

5 April 2011

Submission to the Federal Inquiry into Multiculturalism in Australia

## MULTICULTURALISM

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 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 demanding 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 each other.**

The Australian government also must not avoid this hallmark of democracy - ensuring respectful and full mutual understanding of core values from a social, spiritual and political perspective - 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.

Australians 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. Chinese and Vietnamese came from very different cultures, but have not only adapted to, but added to and enriched our society.

But, for instance, introductions of any degree of Islamic Sharia financial and 'cultural' laws, and courts, will soon divide and devastate our wonderful society and the harmony, unity and freedom we have known. There is no doubt about this. Let us not apologise for being Australian - Australian laws and living are based on Christian values, and there is no better country to live in. We need to keep it that way.

Careful research should indeed be done to see why multiculturalism as practised in Europe has failed. This is very 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 are welcoming of immigration, and are not racist. There will be terrible turmoil here though if the people who come do not intend, and **are not required, to assimilate**, but rather want to radically 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 Civil war is not too harsh a term for what we can expect down the line.

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

Respectfully submitted: