

Multiculturalism

Submission from Salt Shakers

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Overview of ‘Multiculturalism’

What is ‘multiculturalism’?

Multiculturalism has become a divisive policy in Australia. It has passed its ‘use by date’ and should be abandoned.

Although the original intention may have been to bring harmony between different migrant groups, the reality is that the policy encourages various ethnic groups to focus on their ethnicity and their own culture – instead of integrating into Australia and adopting the Australian culture and way of life.

Multiculturalism promotes the retaining of ethnic and cultural identity. Often this means living in communities with people of the same ethnic group rather than people being spread throughout the community.

Although there has been some focus on encouraging people to learn English, this has been undermined by various government agencies continuing to provide multiple translations of documents.

For example, Victoria’s **Multicultural Act** requires government departments to report annually on how many languages they translate documents into – the more languages, the better the department is seen to be!

Multiculturalism as a government policy

Following the original introduction of ‘multiculturalism’ by the Whitlam government in 1973, it was continued by the Fraser government. It was then endorsed by the Hawke and Keating governments.

Under John Howard's government the term lost favour, and the name 'Multiculturalism' was removed from the name of the Department of Immigration – we believe this was a positive step, especially when it was replaced by the word 'Citizenship'.

In recent years the 'multiculturalism' word was abandoned by then ALP leader Mark Latham, in a speech in 2004.

"Most Australians no longer see the need to prove our ethnic diversity," he told the Global Foundation. "They are too busy practising it and enjoying its benefits. They are already living a life of many cultures."

Multiculturalism needed to be redefined to prevent it being a policy that separated people from each other, he said.

A "new and realistic way of thinking about multiculturalism" was necessary, he said, emphasising that "social cohesion is as important as respect for difference".

"In the early stages of multiculturalism we spent a lot of time to prove our diversity and then celebrate it," he said. "This is still reflected in government policies and programs: multiculturalism as a celebration of diversity for diversity's sake".

See <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2004/04/20/1082395857017.html>

However, the policy – and the name – of multiculturalism was revived by Kevin Rudd as part of a 'parliamentary secretary role'. When Julia Gillard became ALP leader in 2010, she dumped the term in September 2010 – however it was re-instated by her in February 2011 following criticism and complaints from ethnic groups!

It appears that the various ethnic groups have been influential in seeing the term brought back into favour.

Integration and the Australian way of life

It is important that all migrants to Australia adopt the 'Australian way of life'.

What is the Australian way of life?

There has been considerable debate and discussion about 'Australian values' over recent years - what an 'Australian culture' might be.

In essence it is the Christian cultural heritage of Australia.

Prior to the second world war, Australia's migrants mostly came from Britain and Europe. Following the Second World War, they mostly came from Europe – Italy and Greece.

At that time, migrants were encouraged to integrate and adopt Australian culture –

- In essence, this was a Christian culture.
- European migrants mostly had a Christian background and culture.

In the past few years this has changed – more migrants have come to Australia from a wide variety of nations...

All have been welcomed to Australia – and invited to become ‘Australian’...

However, migrants and refugees need to fit in with our ‘Australian culture’.

This raises the question – what is culture?

Is it determined by ‘Ethnic background’?

Is it the food people eat?

People from different nations might eat different food – which we now all enjoy with a proliferation of restaurants of every type.

Is it what people wear or the language they speak?

No - it is more about Worldview and Religion

Christianity is the basis of our law and heritage in Australia...

* We don’t have Hindu ideas of a caste system, with Untouchables and the upper classes.

* We don’t have shari’a law in our nation, applying the principles of Islam.

In some Islamic countries hands are cut off as punishment - and people are killed for converting to Christianity from Islam. In Islam, men can have four wives and women are treated as inferior.

In Australia, our common law and legislation is based on the Bible, though that is changing with increasing legislation undermining that.

Video Clip

We recently prepared a short video presentation on the policy of multiculturalism.

View the video clip (as part of this submission) at

<http://www.saltshakers.org.au/component/content/article/85/819>

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Greg Sheridan, journalist from the Australian, recently wrote an article titled

How I lost faith in multiculturalism

Read article at <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/how-i-lost-faith-in-multiculturalism/story-fn59niix-1226031793805>

In the article he highlights that he once believed in multiculturalism.

Back in 1996, he wrote

“There is nothing in multiculturalism that could cause any worry to any normal person. Multiculturalism officially promotes an overriding loyalty to Australia, respect for other people's rights and Australian law, recognition of people's cultural origins, respect for diversity, the need to make maximum

economic use of the skills people bring to Australia and equity in access to government services.”

Now he says...

“Community relations is a more inclusive term than ethnic”

He said “it **is the real world that has changed my views** – turning me into an opponent of multiculturalism.”

He identifies four factors that led to his change of mind:

- * “watching the debate unfold about the illegal immigrants who come to Australia by boat;
- * a month in Europe researching and writing about immigration issues;
- * 30 years reporting on political Islam in Southeast Asia and the Middle East;
- * and, above all, living for nearly 15 years next door to Lakemba in Sydney's southwest, the most Muslim suburb in Australia.”

Greg Sheridan identifies the increase in violence and the rise of the jihadist culture in Lakemba – especially among second generation migrants – the children of the original Lebanese Muslim migrants.

The problem of Islam

The real problem is that Islam itself does not want to integrate. Although many Muslims may have come to Australia to escape oppressive regimes, the fact is that Islam is a total political system as well as a religious system.

Islam requires allegiance to Allah above the state – Islam divides people into *Dar al Islam* (the Muslims) and *Dar al Harb* (the House of war, all non-Muslims).

In recent years we have seen calls in Australia for various aspects of shari’a or Islamic law.

We have an increasing amount of food now ‘certified as ‘halal’ – where a fee is paid to Islamic groups for inspecting our food! When it comes to meat, the meat is slaughtered according to Islamic ritual, with the Muslim slaughterman facing Mecca and saying a prayer to Allah!

Keysar Trad, of the *Islamic Friendship Association of Australia*, who promotes himself as the most tolerant of people, recently called for the legalization of **polygamy** in Australia.

He would like us to forget that he was the translator for the former mufti of Australia, Sheik al Hilali, or that he once wrote articles for the Islamic magazine *Nid’al Islam*.

In this one, ***RACISM: An Islamic Response Part 2 Islam and Prejudacy***, from December 1996, he wrote on the issue of migration - especially saying that Muslims could be coming to 'settle' in Australia if we **don't** let them come as 'migrants'! Read it at http://www.scribd.com/full/17890820?access_key=key-vesdtqwenkth1a3yn1s

Multiculturalism brings up many issues:

One of those is the wearing of burqas.

Some Muslim women claim they need to cover their faces because of their religion.

We're not talking about headscarves – but the full face-covering burqa.

When politicians such as Senator Cory Bernardi say it is a security issue and that face-covering burqas should be banned, they are called 'racist'.

The same happened to Fred Nile when he introduced face-covering legislation into the NSW Parliament.

However it is a real issue:

Just a few months ago a robbery in Sydney was carried out by a burqa wearing man – and a female Muslim driver wearing a burqa refused to uncover her face so a policeman could identify her from her driver's licence photo.

It also happens overseas - Just last week Suicide bombers wearing burqas attacked a NATO base on the outskirts of Kabul.

So what should be done?

- * Get rid of the term 'multiculturalism'.
- * Encourage community relationships for ALL - not just promote separate ethnic and migrant communities.
- * Invite everyone to be 'Australians', not focusing on their ethnic origin.

And particularly

- * Promote our Christian heritage that promotes true justice for all people.