

Australia Risks Fracture of Unity

DALMENY, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA, November 13, 2015 /EINPresswire.com/ -- An equitable nation – there must be a few in Europe – ensures that approved immigrants are treated as future citizens. They would be offered equality of treatment, especially in wages paid, and equal opportunity to advance according to their potential. Their children would be valued and protected, as would their women.

Australia did all this. Initially, it was the ‘fair-go’ ethos which applied to white men (British, of course). When the massive immigration program of the late 1940s was instituted, this ethos was extended to cover the entrants from Europe (colloquially referred to in the public domain as reffos and wogs). Both (initially) privately and (later) officially, a vast effort (at a considerable taxpayer cost) was put in place to assist the acceptance and settlement of immigrants.

In return, it was made clear that the immigrants had to accept Australia’s Constitution and other institutions and social mores. They did, and also did not form ethnic residential enclaves. Settlement was thereby successful – in spite of some name-calling; unnecessary references to accents; and an insistence on the right of Anglo-Australians to change the personal names of immigrants.

During the author’s 65 years of a fully participatory life in Australia, and during his official responsibility in the policy areas of ethnic affairs & multiculturalism; citizenship & national identity; refugee & humanitarian entry; and settlement assistance, he observed, with quiet satisfaction, the progressive inter-meshing of immigrants and host-peoples as equals.

During his time as Chief Ethnic Affairs Officer in Melbourne, he noted the creditable attempts of the Imams there to integrate their people, especially the women. Before leaving that job, he had obtained Ministerial approval for additional grant-in-aid money for the Muslim communities.

In his book ‘Hidden Footprints of Unity,’ Raja Arasa Ratnam set out to examine how the diverse ethnic communities were also relating to one another. He also wondered how they all reached out to God. In relation to the latter issue, he received (with gratitude) the approbation of The Religious Affairs Editor of ‘The Australian’ newspaper for his views.

The author believes that all the major religions are equal in their potential; that there are only 2 core teachings in these religions; and that these are shared by all. The rest of the theology is purely dogma, much of it surely intended to be divisive.

In his efforts to understand the place of mankind in the Cosmos, the author has found the Upanishads most helpful. He has therefore included certain excerpts in his book, which concludes with guidance from that great Christian thinker, Erasmus. There are indeed many great thinkers, representing diverse religions, who would want all mankind to accept that they belong to the one and only Family of Man.

As for inter-community relations, the historical gulf between Roman Catholics and the ‘prods and masons’ seems to have become subterranean. But the tolerance and mutual respect (or indifference) perceivable in a progressive and tolerant Australia is being threatened by a few Muslim spokesmen.

While it is undeniable that Vatican values continue to be imposed by successive federal governments (eg. in relation to voluntary euthanasia, human rights legislation, and abortion) against 85% opposition from the populace, there is agitation from a few spokesmen for Islam who seek a separate, legislation-backed, code of conduct for those Muslims who seek the continuation of a desert culture in suburban Australia. By what right?

In spite of having chosen to live in a secular nation, what is sought is a change in Australia's institutions and social mores to suit this separatist culture. The spokesmen reject societal integration, pretending that this is assimilation! Assimilation policy was discarded at least 40 years ago.

Is there then a wide-spread attempt at a religio-cultural takeover by some Islamicists, manifest (perhaps) by the current 'invasion' of Europe by Middle Easterners? Quaintly, some of the Australian jihadists in Syria were reportedly on welfare when they left.

Hopefully, the silent majority of Australia's Muslim population, who have already successfully integrated with all other Australians, will now put these 'desert-culture' seekers in their place. Australia was on its way to the Family of Man; it should be put back on track.

Ideally, open-hearted people will ignore the nay-sayers and reach out to fellow-human beings, irrespective of any dogma-derived differences about the path to God. There are many such paths, and they all lead to the same door!

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