

Virginia  
Queensland 4014

The Hon. Members  
of the Joint Standing Committee on Migration,  
Enquiry into Multiculturalism in Australia.  
Parliament House,  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Hon. Members,

When people migrate to Australia, there is a reasonable expectation by Australians that these “new” folk seek to assimilate into Australian Culture, enjoying the privileges it provides and thereby improve their quality of life.

I have observed over the years that many groups do successfully do so; however, there are a few groups who do not desire to assimilate and “fit-in” as it were into Australian Society, despite the opportunities being offered by government, private persons and organisations; as well as the easy going attitude that is a hallmark of Australian Society and Australians in general.

Of these few groups who demonstrate that, most definitely, do not wish to integrate into Australian Society; the most noticeable group are Muslim (Islamic) migrants. While there may seem to be a few exceptions, these are basically lapsed Muslims. Lapsed Muslims are those who will say that are Muslims when asked; but do not go to the mosque on Fridays, essentially non-practising “Muslims”.

The situation is that in Islam for practising Muslims, it is sinful to associate with non Muslims. It is an abhorrence and clearly forbidden for a Muslim to work for a non Muslim. This may be the reason that I understand that unemployment rate with Muslims is about 2 to 3 times the national average. It is not that Australians of whatever faith will not hire them; but rather that Muslims will not work for a non-Muslim.

One of the five pillars of Islam is Charity; but that charity can only go to Muslims and caveats accompany funds will state that. It is a sin for Muslims to give to non-muslims who are considered second class humans, at best in Islam. These are only a couple of examples and these Islamic religious norms are enforced by the Imams.

For example, I was in Brisbane and some Middle Eastern youths came and stood beside the seat on which I was sitting. Apparently, they were looking for jobs when one said that he has found a good prospect of interesting work with good pay. The others were happy for him; then he said to the others, “But the man I would work for is not a Muslim.” One of his friends said” You can only work for a Muslim, you know that! If the Imam finds out, you know what will happen!” The other youths agreed and then moved off.

This is just one small sample. The Imams enforce these rules vigorously by one means and another of what I regard as irrational “taboos”. Islam, however, regards these as fundamentals.

The only time when “generosity” is shown to non-Muslim is when they are seeking converts to Islam.

With this fundamental barrier to integration into Australian Society being institutionalised in the Muslim (Islamic) faith; the way forward is a "minefield". Historically, Islam has always taught these things and will not change. I am not sure of what would be a practical response. The Imams have vastly too much power; however that power is based on religious power. That power of enforcement and Islam's teachings as described earlier are the fundamental problems that prevent people from an Islamic (Muslim) background from integrating into Australian Society.

Legislation restating the existing rights of all Australians to free association and employment would be superfluous and clearly not the answer.

In my observations, I have not noted any of the above situations preventing integration into Australian Society with Christians, Buddhists, Sikh, Hindu, Taoists and others, coming from different parts of the world, who have come to call Australia “Home”.

Yours sincerely,