

To the Committee Secretary,

My father left Australia in his teens, during the Great Depression, to find work in South Africa. After serving in WWII he married a South African. I was born overseas and migrated to Australia with my parents at the age of 10. I became an Australian citizen and I am now 60 years old. The older of my two daughters is adopted and the country of her birth is Taiwan. I have been fortunate to live and work overseas. I have also travelled extensively through SE Asia, Nth America and Europe. I have no doubt that I am blessed to live in the best country in the world and I do not take for granted the wonderful freedoms I enjoy.

As someone born overseas, I count it a privilege to be an Australian citizen. I also welcome anyone who wishes to enjoy the freedoms and opportunities that exist in this wonderful nation. However, citizenship is a privilege to be earned not a right to be demanded. Nor should it be extended lightly.

If multiculturalism allows people to come to Australia to enjoy the economic benefits, political and religious freedoms, whilst they retain the customs, language & incompatible political views, evidenced by maintaining a separate life style and/or railing against our institutions and beliefs, then I am against it.

A person wanting to be an Australian should willingly accept the values, system of government and freedom of expression & worship that exist in this nation. Those unwilling to comply should look elsewhere. It goes without saying that we as a country should be able to clearly articulate what we believe in and the truths we hold dear. Only against such criteria is it possible to measure each individual's suitability to be a citizen.

To my mind it does not matter a jot the persons status, race or religion. However, there are three factors which I believe to be paramount in determining an individuals suitability to be an Australian. First, a demonstrated willingness to accept our values and beliefs. Second, the skills (or demonstrated capacity to acquire the skills - this includes the intention and ability to learn English) to be a productive contributor to society. Third, the willingness and capacity to be part of Australian society, not remain separate from it.

Australia seems reticent to say what we stand for and believe in. Let us give voice to our values, beliefs and aspirations. Those who are like minded are welcome to join us in prospering and building our nation.

In dealing with asylum seekers or migrants our response should be informed by the aforementioned criteria. In essence, if you can't be one of us you can't join us. Where acts of charity and mercy are warranted we should respond. This means appropriate help as the circumstances dictate, when and where required. A desire for a better, more prosperous life is not sufficient justification to grant residency or citizenship.

Australians can be justifiably proud of the way we have accepted

migrants and refugees. The vast majority have sought to be a part of Australian society and contribute to it. Was this multiculturalism? I think not. It was a generosity of spirit and the shared values we have, combined with our willingness to accept like minded people. Let's bury this contrivance - multiculturalism - stick to our values and protect our institutions.

Yours Sincerely,