

The Chair of the Committee,
Inquiry into Multiculturalism in Australia,
Maria Vamvakinou MP.
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Your Honour,

Please note this is a further submission, but this one is in my name alone.

I came to Australia in 1951 from Germany, with my parents and brother. Being of German origins, my father was forcibly removed from the Territory of PNG, together with his brother and parents, by Australian authorities and sent back to Germany, at the commencement of the 2nd WW. This action was not a friendly one, and the powers that be even cut off all the buttons from their clothing before they embarked on the ship returning them to Germany.

On returning to Australia in 1951, there was never any thought of action to obtain compensation for the loss of their business in PNG, or for the way they were handled by authorities. There were no chips on our shoulders. We appreciated the fact that Australia was prepared to accept immigrants, and were grateful to come to this great land of which we were all proud.

I remember distinctly what my father said to my mother, to my brother and to me: "We are now in Australia. While we are proud to be Germans, we are now Australians." I also remember distinctly, having arrived on a Monday, on the Wednesday my father (who could speak English), took my mother (who could not speak English) to the Fortitude Valley State School for English lessons at night, which she continued for 12 months, and when we shifted out onto the land, she continued English lessons by correspondence. Rightly or wrongly, we were not encouraged to speak German but English at home. It was stressed - we are now in Australia and we will live as Australians. My parents also made a conscious effort not to become too involved in the German Club. Two years later, and even though only 9, I remember how proud we were to take the Oath of Allegiance on the Bible, and become Australian citizens. We readily accepted Australia's law, culture, ways, democracy and it's Christian heritage. Being guests and then citizens, we never thought in any way, of imposing any other culture, law or religion on Australia. O yes we retained one or two cultural aspects - for example opening Christmas presents and having the main Christmas meal on Christmas Eve, rather than on Christmas Day - but we were Australians.

This is what it means to assimilate into a country. This is what multi-nationalism is all about, welcoming and getting alongside of people from any nation, respecting their traditions, and being one. There is very little tension, a lot of respect, as we work toward a common goal of strengthening the rich heritage and culture of Australia. Multi-culturalism is a competing for cultures for one to come out on top. This is why it has failed in Europe and other places, leading to violence, and attempts to replace the cultures of these countries with foreign cultures imported from other countries etc. When you have cultures competing with each other, it leads to chaos, violence and insecurity, and the stability, freedom of religion and speech and democracy Australia has known, will be destroyed, as even now it is being slowly eroded - see discrimination laws in Victoria, the threat of imposing sharia law etc. Do we want the culture of Muslim countries - where freedom of religion is denied, where women folk are denigrated - even to the extent of the clothes they have to wear, where people of other faiths are persecuted and killed, where Christians for example have no right to build Churches or even the right of Assembly?

If people are going to accept our invitation to live in this great country of ours, they must be assimilated, and first and foremost be Australians, accepting its language, heritage, culture and the fact that the majority of Australians would regard themselves as Christians, not believing in Allah, but Almighty God who was revealed in Jesus Christ - and yes, there is a vast difference. Multi-culturalism has failed, and will never bring anything worthwhile to a country - but the very opposite. Multi-culturalism NO! Multi-nationalism, where people from different nations accept the language, religion, culture and democracy of their chosen country - YES!

Yours sincerely,