

# LETTERS

Dear Editor,

I was pleased to see your tribute in your January issue to Pearl Gibbs. It brought back memories of going to a meeting in Sydney about 1950. It had been called by two or three people who were trying to form an Aboriginal Advancement organization. The others arrived late because of a traffic holdup, so Pearl and I were the only ones there. So, we slipped into the next door cafe for a cup of tea. And then Pearl started. "It's all your fault, you know" she said, "It's you whites who are to blame." I agreed, but suggested that I myself might be excepted. But Pearl made no exceptions. She hammered "you whites" for the whole half-hour til the others arrived and I just had to sit there and take it.

It seemed a bit tough that I was the only white in Sydney who had come along to do something about it and here I was getting the blame. But I knew Pearl's stirring record of fighting for her people day in and day out, year after year, and although I took a lot of abuse that night it remains a happy memory. I've never lost my respect for Pearl and her tireless struggle for the dignity of her people.

With best wishes for your paper,

Len Fox (Potts Point).

(I know. I've sat there and taken it, too. I've also sat there and NOT taken it. When that happens, Pearl starts with her "You whites" line. Which makes me wonder how long before those of us who push the human rights idea will feel some of it flowing the other way. Apart from that, Pearl as someone to have fun with . . . A1. And Pearl as someone to respect, also A1. —Ed.)

Dear Editor,

I see that you have been educated by Pearl Gibbs. We were all educated by Pearl at one time or another. She is a truly remarkable character—and watch out, you never reason to make her angry . . . She gave me the edge of her tongue once and I'll not forget it. She is most effective when she sends you to Coventry. On one occasion I had come to Dubbo and gone straight to the Dubbo swimming pool to cool off. Pearl was muffed because we had not seen her first. She served us tea and biscuits, when we arrived, in a frosty silence. Just before she served dinner that night she let us both have it! After that we could sit down as friends.

When I was active in Sydney years ago, Pearl was one of the koories who kept a watchful eye to make sure that I did not get away with any white man's humbug. At the slightest sign of it, or of pushing a line that was not the way the koories saw it, I was *jumped* on. Then it was explained to me, and I was expected to write my letters and make my protests exactly as they wanted.

Best wishes,

Jack Horner.

Dear Editor,

Here is a letter to my countrymen, the Aboriginal people of New South Wales.

My Dear Friends,

We, the Aboriginal people of N.S.W., or better still Australia, need urgently to dispense with all petty jealousies, cut out all ill-feelings towards one another and unite into one strong body of people willing to stick together through thick and thin alike. Discipline our children well. Teach them not to be cheeky, to have self-respect, respect for others respect for other people's property. Teach them to be kind to the aged, the sick, the infirm. Forbid them from viewing murder, robbery, serials on television, forbid the reading of comics about violence. Give them a strict teaching on the evils of alcohol, crime, drugs and all that goes with it. I do believe this teaching must start in the kindergarten. In my opinion this teaching will overcome many problems. Also it is necessary to do away with this crude slang manner of speaking which is so prevalent among us today. Changing world events and international standards require this.

Cheerio to all

Edward J. Green, (Lightning Ridge).

(You know, the name Lightning Ridge always reminds me of a story I heard about the place, years ago. War had just been declared, runs this yarn, and the local policeman at Lightning Ridge wanted to do his bit for Australia. So he wrote to the Commissioner of Police for permission to leave Lightning Ridge and join the army. It was refused. So, he wrote again. Still no. Bit later had another go. No. A month passed and then the policeman turned up at the Commissioner's office with a big bag full of money. He plonked it on the desk and said "I've sold the police station at Lightning Ridge and joined the army. Here's the money I got for it and I'm sailing at dawn." Don't as me how the story ended up. —Ed.)