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[Thumbnail is of page 1 of *Aboriginal Commentary Issue 1*]

By September 1965 two facts had become clear:

- a) The Nulla Nulla Club was much appreciated by the children involved and was most worthwhile.
- b) The core group in ANUJSS that actually ran the Nulla Nullas would be leaving Canberra early in 1966.

Longer term, it had been envisaged that aboriginal leadership would emerge. But meanwhile, it was incumbent on us to seek out a motivated organisation to take over the running of the *Nulla Nullas* at Wallaga Lake, and, hopefully, extend this work to other locations. A newsletter, *Aboriginal Commentary*, was conceived as providing a link to whatever other group would take over the running of the Nulla Nulla Club at Wallaga Lake in 1966 onwards. The Jewish linkage was deliberately not revealed in the Newsletter: thus the active policy of presenting Tzedakah is referred to as “charitable activities”.

This first issue of *Aboriginal Commentary* comprised ten pages on typewriter paper that were simply side-stapled. It was printed using the Gestetner process on memo sized paper (as wide but shorter than A4). The Editor, Harvey Cohen, composed the editorial as he typed it directly onto Gestetner waxed sheets.

Aboriginal Commentary Issue No 1 was included with a letter sent to various figures involved in Aboriginal affairs, which asked them for their

QUOTE

views on the following.

1. The major problems aborigines are facing today.
2. How you feel these problems can best be alleviated.
3. Any suggestions for activities feasible for a Canberra based group (whose members ages are mainly in the twenties).

UNQUOTE

Issue No 2 was planned, to (notably) include several paragraphs from a long letter that Kym Beazley Snr wrote in reply to our enquiry; however this issue was never printed.

So, for the record:

Here is the opening page of *Aboriginal Commentary Issue No 1*, and part of page 2, re-typed as is, except for the correction of a couple of typos, and the use of bold type for headings.

*** Aboriginal Commentary ***

No 1

Canberra

Price 1/-

September, 1965

Preamble	IN THIS ISSUE	P
<i>This Newsletter is concerned with aboriginal affairs, especially with youth activities. All correspondence should be addressed to the Editor, Commentary, 14 Jansz Crescent, Griffith, ACT</i>	Editorial	1
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Editorial

Every society teaches its children from a very early age a pattern of values and behaviour which will enable the child to participate in the organizational system of the society. The resultant behavioural pattern may be narrow or broad, that is the adult may be able to cope with either a small or large range of experience. The pattern of behaviour and values acquired by an aboriginal child who is a fringe dweller or lives on a station or reserve, does not prepare it for experiences with which it may have to cope if it wishes to participate in the broader Australian society. It is consequently the aim of this group not in any way to destroy the pattern of values the child has already learnt, but to widen this pattern. It is essential therefore that we declare beforehand exactly what new patterns of behaviour we wish to present to the children. One of the greatest dangers is that of establishing the pattern of dependence. Coming regularly to Wallaga Lake and elsewhere we are aware of certain cases of need (as of educational items) which are within our capacity to supply; but the giving of such items as charity is to be avoided. By putting the children in the position of giving - as through charitable activities performed by their club - we hope to avoid establishing the pattern in which the child is always at the receiving end of charity. (Perhaps it is expedient to inform new members of the first such charitable project: the Wallaga [Lake] children made that easiest of handicrafts - cactus gardens in painted cans, which were presented to children in Canberra Hospital). Another special danger we face is that of reinforcing the pattern in which these children receive special treatment vis a quis white children. We must see to it that in their encounters with white children they are treated as other children, and not as specially different. Considerations of this sort imply that when we introduce music as a childrens club activity we do so at the individual level, i.e. encourage particular children but not at forming an aboriginal band or orchestra.

The particular broadness of say middle class Australian society may be partially accounted for by the considerable body of knowledge of the world outside of the immediate sphere acquired by the child. The reading of books, stamp collecting, the exchange of letters with overseas penfriends, travel within Australia broaden horizons and such items we must endeavour to place within the experience of aboriginal children.

H.A.C.

Webmasters Footnote to this PDF page: The article on pages 3 -7 of Aboriginal Commentary, “The Situation of Aboriginals in the Northern Territories”, was by L.R. Hiatt, reproduced from the (mimeographed) Sydney magazine “Broadsheet” of September 1961. This article had been written while Les Hiatt was researching his ANU PhD thesis, published as the anthropological classic, “Kinship and Conflict in Arnhem Land”