

# BLACK ACTION

**"Racism is so inherent within our society that unfortunately we do not see it, and accept it as such."**

This is the opinion of Mrs. Lorna Lippmann, a Research Officer at the Centre of Research into Aboriginal Affairs at Monash University.

Lippmann was speaking at a Jewish Radical Association meeting on "Radicalism and Racism in Australia".

Reporting on an Action Conference on "Education and Racism" which she attended in Brisbane in January, Mrs. Lippmann said of the state of aboriginal affairs:

● In the Aborigine civil rights movement, Jews have been grossly under-represented.

● Aborigine high school children experience antipathy and animosity at school, and resent the fact that Australian history is taught only from 1788 onwards.

● Young Aborigines in Queensland receive constant attention of police.

● Gaol figures show that aborigines in Brisbane, who represent 2% of the population, represent 35% of prison population.

● Aborigine infant mortality is 16 times that of the white figure in the

Northern Territory, and these figures, rather than getting better, are getting worse.

● Malnutrition, poor living conditions, almost non-existent hygiene is commonplace.

● 50% of adult males in the Northern Territory are unemployed.

Is it any wonder that a small group of Aborigines have formed themselves into a Black Panther Movement? Mrs. Lippmann asked.

Aborigines feel themselves to be powerless, and their 10-point platform for reform seems quite reasonable to me, she said.

All they want is freedom, the right to work, land rights, decent housing, education, an end to brutality and fair trials.

Mrs. Lippmann stated that, up to date, there had been no violence on the Black side. "However, I cannot guarantee that this state of affairs will last, as Aborigines now are at the end of their tether.

"They are tired of welfare and handouts; they want to be noticed and have some say in their own affairs.

"In my 15 years of working with Aboriginal affairs, the formation of the Black Panther Group is the only positive and worthwhile thing that I have seen done.

"Perhaps something now may happen to alleviate the suffering and degradation of these people.