

REPORT ON NORTH QUEENSLAND - PASTOR DON BRADY

Left Brisbane on 17th August 1971
Arrived in Townsville on 18th August 1971

Thursday: Went to Murray Upper area visiting several families
One cripple man living in a humpy - there are no deeds for the land- shacks and humpy-type shapes are the only form of housing and at this stage this seems to be a permanent arrangement.
In the Murray Upper area the Cardwell Shire Council has set aside 5 acres of land which is a gazetted Reserve. Because of this it is impossible to make any permanent arrangements as it is not freehold.
A case in the Murray Upper was when a member of a particular church burnt out the camps of the aborigines because they did not accept his concepts on religion. Since then the people have had to suffer many hardships in trying to erect some type of housing.
The main problem in this area is the lack of finance and the first priority would need to be money raising.

- 20th - Made a trip to Innisfail which was worthwhile - saw some families there and spoke to Mrs. Maza; the result being that Mr. & Mrs Maza came to Tully to discuss aboriginal affairs. There is a definite awakening among Aborigines in the North and Mr. & Mrs Maza are both keen on starting something in their area.
- 21st - Attended a wedding of an Aboriginal girl and an Italian boy - the reception was in the form of a traditional Aboriginal feast.
- 21st - Went to Townsville to meet the Palm Island boat in which 14 boys (who were kicked off the Island) were. The boys were presumably kicked off by the Aboriginal Council. Both Darcy and Pastor Don acted immediately - they took the boys and stormed the D.A.I.A. in Townsville. The purpose of this was to show that the Aboriginal people of Palm Island still could not live where they wish. There were supposed to be another 30 on the boat the following day but Darcy and Pastor told the D.A.I.A. that if they were on the boat then they would make sure that the A.B.C. and other mass media were informed of these actions. On the following day the A.B.C. and Darcy and Pastor Don were on the wharf but when the boat arrived there were no boys to be seen. Thus we were able to prevent 30 boys from being stranded on the mainland; however this is always happening and it was lucky that we were there at that particular time.

While in Townsville Darcy and Pastor Don were able to investigate police brutality towards Aboriginal boys. Four lads were beaten by the police on a few days previous to our arrival and when we saw these lads we took them to the hospital. When examined the Doctor wanted to know why they had not gone to the hospital before this. Pastor Don explained to the Doctor that there were hundreds of cases concerning Aborigines that had not been reported because Aborigines had no confidence in the Whites in Townsville. Many of the Aborigines had died in the parks and allotments because they had lost all respect and confidence in the D.A.I.A. and the Whites in Townsville. Thus from the observations there would be no hesitation in condemning T'ville on Racism.

Left Townsville on Wednesday 1st September 1971.