

WALGETT PUB BANS NATIVES AGAIN

SYDNEY. — Walgett publican John McCloskey is refusing to serve aboriginals in the "club lounge" of his Imperial Hotel.

The same hotelkeeper barred a Nigerian student last year.

Walgett is 430 miles north of Sydney.

The town's Presbyterian minister, the Rev Rodney Jepson, said today that he was part of an Aboriginal Affairs Foundation deputation sent to see Mr McCloskey last week.

"We wanted to find out officially whether allegations of discrimination were correct. They were," Mr Jepson said.

"Mr McCloskey told us point-blank he would not serve aboriginals in his lounge.

"He said patrons had to observe certain standards of dress and behaviour in the lounge — and if he admitted aboriginals, he would lose

trade from his white customers."

Mr Jepson said that after the delegation was rebuffed, members of the foundation decided to test Mr McCloskey's ruling.

Last Saturday, three aboriginals entered the lounge and asked to be served.

A barmaid summoned Mr McCloskey, who ordered the men to leave.

On Saturday night, five well-dressed aboriginals left a wedding reception and tried to get into the lounge. They were also turned away.

"Mr McCloskey argued that if he admitted well-behaved, well-dressed aboriginals, the bad element would also

start drinking there," Mr Jepson said.

"I don't really want to say there is a bad element among Walgett's aboriginal community,

because the word 'bad' has moral overtones.

"But there are those who get drunk and who would tend to bludge," Mr Jepson said.

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