

**Australian Parliament
Joint Standing Committee on Migration
Submission no. 148**

Dear Review Committee,

I love pizzas, curries and all manner of food introduced by various cultures who have been welcomed to our land and have become a part of us. I appreciate the many hard working, interesting people who have become Australians.

I am however very concerned if multiculturalism means making laws and allowances for different value systems which are in conflict with our own. I particularly address my concern regarding the system in countries I have worked in for 25 years. I refer to Islam.

Since my return, it is of great concern to me to note the lack of information and understanding that the average Australian has regarding the nature of Islamic Sharia law, which all Muslims to a greater or lesser extent are obliged to strive to implement wherever they live. Islam is not just a religion, it purports to present the perfect way for mankind to live, through the implementation of Sharia law. This includes all aspects of society e.g. social, civil, political, legal and education.

I have to say that, after 25 years of "on the ground" observation of Sharia law in Islamic countries, my experience leads me not to want to see its introduction elsewhere. Sharia law is discriminatory, particularly against women. Even though Islam is presented as a religion of peace and freedom, it falls abysmally short of the levels of human rights we accept in the West, and in Australia. It is not generally known that the 1990 Cairo Declaration of Human Rights in Islam, asserts the supremacy of Sharia over the UN Declaration of Human Rights system.

We need to be better informed. I recommend that we love Muslims but be wary and informed concerning Islam.

I hasten to say that I have many Muslim friends and I appreciate them and their hospitality.

However, while we welcome newcomers of all kinds to our land and extend them our rights and privileges, we should also stress the responsibilities of becoming part of our Australian society.

We can learn from the situation in some European countries where there is a challenge to raise up parallel standards for a small sector of the community.

We should note the old Afghan proverb: "You cannot hold two melons in one hand."

Yours Sincerely,

G & J L