

THE ABORIGINAL PRESERVATION & PROTECTION ACT

This Act came into being hot on the heels of the 1937 conference in Canberra. Instead of the word half-caste being used, the term half blood came into being, as if that terminology was any improvement on the previous one. The definition of half blood was where one parent was Aboriginal and the other parent had no strain or both of whose parents had a strain of Aboriginal blood and who himself has a strain of more than 25 percent of Aboriginal blood.

That Act dealt with guardianship and adoption and the State became the direct legal guardian of all children under the age of 21 years. This set the scene for the most recent in the sequence of "Stolen Generations" and that is also another story.

It was also decreed that there were to be no mixed race marriages and not even any inter-race marriages without the consent of the Protector of Aborigines. The Act however, provided an automatic exemption from the Act for persons who had employment and who did not associate with persons considered to be "lower types".