

INQUIRY INTO MULTICULTURALISM IN AUSTRALIA

MIGRATION COMMITTEE

SUBMISSION FROM

Challenges in Australian Migration

There have been many waves of migration to Australia. Generally speaking each wave has adapted to the Australian law, values and standard of tolerance (or intolerance) prevailing in the host community. Immigrants of many faiths Hindu, Bhuddist, Jewish and of no faith accepted the fact that the Australia that they were to become part of, was basically a Christian country and that its laws and values would reflect this fact.

It was quite normal for migrants to experience difficulties. They could, particularly in the first generation, face poverty, prejudice and exclusion. Overcoming these impediments by hard work, social interaction and determination to adopt their new nationality, was achieved given time, the acquiring of English language and the intention to blend into the new community.

Within a relatively short time members of the new ethnic group were entering the professions, the legislatures and the many aspects of their new society that had once been alien to them.

Until the early 1970s new immigrants were self sustaining, resilient and generous of their gifts and finances to the general community. They set up their own co-ops, churches, language schools and clubs by private means.

The pre 1970s migrants retained their own cultural identity with its elements that were compatible with Australian civil liberties, law and parliamentary democracy. With the exception of rudimentary camp type accommodation and English lessons they did most of this without the assistance of government. These migrants appreciated the new society into which they were bringing their families. The society was at the same time enriched by the infusion of people whose initiative, ideas and industriousness were creating a dynamic Australian community.

In 1973 the Whitlam government introduced multiculturalism. This concept invites migrants to bring the cultures of the lands that they have left and enjoy the privilege obtaining in a free society of their cultures being given value equal to that of the host country.

Multiculturalism has many disadvantages:

It promotes separatism when national coherence should be Australia's goal. It camouflages the bad aspects of migrant cultures. It enables the standards of the private domain of the home, religion, dress, diet and modesty to be imposed on the public domain. The public domain is based on civil liberties, equality under the law, and a democratically elected parliament. When the private domain, assisted and financed by government agencies promotes this intrusion, the majority of members of the host nation feel disaffected and ignored. This frustration will show up as antipathy towards migrants who demand special privileges based on the notion that each culture is equal. Following unease within the host community, enmity occurs with potential to lead to violence.

Multiculturalism was a fairly neutral concept when it was introduced to Australia. During the 70s and 80s migrants from such places as South Vietnam and South America were easily integrated into Australian society. People of Buddhist, Jewish or Hindu background had no reason to impose the private domain with that of the public. Despite the efforts of the multiculturalists of Australia to create ghettos the migrants integrated and the society remained satisfied with its open institutions with its Christian underpinnings.

When European countries accepted many migrants from Africa and the Middle East multiculturalism enabled people of the Muslim faith to demand that the host society adapted to Islam and to the requirements of the Koran. The British Prime Minister David Cameron and other European leaders are now repudiating multiculturalism because it has promoted radical Islam.

In Australia the recent migrants, many of them illegal migrants, from countries where Islam is the accepted faith and where it pervades the whole civil society, have demanded that Australian communities introduce Islamic standards. These migrants want the private domain to influence the public domain.

Multiculturalism combined with a religion, Islam, which has values antipathetic to a society the laws of which are based on a Christian ethic has proven itself to be a divisive concept.

1. Multiculturalism should be replaced with integration.

2. Muslim migrants should, if they are accepted as citizens be required to sign a compact that guarantees that they will respect Australian law and desist from lobbying for Sharia law.

states respect for freedom of religion and the right to convert to any religion.

decries polygamy as being degrading to women.

allows sons or daughters to marry whoever they choose to marry.

Accepts that criticism of Islam and religious debate is a feature of the healthy open Australian culture.

3. The immigration program should only allow skilled English speaking who can integrate easily, to enter Australia.

4. The inflow of illegal migrants should be stopped