

Petition to King George V

PETITION of the Aboriginal Inhabitants of Australia to His Majesty, King George V, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, Ireland, and British Dominions beyond the seas, King; Defender of the Faith; Emperor of India.

TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY, IN COUNCIL THE HUMBLE PETITION of the undersigned Aboriginal inhabitants of the Continent of Australia respectfully sheweth: —

THAT WHEREAS it was not only a moral duty, but a strict injunction, included in the commission issued to those who came to people Australia, that the original inhabitants and their heirs and successors should be adequately cared for;

AND WHEREAS the terms of the commission have not been adhered to in that —
(a) Our lands have been expropriated by Your Majesty's Governments, and
(b) Legal status is denied to us by Your Majesty's Governments;

AND WHEREAS all petitions made on our behalf to Your Majesty's Governments have failed.

YOUR PETITIONERS humbly pray that Your Majesty will intervene on our behalf, and, through the instrument of Your Majesty's Governments in the Commonwealth of Australia — will prevent the extinction of the Aboriginal race and give better conditions for all, granting us the power to propose a member of parliament, of our own blood or a white man known to have studied our needs and to be in sympathy with our race, to represent us in the Federal Parliament.

AND YOUR PETITIONERS WILL EVER PRAY

[This petition appears as document 11 in Bain Attwood and Andrew Markus, *Thinking Black: William Cooper and the Australian Aborigines' League*, Aboriginal Studies Press, 2004, pp 35–36]