

Black critic rapped

BREACHED ACT — MINISTER

CANBERRA. — The Aboriginal Affairs Minister, Senator Cavanagh, yesterday called for one of his senior public servants to be charged with a breach of the Public Service Act.

Senator Cavanagh said Mr Charles Perkins, a \$17,000-a-year assistant secretary, had breached the Act by criticising Senator Cavanagh and another minister.

The Permanent head of Aboriginal Affairs, Mr

Barry Dexter, has asked Mr Perkins, an Aboriginal, to explain his statements.

Mr Dexter is disturbed that Senator Cavanagh judged Mr Perkins "guilty" without first inquiring into the facts.

Under the Public Service Act only the permanent head, and not ministers, can charge a public servant with an offence.

Mr Perkins is in trouble for saying Senator

Cavanagh was accepting "the white backlash" in cutting spending on Aborigines.

Mr Perkins also said the Minister for the Northern Territory, Dr Patterson, was conservative and influenced by "white racists".

Dr Patterson had earlier predicted serious black and white violence in the Territory and blamed alcohol and "stirrers from

the south" for causing the trouble.

Yesterday Mr Perkins would not retract his sharp criticism.

He said he would continue to criticise ministers when he felt it necessary.

"Ministers are not god," he said.

"They should be subject to criticism from some quarters.

"Open government means people being able

to speak out on vital issues and that's what I'm doing."

If he is found guilty Mr Perkins faces possible dismissal but it is more likely he would be reprimanded. IN BRISBANE yesterday, Aboriginal Liberal Senator Bonner said Mr Perkins should be censured, but not dismissed, for his "breach of public service regulations."