

1971

Statement

Migration and Racialism

Australian Bishops

21 January 1971

Following on their conference with the Bishops of South Pacific last November, the [2810] Australian Bishops, after considering the serious problems of over population in some of the Pacific territories and the appeals for a more open migration policy on the part of Australia, welcome the Prime Minister's recent statement in Singapore that Australia is willing and determined to work towards a balanced multi-racial society.

Holding firm to the Christian concepts of brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood [2811] of God, and the dignity of each human person, irrespective of race or colour, they unanimously reject all forms of racial discrimination wherever it is found.

For this reason they are glad to see a growing awareness of our responsibility to [2812] eliminate all unjust discrimination against our aboriginal people. Every effort should continue to be made to improve their lot and to assure them justice and equality of opportunity.

The Bishops wholeheartedly endorse liberalization of Australia's immigration [2813] policy that has quietly taken place in recent times and urge the Government to press forward with this ore liberal and human policy.

They understand that immigration, and the building up of a multi-racial society, [2814] must be considered in the light of sound social and economic principles. They appreciate that the principle of integration is deeply involved. Lost our nation fall a victim to the grave social evils that afflict other countries because of inter-racial striff and violence.

We cannot hope to live in friendship and brotherhood with other people's unless we [2815] are prepared to demonstrate openly that they are welcome, in adequate numbers, to make their home and secure their future in our country.

We appeal to our Australian people to remove far from their hearts all feelings and [2816] inclinations towards racial discrimination, in a true spirit of Christian fraternity, and we implore them to give assistance they can to help migrants from all nations to settle peacefully and happily in this land of their adoption.

We are confident that both the Government and the Australian people as a whole [2817] have the intelligence, tolerance and goodwill to build up in our country a well-balanced multi-racial society living in peace and harmony. Such an achievement would not only enrich our country culturally and economically but, what is more

important, it would demonstrate our true Christian values in this sphere of human relations.

Source: Archives of the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office (ACMRO), Canberra, Australia.
