

CHAPTER 12

W.C. Wentworth had just become the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs in the Gorton government when I was invited to accept the position as research officer in the new Office. Before I took that job, however, I travelled away for about three months while still employed at the Foundation. This was a traumatic experience and it crystallized a lot of my thinking on various major aspects and one or two minor things.

My wife and I thought that when we left the Foundation it would be an opportune time to sell our belongings and go overseas, even if we had to come back to nothing.

Sir Paul Hasluck was then the Minister for External Affairs and I approached him to give us some assistance with contacts here and there. We were on the way to selling our house—the little house that we partly owned in the Glebe, that I had bought out of my soccer earnings.

Eileen and I wanted to look around and educate ourselves. There were no Churchill Scholarships then. At the time there was no scholarship for me, as an Aborigine, to gain entrance to university and there were no real scholarships for an Aborigine during university. Throughout Australia there certainly were no meaningful jobs available in Aboriginal affairs either. Everybody else decided that they were experts in Aboriginal affairs. This was all to change drastically. But at the time it was very hard.

I approached Sir Paul Hasluck and he wanted to help us further. It finished up that the government sponsored part of our trip overseas and we did not have to sell up after all.

There were three big conferences on throughout the world that

would tie in with my work and my interests. The Federal Government felt that by going to these international conferences I could come back with extra knowledge and could apply some of this to our own situation in Australia.

Sir Paul has always been good to me personally. He has been sympathetic to the Aboriginal question although today I think he is slightly out of date. He is a very conservative type of bloke in these things. He's more academically inclined and not a nitty-gritty type.

The government sponsored us from Australia to New Zealand, to Europe and then back through Asia to Australia.

The first conference was in Hawaii on urban development. The second was in Geneva on developing nations and associated topics. It was the United Nations Committee on that subject. The third one was in Tel Aviv on much the same subject, development, low-cost housing, minorities and so on. However, the Tel Aviv one did not come off because of the 'six-day war' which started when we were in America.

We went to New Zealand first of all and had quite a good look around. We felt that there were some encouraging signs of growth in race relations and something to be learnt from New Zealand's vocational centres for the Maoris and associated housing programmes. However, there was something missing all the time. When it came to the nitty-gritty decisions, white people (the pakehas) still made them all. A Maori official was second in charge of Maori Affairs and was only a figurehead in New Zealand. He did not have any real power. The number of papers on his desk of any importance, were few. Yet he was an outstanding person who had previously been New Zealand's ambassador to one of the South-East Asian countries. I was very disappointed although I never indicated this to him. They used him as a front and his own Maori people were too jealous of him to place him in power. They preferred a white man. This is typical white action, playing off blacks against each other.

We had lunch with the Australian High Commissioner and were treated very well by the white and Maori people. We drove from Wellington up to Auckland visiting Maori centres on the way.

The Maori centre at Rotorua was especially interesting and generally the experience in New Zealand left a lasting impression on my thinking. I like the Maori people and feel a great affinity with them. They are like us in many ways.

Then we flew from Auckland to Honolulu. This was a terrifying trip. I thought we were only about ten feet above the sea, most of the time. When everybody else was sleeping I was wide awake. I thought we were doomed. We seemed to be flashing through clouds and just over the top of the sea. We were probably thirty-five thousand feet up in the air. All I could hear was the jet engines. The feeling that we were only ten feet above sea level kept me awake for the entire trip to Hawaii. I am a terrible flyer at the best of times.

However, Hawaii and Honolulu itself were absolutely fabulous. If they could only get those Yanks out of there it would be even better. I suppose it is impossible now though. The Yanks and the Japanese have taken over the place. I still liked it despite the Americans whom I tried to avoid as much as possible.

This was my first encounter with Americans in big numbers. They were very puzzling to me. I could not understand them. They were like groups of sheep. There were coaches of them coming, coaches of them going. A group was going into church and a group was coming out of church. It was as if some person was prompting off-stage, and at his signal they were at different intervals all singing together, all praying together and all eating together.

I wondered if they ever did anything individually at all, apart from going to bed at night. They were so organized. Somebody else was always thinking for them and all they did was act out the parts.

This is the trouble with Americans. Everything is so categorized. There is little spontaneity about any of the things they do. Perhaps this is only a superficial impression, but I felt there was no depth in their individuality.

Apart from this I loved Hawaii. It sticks in my mind as one of the greatest places I have been to. I loved the weather, the beautiful beaches and the food we had at the hotel.

I went to the conference and a lot of valuable material came out

of that. The general principles of housing discussed at the various seminars were most important and have helped me tremendously in my thinking ever since.

Several people were most kind to my wife and me including a bloke called Ken Gee. He was a big gun in the Department of Housing in Canberra. I did not realize who he was. I thought he was just a humble participant until half the conference was over. I thought everyone else was pretty low-ranking like myself. But they were not. They were all big guns, I suppose they wondered what a nonentity like me was doing there.

The conference material was tremendous. There was so much of it. Dick Hamer who is now the Premier of Victoria was also very kind to Eileen and me. He treated us really well and took us all over the place. I thought he was a good representative of Australia. I had never met him since that time but I hope to some time in the future.

Two other people who impressed me then were Mr and Mrs Doug Anthony. Mr Anthony is the head of the Country Party in Australia. He was the leader of the Australian delegation to the conference. He was the top person from the Australian Government. Mr and Mrs Anthony invited Eileen and me out for dinner. After dinner we walked down by the beaches, talked and joked the evening away. We all had a good time, I thought.

We travelled to San Francisco for a brief stopover. While in that city I met a future—now current—black leader called Cecil Williams. He runs a huge programme in San Francisco which draws thousands. He is a really nice person and appears very sincere. We also met some American armed forces leaders and their wives at a special function. The less said about them the better. They were mainly intent on getting drunk very quickly on hard liquor—men and women. This is typical of Americans. They seem to all believe that confidence, sincerity and intelligent conversation can all come from the bottle. It's a good excuse, even here in Australia.

We flew from San Francisco to Albuquerque, a small town in north-west New Mexico, which is where the Pueblo Indians live. There are large Indian reservations in the surrounding area for the

Navaho people and other Indians. I really liked that place. It suited me down to the ground. It was that dry heat. The climate reminded me of Alice Springs. I really fell in love with the country right away.

The hotel we moved into was full of static electricity and I nearly blew myself up. The carpets were electrified, the doors, the railings up the stairs, the wardrobes, the lot! You just about had to walk around with rubber gloves on all day. We got the shock of our lives literally, every time we walked in.

Apart from this it was nice in Albuquerque. However, one of the things that depressed me about Albuquerque was the American Indians. I looked in a couple of bars and they were full of Indians drinking their lives away. It did not seem right to me that they were destroying themselves in this way, in the 'sophisticated' kind of environment. I could look forward to the future and see the present-day Aborigine in Australia. I thought, 'This is what my black people will possibly be like in another fifty years' time—if we don't do something now.'

They were not drinking beer in dirty old snake pits like those we have all round Australia, called pubs. These were modern lounges and the Indians were drinking compulsively, wasting good young bodies on this hard stuff. Accepting this as part of the American or Australian 'culture' to be passed on to indigenous people is of no benefit at all. In every whisky-wasted Indian I saw what could be the Aborigine in fifty years' time. I hope it will not be true. Perhaps we can do something about it.

We visited a couple of homes and I met some Americans. They were good people and nice and homely. I hate people who are too courteous. They make me feel that they want to be courteous in that manner because they have something to hide, or they feel you are inferior, or they feel inferior. They are not comfortable in your presence. These people in Albuquerque were good. They seemed different to other city-type Americans.

There was an interesting white American there. He was a cattle expert working with the Pueblo Indians on one of the reserves. Dan Dodge was his name. He was a real great bloke, courteous and helpful. Dan drove us around and nothing was too much bother.

He explained a lot of things to us. I liked that and I thought, 'Well, there's one type of American I have never met before. There must be lots more of them around and I would like to come back to America some day and meet them.'

I have always remembered Dan Dodge. He took us to a few Indian reservations. One that we were very impressed with was just outside of Albuquerque. There were mud houses in which the Indians lived. I had never seen these mud huts before.

I thought, 'These people are living in mud huts, they must be poverty stricken. How are they ever going to get out of this situation? They must be living like animals or something.'

I should have been more aware of what the situation really was like. I was in for a shock!

An academic-looking youth came out of one of the huts and introduced himself. He was one of the big guns of the tribe there. He also had his degree from university. I suggested he must live in town. He said, 'No, we're all living here together. All our people are coming back to their tribe. All the university graduates, all the top engineers, accountants, are all coming back home nowadays. This is where we want to live, amongst our people. We deserted them in the past, but now we're coming back to be with them. All the leaders left the tribe and the tribe was wandering aimlessly but now we are coming back to play the part that we think we should.'

I thought of what had happened among the Aborigines back home in Australia. As soon as you showed any enterprise or initiative on an Aboriginal reserve, you were removed forcibly or induced to move off because it was the 'right thing to do'. It cuts the head off the tribe. If you did not want to move off you had to subject yourself to having your initiative suppressed.

I was very impressed with this young Indian. We talked for a while and I thought, 'This is right, this is the way it should be. It is what we should be doing in Australia among our own people. We should bring our young and educated people back to the reserves. Our imaginative and more creative young Aborigines should give the leadership that is required in the right directions. This would raise the standard of living and the ambitions of our people. It would rebuild the morale and confidence of our people.'

The Indian asked me into his home. 'We are going into a mud house,' I thought. But when we got inside it was a three-storey house. We opened the door. I was stunned: . . . air-conditioning, a three-inch thick carpet, television, a big refrigerator. Eileen and I just looked at each other. It was just the type of house that was needed for this part of the world. We were astounded to say the least. We had a cup of coffee with the people and talked about a lot of things. It was a good afternoon. The family unit in traditional style was also still recognized. Outdoor ovens for baking bread, native language being spoken and respect for elders.

It was even more impressive when we went into their church. They were all supposed to be Catholics, and they were being indoctrinated along traditional Catholic lines, just as they had been since the white men first came, I presumed. The priest would give Holy Communion according to established church practice.

Not long before our visit some of the young Indian people got together and said, 'Let's bring our own culture back into force again. We've had the Christian culture. Let's bring some of our own culture back, some of our dances, our ceremonies and some of the laws in the tribe, and keep the peace in traditional ways. Let us make the tribe function again as a unit and to everybody's satisfaction.'

During Mass one morning, the people—young and old—said, 'Right, the Mass is over! Clear the pews from the church. It's time for the Dance to the Sun God!'

'Wait!' the priest cried. 'You can't do this!' He was dashing about in his robes. 'This is a church! This is a sacred area! You can't do that!'

'We'll do it! If you don't like it, there's the door! You can go out! We don't want you!'

He was terribly upset and very wild with them for doing this. They had to remove him physically from the building. They said, 'When he wants to come back, he can still take Mass providing we can still have our dances.'

They wanted to bring back some sense of dignity and respect for their tribal ways. That is what they do now and they find great satisfaction in their recovery of their old tribal ways and values.

Later we went to another reserve which was not like that at all. It was really depressing. We saw the chief who was very inarticulate, with no imagination whatsoever. He was completely bewildered. The situation there was absolutely poverty-stricken. There were no young leaders to stimulate thinking and morale was low.

Americans establish a theatrical framework based on what they think is good for people but which is often unrelated to reality. They devise their own terminology. They then try to force the needy people into a programme devised by 'experts' hundreds of miles away from the situation. If it does not work it is not the fault of the sociologist or the psychologist who devised the programme. It is the fault of the people. This is where I think most American welfare/cultural and social programmes have gone wrong. They try to fit the people into the programmes rather than the programme around the people's real needs.

This is how I think it was on that reserve. The only thing that will ever change the system is when American Indians themselves become involved (as in the adobe homes) and run their own affairs, providing they do not sell themselves out conscience-wise. Indians will have to devise programmes on the basis of their past experience and their involvement with their own people. If they can do this and get into high positions of influence, but still retain some dignity and humility and conscience about it, well then I think the proper changes will come.

I do not think you can really do anything in race relations and welfare unless you have those ingredients. You must have direct connection between yourself and the people. Government programmes devised by uninvolved technical experts or white administrators (as in Australia) will never work.

Despite this, I thought Albuquerque was the best part of America really. We met many Indians and had long talks with them. We met some honest white Americans too. We flew on to Chicago the next day to a new situation completely.

The important thing about my experience in the United States was that it confirmed most of my previous reading and thinking. I certainly went over there with some prejudice but it was reinforced in every possible way, and enlarged upon enormously.

America is a filthy country in terms of dirt in the streets and horrible slum dwellings. There is so much degradation in terms of the people. The individual, the human being, just does not count. He is nothing. If you have money then you have everything. It 'brings' you character, it gives you personality, it gives you status and it gives you power. It gives you all of these things which most of the people with money do not deserve. Most of them do not have character or personality. Some people with money have retained their dignity and are good, humble people. However these people were rare, in my experience. The apex of every American's dream, it seems, is to become the false, superficial brainless queer personified in the American film stars. Even the blacks chase this empty elusive dream.

A man doing an ordinary labouring job is just nothing. Just dirt. Americans have taken the dignity out of honest work. A man digging a hole to lay pipes is a very important person in my opinion and just as important as a man making money out of a multi-million-dollar business.

People do not want to be waiters. They do not want to be taxi drivers. Everybody wants to be a millionaire. Americans aim to be an actor or an actress, not realizing that they are that already. They take the theatre into the streets. They play-act their lives.

There are a lot of good people in America, but the bad people are the influential ones and the good people are not. Good Americans like to give money throughout the world. Bad politicians and industrial giants have just turned that military aid or other aid with strings attached, into a form of exploitation in the depressed community or nation to whom the money is given.

This sickened me to the guts when I was in Chicago and saw some of the programmes. One so-called Christian group I visited were the nastiest, shallowest group of people I have ever met in my life. I hope I never set eyes upon them again and they probably feel the same about me. When I went in there they tried to buy me off. Unfortunately they succeeded. I was broke. They said, 'Well, look, here's fifty dollars for coming up and talking to us. OK? See ya later.'

I felt like tossing it right back in the joker's face—but we needed

it. He gave me that money, turned on his heel and walked away as if to say, 'There's fifty dollars. We bought you.' Which they had done more or less. No dignity was ever in that relationship at all.

They operate like this with poor people in their areas. This is why they are not getting through to the needy. Their programmes are not worth a bumper. They spend millions and millions on urban programmes and get nowhere. In fifty years their sons will say, 'You know, I don't think we've done anything with that money. Not only that, the problem has increased ten times!' They breed and generate problems around them. To these people working with the poor blacks is an unfortunate evangelical experience and a social welfare ordeal. They are not looking for solutions, they just want to big-note themselves at the expense of the needy blacks. They are really playing Christian games with people placed in a desperate situation. It is no wonder they are often hated by the very people they think they are helping. There is no dignity in this, and it is a typical white man's approach to a situation he does not understand and even hates—if the truth were known.

We went on from Chicago to New York and we met up with the Australian Consul-General. He had somebody meet us at the airport in their big black Cadillac. They took us to the usual 'Australian' hotel which is the Victoria Abbey Hotel. When we arrived in New York I thought, 'It's nothing like the Alice Springs Airport!' It terrified me. When we drove through the city traffic I was astounded by the rush and bustle. I thought Sydney was bad enough and subsequently London was grim, but it was terrible in New York.

From the very beginning I did not like New York. I thought it was a dirty, filthy place that the people used and abused for their own benefit, just like a worn out old prostitute. People were using it up. All the sights that are supposed to be great, I thought were boring. The Empire State Building or the Statue of Liberty did not stimulate me. In fact I went to sleep on those tours. My wife thought it was not too bad and that we should at least take a look so that we could make a judgement, so she dragged me all over New York.

The Americans made such a superficial show of being clean in their restaurants and so on that I began to think that they were very dirty. I think the unnatural clamour for cleanliness in the United States is a form of mental illness. Perhaps this arose as a result of their awareness of their moral uncleanness. It is a kind of physical compensation. It is not natural.

There was no conference in the United States but I had to meet quite a few people who were associated with various programmes. I did not like them. The Chicago people put me off and I thought the New Yorkers were very much the same. There were some big guns lined up for me to see and for some reason I never did get around to meeting them all. I just could not care less after a while. A fellow named Stringfellow was a terrific bloke. I thought he was rather brilliant in many ways. Ted Noffs had brought him to Australia a few years before. Out of most of the white people I met in America, I liked him and wanted his company. However, he did not take to me. I think he thought I was an Australian Government agent or something. I think a lot of the others thought this as well. I do not think they really opened out with me in the way I would have liked them to.

I tried to encourage them but it was a lost cause. People in America are suspicious of each other. Everybody thinks the other people are CIA agents or something. I could not break these barriers of suspicion at all. Subsequent events provide some basis for this feeling.

I had meetings at Stringfellow's place and at other people's places, with various Jewish organizations, the black radical movements and the Puerto Ricans. I enjoyed the conversations. I thought they were stimulating. However, there were too few of them. I was hoping to meet the late Dr Martin Luther King but this did not happen because of his busy schedule and the distance. I did meet the Rev. Jesse Jackson. I thought he was like a lot of Aborigines. He was a humble character with an arrogant exterior. He wanted to get right down to feel for the people. He had a message to give them and I think he got this across very well. He will eventually lead the blacks.

We went through to Harlem and met some of the people there. It

was a terrifying experience. Everything looked filthy and dirty and the potential for violence and crime was obvious. It was a human jungle.

And Broadway! I have never seen such a stinking rotten hole! The people who sing about Broadway so nostalgically could not have been there for fifty years or else they live in a dream world. People who sing 'The world begins on Broadway . . .' feel differently to me. As far as I am concerned, Broadway is where the world ends! If you have nothing else to contribute in life, you finish up on Broadway. I was really shocked by that place, by night and by day. What a bloody mess! The American theatre scene has really conned the world.

My wife and I were walking along the street in Broadway, I am sure most of the men we saw were high on drugs or full of hard liquor. (Nobody likes to drink lightly for social reasons in America. They just want to get high as soon as they can.) Anyway, this group of Puerto Ricans and others were standing on the footpath. They must have thought I was a Puerto Rican or an Italian or something. With my colour I can pass for anything. Suddenly they started to say things to provoke me. They had all kinds of weapons on them and they were dying for me to respond. I was hoping and praying that I would not lose my cool or say anything because it would definitely have been the end of me. They would have cut me to pieces. To kill someone in New York streets is nothing. They were mouthing obscenities in soft voices that were just loud enough for us to hear. I had to shrug it off and keep walking. We got out of that place as quickly as we could.

The people who lived off the depravity I saw in the streets of New York were living in the outer suburbs in their guarded homes. The rich don't care for the poor and the poor fight amongst each other and tear each other to pieces—the same as Aborigines. There is no real public social conscience.

In Washington we had to stay with an officer of the Department of External Affairs and his family. One of the bad aspects about the trip was that we were forced on people. The Australian Government tried to save us money and also the Embassy could keep an eye on us. It worked both ways for the Government and for

us. We appreciated their assistance in saving us money but unfortunately we were an imposition to people. We were strangers in a strange home. They did their best, I suppose, but we just did not hit it off, particularly in Washington.

The Embassy people everywhere wished to help me but they regarded me as inferior in intelligence. I was one further hardship that they had to endure for a short while. I could almost read their minds: 'Thank goodness for the day he leaves this country!'

It could have been a mutually happy experience. I told them everything I knew. I tried to make friends. If they wanted to know something I would tell them. I had nothing to hide at all, politically or in any other way. I suppose it is stupid in a way to be so open-minded with these people.

I am sure they noted everything, either by tape recorder or shorthand, to report back to Australia. I was perfectly frank on every issue. I think they deceived me and I do not want to meet those diplomatic people again. I came to the conclusion that most diplomats are professional liars, two-faced, and as far as the service of their country is concerned, I do not think they do much good at all. There has to be some change in the attitude of diplomatic people overseas. As far as the Australian diplomatic service is concerned, I believe they should try to be a bit more human and to serve the Australian people in a much more friendly way. I realize they are imposed upon sometimes, but hell, they are supposed to be public servants, for Australia and Australians—not themselves. I feel they live in a world of their own and regard others as bloody intruders.

I noted that if you are somebody important, a rich and powerful businessman, they will fall over backwards to be of service. But for the average person like myself, I think they could not care less.

My stay in Washington, just like nearly every other place in America, was quite unhappy. However I got to meet a number of people from the Negro movement. I met a man called Tucker. He was in charge of the National Association for Advancement of Coloured People. He was good value and I liked the people he had working with him. They seemed to be pretty genuine. All were Negroes.

We were driven around to meet the Negro mothers in some of the slum areas of Washington and we saw what NAACP were trying to do for their children. We went into some of the Negro homes and they were shocking. They were as bad as some of the places in Redfern in Australia. But in Washington, in these slum areas, there were drug addicts and drunks everywhere in the middle of the day.

Just a block away were beautiful homes and streets—the plush area of Washington. You could see the White House half a mile away. Yet here were people living in terrible poverty. A senseless existence.

I really cannot understand the Americans with their much publicized social programmes. I seriously question some of their 'programmes for urban renewal' and 'beautify America campaigns' which make it look as if they are doing something for the country.

In these homes in Washington close to the White House were drunk Negroes and whites, drug addicted children, mothers battling under difficult circumstances like the Aboriginal mothers in Australia, against impossible odds.

One social function to which I was invited was a reception given by the British Ambassador. I was glad to get an invitation because I thought all these diplomatic people would be interesting to meet. After all, they were the chosen representatives of various countries. When I arrived I looked around and after I had been there for a while, said, 'There's nothing stimulating about this. I'd rather be at the Alice Springs races where I could really enjoy myself.' After about twenty minutes it just bored me stiff. The conversation, the people, everything seemed artificial. Everything was programmed: the greetings, the responses, who mixed with whom, where they stood, who is idolized and who is not. It is a superficial social scene with political undertones.

I was introduced to a black Yank who was obviously some pretty high official. I was ready to argue with this bloke if he said the wrong thing. I had just come back from the terrible black slums near the White House. He in turn introduced me to others: 'I'd like you to meet Mr Perkins. He's come all the way from Australia with his wife. Isn't that nice?' When he had finished introducing me he asked 'What do you think of America? Do you find it interesting?'

I said, 'It's the worst place I have ever been to in my life! Not only that but the people are even worse than their country!'

'Do you really mean that?' he asked indignantly.

'Certainly. I would not say it if I did not mean it!' I replied. I carried on, 'And what do you do?'

'I'm in the State Department,' he said.

'What do you, as a Negro, and in a high position, think of the slums half a mile down the road?' I asked him.

'Well,' he said, 'there's definitely a problem that exists in the community but we are working at it and we hope to overcome it in time.'

I said, 'Time according to whom? You? Or time according to those people out there full of dope, beer, and whisky? Or time according to those children who aren't getting a feed?'

'Well,' he said, 'social problems do take time.'

'Yeah, but who dictates how much time? Blokes like yourself who are in a position to influence all these people here and tell them what they should or should not do about some of these questions? Or do you just sit back and accept the situation?'

We got in a really torrid argument there. His black wife was all for my point of view. But he was not. He was back-peddalling and trying to be as diplomatic as he could, and I was not going to let him. Nor was I going to let anyone from the Australian Embassy stop me from speaking to him like that. We had a good discussion.

Naturally my Australian diplomatic hosts were most embarrassed and furious. I was disgusted by the way he kept answering in a real Uncle-Tomish way. Such Negroes are like some of the rich Jews. They crucify their own people. The rich Jews cleared out of Europe and left all the poor Jews there to be slaughtered in gas ovens. This is what I will always hold against the Jews. The average Jew was burnt to death while the rich ones shot through, took all their jewels, and abandoned their own people like a dirty bit of rag. They did not help them at all.

It is the same with the Negro in America. The rich ones watch, living well, while all these people two hundred yards away are suffering. They don't have to live poor to think poor but they must totally commit themselves to do something about black poverty.

Twenty percent might be making an effort but eighty percent are not. It is the tragedy of America that rich black people are doing so little for poor blacks.

I did not create a very good impression at that party. Naturally, when I came to look around when the conversation was over, Eileen and I did not have any friends. Nobody wanted to know me and I certainly did not want to know them either.

The people I was staying with sensed my attitude to the American facade and resented my 'ingratitude'. From then on I had to go out on my own initiative and look at all the slums and other areas of social concern. The Embassy would give me no assistance. They were keeping me clamped down as much as possible.

I said to the attache at the Embassy, 'Listen, are you going to give me an opportunity to look at the other slums and problem areas around Washington?'

'You're taking off tomorrow,' he said with his legs up on his desk. 'What's the use?'

I said, 'I want to see these organizations (I had a list). If you don't take me around, I'll ring up Australia and speak to Sir Paul Hasluck the Minister for External Affairs, who happens to be a friend of mine. I'll tell him that you're not giving me any co-operation!'

'You wouldn't do that,' he said.

'Yes I would,' I said, 'and not only that, I'll name you!'

He said, 'That's very unfair. That's not a nice way to talk to people who are trying to be friends to you.'

'Look,' I said, 'I'm not really bothered if you are a friend of mine or not.'

He said, 'Well, it's very costly. You can't have this charged to the taxpayer in Australia.'

I said, 'Listen, you're talking to a taxpayer! Don't give me that stuff! And secondly,' I went on, 'if you don't make the arrangement I will not get an ordinary car, but I'll get a chauffeur-driven limousine which will cost three times as much. My request is a simple one. I just want one of the drivers from the Embassy to drive me around so I can see these welfare projects.'

He was furious. 'You're using the situation just because you are an Aborigine!'

I could see the prejudice coming out of him. I know I was giving him plenty of bait. I found myself saying, 'You don't like blacks very much, do you?'

'Oh,' he said, 'they get a fair go, but people like yourself are using the situation for your own advantage. You're simply jumping on the racial bandwagon.'

Of course we all 'jumped on the bandwagon'. But the bandwagon was made of blokes like myself and all the Aboriginal people of Australia. We are born into it. We were part of the machinery and the wheels that were turning. It was our guts that were being churned to pieces. This is what a lot of these white people never realize when they say, 'Charlie Perkins has jumped on the bandwagon.' The bandwagon is comprised of people who came before me and will come after me. We *are* the bandwagon. It is always a good cliché for whites to salve their conscience.

The Aboriginal movement was starting to gather momentum and they did not like this. When the attache spoke up it was obvious that he resented this.

We parted very bad friends indeed. He would not even come and see us off at the airport. The morning I was leaving they gave me the car to drive round and see these places. My adviser was supposed to be a liberal-minded person. He was liberal all right, as long as it did not cost him anything. It was a sad sort of thing in a way, that I could not get on with those people, but it did not break my heart.

We took off from Washington Airport and flew to Montreal in Canada. Canada is entirely different. The difference between Canadians and Americans is obvious. I hit it off with the Canadians. They have more humility, they have more understanding and are more easy-going. They are real people and not big-noters.

We went to Expo '67 in Montreal which was an experience in itself. We met many Canadian Indian leaders at their own centre at Expo. Then we went to several places of interest around Montreal. Our hosts in Canada were the late Sir Kenneth Bailey and his wife Lady Bailey—both fabulous people. They were real nice.

One place of special interest was the Four Nations Indian Reserve. We thought it very interesting in terms of structure and administration. The Indians had their own council and ran their

own affairs. It was not the end of the earth as far as sophisticated services were concerned, but it was reasonably good. They had control. They made decisions and they were building the reserve themselves. I thought this was a good idea.

Their land was very high-priced and everybody wanted to get hold of it. The Indians, by way of contrast, just wanted to live on it in their own tribal way. They had adapted some Western concepts but still retained many of their traditional social patterns.

We enjoyed every part of Canada we visited. I think it was much more progressive than the United States and they were trying to think out some of their racial questions and answers in greater depth than were the people in the States. They were more sincere, it seemed, and they had more people who were dedicated to those ends. The Canadians gave me the impression of sincerity. The Americans were shallow.

The greatest influence upon me in Canada was a man called Stan McBride who was a white Canadian working in Indian Affairs. He was our guide and friend. The Indian Affairs Department wanted to take us around and show us everything. Stan McBride did not let up on a thing. He was a very frank person. He saw the weaknesses and strengths within the Department of Indian Affairs in Canada generally and it was good to have him explain things to us. We met several of the tribal chiefs on the east coast of Canada.

We also saw some pathetic instances of Indians trying to recapture their culture. This can happen with the Aborigines in the urban environment, too. It is an embarrassing and awkward first step but it must be taken. Otherwise, without a sense of identity, the people have no reason for existence. This kind of experience must be gone through. Our big fight in Australia at the moment is to find ourselves once again.

I attended a conference in Falls Springs. Indian chiefs and counsellors came together and I was invited to be a part of the conference. It was one of those conferences where Indians, or as in Australia, the Aborigines, just nod their heads and agree with everybody around them. They want to express themselves but cannot because there are too many white people there. They have not the powerful conference positions where control really rests.

They have the responsibility for contributing information but no power to do anything about it. The white man does that. The white man gets ten times as much as the Indian. He makes all the power decisions but when things go wrong he tries to put the blame or responsibility on the Indian. The Indian has no option but just lets this imposed responsibility slide off him.

A white person cannot understand why an Indian or Aborigine does not respond in this sort of situation. Most white people cannot see that the power and the responsibility must go together. I think conferences like that are out of date. The conference ended our visit to Canada which in general had been very worthwhile.

We returned briefly to America before setting off for London. It was just like going from a hostile environment to a friendly one. I felt I had moved out of an area in America that was teeming with people, where you just had to fall and show weakness of one kind or another and you were torn to ribbons; Canada seemed a more easy-going place filled with nicer people with good manners, and London was even more friendly.

We spent about six weeks in England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. I love England. It was the first place where I was ever happy in my whole life. I wanted to take Eileen back to all the people I had stayed with before and I wanted to see them in a different light, as a visitor rather than as a worker. The mines and the shipyards where I worked would be interesting to see from this new perspective.

I did not find the people basically different. They were still good, kind people and nice to me. My ideas of the people (although over the years I had built them up into something more than life-like) were fulfilled when I began to talk with them again. They had their faults for sure but they were good people, everything I expected them to be.

We enjoyed our stay in London and we loved England generally. A lot of people want to hate the English but not me. We had no contact with Embassy officials there at all and that is probably what made our stay in England a little more enjoyable. Although I am not saying they would have not been helpful. We just did not meet them; the experience in America warned me a little.

We travelled to Bath and other traditional tourist places that are

exciting and clean. From a tourist point of view England is good to look at. Having to live your whole life there and work in a coal mine would be different I suppose. It is nice to visit but not live in. The people are great and the nice areas beautiful, but mobility for individuals in society is rather restricted. The wages are also very low. Class distinctions are still a reality.

Ireland was a bitter disappointment. I thought it would be very pleasant. I had great expectations about Ireland but none of them were realized. The people were not too bad but the country has been oversold by the Irish and other romantics. There is too much poverty and social and cultural inbreeding. The church and its depressing influence tends to make a person feel he is in the Dark Ages. I like the Irish but mainly out of Ireland.

I thought Scotland was very pretty and its people charming. Once again, after seeing many of its historic places, I was pleased to leave. The Scottish people generally are wonderful. Their humour and hospitality are legendary and I always feel comfortable in their presence. In Scotland, Ireland and Northern England the poverty, limited imagination and lack of individualism hang in the air like a fog. The buildings, the weather and the solid inbuilt class system dominate. 'Keep your place' is the unwritten and unspoken law.

I suppose the only racial thing I ever encountered in England involved coloured migrants. There were many Arabs, Pakistanis and West Indians throughout England. I reckon England has made a mistake bringing these people in in such uncontrolled numbers. It is a terrible, terrible mistake to have an open-door policy in immigration. I think they have just burdened the people of England with a problem they did not properly comprehend and for which they were completely unprepared. The government pushed the problem on to local communities and said, 'Solve this.' They forced a situation on a people and yet lived away from it themselves.

Like Premier Don Dunstan in South Australia saying 'Let every one of them in — Japanese, Malays, Filipinos, the lot!' It is all right for him. He is the premier of the State and can come and go as he pleases. He is a QC. He has a top job and how many people could compete with him in his job? With the average working bloke it is different. He has to carry the brunt of any racial problems.

In England I saw that there were more foreign people around, and a different feeling amongst the English people, since I was there in 1959-60.

This just shows you that some stupid idiot has no idea of racial problems. If someone is coming into the country, you have to help him to come in a decent manner. I am not saying that I am negative about Asians coming in as long as you make sure that these people will have no future problems. The people already living in the country, whether English or Australian, should be consulted about and educated on race relations before the slightest move is made to change the racial balance.

Race relations involves delicate, personal effort and hard work. A lot of effort must go into preparing people to understand, tolerate and appreciate each other. White majorities have always dominated any race relations situation. The problem now is they cannot completely dominate and thus dictate the pace or the programme. Blacks influence it also, and that is what causes some of the problems. The whites hate being told what to do by blacks or coloured people whether as a majority, as a Government, as politicians or as bureaucrats.

From London we flew to beautiful Geneva. I was there to attend a United Nations Economic and Social Council Conference on Underdeveloped Countries. I was an observer for this conference with the Australian delegation. I found it extremely interesting. It was tremendous to listen to all these people talking about programmes for the needy nations of the world. It clarified a lot of my thinking. The countries involved in the conference were selected mainly because of the contribution they could make economically to underdeveloped countries. The recipients of such aid were also present, naturally. Talk is cheap, I suppose, but the hope is that something will be done eventually. It was good education for me.

Not one of those people sitting round the table was aware that black people in Australia were worse off than the lot of them! The Australian delegation was sitting up there coming out with pompous statements about 'The standard of living in Australia is high and everybody is reasonably affluent.' There was not one word

spoken about the two hundred thousand poverty-stricken Aborigines in Australia. The attitude seemed to be 'Oh, they are somewhere else. They do not live in Australia.'

They deceived the other delegates and big-noted themselves at the expense of the Aborigines plus the ignorance of these national representatives. If I could have spoken for five minutes most of the Australian delegates would have collapsed in their seats. But I was only an observer. I remained silent. Here was Australia posing as the big example to the world of what should be done, when a quick glance at an Aboriginal reserve just outside of Alice Springs would be enough to shatter Australian complacency.

I just sat there through most of the conference with a bit of a grin on my face. I enjoyed listening to the people talk and was very interested in what they were saying. I collected all the material they gave me, read it through and brought it all back to Australia for future reference.

Eileen and I had a good look around and were entertained by officers of the World Council of Churches. They took us for dinner one night. I thought they were very kind people although we did not have much chance to get into intimate conversation with our hosts. They at least try to make an influence on the international scene.

The Diplomatic Service in Geneva seemed better than anywhere else. The Australian Consulate-General and the other people in the Embassy were extremely helpful. The trouble with diplomats is that you do not know if they are fair dinkum or not. They could be kidding you right up a tree. But they seemed more genuine in Geneva.

We went to Spain, just for pleasure. I suppose the main thing we wanted to see was bullfighting. We found Madrid very colourful. The people lived a different life to elsewhere with different hours for meals, work and entertainment. It was quite exciting but we did not have anybody to show us around. We went to the Spanish Flea Market and had a look at that. It was very good but the prices were high. We strolled through the big art gallery called the Prado. Art does not do very much for me. I am not educated on art at all. I like good scenery and this sort of thing but I do not go much for other forms of art. The great masterpieces by Goya and others were all on

display. It was really wasted on me unfortunately. I prefer paintings by my own people, like the Namatjiras, of the scenery around Alice Springs.

One day we went to a bullfight. It was spectacular and all the people were sitting around in a huge circular stadium. There was a ring down below and bright sunshine played on the gawdy gear of matadors and the proud horses were prancing around. They started off by bringing a couple of bulls into the ring. This was followed by the ritual used to get them stirred up so they would want to fight. People rode by on horses and stuck spikes into the bull's back. They hooked into the flesh and this allowed them to bleed. It weakened the bull as well. It was enjoyable to sit there and see all the people. But once they started to do that to the bulls, it just turned my stomach.

I do not have much regard for the Spanish people. I always thought they were cruel. Highly emotional and excessively cruel, moving from one extreme to the other, is the way I have always pictured the Spanish. One moment they are in a passive state and the next minute expressing themselves in these cruel acts.

I think the Catholic Church has had a big influence in this direction. You can do all these weird cruel things and then get yourself confessed off and go and live a free and easy life. I think this is a problem in these Catholic countries and especially Spain. The influence of the Roman Catholic Church is reflected in the bullring. The cruelty of man in the bullring or in wars in the context of Christianity.

We decided to leave halfway through the bullfight because we had had enough. We passed by the stand where all the big guns were: the Governor of the Bullring, the President of the Bullring and associated officials. I abused them from down below in good Australian English. I told them they should be ashamed of themselves, that it was a disgusting sight, ill-treating animals like that, and that they had better wake up to themselves. I added a few other words in between to give a bit of colour. Of course, the President knew every word that I was saying. He, who had the handkerchief and who decided whether or not the bull should die, made as though to climb over the stand to get me. If he could have

got off that stand, he would have. He was very angry. It would not have done him any good because I would have attacked him as well. I would have soon cleaned him up. Everybody else would have attacked me.

Then we walked out. I never turned back to have a last look. I was so disgusted.

The next day we went for a drive to Toledo which is a very historic and beautiful place, just outside of Madrid. We had a look at the historic church there and a few other places which were of great interest to us because of their tradition. We stopped at a little restaurant to have something to eat and I asked the waiter for some Spanish steak. Of course he did not understand a word I said and he stood there for a couple of minutes and was waving his arms round. I used words like 'meat' and 'beef' and 'moo'. I thought of everything to signify meat but he just did not understand. We could not communicate at all. So I pinched my arm, bit it and said 'meat' and he must have thought I was a cannibal because he took two steps backwards and nearly fainted.

Eileen said to me, 'He thinks you're a cannibal, biting your arm like that.'

'Well,' I said, 'what am I going to do? The man does not understand me. All I want is some meat. Suddenly I remembered what everybody was calling the bull. I put my hands on my head like horns and said 'torro'. He understood *that* all right.

I then proceeded to eat the worst Spanish steak ever. It was just like cardboard, shrivelled up, dry. I think it must have come from the oldest bull in Spain.

We went back to Madrid and had dinner with the Australian Consul-General who was a gentleman. The Trade Commissioner was also extremely helpful. The conversation with the Consul-General and two or three other invited guests was very interesting. When we came into the dining room a number of people were sitting around. One gentleman was from Ballarat, a businessman. He was very arrogant. We were introduced to him and when he decided that I was nobody of any consequence he just ignored me all night. We were not all that interested in him either. He was a most horrible man.

He was one of those people who cannot help being over-Australian. He had to sing *Waltzing Matilda* as he walked down the street and had a koala bear stuffed in his shirt so that he could bring it out every few minutes to show everyone how Australian he was. He had a boomerang stuck in his back pocket and was the type you would find in London yelling out across the street, 'How are ya mate!' He carried on like this quite a lot at dinner. He had a big gold kangaroo on his lapel and a kangaroo on his tie. He was telling us how Spaniards could not understand him because his accent was too broad. He was not Australian at all. He was born in some other country in Europe and came to Australia as a migrant to make money. He was using the Australian bit to give him some uniqueness amongst his European business colleagues. As far as understanding the real Australia is concerned, he would not have a clue.

There are a lot of these types of people misrepresenting Australia, Australian born too. They disgust me. They just borrow Australianism for their own benefit. They think Australia is a good gimmick and they live like parasites off the country and use it all they can. Some entertainers use this to make their living. They pinch Aboriginal didgeridoos to boost their image.

We left Madrid the next day to go to Zurich. From there we hired a car to travel round Europe. First of all we went through the Swiss Alps. It was a shattering experience driving up through those mountains with no protective fences on the side of the road. It was magnificent country.

We crossed the border into Germany. Germany is very clean, the people courteous and we found it to be the best country as far as touring is concerned. We thought the hotels and the motels were reasonable in their charges. The German villages were beautiful. We could see the great tradition of the German people there with their sense of community, their spirit of oneness and their feeling for one another. I think this is an indication of a great race of people. They have something that they can look at as being a very valuable thing for society, a sense of identity born of long-standing tradition. The trouble is they are smart and industrious, but they know it.

We were driving along the famous Romantic Road of Germany

and there were little towns everywhere that were fortified. It was so beautiful. We enjoyed this part of the trip very much. My wife and I both like that sort of thing. It was named Romantic Road because of its beauty, uniqueness and atmosphere.

One day we came across a green valley and we turned into it. We did not know where we were going. We were just driving on, enchanted by the scenery. Suddenly, right at the end of the valley, right up on top of the cliff high above us, a huge white castle emerged. It was one of the most photographed and well-known castles in the world. It was magnificent. We got out of the car and looked, thinking 'What a sight!' It was built by some mad king for his mistress.

We drove up and there was a little village below it. There was another castle round the corner, just down the valley a little further. Beside it was a very still crystal-clear lake. Those far off times when the castles were built must have been like paradise for those people, the rich. To have that scenery around them, especially with the snow and the crystal-clear lake, surrounded by mountains, must have been good for their souls. The whole thing was unforgettable. It wasn't my piece of cake but it was certainly nice to look at.

We drove through there into the top end of Italy and on to Florence. The Italian Alps are magnificent. We had some bad moments there with the mad Italian drivers. They are probably the craziest drivers in the world. Why they have not killed themselves off by now, I don't know. They are dreadful drivers, not only in small cars but also in buses. In Florence one day I saw a busload of people come hurtling down the side of the cliff towards us. I thought the driver was going to hit us full-on. At the last moment he swerved over and missed the front of our car by about four inches. The busload of people were sitting there eating their sandwiches in the bus as they went hurtling by. The bus driver was throwing his arms around and turning to people in the back, and shaking his fist at me for not getting over. It must be a regular occurrence.

Florence is beyond description and exciting in the atmosphere it generates. Glorious history belongs to Florence.

We drove on to Venice through winding mountain roads and lovely scenery. Such places live in the dreams of everyone and must

be wonderful to live in, culturally, but they are very unclean. The problem in Europe, it seems to me, is that despite tradition, culture, history and all that, the whole place seems to be living on its past. Tradition becomes destructive if it destroys the present. Some aspects of this can be seen in Venice. Also, unfortunately, the motor boats they allow to go up and down the canals are adding to the destruction of the city. The water lapping on the sides is taking away a lot of the rock and earth. The noise of the motor boats is also a desecration. It is such a tranquil setting, particularly at night with the lights reflecting on the water. Added to this is the gradual sinking down of the very big buildings. It is destined to sink into the mud eventually and I don't think they can do anything to stop it. This is a shame because it is a beautiful city and a wonderful place to visit.

It has its own way of life and to be brought up in Venice I think would have been a real experience. Two or three hundred years ago it must have been a magnificent place to live. It was a big trading centre for the rest of the world. We enjoyed our stay there.

From Venice we went to Rome. On the way we stopped off at little Italian villages. They were good but they were not as clean as the German towns. The difference is obvious in many other ways too. In Rome you need big money to stay in the hotels and they were not really up to standard anyway. Rome is too expensive. The place has atmosphere but is over commercialized.

I had an argument when I was in Rome with the Australian Ambassador. I was waiting for mail and urgent messages to come from Australia so I rang him up when I arrived. It happened to be Sunday morning. Apparently you just do not do that sort of thing. I had tried everyone else but no one answered their phone.

He exploded over the phone, 'Who the hell are you?'

'Well,' I said, 'I'm just a bloke travelling through with my wife and I was asked to contact the Embassy to see if there are any messages for me.'

He said, 'You've got a cheek ringing me on a Sunday morning!'

I said, 'You're our Ambassador to Italy, aren't you? You're supposed to be on call for the general public.'

'I'll have you know,' he said . . . and he listed the duties of an

Ambassador which did not include early morning telephone calls from the general travelling Australian public.

I said, 'Well, it's taxpayers' money that's keeping you over here. I'm one of those taxpayers, so what about giving me a bit of help?'

This he did not like. Ambassadors do not like being told they are public servants. They tend to think they are over there representing themselves. They live in their own little dream world. We had a good argument. He consented after that to allow someone to go and see if there was any mail at the Embassy for me. Then he rang me up and told me there was none.

He said, 'Why don't you contact us on Monday instead of Sunday?'

'Well, look,' I said, 'I can't afford to stay in Rome. It's too expensive. Otherwise I'd see you on Monday.'

I departed in haste after I had a look around Rome, particularly at the historic sights. We went to St Peter's Basilica. It still has me amazed. I am sure that if Jesus Christ came down to earth today, he would be shocked at what people have built on his behalf. All those paintings, all the statues of various kinds in which people try to represent Christ and Mary and God, really had me stunned. It makes me furious when I look around and see all these things. People are bowing to them, bowing down to false images, something I thought you are not supposed to do according to the Bible.

I was absolutely disgusted when I walked in. It was interesting aesthetically and artistically but sickening religiously. Christ did not want to build a church at all. I thought it was an interesting museum and art gallery but I do not think it has any relationship with Christianity. There is no difference in that and the worship of the pagan gods as far as I am concerned.

As for the 'Princes of the Church', the Pope and all this sort of thing, I regard that as a lot of hogwash. That is not Christianity. It is just an organization of vested interests living on the fear of the unknown or ignorance of human beings. It was pleasant to be in the place because it was cool and a relief to get out of the hot, boiling sun. That was the only benefit I ever got from it, apart from its physical beauty.

From Rome we went to the Italian Riviera, right up the coast,

staying at several places along the way. We visited the French Riviera and Monte Carlo, where we went into the gambling casino. I had about five shillings in my pocket. This only allowed me to buy one chip, perhaps just as well because I lost it immediately. It was good however to go in and have a gamble at Monte Carlo. I had always wanted to do that. We stayed round Monte Carlo for a while and enjoyed every minute of it. We then drove back through Zurich. I thought the French Riviera was absolutely beautiful. It was a little overcrowded but the sea, the beaches (often full of stones) were very pleasant to visit.

There were men darker than me there and they were European so they did not take much notice of my colour. The only thing they worried about was if you paid your bill.

Then we got in the plane and flew straight from Zurich to Moscow. It was really a crazy idea going to Moscow just for the week-end. We stayed in Moscow with the Australian Ambassador, Mr Rowlands, who had three vigorous sons whose inclination on one occasion was towards chopping everyone's arms and legs off their bodies with little plastic swords. They had plenty of energy.

We did not meet one Russian person at all. I think the butler and the other people who were servants in the house were all Greek or some other nationality. We were taken to Red Square by Mr Rowlands personally. He was a good host and an excellent conversationalist. Red Square was really something to see.

We went for a picnic with a couple of people from the Embassy. I liked the Australian Embassy people there. They appeared to be very friendly. Probably desperate for someone different to talk to and some news from Australia. However, I still wondered what they would say behind my back. I can never ever really trust Foreign Affairs people again. I think they could have made some arrangements for me to meet some Russian people but this was not on the schedule at all. It was probably my fault I suppose for not pre-arranging it. I should have been allowed to go and speak with people from other ethnic groupings in Russia. This was never offered. Perhaps my reputation at other Australian Embassies had preceded me and they were fearful that I might embarrass them.

We flew from Moscow directly to New Delhi and that is a real

stinking hole as far as I am concerned. I have no love for India whatsoever. India is democracy in shambles. Democracy is really no answer to their problems. They will probably have to copy China to bring justice to the majority of their people. Democracy is a false dream for India at this point in time.

I do not look upon India and Indians very favourably. I think it is a disgrace the way they treat their own people. Especially the Aboriginal Indians of India. If they are going to bring Indians over to Australia, God help Australia. They will bring all their racism, their egoism and their desire to exploit people. They are doing this with the Fijians and the Malaysians. In India people are nothing. You are just a bit of flesh and if they can use that flesh for their own purposes, they will. They have no conscience that I have ever discerned.

I suppose this happens sometimes in Australia, and I should not be such a harsh judge. But I have no high regard for the Indians and their way of life. I hope they will overcome their problems as quickly as possible.

Their poverty is just so obvious to everybody. Yet the educated Indians, inside and outside India, deny that there is poverty. They are humiliated if they have to admit that their country is a beggar. I consider this to be false pride. It is better to own up to failure and then act. The problems are so immense that there is just no hope for meeting housing, educational and nutritional needs within the foreseeable future. The only decent thing you can say about India is that they have been able to do their own thing in their own way. The white people have got out and left them to it. They have inherited their problems from the Europeans and they are doing something about it.

We went to Singapore, which I did not like either. It was a real disappointment. The shopping facilities were not as good as they are claimed to be. The goods are not that much cheaper than in Australia once you pay the excess baggage rate and so on. I suppose with all of these places you have to stay there a couple of weeks and get to know them and absorb the atmosphere. You cannot really be sure of your judgement on a place after being there for one or two days. Besides this I was now anxious to get home to Australia.

My friends, Mervyn (Booma) Williams, Chicka Dixon and Roy Carroll met me at the airport in Sydney. I was so pleased to see them again. They are good mates and always have been. We then went straight on to Adelaide where Eileen and I joined up with our baby, Hetti. The flight from Sydney to Adelaide was so bad that I was ill most of the way. When we landed at Adelaide I could not even walk off the tarmac. I was very, very ill. My kidney trouble was taking hold of me as well as the bad trip itself. I had to sit for about five minutes on the tarmac near the plane before I could even move.

Back at my mother-in-law's place I got in front of the heater. I was shivering and shaking. They called the doctor but he could not diagnose the trouble. He just presumed I had a heavy cold. So I went back into hospital for another two weeks. I of course signed myself out again when I started to get sick of it. This was the beginning of the real trouble with my kidneys.

When I recovered I was flown to Canberra to give a report to the Department of Foreign Affairs. Sir Paul Hasluck was there, together with the top officials. They asked me a series of questions. They seemed quite upset that I was putting my report so strongly to them.

For example, in regard to America and its race problems, I said, 'You're going to have big race riots and race problems in America that will eventually affect us here.' (And violence did flare up that very year in the United States.) I said, 'America's whole policy on welfare and social programming leaves a great deal to be desired. There is no solution in sight.'

I then described the attitude towards me of some of their staff overseas. They quietly took notes and listened to what I had to say. I gave them the full outline of what went on overseas as regards my tour. Whether they took any action or not I do not know but I gave them a full verbal report on that trip. I was really pleased to be back in my own country again.

I went back to work at the Foundation for Aboriginal Affairs in Sydney but it was really the beginning of the end as far as I was concerned. I knew when I returned there that I would leave pretty soon, that something would have to happen. It did. I accepted a position with the Commonwealth of Australia, in the new Office of Aboriginal Affairs in Canberra under Bill Wentworth.