly to Aborigine people."

ABORIGINAL HOSTELS LIMITED

Aboriginal Hostels Limited is a Company owned and financed by the Australian Government. Through our Central Office located in Canberra, and our eight Regional Offices, we provide and operate hostel accommodation throughout Australia. We have a policy of offering employment and training opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. All positions in Aboriginal Hostels Limited are identified positions.

HOSTEL MANAGER

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QLD
Pos. No. 325

Aboriginal Hostels Limited has a vacancy at the Hostel Manager level and is seeking a motivated individual with proven management and supervisory skills for this position.

The Hostel Manager is responsible for providing quality accommodation and an environment which assists Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to obtain equality and dignity within the Australian Community, through access to appropriate recreational, educational and other support facilities. The nature of this position requires the successful applicant to "live-in" when rostered for duty. Self contained accommodation is provided as part of these requirements.

In addition to having full responsibility for the complete operation of this Hostel the successful applicant will also be required to oversee the running of two other hostel facilities at Carnarvon which will involve regular visits and additional office administration duties. Whilst undertaking these additional duties, which are of a temporary nature, a higher duties allowance of approximately \$2440 p.a. will be paid, raising salary to that of a Hostel Manager Grade 3 (\$26,991 - \$27,668).

All positions in Aboriginal Hostels Limited are identified positions. The successful candidate will need to have a knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander culture and society, and also have the ability to communicate sensitively and effectively with Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander people.

Conditions of employment will be as stated in the Aboriginal Hostels Limited Managers Award. These conditions include four weeks annual leave plus a provision for additional recreation leave; free board and lodging, plus subsidised tariff for dependants; removal and travel expenses. As a continuing employee the successful applicant may elect to contribute to the Commonwealth Government Superannuation Scheme, in which case contributions would also attract employer contributions. Transfer of existing Government benefits may also be arranged. Continued employment is subject to satisfactory completion of a 6 month probationary period.

It is in the interest of applicants to obtain a copy of the selection documentation and for applications to address the selection criteria. Envelopes containing applications should be clearly marked "Confidential" P/N: 325 and addressed to:

Regional Manager
Aboriginal Hostels Limited
PO Box 1143
CAIRNS QLD 4870

To obtain selection documentation and any enquiries concerning the vacancies please contact Mr Randall Nicol (077) 51 4588.

Applications close on 10 April 1992.

Aboriginal Hostels Limited promotes a positive race work environment

Palm Island evacuation proposal averted

By KIRSTIE PARKER

It now appears unlikely that residents of Palm Island off the North Queensland coast will be evacuated because of a shortage of water in the island's dam.

Last week, the Palm Island Aboriginal Council was considering recommending the 3000 residents spend time at Townsville and other coastal centres until the problem could be addressed.

It was claimed the poor wet season had left the island's dam with only enough water for three weeks, most of it contaminated with algae.

However, Water Resources Commission officers visited the island and estimated there was enough water to last the community for about 30 days. A decision had been made to treat the remaining water to make sure it was 'hygienic and drinkable', according to a spokesperson for Aboriginal Affairs and Family Services Minister Anne Warner.

In addition, water supplies could be taken to the island by barge if necessary.

The spokesperson said talk of an evacuation was premature because there was always a number of options available, including de-salination.

They have got a fair bit of water left

and they have had some rain today," she said on Friday.

There is some algae but a very simple procedure is being used to treat it, island sources, including the officer on charge of the local police station Sgt Tony Martin said the current wet season was one of the driest for about 20 years.

Aboriginal Support Worker FULL TIME

The support worker will provide information and referral services for the frail aged and younger disabled Aborigines in the Manning Valley, Great Lakes and Gloucester Region within the guidelines of the Home and Community Care Programme.

Essential: Ability to communicate and liaise with Aboriginal communities and an understanding of Aboriginal culture.

Desirable: Tertiary qualifications in health/welfare studies, knowledge of the Home and Community Care Programme, experience in planning services around individuals, good communication skills.

Salary: In accordance with Social and Community Services (State) award.

Aboriginality is a genuine occupational qualification and is authorised under Section 14 of the Anti-Discrimination Act, 1977.

Information regarding terms and conditions of employment can be obtained by contacting the Administrator on (085) 52 2444.

Written applications should be forwarded to:

The Administrator
BHP Medical Centre
PO Box 616
TAREE, NSW 2340

Applications close 6th April, 1992

This project is jointly funded by the State and Commonwealth Governments, Home and Community Care Programme.



THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND

Equal opportunity in employment to University policy.

Co-ordinator Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit

The appointee will be responsible to the Director, and will co-ordinate the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Support Service, including supervision of Student Support staff and responsibility for personal and academic counselling of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. The appointee will also have significant administrative responsibilities and may be asked to assume the role of Acting Unit Director as required.

Applicants should have a degree in Social Work or equivalent qualification and relevant counselling and administrative experience. Understanding of and empathy with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture is an advantage and Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people are encouraged to apply.

Experience in working in academic institutions is desirable and proposals for advancement from other agencies will be considered.

The appointment will, in the first instance, be for the period 13 April 1992 to 13 April 1993 at Senior Professional/Administrative Class 6 level; \$A36,423 - \$42,139 per annum. For further information telephone (07) 365-6699.

Applicants should forward a resume and application to the Director, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit, The University of Queensland, Qld, 4072.

Reference No. 14892.
Closing date: 3 April 1992.



A FESTIVAL FOR ALL AGES



Musicians of all ages took part in the Aboriginal and Islander Music Festival held in Port Adelaide. Picture: ROXXY BERT

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Apology for Aboriginal parents in Kuranda.

By KIRSTIE PARKER

The organiser of a meeting called recently in the North Queensland town of Kuranda for parents to discuss education standards has said she will publicly apologise to 70 Aborigines who walked out amid claims of blatant racism.

However, she maintained that comments in a local newspaper report which previewed the meeting were taken out of context and the 'real issues' fell by the wayside.

The report quoted Miss Lynn Stevens as saying the meeting would discuss 'racial problems' at the Kuranda State School, and that a number of parents in the town had suggested to her a need for separate 'black and white' schools.

Copies of the report were circulated widely throughout the town and members of the local Aboriginal community turned out in force to vent their disgust at Miss Steven's comments.

The headmaster and about eight teachers from Kuranda State School also attended

the meeting, along with a handful of white parents.

Miss Stevens was jeered when she spoke of her concerns that some children at the school did not wear shoes and said the incidence of head lice had reached epidemic levels.

The women who both hosted and chaired the meeting, Mrs Gloria Greco, tried to pacify the angry crowd, stating that the real purpose of the meeting was to discuss parents' concerns about educational standards and discipline levels at the Kuranda State School, as well as difficulties faced by parents in transporting their children to alternative schools.

Mrs Greco said she was concerned for the education of all children at the school — black and white.

However, discontent mounted when Mrs Greco refused to name parents who had written letters of complaint.

The walk-out occurred only an hour into the meeting after a show of hands indicated

© Continued Page 21

Senior Executive Opportunities

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- Attractive Remuneration Packages

STATE MANAGER POSITIONS

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission is looking for applicants with proven executive management ability, a record of achievement, a commitment to Aboriginal self-determination and social justice and a demonstrated capacity to implement and manage change. State Manager positions offer challenging opportunities for people to exhibit exceptional management and leadership skills in an exciting but difficult area of public policy.

ATISC operates in a decentralised environment with each State Manager responsible for a number of Regional Offices and the overall operations of the Commission, within that State. A State Manager is also responsible for providing high level advice to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commissioners, the Minister and the Executive.

The positions require a person with the ability to communicate effectively with Aborigines and Torres Strait Islander people and a knowledge and understanding of their cultures.

Further information about these vacancies, including the selection criteria, please contact Mr Allen White on (06) 289 3262.

Positions are available in Brisbane (expected vacancy), Sydney, Adelaide, Darwin and Perth.

The Organisation

The Commission is responsible for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs at the federal level.

ATISC is a unique public administration body. It manages indigenous affairs by combining representative and administrative structures in one organisation. Sixty elected Regional Councils, with more than 800 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Councilors around Australia determine priorities at the local level. They in turn elect seventeen members to the Board of Commissioners with the other three members, including the Chairperson, appointed by the Minister.

Conditions of Service

Normal Commonwealth Public Service conditions apply.

Remuneration package of up to \$93,000.

This package includes a salary component within the range of \$59,121 to \$66,387 and non-salary benefits such as employer superannuation contribution, use of a private plated vehicle, parking facilities, spouse travel within Australia, fringe benefits tax, telephone rental and annual leave bonus. Applicants must be Australian citizens or have permanent resident status pending the granting of Australian citizenship. Applicants are advised that no part of the non-salary components of the package can be converted to salary.

To be considered for the vacancies, a full application needs to be received by 10 April 1992. Selection for these vacancies will be on the basis of the SES selection criteria. Applicants should state the location of the positions for which they wish to be considered.

Applications addressing the selection criteria should be forwarded to:

The Recruitment Officer
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
PO Box 17
WOODEN ACT 2806

ATISC

ANNIVERSARY EDITION

A BLOOMING GOOD BUSINESS



Sam Robinson, left, and Clamie Roberts show a selection of plants and shrubs that have been grown at Balunyah Nursery, an Aboriginal enterprise at Coraki, Northern New South Wales. See story Page 16.

National forum to mark anniversary

Aboriginal leader and activist Charles Perkins will open a national forum on improving employment opportunities for Aboriginal people to be held at the Lismore Workers Club in Lismore today, tomorrow and Friday.

The forum, 'A Blackprint For The Future', will mark the first anniversary of the national Aboriginal and Islander newspaper, the Koori Mail, which is based in Lismore.

Guest speakers will come from all States and the Northern Territory, representing government services, private enterprise and industries.

Speakers include Henry Harper, of the Arnhem Land Progress Association, Rhoda Roberts of SBS Television, Jim Everett, of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, Tasmania; consultant and manufacturer, John Moriarty, of South Australia, singer Kev Camody, Grace Close of the Aboriginal Promotions Section of the NSW Department of Health, and chairperson of the Reconciliation Council, Pat Dodson.

A section of the forum will be devoted to discussion on employment in the media, and how to use the media when establishing a new enterprise.

The three-day event will provide an opportunity for the Koori Mail's news team to meet for the first time, with contributing journalists travelling from interstate for the celebrations.

Charles Perkins will open the forum at a dinner on June 3, with guest speakers and workshops on June 4-5.

A highlight of the three-day event will be the concert on June 4, also at the Workers Club, with Northern Australian band Coloured Stone and Kev Camody.

Coloured Stone has just released a new album, 'Inma Juju'.

Late registrations for the forum can be made by telephoning the Koori Mail office on (066) 222 666 or at the the Lismore Workers Club.

OUR 1ST ANNIVERSARY DINNER



Forum facilitator Liz Johnson — a moment to check out the forum.



Koori Mail directors, from left, Rob Cameron (chairman), Dan Roberts, Malcolm Hunt, Brian Daley, Chris Coorey, the late Pastor Frank Roberts, Graham Purcell, the Rev Charles Harris (public officer), Russell Kapeen (vice-chairman) and, front, Charles Moran (secretary). John Breckenridge and Ron Randall are not in the photograph.



Maclean High School student of the modelling team parade of a range of screen-printed at Nu



Koori Mail circulation manager Larry Corowa exchanged his football jumper for formal attire for the special occasion.



Both in the newspaper game — editor of The Northern Star, Llyrll Munro, and Koori Mail director Charles Moran director meet at the Koori Mail celebration dinner.



Reconciliation councillor Pastor Bill Hollingsworth — it was a time to hear people's thoughts about the reconciliation process.



Hello bud — Lysil Munro from the Aboriginal Legal Service, Redfern New South Wales, and singer Kev Carmody at the Koori Mail employment forum.



Multi-men Byron Shire councillor, Llyrll Munro, Skillsshare co-ordinator and nurseryman Jimmy Budd didn't mind the extra attention from Ula Langer, of Llyrll, and Luita Casey, also of Llyrll.



Fielding the questions during the 'Speaking Out' producer Joel V and Torres Strait Islander leader journalist and Koori Mail writer Service

AND EMPLOYMENT FORUM



Carney was a member of a classy fashion design garments up at Maclean.



ABOVE: It was an historic occasion for the Koori Mail staffers when all the KM team got together for the first time. They are, from left, back, cartoonist Danny Eastwood (Mt Druitt), director Charles Moran (Lismore), circulation manager Larry Corowa (Tweed Heads), advertising manager John Toohey (Lismore), cadet journalist Tim Paden (Ballina), national sales and marketing manager Gary Martin (Rosebank), advertising representative Stuart West (Lismore), centre, clerical trainee Jakki Kelly (Lismore), editor Janine Wilson (Lismore), journalist Katrina Power (Adelaide), front, clerical trainee Kelly Boyd (Kyogle), journalist Britta Lyster (Sydney), clerical/receptionist Vicki Payne (Lismore), and journalist Kirstie Parker (Cairns) who has now taken up a position as Press Secretary with the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Mr Robert Tickner. Natasha Morse, of Kempsey, has joined the team as a contributor since the conference.



Keynote speaker Charles Perkins, of Alice Springs, in a pensive mood.



Henry Harper of the Arnhem Land Progress Association.



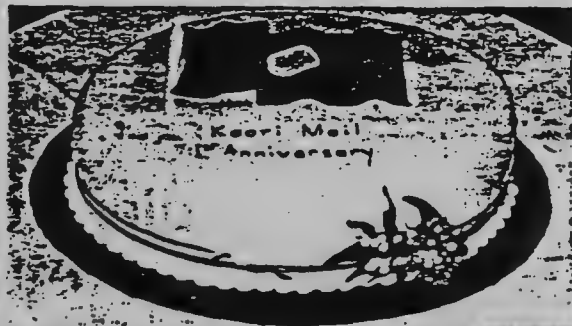
provided traditional didgeridoo music.



At forum — from left, singer Kev Carmody, Lisa Franklin, of Magabella Books, Aboriginal Charles Harris, Irene Harrington, ABC Radio, and Lyall Munro of the Aboriginal Legal, New South Wales.



Graham Wilson, of Mornington Island, provided traditional music with the didgeridoo and clapsticks.



The birthday cake provided the centrepiece for the anniversary dinner. The cake was made and decorated by Maureen Jarvis, of Lismore.



Koori Mail

THE FORTNIGHTLY NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER NEWSPAPER

THIRTY-FIFTH EDITION

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 1992

Editorial, Advertising Phone (066) 222 546
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MARKET GARDEN FOR HORSHAM

The Victorian Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Tom Roper, has announced funding of \$135,000 to purchase a 25 hectare site which will be developed as a market garden by the Werrimul Aboriginal co-operative.

He said an additional \$50,000 has been made available to buy equipment to assist with the development of the market garden.

"Approximately 25 Kooris who have previously received horticulture training at the Wimmers TAFE college will be involved in developing the site into a market garden," Mr Roper said.

"The acquisition of this excellent property will provide a sound economic base for the Aboriginal community and a source of renewed pride and motivation in being able to get a project like this successfully off the ground," Mr Roper said.

"The Werrimul Aboriginal co-operative is seeking to provide work and training opportunities for its members in a very disadvantaged area of regional Victoria."



COMMUNITY CALLS FOR INQUIRY, SACKING

New Burnt Bridge wants right to choose project manager

A Kempsey Aboriginal community has called for an inquiry into the relationship between the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) in Lismore, a North Coast engineer and three firms.

The New Burnt Bridge community has asked for a federal police investigation.

The community has also called for the dismissal of the regional manager at the regional office of ATSIC in Lismore.

The calls are a result of a dispute over a \$2.46 million building grant caused by disagreement over the control, letting of contracts and tendering for a major housing project at New Burnt Bridge, an Aboriginal community at Kempsey.

An Aboriginal community spokes-

man said about people live in tin shacks and caravans on the former Aboriginal reserve in near Third World conditions.

The project involves the immediate rehousing of 20 families from shacks and caravans.

In the first stage of the project, the infrastructure will be provided for 22 houses and five houses will be built.

The New Burnt Bridge Aboriginal community wants the usual tendering process for the appointment of supervisors waived and to have a company with which it has dealt for the past three years to be appointed supervisor of the project.

In a Press statement last week, the chief executive officer of ATSIC, Dr Peter Shergold, said the conditions of the grant require tendering for such services, and ATSIC cannot bend these rules.

"ATSIC is a publicly accountable organisation and especially in the letting of tenders must ensure open and fair competition has taken place," Dr Shergold said.

"ATSIC is not holding up this project as has been alleged. The Commission is ready to release the funds as soon as the conditions of the grant are complied with."

"Funds of \$2.46 million have been approved under a Tripartite Funding Agreement with ATSIC, the NSW Aboriginal Land Council and the NSW State Government."

The Aboriginal community says it is the victim of bureaucratic empire building, and bias surrounding the appointment of project supervisors.

The dispute highlights the increasing cry from Aboriginal people to have the right to make decisions about matters that affect them.

SIDELINE SUPPORTER



Brenda Walker, 8 months, of (Lismore Northern New South Wales) is all smiles as she watched her mother in the netball championships in Lismore. © See picture, story Page 24.

ALS JOINS CRITICISM OF WA UPPER HOUSE

The Aboriginal Legal Service (ALS) has accused a West Australian National Party politician of trying to shut down the ALS and other Aboriginal bodies.

It said a motion by Legislative Council member Eric Charlton demanding the ALS table documents in State parliament detailing its spending and funding was 'blatant hypocrisy'.

It undermines government policies of self-determination, participation and involvement by Aboriginal

people in the administration of Aboriginal affairs," said the ALS executive officer in Western Australia, Mr Rob Riley.

Mr Charlton has claimed he is only responding to concerns expressed to him by Aborigines that the ALS is an 'entrepreneurial set-up'.

Federal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Minister Robert Tickner entered the debate by writing to all WA Upper House members urging them to reject Mr Charlton's motion.

Labor Party returned in Queensland election

The Labor Party has romped back in to power in the Queensland State election held at the weekend.

With a number of seats from the State election still undecided at the time the Koori Mail went to print on Sunday night, Mr Goss said he would not call a party meeting until late this week at the earliest.

At this stage he would guarantee only three new faces in Cabinet and said he would make two or three changes in portfolio structures.

Labor swept back into power with its second big win in successive polls, retaining its dominance over the combined forces of the National and Liberal parties.

The 10 Aboriginal candidates who stood for election were unsuccessful, although Norma James, of the Inala electorate, was second in the count with 1592 votes.

The candidates were Derby McCarthy, Clayfield (441 votes); Merv Gibson, Cooke (325); Kenny Dalton, Ipswich (1063); Jacob George, Mount Isa (260); Walter McCarthy, Toowoomba North (349); Col Smith, Woodridge (478); and Linette Van Issum, also of Toowoomba North (494), and Norma James.

At the time of printing details were unavailable for George Villaseca and Norma Johnson, both of Cooke.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

MINISTER REPLIES

I was concerned at reading your report in Wednesday's edition on the recent meeting of Aboriginal Affairs Ministers.

The States have shown significant interest in having a meeting of Aboriginal Affairs Ministers and as Victoria was host, I tried on two occasions to hold a meeting but found that in particular the Federal Minister was not available. It was then agreed to hold the meeting in Canberra.

Together with Mike Rann (SA Minister for Aboriginal Affairs), I have been trying to get a meeting of the Aboriginal Affairs Ministers together to discuss key issues such as deaths in custody, land rights, and the health strategy.

Neither the Victorian nor Queensland elections had been called, the calling of which meant that our States were unable to attend. I was disappointed at not being able to attend.

Your article also implies that the States are dragging their feet in relation to the deaths in custody report. It seems to be conveniently forgotten that States started to act when the interim report came down and indeed in Victoria's case has now spent \$7 million on additional activity in this State with a \$1.6 million worth of new initiatives in the Budget introduced before the election was called.

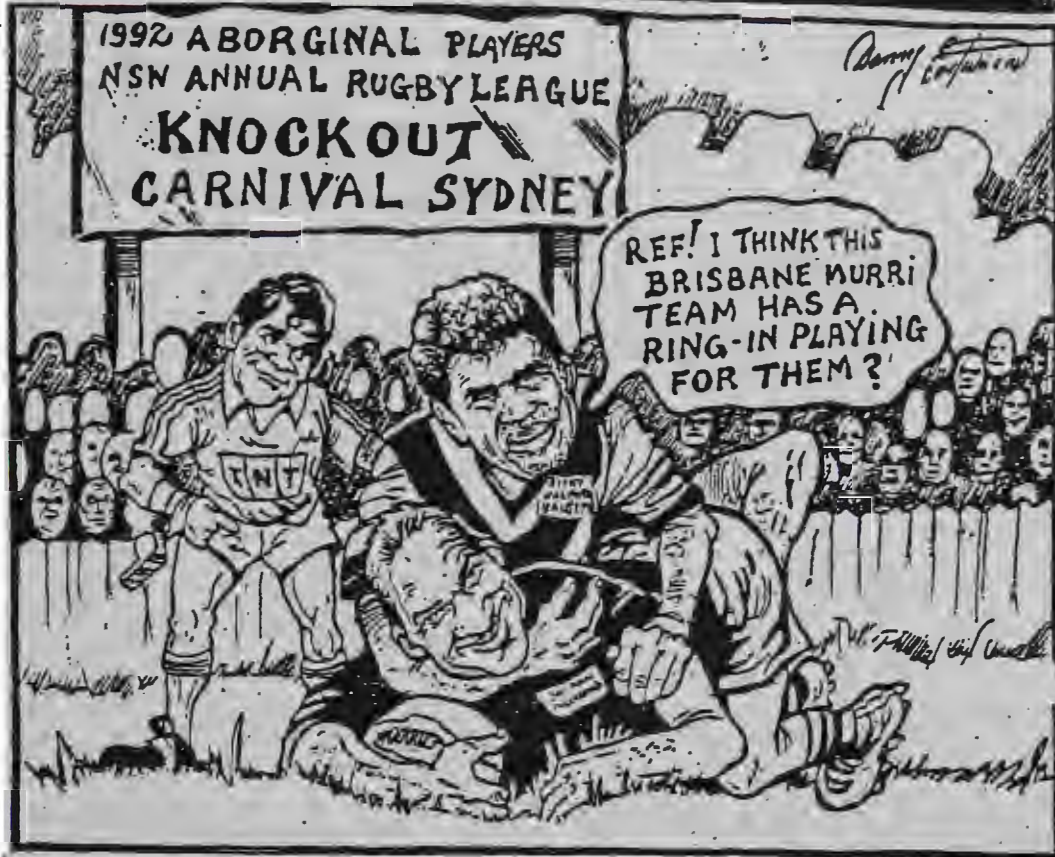
Most States are prepared and are following the recommendations but need the Commonwealth to follow the clear directions of the 1967 Referendum that the Commonwealth has prime responsibility.

I certainly look forward to the Commonwealth providing additional funds in this area to complement the various steps that have been taken by our State Government and others.

MR TOM ROPER,

Victorian Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Melbourne, Victoria.

EASTWOOD COMMENT



SHOULD COLOUR BE THE MAIN CRITERIA FOR EMPLOYMENT?

As a white journalist working in Aboriginal affairs I am aware that there are many jobs I would never be considered for even though I have the qualifications, simply because I am white.

I am also aware that it is possible that there are many Aboriginal and Islander people who would be considered for jobs even though they are not qualified — simply because they are black.

Perhaps in a small way it helps me to understand the longstanding discrimination on many fronts felt by the Aboriginal and Islander people — and how illogical, unfair, frustrating and some times even stupid, that discrimination can be.

A recent conversation between myself, a white journalist, and a colleague, an Aboriginal journalist, continues to haunt me.

A list of names for a job we knew was available in Canberra was being bandied about between myself and an Aboriginal journalist.

It was the usual list of people we knew or knew of, mostly cadet journalists, in which the other journalist on the other end of the line dropped in a name of a journalist known to both of us.

My colleague had apparently had considerable telephone contact with the journalist in question. We agreed the journalist in question was ideal and highly skilled, and with the Aboriginal knowledge required for the position.

And then I dropped the clanger: 'She's white you know'.

A surprised: 'Is she? I had always thought she was Aboriginal'.

How deceptive that telephone line can be!

'Yes, she would have been perfect. Why she's white?'

We both knew she would not be considered for the job.

This conversation continues to haunt me, and of course is completely without

2. THE KOORI MAIL, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1992.

the knowledge of the white journalist in question and I hasten to say that neither of us conversing on the matter have any say over who would be selected for this position.

It is, however, a designated Aboriginal position, and a position I consider to be carry responsibilities significant for all Australians.

My colleague and I both work in Aboriginal affairs — a white journalist and an Aboriginal journalist — and have similar journalistic careers. Both of us are well

ate assistance to the organisation? Surely the latter is the greater benefit to the Aboriginal organisation.

It is not a matter of keeping an Aboriginal or Islander person out of the job, but letting people get the training for the job before they sit in the chair, so that people can't point the finger with accusations that Aboriginal and Islander people can't do the job.

This is not to say either, that if the non-Aboriginal person has not got the full qualifications for the job but is capable of doing

An opinion piece by Koori Mail editor Janine Wilson who invites discussion on the subject.

aware of the prevailing attitudes and realities.

But this conversation raised a matter that has begun to concern me more and more recently — jobs on the basis of colour which does not always mean the best person in a job.

I am becoming increasingly alarmed at untrained Aboriginal and Islander people in certain jobs.

This of course is no reflection on highly trained Aboriginal and Islander doctors and nurses, and teachers, including principals, etc.

It is simply the case of people without training being put in jobs on the basis of colour when they are not qualified for the position they fill. At times, errors through inexperience can add to the suffering of Aboriginal and Islander people instead of providing assistance, a situation no Aboriginal or Islander person wants to find themselves in.

Is it better to have a black unqualified worker doing a poor job when they lack the training, or a trained non-Aboriginal person doing a better job, giving appropriate

ing the job, that he or she should be overlooked for a more highly qualified non-Aboriginal person. As my colleague points out, some times Aboriginality can be a just qualification for the job.

But to put an unqualified and incapable person, black or white, in a job lets the organisation down, can reinforce poor stereotypes, and does little for the self-esteem of the person in the position or the attitudes of people they have contact with in the position.

It just happens that journalism is one of the areas where there are few qualified Aboriginal and Islander journalists yet, but Aboriginal people are now being trained, and will be available for such jobs in a year or two, but until then, let's be wise, and make sure the training has been provided first.

The trained Aboriginal doctors, principals etc were not put into positions before they had completed their training and were able to fulfill adequately those tasks which were expected in their positions.

To put untrained Aboriginal and Islander people in high responsibility jobs with in-

adequate training is irresponsible and detrimental to the image of indigenous people.

— Let's stop worrying about people shouting 'racist' if these jobs are not always given to Aboriginal or Islander people because of lack of training, or worry about accusations of it's 'black money', or 'black people are being kept out of jobs', it's keeping the seat warm until the black bum is ready to sit on it firmly without the risk of falling off.

This year, provide another job in the organisation that a black person is qualified for, until a trained person is available next year.

It's a matter of being fair to Aboriginal and Islander people and the people they are to work for by not putting them in inappropriate positions where they are doomed to fail because of lack of the appropriate training.

It's not keeping Aboriginal and Islander people out of jobs, it's making sure they are ready for the job so that they will not fall on the job and can stay in that job if they so choose.

It's part of the self-determination process.



(The Koori Mail is a mixed work place, with more Aboriginal staff than non-Aboriginal staff. The 10 board members are Aboriginal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Discrimination is what we face in all areas of our lives

I felt compelled as an indigenous journalist to make a comment on your article — Should colour be the main criteria (Koori Mail, October 7, 1992).

Ms Wilson's unashamedly thought provoking article of the frustrations she has come up against in trying to acquire a designated Aboriginal position in her chosen profession would have come as a shock to many indigenous readers of your paper as one usually tends to hear of these happenings in the reverse in many indigenous communities.

The word discrimination is a word we as the rightful owners of this land have to put up with every day in all areas of our lives, not just within the workforce.

We know about discrimination and lack of qualifications. We as indigenous people could disagree with the white man's definitions of qualifications within our communities because of the extensive on-hand training, voluntary and community work, courses, workshops, certificates etc that are not usually recognised when Murris apply for a job.

Also in the past when a white person was put in an Aboriginal designated position to train an indigenous person to take over, when ready, it was hard for the trainer to want to leave and many of these good people left on a sour note.

Your article also refers to the fact that there are not many qualified Murri journalists. This is true because it is a field Murris are now starting to realise is attainable.

Murris have been involved in the media for a long time, but mostly in radio and most of the training has been on-hand experience over many years.

Traineeships in journalism for Murris in the past have mostly been in a form of tokenism within the ABC and now with more indigenous radio licences becoming available, these media training modules will be more accessible to Murris within their communities.

Overseas Aborigine on his way home, at last

Firstly I'd like to introduce myself. I am an Aboriginal man, who has lived in England for 23 years. I am now 27 years old.

I was born in Katherine, NT, in 1965. My mother was a Gurinji, my father was a white Australian.

I was taken into care when I was two, but was later adopted by an English couple and taken back to England.

My English parents were very good to me. But the lies they were told about my real parents caused me a great deal of pain and distress throughout my life.

In the last 12 months I have made contact with my real father. My real mother died some 18 months ago.

There are a number of reasons for writing to you. Firstly to voice my anger at the white imperialists who thought it was a good idea to remove half-caste children and assimilate them into a white world.

This has caused me, and I have learned many other children and families, great pain and distress. I could go on complaining about what the whites

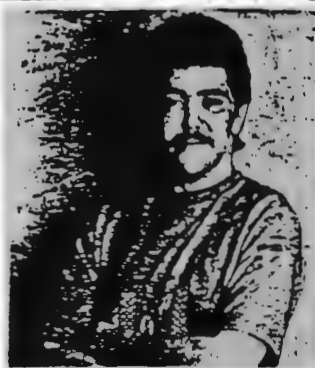
did and still do to our people, but I will not give them the satisfaction of knowing they have beaten our spirit and life. Never!

Recently I've made contact with my father and some of my mother's family who are traditional Aborigines in the Northern Territory, and without the help and support of Marie Munkare, of Link Up, Mollie Dyer and Mum Shirl, this would not have been possible. Also a Rikki Shields here in England, of the Larakia people, has been a help too.

In the past 12 months I have been catching up on my culture and missed life, so if you have any books I'd be more than grateful.

I enclose a photo of myself with a T-shirt that Mollie Dyer painted for me with a Yothu Yindi design and home land movement.

I hope in the next six months to return to my home — Australia — with a film crew to film my return. The BBC, Channel 4, and I believe Black Out, an Australian TV unit, is interested as well. So it could be a very interesting



year ahead of me.

I could go on for ages, but one last thing from an Aboriginal man in England half way around the world... to all my brothers and sisters back home, be strong as we've always been and keep our spirit proud!

Thank you for your time and I hope to hear from you very soon, Bunji.

— LEITH BELL, England.

dedication in working with indigenous people as I feel you have shown your support for us in your long time association with the Koori Mail as a respected white journalist.

— Glenice B Croft, Moorooka, Qld.

Missing the point on training, qualifications

The opinion piece by Koori Mail Editor Janine Wilson invited discussion on the subject (Koori Mail, October 7, 1992).

I can't help but wonder why Janine Wilson considers herself to be 'working in Aboriginal Affairs'. What is wrong working with an Aboriginal enterprise?

The tone of her article, to this reader, is one of utilising her position to justify her

position; the very thing she claims to be concerned about regarding the employment of Aboriginal people.

Nowhere does she say, or discuss, where the training of her Aboriginal colleagues will take place to 'allow him/her to have the qualifications' that make someone like Janine Wilson the most suitable white person to edit a fortnightly national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander newspaper.

Why is it that journalism is one of the few areas where there are few qualified people? Could it be that colour has been the main criteria for (non) employment of Aboriginal people in all facets of a white-European-industrialised society?

How long must the Aboriginal person remain the 'trainee' under the above system: be it 'highly trained doctors and nurses, and teachers, including principals etc.' or dare I say it, journalists?

Has Janine Wilson ever thought that a 'black bum' might not wish to sit in a white-warmed seat?

'Self-determination' as a 'part' of what? And on whose terms?

— Mary Willis, Cawongia, NSW.

Roo meat could be on the menu

Roo burgers could soon be on the menu in Queensland restaurants after the Goswami government has said it would consider legalising the sale of kangaroo meat for human consumption.

Queensland Primary Industries Minister Ed Casey told the United Graziers' Association's executive council last week that the State Government's 30-year policy against the consumption of kangaroo would be reviewed.

"The kangaroo issue has been handled sensitively up until now. Maybe too sensitively," he said.

Aiming a barb at conservationists, Mr Casey said those who did not agree with the beef industry on the problem of kangaroos should go out to south-western Queensland and see for themselves the extent of the problems they caused.

He said if the government decided to legalise the domestic consumption of kangaroo meat, animal husbandry and health and hygiene standards for the industry would have to be developed.

"I don't believe it's a major market," Mr Casey said.

"I'm still convinced it's only yuppie tucker and I don't think there's a huge export market."

"But just because the banning of roo meat for human consumption has been the policy for 30 years doesn't mean we can't be prepared to change it."

UGA president Bill Bonithorne said beef producers now supported the selling of kangaroo meat simply because kangaroos were in plague proportions.

But he said the beef industry would be seeking the introduction of stringent health regulations.

EASTWOOD COMMENT



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Aboriginality is a qualification

In reference to your editorial (Koori Mail, October 7).

Firstly, I would like to say that Aboriginality is a qualification, one that your editor would know nothing about despite her years of experience of being a non-Aboriginal person working in Aboriginal Affairs for several years.

If she did really understand and realise why it became necessary for designated positions so that Aboriginal people had at least some chance of gaining employment opportunities, would she really need to ask that question?

For too many years we have had non-Aboriginal people working in Aboriginal positions and where has it got us, nowhere.

We are still fighting for self-determination. We are still fighting for human rights. We are still fighting for equal rights. Do I need to go on and on.

Are you Ms Wilson training an Aboriginal person to eventually take over your position so that we will have a qualified Aboriginal person running that newspaper.

You surely don't need me to tell you about EEO. Surely you don't need me to tell you about our denial of education, employment and human rights.

Why is it, there are so many white qualified workers just like you working in Aboriginal Affairs positions that should be black positions.

What about training? Have you heard of that word, training, that's where a person (no matter what colour) gets employment and then receives extra training to enable them to do the job properly.

How much longer by your standards do we have to wait before you feel we are qualified with your little piece of paper. Another three years? Three years of a non-Aboriginal working in a black position and doing right by Koori.

Come on, look at your paper. Your front cover, 'Millions go down the gurgler'. Your sensationalism on Aboriginal Affairs is no different to mainstream papers. I can't remember seeing something positive about us blacks on the front cover. (I maybe wrong but my subscription took four months to come through after many calls.)

The black deaths inquiry reports — rather the media should observe, in the race area as in other areas, journalistic ethics of fairness, accuracy and balance. The media has a responsibility in this and in other areas, to inform itself on issues of concern and not to convey misleading and inaccurate facts or stereotypes.

You, as well as your white Australian counterpart are not different. Despite all your years of experience, working in Aboriginal Affairs and still trying to be fair.

I would further like to state Recommendation 205 (B): All media organisations should be encouraged to develop codes and policies relating to the presentation of Aboriginal issues, the establishment of monitoring bodies, and the putting into place of training and employment programs for Aboriginal employees in all classifications.

I believe I could go on and on but my final words to you in relation to your editorial and your sensationalist front covers.

Aboriginality is a qualification in its own right. One that you will never have. You have never been black, you never lived black, you have never been denied because of being black, you have never been judged because of being black. All through your white Anglo-Saxon editorial you have judged and that is exactly what you have done. Made judgment and have been found wanting.

QUALIFICATIONS

You say you want qualifications
An educated Black gin
So maybe you might get lucky and find yourself one
You want a black gin with 5 PhDs or maybe a couple of masters
Just tell me where you'll find one
We were denied education
We were denied equal rights
But still you want a black gin with a big white man's degree
Take what we offer you
Our expertise and our knowledge
We have no piece of paper to say we're qualified
Take what we offer you
We give it with pride
And know that what you're getting is far more valuable
Than a piece of paper in a Black persons eyes.

K J Reed-Gilbert

Report trivialised All Blacks efforts

I felt compelled to write regarding the article 'Nambucca Rams Look Ahead' (Koori Mail, October 21, 1992).

We are all familiar with knockout grand final post mortems — always a highly emotive exercise — however, I felt your report trivialised the fine efforts of the Redfern All Blacks.

Accolades are due, of course, to the Rams, who played a brilliant game of football and contributed to providing the 10,000-strong crowd with an exciting game of league.

The Redfern All Blacks, to their credit, managed some magic moments of their own. All the boys did their supporters proud. They played hard and well and happened to be the better team on the day (one professional league player for only half a game evidently was enough.)

The win was hard-fought and well-deserved and certainly resulted from a combination of superb game play and capitalising on opposition errors, not as your article implied, just the latter.

PS The half-time score was 20-10. PPS Could someone please explain what was meant by Britta Lyster's comment 'notorious Redfern All Blacks'?

Suzanne Ingram
c/- Murawina Ltd

Knockout report ignored winners

Firstly, let me congratulate you or your newspaper and its vital source of information.

Unfortunately, I cannot agree with your reporter's version of what was undoubtedly one of the best knockout finals seen for quite some time. According to a lot of people (both young and old) from all over the State.

We all feel for the Nambucca players. We know what it's like to lose, but to be good winners, you must know how to accept defeat. This is a hard game.

Maybe next year your reporter will acknowledge both sides in this great struggle for football supremacy. It would have been a nice gesture to congratulate Redfern All Blacks on their fine effort.

Colin Vincent, RAB Coach
EDITOR'S NOTE: Although we had arranged for a Koori Mail representative to take photographs and details of the competition, the organisers ordered him from the ground. So, Redfern All Blacks, have a word to the organisers so we can adequately acknowledge your achievements in future. And congratulations.

Focus for life

Congratulations on the publication of your newspaper. I think you all do a excellent job and I look forward to my copy arriving each fortnight.

The Koori Mail is a great idea and provides an excellent focus for Koori life.

Keep up the good work.

Rodney Kendal

Keeping to the issue of qualifications

In my attempt to open discussion on the matter of whether Aboriginality should be the main criteria for employment, we have received three letters which contain some statements that are not a true account of what was said in the article published in the 36th edition (October 7, 1992).

These discrepancies need to be clarified before other writers become too far removed from the issue.

In reply to Glenice Croft's letter (October 21), I had never tried personally to acquire a designated Aboriginal position, but in the original article was pointing out that a person perceived to be highly suitable for a particular Aboriginal-designated position would never be considered for the position because she was white.

It is perhaps timely to point out that I did not apply for a position at the Koori Mail but was approached by the Aboriginal owner when a qualified journalist with editing and layout skills was needed to produce the paper which was just one week away from production.

I am not black, and have never pretended to be black, and recognise that I can never know the black experience.

The best I can hope to do is understand, but, Mr K J Reed-Gilbert (above), I do know about the loss of human rights, racism and discrimination and lack of equal opportunity — I haven't been working on an Aboriginal paper for 18 months with my eyes and ears closed.

At times I, too, am subjected to some of that racism and discrimination because of my association with the Koori Mail and the Indigenous people, so I have experienced a little of this unjust treatment. I, too, have been personally threatened, intimidated and emotionally bruised for taking a stand against racism.

And although it may surprise you Mary Willis (October 21) and Mr Reed-Gilbert, I believe an Aboriginal or Islander person with the appropriate experi-

ence would be ideal for this job, because they have had the Aboriginal experience that I have never had.

To Ms Willis, I have never claimed to be the most suitable white person to edit the Koori Mail, but I am the journalist who was approached and agreed to do the job when asked, and have worked with a growing awareness of issues as well as a personal commitment to the survival of this paper.

But I still maintain that it is not enough to be Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, as I believe an unqualified or inexperienced person could unwittingly bring about the downfall of the paper while it is still in its early days.

So if you like, I do see myself in a role of keeping the chair warm, however that idea may or may not appeal to some, until an Aboriginal or Islander person is suitably trained with essential experience under their belt.

This does not detract from the truth in Ms Croft's statement on what happens to Indigenous people trying to get the training for jobs.

I, too, know that there are problems in a white-dominated media, and the ways in which the white media fails the Indigenous people is a pet subject of mine, as many journalists on other papers are aware, but we will leave that for another time.

On the present issue, the three letters of reply have shown a deep-seated and undoubtedly justified hurt for what has happened and is still happening to Indigenous people. But let's not lose sight of the fact in the personal attack on me and my whiteness, that the discussion was about whether it is right to have untrained Aboriginal people in jobs where they were unable to perform the work.

And don't make me personally responsible for the lack of training for Aboriginal and Islander people, and at least acknowledge that as editor of the Koori Mail I provide training — this is one of the responsibilities I have in this

position — as the Koori Mail has several Aboriginal writers.

It also is my personal hope that my proposal for fulltime employment for Indigenous journalists will become a reality in the near future.

Don't accuse me of trying to put my own brand of 'self-determination' on Indigenous people. Some of my efforts through the Koori Mail have been for Aboriginal communities to establish their role in the wider community in being involved in making decisions in matters that affected them — decisions that have nothing to do with my thoughts on the matter.

I am always mindful of the fact that I work for the Aboriginal communities, and appreciate the guidance the communities give me which I welcome and actively seek, especially on matters of cultural significance.

Community members do at times tell me to be patient, or tell me I'm not 'thinking Koori' when they believe I need this. They also encourage me, and have made it possible for me, a white, to do this job, and with their friendship they have helped me feel welcome in the Aboriginal communities. This job would have been impossible without this community support.

Please don't forget this Aboriginal owned paper has an all Aboriginal board with a staff that includes three white employees, imperfect as we may be, and several Aboriginal writers working from around Australia.

On a final note, I stand by my opinion that to put an untrained person in a position where they can't deliver the goods is harmful to that person and to the organisation they serve. From the considerable verbal support I have had this point of view is shared by many people in the Aboriginal community.

JARINE WILSON,
— Editor

Kelly takes her culture to Japan

Year 10 student Kelly Bamblett, 16 of Campbelltown, New South Wales: has recently returned from a two-week trip in Japan where she was often asked to tell Japanese people about her Aboriginal culture.

Kelly was one of 10 students selected to participate in a student exchange program to Japan organised by the Koschigoya Sisters Association.

When she was asked to write an essay on why she wanted to go to Japan, Kelly wrote about how she wanted to tell people about her Aboriginal culture.

Kelly said she had plenty of opportunity to talk about her culture because 'the Japanese were very interested in Aboriginal culture'. She said she felt proud to present an Aboriginal painting to the president at Koschigoya school.

Dreamtime winners

This week we announce the three lucky winners of our Dreamtime competition. They are:

Kylie Caldwell of Casino, New South Wales; Chris McGrady of Maryborough, Queensland; and Damian Pitt of Moree, New South Wales.

Congratulations to you all. Your wonderful book prizes supplied to us by the Aboriginal Studies Press will sent to you soon.

Koori Mail

THE FORTNIGHTLY NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER NEWSPAPER

FIFTY-FIRST EDITION

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Mabo style claim planned for Watarrka park land

An Aboriginal group intends to launch a Mabo-style land claim over a 71,000 hectare Northern Territory national park near by to Uluru (Ayers Rock).

Pat Laughton, employed by the Kurkara Aboriginal Tourism Enterprise based at the national park, said: Aboriginal people within the park were briefed on the High Court's Mabo land rights decision earlier this year.

"The land council filed us in. They explained the Mabo case and what sort of claims could be made and also what could be achieved even if the claim didn't succeed," Mr Laughton said.

He said a large group of the Aboriginal people had told the Central Land Council that they wanted to pursue a Mabo-based claim on the national park.

"We've all agreed to that, but we wouldn't claim anything that's already been established here," Mr Laughton said.

The park, about 325 km south-west of Alice Springs, includes an area known as King's Canyon, which is becoming increasingly popular as an off-the-beaten-track alternative to nearby Uluru.

Watarrka National Park is owned by the Northern Territory government and is managed by the Northern Territory Conservation Commission.

The Watarrka National Park includes three areas of about 50 hectares each which have been excised from the park as "aboriginal living areas" for the communities of Ulpanyalia, Lilla and Wannamara.

Mr Laughton said a total of about 90 or 100 people lived at the three communities.

He said the largest of the communities, Ulpanyalia, with about 60 people, had a serious housing shortage.

"We've got three tin sheds and two brick houses for the 60 people living there," he said.

Mr Laughton said that by gaining native title to the national park, the

Aboriginal people would gain a significant level of control over what happened in the park.

"At the moment we can put forward our opinion to the Conservation Commission, but they make the final decision," he said.

Ownership of nearby Uluru National Park was handed to traditional Aboriginal people in October 1985 and they subsequently leased the park for 99 years to the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Mr Laughton said that if the Aborigines at Watarrka, who were mainly Luritja people, were granted native title to the park, they would lease it back to the Conservation Commission "but maybe not for as long as 99 years".

Central Land Council director Kurnatjay Ross said there were no specific instructions to proceed with a Mabo claim. However the council did have instructions from the people at Watarrka to investigate the possibility of a claim.

Media conference sets future agenda

The five day National Indigenous Media Association of Australia conference staged last week at Magnetic Island, off Townsville, Queensland was a historical and highly significant event in the advancement and progress of indigenous media nationwide, according to the co-ordinator, Mr Brett Leavey.

The conference incorporated the First Annual General Meeting, the election of the NIMAA board and executive and the tabling of future objectives and priorities.

The major issues discussed and resolved included:

- Policy to coordinate, develop and maintain Indigenous Media whilst maintaining their autonomy;
- ATSIC's Broadcasting Policy paper as it reflects on Indigenous media Associations;
- Financial packages, recurrent funding and the retribution for services it renders;
- Wages and awards which presently before the Arbitration Commission;
- The selection of the members of the NIMAA committee and the election of the executive;
- Establishing licensing priorities under the new Australian Broadcasting Authority listing;
- As well as the ramifications of NIMAA's representation on the International body of the World Association of Radio Broadcasters (AMARC).

The conference was evidence of the power of all indigenous people to work together and negotiate a consensus of opinion on the future of relations of all people throughout Australia and the way they are portrayed through the media, claimed Mr Leavey.

Inside this edition



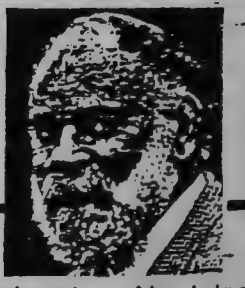
It comes as no surprise to John Moriarty that Japanese people are eager to buy the Balarinji label images that flow from the traditional ideas of his tribe, the Yanuwa of the Northern Territory - worth a potential \$40mil.

PAGE 9



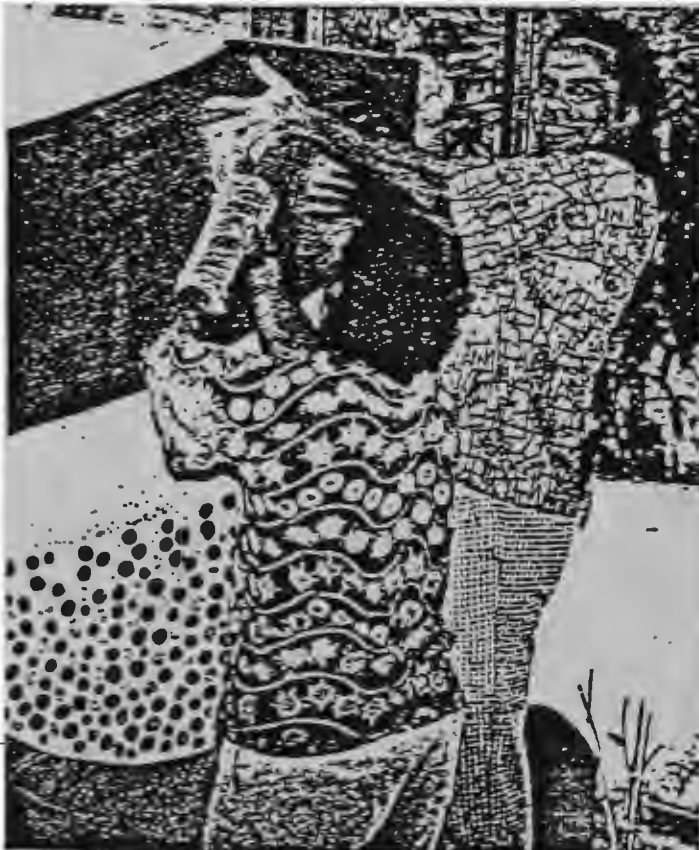
Rev Charles Harris, called by some the Martin Luther King of Australia, has died in Townsville.

PAGE 14



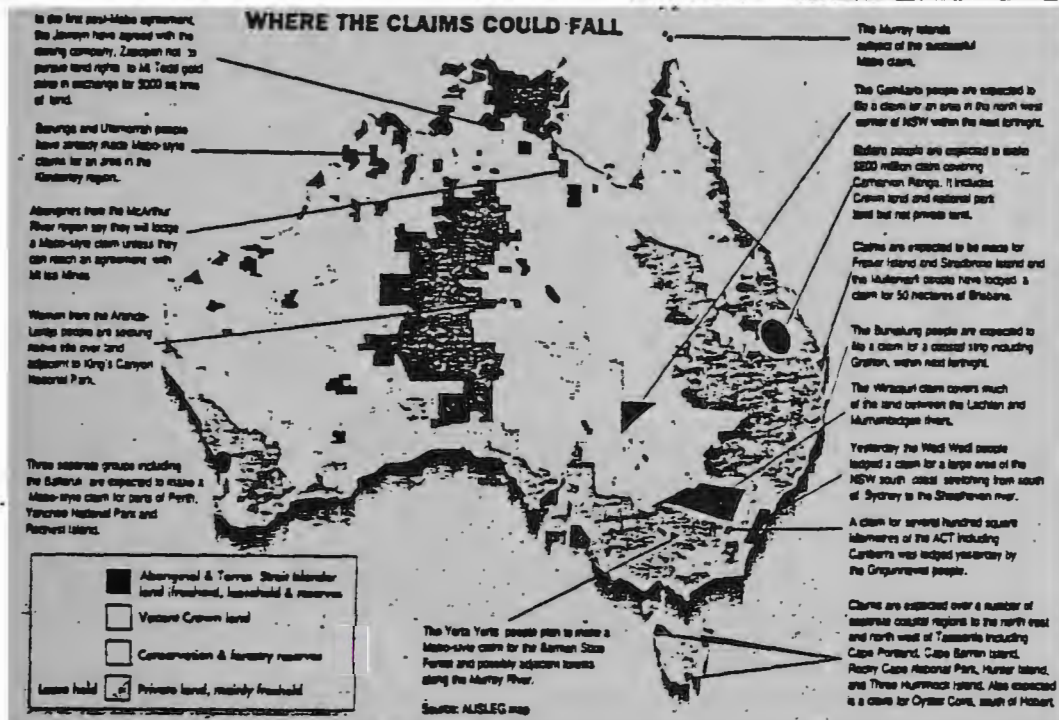
Eminent Aboriginal barrister, Robert Bellefleur, is set to turn the NSW justice system on its ear to get a better deal for indigenous people and reform the system even if arouses controversy.

PAGE 8



Artist Joseph Cummins assists Burri Jerome of Radio 2NCR FM Lismore's Goori Jama program to leave his mark, along with the other participants.

In what was regarded as a most fitting reminder of the five day conference.



National Round-up

On the Nation front, more women are dying as a result of childbirth and Aboriginal women are most at risk, according to a recent report.

Deaths associated with childbirth increased for the first time since reports started in 1966 and more Aboriginal women died directly as a result of giving birth than at any time since 1972. For more details see: **Page 6**

A statistical profile of Western Australian youth revealed that they were a thoroughly decent, hard-working, high-achieving group of people; but the same picture revealed young Aboriginal people were consistently excluded from normal levels of achievement in education, employment, income and independence. **Page 10**

As the nation grapples with Mabo, thousands of Aborigines met last weekend at Berunga in the Northern Territory where, five years ago the then Prime Minister Bob Hawke promised a "treaty" with Aboriginal Australia. **Page 3**

South Australia's Aboriginal and Islander Music Festival just keeps on getting bigger and better. 'Deadly Fun For Everyone' was promised and for the capacity crowds in attendance that's exactly what it was. **Page 15**

Combine bushwalking and art appreciation and you have the basis for a unique new Brisbane City Council community arts project under way at J C Slaughter Falls at Mount Coot-tha with appreciation and understanding of Aboriginal art and culture the focus for the art trail taking shape at the popular picnic area. **Page 18**

We introduce our new Win-a-Watch competition. See page 9 for details. And you can still win one of our popular Koori Mail Sports bags. Turn to page 17 for your coupon.

Land claims sweep over the Nation: more to come

The issue that is creating history on a daily basis, the Mabo saga, continues to grow with the declaration that Torres Strait Islanders plan to lay claim to the whole region between Australia and Papua New Guinea under the Mabo precedent and seek \$5 billion compensation.

Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service President Ray Robinson said his organisation was handling the claim on behalf of the islanders, led by former pearl diver Carlamo Wacando.

Mr Wacando, 56, who now lives in Ingham, north Queensland, said his people were seeking sovereignty over the islands and at least \$5 billion compensation for damage to fisheries and white use of island resources.

Mr Robinson said the Islanders had a "very airtight case" and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service would be lodging a Mabo claim with the High Court "as fast as we can".

Earlier this week, Mr Robinson's Bldjara people announced a plan to lodge a compensation claim for the Carnarvon Gorge area, 500km north west of Brisbane, in central Queensland.

He also called on Queensland indigenous communities to make urgent claims and use his group as a co-ordinating body.

But Mr Robinson said the new claim was far wider than that and would take in the whole of the Torres Strait,

between Australia and Papua New Guinea.

Mr Robinson said the Torres claim was "very hot" and should be a clear cut case under the High Court's reasons for recognising the Mabo claim.

"These people are living the same way they lived 200 years ago. They haven't changed in the 205 years or whatever it is since white settlement."

Australia had also "illegally annexed" the Torres Strait islands in an agreement with Papua New Guinea in the 1970s.

Mr Wacando said he and the Aboriginal legal service would be seeking sovereignty on behalf of all Torres Strait islanders and compensation for environmental damage, use of natural resources and the "illegal annexation" of the islands.

States warned against trying to hide land

Mr Wacando said the Torres Strait islands were "stolen from our ancestors at gunpoint."

He said he had been a pearl diver with his father on their home islands of Darnley and Stephen islands in the Torres Strait before moving to the mainland in 1954 in search of work.

"We were the first family to migrate to Australia looking for work. But we haven't got a fair deal since we came here," he said.

Mr Wacando said he was now unemployed, although he was hoping to get back into fisheries.

He said Europeans had caused "catastrophic damage and wholesale destruction" of the pearling, trochus shell and beche de mer native fishing industries in the Torres Strait.

Meanwhile Federal Cabinet is prepared to act to override any attempts by the States and Territories to quarantine land from the impact of Mabo or block Aboriginal claims to native title.

The decision followed concern that there may be an attempt by some state to artificially alienate all Crown Land before June 30 to extinguish native title.

It is understood that a lawyer who acted on the Mabo case, Mr Ron Casten QC, has warned ministers that some States could vest all vacant crown land in a 'vacant land corporation', constituted so that it was not a government authority.

This would effectively extinguish native title, he claimed.

LAND CLAIM TO CAUSE CIVIL UNREST

Victoria leads major party to hide Mabo land rights

States warned to hide Mabo land rights

CANBERRA, Federal Cabinet has decided to take a tough line with the States and territories over the Mabo decision, and is prepared to act to overturn the attempt to act to overturn the Mabo decision.

Cabinet the Prime Minister States at that the would me to quar impact of Accordi the decision the meeting attempt by cially aliens before June native title a It is under who acted on Ron Casten, ministers that vest all vacant "vacant land coi tuted so that government auth effectively allow land to be exting Cabinet endons of principles a billions of del native title end or

them as a basis for consultation and negotiation when of Ar

compensation but is it advice to minis- are native title is d for the life of a and was to revert ership, compen- would be limited. siders criticised shine yesterday. fated to the day Mabo decision tale, which was

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And with Victoria leads major party to hide Mabo land rights

The document on... The special relationship... with the land, nor

Western A... The... in 1994



Questioning Keating's commitment

Mr Keating won great respect among Aborigines last year when he said that Mabo would be used as the basis for a real reconciliation with black Australia.

In his landmark Redfern Park speech on 10 December, he said: "Mabo is a historic decision; we can make it an historic turning point, the basis of a new relationship between indigenous and non-Aboriginal Australians."

This was after he had performed a verbal "act of recognition" that wrongs had been committed against the blacks, "...recognition that it was we who did the dispossessing we took the traditional lands and smashed the traditional way of life."

"We brought the diseases, the alcohol, we committed the murders, we took the children away from their mothers."

This was music to many ears after the long history of big promises and small actions by Federal Government leaders.

With the McArthur River incident, Mr Keating's commitment has come into question.

If for no other reason than that the Government acted without consulting ATSIC.

Over the past fortnight the Mabo issue has reached every corner of this national and left no-one untouched. Largely played out in the media, the issue of Aboriginal land rights has solicited a variety of public comments peaking at one point with tones of hysteria among the ill-informed. These comments ranged from informed leaders calling for calm and time, to the extremes of redneck, racial bigotry. Below are a collection of abridged comments made during this historical period.

Danny Eastwood: renowned artist and Koori Mail's resident cartoonist

Some Aboriginal groups are taking out outlandish and unreasonable claims, and it is too early to expect so much so soon.

These claims would be unworkable and very extreme and only put intense pressure on the government leaders to change the High Court's landmark Mabo case.

All Aboriginal groups need to have a national forum with Government leaders so there may be a national agreement on land rights and compensation. If this does not happen, the courts will be at a deadlock for the next twenty years.

Because of these early claims, there is little to chance of reconciliation, the mass hysteria they have caused, is dividing the Australian community, white against black, with the ordinary Aboriginal in the street having to cope with



harsher and... prevalent discrimination and racist remarks.

The only way this will change is when all the parties come to an agreement and recognise the principles and then implement the Mabo Native Title land rights for just compensation for 200 years of occupation.

Redneck racists

The Mabo controversy boiled over into a hammer and tongs clash with radio announcer Alan Jones being accused of making racist remarks.

Jones took on former Federal Aboriginal Affairs Minister Charles Perkins in a live television and radio debate.

Jones said Aborigines were claiming Australia "is their own nation, when the nation belongs to Australia."

Jones went further to claim that there were millions of people who were worked their backsides off for their whole life and pay taxes and never be entitled to anything.

"They are being asked to pay taxes to fund people who are seeking title to productive land, to which they have made no contribution to its productivity."

Perkins said Jones doesn't know enough about Aboriginal affairs to be able to have a considered overview of the problem.

"He can only pick out isolated examples and say Aborigines get buckets of money thrown at them, we that's a lot of nonsense."

"He says Aboriginal people never had anything written down, leasehold, before white people came here - what is he trying to say, the people 40,000 years ago should have had a dictionary?"

Miss Lois O'Donoghue: Chairperson of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC)

We congratulated the Prime Minister for his resolute leadership at the recent Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Meeting on Mabo and welcomed the spirit of conciliation shown by a number of State Premiers.

However, ATSIC is concerned that the development of a national response to Mabo might flounder on recalcitrance and populist rhetoric on the part of some Premiers.

I understand that a key stumbling block at the COAG meeting was

whether Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who secure native title will be able to "veto" mining exploration and development.

To this end, ATSIC has developed a proposed basis for a solution on the crucial question of gaining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consent to development on their land.

I am sending details of this plan to the Prime Minister, Premiers and Chief Ministers for their consideration.

In order to fast-track development the Commonwealth will need to be willing to provide financial support to underpin negotiated settlements between mining companies and native title holders.

Access by native title holders to mining royalties would also mean that development on native title land can proceed swiftly.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples would be able to see the potential benefits.

What ATSIC is proposing is a win-win situation.

ATSIC is ready to be involved in any further Commonwealth/State discussions or in discussions with mining and pastoral groups.

It is important that there be full participation by the key Aboriginal organisations who have already contributed positively to furthering the response to Mabo.

The Eight Point Aboriginal Peace Plan together with ATSIC's own response set a positive framework for further discussions.

WHEN the High Court ruled a year ago that Murray Islander Eddie Mabo legitimately claim his homelands.

Perkins calls Jones a racist in TV clash

Land grabs are outside Mabo spirit

The Mabo minefield

Keating accused of aiding miners

Ambit claim crazy: Goss

Opera

REBEL MABO STAND

Goss has a jellyfish spine claims Boswell

Senate Leader Ron Boswell: Shadow Minister for Northern Australia and the National Party

Queensland Premier Wayne Goss has sold out the State's best interests by supporting Paul Keating's Mabo proposals which could cost Queenslanders billions of dollars.

What the Prime Minister tried to sell the Premiers was a perversion of the High Court decision.

He applied his own cynical 'twist' and put the future of large numbers of pastoral, tourism, and mining lease holders in jeopardy.

Mr Goss stands condemned for going along with that. Of all people, he should understand the vital part the rural, tourism, and mining industries play in the North.

Queenslanders should be aware of the fine print in Mr Keating's 'Framework of Principles'; and the effect on tourism, pastoral and mining leases granted since 31 October 1975.

Mr Keating's Principles differ radically from the High Court's position.

The Court held that State Governments could extinguish Native Title by a valid exercise of their powers provided that where it was done after October 1975, compensation was paid.

The Keating plan which Wayne Goss supports is that native title and the grant (or lease) should co-exist.

He also proposes that common law should be amended to provide that State Government grants (or leases) should not of themselves extinguish native title.

Legal advice on the Keating proposals is that those leases could revert to Native Title when the lease expired.

Native Title Holders would have the final word on renewal, and even during the term of lease, could intervene on the basis of supposed breaches of lease conditions.

There will be disastrous consequences if Mr Keating's

'Principles' are not challenged and ruled out," Senator Boswell said.

Governments will not be able to grant any leases over Crown land until the possibility of Native Title has been established — and that could take many years.

Economic activity could be held up indefinitely.

Even when the Government decided on a lease or some other arrangement, Native Title Holders would be able to exercise a veto.

Keatings proposals presented a real danger to tourism, mining, and grazing industries.

Leaseholders could be dispossessed. At the very least, they could have new and economically crippling conditions imposed on them.

Who could imagine a tourist operator, for instance, spending money upgrading a resort, if there was a possibility the lease would not be renewed?

What sensible grazier would undertake water conservation or land care programs only to hand the benefits to someone else?

The Premiers of New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and Western Australia, and the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory have all been forced to consider their own legislation to protect their own major industries.

Mr Goss is doing the opposite. He is happy to go along with Keating. He is prepared to jeopardise a mining industry which contributes almost \$3 Billion a year to Queensland, a rural industry which contributes about \$38n, and a tourism industry worth over \$18n to the State.

People like Mr Kennett and Mr Court are taking strong stands and demonstrating real leadership.

Mr Goss is showing all the backbone of a jellyfish.

He has chosen to be a Labor Party hack rather than a strong advocate for Queensland.

John Ralph: President of the Business Council

The fallout from the Mabo High Court decision could severely restrict the growth in Australia's standard of living for future generations.

The Federal Government is blurring the issue of peoples' legitimate claims over native land title with other motives including trying to remedy high Aboriginal mortality rates and other health and welfare problems.

Ordinary people have no knowledge of what this means to them.

Eighty per cent of the population haven't heard of it, but while they won't pay for it immediately, their children will.

But, as an Australian, I would view ceding sovereignty to Aborigines as an absolute tragedy.

— Melbourne Sun

Patrick Dodson: Chairman of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation.

Planning is underway for a bush meeting of Aboriginal leaders and talks with key groups from the wider community to discuss the Mabo situation.

We identified the need for Aboriginal leaders to get together at the Position of Indigenous People in National Constitution's conference held in Canberra last weekend.

The meeting will take place in early August, probably in the Northern Territory.

The aim is to allow Aboriginal leaders to clarify, with each other, their positions on the implications of the Mabo decision away from the glare of the television lights and the fragmented and distorted pictures that appear in the press.

We will also be looking for a consensus on the different approaches that are available to respond to the decision for the long term good of the country.

The approaches range from immediate action in the courts, through to longer term proposals for constitutional recognition, self-government and a formal document of reconciliation.

It is important that people have a full understanding of the range of options open to them.

What is not appreciated by the wider community is that the Aboriginal people they see in the media have other full-time responsibilities.



They are trying to respond to a complex legal and political situation that has heads of government unable to agree on a way forward.

Similar discussions need to take place with representatives of key groups representing the interests of the wider community.

The Council will host such talks immediately after the meeting with Aboriginal leaders.

We are looking to establish a meaningful dialogue as a constructive way forward.

Extremist a threat

Extremist statements from both sides of the Mabo dispute threatened implementation of the High Court's decision on native title, a leading churchman warned.

Australian Council of Churches president, the Reverend Ian Allsop, said the Mabo ruling provided an opportunity to address the fundamental issue of Aboriginal's deep spiritual connection to the land.

"If this gets buried again it will put us well back in dealing with indigenous people," Mr Allsop said.

"Hesitation by government leaders, or political posturing by non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal sectional interest

groups, could well damage the process of reconciliation."

Mr Allsop said the issues were serious and both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people would be disillusioned if they were not resolved.

Failure to settle the issue would result in sectional interests winning at the expense of Aborigines.

He said it would also affect Australia's international standing.

"It would put us right back because of our treatment of indigenous people."

Mr Allsop said it was important for all religious communities to encourage a resolution to the Mabo decision.

"It's a deeply moral question for our nation."

BUSH COMMUNITY NOTES

Continuing our series of BUSH COMMUNITY NOTES designed to cater for the news and views of the Aboriginal communities in rural New South Wales.

Please phone local correspondent CHARLES JOHNSON on (068) 96 6705 or drop a line to him at PO BOX 104, Lake Cargelligo, NSW 2672.

contributions to the column, large or small, are welcome.

COBAR LALC

An initiative put forward by Cobar LALC in conjunction with Cobar Museum and the National Parks and Wildlife Service seeks to provide an Aboriginal section in the local museum.

A whole room would be provided to display Aboriginal art, sculpting and painting.

This would encourage tourism to Cobar, interest the local residents and help promote Aboriginal understanding to the wider community.

Sponsorship is being sought from Cobar Shire Council, ATSIC, National Parks and Wildlife Service, local businesses as well as both the Australian and National museums as \$10,000 is needed to place the exhibition permanently in the museum.

The NSW Opposition spokesman on Aboriginal Affairs Mr Colin Markham said: During a recent visit to Cobar, that it would be a great thing for the town itself, as well as the Aboriginal community.

Any offers of financial help, gifts or loans of quality items would be most welcome and should be made to the Curator, Dominic Egan telephone (068) 362448 or Cobar LALC telephone (068) 361144 who are also dealing with the project.

WILLOWBEND ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

Willowbend Aboriginal Corporation is situated on the Aboriginal mission site.

Although little evidence is remaining of the old mission days, one old building has been allowed to remain as a relic.

Instead there is a cluster of smart new houses grouped around tar sealed roads.

The gardens are all well kept and stocked with flowers, and the general impression is one of tidiness.

Nearby, the Lachlan River turns a sharp bend, which combined with four large willow trees along the banks gives the reason for the name Willowbend.

Just across the river is the town of Condobolin.

Willowbend is only a small community of 60 Aborigines but the residents and committee members are very active.

Also there are about 100 other Aborigines from the area who use Willowbend regularly.

An air of social conscience about the place is evidenced by the time spent in helping the Pamparoo school at Euabalong (70kms away) with Committee guidance in helping to manage affairs for these Koori Kids at Risk.

Also the help given to the Yawarra training centre for Aboriginal people with intellectual disabilities in Condobolin is free and willing.

The playgroup is open to all people in the district to bring their children along and the Willowbend Aboriginal Employment Officer, Richard Coe, gives his efforts to help people outside the community at times.

Willowbend Aboriginal Corporation runs an Aged Persons Hostel which is situated in the grounds at Willowbend.

At present it is only large enough to cope with six men and is managed by Peter Coe.

It is modern, extremely comfortable and these older Kooris can live in dignity.

One of them, Jack Grant, voluntarily looks after the gardens and has made a beautiful show for people to see.

The place needs enlarging so that more Kooris can be looked after in their older years and perhaps women could then be included to effect a balanced atmosphere.

But funds are not forthcoming.

The CDEP scheme is applied for and rejected each year.

It seems a pity that such a dynamic and positive community, which has so much social conscience, has not yet met the criteria in their quest to help other Kooris as well as themselves.

WARREN MACQUARIE LALC

Thirteen acres of land purchased 2kms out of town are proving a good prospect for the future health and prosperity of the local Aboriginal community.

Three acres are currently under intensive cultivation with head gardener Percy Darcy and his assistants engaged in producing 500 broccoli plants, 400 lettuces, 350 tomato plants, chokos, cabbages, cauliflowers, red cabbages, cucumbers, melons and pumpkins.

Some of the plants are growing under plastic covers.

ATSIC have also provided funds for a tractor and rotary hoe.

Percy is carrying out the plans to achieve two objects.

Provide cheaper healthy produce for the local Aboriginal community to eat, encouraging them to eat less junk food and provide income for the community by selling produce to local outside businesses.

Percy Darcy, who has seen much of life — as a shearer cook for 48 years he has travelled extensively — feels that if young people see that you can actually make money by working on



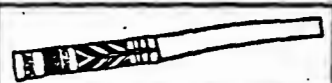
the land, then they will be encouraged to take part.

An amenities block is to be erected on the site, with showers and toilets and it is planned to lawn some of the land over and build a barbecue area.

This will make a recreation area. Later on it is hoped to have a pig farm and also chickens on some of the land.

This could become a very viable commercial enterprise through CDEP for this community of 700 Aborigines.

Willowbend workers, from left: Arnold Gardener, Daniel Gardener, Dorothy Clark, Richard Coe and Robert Sioe.



HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

CO-ORDINATOR - ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER

Recruitment and Career Development Strategy
Fixed Term

Salary Administrative Officer \$33,385 - \$38,104 per annum depending on qualifications and experience.

The University wishes to appoint an Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander person to a new position of Coordinator of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Recruitment and Career Development Strategy.

The successful applicant will be based initially at the University's Equal Employment Opportunity Unit and will be responsible for establishing, maintaining, monitoring and evaluating the 5 year plan.

The Co-ordinator must have a demonstrated capacity to effectively manage and administer equal opportunity in employment projects, preferably in a post-secondary environment and experience in working with members of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. A knowledge of social processes would be an advantage. The Co-ordinator must have a strong understanding of the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and be able to work with staff at all levels. Relevant academic qualifications and/or work experience is also required. A knowledge of social processes would be an advantage.

Being Aboriginal or a Torres Strait Islander is considered to be a genuine occupational qualification in terms of Section 14(1) of the NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977. A capacity and willingness to implement and develop EEO/AA policies and procedures is required.

The initial appointment is for 3 years with good prospects for renewal for the further two years of the plan, and the position is permanent. The successful applicant must be able to take up the appointment no later than 30 September 1993. The appointee will have access to professional development courses at the University to develop such skills as may be required.

Membership of a University approved professional association is compulsory.

Selection for this position will be made on the basis of specified selection criteria. IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR APPLICANTS TO OBTAIN THE SELECTION CRITERIA AND ADDRESS EACH OF THEM APPLICATION for further information and to obtain a copy of the selection criteria and a position description, please contact Murray Waterhouse on telephone (02) 867 1722. Applications close 6 August 1993.

PLEASE QUOTE Ref 20838

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Applicants should submit a written application. SUO/100 REFERENCE NUMBER. Include curriculum and personal statement, a complete resume, list of referees, list of qualifications (where appropriate) and the cover letter. (and previous employment history) if at least one year of experience. The Appointment Officer, Human Resources, P.O. Box 1, Kensington, N.S.W. 2033 is responsible for processing applications.



ABORIGINAL HOSTELS LIMITED

Aboriginal Hostels Limited is a Company owned and financed by the Australian Government. Through our Central Office located in Canberra, and 8 Regional Offices, we provide and operate hostel accommodation throughout Australia. We have a policy of offering employment and training opportunities for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT OFFICER ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE OFFICER CLASS 2

\$23,959-\$26,568 P.A.

POSITION No. 957
CENTRAL OFFICE — CANBERRA

DUTIES: Undertake a range of administrative support functions, including: maintenance and control of various office systems; keyboard tasks; maintenance of related records and filing system; preparation and distribution of divisional correspondence.

CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT: General Australian Public Service conditions of service apply.

WRITTEN APPLICATIONS: It is in the interest of applicants to obtain a copy of the selection documentation and for applications to address the selection criteria. Applications are to be forwarded to:

Recruitment Officer
Aboriginal Hostels Limited
P.O. Box 30
WOOLLEN ACT 2606

ENQUIRIES: Ms Patricia Gilmour (06) 289 3915.

SELECTION DOCUMENTATION: Ms Valmai Turpin (06) 289 3876.

CLOSING DATE: 23 July 1993.

All positions in Aboriginal Hostels Limited are identified positions.

Aboriginal Accommodation Across the Nation

What's on, where, and when - the *Koori Mail* National Calendar

8 July- 7 August — THE DREAMERS play by Jack Davis. Produced by Christopher Cummings Theatre Productions in association with Kooris In Theatre. Venue: Sydney's Bondi Pavillion Theatre; special rates for schools.

Telephone: (02) 368 1119

14-16 July: Turning the Tide, Northern Territory University, Casuarina Campus, Darwin. Conference on Indigenous Peoples and Sea Rights, arranged by the NT University Faculty of Law and the Centre for Aboriginal and Islander Studies.

Contact: Steve Arnold, Executive Officer, tel (089) 466898, fax (089) 466852.

14-30 July: The UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations (WGIP), Geneva, Switzerland.

Contact: Ph: 06-2612069, fax 06-2613424.

18-21 July: Aboriginal Employment Conference - Burrup Muru, Tomorrow's Pathways. Keynote address by Mick Miller. University of Western Sydney, Nepean-Kingswood Campus.

Contact: Ph (02) 6859327, fax (02) 6859351.

24-8 August: "Corroboree - Sights and Sounds of the First Australians". Two week festival of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and music including over 100 exhibits of painting and sculpture, films, documentaries, education program and storytelling. London's Royal Festival Hall, South Bank.

Contact: Theresa Burn of Moira Dooley, London Ph 071-9210600, fax 071-9282049.

July: Indigenous Film Festival "Cultural Focus, Cultural Futures". Indonesia.

Contact: Fax 06-273-3971, ph 06-261-3854.

July: Stamp Issue featuring contemporary Indigenous art. Venue: Australian Post Outlets.

July: National Administration Film Festival. National Administration Auditorium.

Contact: Fax 06-244-7978, ph 06-244-6541.

July: Bran Nue Dae National Tour opening in Melbourne. Sponsored by the Australia Council and BHP Mining Corporation.

Contact: Ph 091-921-708.

June/July — "Koori Prisoners" Art Exhibition. Featuring works from Long Bay, Bathurst, and Lithgow Jails. Venue: Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative.

Contact: Ph 02-6982047, fax 02-6988031.

To 19 Sept — Major Aboriginal Art Exhibition. Venue: Tandanya Aboriginal Culture Institute, Adelaide.

To 7 August — The Dreamers — a play by Jack Davis, produced by Christopher Cummings Theatre Productions in association with Kooris in Theatre. Venue: Sydney's Bondi Pavillion Theatre.

Contact: Ph (02) 3681119.

9 August — International Day of Solidarity with the Struggling Women of South Africa.

16 August — IWIP — North America Program Film Series. Venue: Webster University, St Louis, MO.

Contact: John Wells, Education Officer, Embassy of Australia, 1601 Massachusetts Ave, NW Washington, DC 20036 USA. Ph (202) 797-3253, fax (202) 797-3049.

18 August-17 October — The Heritage of Namatjira. Venue: Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth.

Contact: Ph 02-9509047 / 008-226912, fax 02-950911.

20-22 August — Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation. Perth.

Contact 008 807 071.

23-25 August — Self-determination for Indigenous Peoples — Implications for Federalist States. International Symposium and Colloquium. Venue: University of New South Wales, Sydney, New South Wales.

Contact: Ph: (02) 697-2222, fax (02) 6827471.

23-27 August — Northern Territory Aboriginal Constitutional Convention. "Today We Talk About Tomorrow" — planning a process to achieve self-government in the Northern Territory. Venue: Tennant Creek Showgrounds, Northern Territory.

Contact: Alexis Wright/ Northern Land Council or Central Land Council.

27 August — The United Nations Association of Australia Special Media Peace Prize. Announcement of prize 27 August 1993.

27-29 August — 1993 Nations Association Conference. Focus Cambodia as a IWIP feature. Ver Old Parliament House, Canberra.

Contact: Ph (06) 2474499 or Box 1570 Canberra ACT 2601.

29-31 August — Indigene Peoples' Conference on Federalism and Self-determination. Ven: Townsville, Queensland.

Contact: Fax 06-2571893, 06-2493668.

August — Koori Job Fair. Ven: World Trade Centre, Melbourne Victoria.

Contact: CES, DEET, Victoria.

August — National Rock Concert. Venue: Sydney.

Contact: Ph 02-2812144, f: 02-2818920.

August — Photographic Show. Featuring Destiny Deacon and Brend Croft. Venue: Australian Centre of Photography, Sydney.

Contact: Ph 02-6982047, fa 02-6988031.

August — Exhibition of Visual Art. NSW Aboriginal Artists. Ven: Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative.

Contact: Ph 02-6982047, fa 02-6988031.

To have your event included in the Koori Mail National Calendar, just drop us a line at P.O. Box 117 Lismore. NSW 2480 or fax your details to (066) 222600. Please no telephone calls.

WIN A KOORI MAIL SPORTS BAG

Each fortnight the Koori Mail will give away 2 sports bags to lucky readers. For your chance to win one of these great bags, complete the questionnaire below and send it to:

Koori Mail
PO Box 117
LISMORE, NSW 2480

The Koori Mail is looking to improve its content and values your opinion.

- How do you receive the Koori Mail?
(a) Buy at newsagency
(b) Subscribe
(c) Passed on to me
- How many people read your copy of the Koori Mail?
- Do you think the Koori Mail contents covers national/State and regional issues adequately. Yes/No
- What would you like to see more of in the Koori Mail?
- Do you think the name of Koori Mail is suitable for a national indigenous paper? Yes/No
- Do you think our sports coverage is adequate? Yes/No
- Do you think our coverage of cultural issues is adequate? Yes/No

YOUR COMMENTS

Your Name
Address
Postcode Phone No



ABORIGINAL HOSTELS LIMITED

Aboriginal Hostels Limited is a Company owned and financed by the Australian Government. Through our Central Office located in Canberra, and 8 Regional Offices, we provide and operate hostel accommodation throughout Australia. We have a positive policy of offering job and training opportunities for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.

REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION OFFICER

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE OFFICER
CLASS 5 — \$33,924-\$35,971 P.A.

Position No. 501 — Regional Office — Sydney

DUTIES: As Regional Administration Officer undertake duties involving the administration of the Company policies and procedures at a regional level with emphasis on controls related to: expenditure; income; staff; community support hostels; and supervision of Regional Office staff.

QUALIFICATIONS/EXPERIENCE: Applicants should have relevant qualification and experience in office management and administration, a sound understanding of basic accounting procedures; cost control; personnel and payroll procedures; and staff supervision.

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE: General Australian Public Service conditions will apply.

WRITTEN APPLICATIONS: It is in the interest of applicants to obtain a copy of the selection documentation and for applications to address the selection criteria. Applications are to be forwarded to:

Regional Manager
Aboriginal Hostels Limited
P.O. Box 900
DARLINGHURST NSW 2010

ENQUIRIES: Mr Ken Morgan (02) 212 3268.

SELECTION DOCUMENTATION: Ms Kaylene Frail (02) 212 3268.

CLOSING DATE: 23 July 1993.

All positions in Aboriginal Hostels Limited are identified positions.

Aboriginal Accommodation Across the Nation

Historic gathering throws out PM's Mabo legislation



Prime Minister Paul Keating has been sent back to the drawing board after his proposed Mabo legislation was summarily dismissed.

Following an historic meeting of a broad cross-section of Australia's Aborigines at a remote bush camp in the Northern Territory, Mr Keating has been told to review his approach on Mabo and be prepared to consult fully with a newly-established committee of Aborigines.

Mr Keating's proposed Mabo legislation was unacceptable, they said and undermined the reconciliation process with Aboriginal Australia.

After three days of intensive talks last week, some 400 Aborigines produced a series of demands, called the "Eva Valley statement".

The demands include the right to stop mining and other development projects on Aboriginal "native title" lands.

Under Mr Keating's proposed Mabo legislation, it provides only for Aborigines to have the right to negotiate on development projects.

Another condition said: "Native title cannot be extinguished by grants of

any interest", and another called for the declaration of Aboriginal title over unspecified "reserves and other defined land".

"We don't agree with anything they've done. They haven't bothered to talk to us about it, they haven't negotiated with us about it, and they

Poll: Mabo no threat

Australians do not believe scaremongering that their backyards are under threat of an Aboriginal land claim because of the High Court's Mabo decision, a survey has revealed.

The latest Sauhrick poll showed 88% of voters understood the principles of the High Court judgment could only be applied in cases where Aborigines proved they had maintained a continuous relationship with the land since European settlement.

Only seven per cent said they believed the Mabo judgment entitled Aborigines to claim any land in Australia, including major cities. Only five per cent did not know. Just 12% of respondents believed the land on which their house was built was under threat. Asked if they thought the judgment was likely to damage Australia's economic development, 55% said "yes" and 35% said "no".

The meeting also decided to establish a committee of some 12 to 15 Aborigines from around Australia to negotiate on Mabo on behalf of all.

At a media conference at the conclusion of the summit, held at Manyallaluk near Katherine, 300-km south of Darwin, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner Mick Dodson said the federal government had completely failed on Mabo.

don't have our consent to do what they want to do."

In a well aimed serve at the press, Mr Dodson refused to reveal what action the group would take if the federal government refused to accept the position of the meeting.

"Frankly it's none of your business," he said.

Northern Land Council chairman Galarwuy Yunupingu, a member of the reconciliation council, said the government's approach to Mabo had undermined the process of reconciliation.

"The prime minister's obviously rejected our good work. What kind of a prime minister is he if he's going to undermine work collectively done by important people in the community."

Activist Michael Mansell, also a member of the committee, said the federal government must start again in addressing the Mabo decision.

"There is a very clear message here to the federal government, and that clear message is that we are not content with the way the federal government has handled the native title issue to date," he said.

"We believe we are supposed to be the beneficiaries to the High Court ruling on native title, but as yet, it seems the federal government is more intent on satisfying the concerns of the states and the mining industry."

"They have neglected the views and interests of Aboriginal people, so much so that they have forced us to have a meeting on the national scale such as this," Mr Mansell said.

He said Aborigines wanted the government to make "native title" stronger than the High Court had recognised in the Mabo decision.

Mr Dodson said the meeting had fully endorsed the reconciliation process, denying some media reports that the meeting had considered abandoning the process.

"We did not, nor was it on the agenda, make a decision to reject the reconciliation process, in fact there was much support for it."

The Manyallaluk meeting was billed as the biggest, most representative meeting of Aboriginal people from around Australia since the High Court's Mabo decision in June last year.

What a Wopper!

Koori Mail Education Profile



It is double the value with this week's 56 page Koori Mail. Turn to Page 11 for the start of our whopping 36 page nation wide Education supplement which features kindly to college, secondary to senior citizens.

Also in this Edition....

Aboriginal fringe dwellers living in poverty on the outskirts of West Australian towns are dying at an alarming rate and others are suffering from disease.

State Labor MP Ian Taylor said fringe dwellers in his electorate of Kalgoorlie had been the worst hit with a third of the group dying in just two years.

Full details Page 5

Applications for auditions to the National Aboriginal Islander Skills Development Association (NAISDA) College of Dance are now being accepted.

NAISDA offers a five year program of study and applications close on October 31 with auditions are held over a two week short course in November and December.

See Pages 48-49

A testimonial dinner was staged at Alice Springs for former World Champion Bantamweight boxer, Lionel Rose. It was 25 years ago that Rose took out the title.

See Page 56

And don't forget our great competitions. That 5th coupon in our popular Win-a-Watch valued at \$89.95 can be found on Page 50 and the Win a Sports Bag entry form on

Page 51



A WINNER IN EVERY SENSE

Lismore school-girl, Laurie-Anne Parsons, 11, was acknowledged last week for her outstanding performance in Year 6.

Laurie-Anne, a student at Goonellabah Public School, was presented with an Aboriginal Education Council of NSW Award by the Country Women's Association.

Laurie-Anne's achievements made her an obvious choice for the award as she has excelled in drama for talented children, represented the school in soccer and netball, and represented the region in cross-country athletics.

The teachers at the school also recommended her for the award because of her personality, motivation, her mature behaviour and sense of humour.

Koori Mail **Education Profile**



Walkabout Travel

Emu farm goes from strength to strength

By JERRY PRATLEY

Kurrawang Emu Farm manager Mick Roe believes Aboriginal people have a natural advantage in the tourism business.

Mick says international and domestic tourists are crying out for information about Australia's indigenous culture and the demand will only get stronger.

Kurrawang, about 20km east of Kalgoorlie-Boulder on the Great Eastern Highway in Western Australia, is an example of an Aboriginal community that has successfully tapped into tourists' desires to learn more about indigenous Australians.

But Kurrawang does not rely solely on selling Aboriginal culture. It has exploited a growing niche market — emu products.

Aboriginal people have always used emu products, but until recently white Australians have ignored what the native birds have to offer, such as oil, meat, eggs, feathers and leather.

This edition The Koori Mail introduces a new regular feature — Walkabout Travel — in which we profile the indigenous people involved in the tourism industry. If your community wishes to promote a tourism project, let us know.

In addition to the emu product sales, tours are conducted and visitors are told about Aboriginal culture.

Kurrawang began operating five years ago with the help of a \$350,000 Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Aboriginal Development Corporation grant that helped set up emu holding pens, infrastructure to breed and hatch the birds and a tourist reception centre and shop.

According to Mick, tourism was the farm's major source of income in the beginning but the sale of emu products and emu chicks is now the main earner.

After the grant and initial set up, it took about two and a half years for the farm to become self-sufficient.

Today the farm employs 11 people (10 indigenous) and has an annual turnover of about \$250,000 (and growing).

Mick says one of the most important things to consider when setting up a tourism venture, or any business, is to approach it in a professional way.

There can't be any of this 'come to



Kurrawang Emu Farm staff with some of the farm's products.

work when you feel like it' business, it has to be treated as a nine-to-five operation."

He says people considering establishing a venture need some business knowledge but if this is lacking, a manager could be employed to get the operation up and running and provide training for the community.

A non-Aboriginal, Mick was employed by the Kurrawang community to get the farm going but he will be leaving the community later this year to allow it to run itself.

For a community wanting to establish everything itself, there are Government-funded training schemes that provide a grounding in how to establish and operate a business.

"I think the success of the business could be put down to the way we have decided to value-add to everything we produce so we can retail it ourselves.

"Most farms farm their produce and sell it bulk, but we farm it and retail it ourselves. It cuts out the middle man. You farm, value-add and retail. You handle the lot.

"The carved eggs, for instance, are done here by the locals, we process the meat, the oil is quite easy to do once you've got it set up, we get a little bit of the leather made elsewhere but overall it is the cheapest way to do it," he says.

Mick says one of the biggest influences on the farm's success was the self-supportive approach adopted by the Kurrawang community.

"We adopt a different attitude to most Aboriginal communities," he says.

"Our attitude was that initially we got funding to help get the place up, then after that we wanted to fund everything else where possible."

"Instead of going straight into a Rolls Royce set-up, it has taken over four years to get where we are — we took things step-by-step."

Another aspect of the community considered was being close to a ready supply of tourists. Kalgoorlie-Boulder, an area of almost 30,000 people and Australia's biggest producer of gold.

"Probably 50 per cent of our visitors are local," Mick says. "It's very important to have that local base."

The other tourists are made up of about 40 per cent from the eastern States and 10 per cent international. There is a general mix of nationalities which visit, but the Asians in particular seem to be very interested in Aboriginal culture."

A big proportion of Kurrawang's income is earned directly through the shop, which is responsible for catering to tourists as well as managing the general farm business. The latter now accounts for more than half the farm's income.

For more information on Kurrawang, contact Mick Roe, Kurrawang Emu Farm, PO Box 618, Kalgoorlie, WA 6430; phone (090) 21 2845 or fax (090) 81 1023.

© A Talent For Tourism — Stories About Indigenous People in Tourism



Sales of emu products and emu chicks are now Kurrawang's main earner, but tourism continues to be an important income source.

Crying out for Aboriginal culture

Alice Springs residents believe tourists are crying out for, but not getting, an Aboriginal cultural experience, according to a study.

Commissioned by the Alice Springs Town Council and the NT Tourist Commission, the study has found many residents feel unqualified to explain Aboriginal issues to tourists and are concerned tourists do not get an opportunity to learn about local culture.

Cultural Centre Dreamtime

By Yasmine Willan

The award-winning Dreamtime Cultural Centre in Rockhampton (central Queensland) is run with a blend of canny business sense and innovation by a former army regimental sergeant major.

Bob Blair, the ATSC Central Queensland Regional Council Chairperson, runs this indigenous tourism operation with a firm and imaginative hand. He and 27 indigenous part-time/casual and full-time staff are finely tuned for performance.

"A big hurdle we have overcome is staff attitude to work commitment and work hours," Bob says. "I have never tolerated one person working on what we call 'Mum-time'."

"It was not acceptable here, it is still not acceptable here. If you have a bus here at 8.45 a.m. and you don't come till 9.00 a.m. that bus won't come back."

"From me down we strive to make us better. We want to be the best just because we're black. We can compete, we're up there with the best of them."

The only disadvantage Bob sees for indigenous tourism operators is that they have to be better to be seen as being as good as the rest.

"Indigenous tourism operators... have to be better to be seen as being as good as the rest."

He says there is a saying in Rockhampton that the Dreamtime Cultural Centre is run like a white organisation.

He asks: "How is a white organisation run? Does it make

money, is it efficient, does it look after its staff, are its eating and toilet areas clean? Then I would ask: How does a black organisation run anyway?"

Bob has struck a unique balance in creating a successful indigenous tourism venture by combining the best of black and white expertise. He has capitalised on indigenous culture and advice while not isolating the project from wider support.

The concept for the Centre, first promoted by the Central Queensland Aboriginal Corporation for Cultural Activities, was approved by the former Department of Aboriginal Affairs in 1986.

Building started on 10.8 hectares of leased Rockhampton City Council land with an \$850,000 Bicentennial Authority grant and a \$250 000 Aboriginal Development Commission grant. Bob was hired as General Manager.

"We formed a registered company to avoid the pitfalls of politics within the community and to ensure we had expertise on the Board," Bob says.

"We have three blacks and two whites on the Board. A lot of Aboriginal groups I talk to are amazed that we have two whites on the Board."

ATSC currently provides funding for the Centre but Bob foresees this drying up in four years.

This prospect has convinced him to change focus from continuing to be a government-funded cultural centre to becoming self-funded within four years.

To accomplish this, ATSC will hire a marketing professional on a one-year contract to actively market the Centre and train two indigenous staff in



General Manager Bob Blair

marketing to continue the program.

Over a three-year period, ATSC funding has been reduced from \$670,000 per annum to \$510,000 while gate money has steadily increased and has been ploughed back into the Centre.

Currently the Centre takes \$175,000 in gate money per annum; this is expected to increase to \$235,000 by the end of 1994.

Staff wages are partially covered by ATSC's Enterprise Employment Assistance Scheme, which provides a weekly subsidy for each indigenous employee formerly unemployed.

Bob successfully applied to ATSC for funding to build a theatre restaurant complex on the grounds. This will expand the undercover facilities (a needed buffer for large crowds in wet weather) and increase conference capacity.

Accountability to the government and the public has given the Dreamtime Cultural Centre the credibility for ongoing funding.

"An ATSC representative has said you can see where every cent has been spent," Bob says. "We spend the money on what it was funded for. If it was \$100,000 for wages we spend it on wages."

He attributes the Centre's success to five main points: the management structure, accountability, staff training and performance, goals and pace.

More information about the Dreamtime Cultural Centre can be obtained by contacting: Bob Blair, Dreamtime Cultural Centre PO Box 6182 Rockhampton Qld 4702. Telephone: (077) 36 7222

Walkabout Travel

New booklet promotes indigenous tourism

The achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the tourism industry have been recognised in Canberra with the launch of a new publication called *A Talent for Tourism - Stories About Indigenous People in Tourism*.

Federal Minister for Tourism, Mr Michael Lee, said that 11 indigenous tourism operators had contributed to the publication, talking about their businesses and the sometimes rocky road to success.

"Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are embarking on some of the most innovative tourist projects right across Australia and, in the process, helping to attract visitors to this fast growing market," Mr Lee said.

"Their projects are unique and enterprising and add a valuable dimension to Australia's national identity. Yet like many businesses they have faced challenges and have come up with their own solutions to issues such as marketing, management, promotion and quality," he said.

The booklet aims to increase awareness in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities of the opportunities available to them through involvement in the tourism industry.

It also aims to demonstrate to the tourism industry and the Australian community that the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism enterprises is increasing.

"There are significant numbers of Australian and overseas tourists who want to experience and learn about authentic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture," Mr Lee said.

The different approaches to tourism taken by the operators in this booklet demonstrate that indigenous people interested in the tourism industry may choose the style of tourism and control the extent of their involvement.

"The businesses in *A Talent for Tourism* all have these ingredients, but they are all involved in the tourism industry in their own way."

"If indigenous people want to become involved in tourism, there are many sources they can call on for information and advice to help them decide on the style of involvement that they wish to pursue," he said.

Some of the projects featured in the booklet are:

• Umorruk and Patalis, An

environmentally sensitive tourist safari venture based in Arnhem Land which runs tours of Aboriginal rock art, culture and wilderness areas;

• Tjapukai Dance Theatre: A well established dance group that has become a magnet to tourists in the Cairns region; and

• Desert Tracks: A bush college which runs educational ecotours teaching Aboriginal law, culture and lifestyle.

• For more information contact Geoff Brown, Department of Tourism, on (06) 279 7142.

RIGHT: Federal Minister for Tourism, Michael Lee... Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are embarking on some of the most innovative tourist projects right across Australia.



WARRUMBUNGLE TRAVEL CENTRE PTY. LTD.
ACN 003 344 002 7100

KOORI TRAVEL WORLD

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Coonabarabran NSW 2357
068 422977 068 421936 fax

PO Box 819, Taree NSW 2430
Shop 2/51 Old Bar Rd, Old Bar NSW 2430
065 533250 065 533252 fax

Thank you for the opportunity of allowing us to present our company, Koori Travel World. We are a totally owned Aboriginal Enterprise.

We are asking you to give us the opportunity to quote on any or all of your travel needs. By doing this you will see that our prices are very competitive.

Koori Travel World is an expansion of Koori Wholesale Suppliers, totally owned and operated by Aboriginal people. Both of these companies are based in NSW. Koori Travel World began trading on Monday 1 June 1993 by Mr T. Kellner and Mr D. Rennberg. We believe that we are the only Aboriginal Travel Agency in Australia. Our company policy is to employ as many Aboriginal people as possible, in fact we have just employed 3 Aboriginal ladies to train as travel consultants.

We believe that being Aboriginal is just not enough when it comes to business. Our attention to detail and overall professional relationships with our customers, together with a bold and aggressive marketing campaign. The Koori Travel World will match or better any prices that you or your organisation may come up with. We can achieve this through our affiliation with the Harvey World Travel franchise. Harvey World Travel franchise are all owned by individual persons such as ourselves. This affiliation gives us the opportunity to offer you together with your organisation and Aboriginal communities throughout Australia to purchase airfares and accommodation at a rate less than you currently enjoy.

The services we presently offer are:

DISCOUNT AIRFARES (Ansett, Australian, Qantas and International Airlines)

DISCOUNT ACCOMMODATION (From 5 star to the low cost range)

CAR HIRE (Budget, Avis, Thrifty, Hertz)

BUS HIRE (From 8 seaters to luxury 52 seater)

CONFERENCE VENUES

PRIVATE HOLIDAYS

AND ALL BUSINESS TRAVEL

Koori Travel World has already organised major conferences, some of these are:

The National Aboriginal Community controlled Health Organisation Conference in Cairns (over 200 people attended)

The Aboriginal Arts Management Association Conference in Sydney

(over 150 people attended)

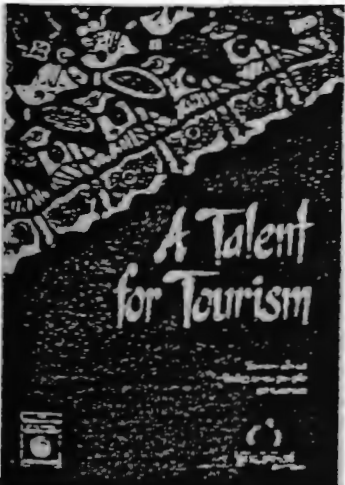
The NSW Health Resources Committee and we have the rights of The World Drug and Alcohol Conference in Sydney. (Estimated 3,000 to 5,000 people)

As part of our conference packages we have the facilities to reproduce a draft set of minutes from your meeting or conference almost instantly. Together with a computer disk and 90 minute audio cassette recording. To make your meeting or conference a complete success we have the mobile facilities of up to 64 microphones and a public address system to be used at any one time. This will give you the ability to conduct your meeting to the highest possible standard. Every person will not only hear but have the chance of being heard.

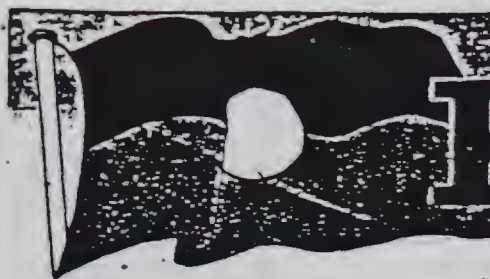
Looking forward to hearing from you to discuss this matter in greater depth.

TOGETHER THROUGH ENTERPRISE
TOM KELLNER - GENERAL MANAGER

Specialist in Conferences and Business Travel for Kooris
Doing it the Koori Way



The front cover of the new publication *A Talent for Tourism - Stories About Indigenous People in Tourism*.



Koori Mail

THE FORTNIGHTLY NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER NEWSPAPER

EIGHTY FOURTH EDITION

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 1994

Editorial, Advertising Phone (08) 222 666
Fax (08) 222 600
Recommended and maximum price \$1.50

THAT'S OUR GOLDEN GIRL!

Triumphant and defiant

Cathy Freeman waves from the podium after receiving her gold medal for the women's 400m race at the Commonwealth Games in Victoria, Canada.

Cathy's electrifying performance in the 200m and 400m and the crushing blow of being disqualified in the 400m relay has seen her name go down in the record books as one of this country's greatest achievers. She racked up wins on more than the sporting field. Her defiant gestures with the Aboriginal flag won her international favour and created a political furor back home and awareness over the reconciliation issue.

But Cathy was not the only Indigenous athlete to bring back glory for this country. Robert Peden, James Swan and Kyle Vander-Kuyp produced exceptional results.

NATIONWIDE Roundup

NT

Claims by the Minister for Sport and Recreation that Uluru traditional owners are seeking to ban rock climbers, and that it is blatantly obvious to visitors is denied by Kata Tjuta National Park management.

They say climbing the rock is dangerous and it's their responsibility to ensure that all safety precautions are taken.

PAGE 2

WA

A controversial Perth based diamond exploration company has become the first mining company to suffer a criminal conviction for carrying out work on an Aboriginal sacred site.

It was claimed Cambridge Gulf Exploration be had deliberately and wilfully ignored the Sacred Sites Act.

PAGE 3

TAS

The Tasmanian government has offered Aborigines ownership of Oyster Cove in what is being described as a major turnaround on the issue of land rights.

The proposed handover was raised during a meeting with the Premier.

PAGE 3

QLD

A young man's love for his father brought Australia its first boxing gold medal since 1976 when bantamweight Robert Peden narrowly defeated England's Spencer Oliver to take out the 54kg division at the Commonwealth Games in Victoria, Canada.

PAGE 20

APPENDIX III
DOCUMENTS RELATED TO THE *KOORI MAIL* OPERATION

Page

1- 11	Consultants reports on <i>Koori Mail</i> operation - Ian Snell, author, dated 13 January 1993 - Ian Snell, author, dated 19 May 1993 - Robert Wilson, author, dated 15 June 1993.
12-13	Memorandum, Dona Graham to John Toohey - dated 24 January 1994
14-26	Excerpts from "Business Plan", Bygal Weahunir Holding Company - date: c. January 1994

13 January 1993

The Board of Directors
PO Box 117
LISMORE NSW 2480

KOORI MAIL

The Koori Mail should be a serious publication representing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It must always remain viable as a business, and to be seen as a strong and successful newspaper. There is enormous benefit for State and Federal Governments, and even large Shire Councils so that information can be given more freely to gain more understanding. This can be quite a powerful medium.

I have broken this report up into four areas:

Advertising;
Subscriptions;
Editorial; and
General

On the advertising side the revenue is going to come from interstate. At present this is not being done particularly well as the interstate representatives have not been briefed at all, and I would like to run through the following comments that were given to me by the appointed representatives:

VICTORIA - Barry Cameron. Media sales has never seen a copy of the Koori Mail. Needs plenty of information and weekly contact by the advertising department. Prospects are large-companies such as Boral, people that have large building contracts with the Aboriginal people, i.e., the Aboriginal Department of Housing, and some Federal Government contacts in Victoria, plus State Government, Universities and Shire Councils;

BRISBANE - Marion Heine, does not receive regular copies. Would like to do so. Ms Heine is the person who will make calls on behalf of advertising of Koori Mail. Weekly contact giving them ideas of features or special interest so calls can be made on their behalf. Pleasant reception, possible mileage;

ADELAIDE - Mark Hastwell, Principal of Hastwell and Williamson. Never heard of Koori Mail, never seen a copy. Contact, Tom Raggatt. Plenty of good ideas, information. Wrong telephone numbers printed on rate card. Not a lot of communication at all;

SYDNEY - Tony Magic, has sighted the paper, made contact with John Toohey. Results achieved will be beneficial to the paper. John should contact Sydney and Canberra personally in the near future. Major federal government advertising is all located in these areas, and approximately eleven creative advertising agencies with money to spend. Rest are located in Canberra. Would be beneficial if alot more contact is made with these people, and calls to advertising offices should be made by himself. Not left to representative in Sydney;

WESTERN AUSTRALIA - Kevin O'Keefe Media Services, never heard of publication, wants whole package sent. All require regular newspapers. three each per edition, good prospects in Western Australia. Education, State councils, and a number of advertisements coming into the Northern Territory News and the Centralian Advocate put in by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission.

Although a far better result in advertising is being achieved than in the earlier issues, it can be improved further. Most of the advertising will emanate from these sources. Where possible it is good to try and get the advertising direct, and in many cases it has been happening, so that commission have been saved. John should clarify the representatives position carefully so that the paper only pays commission on new business.

John Toohey can't be the whole of Australia. Information needs to go out to the right people on a regular basis to achieve decent results.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

This papers strength is in subscriptions. There are various forms of getting people to part with their money to pay for a newspaper. There must always be a coupon subscription with some form of incentive in the paper every issue. I would suggest that the two subscriptions going to the one household currently being run should receive a flag, I would also suggest that if people paid their subscription to the Koori Mail within fourteen days they receive a free Koori Mail cap, displaying the words, "I like the Koori Mail", or something similar to make them a part of the paper.

A huge push should be made in the selling of subscriptions to libraries, schools and embassies.

Your newspaper distribution company must find it hard to get out to distant and remote areas on a regular basis, but I would check out larger areas like Moree to make sure they are receiving ample copies.

The Koori Mail must have Bankcard, Mastercard, Visacard facilities, as more people are obtaining these, and this means that you will not have to bother sending out an account. When people phone in regarding their subscription, you can quickly obtain their card number, and monies have already been received.

EDITORIAL

It doesn't appear to be satisfactory in meeting the philosophy of the publication. The editorial person needs to work within the budget set down by the General Manager. The costs are far too high for a publication of this type.

The issue of October 7, 1992 (the opinion piece) must never happen. It is against all ethics of journalism to suppress letters to the editor. The paper does not reflect a national flavour. It is more of a local Lismore and northern New South Wales publication. I see the editor's job being more of a production editors position, collecting copy, briefs Australia wide and giving the stories their due attention thus improving the quality of the publication. Good stringers in each state are required. The cost can be very little or nothing as they are receiving nation-wide publicity.

The content of the paper needs the following ingredients:

Interstate briefs, to make each state feel they are part of the paper. The paper has been advertised as covering Aboriginal lifestyle and culture and to this date has not done the job. It is essential that history and culture should appear every issue, as they are areas that will appeal to schools and tertiary institutions. Readers competitions, small prizes, say sports bags, hats, books, etc., one adult and one child. Letter to the editor should be limited to 350 words to allow more comment in the paper we need to ask our readers to contribute regularly to us for wider views.

I would suggest an outside editorial opinion on the way the direction of the Koori Mail should go.

One person should report to the board, and that is the General Manager.

I believe the staff should be all under one roof as it is a team with a common goal. I found some people doing unnecessary work. Vicki entering all hard copy that is sent in by contributors which I believe is not warranted and that the editor should sort out the copy that should have a chance of appearing in the paper. With a small staff, you just can't carry that type of unnecessary work.

The editorial staff cannot move advertisements or pages. It must come from the General Manager if there is any movement to be done. The paper can lose revenue if this persists. The Link advertisement not to run. This is valuable editorial space.

GENERAL

The staff at the Koori Mail office appear to be a cheerful lot. I am pleased to see that the young people have enthusiasm.

There should be an incentive program for everybody in the office, whether it be a junior or somebody entering subscriptions, selling advertising, entering copy into a computer. They are all part of a team, and they all want to share in the success of the newspaper. I am suggesting that if a break even figure for the fortnight is reached, (\$12,000) the staff should share in some enthusiasm of achieving a goal;

I believe that the flexi day should cease at the Koori Mail. It is not part of the Northern Star, and therefore should make it's own rules;

The office should open at nine o'clock. the staff members should have an hour for lunch, which allows them to get away from the environment of the office, and finish at five, and that because of the location of the office, a half day shopping day fortnightly should take place instead of the flexi. This will then come as a matter of reward, rather than starting at unnecessary times and will get the moral of the place up;

The paper should certainly be a training ground for Aboriginal people. An editorial cadet would be ideal. The person should be under the control of the Northern Star's training-scheme. If that could be implemented it would have enormous benefits. There must be control with the young people, and it will benefit them if they can come out of the cadetship a lot faster.

Talk to each other alot more. I found that there were a number of cases when the right hand didn't know what the left hand was doing.

For instance if there is a supplement coming up, the editorial staff should be given plenty of notice, and if editorial comes in as an add on benefit, that the General Manager, together in consultation with the journalist, should decide what editorial promises are going to be met.

The developing of photographs has been taking far too long, therefore there should be some answers to getting this problem fixed. This too, can help the standard of the paper on to its next level.

Koori Mail really needs to stand on its own two feet. In the next phase of planning for better management, desk top publishing is certainly an option to save a lot of production costs and allow bottom line to be far better. It's easy to lease, or buy second hand, simple equipment that will save heavy production costs and give you much more control of the paper.

DEADLINES

Deadlines are very important for the smooth running and the economy of the publication.

20 page issue

Kids page finished during off week.

On week

7 pages 5pm Tuesday

4 pages 5pm Wednesday

6 pages 5pm Thursday

2 pages-12 noon Friday

Premiums, selling merchandise for profit. This can be a success and promote the paper. Items such as Koori Mail sports bags, hats, umbrellas, mugs, etc. Use suppliers where the paper doesn't have to hold stock. John has been briefed on this matter.

Summing up, I found the staff at the Koori Mail office pleasant:

John Toohey - is enthusiastic, he will gain experience as he takes this paper along the way. He must control all monies, budget and staff matters;

Vicki Payne - enjoys the job and I believe is doing excellent work for the paper. She is doing an unnecessary job of inputting hard copy that doesn't in the main get printed. You could use her talents in a far more productive way in circulation and subscriptions and general office duties. That would allow Tim to go back and finish his cadetship;

Stuart West - is keen and is looking to further his career in newspapers;

Tim Paden - an excellent young man, I am very disappointed his editorial cadetship was cut short. He is doing an excellent job of selling subscriptions, and enthusiastic in a rather boring job;

Kelly Boyd - a young 18 year old girl, while she may leave for greener pastures, I hope she stays as she is a bright young girl and the paper needs young people with enthusiasm to make it work.

I believe that the Koori Mail has a bright future as long as people keep their feet firmly on the ground and make sensible decisions it will grow from strength to strength.

I prefer a weekly or monthly publication but as your circulation company has to deliver to far flung areas, Koori Mail should stay a fortnightly publication at this stage. Never make it into a magazine because it must have that serious authority as a voice for the Aboriginal people, and only a newspaper can do this.

I do hope my comments have been of some benefit to you.

Yours sincerely



Ian Snell

THE KOORI MAIL

I felt a vast improvement since last visiting the paper.

I receive the paper regularly and always make a point of going through it to see what coverage there is Australia wide. I am pleased to say that the paper is taking on a national flavour and that is a very important step in making it acceptable as a serious medium.

One thing I would like to comment about is more pictures be used, and the quality and clarity of the pictures made a lot clearer.

I feel as though it is folly to print a picture that is difficult to recognise the people in it. I am also glad to see that the publication is carrying more inserts.

Making it more interesting as a whole, I would like to see more feature pages in the paper. I am very happy to see that there has been some excellent features this year and that needs to progress further. Not only advertorial, but editorial as well, particularly with sport which could attract some advertising, I feel that this is an integral part of a newspaper.

The printing of the newspaper still seems to be too costly and the Northern Star is charging plenty. I would like to see the paper out of their clutches or at least give them the opportunity to requote. We can get a far better deal elsewhere. People like Rural press (one example) do an excellent job, another company called Media Press. I favour Rural Press as they have an office here in Lismore and therefore a lot of their equipment is compatible with their factory in Sydney and is a quicker turn around to our distributor down there.

This needs to be looked at in 1994 because I can see some enormous savings there.

The newspaper can be run as a commercial proposition that can be clinically run. This can return some small profits very quickly but in the long term look at the young people working at the Koori Mail, even though people have left, and continue to do so, I feel that there has been benefit for them and there is benefit for the next employee and this is one of the primary reasons for the existence of the Koori Mail. It's a training ground and I feel that young people who may have started in the advertising department can be a square peg in a round hole.

Consultant report 24/1/93

Rather than just sack them, try them in another area. It may be composing when the paper converts to desk top publishing, it could be doing layouts, circulation, a cadet editorial person or as an advertising sales person.

The important thing is, that as time goes on, the people that go through the Koori Mail leave as better people and be able to benefit the community as a whole.

I would like to see an editorial cadet there full time. I know we have a part time editorial editor which is suitable at this stage. Training young people is important, even if they move on to radio or a magazine, or whatever they decide to do at the end of their course, I believe the paper has again contributed to benefiting that young person.

The advertising sales side needs to have a commercial approach and needs a tele-marketer: that is a person that is going to sell hard on the telephone or follow up letters or particular features throughout the year. At the present I feel that is lacking somewhat.

That brings us to the question of incentives. How to make young people work. I believe that on that side, there could be grounds for changing some of the junior staffs commission incentives. I believe the sales staff should get paid a percentage of what they sell rather than the present system which is if the paper achieves a particular figure, they get part of the action. If their not contributing very much, I don't believe they should get more. Incentive schemes, commissions and the like are for people who put in extra effort.

Staff doing jobs other than advertising selling, whether they are doing the layouts or front counter girl Friday, or selling circulation. If that person is employed in that position and they are doing a good job there should be a regular review and they should know that they have done a good job and could receive an increase in salary. Commission structures can sometimes turn out to be a little unfair where people get something for nothing, I think particularly with this newspaper that all the young people that come here should have to work for what they get.

Whether they choose to stay or leave, and young people do tend to move jobs a little more than they are used to, it is important that they go out with the right attitude.

I feel that it is time that the General Manager should be showing his face around the major advertisers, not only around Lismore, but all major capital cities. It is important to show the flag. We have sales representatives in each of the states, but they don't do alot because they need the guidance from the Manager who should go with them to see the major advertisers that will support this newspaper.

I have always found when management see their independent representatives regularly, an improvement in advertising, when you start looking at revenue that come out of Sydney and Canberra, they are important markets for us and must not be neglected.

Representatives in each state look after more than our newspaper so therefore if we don't push them hard they wont give us the effort that we require.

This is not a nine to five job.. It is a job that requires dedication. Whether it be nine o'clock at night or six o'clock in the morning, so again The Manager has to be a special type of person to really have the enthusiasm to make this newspaper work.

And finally, I think that everybody should be reviewed from time to time. Lets not neglect people because they happen to be the servants of the Company. If somebody is doing a good job, let pat them on the back and reward that person. It is important.

callicoma publishing services

Robert Wilson
Author/Journalist

8 CALLICOMA ROAD
SEAFORTH NSW 2092
Phone (02) 949 3621
Fax (02) 907 0887

June 15 1993

I have been asked by Mr Ian Snell to make comparisons between the Koori Mail editions of January 13 1993 and May 19 1993? in terms of editorial content and display.

I base my opinions on experience and expertise gained over 37 years of journalism, which includes working on three continents and twice being an editor of a daily newspaper.

The two editions show significant differences in style and content, with the January edition containing 33 items (plus 12 pictures), and the May edition 48 items (20 pictures). Both newspapers were 20 pages.

JANUARY 13 EDITION

Overall, the impression is given of a newspaper which is slabby, with stories given more length than they deserve, lapses in attention to detail, a number of instances of stories being unstructured and lacking in journalistic shaping or sub-editing. Pages are boring and present little to attract the reader, who is given little encouragement or help.

In the newspaper's favour, headlines are confined to sans serif type faces which all broadly belong to the same family.

Page 1, main story: loosely written, and over-long.

Page 2, Cartoon too large.

Mafi-Williams letter is much too long, could have been cut by half without losing its impact.

?? The last letter ends in the middle; what happened to the remainder?

Page 3, Main story subjectively written. It could have been told just as well by straight reporting of the facts, which stand up for themselves. The bold story is divorced from the main story of which it should be part.

Pp 4-5 No illustration, in either editorial or advertising, to relieve the type, apart from one small logo.

Pp 6-7 Ditto.

Page 9 Good story, could have been told better.

Page 10 Picture too large, looks as if it was cropped to conveniently sit on top of the ad. The photo could have been cropped to single column width, and another story put in column 1.

Page 14 Rambling story, no beginning, no end. Should have been entirely rewritten.

2/...

- Page 17 So this is where the remainder of the page 2 letter went! There are turn lines on neither p2 nor p17.
- Page 19 A good idea, poorly presented. If the story had been given some display, it would have been extremely readable, and a picture would have helped.
- Page 20 Too long, writing should have been radically tightened, no photograph.

MAY 19 EDITION

This is a much busier paper, with more stories and pictures than the previous edition. It is a tighter, more professional and better-produced paper, but there is still some careless lack of attention to detail.

Headlines are also a confusing mixture of serif and sans serif type faces which do nothing to improve the newspaper's appearance. Choose one style or the other.

- Page 1 Pointers attractively presented with good use of colour and design, marred only by the headline. It should have been bigger, on a solid colour background. Picture is divorced from story by a line rule, and caption is badly set. The small maps are a useful, and cosmetic touch, but the place names are much too small to read.
- Page 2 ~~Cartoon~~ still too large, despite floating. Picture caption should be under the picture, not under the story.
- Page 3 Same picture as in other edition (p 10). This is how it should be cropped. Solid reverse story looks too much like an ad.
- Page 4 Much better letters page. Shorter letters, and essential information giving details of where letters should be sent to, a MUST in any letters page
- Page 5 Interesting story. Could have been displayed much better, to attract people into reading it. In this manner, it is presented as just another story.
- Pp 8-9 Too blocky. P 8 picture worth only single column. P 9 picture what is he holding, no caption. A filler should have been forced into each page.
- P 12-13 Confusion about weight of stories results in visual mish-mash. P 13 bold story too wide, should have been s/c or 1.5 column width.
- P 20 No caption on picture. What is a Sports Bag? Results box should contain details.

365 Wilson

MEMORANDUM

To: John Toohey - General Manager

From: Dona Graham - Editor

Date: January 24, 1994

Subject: Advertising position

John,

At the staff meeting on Wednesday, 12/1/94, and in subsequent conversations, you identified the need for another advertising representative; and the financial constraints the company is currently operating under. I ask you and the Board of Directors to consider the following proposal which I believe would not only be self funding, but also highly profitable.

As we have discussed previously, Features -eg: education, health etc... have the potential to generate a generous income at minimal cost. And it is in this area that we have yet to capitalize on utilising our existing staff. It is the end of January already and we have no confirmed Features program for '94 and the opportunity for a 'Back to School' feature is fading fast.

I would ask you and the Board to consider expanding my role to include Features on a permanent/part time basis in conjunction with my existing casual duties as Editor. I envisage it would only take two days per week, initially to do all the leg work and get the program up and running - designing the flyers, establishing the client data base etc...- before settling down to maybe, three days a fortnight on average.

By combining my existing role with that of Features it will pay immediate dividends. From experience John you know that if the 'Editor' rings a potential client to participate in a Feature their response will far out strip anything the Advertising Manager can do because the Editor is in a stronger position to bargain. The Editor can use the lure of free editorial space to secure ads - which costs us nothing - whereas the Advertising Manager can only negotiate on money and that means discounting ads.

It would also make better use of my time. I can sell an ad and confirm copy details - length, format and photos at the same time. With one person managing both sides - ads and editorial - from start to finish you minimize the potential for errors and lost income.

I think you would also have to agree that Stuart works better in a team environment than on his own and as I have over 10 years of experience handling Features, he can only benefit from this arrangement and his work output is sure to increase.

In the last quarter of 1993, I worked on two features that went on to become the two largest ever produced by the Koori Mail (a 36 page Education theme in August and another Education feature 20 pages in October).

They were both completed on schedule, but in both cases not only did costs blow out dramatically, but income was lost solely due to a lack of organisation by the advertising department. May I suggest that this might not have occurred if my proposal had been in place.

John, the relationship between Editorial and Advertising at the Koori Mail is its greatest strength. We put out a newspaper each fortnight without any screaming or name calling, loss of sanity or hair - it is a terrific team effort. Very rare are the occasions where Editorial has knocked back a request from Advertising and only then based on sound publication principles and never have I refused to change layouts to accommodated ads.

I ask for the opportunity to discuss my proposal in person and how we can use it to capitalize on our strength. As discussed, I will be on leave until Monday, February 14, 1993 and would be available anytime from that date.

Regards,



BUSINESS PLAN

BUSINESS NAME: - Bygal Weahunir Holding Company
of Budsoar Pty Ltd Trading as:
Koori Mail

ADDRESS: - Suite 1/73 Magellan Street
LISMORE NSW 2480

POSTAL ADDRESS: - PO Box 117
LISMORE NSW 2480

TELEPHONE NO: - (066) 222 666

FAX NO: - (066) 222 600

AMOUNT REQUIRED: \$80,000

CONTENTS

	Page
1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION	4
3. CORPORATE STRUCTURE	5
4. MARKET DETAILS	6
5. BUSINESS OBJECTIVES	7

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Koori Mail was established in Lismore in May 1991 when the first edition was produced and was privately owned by Mr Owen and Sue Carriage.

The newspaper ran into financial difficulties in its infancy and was subsequently taken over by the Northern Star Pty. Ltd in satisfaction of debts incurred by the proprietors.

The Northern Star consulted with Aboriginal elders and determined that they would offer a 80% shareholding to Aboriginal communities.

Five local Aboriginal communities combined together to make application to ATSIC for funding to purchase 80% share holding and ASTIC subsequently made a one off grant of \$226,000 to purchase the shareholdings.

The following communities each own 16% of the Koori Mail

- Buyinbin Aboriginal Corporation (CASINO)
- Bundjalung Tribal Society (LISMORE)
- Bunjum Aboriginal Co-operative (CABBAGE TREE
(ISLAND))
- Kurrachee Aboriginal co-operative (CORAKI)
- Nungera Aboriginal Co-operative (MACLEAN)

Whilst savings have been made which have led to the Koori Mail showing sustained growth and profitability the true potential to further increase our profitability has not be realised due to the large production costs incurred with the Northern Star.

The only way to reduce these costs is to produce the pages of the paper using desk top publishing equipment to get the pages to a camera ready state.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Koori Mail is making this application for loan funding to cover the following:

- \$54,000 Pay-out of Northern Star loan
- \$26,000 To purchase a desk-top publishing equipment
(as per attached quotes)

The Northern Star have indicated that they no longer wish to be involved with the Koori Mail and have been putting pressure on the current board to repay the Northern Star loan.

The Northern Star have indicated that they will sell their 20% shareholding to the Koori Mail for \$20.00 when the loan account is repayed.

The board of Directors feel that by repaying the Northern Star loan and becoming 100% Aboriginal owned and managed they will become role models for other Aboriginal business enterprises. This will also allow the Koori Mail the independence and flexibility to negotiate better deals with our suppliers and producers. The board feels that the desk top publication methods to a camera ready stage is the only way to achieve reduced production costs and open the way for the Koori Mail to become a publishing house in its own right.

We anticipate that it could take three to six months before we see the benefits flow to the Koori Mail, but from that point onwards we should make savings in the production costs in the order of \$1,250.00 - \$2,000.00 per edition (\$32,000 - \$50,000 per annum). (see attached Cash-flow)

The Koori Mail board feels our application for funding through ATSIC's Business Funding Scheme is unique in that it does not necessarily meet all the guidelines set out in the application.

The Koori Mail has now been operating for 2 1/2 years and has become recognised as the national voice of Aboriginal Australia, this was recently recognised by the awarding of the Council for aboriginal Reconciliation Special award for the Aboriginal enterprise most advancing relations between Aboriginals and the wider Australian community.

The terms of ATSIC's guidelines stress the commercial viability of the enterprise and that it provide sufficient profit to meet loan repayments.

The financial statements attached will show the difference in profitability that can be made by producing our paper to a camera ready stage.

The increased profitability is more than enough to meet repayment of a loan of this size over 5 years.

The proposed security could take the form of a bill of sale over the following:

1. Office equipment \$40,000 (include desk-top publisher)
2. Mast Head of the newspaper (estimated valuation \$116,000)
3. Debtors register (estimated valuation \$70,000 - \$100,000 variable month to month)

The preferred options of security would be a bill of sale over the masthead of the newspaper and we believe the estimated value is correct and indeed could be worth considerably more taking into account the profitability and acceptance of the Koori Mail as the national voice of Aboriginal Australia.

Advertising revenue for the foreseeable future is virtually guaranteed as the Koori Mail occupies a niche market, this is recognised by government bodies and advertising agencies.

BUSINESS OBJECTIVES

To produce and expand already established National Aboriginal newspaper (Koori Mail).

The newspaper to date has been produced by a small team based in Lismore with the compositing and printing being done by the local regional newspaper (Northern Star).

Our objective is to repay the Northern Star loan of \$54,000 and to expand our operation by the purchasing of desk top publishing equipment at a estimated cost of \$26,000.

The purchase of this equipment will allow all pages of the newspaper to be produced and composited in house without dependence on the Northern Star.

MARKET DETAILS

- 2.1 Currently distributing the Koori Mail Australia wide with sales by subscription and Newsagent direct.
- 2.2 The production of a fortnightly National Aboriginal newspaper of the highest standard.
- 2.3 Growing at 70% real terms.
- 2.4 The Koori Mail continues to gain wider acceptance through out Australia with Government agencies and other advertisers realising the full potential to reach the Aboriginal populous.
- 2.5 The Koori Mail has expected sale levels of \$470,000 for the 1993/94 financial year. (see attached cash-flow)
- 2.6 At this stage the Koori Mail is the only national Aboriginal newspaper and it is not anticipated that any competition in the foreseeable future will arise.
- 2.7 The major client base for services of Koori Mail are Government agencies, Tertiary Institutions, private advertises, Aboriginal community organisations.
- 2.8 The Koori Mail is produced to the highest standard and competitively priced to meet the needs of their target market.
- 2.9 The paper is sold direct through news agencies and subscriptions and distributed Australia wide by Inter News Distribution Pty. Ltd.
- 2.10 The Koori Mail utilises Advertising, direct mail, direct calling, trade fairs, tele-marketing and sponsorship of major promotions to enhance its profile within the market.
- 2.11 Advertising and sales are of a repetitive nature and at present averaging \$40.000 per month. We recently secured a contract from D.E.E.T. valued at \$80,000 to produce quarterly supplements and we believe this to be the first of many contracts that will become available from government agencies.

* This page is to be read in conjunction with Page 6 of the B.C.L. business plan format. (Market)

KOORI MAIL

STAFFING;

Position	Name	To be recruited Yes/No	Date Reqd.	Salary
General Manager	John Toohey	No	-	35,000
Editor	Dona Graham	No.	-	35,000
Advertising Manager	Stewart West	No.	-	28,000
Subscription Officer	Natajsia Lopic	No	-	24,000
Receptionist/ Clerk	Vicki Payne	No	-	24,000
Junior Clerk	Megan Hickling	No	-	21,000
Computer Graphics operator	?	Yes	Jan 94	28,000
Compositor	?	Yes	Jan 94	25,000

All Staff are to be cross trained with training provided by accredited trainers through Lismore TAFE college and Lismore Skillshare as well as on-the-job training programs.

CORPORATE STRUCTURE

The Koori Mail company structure is shown below with Bygal Weahunir Pty Ltd being the holding company and Budsoar Pty Ltd being the operating company.

Bygal Weahunir Pty Ltd
Account No. 055-283-479

The Shareholders are:

Buyinbin	20%
Bunjum	20%
Kurrachee	20%
Nungera	20%
Bundjalung	20%

Budsoar Pty. Ltd
Account No. 003 513 488

The Shareholders are:

Northern Star	20%
Buyinbin	16%
Bundjalung	16%
Bunjum	16%
Kurrachee	16%
Nungera	16%

The Northern Staar have agreed to sell their 20% shareholding for \$20 once we repay the loan account (\$54,000 outstanding). The Northern Star shareholding would then be distributed to the other shareholders.

The current board of Directors is made up of two representatives from each of the Aboriginal communities the Northern Star has elected that they have no representation on the board.

BUDGETED PROFIT & LOSS (CAMERA READY)
PERIOD ENDED 30/8/94

SALES	Jul-93	Aug-93	Sep-93	Oct-93	Nov-93	Dec-93	Jan-94	Feb-94	Mar-94	Apr-94	May-94	Jun-94	TOTAL
Advertising	26536	48304	25636	35536	44576	25536	26813	65863	26813	26813	45853	40219	427387
Circulation	1800	2700	1800	1800	2700	2700	2700	2700	2700	2700	2700	4050	31050
Subscriptions	6750	6750	6750	6750	6750	6750	6750	6750	6750	6750	6750	6750	81000
Sundry	100	100	100	100	100	100	800	800	800	800	800	800	6400
Wage Subsidies	3000	3000	3000	3000	3000	3000	3000	4250	4250	4250	4250	4250	42250
	37186	60054	37186	47106	57126	30006	40063	70353	41313	41313	60353	56069	587087
EXPENSES													
Salaries & Wages													
Editorial Wages	2884	4326	2884	2884	7884	2884	2884	7884	2884	2884	7884	4326	52492
Editorial Expenses	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	1200
Salaries - Sales	3736	5604	3736	3736	3736	3736	3736	3736	3736	3736	3736	5604	48568
Salaries - Administration	6190	7785	6190	6190	6190	6190	6190	6190	6190	6190	6190	7785	67470
Wages - Production							1600	1600	1600	1600	1600	2400	10400
Correspondents	1100	1100	1100	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	14100
Total Salaries	13010	18915	13010	13110	18110	13110	14710	19710	14710	14710	19710	21415	191230
Travelling Expenses	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	4200
KM Re-imbursment	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	2400
Superannuation	390	567	390	393	643	393	441	691	441	441	691	642	5927
Wages Oncosts	1301	1892	1301	1311	1811	1311	1471	1971	1471	1471	1971	2142	19123
Total Oncosts	2241	3009	2241	2254	2904	2254	2462	3112	2462	2462	3112	3334	31050
	16251	21924	15251	16364	21014	15364	17172	22022	17172	17172	22022	24749	226180
Overhead Costs													
Printing Charges	7680	16640	7680	10240	10240	7680	7168	7168	6378	6378	7168	8064	100180
Press Delivery	1700	1700	1700	1700	1700	1700	1700	1700	1700	1700	1700	1700	20400
Advertising & Promotion	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	6000
Audit Fees	650	650	650	650	650	650	650	650	650	650	650	650	7800
Bureau Fees	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	7200
Bank Charges	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	1200
Commission	1354	3330	1354	3554	2554	2554	2681	3681	2681	2681	2681	4022	33127
Cleaning	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	720
Directors Fees/Expenses	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	4800
General Expenses	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	3000
Insurance	225	225	225	225	225	225	225	225	225	225	225	225	2700
Electricity	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	840
Vehicle Leasing	504	504	504	504	504	504	504	504	504	504	504	504	6048
Vehicle Expenses	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	4200
Rent	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	9600
Postage	3150	3250	3250	3250	3250	3450	3450	3450	3450	3450	3450	3450	40300
Stationary	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	6000
Telephone	700	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	8950
Office Repairs	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	840
	19663	30749	19833	24693	23593	21233	20840	21040	19058	19058	20848	23085	261405
MTD Surplus(Deficit)	2272	8181	2102	7229	12519	1489	2042	25602	5084	5084	16602	8235	96603
YTD Surplus(Deficit)	2272	10153	12555	18784	32303	33792	35094	61517	66601	71605	80367	86603	96603

KODAK MAIL
BUDGETTED PROFIT & LOSS (CAMERA READY)
PERIOD ENDED 8Q6/95

SALES	JUN-94	AUG-94	SEP-94	OCT-94	NOV-94	DEC-94	JAN-95	FEB-95	MAR-95	APR-95	MAY-95	JUN-95	TOTAL
Advertising	37451	48491	27451	37451	60217	27451	27451	51491	27451	27451	60217	27451	458026
Circulation	2700	2700	2700	2700	4050	2700	2700	2700	2700	2700	4050	2700	35100
Subscriptions	6750	6750	6750	6750	6750	6750	6750	6750	6750	6750	6750	6750	81000
Sundry	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	9600
Wage Subsidies	4250	4250	4250	4250	4250	4250	4250	4250	4250	4250	4250	4250	51000
	51951	60991	41951	51951	76067	41951	41951	65991	41951	41051	76067	41951	634726
EXPENSES													
Salaries & Wages													
Editorial Wages	2884	7884	2884	2884	9328	2884	2884	7884	2884	2884	9328	2884	57192
Editorial Expenses	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108	109	110	111	1266
Salaries - Sales	3736	3736	3736	3736	5604	3736	3736	3736	3736	3736	5604	3736	48568
Salaries - Administration	5190	5190	5190	5190	7785	5190	5190	5100	5100	5190	7785	5190	67470
Wages - Production	1600	1600	1600	1600	2400	1600	1600	1600	1600	1800	2400	1600	20800
Correspondents	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	1200	14400
Total Salaries	14710	19711	14712	14713	26419	14716	14716	19717	14718	14719	26425	14721	209996
Travelling Expenses	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	350	4200
M Re-Imbursement	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	2400
Superannuation	441	591	441	441	793	441	441	592	442	442	793	442	6300
Wages Oncosis	1471	1971	1471	1471	2642	1472	1472	1972	1472	1472	2643	1472	21000
Total Oncosis	2462	3112	2463	2463	3984	2463	2483	3113	2463	2463	3985	2464	33899
	17172	22823	17175	17176	30403	17178	17179	22830	17181	17182	30410	17185	243895
Overhead Costs													
Printing Charges	7680	7680	5760	7680	10560	5760	5760	8640	5760	5760	10560	5760	87360
Press Delivery	1751	1751	1751	1751	1751	1751	1705	1705	1785	1785	1785	1785	21216
Advertising & Promotion	515	515	515	515	515	515	525	525	525	525	525	525	6240
Audit Fees	670	670	670	670	670	670	683	683	683	683	683	683	8112
Bureau Fees	618	618	618	618	618	618	630	630	630	630	630	630	7488
Bank Charges	103	103	103	103	103	103	105	105	105	105	105	105	1248
Commission	3745	2745	2745	3745	4118	2745	2745	3245	2745	2745	4118	2745	38187
Cleaning	62	62	62	62	62	62	63	63	63	63	63	63	749
Directors Fees/Expenses	412	412	412	412	412	412	420	420	420	420	420	420	4992
General Expenses	258	258	258	258	258	258	263	263	263	263	263	263	3120
Insurance	232	232	232	232	232	232	236	236	236	236	236	236	2808
Electricity	72	72	72	72	72	72	74	74	74	74	74	74	874
Vehicle Leasing	504	504	504	504	504	504	504	504	504	504	504	504	6048
Vehicle Expenses	361	361	361	361	361	361	368	368	368	368	368	368	4368
Rent	824	824	824	824	824	824	840	840	840	840	840	840	9984
Postage	3554	3554	3554	3554	3554	3554	3623	3623	3623	3623	3623	3623	43056
Stationary	536	536	536	536	536	536	548	546	546	546	546	546	6490
Telephone	773	773	773	773	773	773	780	780	788	788	788	788	9360
Office Repairs	72	72	72	72	72	72	74	74	74	74	74	74	874
	22739	21739	18819	22739	25992	19819	20029	23409	20029	20029	26201	20029	262572
(TD Surplus/(Deficit))	12040	16429	4958	12037	19672	4954	4743	19752	4741	4740	19455	4738	128258
(TD Surplus/(Deficit))	12040	28469	83428	45463	85135	70089	74892	84584	99325	104065	129520	128258	128258

Koori Mail

AN INDEPENDENT NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER NEWSPAPER

125 Union Street, Lismore, 2480

P.O. Box 117, Lismore, 2480

Telephone: (066) 22 2666

Fax: (066) 22 2600

TRAINING PLAN - DESKTOP PUBLISHING KOORI MAIL

It is proposed to expand the desktop publishing facilities of the Koori Mail should our application for funding be successful.

Initially we anticipate putting on at least one (1) trainee to acquire the skills and training required to operate this equipment.

Discussion with the CES and DEET indicate that we would be able to offer a formal training course by way of an apprenticeship in a print or graphic trade. This training could be undertaken by block release through TAFE or if that was not available, a course at University in Media communication could be considered.

DEET have indicated that wage subsidies up to 75% would be available.

APPENDIX IV
SAMPLE PAGES FROM THE *AMATAKU TJUKURPA* NEWSLETTER

Page

1	from Vol. 23 (27 September 1985)
2	from Vol. 41 (no date visible)
3	from Vol. 46 (11 July 1986)
4	from Vol. 51 (26 September 1986)
5	from Vol. 54 (17 October 1986)
6	from Vol. 59 (no date visible)
7	from Vol. 60 (6 December 1986)
8	Volume number and date obscured

Council meeting

Ngayulu Kuwari Wangkanyi.
Panya nganana Council
meeting wangkangi
mungantji. Ka Counciltu
alatji wangkangu anangu
kutjupatjara Watarku
tjarpara warkarinyi.
Store-ngka munu office-ngka
Ka alatji wiru wiya.



Date: 27-9-85

Volume No: 23

TAFE

Ka Counciltu alatji Wangkangi
uti anangunku workaku
mukuringkula Council nyangama
warkaku mukuringkula panya alatji wiru.

Ka Kutjupa anangu kutjupatjarangu Cheque
money mantjilpai munu piruku workanguru
mantjilpai. Ka law ngaranyi cheque mantjilpai
workangu money kulunypa mantjilpai.

Ka Kulinma kutjupatjarangu money cumilani
Community munu uti Council ngatjinma.
Tjanampa ti-iki wiya Kuju. Palu kutjupatjarangu
ngatjini ti-iki winkingku Ka alatji wiru wiya Kura.
Munu Kutjupa nyuntu ngatjini loanku-money wiya

Kulinma weekend nyangangka **Policeman**
pitjanya. Munula drunk tjuta nyakula
witilku. Palu wantima wirungku. Munu
Football-langka Kutju inkama winakitja panya

Kenneth Ken



Plate 5

Text 1 'Council Meeting' is above and opposite is Text 2 'Police Women'.

POLICE WOMEN

Nganana Kuwari Wangkara
Kuliningi

Panya Minyima police woman
piranpa pitjangu Amatalakutu.
Nganananya Wangkanti Kitja
Ka nganana ngapartji
palula Wangkangi tjinguru
wati Kuringku pungku Minyima
Ka tjinguru mapalku tjakultjura
palu? Panya warden Mankurta
Ka tjana ringamilani.
Ka Kungka police woman paluru
ini Cathynga. Palu tjinguru
nyuntunya rawangku punganyi
Ka mapalku Wangkama Wantinytja
Wiyangku. Palu paluru munu
maureennga pitjantjatjara
Councilta Warkaripai paluru
Pula- Kunyu ngula pitjanyti
ngura nyangaku.

NAMES CATHY

Amata kw
Tulurpa
11.7.86
no. 46

A black and white photograph of a man with dark, curly hair and a mustache. He is wearing a plaid jacket over a light-colored shirt. He is standing outdoors with trees in the background.

Watjilarinyina

Nganana Amatala nyinapai
ngura nganampangkātītūtjara alatjitu.

Munula putu ananyi ngura kutjupaku,
[Panya] nganana watjilaripoi. Panya
nganana ngura kutjungka pulkaringu.
Ka nganananya putu altipai, "Pitja unytju.
Arala alatai." Ka nganana wangkapai,
"Wiya wanti. Tjunini kura ngaranyi
watjilwatjilpa, palyana nyinanyi. Amatala."
Ka tjana wangkapai, "Unytjumantu pitja
Amatanya pilukatinytja wiya. Ngura
nyuntumpatu nyangatja ngaranyi,
nyuntutun kuwari ngura nyanga
palula pamparinganyi. Pitja iniwai."

[Polu utila] ngura kutjupaku
watjilarirampa, wirura nyinama
nguraritja wangkara. Munulanku
manta nganampa wirura. Kanyinma."
[Palu wiya] nyangatja tunguntungunpa
alatjitu. Jikira, pantira paraparangany
Kalanja ngunytjulu, mamalu, tjamulu,
kamilu, katjalu, munu untaltu tjana
nyanganyi. Munulanya alatji tjana
kulini, "Ngaltutjara kuntangka palatja,
Wanyuna ngayulu wamangka
pitulungka pulkanu? Wiya, Kuka malungka
nanta pulkanu."

Rene

Lesley

Amatoku Tjukurpa
17.10.86 v. 57.

PITJANTJATJARA COUNCIL

piruku

PULKARINGKUNTJAKU



Ruwaripatjara anangu uwankara Pitjantjatjara Council-ta ngarangi. Palulanguru nganana kunpu nyinangi. Munula anangu kutjupa tjuta pulkara alpamilanigi (Ngatjatjara tjuta); munula rawa tjunguringangi. Munu nganana minyma tjutangku kuliniigi nganana Minymaku Council-tjungkuntjikitjangku. Munula nyanga palulanguru rawa tjunguringangi mitingi pulkangka. Munula pulkara wangkangi watingku minymangku. Ka palulanguru Yangkuntjara tjuta pakanu tjanampa panya tjukuritja tjuta atunmankuntjikitja. Ka tjuta pakanyangka Pitjantjatjara Council tjukutjukuringu. Ka kunyu nyanga palulanguru piruku Homeland Council palyanu ngura walytja tjuta atunmankuntjikitjangku. Ka D.A.A.-ngku putu kulini mani panya ungkuntjikitjangku salary tjutarangkanyangka.

Palu nyanganguru lawyer-ngku wangkangu, uwankara malaku tjarpattjungkuntjaku Pit. Council-ta, Pit. Council piruku pulkaringkuntjaku. Kala uwankara Pit. Council-ta umbrella ngaraku. Ka nganana uti tjarpattjunku malakungku panya nganana manta anangu, winkingku mantjinu- Pitjantjatjarangu; Yangkuntjatjarangu, Ngatjatjarangu munu alinytjara tjutangku kulu nganana tjungu kunpu ngaranyangka D.A.A.-ngku nyakuku munulanya kulilku.

Anangu winkingu mitingi pulka ngaranyi Nyikukunala pina nyangatja wixaringkanyangka. Kala pulkara wangkara kulina palyalku nyana palula.

Originally all anangu were members of Pit. Council. This made them strong. We were able to help lots of others (e.g. the Ngatjatjara people) and met together often. Then we women decided to form the Womens Council. We always joined together at the big meetings, and we all spoke strongly, the men and women. Then the Yangkuntjatjara people left to care for their sacred places. When others also left, Pit. Council became small. Then after this, the Homelands Council was formed to care for all the smaller homelands. Now there are lots more salaries to pay and D.A.A. is confused, not knowing to whom to give the money.

However, now the lawyer has said that we should all come back to Pit. Council to make it strong again. We would all stand under the umbrella of Pit. Council and place everything under it again. Remember, it was together that we got our land - Pitjantjatjara, Yangkuntjatjara, Ngatjatjara and some northern people as well. If we stand strongly together, D.A.A. will see this and listen to us.

There will be a big meeting at the beginning of next month at Nyikikuna for everyone. We will talk about these things there and make decisions.

{PANINY}

MONEY



I want to talk about money again.

Peter says what was put in the last paper was wrong.

Additional money for C.D.E.P. materials is only \$3,100 and not \$31,000 as reported. All C.D.E.P. materials money is committed on the Health and Welfare Project to re-build the old Community Centre.

The \$57,000 C.M. & S. held back by D.A.A. relates to the Powerhouse, Water and Sewage. Some of it will be needed to pay for diesel for the Generators, but most of it is for salaries for people who work on Essential Services, like Joe and Robert, a Maintenance Man, when we get one and anyone else who knows enough to help Joe or do general maintenance work. There are just not enough people interested in working to use this money. That's why it looks as if we may have C.D.E.P. wages money over as well.

... *[Handwritten signature]* ...



Ngayulu mukuringanyi panga manitjara wangkantjikitja piruku. Peter-lu wangkangu pipa panya nganmanytju tjunkunytjaya ngunti palyanu panya C.D.E.P. mani \$3,100 ngaringyi, \$31,000 wiya. Ka nganana panya ngunti wangkangi kutjupa kutjupa tjuta mantjinytjikitjangu mani nyanga palula. Palu nyangatja panya Community Centre irititja palyantjaku mani nyanga palula-nguru.

Ka \$51,000 C.M. & S. mani nyanga palunya D.A.A.-ngku kanyini panya powerhouse, minaku, palumpa tjampa. Ka kutjupa tjutaku diesel-ku munu generator-ku. Ka uti tjana warkarima mani nyanga palunya mantjatjikitja Panya Joe-nya warkaringyi munu kutjupa maintenance wati. Panya mankurpa nguwanpa warkaringyi.

MONEY MONEY MONEY MONEY

Uwa ngayulu kuwari wangkanyi panya advance munu loan.

AMATKU TJUKURPA
No 60, p 4 6-12-86

Nganana panya loan mani munu advance mani uraipai munula rawa watarkuripai-malakungku mani payamilanytjaku. Kuwari nganana mani pulka katingu Amata Community nguru munula Kananykananypa nyinanyi mani malakungku tjunkunytja wiya.

Anangu tjutangkuya kulinma! Nyanga palunya tjinguru nganana rawangku urara urara Amatanya Kalkanya purunypa palyalku.

Uti nganana mani urantjatjanungku wanganarangku malakungku tjunama munta tjingurula loan munu advance urantja wiyangku wantiku munula mani walytja tjara anama ngura kutjupa kutu, palya.

Ngayulu kuwari anangu uwan karangka wangkanyi loan mani wiya, munu advance mani wiya, palu tungunpungkula mani urantjikitja mukuringkula ngayula kutu pitjanytja wiya. Palya? Uti nyanatja - kaya kulinma.

ASK DON'T

I'm going to talk today about advances and loans. As you know we have a habit of obtaining loans and advances and then forgetting to pay them back. We have taken a huge amount of money from the Amata Community funds and we are sitting back without a care, not having returned it.

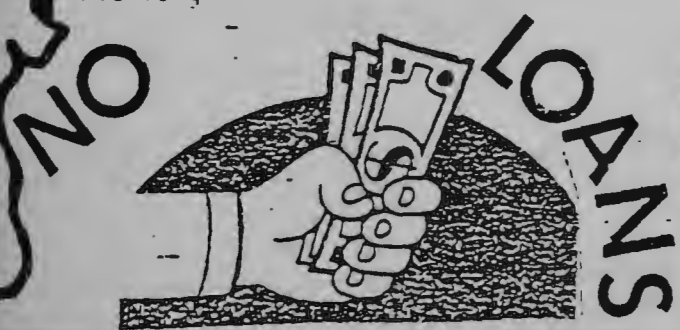
Listen to this everyone! Perhaps if we continue to borrow and borrow in this way, we will end up like Kalka.

Having borrowed money, we should pay it back without a fuss. Perhaps we shouldn't get loans and advances but take our own money when we go to another place.

I now want to say this to everyone. THERE IS NO LOAN MONEY OR ADVANCE MONEY.

But if you want to make a fuss and get money, don't bother coming to me.

This is quite clear - so take notice!

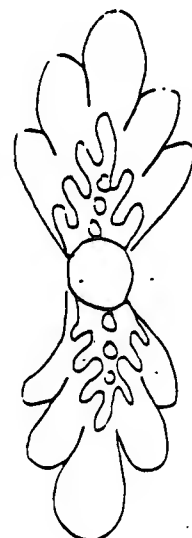
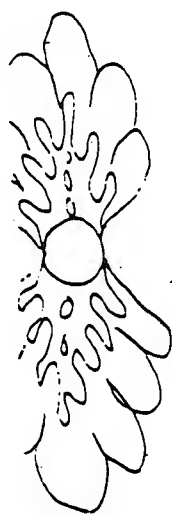


Money, Don't Ask' is above and opposite is Text 7 'World Kutjupa Nguwanta'.

IRKINI-KU ANKUNTJA

Nganana anu inmaku Irkinila-kutu nganana anu minyma kutju. Munula inma pulka alatjitu palyaningi. Panya nganana anu tjukurpa minyma ini Kutungu-nya nyakunytjikitja. Palu nganana pulkara alatjitu ulangi kulira panya nyangatja nganampa kami tjutangku iriti-nguru kanyiningi. Kalanya T.U.ngka mantjiningi ngura nyara palula. Ka minyma ngura tjuta nguru alatjitu anu ngura nyara palula kutu: Ernabella-nguru, Amata-nguru, Fregon-ntanguru munu Ayers Rock-nguru kulu. Palu nganana wiru tjuta nyangangi iriti kamilu tjana "kampurarpa kaputunkutja". Nyara palula nganana tjirinpi kutju nyinangi munula malaku pitjangu. Palu nganana pulkara alatjitu tjiturutjtjurungu ngura nyara palunya nyakula.

We went to a place called Irkini, only woman went there and we held a huge inma. We went there to look at the dreamtime story lady called KUTUNGU. We were crying about this because it was from a long time ago when our grandmothers use to dance there and take care of this story. Then they made a video picture about us in that place. There were lots of women came from different places: from Ernabella, Fregon, Amata and Ayers Rock. We looked at all the wonderful things there about the story of our grandmothers collecting the wild berries. We were there for one week, then we came back. We were overcome with sorrow to see those places.



STORY TOLD BY

PANINY

WRITTEN AND TRANSLATED BY GYIPATI RILEY

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Koorier 2

Koorier 3

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Gerry Bostock - freelance writer/ film maker: 10-12-93

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Owen Carriage - *Koori Mail* Founder: 01-05-94, 21-06-94

Dona Graham - Editor, *Koori Mail* (at late 1994): 28-06-93

Jaki Gothard -- Managing Editor, *Torres News*: 27-10-94.

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