

.. NOTES ..

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Bulletin No. 17.



VICTORIAN BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Immigration and Alien Restriction



Issued by direction

AUSTRALIAN NATIVES' ASSOCIATION
(Victorian Board of Directors)
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*Immigration and Alien
Restriction.*

JUST a decade has passed since the first bulletin was published by the Australian Natives' Association on the problem of Immigration and Alien Restriction. The intervening period of time has seen justified every argument submitted in 1929.

The Association, at its Warrnambool Conference in March, 1939, declared its policy upon the problems of Alien Immigration in the following concise terms:—

"This Conference expresses doubt as to the wisdom or desirability of the existing scheme of alien immigration, and submits the following plan as the basis of a scheme of controlled alien immigration.

"1. Without affecting the powers of restriction of aliens, vested in the Governor-General in particular cases, and exercised by him on the grounds set out in Section 3 (k) of the Immigration Acts 1901-1935, the general influx of alien immigration be limited to an annual number not greater than 2 per cent., of the nationals of each emigrating country actually in the Commonwealth of Australia as at 1/1/1900.

"2. No concentration of aliens as communities or colonies be allowed anywhere in the Commonwealth.

"3. No separate schools for alien children staffed by alien teachers and teaching alien languages be allowed.

"4. No printing of foreign newspapers or news in foreign languages be allowed.

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"5. Consideration be given to the requirement of a minimum sum of money by each alien immigrant such sum to be held by the Commonwealth for a period of probation not exceeding three years.

"6. The failure of an alien to pass a dictation test in English at the expiration of three years be a ground for his expatriation."

IN New York Harbor there rises high into the heavens, Bartholdi's world-famous Statue of Liberty. Engraved upon that statue are words as world famous as the statue itself—"Send us your huddling masses yearning to be free."

Almost sixty years ago this invitation was an appealing one to the citizens of the then closely populated areas of the world, and streams of migrants poured into the United States in response to the call, but since the revolutionary Immigration Acts of the U.S.A. (1921-1924) the invitation has been withdrawn, and the migration stream has been reduced to an extent which arbitrarily allows entrance into the U.S.A. of no more than 2 per cent. of the nationals of each country who were actually living in the United States in 1890.

The earlier bulletin of our Association very briefly illustrated the effect of the 2 per cent. quota system in the U.S.A. The types of immigrants were there referred to as "Old" and "New." The "Old" type, in the main, represented the Northern and Western Europeans who made up the main stream of immigration to the U.S.A. prior to 1890, and the "New" type represented the Southern and Eastern Europeans who joined in the increasing stream of immigrants to the United States during the last decade of the last century, and in the first decade of this century.

The application of the 2 per cent. quota fixed by the U.S.A. Immigration Act (1924) is splendidly shown by these figures:—

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Old Type (Quota based on 2 per cent. of nationals in U.S.A. in 1890)—

Great Britain	62,000
Germany	51,000
Scandinavian countries	20,000

New Type—

Italy	3,912
Greece	47
Spain-Portugal	560
Russia	2,843

There are before us reasons that demanded the revolutionary change in Migration policy in U.S.A. In the first place it was submitted that the vital test to apply to the problem of migration was that of assimilability, and that if there was no defined and conscious assimilation by development, either towards similarity or into a common identity, then migration was subject to grave and widening dangers. And in this very regard America's experience is a danger beacon to us in Australia.

It is claimed by authoritative writers upon this question that the tendency of the immigrants to remain in alien groups definitely weakened the national cohesion of the State.

It is clear that group immigration settlement of aliens, in colonies or communities, makes assimilation into national life slow and difficult, if not completely impossible. The influences preventing the assimilation of the many and diverse nationalities in the U.S.A. are both numerous and powerful.

Let us consider some—

There are 63,000 racial societies whose main purpose is the maintenance of racial solidarity and to support their home country or some political party in it.

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There are—

- 26,000 foreign churches.
- 147 daily foreign newspapers.
- 863 weekly and half-weekly foreign journals.
- 240 monthly or half-monthly foreign journals.

The foreign newspapers have a circulation of 10,000,000 copies. The foreign papers are printed in no fewer than 35 languages. It is therefore no wonder that identity of racial interest has thus bound the members of each race as no American interest has ever done for all of the races.

The most vital and important part of the policy of our Association is that which urges the adoption of a 2 per cent. quota system based upon the number of nationals who were in Australia according to the census of 1901.

For the purpose of illustrating the effect of this policy, three sets of tables are set out—

- (a) Nationals (naturalised and unnaturalised) in Australia according to 1901 Census.
- (b) Aliens actually entering Australia in years 1936, 1937, 1938.
- (c) Approximate number of aliens who would actually be permitted to enter Australia in years 1936, 1937, 1938, if 2 per cent. quota applied.

Although the quota system is sought to be exclusively applied to alien immigration, if it were applied to British immigration the following interesting table is observed:—

BRITISHERS IN AUSTRALIA.

(Britishers—England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland.)

According to 1901 Census — 679,159.

Number of Britishers entering Australia—	Approximate number of Britishers who would be allowed to enter Aust. on 2% quota—
1936 -1,167	1936 13,582
1937 -4,184	1937 13,582
1938 +3,102	1938 13,582

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TABLE "C."

Approximate number of Aliens who could enter Aust. if 2% quota system applied.

	1936.	1937.	1938.
	38	38	38
	125	125	125
	71	71	71
	766	766	766
	17	17	17
	11	11	11
	113	113	113
	6	6	6
	66	66	66
	10	10	10
	197	197	197
	40	40	40
	8	8	8

TABLE "B."

Numbers of Aliens entering Aust.

	1936.	1937.	1938.
	—	5	10
	51	66	30
	142	277	670
	495	820	635
	—	47	-61
	913	1,035	1,857
	—	-19	-177
	—	2	43
	—	28	16

TABLE "A."

Nationals in Aust., according to 1901 Census.

Austria - Hungary	1,902
Belgium	357
Denmark	6,281
France	3,592
Germany	38,342
Greece	878
Holland	594
Italy	5,678
Portugal	311
Rumania	89
Russia	3,358
Spain	515
Sweden & Norway	9,863
Switzerland	2,039
All other European Countries	434

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Again we might examine the problem in the light of our absorptive capacity. A survey of the types of alien immigrants, particularly those who have come into Australia in recent years, discloses a predominance of unskilled persons.

It is beyond dispute that the bulk of Australia's army of unemployed, estimated at the moment to exceed 100,000, consists of unskilled labourers, so that the entry of further unskilled individuals into our country must naturally aggravate, intensely, our most serious prevailing economic problem.

Moreover, in the arena of skilled industry, the opportunities for placement of skilled labour are seriously limited, so that when the test of absorption is applied either in relation to unskilled or skilled labour, it appears that the indiscriminate and uncontrolled entry into the Commonwealth, of alien immigrants, must necessarily result in further disturbance of our economic life with an inevitable undermining of our living standards.

Public feeling has been aroused throughout the Commonwealth because of the absence of a scientific and constructive national policy on the problem of Alien Immigration.

The conscience of the people is stirred by the accumulating evidence not only of the entry into Australia of large numbers of alien immigrants, but the circumstances under which they enter, and the conditions of life that they adopt when here. Their congregation in communities upon the cane fields of Northern Queensland and the fruit growing lands of the Yanco, Murray Valley, Shepparton and Werribee irrigation areas, where in some instances newspapers issue in their native language, form the initial symptoms of the immigration malaise from which America suffers so sorely to-day, but which malaise she is now so desperately attempting to reduce and limit by her rigid immigration quota controls.

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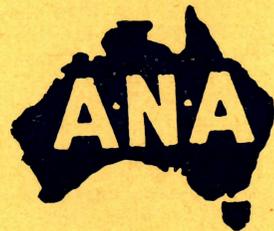
The force of what was said in our earlier bulletin is stronger to-day. We then remarked that Professor Ross, an eminent American scholar, when asked what was America's greatest problem, said, "The thing that causes the most foreboding to me is how to preserve democracy and a popular Government in a people that has become so heterogeneous as ours."

Might not we in Australia ask ourselves the same question when, compared with the U.S.A., we stand to-day only at the threshold of this problem.

The application of the principle of the 2 per cent. quota to alien immigration into Australia would at once substantially reduce the flow of alien migration to our shores, and thus make possible the easy assimilation into our social, economic, and national life, of a smaller stream that would otherwise flow.

In the recent plans would minimise the increasing tendency of the concentration of aliens in communities of one kind throughout Australia, as has been so definitely established already.

Finally, it would lessen the discontents and dangers that uncontrolled alien migration plans have demonstrated to us through the clear pages of both recent American and Australian history.



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Monetary and Banking Systems in Australia

RECOMMENDATIONS OF ROYAL COMMISSION.



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