



Inaugural Annual Address on Immigration and Citizenship

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Introduction

I am very pleased to present this inaugural address on immigration and citizenship.¹ Let me begin by joining with the previous speakers in acknowledging the traditional owners of this land on which we meet today.

I will take the opportunity today to reflect on the long-standing and productive collaboration between two important Australian institutions – the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) in its various forms and guises, and the Australian National University – with its various forms over the years though we've kept the one name.

When we were established, our founders had high aspirations for us. They wanted ANU to *advance the cause of learning and research in general and take its rightful place among the great universities of the world. With the establishment of a national university...Australia will*

¹ I wish to thank Ms Barbara Edgar, PhD candidate in the Australian Demographic and Social Research Institute at ANU, for her research and writing work for this speech, and also to acknowledge the input of my ANU colleagues Professor Peter McDonald and Professor James Jupp in their discussions with me regarding the links between ANU and DIAC.

*have taken one more step to align itself with the great and enlightened nations of the world.*²

The last point is particularly pertinent and worth emphasising - they had the ambition to transform Australia into one of the *great and enlightened nations of the world* – and we were to play a part in that transformation.

Our ANU founders have not been the only ones openly concerned about building nations and the place of universities in the process. A nice essay about the need for a national university for America goes back to 1787³, when one Dr Benjamin Rush declared that the war (of independence) may have been over but the revolution would not be completed until the United States had perfected its *new form of government* and prepared *the principles, morals and manners of our citizens for these forms of government*. He argued that a *federal university* would be one in which *everything connected to government, such as history – the law of nature and nations – the civil law – the municipal laws ... and the principles of commerce would be taught by competent professors*. Enrolments would be restricted to those who had *'imbibed federal and republican ideas.'*

In 1789, the US had twenty colleges, with no true university and many of the twenty described as *hardly more than backwoods grammar schools*. The largest of them, Harvard, had just 150 students. The Founding Fathers were convinced that their experiment in republican government could not succeed unless the people and their officials were properly educated. They endorsed learning for its own sake; and wanted to raise the level of higher education in America. Two principles pursued by the Australian founders of ANU.

As H.C. Coombs reminds us in his autobiography - when writing about a particular activity that had taken a long time to surface at ANU - *good ideas never die.*⁴ Around 157 years after Dr Rush we built a national university (and Coombs was an important advocate) even though the

² The Hon J.J. Dedman MP. Minister for Post-War Reconstruction, 'Second Reading Speech - Australian National University Bill 1946 - 19 June 1946'. House of Representatives: *Official Hansard*

³ Albert Castel (1964), 'The Founding Fathers and the Vision of a National University', *History of Education Quarterly*, Vol 4, No. 4, p. 280

⁴ H.C. Coombs, *Trial Balance* (Macmillan, 1981) p. 178

US did not (I readily concede that they haven't done badly, however I can make no comment on the standard of the *principles, morals and manners* of their citizens and whether they would have been better or worse if they had). Maybe our founders were just stronger or more determined or maybe the needs of a small and, in those days, isolated country were greater and more compelling in a world so different from 1787. I will make no comment on the *principles, morals and manners of our citizens*.

Anyway, one plank in Australia's platform supporting the transformation into a *great and enlightened nation* was in place – the ANU.

Another plank was the establishment of the Department of Immigration. The two of us were created within months of each other in the aftermath of the Second World War. Both were intended to support the ambitions of the government of the day – the governments of Curtin and Chifley.

The migration, settlement and citizenship policies implemented by the Department today have come a long way from those early post-war years. The old policies of white Australia and assimilation are no more.

Australia's needs and the world environment have changed. Policy has had to respond to the challenges of increasing population diversity, large flows of displaced people, a mobile international labour force, economic swings, and globalism.

Australia's well-managed and evolved immigration and settlement programs have become the envy of the world.

For its part, the ANU is pleased to have played an important role in informing policy development and promoting public discussion in these important areas.

Our combined story provides an important example of the vital role our universities and government agencies can play together – in providing informed advice so that government can develop, justify and fine-tune its policies to meet the needs of our changing times.

Let me begin the story with the Department.

Founding of the Immigration Department

Prime Minister Curtin had suggested creating a separate immigration portfolio as early as 1944. One of the first acts of his successor, Ben Chifley, was to do so – and the Department of Immigration was established in 1945, with Arthur Calwell as its first Minister.

This was a time when millions of people displaced in Europe urgently needed sanctuary.

Meanwhile, the war had brought home Australia's vulnerabilities. These and a desperate shortage of labour encouraged the view that Australia needed a larger population – highlighted in the catch cry 'Populate or Perish'.

One of Calwell's first acts as Minister was to set in train the nation-changing immigration scheme.

Its aim was to increase Australia's population by one per cent a year, matching the natural population increase from the burgeoning birth rate.

Virtually all sections of the community supported this extraordinary program. It was to underpin an economic boom over the next two decades and gradually it would transform Australian society.

Successive governments have maintained the migration program – adjusting it along the way to take account of changing economic, social and political environments.

It has produced seven million new settlers for Australia.

Its success is founded on the contributions of Sir Tasman Heyes and Sir Peter Heydon, the first two permanent heads of the Immigration Department. Their period of administration covers the establishment of the migration program, through to the first steps to dismantle the white Australia policy.

Their personal qualities set the program's direction and gave it a great start.

Sir Tasman Heyes was appointed the first Secretary of the Department of Immigration in 1946. He had risen through the public service ranks from relatively humble beginnings, including a period of service on the Western Front during the First World War.

He was dedicated to his work, and was a man of great personal charm, friendliness and vision.

Heyes faced the daunting tasks of building a new department and managing a radical policy shift – which saw a dramatic increase in migrants from continental Europe alongside the stream of settlers from the UK and Ireland.

By the time Heyes retired in 1961, the department had a staff of twelve hundred, including nearly four hundred overseas. Over the same period, net migration increased eight-fold, from a little over 11 000 in 1947 to 89 000 in 1960.

Heyes continued his public service work after retirement – serving on the Commonwealth Immigration Planning Council, the Australian Broadcasting Control Board, and as chairman of the Commonwealth Hostels board of directors.

He was knighted in 1960 and in 1962 was awarded the Nansen medal by the United Nations – in recognition of his, and Australia's, contribution to the resettlement of refugees.

Arthur Calwell wrote that *the name of Tas Heyes . . . ranks with the best and most highly successful departmental heads in the history of our Federation.*⁵

The early years of the ANU Demography Department

The Australian National University was established by the Chifley government within a year of the Immigration Department, in 1946.

Like the Department, the ANU was created out of the post-war desire for nation-building – and the place of Australia in the world.

⁵ Cited in Andrew Markus, "Sir Tasman Hudson Eastwood Heyes (1896-1980)," Australian Dictionary of Biography at <http://adbonline.anu.edu.au/biogs/A140513b.htm>

It was the country's first concerted attempt to encourage research in our universities -- and to grow a research culture to support the nation's development. Our (then) six universities did not produce a PhD graduate until 1948. In a manner of speaking, the establishment of ANU was an Australian ticket to a seat at the table; our founders had seen close up the consequences of our essentially mendicant position. And they knew that if you (we) did not contribute to the fare you were left with the crumbs that fell off – no place to be if you also aspired to be a *great and enlightened nation*.

The Social Sciences were a key part of the ANU brief:

*We are still a young and virile people. Our institutions are not yet fully determined, and for that reason, apart from many others, our opportunities for research into the social sciences are unique.*⁶

The founders observed that there was no research base for the study of Australia's population in the country at that time. They considered that a knowledge and understanding of Australia's demography was vital for future planning.

The first academic appointment in the social sciences at ANU was the appointment in 1949 of Mick Borrie as Research Fellow in Demography – upgraded a few months later to Senior Research Fellow.

Borrie's appointment to the Chair of Demography a few years later, in 1957, was the first Chair of Demography anywhere in the world.

From the beginning, ANU demographers have been at the forefront of research into Australian population trends, immigration history and policy, and the integration of immigrant groups in Australia.

Their success was built on Mick Borrie's drive and achievement, and the team of talented people he fostered.

⁶ The Hon J.J. Dedman MP. Minister for Post-War Reconstruction, 'Second Reading Speech - Australian National University Bill 1946 - 19 June 1946'. House of Representatives: *Official Hansard*

Professor Jack Caldwell succeeded Borrie in 1970 as the second Head of Demography at the ANU. International demographers have placed Caldwell among the two most influential demographers of the second half of the twentieth century.

He worked tirelessly to promote informed and balanced consideration of complex population policy issues, including explicit population targets for Australia.

Early collaborations between Immigration and ANU

From the early days there was strong collaboration between Immigration officials and ANU researchers. A key example is the relationship between Sir Peter Heydon and Professor Jerzy Zubrzycki.

Peter Heydon was appointed the second Secretary of the Department of Immigration in 1961, following a successful diplomatic career.

He soon won respect and admiration for his conscientious, businesslike approach, and his ability to set high standards and foster staff spirit.

Meanwhile, Jerzy (George) Zubrzycki had joined the ANU in 1956 as a Research Fellow to study European immigrant groups in Australia. In 1971 he was to become ANU's Foundation Professor of Sociology.

Sociologist Jean Martin had obtained her doctorate from ANU in 1954. In 1965 she was appointed Foundation Chair of Sociology at La Trobe University, before returning to ANU in 1974.

Zubrzycki has described conversations with Heydon and Martin *well past the official business hours ... over a glass of sherry in Heydon's office*. Topics ...

ranged widely over a number of issues which Heydon, more than any single public servant of his generation, identified as challenges of the next decade of Australia's immigration experience.

'We talked about the plight of migrant children for whom no special provision was being made in Australian schools, about non-recognition of overseas professional and trade qualifications, about those unskilled migrants for whom no prospect of advancement was in store and, above all about the wisdom of persevering with the policies of assimilation ...

Zubrzycki continues:

*The outcome of these talks was a request that Haydon put to me to write a wide-ranging review of these problem areas and to discuss alternative approaches to migrant settlement. I did this in a pamphlet entitled *The Questing Years ...* which outlined the model of cultural pluralism that "stands for the retention of ethnic identity and continued participation of individual settlers in minority group activities".⁷*

These conversations, back in the late 1960s, foreshadowed the creation of the Adult Migrant English Program and other ground-breaking settlement programs.

Zubrzycki served on a series of government inquiries and committees, out of which multicultural policy was born. He was widely described as 'the father of multiculturalism'. George died last May, at the age of eighty nine.

Andrew – I note that you have publicly acknowledged the enormous influence George had on the work of your department and successive Australian governments, and the major contribution he made in the area of multiculturalism.⁸

It is clear that the early friendship between Peter Heydon and Jerzy Zubrzycki, the public servant and the academic, laid the foundation for the successful multicultural society we find in Australia today.

⁷ *The Evolution of the Policy of Multiculturalism in Australia 1968-95*. Address by Jerzy Zubrzycki to the Global Cultural Diversity Conference, 1995, Sydney at <http://www.immi.gov.au>

⁸ Mr Andrew Metcalfe, Secretary, Department of Immigration and Citizenship, Address to the Settlement Council of Australia Conference, Canberra, 29 May 2009

The beginning of the end of the White Australia policy

Heydon gave Australia another important legacy – he began the process to abolish the white Australia policy.

Back in 1901, one of the first decisions of the new Commonwealth Parliament was to pass an Act which limited migration to people of primarily European origin.

After this, the low proportion of the population born outside English-speaking countries fell even further. By 1947 just two per cent of Australian residents were born outside of Australia, the British Isles and New Zealand.

In 1966, with the support of his minister Sir Hubert Opperman, Heydon persuaded the government to liberalize this restrictive policy. It was a key turning point.

It was decided that prospective migrants were to be assessed on the basis of their suitability as settlers, their ability to integrate readily, and their possession of qualifications useful to Australia.

A number of temporary residents from countries outside Europe were permitted to become residents and citizens after five years – the same as for Europeans – instead of fifteen years.

Heydon genuinely valued the advice of external consultative bodies, accurately representing their views to ministers even when they diverged from the policy of the day.

He was by all accounts a splendid raconteur – with that endearing Australian trait of being able to laugh at himself. He told a story of once arranging a flag for 'Doc' Evatt's official car in London – only to be informed by the minister that it was, in fact, the flag of New Zealand!

Heydon was knighted in 1970.

Enquiries and reforms in the 1970s and 1980s

The government has long used enquiries and reports as an instrument for refining immigration and population policies, as well as for validating existing policies. This was particularly the case between 1975 and 1996.

ANU researchers were influential in shaping the thinking of advisory committees and in drafting their reports and recommendations to government. In this way they made an important contribution to public policy development.

I have spoken about the work of Jerzy Zubrzycki in the multicultural area.

In the early 1970s the government invited ANU demographer Mick Borrie to conduct a National Population Inquiry. This produced the most comprehensive report on Australia's population ever undertaken.

By showing the effects of population growth on society and the environment, the 1975 report provided for the first time a systematic basis for immigration policy-making.

There was wide public debate about Australia's population, migration and refugees.

New immigration policies were developed to provide a framework for Australia's population development. These included more relaxed criteria for family reunion and a more consistent approach to migrant selection.

The first numerical scoring system for migrant selection was introduced in 1979. It gave points to prospective migrants based on factors such as family ties and occupational and language skills, which were seen to increase the probability of successful settlement.

ANU demographer Charles Price – who died last August - was a leading member of the committee which undertook the first major review of this system in 1981.⁹ The committee developed a model for migrant settlement which remained influential for many years.

Price served effectively on many committees related to immigration and settlement, and was an important advisor to government. His work shed light on the processes of migration and settlement, and the social consequences of Australia's immigration program.

In 1989, points testing on the skilled migration categories was introduced into Australian law. Points testing aimed to identify objectively the characteristics of prospective migrants that would benefit Australia or assist with settlement.

These characteristics related to education, work experience, English proficiency and age. Labour market research had found these to be associated with more rapid adjustment among new migrants.

ANU economist and policy analyst Glenn Withers played a key role in developing the immigration points system. He also chaired a number of government bodies, notably the Population Issues Committee of the National Population Council.

By the late 1980s the ANU Centre for Immigration and Multicultural Studies had been established in the Research School of Social Sciences and was led by James Jupp.

He was funded by the Bicentennial Authority to edit a seminal encyclopedia, *The Australian People*, which was published in 1988. The second edition was published for the Centenary of Federation in 2001.

I am told that these volumes have been an invaluable resource for staff in the Department, with their intricate histories of the many diverse immigrant groups in Australia.

⁹ The DIEA Committee of Review on Migrant Assessment also included Justice Gobbo, Jim Samios and David Cox. The system reviewed was called the Numerical Multifactor Assessment System (NUMAS).

Jupp also chaired the government's Review of Migrant and Multicultural Programs and Services in 1986.¹⁰ The review ratified multiculturalism and a newly-proposed strategy called 'access and equity'.¹¹

The BIR / OMA period of research

Jupp's 1986 review advocated independent research, and expertise, to guide policy.

In the late 1980s the government created two significant research bodies. The Bureau of Immigration Research (BIR) was created as part of the Immigration Department in 1989 and the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) as part of Prime Minister and Cabinet in 1987.¹²

Until their abolition in 1996, these bodies funded an extraordinary immigration and population research effort that arguably has had no parallel - before or since. In its last bulletin, the Bureau lists 112 reports and publications, 55 projects in progress and 12 newly funded projects.¹³

ANU academics contributed to this research effort. The ANU Demography Department had a good relationship with both bodies, and with the Immigration Department more broadly.

ANU demographers such as Jerzy Zubrzycki, Charles Price and James Jupp undertook various contract research projects, while many others worked on independent research studies with keen policy relevance. I will mention a few examples.

¹⁰ *Don't Settle for Less – Report of the Review of Migrant and Multicultural Programs and Services* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1986)

¹¹ *Access and Equity in the Role of the Commonwealth Government*. Address by Dr Andrew Theophanous to the Global Cultural Diversity Conference, 1995, Sydney www.immi.gov.au.

¹² The Bureau of Immigration Research (1989 to 1996) and Office of Multicultural Affairs (1987 to 1996) succeeded the Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs (1979-1986).

¹³ Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research Bulletin, issue no. 17 (Aug. 1996).

In the 1980s, there was a belief that immigration could substantially hold back the ageing of the population. The work of ANU demographer Christabel Young effectively challenged the view that large-scale immigration was a sensible response to population ageing.

Gordon Carmichael was funded to coordinate a review of migration between New Zealand and Australia by scholars in both countries. His work informed the deliberations of the Australian and New Zealand governments.

Lincoln Day wrote papers on the consequences of immigration. One paper examined what Australia's policy should be towards immigration in general and refugee immigration in particular.

Recent developments since 1996 - ADSRI and DIAC

Since 1996 the role of universities as providers of expert advice, independent of government, has become if anything more crucial. A significant research effort in the areas of immigration and multicultural affairs is needed more than ever.

The number of temporary migrants including skilled workers and students has increased solidly since the late 1990s, helping to meet new labour needs. At the same time we have a historically large number of permanent settlers, many of whom arrived on temporary visas, liked it here, and decided to stay.

High levels of immigration, the asylum issue, international conflicts and the spectre of terrorism have contributed to public concerns about social cohesion and the ability of migrants to integrate.

Others are worried about the costs of immigration on Australia's fragile environment in a context of climate change.

There is wide discussion about the future challenges Australia will face from its ageing population.

The good news is that the Department is very open to expert advice and research. The collaboration between DIAC and the ANU continues to be positive and strong.

Two leaders whose friendship has helped cement the productive relationship between DIAC and the ANU in recent years are Abul Rizvi and Peter McDonald.

Until recently Abul Rizvi was a Deputy Secretary in DIAC, having joined the Department in 1992.¹⁴ It is on the public record that he made, in that time, *a major contribution to the development of the migration policies and programs for which Australia is internationally recognised*.¹⁵

Abul identified strategies to improve the design and delivery of visas in a challenging environment – where increasing numbers of people are travelling across Australia’s borders, fast visa processing is essential, but there is increasingly sophisticated visa fraud.¹⁶

At the ANU, Professor Peter McDonald has led the demography program since 1996. In that time, the Australian Demographic and Social Research Institute, or ADSRI, has come into being at the University, and ANU demographers have conducted a number of significant research projects for and with the collaboration of the Immigration Department.

For example, ANU demographers Rebecca Kippen and Peter McDonald published an important paper in 1998 called *Achieving Population Targets for Australia: An Analysis of the Options*. The paper was presented to over 200 staff at the Immigration Department and the minister made frequent public reference to it.

ANU demographers Siew-Ean Khoo and Peter McDonald, together with Graeme Hugo from the University of Adelaide, have conducted surveys of temporary skilled migrants and their employers to understand the factors motivating temporary skilled migration and the implications for Australia’s immigration policies.

¹⁴ Mr Rizvi is now Deputy Secretary, Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy.

¹⁵ Statement by Secretary Metcalfe to Senate Estimates, Parliament House, Canberra, 21 May 2007

¹⁶ Abul Rizvi (2004). ‘Designing and delivering visas’, *People and Place* vol 12, no 2

The findings have been helpful to the Department in recent reviews of the temporary migration visa.

In 2008, DIAC commissioned Peter McDonald and Jeromey Temple to undertake modeling research into the relationship between Australia's projected population directions and its future labour supply.

I am pleased to say that Minister Evans, in announcing changes to Australia's skilled migration program last month, acknowledged that Peter's work has informed the development of the Government's longer-term planning framework for skilled migration.¹⁷

The changes announced by the Minister are important. I welcome the Government's overhaul of the skilled migration program. Shonky colleges and unscrupulous migration agents have been promoting sub-standard courses as an easy pathway to permanent residence in Australia, to the detriment of too many international students and to our reputation as a quality education provider. Nevertheless, the education/migration link as an option for graduates of quality university programs must not be overlooked in the reform process – our academic and research workforces require renewal urgently and international students, particularly higher degree by research students, will provide an increasingly important source of talent for this task.

Conclusion

I have given you a snapshot of the shared journey of the Immigration Department and the ANU over the past sixty-five years. Time does not permit me to acknowledge all the dedicated and talented men and women who have contributed to this nation-building journey.

Also, my remarks this evening have focused on the strong collaboration between ANU and the Department in the immigration area – but we have also made significant contributions to citizenship policy. Kim Rubenstein of our College of Law, for example, served as a consultant to the Department on the redraft of the 1948 Citizenship Act which culminated in the *Australian*

¹⁷ Speech by Minister Evans, *Changes to Australia's skilled migration program*, 8 February 2010 at www.minister.immi.gov.au

Citizenship Act 2007, and was a member of the Minister's Independent Committee that reviewed the Citizenship Test in 2008.

It is a historical fact that there has been strong public interest in immigration and population in Australia virtually since the arrival of the first Europeans.

The current debate about Australia's future population size and composition is not new – but the environmental and economic challenges we face over the next half century, as our population ages and as, metaphorically, the world becomes smaller, are different from those that faced previous generations.

The increasing pace of social and technological change adds to the urgency and importance of having an informed, balanced discussion about population.

Future policy-makers and scholars will have to grapple with some big questions, just like the architects of Australia's modern immigration system had to do 65 years ago. They will be (just a few of many) questions like:

- What policy approaches will ensure that immigration plays the part that it needs to play in meeting the short- and longer-term skill needs of Australia?
- How do we plan for the impact of immigration on our ageing population, our future labour force, and our prosperity?
- How can we employ migration strategies to address labour shortages in particular regions and industries? Is there a role for temporary migrant workers in meeting low-skilled labour shortages in Australia? How can we ensure that workers and students living temporarily in Australia have a sense of inclusion in Australian society?
- How do we plan for the impact of immigration on the sustainability of our society, on our environment and our infrastructure?
- How can Australia combat people smuggling while at the same time maintaining a humane approach to its victims?

- How do we influence settlement patterns so that socio-economic inequalities are reduced and the benefits of migration spread widely, so that the possibilities for alienation from mainstream society and the development of extremist views are reduced?

We need to approach all these questions in the same spirit that Arthur Calwell demonstrated when he launched the immigration scheme in this chamber in 1945 - as *something essential to our national welfare and something that is above all sectional interest*.¹⁸

Australia has a long history of innovative research and policy-making in the areas of immigration and population. It is vital that this continues – and important that our universities play their role.

Just last year, the Prime Minister outlined his vision for a re-invigorated strategic relationship between the ANU and the Australian Government. It should be, he said, *a relationship that puts education and research at the centre of building robust public policy. A relationship that grows excellence in policy analysis, policy advice and public sector strategic leadership*.¹⁹

The relationship between DIAC and ANU is a good story. It is an example of how the walls between academia and public administration can be broken down, in keeping with Prime Minister Rudd's vision for the betterment of our nation. It is an example of how by working together, all of us, we can ensure that Australia will continue an important role as a *great and enlightened nation* in the new, different and hopefully better world we are all now building.

Thank you.

¹⁸ The Hon Arthur Calwell MP, Minister for Immigration; Minister for Information, 'Migration Speech', House of Representatives, 2 August 1945: *Official Hansard*

¹⁹ The Hon Kevin Rudd MP, Prime Minister of Australia, 2009 Annual Burgmann College Lecture, Burgmann College, Australian National University, 27 August 2009