

**William Cooper, Honorary Secretary, Australian Aborigines' League, Circular Letter, 27 December 1937, National Archives of Australia, A659, 1940/1/858**

**Australia Day 1938**

**Aborigines' Day of Mourning**

The Australian Aborigines' Progressive Association of New South Wales has called on all aborigines in the advanced stages of civilisation and culture to observe a DAY OF MOURNING concurrently with the white man's DAY OF REJOICING to celebrate the 150th year of the coming of the white man to Australia. The aborigines, by this means, hope to call the attention to the present deplorable condition of all aborigines, of whatever stage of culture, after 150 years of British rule. It is expected that such actions will create such sympathy on the part of the whites that full justice and recompense will follow.

The "**DAY OF MOURNING**" has been endorsed by the Australian Aborigines' League, the Victorian body, which also looks after Federal matters, and it is expected that meetings will be held in a number of places and suitable resolutions passed. This League now asks the Christian community to help us in another way:—

We know that sympathy with the aborigines is widespread and growing, and, because the aboriginal knows that the goodwill of the white man is essential to success they seek to justify the continuance of this sympathy. We now ask all Christian denominations to observe Sunday, 23rd January, as **ABORIGINES' DAY**. We request that sermons be preached on this day dealing with the aboriginal people and their need of the gospel and response to it and we ask that special prayer be invoked for all missionary and other effort for the uplift of the dark people.

We regret the unavoidable delay in submitting our request, which was not avoidable all the circumstances, but we feel that a suitable notice from you in your church press will give that wide publicity that is so essential.

Yours sincerely yours