

Reds Blamed For Unrest

Herald Special Representative

DARWIN, Wednesday.—While it is felt here that claims by the aborigines for better food and clothing should be investigated, there is little doubt that Communists are inciting the present strike wave.

The aborigines went on strike again on Monday, for the third time in eight weeks, demanding a £7 a week wage and full civil rights.

The wage claim is considered absurd, but it is a fact that many aborigines are genuinely dissatisfied with their conditions.

There may also be some merit in their demand for more freedom of movement.

The Native Affairs Branch will not take any action about the strike until after the hearing of a charge against the aboriginal strike leader, Lawrence, has been completed.

Lawrence appeared in Darwin Police Court today on a charge of having interfered by threats with the right of an aboriginal, Jacky, to continue in his employment.

"INTERFERENCE"

The acting secretary of the North Australian Workers' Union, Mr T. Peel, says that the aborigines' rations are assured—if the Native Affairs Branch cut them off—by financial support promised by big trade unions in the south.

NAWU officials expect long strike.

Native Affairs officials, however, that the strike wave would have been over long ago had it not been for the interference of Communist officials of the NAWU.

They believe the strikes are part of the Communist "nuisance" programme for Australia. The Communists have certainly encouraged the aborigines with advice and promises of assistance, and this week it

is apparent that NAWU officials have actually taken over direction of the strike.

Lawrence and his strike committee have been making almost daily calls at the NAWU office.

One of the NAWU organisers Mr M. Carne, was at one time secretary of the local branch of the Communist Party. Last year security officials raided his house.

SYMPATHY

The Director of Native Affairs, Mr J. H. Gray, has been silent throughout the strikes.

Local people are all against them.

Their official demands, appearing in the Northern Standard, Darwin's only paper, which is published weekly by NAWU, include £7 a week and full civil rights.

The aborigines' complaints about food and clothing, and freedom of movement, would probably meet with sympathy from Darwin people and their Legislative Council.

The Northern Standard, which publishes much Communist and "peace" propaganda, in an editorial spoke of "flagrant neglect of obligations toward the aboriginal races," and alleged that natives were still exploited and whipped.

Natives had seen how white workers obtained improvement in conditions and copied them.

"STARVATION"

The editorial said that the methods used by authority to quell the natives into submission smacked of autocracy—"starvation by ministerial direction, intimidation and arrest by police officers, failure to discuss grievances."

The Northern Standard also published on its front page telegrams received by NAWU from the Communist-front Eureka Youth League in Sydney, Perth and Newcastle, supporting the aborigines' demands.

Mr Peel said that NAWU was legally entitled to enrol aborigines as full members, but would not encourage them to join unless they got full award wages.