



Smoke Signals

TIP FOR THE MONTH Remove builders' cement from your hands by soaking them in two pints of warm water containing half a cup of vinegar.

▶ The big koala hunt will be on this winter, but the bears need not fear the quarter of a million schoolchildren who will be looking for them. The children, from fourth, fifth, and sixth grades of every primary school in New South Wales, will be taking part in one of the most ambitious conservation projects ever undertaken in the State. The Wildlife Service of the Fauna Protection Panel has asked the children to note the number of bears they see and the kind of gum leaves on which the bears are feeding. This information will allow the Wildlife Service to gauge the extent of koala distribution and the parts of the State where the bears appear to be in danger. Many may be rounded up and taken to other parts of the State where suitable gum trees are available for them, to safeguard their lives and the future of this lovable animal.

▶ A premature baby in New York late in June was kept alive by blood transfusions from a woman with a blood so rare that only five people in the world are known to have it. One of the five with the RH null blood is an Australian Aborigine, Mrs Elsie Nelson, of Western Australia.

▶ A Talent Quest exclusively for Aboriginal amateur artists is one of several functions planned by Moree people to help celebrate this year's National Aborigines Day. Other events will be a special church service, football and basketball matches against visiting teams at Moree Showground, and a Grand Ball.

▶ Two strange cases came before courts in Britain last month. In one of them, a man was charged with stealing 20,749 beetles. The man, a director

of a museum and art gallery, had added the museum's beetles to his personal collection. The other court case involved a Leith garage proprietor, a spin-dryer, and whisky. The charged man got enough whisky to fill two dozen bottles by squeezing it from used filter pads thrown out as rubbish from a whisky-bottling plant. The Leith police did not dismisseth him.

▶ Another London report said that Aboriginal jockey Darby McCarthy would return to Australia in July, and planned to settle in Sydney. If he does he might miss the kind of red-carpet treatment he likes, and has been getting during his European riding engagements. Darby learned to ride bush brumbies at Thargomindah, in Queensland, but those were his days of sweat shirt and jeans. At the Royal Ascot race meeting last month Darby was in grey morning suit, red carnation, and topper, and has been riding the cream of English thoroughbreds. It's a long way from Thargomindah.

▶ Two Australian tourists in Rome last month were sitting near the Pantheon when something like a boomerang flew past them into the air, and wheeled back to the feet of a group of Roman boys. It WAS a boomerang—a plastic one made in Hong Kong.

▶ Aborigines at the Benedictine monastery at New Norcia, in Western Australia, have a celebrity in their midst. He is Dom Chad, a Benedictine monk, who late in June was invested with the insignia of an officer brother of the Order of St John of Jerusalem. Dom Chad, until late last year, was Dr Howard Saxby, medical superintendent and chief executive officer of the Mater Misericordiae Hospital, North Sydney. When he retired last year he decided to become a monk and devote his life to the welfare of Aborigines at the monastery.