

From: PG

To the Committee Secretary, Joint Standing Committee on Migration

Dear Sir / Madam,

I regard myself as an "ordinary" Australian from a "working class" background. I am not sure just what the term "multiculturalism" implies. If it means respecting people of other cultures and respecting their beliefs, then I agree with it up to a point. The respect must be reciprocal of course. All cultures should be respected and tolerated even if they each have widely different beliefs from one's own, provided that the people of any given culture mean no harm to others with different "belief sets."

I do have reservations as to how far "multiculturalism" can practically go however. Should we allow (in our legal system) practices such as child marriage, female genital mutilation, and countenance the death penalty for "crimes" such as one culture's peculiar definition of sexual immorality? I am sure that there are people in this country (from more than just one cultural background) that support such practices and would like to have them allowed within Australian law. It would be extremely naive, in my opinion to deny that such attitudes exist.

I believe that the people of any particular culture should support their "belief set" voluntarily and not be forced to do so by legislation that applies particularly to the people of that cultural group. Freedom of choice is essential if we are to continue enjoying our democratic society as we know it. Forwarded with respect,