

A. P. A. Burdeu, President, Australian Aborigines' League, to the Minister for the Interior, Thomas Paterson, 27 February 1938, National Archives of Australia, A659, 1940/1/858

The following suggestion has been made by a gentleman who is interested in the cause of the aboriginal. As it is consonant with the policy of this league, it is submitted for your consideration:—

That, in the territories administered by the Commonwealth, native boys should be enrolled in cadet forces, uniformed and equipped as corps of white boys. Adult natives should be able to enrol in aboriginal citizen corps.

His idea is that the training of the natives would be only in line with the native soldiery of other parts but there would be the training and the discipline, with the Esprit de Corps, which would mold the life of the native away from his present condition in which he is placed.

He submits that there should also be, associated with aboriginal uplift, training as could be reasonably and profitably given by the establishment of a workshop where motor cars could be renovated, old ones being taken down and reassembled. Suitable training along similar lines for girls would put something into their lives also.

I suppose you get many criticisms and suggestions but the foregoing are constructive and may be welcome.