

# Press Release, 4 May 1972

Lippmann, Walter et al from: "The Walter Lippmann Collection" Bureau of Immigration and Population Research Bulletin No. 10, 1993, p 50.

**This Press Release, signed by a group of prominent Australians, was issued in response to widely-reported comments in May 1972, by former Immigration Minister and architect of the post-war immigration program, Arthur Calwell. He was quoted as saying that "no red-blooded Australian" wanted to see a "chocolate coloured Australia in the 1980's." A day later, in an interview, Mr. Calwell reaffirmed his opposition to the "flood of coloured migrants coming into the country" and described Asian migrants as "living on the smell of an oily rag and breeding like flies." The comments sparked an uproar.**

We are deeply concerned at the highly emotive language being used in the current debate about Australian's immigration policy and the nature of Australian society.

Wide discussion on these matters is desirable and important, but to polarise opinions on the basis of race, colour or creed is divisive and fails to recognise the existing situation in Australia. Aborigines, Chinese, Indians, and Europeans of many and diverse cultural backgrounds have already made Australia a multi-racial society.

What is needed is a recognition by us all that Australia has an unequalled opportunity to build a society which is rich and diverse in its origin but cohesive in its identity: a society in which all people may live their distinctive cultural lives without suffering in any way in their rights as citizens.

To continue the growth of such a society there must be a wide community awareness of the values of diversity without division.

Government and community organisations must accept the challenge of further developing those supportive structures which are essential to the moulding of a cohesive, multi-cultural society in Australia.

To debate this issue on any other basis can only be destructive.

Walter M. Lippmann, Chairman, Joint Committee on Migrant Welfare, Australian Council of Social Service, and ACFOA.

Rev. Allan Matheson, Victorian Council of Churches.

Professor George Zubrzycki, Professor of Sociology, Australian National University, Canberra.

Professor Jean Martin, Professor of Sociology, La Trobe University.

Mr R. J. Hawke.

Mr David Scott, Director, Brotherhood of St Laurence.

Mrs Marie Coleman, Director, Victorian Council of Social Service.

Rev. Arthur Preston, Central Methodist Mission.

Mrs Elda Vaccari, President, Committat Assistenza Italianae.

Mr G. S. Green, Chairman, Immigration Committee, Victorian Jewish Board of Deputies.

Mr Matthew Harrison, President, Good Neighbour Council of Victoria.