

'Black Power'

the problem

"BLACK POWER" was the cry that was causing "aborigines" to run into trouble in hotels, a Queensland western hotelkeeper said yesterday.

Another hotelkeepers' leader said he believed some aborigines were "planted" to make trouble.

The Queensland Hotels Association Charleville District president (Mr. W. Elder) said the trouble came mainly from part-aborigines. A hotelkeeper sometimes had to refuse to serve a man who was troublesome.

Mr. Elder said that at his Rivette Hotel, he had more of the "aboriginal trade" than any other hotel in Charleville.

It was the younger, mixed-bloods who talked about "Black Power".

"The old original Aborigines, the pure-breds, are great chaps. They laugh and joke about their color. They never make trouble.

"It's the half-breeds, the quarter-breeds and the eighth-breeds who make trouble.

"They're got enough white brain to be smart. And they have enough color in their faces to make them sensitive.

"The half-breeds aren't so bad. It's more the quarters and the eighths.

Different

"They get obstreperous and difficult to handle. Very often you feel like barring the worst, though I never have. When they come back a day or two later, they're different people.

"When the crossbreeds get on the drink, you see the different side of their natures."

The Premier (Mr. Bjelke-Petersen) on Sunday said he would ask the State Licensing Commission to investigate claims that several Kingaroy hotels had refused to serve aborigines on racial grounds.

Mr. Elder said that if anyone in the Charleville district, white or black, were refused service in a hotel, it would not be on racial grounds. It would be because of his behaviour.

Townsville's Q.H.A. district president (Mr. Ben Bloom) said: "We get over our aborigine drinking problems by sitting round the table and discussing individual cases with representatives of the Aboriginal Advancement League.

"There are complaints. You'd expect that. We get trouble from aborigines and from whites.

"Some of the aboriginal complaints, I suspect come from 'plants.' I wouldn't like to say who plants these chaps. But you can always pick them.

"An aborigine will come into the hotel and immediately start putting on a turn, talking about racial discrimination."

"Not all"

Aboriginal Senator Neville Bonner appealed to hotelkeepers not to label all aborigines as troublesome drinkers.

Senator Bonner said: "The trouble is some hotelkeepers generalise. Just because one or two black men have played up, they say, 'The aborigine can't take his drink.'

"The aborigine can take his drink as well as the white man. The white man plays up sometimes when he drinks.

"But with the white man, the hotelkeeper doesn't label him generally, as he does the black man."

Footnote: The 1966 census gave the number of aborigines in Australia as 80,200. Of these, 19,000 were in Queensland. The count did not differentiate between full-bloods and part-bloods. Those counted were "50 per cent or more aboriginal."