

Federal inquiry into Multiculturalism in Australia

Successful multicultural societies occur only where Judeo-Christianity is the formative culture.

The following submission explains reasons for this phenomena and thus the need for policy-makers to understand them

1. **Countries with Judeo Christian roots have shown themselves to be unique in their ability to develop peaceful, ordered and open multicultural societies.** The fact is that such societies depend on high levels of social trust, respect for the individual and willingness to do good to one's neighbour. And such don't exist anywhere where Christianity hasn't been the originating and pervasive (we could say dominant or formative) culture. Not only is this so, but the possibility of multicultural societies developing and continuing is causally tied to the health and strength of this faith in those cultures. Such faith or belief in turn, produces the values which give rise to the behaviours under-girding such societies. It works in that order. The possibility of a successful multicultural society depends more on its spiritual life, or its 'faith health', than on its industrialisation, economic development or governmental structures. They themselves are the fruits of belief and values.
2. Recognising this, past Treasurer, Peter Costello in his Inaugural Thanksgiving Day address, said regarding worshipping, working Christians in their Church communities, "*They are the steadying influence, the ballast to our society, when it shakes with moral turbulence. They give strength and stability and they embody the character of our valuable traditions. It is their inner faith which gives them strength. Our society won't work without them.*" Or, as a former Deputy Prime Minister put it, "*The work of a Sunday School teacher is more significant in the long run to the wellbeing of our nation, than that of the Prime Minister.*"
3. In Western Europe, because of weakening Christian values, multiculturalism is running into serious trouble as is being recognized and stated by political leaders like Merkl and Cameron. The prominent German philosopher, Jurgen Hebermas, stated that recognising the Judeo Christian roots of western civilization, "*...does not impair cultural understanding, but in fact makes it possible.*"
4. **Multiculturalism has become a culture in itself.** The term was first used in 1906 by Horace Kallan, an American, to describe cultural pluralism. Today, under so-called political correctness, this idea is used to oppose, or minimize Christianity and its symbols as being out of place in a multicultural community.¹
5. In this debate the multicultural phenomena becomes multicultural *ism*, as its proponents seek, not simply to work out how diverse cultures can live together harmoniously, as was the main concern in the early 70's, but rather to develop multiculturalism as a value in itself, by which other cultures, particularly Christianity, should be judged. Core values of western liberalism like equality, liberty and toleration of rights are unable to be justified when the Christian tradition and any concept of universal human nature, from which these notions derive, is

¹ Examples of this: Questioning the place of prayers in the opening of Parliament. Pre school facilities refusing to have Christmas carols. The traditional Christmas tree on Capitol Hill, Washington, renamed 'A People's Tree' (ironically Beijing had 'Merry Christmas' banners all over the city). An attempt to re-name 'Red Cross', 'Red Crystal'. A museum in Cherford, U.K. removed B.C. A public hospital in Perthshire, Scotland, taking out the communion table from the chapel – all of these so as not to cause offence to other religions, it is presumed. Also Chaplaincies in Australian government schools claimed to be undemocratic, because Australia is multicultural.

ignored. Thus these values are presumed rather than understood and learned. Let us then consider some of the events and ideas that have given rise to the formation of open, ordered, multicultural societies.

6. **Migration has flowed mostly from East to West, rather than West to East.** In Australia Migration has been a significant post-war (both the Second and Vietnamese wars) movement, both chronologically and causatively. Groups like the volunteer Good Neighbour Councils of the 1950's helped new Australians settle in. In the 70's government ministries and departments were set up to implement immigration and refugee policy. Al Grassby was the first Minister of Multicultural Affairs, appointed in 1973. The States soon established replicas.
7. Christian countries in the West, hosted these migrations. They had the attraction to draw people of diverse social and religious backgrounds, and the infrastructure, wealth and good will, to receive them. From here, particularly from the 1990's, and coinciding with the demise of Soviet Marxist-Communism in the East and the decline of mainline Church in the West, we have heard and seen this new ideology, multicultural *ism*, questioning the place and role of Christianity.
8. **Open multicultural societies don't just happen.** There are key social and political ingredients that make a peaceful multicultural society possible and these have emerged, or occurred only where Judeo Christian thinking has taken root in a society, or has had a strong influence.
9. **Foremost is the internalising of law.** The first statement of the New Covenant is "*I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts*". Without parallel in any other social order or nation, this is the active ingredient that has made the best examples of Christian civilisation possible. It is why some of these countries enjoy protection of rights, without a legal Bill of Rights. It is the yeast of social trust.
10. All other belief systems rely on externalized law. No other belief system has ever produced what Michael Novak calls "*a theory of liberty*", the idea of a freely chosen relationship with the Creator. This relationship, he believes is even more important than the law and is fundamental if we are to have a civil society. It is the difference between the creation of law-loving citizens and the imposition of law-making bureaucracies.
11. Second is **the principle of free opposition, as against enforced position.** This is manifest in a free press, open social-political critique, and active parliamentary oppositions. The historic root of all this is the prophetic opposition to the monarchy in Israel later manifest in the free association of Christian churches and summed up by Origen (b.185), "*It is not wrong to form associations contrary to the law for the sake of truth*". This and para's 9 and 10 above are linked in an observation by Professor Judge (Macquarie University), that this idea is the origin of the alternative society and the open society. "*The great Australian values which . . . bind together our multicultural society*", he says, "*all have their historic sources in Biblical morality.*"²

² 'Society for the Study of Early Christianity' Feb 2003, page 6

12. Australian historian Graham Maddox documents the significance of Calvin, who provided theological foundations for Locke and the later classical liberals to develop modern forms of government with free oppositions in the new world. The German theologian, Moulmann, affirmed this by claiming *“the English and American enlightenment led by denominations like the Quakers, Baptists and Methodists, were the forerunners of the modern world, with continental Protestantism and Roman Catholicism developing in this area much later.”*
13. Third and related to the above, is the understanding of **countervailing powers as against concentration of powers**. The division of powers, the independence of the judiciary, universal suffrage, and federalism in effect balance strong and orderly government by dispersing power through a diverse political system.³ A clear understanding of human nature and thus the danger of power concentrating in elites, was the formative theology for this development.
14. **Fourth, in well functioning multicultural societies, Church and State are separated**. Indeed they must be for the Church to function as the true nourisher of a free society. By contrast Islamic States require Mosque and State to be one. No other world religion, or ideology can beget social freedom, because they do not have the dynamic of forgiveness, which internalises righteousness in a guilt free conscience. In Christian society it is maintained by love of law, not by fear of law, except as a social restraint, upon the lawless.
15. No other religious or atheistic philosophy of governance has produced peaceful ordered multicultural societies. They have only approximated the possibility as a result of systems of governance being developed in them by Western influence, but they struggle. Nepal for example, the world’s only Hindu Kingdom, denies religious freedom in its constitution. Likewise countries with Buddhist majorities have produced no example of open, and free, democratic multicultural societies, the less so in places where Buddhist power elites influence their governments.⁴
16. To gain a general perspective, it would be interesting to construct a continuum of nations. On one extreme would be those with an aggressive atheistic quasi-religion (North Korea would be the best contemporary example of this). Next to that materialist ideologies (Communist states), through to Islamic states, then countries whose concepts of governance have been influenced by the West, such as Indonesia, through to those re-structured in the post-war period (Singapore, Japan), then Latin American, European Protestant and Catholic countries with Protestant Reformational – Great Awakening influenced Christian societies, on the other end. You would finish up with a map that would correlate very closely with the degree of influence that has been produced by the presence, or absence of Biblical Christianity in any society, and the presence of open, ordered multicultural societies.
17. The characteristics of capitalist societies, such as education, tolerance of other cultures, business, sport and travel, are sometimes identified as the values which have given rise to multiculture success. But these activities, taken all together, depend upon freedoms which are most developed in Western Judeo Christian influenced societies. The capitalism which facilitates these things, is not just present in western societies, but is increasingly invading all civilizations. It is actually a product of Reformational thought, chiefly emanating from the Biblical theologies of

³ Graham Maddox ‘Prophetic Religion and the Roots of Political Opposition’ – Ancient History Documentary Research Centre, 1998.

⁴ E.g. Bhutan, Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Brunei, Vietnam, Thailand, Sri Lanka.

Luther and Calvin (the classic thesis of writers like Tawney and Weber). We could confidently add that the less influence of Christian tradition, the more these sorts of things are experienced only by elites in their societies. Sport, business, travel, communication etc, aren't in themselves factors that liberate societies. They are not causal factors, they are effects which become further conduits and facilitators of open interaction between cultures.

18. Perhaps the most exciting recent examples of the free open, democratic and potentially multicultural societies, has come from the overthrow of oppressive Marxism, through the energy of the Christian renaissance and courageous leadership in Russia and Eastern Europe from 1989. Both Protestant (Romania, East Germany, Russia) and Catholic (Poland), are examples of this.
19. **The possibility of the continuation of peaceful open, multicultural societies, depends essentially upon on Christianity continuing true to type in those societies.** It is the movement of Christianity, rather than institutional, or state church, which has engendered these societies. Given the origins of multicultural societies, their nourishment is only possible through the presence of that which caused them. The continual release and proclamation of Biblical truth and its demonstration in those free associations of belief, which exhibit Christ's law in daily life. A British sociologist recently argued that the maintenance of humane society in Great Britain requires the viability of a strong Church and that there is no evidence to have confidence that the former can be anticipated, without the latter.
20. **Churches are called to communal purity, not primarily to social diversity.** Diversity is a key ingredient in a peaceful multicultural society where individuals have freedom to make up their own minds. Such societies are only possible if they have within them a Church, which is true to type, i.e. one which pursues its call of purity and holiness. Holiness in the Church, diversity in society. Diognetus (AD150) put this beautifully, "*The soul is to the body what the Church is to the world.*" He went on to say that "*whereas the Romans shared their wives, but not their property, the Christians shared their property but not their wives*", thus demonstrating the powerful moral influence of the foundational nucleus of a society. Jesus used the salt analogy. The morality of Christianity rose above accepted ethics. This was essentially the power that defeated slavery in the ancient world. You can only continue to oppress a slave, if you believe he is morally inferior. But Christian slaves were empowered by their faith and practiced a moral beauty far excelling that of their masters, something which in itself undermined the concept of slavery. In another era the moral purity and stature of the Methodists, according to British philosopher prof. Anthony Flew, prevented Marxism any chance of taking root in England. (One wonders whether such behavior as the evil of gossip and the denigrating of church leadership in front of the children at the Sunday dinner table, may have been at least as damaging to the mainline Church as heresy in doctrine and sexuality).
21. **Churches must understand what they are.** They are present manifestations (inserts) of the social order of the New World. According to this, Christians are constantly being changed and called upward. Congregation size is irrelevant, though probably smaller, simply structured congregations which are true to type, serve this proclamation better. Over the generations, congregations such as these have enabled nations to arise, yeasted with mutual respect, social trust, care for neighbour, protection of the weak, respect for differences in belief, making an eminent Australian multicultural society possible and workable.

Thus the root that has produced the fruit of the free and open multicultural society, must be valued and nourished.