

Age 8th April 1988

## Group will take own passports to Libya

An Aboriginal nation passport will be used for the first time when a group of Aborigines organised by the Tasmanian activist Mr Michael Mansell visits Libya.

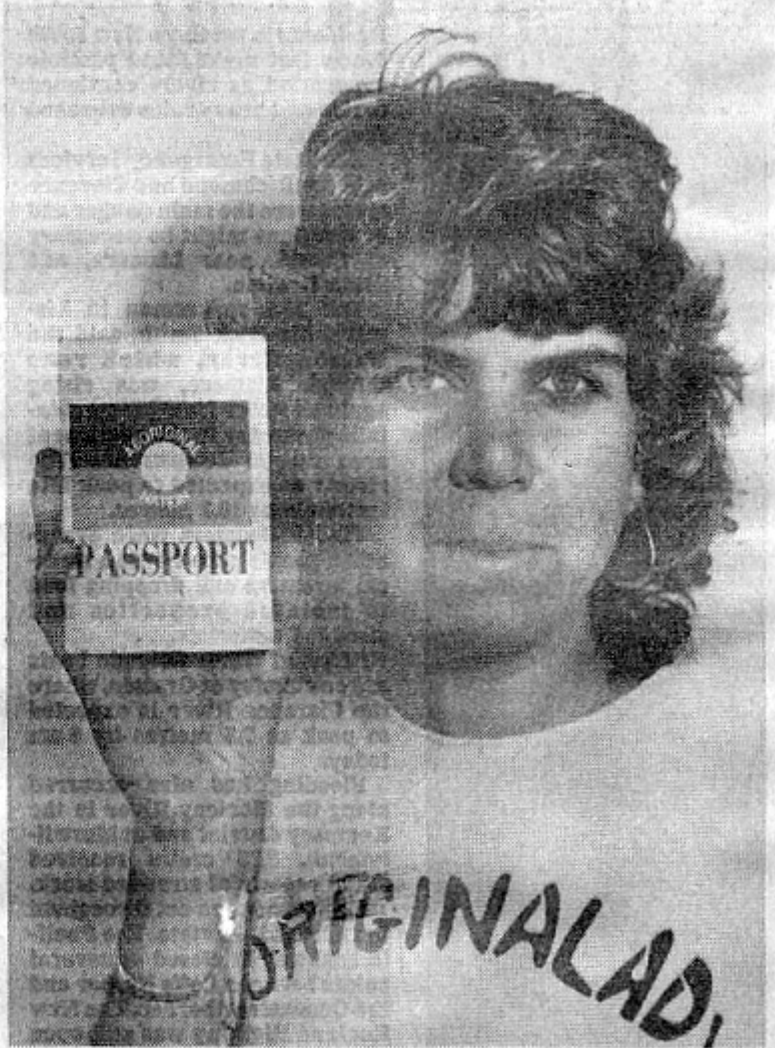
The 12 Aborigines in the group, who expect to leave within days, were told that Libyan officials would recognise the document.

Featuring the Aboriginal flag on a yellow cover, the passport is being produced and distributed by the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre. It has the signature and stamp of the Aboriginal elder Oodjeroo Noonuccal (formerly Kath Walker).

The passport repeats the wording used in the Australian passport, calling on all those whom it may concern "to allow the bearer to pass freely without let or hindrance, and to afford him or her every assistance and protection of which he or she may stand in need".

Ms Darlene Mansell, a Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre volunteer worker, a member of the Libyan group and first cousin to Mr Mansell, was uncertain how many passports had been issued already. Ms Mansell said that in Launceston earlier this year, she slapped a sample passport down in front of the Federal Aboriginal Affairs Minister, Mr Hand, asking for his reaction. She said Mr Hand told her he couldn't deal with the issue.

However, the Libyans apparently had no such problem.



Ms Mansell with the Aboriginal passport: Libyans have said they will recognise the document.