

William Cooper, Honorary Secretary, Australian Aborigines' League, to Rev. William Morley, Secretary, Association for the Protection of Native Races, 5 November 1938, Association for the Protection of the Native Races Papers, University of Sydney Archives, S55, Item 7

I was very interested to note in the press that the N.S.W. Government proposes to introduce legislation providing for the abolition of the present board and appointing another form of administration. This is good so far as it goes but a more real reform would remove the power of the managers and matrons, who in some cases, are ruthlessly persecuting our people. I can assure you that our natives are boiling over with indignity at the way the managers and matrons are oppressing us, often using the color of law to aid them. Did you know the full story your blood would boil. We therefore have asked the Premier to grant: –

1. Representation of aboriginal interests in the new administration. We want someone to whom we can look as one who will urge our viewpoint and whom we can contact in cases that we feel need being ventilated before the Board. An anthropologist does not fill the bill as you will appreciate.

2. Representation of the natives on the administration of the stations. We propose a council, appointed by the people who will have status and authority as a municipal council. This will relegate the Manager and matron into a place more approximating the Governor than a Dictator, a representative of the government, the administration and ultimately of the King, who is assured of native loyalty both to His Person, His Throne and His Government.

We want respect for the rights of minorities to be conceded in Australia just as much as Australia contends that this right be conceded to European minorities. In fact we don't want to be m[e]rely a minority but as Australians, as loyal as any other Australians, to be accorded the same status and rights that other Australians enjoy. This representation will be a step to our full emancipation.