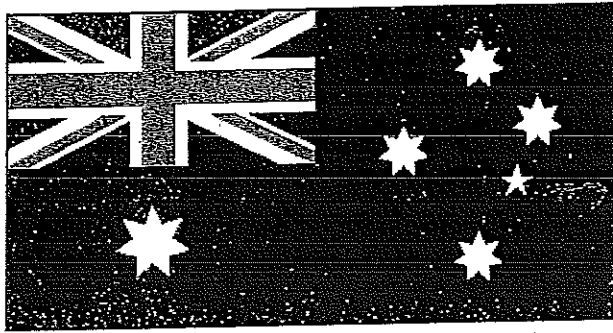
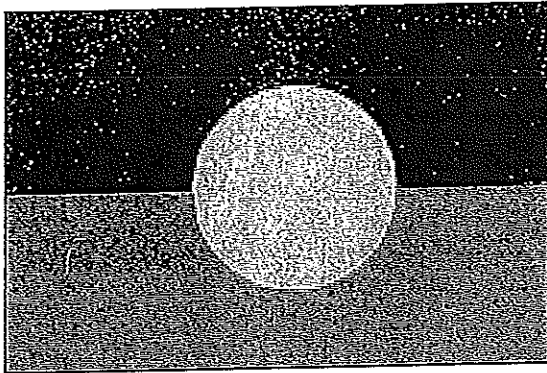


The Australian Flag



As national symbols, flags tap into the undercurrents at work in the psyche of national identity. Debate over the national flag is a strong indicator of a nation's changing perceptions of itself. The debate over the Australian flag is an expression of the issues engaging the populace as it struggles with the three R's. The Republic, Reconciliation & Rural

The Aboriginal Flag



THE Aboriginal flag is divided horizontally into equal halves of black (top) and red (bottom), with a yellow circle in the centre.

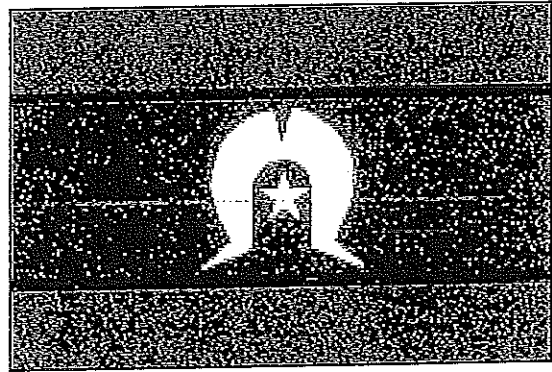
The black symbolises Aboriginal people and the yellow represents the sun, the constant renewer of life.

Red depicts the earth and also represents ochre, which is used by Aboriginal people in ceremonies. The flag — designed by Harold Thomas — was first flown at Victoria Square, Adelaide, on National Aborigines' Day on 12 July 1971.

It was used later at the Tent Embassy in Canberra in 1972. Today the flag has been adopted by all Aboriginal groups and is flown or displayed permanently at Aboriginal centres throughout Australia.

insecurity. Australia's current flag is an amalgam of ideas & images. The flag that was hoisted (or foisted) on Sydney Cove in 1788 was the Queen Anne Union Flag and showed only two crosses. The red cross of St George and the white saltire of St Andrew, representing the Scottish /English union. The red saltire of Ireland's St Patrick was added in 1801 to mark Ireland's entry into the union. By Federation in 1901, after a nationwide design competition, the Australian flag was unfurled. The Union Jack was represented in the "canton" or position of honour: The Southern Cross is a celestial reference to our geographical position, & the 6-pointed Commonwealth Star added to represent the 6 states. A seventh point was added in 1954 to represent the Australian Home Territories. When Australia does declare itself a republic, it is inevitable the current flag will be redesigned. Which symbols we choose, will be the result of the debates we are now involved in.

The Torres Strait Islander Flag



THE Torres Strait Islander flag — designed by the late Bernard Namok — stands for the unity and identity of all Torres Strait Islanders.

It features three horizontal coloured stripes, with green at the top and bottom and blue in between — divided by thin black lines.

A white dhari (headdress) sits in the centre, with a five-pointed white star underneath it. The colour green is for the land, and the dhari is a symbol of all Torres Strait Islanders.

The black represents the people and the blue is for the sea. The five-pointed star represents the island groups. Used in navigation, the star is also an important symbol for the seafaring Torres Strait Islander people. The colour white of the star represents peace.

FLAG IS OFFICIAL

The Australian Aboriginal Flag was proclaimed an official flag of Australia under Section 5 of the Flags Act 1953 on 14 July 1995. The Torres Strait Islander flag was similarly proclaimed on the same day.