

Aborigines' education

THE promise of renewed efforts to step up adult education among the Aborigines should be warmly welcomed and, where the efforts are practical, financially supported.

The leadership training school for Aborigines just ended in Sydney was as important in its own way as the freedom ride through NSW was.

There have been criticisms of the freedom riders, some honest, some not so honest. But what is clear is that their efforts must be followed up.

One of the ways, and only one, that this can be done is through adult education. This, as KATH WALKER, that powerful spokeswoman for Aborigines, has made clear, can best be done by their own people.

To use Aboriginal leaders and to offer them training is a way to by-pass the inevitable patronising air that too often accompanies even the most well-meant efforts.

A combination of shyness and bitterness among the fringe-town dwellers has often lead to passive resistance to white welfare officers or charity workers.

In the past there has been too little co-ordinated effort to train Aboriginal leaders. The work of the Church of England Tranby Co-operative College in Sydney, backed by trade unions, has done vital pioneer work in this field.

Scholarships could open the way for courses twice a year instead of once a year as at present. Alongside the promises of new railways, etc, the amount needed would be modest.