

# *Voluntary Coaching Plan to Aid Aborigines*

A voluntary coaching scheme to aid Aboriginal students has been launched in Sydney.

The scheme has been organised by the Consultative Committee on Aboriginal Education (the Sydney *Sun* reports).

The committee represents 21 organisations interested in Aboriginal welfare.

The convenor of the committee, Mr. David Tribe, said there were an increasing number of Aborigines in the city who were studying to get better jobs.

Mr. Tribe, who is a school teacher, taught Aboriginal children at Walgett for five years.

He said that because of social and environmental factors, many Aborigines had great difficulty with their studies.

"In most cases the big need is to bridge the gap between primary and secondary education levels," Mr. Tribe said.

He said that already about 13 coaches had already volunteered and were giving help to Aboriginal students.

Most of the coaches were helping students at Tranby Co-operative College, Glebe, where Aboriginal students were concentrating mainly on bookkeeping courses.

An aboriginal girl studying for a P.M.G. telephonists' examination and an Aboriginal youth attending a business college were also being coached.

Mr. Tribe said that with older Aborigines, a basic aim would be to help improve reading, writing, arithmetic and English expressions.

"Speed-reading techniques, as employed at Tranby provide a first-class method of quickening mental responses and stimulating thought," he said.

"Quick and efficient reading is a preliminary must for most jobs in our complex society.

The aim of the scheme was to recruit capable and willing coaches and put them in touch with Aborigines needing help.

"At the moment, we are just feeling our way, but we fully expect a big demand once the scheme gets under way.

"For that reason we are very anxious to get as many volunteers as possible before the rush starts," he said.

"But as there are about 6,000 Aborigines in Sydney, we will doubtless find coaching is required at all primary and secondary education levels and possibly some at the tertiary level.

Mr. Tribe said coaches would be required to have reasonable qualifications.

"They will not have to be trained teachers or graduates.

"An educated person, preferably with a Leaving Certificate, will be acceptable.

"Our aim will be to bring coach and student together inside the same locality".

Coaches willing to volunteer their services and Aborigines seeking help should contact Mrs. C. E. McMurray-Jones, 7 Orana Road, Mona Vale, Phone 99-4599.

# *Moving Tribute to Gifted Aborigine*

The following moving tribute to the late Milton Ford, who died in Melbourne on April 10 this year, was paid over Grafton radio station 2GF by his former headmaster, Mr. John Orme.

Mr. Orme is headmaster of Grafton High School. Milton, who was amongst the first to win a bursary from the Aborigines Welfare Board, was buried at Grafton.

Mr. Orme said in his memorial broadcast:

"This little true story has a sad ending but I feel that you would like to hear it. During my time as Headmaster of Grafton High School I enrolled a slim, young, Aboriginal lad of almost full blood.

"He bore himself and behaved in a gentlemanly way. He had a particularly delightful, musical voice—I remember deliberately prolonging an interview with him for the pleasure of hearing it. He worked quietly, systematically and arduously. He won the complete respect of his fellow students and of his teachers.

"When he obtained a good pass in the Leaving Certificate Examination he expressed a warm interest in marine engineering. Arrangements were made for his

contact with B.H.P. authorities in Newcastle, and he was taken on to their staff as a trainee.

"He found, with the aid of his church, a good home and set out on his studies. He did well and was, in a couple of years, appointed as assistant engineer on a sea going ship. His continued studies kept him ahead of his appointments and this year he was Fourth Engineer about to be promoted to Third.

"He worked in harmony with his colleagues; they too respected him and he was regarded as a valuable and reliable officer by his employers, still B.H.P. He told me on a recent visit to Grafton that marriage remained his one unsolved problem and he remained single.

"A few weeks ago he took ill at sea and was brought to Melbourne and died there. I attended his funeral at South Grafton last Friday.

"His loss was a great one, he could have become a leader of his community. All those who knew him will extend their sympathy to his brother and sisters—his parents had both died.

"All ex-students of the High School who were contemporaries of his will join me in paying tribute to their late companion, Milton Ford."