

BLACKS INVADE ARMY BASE

By Bill Day

DARWIN: On August 1, 30 members of the Aboriginal organisation, the Gwalwa Daraniki, wearing red headbands and carrying their flag, marched through the unguarded gates of the Larrakeyah Army barracks.

Named after the Larrakia tribe, the barracks include an ancient site known to the Aborigines as Goondal. This area, three-quarters of a mile inside the Army camp on the end of Emery Point, has been inaccessible to the

Aborigines for 30 years.

Military police confronted the Aborigines and told them to leave or be "forcibly removed." The Aborigines ignored this warning and continued towards the ceremonial site. "We don't need permission to visit our own ceremony ground," said Bob Secretary when asked by the police to leave the area and make a formal request for access.

Last time the Gwalwa Daraniki went through the "proper channels" it took five months of letter-writing and phone calls to get a permit for five Larrakia elders to revisit Goondal. On the occasion an old lady, Dolly Gurinyee, broke down and wept. The area is now part of a land claim before Judge Woodward.

Thwarted by the Aborigines' determination, the M.P.s turned on the three whites present, including an ABC reporter, and ordered them to leave. The Blacks reached the end of the point and stayed half an hour, watched by five police wagons. After demanding free access at any time, the demonstrators left peacefully. No arrests were made.

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A spokesman for the peaceful invasion was Fred Fogarty, at present on bail of \$200 and awaiting trial on several charges including malicious damage and assaulting a policeman following an incident on July 6 at Kulaluk, the headquarters of the Gwalwa Daraniki. A truck caught fire and surveyors were chased by Aborigines.

The charges against Fred Fogarty will prove very embarrassing for the Government if they proceed with the case. There is a precedent for not proceeding as in August last year when the Gwalwa Daraniki lodged complaints with the Northern Territory Lands Branch after hundreds of tons of beach sand were removed from crown land on the foreshore fronting the subdivision at Kulaluk. The subdividers had acted illegally, admitted the Lands Branch in a letter. The clearing of five acres of mangroves to give the subdivision an ocean view was also illegal, they wrote. No charges were made although the sand alone was worth thousands of dollars.

The sub-dividers are now filling in the foreshore with rubble, timber and other rubbish, yet the Aborigines will be prosecuted for, in their view, defending their land. It stinks!