

William Cooper to the Minister for the Interior, Thomas Paterson, 23 March 1936, National Archives of Australia, A659, 1940/1/858

I note by the press that a proposal is made for the relaxation in the restrictions on aboriginals in the Northern Territory to the extent that half castes and those of lighter shade will have authority, among other things, to enter public houses and be served with liquor.

This organisation welcomes every gesture of sympathy toward the aboriginal and thankfully accepts every advance toward full liberty[.] We realise that newspaper reports are not always wholly to be accepted and in the present case we do not regard the report as being necessarily official in the form which it appeared. Nevertheless we are perturbed about one aspect which we feel is in line with White opinion, an opinion that this League does not share. The concession or relief is to be available to half castes and those of lighter shade only.

This league stands for the aboriginal race, full blood and coloured and definitely believes that the full blood is capable to capable of advance to full culture as possessed by the white. This is not in any sense an opinion not backed by evidence. We can demonstrate this at any time from our own cultured community. We therefore request that, in the proposed concession, it may be made to include, additional to half castes and quadroons, "approved full blooded aboriginals". We would further request that this be an accepted standard for any future amelioration.