

Aboriginal 'Panthers' plan their own party

By
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QUEENSLAND aboriginal leader, Dennis Walker, wears the Afro hairstyle of American Black Power advocates.

The resemblance does not stop there. Mr Walker is planning to set up a Black Panther Party here in Australia.

Walker, 25, is the son of aboriginal poetess Kath Walker and is the Brisbane Tribal Council's financial co-ordinator.

With 10 others, he is writing the proposed party's constitution.

It is being modelled on the U.S. movement of the same name.

But will it be as violent?

"Not necessarily," Mr Walker said today. "We hope it will be an effective political organisation using political channels.

"It will endeavor to liberate the aboriginal from the white system.

"However, if this system shows that it is violently against us, we too will be violent.

"We are closely studying the country's gun laws."

Mr Walker said the party would begin by

fielding candidates at a local level.

A weekly propaganda sheet called "Black Panther Community News Service" will be distributed nationally.

Party members will have to abide by 26 rules, including not taking drugs while working, and compulsory attendance at political education classes.

"Members will be required to work towards achieving several things," he said.

"These include full employment, land rights for aboriginals, decent housing, proper educa-

tion facilities, exemption from military service, the release of black prisoners, an end to police brutality and a Bill of Rights for aboriginals."

He thought the party would be successful "gradually."

"We already have many sympathisers — including whites — and the U.S. movement has set a good precedent," he said.

"It has shown just what a fascist government Nixon's is and has woken many whites up to the fact that they are bound to servitude.

"Blacks have been taught to stand up and assert their rights — and they're getting them."

But so far, Mr Walker's personal stand has lost him five jobs in a year and severely damaged his marriage.

"I demand from my employers respect for my blackness. If they don't, I walk out."

He and wife Patricia, 26, are separated. They have four children, Raymond, 6, Petrina, 2, Joshua, 8 months, and an adopted son, Leroy, 12.

Payments stopped

"I had to leave," he said. "The government chopped out the social services payments after my arrest in last year's Brisbane riots.

"So now Pat gets about \$33 a week on a deserted wife's pension and maintenance.

"I hardly ever know where my next meal is coming from."

Last month it was revealed that an alleged death list of conservative aboriginal leaders had been found.

It included the first aboriginal MP, Senator Bonner.

And today, it was reported that the Federal Minister for Environment, Aboriginals and the Arts, Mr Howson, was named on a death list.



Dennis Walker . . . "I demand respect for my blackness."