



Dick Donnelly



Jack Davis

ABORIGINAL VISITORS TO SYDNEY

The last week in August saw two interesting Aborigines visiting Sydney to attend a poetry seminar at Macquarie University. One of them was Dick Donnelly of Woodenbong who had been asked to sing some of the tribal songs which he has spent a life-time collecting. Dick sings in *Houngaree*, a dialect of the Banjalang language mainly, but can also sing some of the old *Gumbaingery* songs, although he says he doesn't know the meaning of them. Some ten years ago, Roland Robinson took Dick Donnelly on a tour of N.S.W. Dick would sing the songs and Robinson would explain and translate them. The two men are still firm friends.

The other Aboriginal visitor to Macquarie was Jack Davis, who is Chairman-Director of the Aboriginal Advancement Council of Perth. Jack, who has recently released his book of poems *The First-Born and Other Poems* read a number of his works to an appreciative audience at Macquarie. Below are some of the poems which Jack Davis has allowed *NEW DAWN* to reproduce for the enjoyment of the Aboriginal people of this State.

THE FIRST-BORN

(c. JACK DAVIS)

Where are my first-born, said the brown land, sighing;
They came out of my womb long, long ago.
They were formed of my dust—why, why are they crying
And the light of their being barely aglow?

I strain my ears for the sound of their laughter.
Where are the laws and the legends I gave?
Tell me what happened, you whom I bore after.
Now only their spirits dwell in the caves.

You are silent, you cringe from replying.
A question is there, like a blow on the face.
The answer is there when I look at the dying,
At the death and neglect of my dark proud race.