

QACC condemns Senator Anning's call for "the final solution on immigration"

On behalf of the Queensland African Communities Council Incorporated (QACC) I condemn Queensland Senator Fraser Anning's call for "the final solution" to his so called "immigration problem" in Australia, made in his maiden speech in the Australian Federal Parliament on 14 August 2018.

In his speech, as aired on ABC radio on 14 August 2018, and subsequently widely circulated in the media, Senator Anning called for a plebiscite as "the final solution to the immigration problem". Senator Anning said that people who are allowed to migrate to Australia must be limited to those who "reflect the historic European-Christian composition of Australian society" (totally negating the original inhabitants of this land before it became a penal colony of England) and incited dangerous social division and unrest, which could have the potential to erupt into physical violence, by arguing that Australia was "on the brink of irreversible change" if citizens failed to "rise up" and unleash a "cultural counter-revolution" against the subversion of the Australian society.

Senator Anning particularly singled out Muslim and African migrants, especially those who are both African and Muslim, falsely claiming that they are not assimilating and integrating into Australian society, and has unjustly and unfairly demonised and dehumanised the entire population of African birth and descent in Australia, as well as all followers of the Islamic faith. He labelled the entire Muslim and African community in Australia as welfare dependents and exploiters, and as criminals, and insisted that there is need for "cultural reconquest" of Australia. These statements are abhorrent, appalling, hateful, racial and bigoted and reflect the ugliness of a belief in, and adherence to, the doctrine of the white supremacy. They drag Australia back into the dark ages of prejudice and intolerance and do not, in any way, reflect or represent 21st century Australia, a nation that continuous to grow and flourish because of migration.

We know that the majority of our members (both Muslims and Africans) are law abiding people who are both proud and grateful to be in Australia. They are hardworking and educated people who appreciate, and take advantage of, the opportunity that living in Australia gives them to make better lives for themselves and their children, to be treated equally and fairly and to contribute to the country and society that has accepted them. They live in their homes, go to work, work hard, go to school, pay mortgage/rent and take good care of their families. They have friends from all cultures. Many have made significant contributions to Australian society at all levels including, but not limited to, as lawyers, doctors, engineers, teachers, professors, researchers etc., as well as to Australian culture as singers, musicians, composers, choreographers, dancers and actors. They play Australian sports and make valuable contributions to their teams. They serve and protect Australia and its people as members of their state police forces and defence and security services. What sort of non-integration is Senator Anning talking about?

Furthermore, QACC is on record that it does not condone any criminal activity whatsoever and that it firmly believes that anyone found committing offences against the laws of Australia must be brought to account and face the full force of the laws of Australia.

QACC strongly condemns politicians who are intentionally misusing the behaviours of a few, specifically geographically located people from within our larger community to vilify and demonise the entire Muslim and African Australian population. Senator Anning has amply demonstrated the weakness and ignorance of his argument in this by having singled out, in order to flagellate the entire African-Australian community and all Muslims in Australia, a small and geographically specific segment of specific origin, of whom many members of the wider community are actually Christian in their beliefs – i.e. some disaffected youth of South Sudanese origin in Melbourne. This is unjust and unconscionable.

Instead of making such ill-advised and divisive statements, the effect of which may only inflame and exacerbate the existing situation and lose him and his party even more support (since no fair-minded person should support such racially and religiously targeted fear-mongering), it would be much more helpful if Senator Anning focused his energy towards addressing the root causes of the problem in Melbourne instead of pushing a narrow political, racist and bigoted agenda which does not serve the Commonwealth Government's overall schema for a socially cohesive, multicultural and productive Australia.

It is neither just nor ethical to create unnecessary fear of and prejudice and hatred against, or fear and vulnerability within, the entire Muslim and African Australian populations and then use it as a political tool for political success.

It is incumbent on any person elected to government, at any level, in Australia to represent all of the people of their constituency, and of Australia, whether born here or overseas and of whatever ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation, fairly, equally, justly, and impartially and to adhere to the anti-discrimination which is enshrined in its laws. In his discriminatory and divisive maiden speech to Parliament Senator Fraser Anning has demonstrated his willingness to use his position as a platform from which to incite social unrest which could lead to the commission of physical violence against those he has unfairly targeted, and both his incapacity and his unwillingness to perform his duties of office fairly and without bias against African and Muslim Australians and constituents – at the least. QACC, therefore, believes that Senator Fraser Anning does not deserve to be in the 21st century Parliament of Australia in any capacity whatsoever.

QACC has long held the view that the Government and people of Australia have the right to choose who comes to Australia, but it is abhorrent and patently wrong to single out and demonise Muslims and Africans who have been allowed to settle here because of the actions of a small minority of people who have, for whatever reasons, gone astray, no matter how bad and unlawful their actions may be. Punish those who offend, not the entire population of Muslims and Africans and don't stop good and worthy Muslim and African people from living in, and contributing, to Australia because of the bad actions of a very few.

QACC commends the public statements made by the Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon. Malcolm Turnbull MP; the Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. Bill Shorten MP and the Leader of the Greens, the Hon. Senator Richard Di Natale in both the Lower and Upper Houses of the Parliament of Australia on 15 August 2018. QACC and its members have been encouraged by your strong stand against Senator Anning's appalling hate, racial and bigotry statements.

QACC is a community-based not-for-profit umbrella organisation established in 2003 to be a united voice for all people of African birth and descent living throughout the State of Queensland.

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