



The Secretariat,  
Legal and Constitutional References Committee,  
Parliament House,  
CANBERRA  
ACT 2600  
AUSTRALIA

28th January 2004

Dear Sirs,

Parliamentary Inquiry into Australian Expatriates.

I write as a former child migrant and former permanent resident of Australia who now **has** to live overseas because I was not given the correct information by the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs in Brisbane in 1964 and 1966. I arrived in Australia in 1949 aged 10. In 1964, prior to my first trip overseas, I enquired about passports and was advised to take out a UK passport. In 1966 when I was about to come to the UK for a longer period I again enquired about my situation when I wished to return to Australia and I was told that there would be “no problems because of the length of time I had lived in Australia”. I was **not** told that I needed to register as an Australian. Like almost all child migrants (and most adult migrants) from the UK at that time I firmly believed that I was An Australian, indeed, as late as 1970, the then Minister for Immigration admitted that there was much confusion over the status of UK immigrants. Subsequent checks have shown that under one percent of UK immigrants had registered by 1966 which shows that the need to register was virtually unknown, none of parents friends nor anyone I have spoken to had heard of it.

There are probably very few people now who are in my position and it would seem only fair for Australia to grant an amnesty to *former child migrants who spent part of their formative years in Australia, and who lived there for at least ten years, and who have maintained close contact with Australia, and who left prior to 1974 (when registration ended) to enable them to return to Australia and take up the citizenship which they firmly believed they had.* Financial conditions may have to be attached such as apply to “Retirement visas” and possibly also medical bonds similar to those for elderly parents.

I trust that you will take this matter on board and in that great Australian way “give us a fair go”.

Yours faithfully,

Michael Young  
Dip Arch (QLD), Msc (Lon), FRAIA, RIBA