

William Cooper, Honorary Secretary, Australian Aborigines' League, to the Minister for the Interior, Thomas Paterson, 15 June 1936, National Archives of Australia, A1, 1936/7014

The attention of our League has been drawn to the staging of an aboriginal corroboree at Darwin for the benefit of American Tourists.

It is our opinion that the commercialising of the aboriginal people in this way is derogatory to the cause of their uplift, causing on the part of partly civilised people, a resuscitation of undesirable practices which will retard their uplift.

Our League does desire the preservation of the best features of aboriginal culture and feels that the preservation of certain corroboree dances, in the way the Old World peoples have retained their folk dances, is in harmony with this, but great care should be exercised till such time as the native race is so fully civilized that the outlook on the corroboree is just that of the Old World civilization on their folk dances.

We request that you will give instruction that no further instance be allowed to take place.

Thank you.