

Black gets bond on gun charge

CANBERRA. — An Aborigine who held four public servants at gun point on Thursday was "trying to avert violence," Canberra Court was told yesterday.

Bobby McLeod, 26, entertainer, of the Canberra suburb of O'Connor, was ordered to pay \$40 and released on a 12 months good behavior bond after being convicted of carrying an unlicensed firearm.

He pleaded guilty.

McLeod said later he was not happy with the verdict. "I should have got away scot free — I don't think I was doing anything wrong," he said.

Mr. Terry Higgins, for McLeod, told the court his client went to the Aboriginal Affairs Department on Thursday "to make a political gesture."

"It was intended to be a sort of charade to show the sort of thing that could happen if the person intended violence," Mr. Higgins said.

Earlier, suspended public servant Charles Perkins, who appeared as a character witness, said McLeod had "just wanted to make these people listen to him."

"If he had walked in with a boomerang and a spear these people would have laughed him out of the place," he said.

Detective Arthur Brown said he spoke to McLeod after the incident.

"I was handed a small .22 pistol. McLeod said it was his. He said he did not have a licence for it," Brown said.

He said the pistol was empty.

Mr. Selwyn Hausman, a solicitor who was present during the incident in the department, said that at times McLeod had the pistol in his hands, but often it was not in sight.

"I feel nobody was in the position of being threatened," he said.

He said McLeod had told him to see the Press were present, and he gave the gun over without any difficulty when reporters came.

Mr. W. K. Nicholl, SM, said that McLeod carried a pistol "for political motives to draw attention to a cause you believed to be valid."

"You carried a pistol in circumstances where it was possible some unhappy consequences might have followed," he said.