

ABORIGINES ARRESTED AT CIVIL RIGHTS SIT-IN

Six civil rights demonstrators including two Aborigines were arrested on Saturday when they tried to integrate the Walgett picture theatre.

It is believed to be the first time Australian police have arrested Aborigines for taking part in a civil rights action.

The Aborigines were a young girl, aged about 18, and a man.

The four white demonstrators were University of Sydney students.

One of the arrested students was later charged with assaulting a policeman, resisting arrest, offensive behavior and causing an obstruction.

Walgett, in northern New South Wales, has

been a target for civil rights workers.

The demonstrators invited arrest after talking with the theatre management and police.

All were charged with causing an obstruction, and were given bail to appear in Walgett Court on August 24.

The maximum fine for the offence is £2.

Student Action for Aborigines backed the Walgett protest and was prepared to fight for the rights of the demonstrators through the courts, a spokesman said.

The four students had arranged with Walgett Aboriginal leaders to take Aboriginal girls to the theatre.

They were allowed to buy tickets, but were refused admittance to the

upstairs part of theatre, reserved for whites.

They were asked to leave and said they would not. They offered to sit on the stairs.

Police were called in to the theatre and arrested the six demonstrators who were the only people left at the theatre by this time.

Mr Charles Perkins, leader of Student Action for Aborigines, said in Sydney last night that the desegregation campaign would be continued in Walgett.

"Our work in Walgett is only just beginning," he said.

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