

**THE CATHOLIC CHURCH  
AND THE STRUGGLE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS  
OF AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL PEOPLE  
IN THE 1960s ❀**

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*Stefano Girola*

**Introduction**

This paper will discuss the attitudes of the Catholic Church in Australia with regard to the struggle for the civil rights of Australian Indigenous people in the 1960s. The paper will focus on civil rights rather than on Indigenous rights because, until the late 1960s, pro-Aboriginal activism was focused on obtaining for Indigenous people, equal rights with other Australians – rather than group-specific rights that result from their status as the previous occupiers of the Australian continent – namely Indigenous rights.

This was an important decade in the history of race relations in Australia. Many legal provisions that had restricted the rights of Indigenous people for a long time were being completely dismantled. In 1962 Aborigines were given voting rights for the Federal Parliament. In 1965 the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission officially recognized the principle of equal wages for Aboriginal workers in the pastoral industry. In 1967 the overwhelming majority of Australians approved with a referendum, the constitutional changes that allowed Aborigines to be counted in the Census and gave the Commonwealth powers to legislate on Aboriginal matters<sup>1</sup>. Although the struggle for civil rights did not finish in 1967, this paper will not investigate the post-Referendum period. From the late 1960s, the focus of pro-Aboriginal campaigns was shifting from equal rights to Indigenous rights, and in particular to land rights. These new developments require a separate investigation.

In analyzing the literature regarding the struggle for civil rights for Indigenous people, including memoirs or biographies of the protagonists of this struggle,<sup>2</sup> one is struck by the scarce references to the contribution of the Catholic Church. I will show that, unlike other Christian denominations, the Catholic Church in Australia was not directly involved in the campaigns for civil rights in the 1960s. The reasons for the lack of corporate support by the Catholic Church for these campaigns of the 1960s will be discussed. I will also highlight that the documents reveal the absence of a specific Catholic position or policy on the matter of civil rights for Indigenous Australians. It will be suggested that this may indicate a weak leadership of the Church hierarchy on this important issue for Australian society. The late support given by the Catholic bishops to the 'yes' vote for the referendum campaign in 1967 could not hide the fact that the Catholic Church did not offer a strong contribution to the political achievements of pro-Indigenous organizations in the 1960s.

Finally, I will show that in the years of Vatican Council II, a new approach was beginning to emerge within the Church towards the Aboriginal question. A growing awareness of the broader social responsibilities of the Church led some Catholics, clergy and lay, to publicly question the Church's stance on the struggle for the rights of Indigenous people.

### **The Catholic Church and the Issue of Voting Rights for Aborigines**

In analyzing the attitudes of the Catholic Church with regard to the movement for equal rights to Aborigines, an important premise is necessary. The Catholic Church supported the right of Indigenous people to be accepted as citizens of Australia long before other components of Australian societies - for example the trade unions - became interested in the plight of Aborigines. There are many examples from which to choose. In an ongoing study of the diary of the Spanish missionary Rudesindo Salvado, founder of the Benedictine mission of New Norcia in Western Australia, scholar Roberto Esposito has identified a terminological shift in the way Salvado wrote about Aboriginal people. For Salvado, Indigenous

Australians were at first 'savages', then 'natives' and finally 'the Australians'.<sup>3</sup> What Salvado meant by using the latter term was apparent when he bitterly criticised the Federal Conferences and Conventions of 1890, 1891 and 1897-98 for not even mentioning Aboriginal people in determining the future Australian citizens.<sup>4</sup>

Likewise, in a letter to the editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald* in December 1892, Jesuit missionary Donald McKillop said:

In the great conference of last year, when statesmen came together from the different colonies to mould the destinies of Australia, it was surely significant that not one word was spoken about the native races. This fair land of ours is marching on to greatness, and very often we hear it boasted that this greatness, whatever form it will take, will be achieved without the loss of one drop of blood. I am afraid the future historian will tell another tale.<sup>5</sup>

Another defender of the rights of Indigenous people in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was the Scottish missionary, Duncan McNab, active in Queensland in the 1870s, who unsuccessfully lobbied Government authorities for the recognition of Aboriginal rights to own land and for the legal recognition of Aboriginal marriages.<sup>6</sup>

It should be stressed that when these missionaries defended the common humanity and the rights of Aboriginal people, many respected Australian scientists and academics were reinforcing – with their measurements of Aboriginal skulls and analysis of cranial or facial structures – the popular opinion that regarded Aborigines as sub-human creatures, the missing link between the ape and the man. Social Darwinism was the doctrine of the day in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and according to its tenets

Aborigines were seen as archaic survivors from the dawn of man's existence, and it was believed that there was no place for such people in the modern world.<sup>7</sup>

Instead, many Church officials continued to uphold the view that Aboriginal people had a right to be considered in any discussion on the future of the nation. A pamphlet of the Australian Catholic Truth Society in 1929 on the Beagle Bay Catholic mission maintained that

Aboriginal people could in time become useful citizens, while preserving their racial identity.<sup>8</sup> Queensland priest John Healy incessantly repeated a message by the Apostolic Delegate Filippo Bernardini, who in a Sydney meeting in 1934 told fellow Catholics:

If you Australian Catholics believe that your civilisation is the Christian one, if you have faith in the destiny of your country, you must do your utmost to make of these poor creatures good citizens, and to cancel for ever this weak spot on the national life of Australia.<sup>9</sup>

Today these words might sound patronizing, but it is necessary to put them in their proper context. For example, when, in 1934, the Australian Minister for the Interior proposed to bring to Melbourne, for adoption, twenty children of mixed parentage from the missions in the Northern Territory, the women's section of the United Country Party (Melbourne branch) protested that the girls might 'infuse a strain of Aboriginal blood into our coming generation.' This awful risk they would avoid 'for the race heritage we hold in trust...for the sanctity of our age-old traditions, and for the protection of our growing boys'.<sup>10</sup> These were the attitudes that many Church men and women had to confront when they upheld the rights of Indigenous people to be considered as future citizens of Australia.

However, when the campaigns for the abolition of legal discriminations against Indigenous people gained momentum in the second half of the 1950s, the response of the Catholic Church did not always match its own rhetoric. Catholic missionaries in the Kimberley missions in the 1950s were diffident towards many initiatives in the struggle for civil rights. According to Durack, those Catholic missionaries opposed the granting of full citizenship rights to Aborigines because of 'a somewhat exaggerated fear of communist influence and its power to exploit the native vote'.<sup>11</sup>

The suspicion of Catholic officials towards civil rights campaigns was evident also during the hearings of the *Select Committee on Voting Rights for Aborigines* set up by the Federal Parliament in 1961. Some of the opinions expressed by Catholic missionaries illustrate a gap between the belief in the equality of all human beings

and the practical implementation of this principle to the specific situation of Aborigines. However, the opposition to the concession of the franchise was not unanimous. The interviews with Catholic representatives show instead a large variety of positions on this topic and it is worthwhile to discuss them in detail.<sup>12</sup>

Owen McDermott, parish priest of Thursday Island, argued that to give blanket voting rights to Aborigines in Australia would make no sense. If voting rights were extended to all Aborigines indiscriminately, the consequence would be that,

You would be giving them also to people who are not regarded as being able to look after themselves, which is why they are on missions and settlements. That would mean that people who did not know what they are doing could decide the government of the country. I think that aboriginal voting should be on a personal basis. I think there should be some test applied and the magistrate should himself interview the applicants.<sup>13</sup>

According to Fr McDermott, 'there should be a test for full-bloods and a less stringent test for half-castes and quarter-castes'.<sup>14</sup> This test would limit the possibility of political manipulation by scheming persons who could get to take advantage of Indigenous people.

Also Rev Gregory Gomez, Lord Abbot of New Norcia, was opposed to extending voting rights to Aborigines. His submissions to the committee made the following points: few Aborigines would be interested in voting; most would be unfitted to exercise the franchise; and only a small percentage would appreciate the privilege of voting, namely those who had the benefit of some education at the mission and who were not full-blood. Fr Gomez didn't think much about Aborigines' motivations for getting citizenship rights: 'All they want the vote for is to have a licence to buy their own drink.'

The missionary also did not seem enthusiastic about the role of the Church in promoting an awareness of citizenship rights among Aborigines, stating that 'perhaps' the missionaries 'could try' to enable Aborigines 'to understand what it means'. But this could not happen before 'five years or perhaps ten'. The main problem seemed

to be that Aborigines could be easily manipulated by others. Hence, according to Gomez, 'the time is not ripe for them to have any particular right'.<sup>15</sup>

An exchange between Gomez and the Committee shows that the missionary's opposition to the enfranchisement of Aborigines was based also on racist considerations:

Q. 'But we do not ask a European to be intelligent. He can be a moron and have the vote'.

A. 'Yes'.

Q 'So that, if you say an aboriginal must be intelligent you are in fact drawing a race line?'

A. 'Yes, I am. But the difference, in my opinion is this: The white man is taken to be intelligent. Whether he is not is another question. These fellows are not by nature, so those who are intelligent are more or less the exception rather than the rule. I think it is the rule for whites to be intelligent, although exceptional ones are not'.<sup>16</sup>

As a consequence, Aborigines should show 'some sort of intelligence' before being granted the right to vote.

Similar opinions were stated by the Superintendent of Kalumburu mission, Benedictine Father Seraphim Sanz. Regarding the inmates of his mission, he claimed that they were not interested in voting as the only contact they had with European civilization was limited to the mission school. Although the children might understand better the voting issue, adults were out of the question. He also shared Gomez's lukewarm concern in the Church having a more proactive role in preparing Aborigines for citizenship<sup>17</sup>. When asked about granting voting rights to Aborigines in general and not only to mission inmates, Sanz's answer showed the gap between the Christian doctrinal principle of the equality of all human beings and its implementation in the circumstances of Aborigines. He claimed that Aborigines should be given the right to vote and to decide the nature of the Parliament. But in order to obtain this right, an Aboriginal person had to fulfil the following requirements:

- to be capable of doing one job
- to know how to rear a family and look after their own business reasonably well
- to be able to read and write
- to have a permanent job
- to have a good report by his neighbours re their abilities to live like decent citizens.<sup>18</sup>

Despite being reminded by the Committee that also members of Parliament did not have a permanent job, the missionary did not clarify why it was necessary for only Aborigines to satisfy these prerequisites<sup>19</sup>.

Also Father Alan Corry, superintendent of the Bathurst Island mission in the Northern Territory, foresaw difficulties in implementing the principle of equality to the situation of Aborigines:

First of all, they have a right to vote – there is no doubt about that – because in the eyes of God every one of us is equal, with an intellect and a will. We do not question their right to vote at all, as human beings and as children of God and heirs to the Kingdom of Heaven just as we are. That is the first point I make. I will elaborate it a little in a minute. I consider that they are not yet sufficiently prepared to use that right to vote.<sup>20</sup>

It is meaningful that the missionary still felt it was necessary, in 1961, to defend the common humanity of Aborigines. According to Fr Corry, their art, dancing, bushcraft and body-painting indicated without doubt that Aborigines possessed an intellect. However, Corry's main argument was that voting was part of the complex system of Western democracy and Aborigines were not sufficiently integrated into Western culture and society to be able to participate in its electoral procedures. In the course of the interview this argument was challenged by further questions of the Committee, which pointed at some contradictory statements of the missionary. Actually Fr Corry was eager to show the success of the missionaries on Bathurst Island, through the achievements of the Aborigines

living on the mission: Christian culture was flowering in the Aborigines' acceptance of the Christian way of life; Aborigines had taken on the responsibilities of family life and were living up to those responsibilities splendidly; Aboriginal workers were very good and 'the way some of the men here work would astound you people'; the majority of Aborigines were responsible. Eventually he also admitted that 'some of our aborigines could vote more intelligently than some people that are already voting'. It is apparent that comments like this seemed to be at odds with his previous statements regarding Aborigines' lack of preparation for the vote.

Corry remained persuaded that it was better to wait until all Aborigines would be ready for the vote rather than granting this right now to those who were ready for it.<sup>21</sup> The tragic and famous case of the painter Albert Namatjira had certainly highlighted the fact that granting citizenship rights only to 'selected' Aborigines could create serious difficulties for them in reconciling these rights with tribal obligations.<sup>22</sup> However, Corry did not consider the possibility that this problem could be solved by extending voting rights to all Aborigines.<sup>23</sup>

In spite of some misgivings with regard to the practical implementation, Darwin Bishop, John Patrick O'Loughlin, the only Catholic bishop interviewed by the Committee, was in favour of granting voting rights to Aborigines as a matter of justice: 'I think the aboriginal should get voting rights. Perhaps this is theoretical. He pays taxes and because of that I think he should get the right to vote'.<sup>24</sup>

Asked whether he thought that the franchise could be extended to all Aborigines, O'Loughlin gave only a qualified answer. The illiteracy and the primitiveness of some Aborigines meant that, for some of them, voting rights would have been irrelevant. However, unlike Father Gomez, O'Loughlin was more optimistic on future prospects. Also illiterate Aborigines 'might still be able to vote if the means were provided, because they might have as much grasp of affairs and politics as some of those who can read and write'.<sup>25</sup>



In anticipating the growth of a movement upholding the proposal of voting rights, O'Loughlin welcomed the prospect of politicians' visits to the missions for electoral propaganda, 'providing their parties were reputable'.<sup>26</sup> Even the establishment of branches of political parties on the missions would be acceptable. He regarded these opportunities as a sign of a greater interest and involvement by Australian society in the welfare of Aborigines, so far, by and large, neglected.<sup>27</sup> In criticizing tourists who came to the Northern Territory to look at Aborigines 'as they might look at kangaroos', the bishop argued that the concession of voting rights would create more interest in the Aborigines as persons.<sup>28</sup>

Finally, for O'Loughlin these developments were important steps towards the assimilation of the Aborigines within Australian society. The bishop clarified that it was Church policy to contribute in breaking down the remains of the tribal structure of Aborigines. If the extension of citizenship rights could accelerate this process, it was welcome.<sup>29</sup>

On the other hand, Fr Brian Thomas Murray, a priest working in Broome, rejected the idea that conceding voting rights to Aborigines should be a step towards their assimilation into Australian society. He saw the concession of the franchise first of all a matter of human rights and justice<sup>30</sup>. He rejected proposals of applying discriminatory tests to Indigenous people before granting them the vote. He told the Committee:

Get the rights fixed first of all, and let us approach the difficulties that will follow from extending this and see what the difficulties are. Set up some machinery to overcome them. I think it is wrong thinking to look at the difficulty first and then adjust our laws just to overcome a problem.<sup>31</sup>

Fr Murray insisted more on the symbolic value of extending a new right to a dispossessed people, rather than on the effective value of the participation of Aborigines in future elections. He did not think that there was an urge by Aborigines to get voting rights as such, because 'they [Aborigines] think of it only in terms of freeing them

from the subjection in which they think they are at the present moment'.<sup>32</sup> He did not believe as well, that Aborigines were interested in citizenship rights only to get a 'free beer ticket.' What mattered, according to this priest, was to challenge a major hurdle in race relations in Australia; namely the 'sense of inferiority' that Europeans had engendered in Indigenous people.<sup>33</sup>

Also Father Basil Noseda, from the Benedictine Abbey of New Norcia, was of the opinion that it would be appropriate to grant voting rights to all Aborigines who wished to vote. Unlike his superior, Fr Gomez, Noseda's views on the capacity and skills of Aborigines were much more positive. He believed that 90% of New Norcia's Aborigines could vote intelligently. The only criterion to consider was Aboriginal choice. If they wanted the vote, 'so they should be given the vote without any of this nonsense of medical examinations, which are very embarrassing, to say the least'.<sup>34</sup> The education that Aborigines had received at New Norcia had given them a sense of leadership and had entitled them to citizenship rights.<sup>35</sup>

Another friar from the New Norcia mission, Father Wilfred Saenz, claimed that in this mission most of the natives would understand the voting question very well. The same could be said of most Aborigines living in the southern regions of Western Australia. However, Saenz agreed with Fr Gomez that the Aborigines more removed from the influence of Western culture and lifestyles, like those living in Kalumburu, were not ready for the vote.<sup>36</sup> However, there was no suggestion of racial inferiority in Saenz's arguments, rather an insistence on the importance of education and working opportunities in improving the status of Aborigines so that they could eventually enjoy the same rights as the rest of the population.

The opinions expressed by the Catholic clergy interviewed by the Parliamentary Committee on voting rights show that, on this important issue, the Catholic Church did not have a definite policy or an affirmative vision to offer. Many views were actually conflicting and some missionaries contradicted their own religious superiors on the preparation of Aborigines for the enjoyment of voting rights. The variety of Catholic responses suggests indirectly

that there was a lack of leadership within the Catholic Church in Australia with regard to Indigenous issues. It is meaningful that none of the Catholic clergy interviewed by the Committee made any reference to public statements or policies of the Catholic Church in Australia on these matters.

The Catholic clergy who expressed major hesitations with regard to voting rights for Aborigines were not alone in doing this. The minutes of evidence of the Parliamentary Committee on Voting Rights also record similar views by representatives of the Presbyterian, Anglican, Lutheran and United Aborigines Mission.<sup>37</sup> On the contrary, members of other religious groups, like Aboriginal Pastor Doug Nicholls of the 'Church of Christ', Mr G. Hutchesson, clerk of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) of South Australia, Rev. E A Wells, of the 'Overseas Missions' Committee of the Methodist Church of Australasia, conveyed their unreserved support to the proposal of extending voting rights to Aborigines. They also rejected discriminatory tests. According to scholar Darling, these clergy were 'a cardinal part of the network of activists who eventually achieved a measure of justice' for Indigenous peoples.<sup>38</sup>

Another religious organization, the National Missionary Council of Australia, gave full support to the extension of citizenship rights to people of Aboriginal descent and to 'full-blood Aborigines living in white communities'.<sup>39</sup> But the representative of the NMC also conveyed the Council's misgivings on the feasibility of applying to remote Aborigines, the requirements of compulsory enrolment and compulsory voting. Such concerns were taken into account by the Parliamentary Committee. In 1962, the Commonwealth amended its Franchise Act, allowing all Indigenous adults to vote in Commonwealth elections, but the vote did not become compulsory for them until 1983. As Chesterman pointed out, this important step in the struggle for civil rights for Aborigines was due mainly to the Australian Government's anxiety for its international reputation, in an era when discriminations based on race were less and less tolerated by international public opinion, and in particular by the newly de-colonised nations.<sup>40</sup> The second important factor was the

domestic activism of organisations, comprised of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal supporters, that fought for civil rights for Aborigines,.

### **The Catholic Church and the Movement for Equal Rights for Aborigines**

Catholic suspicion towards the campaigns for civil rights for Aborigines continued in the first half of the 1960s. In this period the main organization to support the extension of equal rights to Aborigines was the *Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders* (FCAATSI). Soon after its foundation in 1958 in Adelaide, this national body started to fight for the abolition of discriminatory provisions against Aborigines in State laws and in the Australian Constitution. The Federal Council was the first pro-Aboriginal organization to campaign for the rights of Aborigines on a national scale. Its prominence in this struggle can be measured by the fact that, in 1967, 47 organizations from different ideological and religious backgrounds were affiliated with it.

It is worthy of note that the Catholic Church did not establish any affiliation with FCAATSI, while other religious denominations did. By 1962 the Melbourne Unitarian Church, the Methodist *Committee on Part Europeans* and the Church of Christ Aboriginal Mission Board were affiliated with FCAATSI. During the 1960s, some mainstream religious groups also joined the campaign of FCAATSI for civil rights for Aborigines: the National Missionary Council, the Victorian Council of Churches and the Australian Council of Churches. The absence of the Catholic Church was particularly conspicuous in May 1965 at a consultation on Aboriginal Affairs at St Paul's Cathedral in Melbourne. As Toffe noted, this meeting was attended by representatives from all the mainstream Christian churches, with the exception of the Catholic Church.<sup>41</sup>

Since many left-wing activists were members of FCAATSI, it is not difficult to understand Catholics' unwillingness to support such campaigns. The importance of the anti-communist element in Catholic attitudes towards the struggle for Aboriginal rights was stressed in an article published in 1963 by the periodical 'Social

Survey', written by a Jesuit priest. After a critical examination of the Aboriginal policies of the Communist Party of Australia (CPA), the author accused the CPA of successfully influencing all the bodies devoted to Aboriginal advancement. Even if only FCAATSI and QCAATSI were singled out here, the author suggested that the influence of the CPA had undermined the credibility of all organizations - with the exception of OPAL - promoting the advancement of Aborigines.<sup>42</sup>

However, Smith implicitly admitted that communist activities in support of Aboriginal rights had highlighted the apathy that had characterized the attitudes of the majority of Australians towards the welfare of Aborigines:

Unless sufficient non-communist Australians take an active interest in the welfare of the Aborigines, and unless Australian governments considerably step up their work for the Aborigines, the communist hate-sowing campaign will affect many individuals and create much unnecessary bitterness and suffering.<sup>43</sup>

The visibility of action on behalf of Aborigines was also important:

'We must give the Aborigines no sound new reason for their sense of injustice and oppression, and we must be clearly seen to be acting vigorously on their behalf'.<sup>44</sup>

In Queensland, in the same year, the Catholic Church was starting its involvement with an organization founded by the Queensland Government in March 1962: 'OPAL' (One People of Australia League). The support of the Queensland Government was also due to its need to deflect criticism from its discriminatory Aboriginal policies. The ideology that underpinned OPAL was the assimilation of Aboriginal people within the Australian community. The methods to achieve this were mainly welfare and charitable initiatives towards Aborigines as individuals. Improvement in their housing, employment and education opportunities would allow them to participate in the social and economic activities of white society.

As historian Darling has shown, the establishment of OPAL was strictly linked to the demise of *The Queensland Council for the*

*Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders* in 1961. This militant organization for Aboriginal rights was critical of the discriminatory laws that controlled most aspects of Aboriginal lives in Queensland. Soon after its foundation it was put out of existence by the action of anti-communist forces among which the *National Civic Council* guided by Bob Santamaria, played a major role.<sup>45</sup> Although Darling seems to inflate the role of the NCC and the Catholic Church - attributing the coup that brought about the demise of an Aboriginal organization, to the Catholic Church as a whole - it is interesting to note that in some Queensland dioceses, members of the Catholic clergy became officially involved - almost from the start - with the anti-communist organization OPAL.

In recalling the origins of OPAL, a Presbyterian pastor quoted by the Rockhampton Catholic diocesan newspaper *The Review* maintained that anti-communism was actually the main motivation behind the new organization:

O.P.A.L. had its beginnings largely for the reason that the coloured people of North Queensland were becoming discontented because of the activities of a Communist organization in the area.<sup>46</sup>

Rev Wilson added that 'the coloured people had much ability and capacity but were sometimes lacking in responsibility.'

In his study of the foundation of OPAL, Donald has argued that the reasons why several Church groups affiliated with OPAL was that in this organization they did not have to engage in applying political pressure on civil rights issues which were not high on their priorities.<sup>47</sup> Tomasetti suggested that the main difference between Aboriginal organizations such as FCAATSI and OPAL was that the former dealt largely with the policy and legislative aspects of civil rights, including wage matters, whereas, OPAL's efforts were devoted largely to helping individuals or families with social service matters.<sup>48</sup> Also Darling has noted that civil rights for Aborigines were not on the agenda of Queensland Churches in the early 1960s; arguing that in the main, the Queensland Church and political hierarchies in the late 1950s and early 1960s opposed the

implementation of 'Black rights' either overtly or through non-action.<sup>49</sup>

OPAL did much for the welfare of Aboriginal people and for this reason it is fondly remembered by many Indigenous people in Queensland. However, in aligning itself with the Government of Queensland, where the Aboriginal 'Protection Acts' were amongst the most oppressive in the history of Australia, it can be argued that the Catholic Church was giving up an important facet of its mission, namely the prophetic denunciation of unjust social structures.

### **Lack of Bishops' Leadership on Aboriginal Matters**

The existence of diverse and conflicting attitudes within the Church on the issues of rights for Aborigines continued in the following years. So did the lack of Church leadership on a national level. The notes of the meetings of the Australian Catholic bishops show that in their plenary meetings until 1965, the bishops did not discuss Aboriginal issues. A similar oversight was apparent also in the Social Justice Statements published annually and carrying the authority of the Australian Catholic hierarchy. The first two statements published in the 1960s focused respectively on international justice and on the problem of censorship of books. The last two Social Justice statements published in the 1960s continued to ignore the Aboriginal question.<sup>50</sup> In particular, the last statement on 'The moral code' did not take on board any suggestion from contemporary Catholic social doctrine or from the ideas that were being discussed in Rome at the Second Vatican Council. This prompted Hogan to wonder 'what the Australian bishops had been doing in Rome for those three years of the Vatican Council.'<sup>51</sup>

Hogan has argued that because of their participation in the Council in Rome between 1962 and 1965 the Australian bishops devoted only a tiny fraction of their attention to Australian social and political affairs.<sup>52</sup> This is apparent from the notes of their meetings, in which the attention of the bishops was almost exclusively focused on the liturgical changes introduced by the Second Vatican Council. Hence, in a period where other Churches in Australia were reformulating their Aboriginal policies and offering important contributions to the debate on race relations in Australia,<sup>53</sup> the

Australian Catholic bishops were not putting forward any significant proposal.

In this lack of leadership on Aboriginal matters, it was hard to understand whether there was a specific Catholic position on the future of Aborigines in Australian society. In March 1963, an editorial in *The Review* argued that 'native right to full citizen status can never be disputed'.<sup>54</sup> This argument was repeated one year later in an editorial of the same paper, which compared the 'anti-Christian attitude towards the negroes' in the USA to the prejudices existing in Australia towards Australian Aborigines.<sup>55</sup> The author also claimed that if Catholics were true to their Christian principles, they should be in the forefront in helping Aborigines to achieve equality with other Australians.

Yet, in a 1965 interview on a Catholic magazine, a missionary in the Northern Territory stated a very different opinion on the same matter:

The function of Missions - as of the whole Priesthood - is firstly to change minds. You can be sure Missions are doing this work, only when you encounter some Aborigines not merely appearing at Mass, but thinking and speaking in a non-aboriginal manner. One aboriginal woman of Bathurst Island was asked, after the recent Aboriginal Welfare Legislation in the Territory, 'What do you think of being a citizen, Martha?' 'Citizenship! Pooh! she said, 'Citizen of Heaven, me'. That's a true change of mind that will endure after mission life is over. That is the change of mind out of which will grow integration. It will not come by legislation. It is not Freedom Riding, but the freedom of the children of God, which will elevate all men to the supernatural level at which human differences disappear from sight.<sup>56</sup>

Fr Ormonde was not the only Catholic official in the north of Australia to express scarce enthusiasm for the repeal of discriminatory legislation that was taking place in the 1960s.

Pallottine missionaries in Beagle Bay had started to pay wages to Aboriginal workers on the mission; but then had decided to revert to the ration system after the men had gambled away everything.



Darwin Bishop O'Loughlin, in a 1966 seminar on Aborigines in the economy, declared his disagreement with the extension of equal wages to Aboriginal workers in the Catholic missions of the Northern Territory. The missions could not afford to pay regular wages and the demands for an increase of Aboriginal wages would put unbearable pressure on the mission administrations.<sup>57</sup> Although the final objective of the missionaries was a spiritual one, in accomplishing the twin aim of 'evangelizing and civilizing' aboriginal people, the Church had become a provider of education, health and employment for Aborigines. It was in its role as an employer, O'Loughlin argued, that the Church could not support demands for higher wages. In addition, the bishop ominously predicted that if a uniform basic wage were awarded to all Aborigines, many who were then employed at lower rates would lose their jobs and be compelled to reside on Missions and settlements. Also Pastor P G Albrecht, the Lutheran Superintendent of the Finke River Mission, was worried that the raising of wages for Aborigines would result in a more widespread use of alcohol and that this would further erode an already collapsing tribal authority.<sup>58</sup> Anthropologist Stanner believed that the economy of northern Australia could not yet sustain 'the entire Aboriginal population working productively at award wages and standards'.<sup>59</sup>

Finally, also, the proceedings of the 'NSW Government Joint Committee on Aboriginal Welfare' in 1966 exposed a continuing ambiguity in the Church with regard to the implementation of the principles of equality to the specific situation of Aborigines. Fr Xavier Dunne, Catholic priest in the town of Bourke, did not support the ongoing campaign for the achievement of equal rights to Aborigines, including the extension of social security benefits, as he pointed out during his interview with the Committee:

I think here people in this field talk about restricting their rights, human individuals and being the same as the white man, and so on. That is all very well in one breath but in reality are they the same as the white? It gets back to the old thing that every man is equal. Your child is a human being but if it is good for him you apply restrictions to him. When we are dealing with these people we are trying to raise to our level, we must be prepared to have a few restrictions if it is

good for them. Just as we restrict a child, so we must restrict these people reasonably and logically.<sup>60</sup>

Dunne was concerned about the welfare of Aboriginal children in particular; condemning the fact that many Aboriginal parents wasted the child endowment money to buy alcohol for themselves, leaving the children without food.<sup>61</sup> Some of the priests interviewed by the 1966 Committee, also missionaries working in Northern Australia, were worried for the consequences of the sudden extension of welfare benefits to people who had been until then strictly regimented and restricted.<sup>62</sup>

### **Bishops' Support for the 1967 Referendum**

As far as the Catholic hierarchy is concerned, the first mention of the referendum for Constitutional rights for Aborigines at a meeting of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference was in April 1966. The input for a discussion on the topic came from a letter of the Presbyterian Church. The Plenary Assembly of the Bishops did not discuss the letter but deferred it to its Committee for Social and Charitable Works.<sup>63</sup> In the following meeting of April 1967 the Conference endorsed the proposal to grant full constitutional rights to the Australian Aboriginals.<sup>64</sup> Following up the Conference's pronouncement, a major Catholic newspaper published articles supporting the proposal to abolish the discriminatory clauses<sup>65</sup>. According to *The Catholic Weekly*, an overwhelming 'yes' vote would show the concern of Australians for the country's original citizens, 'who have for so long been disregarded'.<sup>66</sup> In her recollection of the events leading to the Referendum, Faith Bandler, one of the leaders of FCAATSI, noted the support given by this newspaper.<sup>67</sup> Newspapers published pictures of Aboriginal activist Joe McGuinness holding a placard with the words: 'Australia's Catholic Bishops say 'yes' '.<sup>68</sup>

By the time the Catholic bishops gave their support to the campaign, the proposed constitutional change had obtained widespread community backing and the bipartisan support of the major political parties. A clear pronouncement of the bishops did not run the risk of dividing the hearts and minds of Catholics, still reeling from the deep divisions caused by the Labour Party's split of 1954. However,

in the years preceding the Referendum there was no corporate action to support the campaign for constitutional rights. Hearn did not find much discussion on the referendum in the documents of the Catholic Diocese of Darwin, one of the more committed to Aboriginal evangelisation.<sup>69</sup> An analysis of three Queensland diocesan newspapers has revealed scarce attention to the referendum. In its issue of May 25, two days before the day of the Referendum, the only mention of it in the *Catholic Leader* was in a short article in p.21 in which the Young Christian Workers urged their members to support the Constitutional changes.<sup>70</sup> Documents in the Sydney Archdiocesan archives reveal that when Archbishop Gilroy asked Archdiocesan priests to read a statement of support from the pulpit, this decision was due to the combined lobbying of pro-Aboriginal activists and lay Catholics committed to Aboriginal welfare.

In her personal history of FCAATSI, Faith Bandler recalls an episode that shows how some Aborigines perceived the ambiguity of the Churches with regard to Aboriginal aspirations. However, this time the response of some local Churches to the Referendum Campaign was more promising:

Some of our speakers believed that material needs of Aborigines were ignored by the churches and missions. Kerr wrote: 'I agree it's fair. But as far as South Australia is concerned the churches are the only people on our side'. As if to prove their point, the heads of the churches in South Australia announced '...they would plug the cause for a successful referendum from every pulpit!'<sup>71</sup>

## **Elements of Change in Catholic Church Attitudes after Vatican Council II**

All the Christian Churches had preached the doctrine of the common humanity of Indigenous peoples since the early stages of European settlement. They did so even when most scholars and popular folklore believed that there were irreconcilable differences between the races; with the Aboriginal people at the bottom rung of the 'Great Chain of Being' or of the evolutionary scale. As a Maori activist told *The Catholic Weekly* in 1959, it was the message of Christianity that taught Maori that 'in the sight of God all men were equal'.<sup>72</sup> However, she also added that it was time for Europeans to affirm

these Christian principles. The campaigns for the civil rights of Aborigines in the 1960s offered an opportunity to fill the gap between doctrine and action, but the response of the Catholic Church was still ambiguous.

However, at the end of the period here considered, a self-critical examination within the Catholic Church was starting to emerge. In 1967 Fr Hilton Deakin, then a young priest-anthropologist from Melbourne, was the author of a pamphlet called *A Fellow Australian*.<sup>73</sup> This was the first publication of the Australian Catholic Truth Society that did not analyse the Aboriginal question - focusing only on the Catholic missions to Aborigines. The focus was instead on the relationships between Aborigines and Australian society. This shift represented an important novelty and it was from the point of view chosen, that the author could denounce the attitudes of his own Church with regard to the struggle for justice for the Aborigines. Deakin wondered:

Has the Church been in the forefront fighting to give the aborigine the rights we enjoy as Australians? The legal, social, economic freedoms we possess? If anyone should be doing this, defending the rights of men, surely it is the Christian. But one cannot give an unqualified yes to this question (...)

It is noticeable, and regrettable, that Catholics have not been as strong and committed in supporting these movements as have other Christians. These groups have made mistakes, but they produce results, and that is ultimately what counts. Much of the present legislation and economic improvement of the Aborigine are the result of their activities.<sup>74</sup>

An editorial published in August 1967 in *The Advocate*, praised Catholic missionaries for working among Aborigines in times when most Governments completely neglected their responsibilities towards Indigenous people. At the same time, the author noted that in the recent awakening of the conscience of the community to the Aboriginal needs, 'a number of organizations have been found to promote the Aboriginal cause, in which (we must admit with regret) the Free Churches have taken a more prominent role than ourselves.'

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To justify his critique of charitable initiatives that smacked of paternalism, an Aboriginal man, writing in the periodical *Catholic Missions*, referred to the decrees of Vatican Council II. French invited the Catholic Church in Australia to apply the teachings of the Council to its relationships with Aborigines. He also asked Catholics to be more tolerant of Aboriginal points of view and to become more involved with organizations fighting for justice for the Aborigines. Among these organizations, he singled out FCAATSI, whose main merit was its success in pressing the government to remove discriminatory clauses from the Constitution of Australia.

These pleas to the Church to reconsider its responsibilities with regard to Aboriginal people in the light of Vatican Council II, heralded the beginning of a new era in Church/Aboriginal relationships, in which the Church would be called once again to fill the gap between its rhetoric and action. This time, however, the main question to be addressed would not be civil or equal rights but the even more challenging issue of Indigenous rights to land and self-determination.

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• Stefano Girola is a PhD candidate in the School of  
• History, Philosophy, Religion and Classics of the  
• University of Queensland. His thesis analyses the  
• development of the policies and attitudes of the Catholic  
• Church with regard to Australian Indigenous peoples,  
• 1885-1983.  
• He is the author of two books: 'The Three Saints: Faith  
• History Tradition from Sicily to Queensland' (Brisbane:  
• Minerva, 2001) and (with Catholic missionary and  
• author, Renato Kizito Sesana) 'La Peria Nera: L' altra  
• Africa Sconosciuta' (Milano: Edizioni Paoline, 2002).  
• Stefano contributes to Italian journals 'Jesus' and  
• 'Mondo a Missione', with articles on the Catholic  
• Church in Australia.  
• .....

## ENDNOTES:

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- 1 For the conquest of civil rights for Aborigines, see John Chesterman, *Civil Rights: How Indigenous Australians Won Formal Equality* (St Lucia, Qld: University of Queensland Press, 2005); Bain Attwood, *Rights for Aborigines* (Crow's Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2003); Susan Taffe, *Black and White Together: FCAATSI: The Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, 1958-1973* (St Lucia, QLD: University of Queensland Press, 2005), 161-192.
- 2 See Ann Curthoys, *Freedom Ride : A Freedom Rider Remembers* (Crow's Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2002); Jack Horner, *Seeking Racial Justice : An Insider's Memoir of the Movement for Aboriginal Advancement, 1938-1978* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2004); Faith Bandler and Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, *Turning the Tide : A Personal History of the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press for the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, 1989); Bain Attwood and Andrew Markus, *The Struggle for Aboriginal Rights : A Documentary History* (St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 1999), *Victims or Victors? : The Story of the Victorian Aborigines Advancement League*, (South Yarra, VIC: Hyland House, 1985).
- 3 See Bernard Lane, 'Diaries of a Spanish outpost', *Higher Education Supplement in The Australian* (15 February 2005), 37.  
[Salvado was commonly called 'Rosendo' in Australia.]
- 4 G. Russo, *Lord Abbot of the Wilderness: The Life and Times of Bishop Salvado* (Melbourne: Polding, 1980), 256.
- 5 Donald MacKillop, 'Aboriginal Mission in the Northern Territory: To the Editor of the Herald', *Sydney Morning Herald*, (December 22 1892): 3.
- 6 For a recent account of McNab's work among Aborigines, see Brigida Nailon. *The Writing on the Wall: Father Duncan McNab 1820-1896*. (Echuca, VIC: Brigidine Sisters, 2004).
- 7 Bain Attwood and Andrew Markus, 'The Fight for Aboriginal Rights', in Robert Manne, ed. *The Australian Century: Political Struggle in the Building of a Nation*, (Melbourne: Text publishing, 1999), 267. See also Roger C. Thompson, *Religion in Australia: A History* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1994), 52-53:  
'In the late nineteenth century there was a common view that Aborigines were an inferior people and a dying race, and that this was a natural course of event. It has been claimed that such prejudice about Indigenous Australians was influenced by the impact of social Darwinism: a translation of Darwin's theory of natural selection and the survival of the fittest from the physical world to human society [...] Social Darwinism enhanced the viewpoint that Aborigines were at the bottom of the social scale, as demonstrated by their perceived

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nomadic society, compared with agriculturally-based Pacific Islanders. The decline of the Australian Aboriginal population with the violence and diseases introduced by white invaders, was a further demonstration that they were destined to disappear.'

See also

Bain Attwood, 'The Past as Future: Aborigines, Australia and the (Dis)Course of History', in Bain M. Attwood ed. *In the Age of Mabo: History, Aborigines and Australia*, (St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 1996), XII:

'With the rising influence of evolutionary thought –often known as Social Darwinism- the displacement and the "dying out" of the indigenes became a commonplace assumption, and was represented as a natural course of events [...] By the very logic of this historical discourse, then, Aboriginal survival - an Aboriginal future, in other words- was a contradiction in terms: they were "historical transients", necessarily passing away, and hence would soon no longer be (of the) present'.

8 W. A. E., *The Blacks of Beagle Bay: An Epic of the Far nor'-West, Australian Catholic Truth Society Pamphlet ; No. 552*. (Melbourne: The Australian Catholic Truth Society, 1929).

9 'An Important Address of His Excellency the Apostolic Delegate on the Australian Aborigines', *The Annals of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart* (August 1 1934): 454.

For the reaction to Bernardini's speech see also 'Archbishop Bernardini's Call to Support Missions', *The Advocate* (September 27 1934): 27; 'The Aboriginal Missions', *The Annals of the Propagation of the Faith* (April 1 1935): 22; John Healy, 'The Blacks and the Whites and the Church in Australia', *Manly* 4, no. 4 (1934): 47.

10 C. D. Rowley, *Recovery: The Politics of Aboriginal Reform* (Ringwood, VIC: Penguin, 1986), 112-113.

In the same year, the future director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, Mons. James Hannan wrote in the Melbourne newspaper *The Age*: 'We have no reason to think with smug complacency of the Aborigines as a dying race, and if we would be perfectly candid with ourselves most of us see with a great deal of satisfaction a race that is dying out and the idea that a very awkward responsibility on ourselves is disappearing': quoted in John Healy, *Aboriginal People of Australia with Church and State* (Brisbane: s.d.), 395.

11 Mary Durack, *The Rock and the Sand* (London: Corgi Books, 1969), 318.

12 Among other representatives from different religious organisations, the Committee also listened to the opinions on the matter of the following Catholic clergy: Father Owen McDermott, parish priest of Thursday Island; Father Brian Thomas Murray from the Catholic presbytery in Broome; Rev. Gregory Gomez, Lord Abbot of New Norcia; Father Seraphim Sanz, Superintendent of

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Kalumburu Mission; Father Basil Nosedo and Father Wilfred Saenz, from the Benedictine Abbey of New Norcia; the Bishop of Darwin John Patrick O'Loughlin; Father Alan Corry, Superintendent of the Bathurst Island Mission; Brother Francis Joseph Quinn, from the Bathurst Island Mission. See The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, *Report from the House of Representatives Select Committee on Voting Rights of Aborigines*, part II. Minutes of Evidence (Canberra: Commonwealth Government Printer, 1961).

- 13 The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, *Report from the House of Representatives Select Committee on Voting Rights of Aborigines*, part II. Minutes of Evidence (Canberra: Commonwealth Government Printer, 1961), 133-134.
- 14 *ibid.*, p.134.
- 15 *ibid.*, p.248.
- 16 *ibid.*, p.248.
- 17 See *ibid.*, p.250: 'We can enlighten them to take a more active part in community life and in regard to deciding the men they want to represent them, but their appreciation of Parliament would be governed by what the mission needs'.
- 18 The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, *Report from the House of Representatives Select Committee on Voting Rights of Aborigines*, 250.
- 19 Q. 'Do you think that the policy of the Commonwealth and the States should ensure the survival of the aboriginal people as a distinctive people, or should the policy be able to promote assimilation in the sense that the natives are absorbed into the European community?'
- A. 'I think that they should be assimilated but very gradually.'
- Q. 'Do you feel that they have self-respect for themselves as a distinctive people?'
- A. 'Not as a distinctive people; not at all. They have self-respect for themselves and they like to be, within their own capability and understanding, as good as white men. [...] Their aim is to be as good as a white man, which is a good thing.' : I The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, *Report from the House of Representatives Select Committee on Voting Rights of Aborigines*, 251.
- 20 The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, *Report from the House of Representatives Select Committee on Voting Rights of Aborigines*, 380.
- 21 'A few Bathurst Islanders could vote now, but it is my opinion that it is better for them to vote, when more of them are ready rather than that an isolated few



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- be given the right to vote. ': The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, *Report from the House of Representatives Select Committee on Voting Rights of Aborigines*, 381.
- 22 For recent accounts of Namatjira's case, see Taffe, *Black and White Together*, 56-58; Horner, *Seeking Racial Justice*, 98-99.
- 23 The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, *Report from the House of Representatives Select Committee*, 382.
- 24 *ibid.*, p. 365.
- 25 *ibid.*, p. 365.
- 26 *ibid.*, p. 366.
- 27 *ibid.*, p. 366:  
'I believe that the more people who interest themselves in the aborigines the better. In this part of the world, the welfare of the aboriginal is left to the Government, to the Welfare Branch and, to some extent to the missionary bodies whereas other people could help but it does not occur to them to assist'.
- 28 *ibid.*, p. 367.
- 29 *ibid.*, p. 366.
- 30 *ibid.*, p. 240.
- 31 *ibid.*, p. 240.
- 32 *ibid.*, p. 241.
- 33 *ibid.*, p. 241.
- 34 *ibid.*, p. 318.
- 35 *ibid.*, p. 318.
- 36 'Around here [in New Norcia] I think most of the natives would understand the voting question very well....I think with a few exceptions it would be a good idea to give them voting rights – down, from say, Carnavon this way. Of course, in Broome and a few other places where they are living more advanced lives it is all right. But with the native tribes at Kalumburu and up north it is out of the question; they are still too primitive for voting rights...I think that down south the majority could easily be educated to it. In New Norcia they are all right': *ibid.*, p. 321.
- 37 *ibid.*, pp. 113-114.
- 38 Elaine Darling, *They Spoke out Pretty Good* (St Kilda, VIC: Janoan Media Exchange, 1999), 68.

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- 39 The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, *Report from the House of Representatives Select Committee*, 504.
- 40 See John Chesterman, 'Defending Australia's Reputation: How Indigenous Australians Won Civil Rights (Part One)', *Australian Historical Studies* 32, no. 116 (2001); John Chesterman, 'Defending Australia's Reputation: How Indigenous Australians Won Civil Rights (Part Two)', *Australian Historical Studies* 32, no. 117 (2001).
- 41 Taffe, *Black and White Together*, 97.
- 42 See W.G. Smith, 'Communists and the Aborigines', *Social Survey* 12, no. 8 (1963): 231:  
'The Party has also associated itself directly or indirectly with the creation and/or use of all sorts of organizations and associations for the advancement of the Aboriginal people -notable amongst these have been the Federal Council for the Aborigines Advancement and the Queensland State Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders'. See also *ibid.*, p. 232:  
'With regard to these Advancement Leagues and similar organizations, the Party has had not little success. Its members have joined these bodies, and while ostensibly working for the good of the Aborigines, they have furthered their primary objectives of the encouragement of the already existing sense of oppression amongst the Aborigines themselves, and of the use of the Aborigines in the general plan for the establishment of communism'.
- 43 *ibid.*, p. 232.
- 44 *ibid.*, p. 243.
- 45 The NCC was formed after the Catholic bishops withdrew their official support from the Movement. Bob Santamaria became its president and through this new organization he continued his strong anti-communist 'crusade' within the Catholic Church and in Australian society: see Bruce Duncan, *Crusade or Conspiracy? Catholics and the Anti-Communist Struggle in Australia* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2001), 246-247.
- 46 'Churches Support O.P.A.L. Appeal', *The Review* (July 1965):14.  
See also Smith, 'Communists and the Aborigines', 231: 'One of OPAL's objectives is to counteract propaganda and subversive programs initiated by communists in their fairly successful campaign to influence other Aboriginal welfare bodies'.
- 47 Donald E. Alexander, "A Study of the One People of Australia League: 1961-1973" (MA Thesis, University of Queensland, 1976).
- 48 William E. Tomasetti, *One People of Australia League* (s.l.: 1967).
- 49 Darling, *They Spoke out Pretty Good*, 68.

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- 50 *The Second Vatican Ecumenical Council* (1962) and *The Moral Code* (1966).
- 51 M. Hogan, ed., *Justice Now! Social Justice Statements of the Australian Catholic Bishops* (Sydney: Department of Government and Public Administration University of Sydney, 1990), 243.
- 52 *ibid.*, 243.
- 53 In June 1963 the National Missionary Council rewrote its Aboriginal policy in two pamphlets written by its general Secretary Frank Engel: National Missionary Council of Australia, *The Meaning of Assimilation* (Sydney: The Council, 1963); National Missionary Council of Australia, *Four Major Issues in Assimilation* (Sydney: The Council, 1963). In 1963 the General Conference of the Methodist Church adopted the 107 Convention of the International Labour Organization, which dealt with the social advancement of Indigenous minorities in independent countries. Among other demands, this Convention called for equal pay for equal work, compensation for loss of lands and other socio-economic measures that would allow Aborigines complete equality in all spheres. The Methodist Church translated these principles into specific requests to the Australian Governments adjusted to the situation of Aboriginal people and their rights to land: see Attwood, *Rights for Aborigines*, 299-300.
- 54 'Immigration', *The Review* (March 1963):4.
- 55 'Comments on Current Affairs', *The Review* (October 1964): 3.
- 56 T. P. Ormonde, 'Northern Territory Aborigines', *The Annals of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart* (September 1965): 265.
- 57 John P. O'Loughlin, 'Effects of Raising Aboriginal Wages on the Mission Economy', in Colin Tatz, Ian G. Sharp, and Monash University. Centre for Research into Aboriginal Affairs, eds. *Aborigines in the Economy: Employment, Wages and Training*, ([Brisbane]: Jacaranda Press in association with Centre for Research into Aboriginal Affairs, Monash University, 1966), 176-177.
- 58 *ibid.*, 182:  
'Without a doubt, the most serious of the detrimental consequences of higher wages is that most of the extra money is going into drink – and *not* into better living standards and conditions, and *not* the families of the men concerned. The scene around Alice Springs hotels on pay-day nights, and whenever there is some extra money around the place, is sufficient proof of this... The number of alcoholics is increasing, and by alcoholics is meant anyone whose drinking seriously interferes with his economic, social and family life. The family unit is being weakened. Many women who initially opposed their husbands' excessive drinking are themselves becoming excessive drinkers. Immorality and loose living are increasing. These are matters which are undermining the very social

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fabric of these people. And this social fabric has already been seriously weakened through their contact with our own culture.'

- 59 See the chapter 'Industrial Justice in the Never-Never (1966)', in William E. H. Stanner, *White Man Got No Dreaming : Essays, 1938-1973* (Canberra: Norwalk, Conn.; Australian National University Press; Norwalk, Conn. : [distributed by] Books Australia, 1979), 266.
- 60 New South Wales Parliament. Joint Committee of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly, *Report from the Joint Committee of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly Upon Aborigines Welfare* (Sydney: Govt. Printer, 1967), 242.
- 61 See *ibid.*, 239-240.
- 62 Father John Leary, talking about Aborigines in the Northern Territory missions, said: But is far better to subsidise here and teach the Aborigines how to work and become responsible citizens than pay out far larger sums in welfare grants and lead them to ruin': John Leary, 'Aborigines: The Vital Issue', *The Annals of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart* (May 1968):15. In the mid 1960s in the Western Australian mission of Beagle Bay, the Pallottine Fathers introduced wages on the mission. They decided to partially return to the ration system when they realized that the men gambled away everything: see J. Kearney, 'Cooperative Farming at Beagle Bay', *Catholic Missions* (August 1965).
- 63 Australian Episcopal Conference, 'Minutes of the Annual Australian Episcopal Conference Held at *Mt Alvernia*, 49 Burns Road, Wahroonga, April 19, 20, 21&22' (Wahroonga, NSW: 1966), 3.
- 64 Australian Episcopal Conference, "Minutes of the Annual Australian Episcopal Conference Held at *Mt Alvernia*, 49 Burns Road, Wahroonga, April 4, 5, 6&7', (Wahroonga: 1967), 10.
- 65 'Letter on Referendum: Vote for Aborigines', *The Advocate* (May 18 1967): 22.
- 66 'The Referendum', *The Catholic Weekly* (May 11 1967):2.
- 67 Bandler, *Turning the Tide*, 108: 'The *Catholic Weekly* editorial supported the changes, discouraging any confusion on the part of voters, and stressed the need for a successful conclusion for the referendum'.
- 68 See Eva Sommer, 'Uneasy in Two Worlds: The Australian Aboriginal's Tenuous Hold on Creature Comforts', *The Catholic Weekly* (May 11 1967):16.
- 69 Peter Hearn, *A Theology of Mission: Diocese of Darwin 1949-1985* (Kensington, NSW: Nelen Yubu Missiological Unit, 2003), 128.
- 70 'YCW Plea for Aboriginal Recognition', *The Catholic Leader* (May 25 1967): 21.

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71 Bandler, *Turning the Tide*, 99.

72 'Wide NZ Protests on All Blacks Tour Ban', *The Catholic Weekly* (December 17 1959): 26.

73 H. Deakin, *A Fellow Australian* (Melbourne: A.C.T.S Publications, 1967).

74 *ibid.*, pp.2, 26.

75 'Scholarships for Aborigines', *The Advocate* (August 17 1967): 8.