

Submission to the Federal Inquiry into Multiculturalism in Australia

MULTICULTURALISM

We were born in Australia (NSW and WA), have been married for 51 years, are both educated to tertiary level, have 4 children (all with degrees including PhD, and Bachelor degrees) and 10 grandchildren. Neither ourselves, our children or our grandchildren have ever been charged with any offence(s) under Australian law. Our children are married to spouses from four different countries and nationalities - our family IS A MULTICULTURAL Family. We believe and are committed to the following:-

The core values essential to the healthy functioning of our Australian western liberal democracy must include the expectation of a commitment to those values by all participating cultures.

If people from a different culture, especially those coming from a less modern context, want to be accepted and find a happy place in Australian society they are able and welcome to do so, but only if they are open to debate and discussion of their ideas as well as ours, without retreating behind the defence of 'cultural offence' or insult and the restricting of our opinions by force. Every Australian is entitled to believe what they want to believe, but we can have tolerance only if we understand and accept each other.

The Australian government also must not avoid this hallmark of democracy - ensuring respectful and full mutual understanding of core values from social, religious and political perspectives - because of political sensitivity or 'correctness'. Multiculturalism has been defined and practised over these many years in Australia, with genuine acceptance and interest usually being shown to peoples from all other cultures: overall with very successful and satisfactory outcomes. But ordinary public frustration will certainly increase if the government continues to move further towards allowing minority lobby groups to over-rule the past and current good laws for living and community standards.

As Australians, we have good reason to be nervous when we hear suggestions that "a new policy on multiculturalism is needed...", and even more so when we wonder what exactly is meant by the "government's social inclusion agenda". Our laws have been sufficient. Multitudes of people have come from very different cultures, and have adapted to, added to and enriched our society.

We believe introductions of any degree of Islamic Sharia financial and 'cultural' laws, and courts, will very soon divide and devastate our current society and the harmony, unity and freedom we have known and enjoyed since the foundation of our Nation. We believe there is no need to apologize for being Australian - Australian laws and living are based on proven values, and our conviction is that there is no better country to live in. We believe it is necessary for it to be kept that way.

Widespread reports indicate multiple and major problems with multiculturalism in Europe, leading to its proposed rejection in a

number of countries. Therefore, we believe careful unbiased research should indeed be done to see why multiculturalism as practised in Europe has failed. This is extremely important if we as a country want to continue to enjoy the enormous benefits and vibrancy we have derived from migration to this point.

Australians on the whole are very welcoming of immigration, and the vast, vast majority cannot truthfully be labelled as "racist". However, we believe there will be terrible turmoil here though if the people who come do not intend, and are not required, to assimilate, but rather believe their "right" before even they become citizens is to propose radical change our very lives and laws and culture and values to include those from which they are coming - often, to escape them. If good help is not given to the careful and purposeful integration of all migrants into our Australian worldview and laws, there is every indication that considerable civil unrest is not too harsh a term for what we can expect in the future.

If multiculturalism means that people do not need to become fully Australian, then that cannot be called immigration - an immigrant by definition is one who "leaves his/her own country to (permanently) settle in another."

Respectfully submitted by :