



Thursday, 7 April 2011

SUBMISSION

To:

Committee Secretary,
Joint Standing Committee on Migration

PO Box 6021, Parliament House,
Canberra ACT 2600, Australia.

INQUIRY INTO MULTICULTURALISM IN AUSTRALIA

1 Thank-you for your letter of 18 March 2011 inviting the Federation of Australian Buddhist Councils of Australia (FABC) to make a submission on this important subject.

2 As the representative organisation of the Buddhist community through our five state Buddhist Councils, we represent approximately 250 Buddhist temples and organisations throughout Australia. We wish to express support for a suitable Multicultural policy in Australia that serves to promote a strong and vibrant Australia. The FABC is the voice of the Buddhist community in Australia that;

- more than doubled from 199,800 to 420,000 during the period 1996 to 2006 (source: 2006 ABS Census of Population and Housing)
- now includes approximately half a million people of all Buddhist traditions
- is the largest non-Christian religious group in Australia

3 We support a Multicultural policy that will maintain and promote Australian values such as democracy and a fair go. Multiculturalism should be about adding to Australia the best of the various cultures of those migrants who have chosen to call Australia home.



4 Just as a composite material is often stronger than the individual components, the various threads of different cultures, if blended well, can serve to strengthen Australia. Each migrant culture should self-engage in current affairs so that Australia can benefit from the wisdom of others. Everyone has something positive they can contribute.

5 Multiculturalism should be accepted in so far as it does not go against human rights or public security.

6 The Buddhist community of Australia would like to be actively engaged in the community because it is an important aspect of nation-building. We welcome the opportunity to represent ourselves to government and media. Buddhism can play a positive role in the sometimes conflicting viewpoints of the major faiths.

7 Change is part of life, but if changes are too great it can be detrimental. Therefore we believe the rate of migration should be monitored to ensure change is gentle and harmonious.

8 Australian children should grow up freely among young Australians of all religions in our schools. Our children should be educated in the cultures and beliefs of others and be taught to question and think for themselves.

Yours faithfully

Dr J Mitra
FABC Secretary
On behalf of the President and Committee