

***Ladder*, vol. 1, no. 4, 1937, p. 23, William Cooper, Honorary Secretary, Australian Aborigines' League, Letter to the Editor, 5 November 1936**

The white race, in its dealings with the dark race, seems always to think in terms that involve the aboriginal as something sub-human, or, at least, outcast. Many of our friends even seem to be infected with a superiority complex which is not fair to our race. May I plead for an attitude that will recognise our real humanity for, though we have suffered unspeakable horrors since the coming of the white race, we still have that self respect which causes a feeling of hurt when received with a superior and merely tolerant attitude.

My league very definitely appeals for a fair deal for the whole race, full-blood or coloured. We definitely protest against discrimination in favour of any one section. Might I submit our claim in brief? The full-blood is the descendent of the race that has peopled this continent for many hundreds of years. The coming of the white race and the passing of the sovereignty should not have affected the title to his share of the soil, and his coming, by conquest, under British rule, should have brought him British citizenship with all the rights and privileges thereof. The attitude that only by virtue of some white blood can a native claim some consideration is definitely wrong. The aboriginal has a right to the best. The half-caste or preferably the coloured native, is descendent also of the aboriginal, and heir to all that such descendent involves. He is also son of the white man and I submit, heir to all that involves.

The supposed superiority of the half-caste is not admitted, and in fact, all thought of breeding the half-caste white, and the desire that that be accomplished, is a creature of the white mind. The coloured person has no feeling of repugnance toward the full blood, and in fact, he feels more in common with the full blood than with the white.

We dark folk have no regret that we are coloured, nor do we admit any fundamental superiority in being white. We are proud of our race. We know that a dark person, full blood or half-caste, can do anything he is shown how, and can do it as well as a white man. Our plea and aim is that the whole dark race be lifted to full modern culture, and be granted full equality in every way with the white race.