

**Australian Parliament
Joint Standing Committee on Migration
Submission no. 323**

The Federal Parliament's **Migration Committee** (Joint Committee of both Houses) has launched an inquiry into **multiculturalism in Australia**.

To: **Maria Vamvakinou MP**

The Chair of the Migration Committee,

Thank you for suggesting the need for an enquiry into multiculturalism in Australia and taking submissions from the Australian community.

My family (all native born Australian citizens) returned to Australia in 2009 after living for ten years in Northern Sudan and Kenya. My work involves me to be closely involved with people from many different nations, ethnic identities and religious affiliations and I also currently volunteer as a TESOL tutor for recent immigrant arrivals to Australia. I therefore make this brief submission to the Committee as an informed Australian citizen who enjoys meeting and communicating freely with people from many different backgrounds, but who at the same time can see the limits of 'multiculturalism' as currently defined and practised within the Australian community.

Unfortunately, due to political correctness, there has been a paucity of discussion on the 'hard' questions of multiculturalism. There has too readily been an uncritical presumption by those who promote multiculturalism in Australia that all worldviews are acceptable and that a 'multi-faithed society' (and I include those who are non-religious as a faith group) is the goal to be obtained. What must be said here is that all faith systems are not the same and not all would necessarily agree with a modern secular worldview, and with a legal code derived from Judeo-Christian values. In fact, in some religious systems there is no separation between the secular and the sacred and it is naïve to presume that the current policy on multiculturalism will ensure some form of magical assimilation into the Australian way of life. Any society to be governed needs to have a clear sense of common identity and common values. Australians do have a unique identity, history and values – however, new immigrants to our country do not need to subscribe to this identity and values and can simply retain those coming from their country of origin. This can lead to ghetto'ism rather than assimilation, and where the demographics of a particular group are in the majority, a push to see their values promoted in opposition to Australian values. I would concur with the sentiments expressed by Greg Sheridan in his recent article "How I lost faith in Multiculturalism" (The Australia, April 02) and his suggestions for a way forward and I quote him now where he says:

How can Australia sensibly take account of all this while maintaining a non-discriminatory immigration program? Three obvious courses suggest themselves.

In the formal immigration program, there should be a rigid adherence to skills qualifications so that the people who come here are well educated, easily employable and speak good English.

The inflow of illegal immigrants by boat in the north, almost all Muslim, mostly unskilled, should be stopped.

Within the formal refugee and humanitarian allocation of 13,500 places a year, a legitimate stress should be placed on need but also on the ability to integrate into Australian society.

And, finally, we simply should not place immigration officers in the countries with the greatest traditions of radicalism.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Yours sincerely,