

Twenty-two-year-old blind Aboriginal David Kerin returned to Australia early in September after five years study in London and said that he intended to devote his life to relieving the sufferings of others.

He successfully completed a four-year physiotherapy course at the Royal Institute for the Blind in London in March and for the next six months worked in London hospitals.

David was blinded by conjunctivitis at Alice Springs when he was four years old, and was flown to Darwin for treatment. He spent most of his school life at St Edmund's School for Blind Boys, from which he obtained his Leaving Certificate in 1961.

In 1962, the Commonwealth and N.S.W. Governments joined to help David undertake his



David Kerin Returns

studies in London. The Aborigines Welfare Board contributed \$4,000, and maintained a continuous interest in David's progress.

The course was not easy for him and although he had to repeat a year his persistence was crowned with success.

On his return to Australia, David said that when he was given the wonderful opportunity to choose a career he decided on physiotherapy because it would give him the opportunity to help others.

He was met at Mascot Airport by representatives of the Aborigines Welfare Board, the St Vincent de Paul Society, and the Commonwealth Government.

The next day, with his good friend and former teacher, Brother Adams, of St Edmund's, David paid a visit to Mr H. J. Green, superintendent of the Aborigines Welfare Board.

David told *Dawn* that about eighteen to twenty blind students from all parts of the world attended the physiotherapy school in London each year; at any one time there were about fifty at the school.

He said that a blind person developed slightly more sensitivity in his fingers than did a non-blind person, and this helped the blind to become excellent physiotherapists.

David went to Darwin to visit his parents for the first time in six years, and to spend Christmas with them. He hoped to work as a locum at Darwin Hospital until his return to Sydney, where he hoped to take up an appointment early in 1968.

The Aborigines Welfare Board at its October meeting received the following letter from the principal of St Edmund's School for Blind Boys, the sentiments of which, in regard to David and his



David and Brother Adams visited Mr H. J. Green, (left) superintendent of the Aborigines Welfare Board, in his office the day after David returned to Sydney after five years' study in London

success, are heartily shared by the Board: "I would like to express to you and the Board our deepest thanks for all you have done for David Kerin, in financing to a considerable amount his tuition fees in London. David has now returned to us, and one has a feeling of satisfaction, that the effort was well worthwhile. It is hoped that he can now find a position in the career in which he has successfully qualified.

"After a holiday with his family in Darwin, he hopes to return to Sydney to pursue his career. On seeing the type of gentleman David has become all our faith in him has been well repaid.

"With our repeated thanks, best wishes, and prayers."