

A. P. A. Burdeu, President, Australian Aborigines' League, to Rev. William Morley, 19 June 1936, Association for the Protection of the Native Races Papers, University of Sydney Archives, Series 55, Item 7

Mr Cooper has just called to see me. We talked over the matter of the petition for which he has, so he informs me, about 2000 names. These are from all over Australia and ought be far greater in number but for the fact that certain natives were afraid to sign, notwithstanding that the managers assured them that it was quite allowable. They felt there was a catch in it. The 2000 are on several lists which Mr Cooper and his son are pasting one under the other to make a roll of signatures under the petition. This should be ready very shortly.

I said to him that merely to send the petition to the Military Secretary to the Governor General may mean that the latter might not see it at all. Previously I had communicated with him as to the procedure and, in a not too courteous letter, he replied that the question of forwarding or not was a matter for the Governor-General's advisors to decide. His reply was not encouraging and I could quite contemplate that the petition might be sent to the Prime Minister's Dept. or to the Crown Solicitor's office and it might not only be not seen by the Governor General but it might not get away or be replied to by someone in Canberra. I asked Mr Cooper if he were willing to go to Canberra himself and suggested that you, for preference, or some member of the A.P.N.R. might go with him to Canberra there to present the document personally in a deputation to be introduced by one of the Federal members. I explained that you would know all the ropes and the weight of the A.P.N.R. behind the document would certainly ensure a good hearing.

I think I could ensure the expenses for you from Sydney and, of course, we would have to meet Mr Cooper's. In any case we would also have to be responsible for yours too if necessary.

Please just think it over and, if necessary, submit it to your executive, letting me know in good time as convenient to you as to what you think. We will know the value of your advice.