

***Ladder*, vol. 1, no. 5, 1937, pp. 12–14, Extract from William Cooper to Honorary Secretary, Australian Aborigines' Amelioration Association, [c. July 1937]**

We are getting on quite nicely. The reaction of authority, at first suspicious, is now quite cordial and we feel that good is being done. Especially am I pleased with the reaction of Mr Paterson and Mr Lyons, in the order given. Certainly we have not yet got past the promise stage but our representations have led to definite promise which we hope will materialise. We know the biggest hurdle will be the entrenched departmental officials, to whom we are but clay (and this applies to your State, as well as to other States and the Commonwealth). Even in New South Wales we have had encouraging replies, though only after long ignoring and later evasion. At our instance, Cumerogunja, on the wonderful Murray, is to be supplied with an up-to-date and powerful pumping plant and water is to be laid on to new homes which are to be built. The last thing we were able to secure was the provision of an area of land to be fenced and worked as a market garden. We asked for the culture of tomatoes, vines, oranges, lucerne, tobacco, etc., all possible in our fertile area, so well watered by the Murray. Only official apathy can prevent our request for a model aboriginal station to prove the inmates, and ultimately to be a pattern for Commonwealth-wide imitation, from being a success. Our petition for the King has been ready for dispatch for some time. We held it up to see what the last Premiers' Conference would bring forth. We further held it up to see what the conference of Chief Protectors would do. When this proved abortive, as far as we are concerned, we notified Mr Lyons that we had the petition ready for dispatch and the next move is with the Government. If it satisfies us we will not forward the petition ...