

# The Aboriginal History Project

## Newspaper Archive

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### Aborigines Mourn While White Men Celebrate

26 JAN 1938

SYDNEY, Wednesday.—“This is our day of mourning,” said Mr Jack Pratten, President of the Aborigines’ Progressive Association at the opening of the Aborigines’ All-Australian Conference here today. “While the white man is enjoying the celebrations we mourn over the frightful conditions under which the aboriginal has existed, and is existing today in the continent which once belonged to our forefathers.”

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“We want ordinary citizen rights, old-age pensions, the maternity bonus, relief work when unemployed and full rights to education for our children,” he continued.

“We do not want to be herded in Government reserves and treated as a special class.

“There are 10,000 aborigines in New South Wales, of whom 9000 are half-castes. These are the children of white people as well as black. In Australia there are 60,000 full-bloods and 20,000 half-castes.”

Referring to the 150th anniversary celebrations today, he said: “The committee provided us with a stand in Liverpool Street and we saw the procession from it. The display was gorgeous, but we do not forget the bad deal we have had from the white man.”

More than 100 delegates, including some from Victoria and Queensland, attended the conference.