



Mr Johnny Fejo is farewelled by his wife, Dolly, at Darwin Airport yesterday before leaving to attend the Brisbane Conference.

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Off to talk of land rights fight

A Darwin man will tomorrow tell a national conference on Aboriginal rights in Brisbane of the Larrakia's fight for land in the Territory.

He is Mr Johnny Fejo, a part-Aboriginal, who left Darwin by air yesterday to attend the Action Conference on Racism and Education.

The conference, which is being sponsored by the Abschol student group, Brisbane Tribal Council, and the Act-Confrontation Committee, will end next Wednesday.

More than 15 Larrakia's, including their leader, Mr Bobby Secretary, farewelled Mr Fejo when he left Darwin Airport.

Mr Fejo said he would tell the conference of the Larrakia's fight for tribal land in Darwin.

"I will let them know of the Government's attitude to our claims," he said.

"We are entitled to some land rights in Darwin which is the traditional home of our tribe."

Mr Fejo said he would be presenting a paper to the conference from Mr Bill Day, a European who has been helping the tribe in their fight for land.

Leader of the Larrakia's, Mr Bobby Secretary said Mr Fejo had been chosen to go to the conference because he would be the next to lead the tribe.

He said Mr Fejo lived with his wife, Dolly, at their camp behind the Nightcliff drive-in theatre.

Johnny Fejo, grandson of Larrakia elder, Garamanak, was adopted according to Larrakia custom by Smiler Fejo upon the death of Johnny's mother, Flora, who was Smiler's cousin.

Johnny's father was recorded as Nipper Rankin, also father of Richard Rankin, who was the son of Johnny's mother's sister. Nipper later married Larrakia woman, Josephine Rankin, mother of Gwen Rankin of Bagot community.

Note: This newspaper article (NT News, Jan 27 1972) says that "Leader of the Larrakia, Mr Bobby Secretary said Mr Fejo had been chosen to go to the conference because he would be the next to lead the tribe" (because Bobby Secretary had no children, this male to male line of succession was also according to Larrakia custom). Sadly, Johnny passed away in 1979.

Comments by Dr Bill Day, Consulting Anthropologist
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