

William Cooper, Secretary, Australian Aborigines' League, to the Prime Minister, Joseph Lyons, 24 January 1937, National Archives of Australia, A659, 1940/1/858

I am writing in grateful appreciation of the sympathetic attitude of your administration toward my people.

While we are not satisfied with conditions yet, even in the most favourable of circumstances, and we feel that you are satisfied either, still we do say that, under your administration, more has been done in the last few years than has been done since the coming of the white people to this country. Then the spirit in which the improvement is done is not the least of the service you are doing to our race. What has already been done and what is in your announced programme is an earnest of your goodwill.

We are also grateful of the graciousness of your reception of our pleas for improved conditions and the kindly tone of your replies to our correspondence.

The reason for my writing is just to say what we think. We have a long way to go but the kindly thought for our people is a token that you are willing to help us on our way. We are deeply grateful.

The aboriginal race is a much misunderstood people but we are intensely loyal to the Person and Throne of His Majesty and to His Administration in Australia. We are proud to be members of the British Empire and desire to take our place as worthy units in the Commonwealth.

I would like to add that Mr Paterson, Minister for the Interior, shares with you our deep appreciation and we would request that you convey this to him.