



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

With the Compliments

of

The Hon. Nigel Bowen, Q.C., M.P.

Minister for Foreign Affairs

OCTOBER 26, 1972

Hon. Nigel Bowen,
Minister for Foreign Affairs,
Canberra Parliament House,
CANBERRA 2600

The Right Hon. Nigel Bowen,

Thank you for the most interesting and important extract from an address to the Ukrainian Club.

I have read it with much pleasure and have mentioned it during the Italian News some days ago.

Congratulations for what the present Government is doing for the welfare of migrants in this Country. I am endeavouring to do my best in keeping a serene atmosphere between my fellow-countrymen.

Best wishes for the coming elections.

Yours faithfully,

MANNA LENA

(Cav. Lena Gustin, M.B.E.)

Extract from an address by the Hon. Nigel Bowen, QC, MP
Minister for Foreign Affairs, to the Ukrainian Club,
Lidcombe. 2.00 p.m. Sunday, 15 October 1972

In support of Mr. Bill Pardy, Liberal Candidate for Reid

I want to talk today about the future of our immigration policies, because not only is this a matter of great significance to all of us, it will be of special interest to those who have recently come to this country.

The Liberal Party is strongly committed to preserving the present system -- that is, one which actively seeks the best possible people for our country by a blend of assisted migration and by the sponsorship of those already here.

We have said, and I repeat it today, that we do not want a cutback in the numbers of people coming to Australia.

And, just as important, we as a Government must be able to determine the type of migrants that come to this country.

Policies aimed at drastically reducing the migrant intake are inconsistent with the expectations of a prosperous economy.

I don't need to tell you that throughout Australia's economic history much of our national prosperity and progress in this country has been due directly to the immigration

policies we have pursued.

Mr Whitlam has said that a government led by him would reduce immigration to between 50,000 and 100,000 each year. Under this Government it is currently running at about 140,000 people per year.

Mr Whitlam has also said that the only restriction a Labor government would put on immigration is by fixing these quotas.

Anybody could come here. Now, that might sound all right in the egalitarian sense, but let us look where it would lead.

If we were to have immigration by sponsorship only, we would get fewer central and northern European migrants -- like yourselves -- because the record of sponsorship from these areas has been much lower than from other parts of the world. I think this is natural because, with the general level of skills higher in these parts, they have historically been attractive to other countries seeking migrants.

This trend, of course, would be exaggerated by Labor's imposition of lower quotas.

We would not only have fewer migrants, there would also be, in proportion, fewer skilled people coming here.

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The sponsorship of relatives has been a vital factor in our immigration programmes and even when there has needed to be a cutback in total immigration for economic reasons -- as was the case recently -- there was no cutback in sponsored cases.

The Government does not believe that sponsored migrants would even remotely meet Australia's needs.

I was interested to see that, in a television interview on the ABC on their programme 'Monday Conference', Mr Whitlam said: "I do not think that one can sustain the argument that government recruiting gains very many skills for this country." Surely he could not have believed that!

Only six days before that interview, the Minister for Immigration announced in Federal Parliament the results of a five year analysis by the Immigration Department, which showed that to June 1972 only 20.4 per cent of the skilled workers who came to Australia were personally sponsored.

I think it is important to note, too, that if we had had a sponsorship scheme in that five years, it would have meant that 78,700 of the 98,800 skilled workers who came as assisted migrants in that time would have been lost to Australia. Now, that is a significant factor. Eighty per cent of our skilled migrants would not have come to Australia if the Labor Party's policy of immigration by sponsorship had been in force.

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I think this clearly shows that Labor's policy on immigration would be an absolute disaster for our future development.

The same survey showed that to have abandoned the Government nominated migration would have cut back the rate of arrivals by at least 50 per cent.

Anybody impressed by Labor's proposals would be interested in the figures revealed by that survey. It showed that 50 percent of all settlers who came to Australia during the past 5 years were either Commonwealth or State nominees. A further 12 per cent were unsponsored migrants, mainly 'free flow' unassisted British settlers, and only 38 per cent of all who arrived during the 5 years were privately nominated settlers.

It is obvious that Labor's immigration policy is directed towards the migrant groups in Australia that would benefit ^{most} from a system of sponsorship. This could be seen as a not too subtle vote catcher to attract certain sections of migrant-

But, of course, the worst effect of Labor's immigration policies would be on the economy. There is no doubt in the minds of most economic experts that migrants contribute far more to the economy than they take out of it. Their presence creates employment, rather than making employment difficult. This has been shown for many years now. But, if the pattern of our migration was disturbed and we had a preponderance of unskilled workers coming to Australia, this would have a very

damaging effect on us. There seems always to be a chronic shortage of skilled labour, even under present circumstances, so one can imagine just what this would do to the situation.

The overall effect of a Labor government coming into office would be, firstly, that it would lose effective control over the composition of the immigration programme and, secondly, that it would be precluded from using carefully planned immigration programmes in achieving national goals. This could, for example, be vital to policies of regional development. And I think it important to remember, when we speak of plans for further regional development, that it would be the migrant who is Government sponsored, without prior commitment to relatives, friends or employers, who is most likely to be available to move to new centres of regional development, and these new centres will inevitably require selective reinforcement by skilled and other key workers for new and expanding industries.

Without Government sponsorship these skilled workers just simply would not be there.

The Labor Party's immigration policies have not been thought through properly. They are a product of people obsessed with the question of race discrimination and of the zero population theory.

Their obsession with the racial question has blinded them to the other serious shortcomings in their scheme.

The unequivocal commitment of the Australian Labor Party is that there must be no discrimination on grounds of race or colour or nationality.

Now, they are entitled to their view. But surely it would be disastrous to tailor a country's immigration policy, with all the effects that that policy has on our society, so that it fits in with an idealistic slogan out of their platform? The wellbeing of our country should not be dealt with so lightly.