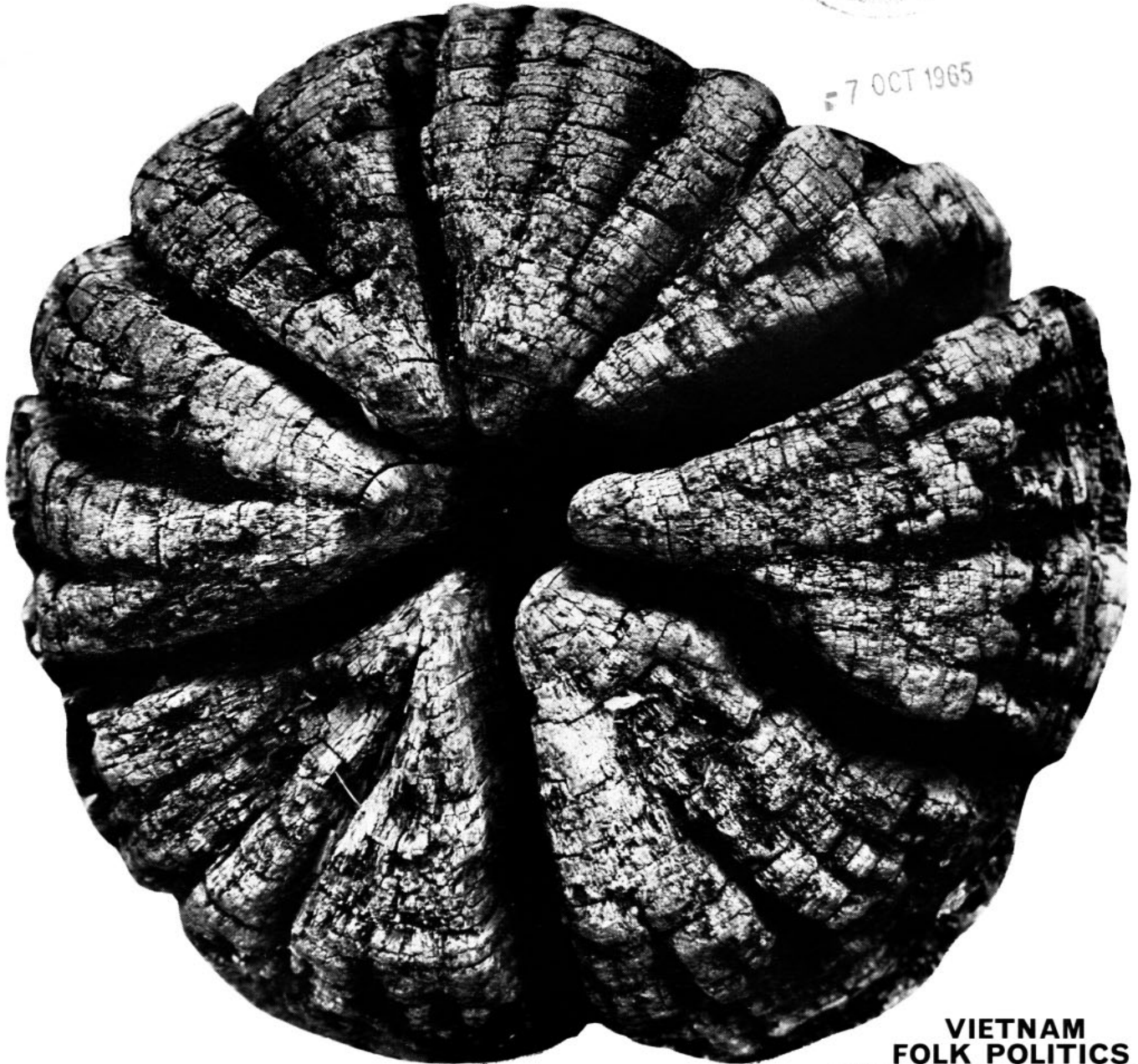


DISSENT

WINTER 1965

NUMBER FOURTEEN

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VIETNAM
FOLK POLITICS
BUS TOUR REACTIONS
WHITE COLLAR UNIONS
UNIVERSITIES ASSESSED

also

WALLACE CRABBE
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DAVIES
ENCEL

reactions to the safa tour

jim spigelman

In the last two weeks of February this year, thirty students from Sydney University toured country towns in the North and West of N.S.W. The tour was organised by Student Action for Aborigines (SAFA) and was designed to protest against discrimination and to implement a survey of aboriginal conditions.

This tour was labelled a 'freedom ride' through a mistaken analogy with the U.S. civil rights action. The analogy was based on a vague concept of 'students in buses on a civil rights cause'. In the U.S.A. the freedom rides were directed against segregation in interstate bus terminal facilities — the organisation and very purpose was far different from that conceived for SAFA. The primary aim of SAFA was to draw public attention to the aboriginal question. Viewed in this light it has probably been more successful than most instances of student action in recent years. The reactions of various sections of the community are the crux of its success.

City Press

The city press reported the tour correctly and in the main reacted favourably. The *Sydney Morning Herald* gave us extensive publicity and support in its editorials . . . 'It is deeply encouraging that more people — and young people with whom the future lies — are interesting themselves in Australia's many faceted aboriginal problem'. They were perhaps a little too enthusiastic and there is some evidence for believing that they were interested in using the aboriginal question against the Government in the State elections. Commenting on NSW Chief Secretary's silence: 'The citizens of country towns are too often blamed for circumstances for which the Government is basically responsible', or 'Mr Kelly will find it more and more difficult if he manages to survive the coming elections

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as Minister — to say "no comment" on any question affecting the aborigines'. The *SMH* did not apparently notice an even more surprising silence as the *Daily Mirror* reported: 'The leader of the Opposition, Mr Askin, who is seldom short of a comment had *nothing* to say about the colour bar.' Both the *Mirror* and *The Australian* appeared overwhelmingly favourable, thus the tour was 'very useful shock treatment . . . they have made some of us ashamed or at least uncomfortable'.

An interesting study could be made of the reaction of Consolidated Press. *The Bulletin* had scooped everybody with a cover study article on the pre-tour organisation of SAFA. This issue came out the day after the bus was run off the road outside Walgett. One would think that having had this initial success, any journal would tend to stick with the topic; surprisingly the next issue of *The Bulletin* (27th Feb.) did not carry a news article on our experiences in Walgett and Moree. When the possibility of the tour was first mentioned in September 1964, the *Telegraph* was the only paper to react adversely '*misguided characters . . . who wanted to force even more integration of aborigines who are quite happy with things as they are*'. (*Sunday Telegraph* 20/9/64) This attitude persisted and at times became similar to some of the narrow mindedness of the country press. Thus in reporting the Moree demonstrations the *Sunday Telegraph* stated — '*During the demonstration by the pickets at least a dozen other aboriginal children were swimming in the pool. They are from Thompsons Row where living conditions are good*' (*Sunday Telegraph* 21/2/65).

The *Telegraph* did not even mention that some of the children from Thompsons Row had been refused entry in the past. When we discovered from ex-alderman Bob Brown that the 1955 resolution segregating the baths¹ was being enforced, we returned to Moree. On the morning of our return, Ald. Jones,

an official of the swimming club and a member of council went around to Thompsons Row and issued free tickets to all the aborigines on the reserve or on the Bingarra Road settlement — this action effectively split the aboriginal population.

The *Telegraph* further supports the conventional rationalisation that aborigines are excluded on health grounds; after all the children came from 'Thompsons Row where living conditions are good'. Perhaps it did not know about the mother with four daughters who live in Thompsons Row. Two have darker skins than the others, the light skinned ones were allowed into the pool, the others (at the discretion of the Manager) were not. Apparently skin pigmentation is an indication of 'dirtiness'. The *Telegraph* distinguished only two aboriginal communities, Bingarra Road and Thompsons Row; it never mentioned those from the Reserve. It has apparently been convinced by the piece of local folklore with which we were presented time and time again in Moree — those of the reserve are irrelevant, after all, 'they've got their own pool'.

Country Press

The provinciality of the country press has to be experienced to be believed. There were the exceptions which gave an objective, though not sympathetic account of our actions. The more usual reaction is typified by the *Cootamundra Herald* which flamboyantly awarded us 'the Prize for the Biggest Ratbags of the Year'. Then there was the spectacle of a Dubbo paper announcing proudly that in Dubbo 'they stayed only a short time because they found no aborigines living under oppressive conditions'. In fact Dubbo was only a sleeping stop and I don't think we saw (nor looked) for an aborigine while we were there. What we *did* find — and purely by accident — was a sign over the entrance of the lounge in the Railway Hotel stating: 'Aborigines are not allowed in this lounge without the licensee's permission'.

Many of the country papers would have agreed with the *Inverell Times* when it accused our action of being 'deliberately engineered to exaggerate, for the worse, conditions or practices in certain north west towns and to create the impression that racial discrimination — if such exists — is on a much greater scale than it actually is'. (22/2/65)

Thus the *Northern Daily Leader* used such headlines as 'Police Refute Walgett Bus Incident Claim'; 'Report on Walgett Hostilities Denied'; 'Racial Discrimination at Moree Exaggerated'; 'No Racial Bar at Moree Baths'; 'Aborigines suffer from Moree Disturbance'. On Saturday, Feb. 20, the *Leader* carried an 'exclusive photograph' of white and aboriginal children 'mixing freely and happily in Moree municipal baths'. This, it proclaimed, is 'the answer to the Sydney students who have been demonstrating against what they call "racial discrimination"'. This picture, the *Leader* claimed at the time was 'taken during a normal afternoon at the Baths' (25/2/65). Now the Thursday 5.20 p.m. when the editor claimed this photograph was taken was hardly 'a normal afternoon

at the baths'. SAFA was in Moree for the first time. After a fifteen minute picket by the students, the manager of the Baths had permitted half a dozen children from the Bingarra Road settlement to enter the pool. The student bus then picked up thirty more from the reserve, all of whom were admitted. Just a 'normal day at the baths'.

The *Leader* also attempted to brush aside the incident when we were forced off the road. 'It is perfectly flat country out this way — any country person realises that — there was no danger of the bus crashing.' This apparently made everything all right. There was no mention of the fact that the driver of the truck had had two attempts at forcing the bus off the road and on the second had quite deliberately side-swiped the bus, scratching the side and breaking the indicator light.

The *Northern Daily Leader* was, however, relatively mild when compared with the *Macleay Argus* of Kempsey. An employee of the *Argus* had written a private letter to the paper on the Thursday that we arrived stating, 'Kempsey today will be invaded by a busload of half baked young men and women probably unparalleled in their own conceit and impudence'. The *Macleay Argus* announced that 'The "Ride" was Red Inspired' — 'most if not all the students have Communist affiliations and the Communist Party and the Eureka Youth League in particular, organised and supported the "freedom riders" on their 2,000 mile trouble making junket'. (27/2/65) The only evidence for this, was the fact that the grandfather of one of the girls on the trip was the late Jim Healy, secretary of the Waterside Workers' Federation.

The second page carried a very dramatic headline 'They Were Rude'. This was supported by our interview with the Mayor of Kempsey, Ald. Melville — '*Far from being an attempt to secure information, their questioning of the Mayor was a brutal third degree. As visitors to the town they had to be reminded repeatedly of the behaviour expected of them*'. The mayor was interviewed in the presence of the press and TV by the Tour Executive consisting of Charles Perkins, Patricia Healy and myself, with the Vice-President of SAFA John Powles. The mayor had ALP pre-selection for the local State seat of Raleigh and was obviously careful in his statements. After our 'brutal third degree' his favourite statement was 'no comment'. We had the mayor on the spot. The Council resolution of 6th December, 1948 states that 'The manager of the baths is instructed not to permit any aborigines to enter the municipal baths'. Here as in Moree, there was the anomaly of children being regarded as healthy during school hours but not after school. Minute 1104, 21st Feb. 1949 states 'that any coloured children attending the Municipal baths with High School swimming parties be permitted to use the baths, but that the Council's previous resolution on this matter be not further relaxed'.

Furthermore Charles Perkins had asked to buy

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underlying similarity in all the towns we visited. When they differed, the differences lay in the examples used to justify their arguments.

It may well be an indication of overall rural thought, but the value of experience in living with aborigines was constantly stressed. Time and time again we invited to stay in a town for a few weeks. The feelings of social superiority which *all* whites feel towards the aborigine are important. Some whites have only the aborigines to feel superior to and to justify this feeling they depend on the continuing failure of aborigines to lift themselves up. To see this process of the vicious circle of poverty, one must witness failure after failure and this can only be done by 'living with them', hence the value of practical experience.

Rationalisations

The lack of drive and ambition of the aborigines is a common rationalisation of discrimination, 'why can't they help themselves?' None of these people would admit that the numerous forms of subtle discrimination (and the few blatant ones), in interaction with the aborigines' depressing environment, may help to destroy the ambition and sap the initiative, thus causing in part, the very conditions which are used to justify the discrimination.

The rationalisations of hygiene and drunkenness could, in many cases, be traced back to the question of 'why can't they help themselves?' Thus they are dirty because of their living conditions; or they all drink because of their depressed way of life — but the onus is on them to pull themselves out of the vicious circle. It was very rare that one struck a person who would claim that the aborigines were inherently inferior, unhygienic or drunken. There does not appear to be any racism, in its theoretical sense. There is some indication however that each town has its own racial folklore which differs only in degree from racism. Its impact on the self-respect, group pride, and ambition of the aborigines is just as disastrous as a racist system would be.

In the many arguments we had in the towns we would be struck by the frequent use of certain examples. Thus in Walgett, we were repeatedly told how a few years ago, the aborigines had used the wooden boards of their houses for firewood. Similarly in Bowraville, we heard again and again of the unemployment benefit which they spent on drink. The existence of different pieces of racial folklore and *communal* rationalisations indicates the functions that prejudice plays for the whites in NSW country towns.

In Walgett the RSL Club does not have any aboriginal members, despite the fact that there are several aboriginal ex-servicemen in the town. The Vice-President of the club stated categorically that, as a member of the selection committee, he would never vote for an aborigine. The Secretary pointed out that by far the largest proportion of members are only 'associate members'. In a town in which the aboriginal population outnumbers the whites, it is surprising

that no aborigines qualify for associate membership. All whites interviewed stated that there were both 'good' and 'bad' aborigines — most of the locals showed concern when we asked why the 'good' aborigines were not allowed membership. Many replied that once the aborigines became members, they would be able to sign up others — the implication being that the aborigines would take over the club. This is based on an overall fear of the aborigines in Walgett, a recognition of the fact that they are beginning to outnumber the whites. The secretary and vice president of the club emphasised their pride in their club, which was the centre of Walgett's social life. The analogy with the US and South Africa may be uncomfortable and the terminology even more so, but the above evidence points to the fact that the RSL Club has become the last stronghold of white supremacy in Walgett.

Economically, Bowraville is a depressed town. At the lower levels the prejudice is reinforced by a keen sense of competition for increasingly scarce jobs. Here the arguments of 'why can't they lift themselves up?', come out strongly. The economic recession makes it easier to generalise from those aborigines who refuse to work, to those who are unemployed. The whole atmosphere of the town differed from any other we had visited. Thus when I asked an aborigine which shops discriminated, he did not reply 'we are not allowed in there and there'. He said 'We *are* allowed in there'. This reversal of emphasis shows a basic psychological difference. We found many instances of discrimination here. Four milk bars discriminated in some manner, did not allow aborigines to use glasses, to sit down and eat etc. One hotel, many aborigines claimed, did not serve them; the other confined them to a back room called the 'Dark Room'. Since our visit the publican has removed restrictions and the aborigines now mix in the public and saloon bars. Then of course there is the theatre, with its three foot high plywood partition separating a so-called 'Dark Centre' and the special door down the side. The barber stated that he definitely knew of whites who refuse to patronise his store because he cut aborigines' hair. For a period of eighteen months after the local convent high school closed, aborigines were denied higher education, because, it was reported, every time an attempt was made to get aborigines into the State High School, there was a public outcry.

SAFA has made a definite impact in these towns. Analogies with the USA are easy to make and far more difficult to uphold because of a definite difference in degree. However when the bus was on its way back to Moree, many of the students were struck by the peculiar relevance of the following extract from Martin Luther King's letter from Birmingham gaol: *'Non-violent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and establish such creative tension, that a community which has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatise the issue that it can no longer be ignored.'*

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a token, but when he stated that he was an aborigine, the manager said that he could not sell him one. Charles would pass any health criterion with which the Kempsey Council would see fit to replace the current resolution. Unlike Moree the resolution IS enforced, as shown by Charles' experiences. Furthermore in December 1964, Miss B. Henwood, the Hon. Secretary of the Macleay Aborigines Welfare Committee had asked the Council to rescind the above resolution. Later that month the following letter was sent: *'After careful consideration of the request the Council regrets that it is unable to agree to any departure from its existing policy governing the use of the pool by such children. Yours faithfully, H. D. Pittendrigh, Town Clerk.'*

These facts put the mayor on the spot and then, instead of answering our arguments he accused us of being 'insincere in their approach and not interested in anything constructive'. The *Macleay Argus* thought we were Communist, ill-mannered and drunkards, hence their childish editorial heading 'They Came, They Saw, They Sickened'. The *Macleay Argus* was not only sickened, it was also indignant that 'They tried to bar the entry of white children when aborigines were refused admission', traditional non-violent tactics of waiting in line until served.

Political Parties

There are four major spheres of interest in surveying the reactions of the political parties: the reaction of the MLA's from the areas visited; of the opposition parties; of the government; and the reaction of other sections of the ALP.

It is in the light of the first category (the reaction of local MLA's) that Mr Renshaw's first statement must be viewed: 'There is no discrimination in Walgett on the basis of colour but on behaviour'. Mr Crawford whose electorate includes Moree, stated that he 'regarded it as tragic that the university students should stir up trouble on the aboriginal question. Mr Brown, the member for Raleigh, which includes Kempsey, was similarly angered. It would be expected that the local politician, just before a State election, would be the best guide to local feeling on an issue. The above statements are not encouraging.

Hardly a bandwagon had rolled for several months before the State election, without the Liberal leader, Mr Askin, jumping aboard. He was unusually silent on the aboriginal question, though, at the time any statement would probably have been treated as front page news. All parties seem to have been concerned with possible impact in certain country electorates. The Liberal and Country Party silence is more amazing since in September 1961 they had moved a motion of urgency in the Legislative Assembly for the improvement of aboriginal welfare. Apparently the aboriginal issue is not a vote catcher.

The government and the ALP generally have been, perhaps understandably, reluctant to speak out on this issue. However during the tour statements were issued by various ministers, acting in their capacities

as Ministers of the Crown. Mr Sheahan, the Minister for Health, warned that the government would cut off its subsidy to hospitals which maintained segregated facilities. Mr Kelly, the Chief Secretary stated that the government does not discriminate against aborigines, 'they have full rights as citizens of NSW under the law'. This is more or less the truth, despite certain clauses in the Act which are hangovers from the old 'protection' policy. At a later stage, after the Bowraville incident, Mr Kelly mentioned that he had no power to prevent segregation in theatres and halls under the Theatres and Public Halls Act. The Minister for Local Government, Mr Hills, has not commented on the possibility of including a civil rights clause in the Local Government Act. This would render illegal the current discriminatory resolutions on swimming pools.

The one positive reaction SAFA did receive from the government was when the Premier, Mr Renshaw, came out in public and debated the aboriginal question with Charles Perkins and myself on TV. This perhaps was an indication of concern at the impact of our tour on the electorate and it may therefore become a spur to future action.

It is to be hoped that Ald. Melville, Mayor of Kempsey and ALP candidate for Raleigh does not represent ALP views on this issue. As I had mentioned above, the ALP branches in Moree had acted on the Hospital segregation. Furthermore the president of the local Federal Council of the ALP, Mr Kelly was the person who initiated the resolution to rescind the discriminatory statute at the public meeting we had organised in Moree. (The motion was passed 88-10, the students abstaining.)

Trade Unions

Before the tour we approached several unions for co-operation in our activities. The Secretary of the Australian Workers Union (NSW) Mr C. Oliver told us that:—'*Should you during your travels obtain evidence of underpayment of wages that concern the employment of aborigines, I would be grateful if you would provide me with specific information in order that appropriate action can be taken.*' We had heard that the Federated Liquor and Allied Industries Employees Union had cut off beer supplies to hotels which it had found discriminating against aborigines. Although they would not give us a blanket cover, they did state that they would '*examine the merits of any particular instance and take any action deemed to be appropriate.*'

In answer to a request for co-operation of its country members the NSW Teachers' Federation believed at first that:—'*while Federation agrees with the need to publicise cases of discrimination, it suggests that this type of action is premature at this moment and may have an undesirable aftermath as far as the aboriginal people are concerned.*' (28/10/64) In the wake of this 'undesirable aftermath' the Teachers' Federation carried a resolution stating: 'We consider

that the university students have displayed a high degree of civic responsibility in forcing public recognition of the racial discrimination existing in this State and we pay tribute to the moral and physical courage they have shown in carrying through this undertaking. We therefore call on the government to introduce immediately legislation which will make all forms of racial discrimination illegal'. (10/3/65.)

A certain section of the Union movement appeared right behind us, whatever the interpretations given to their motives. Thus several branches of the BWIU passed motions of support, as did the South Coast Labour Council. Such support could have proved embarrassing, granted the overeagerness of certain sections of the community to call any form of radical action 'red-inspired'. At a general meeting of SAFA, a member had asked whether we wanted any loud-speaker equipment, in case it would come in handy on the trip. When we arrived in Moree it had all been delivered personally by an organiser of the WWF and a reporter from the *Tribune*; the source of the equipment was only then made known. The press immediately smelt Communism and we were faced with the possibility of irreparable harm occurring to our public image and hence to our impact on public opinion. The equipment was not accepted.

The Churches

Various clergymen had supported SAFA in their personal capacity. The most notable of these was the Reverend Ted Noffs who actively participated in our activities and indeed was instrumental in the formation of our social survey. His 'Wayside Chapel' acted almost as a Sydney base while we were on tour. We did receive institutional support from the Australian Council of Churches. While on tour they sent us the following telegram:— 'Your survey aboriginal situation and action against discrimination of great importance. Hope it stimulates imaginative government and community action for aboriginal development and education of white community'.

The *Anglican* had an extremely satirical editorial on the reactions of the country people to our tour. Some readers did not see the satire and indignantly cut off their subscriptions to the *Anglican*. Among the various letters to the editor which congratulated him for his satire was one from Bishop Moyes: 'Let us thank the students for their adventurous campaign; and do our utmost to remove discrimination not only from local government documents, but from practice in these areas'.

Other clergymen from country areas were less charitable. Thus Rev. J. Barten stated: 'People forget that aborigines are *not* Europeans — they have a completely different outlook on life. They don't want to become Europeans. They are only interested in being what they are. A formal education which we prize so highly simply does not interest them'.

Rev. P. J. Dowe was also at pains to point out: 'Our dark friends are just not like Europeans . . . Anyone who has lived among coloured people in these

towns knows that the biggest problem is not the lack of means to improve but the lack of desire to improve. There is not a shortage of money but the money is wasted. The majority do not want to work. They are content to sit back and live on the white man's 'handouts' and the returns of those friends who do work'.

Both of these clergymen are apparently unaware of the substantial body of sociological data which points to the fact that lower class or socially depressed groups tend to have similar characteristics. This distinction between 'European' and 'Aborigine' is to me fundamentally obnoxious. Both clergymen are setting standards which even their idealised 'European' elements do not meet.

Needless to say the above mentioned clergymen did not approve of the SAFA tour. Rev. Dowe had shown his disapproval when he had thrown us out of his Walgett Church Hall at 9.30 one night. He was emphatic that 'such demonstrations stir up ill feeling between races which was not here before the students visit . . . Such demonstrations encourage discrimination by placing aborigines on a pedestal as something of an oddity and not an ordinary member of the community'.

The fact that a colour bar exists in certain areas of Walgett's communal activity does not, apparently, 'place aborigines on a pedestal'. The ban on aboriginal membership exercised by the Walgett RSL Club; the dress shop which would not allow any aboriginal women (healthy or otherwise) to try on dresses; the 'Oasis Hotel with the sign on its Saloon Bar — 'Aborigines by Invitation Only', all this is overlooked.

The clergy in these country towns are apparently not immune to the influences of the community at large. They trot out all the traditional cliché-ridden argument on drink, hygiene, laziness etc. Both Rev. Dowe and Rev. Barten showed a great faith in practical experience; the students and the editor of the *Anglican* were invited to live in their towns for a period of time. This invitation had been similarly extended by the Mayors of Moree and Kempsey and numerous citizens at various stages of our tour. Perhaps we would become convinced of the aborigine's inherent inferiority or perhaps we would merely adapt our beliefs to the overall social norms of the country towns in order to ensure harmonious living with our white neighbours?

Country People

There was no significant group of people in any of the country towns who were willing to support us, but there were individuals like ex-Alderman Bob Brown in Moree. Even those who had worked for aborigines were apprehensive lest our tour should undo their achievements. One thing is certain — the aboriginal question can stir the great apathy in these country towns. This in itself is of some significance. Those that appeared openly hostile reacted against us rather than against the aborigines. Against us as students, as youth, as city-ites. We were struck by an

Aborigines

One of the most pleasing and most important achievements of the tour was the almost unanimously favourable reaction we received from the aborigines. There were two groups which did not extend this. Firstly there were those who had gained some form of status in the white community which they were afraid of losing. In this category are many of the aborigines who live in the town itself, and not on reserves or shanty settlements. Thus there is Thompsons Row in Moree. I have described above the use to which this split in the aboriginal community was put by Alderman Jones. Nevertheless one resident of Thompsons Row *did* get up before his friends at the public meeting we held in Moree and claim that his own children had been denied entry to the swimming pool. Ken Swann's children were not unhygienic, as even the Alderman attending the meeting admitted.

Undoubtedly some of the aborigines have criticised us since we left — for the simple reason that they have to go on living in the town. Thus the *North West Champion* of Moree printed (with obvious glee) a letter to the editor on its front page from an aboriginal woman who criticised the students. Some aborigines have disagreed with the methods we used. Many more in the towns were sympathetic.

In Walgett when arguments broke out, the aborigines at first remained in the background. After a while they joined in and began sticking up for themselves. The night we left Walgett we received an enthusiastic send-off from many aborigines.

In Moree, on our first visit, the children reacted favourably. Many had never been to the pool before. The next day the aborigines took the matter into their own hands and about one hundred children and adults demonstrated at the baths. To quote one aboriginal woman: 'Aboriginal parents are angry about the ban. There has been talk of a deputation to the Council to state our case'.

In Bowraville the aborigines have taken very significant action against the segregated picture theatre. Under the leadership of Miss Ann Holten, the aborigines are boycotting the theatre and are attending the pictures at Nambucca Heads. This is the first time to my knowledge that the aborigines have used the economic weapon. The tales of aboriginal apathy we had heard before we left are very slanted.

Despite these favourable reactions, there does not appear to be any possibility of the aborigines themselves initiating a social movement on the scale of the negro revolution. Many are drifting to the cities, and this initial rejection of rural squalor is the all important first step in breaking the vicious circle of poverty. At this stage however the growth of militancy is limited by a lack of a sufficiently large and articulate leadership.

It appears that almost exclusively white groups — as SAFA is — will have to continue activity, if remedial action is to be taken. There has been a growth

of individual instances of defiance; Lake Tyers residents picketed Victorian Parliament House and Sydney aborigines staged a sit-in in the Burlington Hotel. However, action is limited to sporadic individual instances. There remains little chance of broader activity. It is to be hoped that SAFA will continue to keep the question before the public eye.

Postscript: The following paragraphs, which are significant in assessing the effects of the tour arrived too late to be included in the article. (Ed.)

We left Moree only after four aldermen promised us that the 1955 resolution (see footnote) would be rescinded. The possibility that this promise might be kept was indicated by the report of 6/5/65 in the *Moree Champion* which stated that 'Five of the seven aldermen agreed at last Monday's meeting of the Municipal Council that the 1955 resolution barring aborigines from the baths should be rescinded'.

An even more significant victory for SAFA is the motion carried by the Kempsey Council on 3/5/65 that '... the Council is satisfied that the general standards of the health, hygiene and housing of the aborigines in Kempsey has improved considerably in recent years, and in the light of this, the Council permit unrestricted use of the swimming baths by the aborigines ...'.

The argument about health is of course a lame excuse since, as mentioned above, the Council refused a request to change its policy in November 1964.

1 'PATRONAGE OF BATHS AND MEMORIAL HALL:— That no person being a full blooded or half-cast aboriginal of Australia, or being a person apparently having an admixture of aboriginal blood, shall use, occupy or be present in or upon, or be allowed or be permitted or invited to use, occupy or be present in or upon, the premises of the Council known as the Memorial Hall or in or upon any of the buildings or places ancillary thereto, including the Supper Room, Kitchen, Served, Toilets and Passages AND THAT no such person as aforesaid shall use, occupy or be present in or upon or be allowed or permitted to use or occupy or be present in or upon the Premises of the Council known as the Moree Baths or in or upon any of the Buildings or places therewith'. (Resolution of Moree Municipal Council, June, 1955.)

See also Baths Committee Report, 27/3/61. 'Recommend that Council accede to the request in the letter received from the headmaster at Moree High School: "Council's policy of excluding persons of aboriginal origin from the Municipal pool has resulted in the exclusion of the aboriginal school children from the organised swimming activities conducted by this school.

"It will be appreciated that a school can only achieve its purposes on the basic assumption of the equality of every pupil.

"I request that Council allow the aboriginal pupils of this school to swim under school supervision in the Municipal Baths every Wednesday afternoon during the swimming season and on other special occasions being carnivals and training sessions". Carried.' (If as the Mayor claimed the 1955 resolution had NEVER been enforced why did the headmaster feel that the above letter was necessary as late as 1961?)

Alderman Bob Brown had moved (8/5/61) that, 'All persons, without discrimination because of race or colour, be given equal rights to use the Council's Bore Baths and also the Memorial Hall'. He failed to get a seconder.