

**Australian Parliament
Joint Standing Committee on Migration
Submission no. 208**

The Chairperson,
Migration Committee
Maria Vamvakinou MP

Dear Ms. Vamvakinou,

I wish to make a submission to the above Committee.

I do not believe that the term "Multiculturalism" is relevant in Australia today. As you will be well aware, the concept has been widely expressed in previous times and has been in and out of useage, the latest "in" being via the Hon. Chris Bowen's February 16th speech.

I believe that in the context of our post World War II massive immigration, that it had relevance as opposed to now. At that time the majority of our intake were from "Christian" background countries, who generally easily assimilated into Australian values with our Judeo Christian background. Subsequently Asian Indian area migrations occurred with relatively little national problem. This in spite of areas becoming say progressively Greek and then say Vietnamese as an example.

In today's world, however, there is a massive world wide migration of folk with a basic Muslim identity, and in our own country, the current influx of boat people are mainly Muslim. There is a fundamental difference in the faith of Islam and any other faith, which seems not to connect in the political arena. The difference is that Islam is a faith both intimately personal and political, with a credo of Islamic Sharia law being the ultimate aim as the law of the country of residence. Recently I attended a Multiculturalism seminar, at which there was an attempt by a Melbourne Muslim man and woman to show their "integration". At that session, it was abundantly clear that there are many barriers to person to person communication with Muslims. I believe the essential part of this is their unwillingness to relate outside of Islam.

In my experience this is a peculiar problem with "people of the Book" as they express it. A problem with Islam is that Muslims claim Islamic justification for their actions, not justification in Australian law.

True you will see articulate Muslim people speaking at public seminars and on TV, but this is not the Muslim world amongst us. In short Islam does not in my view, seek integration, but rather Islamic sharia change from the Australia we know and love. We should actively emphasise "citizenship" which implies integration and the acceptance of Australian values, way of life and law, as is apparent amongst other immigrants.

It is salutary to see Islamic practice elsewhere: The recent Pakistani applauded murder of Punjab Province Governor Salma Taseer, whose moderate views were causal. It is not enough to say this is elsewhere and is irrelevant here. I am not aware of Islamic Australian voices speaking out against it. Further, I understand that Saudi money actively supports an extremist version of Islam in this country right now.

I am very supportive of The Australian's Greg Sheridan's article in their April 2nd publication, wherein hw speaks from years of first hand knowledge of the Lakemba Sydney scenario, and also of the current overseas picture.

Finally, Multiculturalism is only as effective as the willingness by all to embrace it. I do not see this in amongst Muslims here today, with whom it would only ever be superficial and subservient to Islam, in spite of claims otherwise.

Yours faithfully