

Commonwealth Parliamentary Debate – Graeme Campbell

From: Parliament of Australia, House of Representatives, [Official Hansard](#) for 30 October 1996.

Racial Tolerance

Member for Kalgoorlie's response to the Prime Minister's motion on this matter

Mr Campbell
(Kalgoorlie) (4.42 p.m.)

In speaking to this debate, I must say there is very little that I would take issue with the Prime Minister (Mr Howard) on, but not so with the Leader of the Opposition (Mr Beazley). I believe his cant and hypocrisy was exceeded only by that of the shadow minister, Mr Gareth Evans. In listening to the debate, once the Prime Minister had spoken, we had a very quick decline from the facts. We had statements being made that are simply misleading. They will not stifle the debate. When you look at this motherhood statement, people in this chamber in their arrogance think that it is going to stifle the debate in the community. It will not. The truth is there has been a bipartisan policy all these years, and that is the problem. There has been no discussion on this issue.

Bob Hawke said that one of his great achievements was to liaise with the Liberal Party and the ACTU to keep immigration and multiculturalism off the agenda. The truth is that the Australian people have never had the chance to speak or had their opinions valued. Mr Beazley said that he did not know what political correctness was if it was not what he described as the will of the people at the time. Of course it is not, and he knows it is not. That is hyperbole of the worst order. He knows that political correctness is the will of the elitists in society.

What you have here today is basically a battle between Australian nationalists and the internationalists. I would say that everyone who has spoken in this debate so far has been, without reservation, an internationalist. I stand as a proud Australian nationalist with outward looking nationalism. It does not threaten anyone, but it says that we in this country have the right to decide. I turn to this quote:

I don't think it is wrong, racist, immoral or anything else for a country to say we will decide what the cultural identity and the cultural destiny of this country will be, and nobody else.

Just about every self-respecting country does, and I find the most extraordinary argument the one that says by talking about these issues we are offending our friends in Asia. That is bunkum.

Those countries will make judgments based on their own hard-headed interests. Has anybody asked an Australian coal exporter about the rights of an Australian to immigrate to Japan before we sign a coal deal with the Japanese? What absurd nonsense.

I do not think there is anything there that anyone in this House would find fault with - certainly not publicly. Those are not my words; they are the words of John Howard in 1988. It is interesting to see that Cheryl Kernot recently has been attacking the Prime Minister, just as the Labor Party has. Let us look at what Cheryl Kernot had to say in 1995. I will quote from the *Australian* of 23 February 1995:

Democrat leader Cheryl Kernot yesterday defended John Howard's controversial 1988 remarks on Asian Immigration saying they "at least appeared to reflect a genuine concern"... Kernot also appeared to favour lower immigration for the sake of social cohesion... She said Mr Howard's questioning of the levels of Asian immigration "(seemed) to make space for a more legitimate debate about the social and

economic impact of immigration".

Oh hypocrisy, your name is Kernot! I might say that John Stuart Mill -

Mr Gareth Evans:

On a point of order, Mr Speaker; I suggest that imputations of that degree of disgracefulness are out of order in this or any other chamber.

Mr Speaker:

I thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. The member for Kalgoorlie will not impinge on the reputation of a member so directly.

Mr Campbell:

Thank you, Mr Speaker. John Stuart Mill, I believe, is so beloved of that side of the House that the Liberal Party is setting up a John Stuart Mill Forum. John Stuart Mill said several things of interest. He said if a country doesn't have the right to decide with whom it shares its people it has no rights at all. I think that is very true.

In his *Considerations on Representative Government* he said:

Free institutions are next to impossible in a country made up of different nationalities. Among a people without fellow-feeling, especially if they speak different languages, the united public opinion necessary to the working of representative government cannot exist.

Mr Hockey:

That was in the 19th century.

Mr Campbell:

While that is from the last century and is a little out of date I think they are words of wisdom. You could of course use Professor Zubrzycki who is considered to be the architect of multiculturalism in Australia. Only about two years ago in the *Australian* an article about Professor Zubrzycki said he had grave

reservations about his policy of multiculturalism; it wasn't working as he intended and it wasn't working because ethnic leaders put ethnic interests above Australia's national interest. What a surprise that is.

Mr Hardgrave:

Where is your quote?

Mr Campbell:

The quote is there and Professor Zubrzycki will not deny it because he conceded it on a television program in which I participated quite recently. It is quite clear that those were his words and it is just nonsense to pretend otherwise. I do have a concern for people from different backgrounds who have come to this country. Anyone who makes a commitment to Australia in my view is welcome. However, it will not take the heat out of the debate if by doing this you are simply screwing down the lid and turning up the heat. The government has no option but to reduce immigration numbers - and the Prime Minister, John Howard, recognises it even if the rest of you do not. I can tell you now that the Prime Minister will be pushing for lower immigration numbers.

Another example from this paper says that we affirm our commitment to maintaining an immigration policy on wholly non-discriminatory grounds of race, colour, creed or origin. Those are fine words but the fact is that they are not true. I will tell you how we discriminate. It is quite simple and quite obvious. It is all done by government and it is a matter of where you put your offices. Firstly, if 50 to 60 per cent of immigrants currently come from Asia it is discriminatory against the bulk of the community. That is clear discrimination. If you open an office in one area and close one in another, of course you get a change; and that is discrimination.

It is also quite obvious how it has been done for years in Britain. A woman from Germany told me of the experience her sister had recently. When you go to the front office and apply, and

the staff are so rude to you, people get turned away and say they will not bother. Then the immigration department can say that there is no interest when in fact the people have been turned away by rudeness. It has long been the ploy in the United Kingdom and apparently has extended to Europe as well. For various reasons to do with employing local people that does not apply in Asia.

If you have points on the family concessional scheme it clearly is a discrimination. Ask yourselves this, you pious posers: if it is a non-discriminatory scheme, why don't we get large numbers of people from Africa? The reason we do not get them from Africa is that we discriminate; we do not open offices there. Nobody who knows anything about immigration will argue with any of those points. They know they are true and they are discriminatory. It is simply nonsense to say we do not discriminate. The policy is highly discriminatory.

I just want to make a little comment about Aboriginal affairs because I represent more Aboriginals than anyone in this parliament. I get good support from them because I try to address their real issues. I might add that I have never seen much assistance from those Labor speakers. All they have done is give lip service to the Aboriginal industry. I might add that it is the Aboriginal industry, not Aboriginal people, that Pauline Hanson was attacking.

Mr Hockey:

Where is she?

Mr Campbell:

I am not Pauline Hanson's keeper so I do not know. I want to say that we have a lot of talk about cultural diversity. If you get out into rural Australia, you do not find it. You might think it is so in Melbourne and Sydney but for the great rest of Australia it is simply not so. The trouble is that we now have politicians in this place, some of whom have spoken today, who represent city suburbs with a very narrow focus.

I would say it is quite clear that they are not representative of the whole of Australia.

Let us just consider the policy of our neighbours. I am sure that you all know what the immigration policies of our neighbours are. Malaysia has the policy - and it has taken numbers of immigrants - that it will take culturally compatible people. This means, fundamentally, people from Indonesia. They speak the same language and have the same religion. That is their policy. The policy of the Japanese is to take people of Japanese origin. Until recently, they were sourcing them from Brazil.

The policy of all our neighbours is race determined. I am not saying that we should do that but I do not deny them the right to do that; they have every right. When I was in Kuala Lumpur recently I was talking to a small businessman, an Indian running a hire car service, who said, 'We do not know what we will do if this present government ever gets defeated because if this government gets defeated we have nowhere to go.' Beneath the surface racism is entrenched and it is very real.

During my election campaign I got a cheque and a letter from a Malaysian woman, obviously from a fairly affluent background. She said in a letter to me that she had never really encountered racism until she married an Englishman. His family accepted her but her family did not accept him, so they came to Australia. She went on to say, 'I would not like you to think I was racist, Mr Campbell. Some of my best friends are Chinese. But I am telling you that if they get the numbers in Australia they will do to you what they did to Singapore.'

It is nonsense to talk about any sort of united view in Asia - it does not exist. If you want to see racism alive and well and entrenched, Asia is the place to go. I get sick to the back teeth of people talking about and deriding Australia. This is, by and large, the most tolerant society in the world, but it is a society that has to be consulted and which has not been consulted so far. You will not achieve anything by trying to

screw down the lid. All you will show is that you in this parliament do not represent the people and that they are not having their voices heard through you. It is quite clear to me that politicians have failed this country. It is now up to the people to do something for themselves.

I want to make sure that we do address this problem and we do not have a situation created where anybody in this society runs in fear. It is not a one-way street. In the election before last, I was campaigning in Sydney and a New Zealand TV team asked me if they could tag along. The journalist, a very large Maori whom I would not have liked to tackle, said to me, 'We have been filming in Cabramatta and we could sense the hostility; we were frightened.' That is not the Australia I want, and it is not the Australia that I am encouraging. It is the Australia you will get if you go down this road of mindless bipartisan policy which fails to address the real issues. If you fail to address those real issues, there will be trouble in this country. It will be on the heads of all you bipartisan frauds.