

# It's Not the Thought That Counts

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## Reviews of the Immigrant Situation before Galbally

by Lidio Bertelli

In concluding his statement to Parliament on May 30, 1978, when tabling the report **Migrant Services and Programs** by the Review Group on Post-Arrival Programs and Services for Migrants, the Prime Minister, Mr. Malcolm Fraser, stated that "this is the most thorough review of services to migrants that this country has ever undertaken. I believe that if it had been undertaken a considerable time ago the position of many migrants would be much better than it is now."

Quite understandably the "Galbally Report" - as it is more popularly called - has immediately achieved the status of a textbook covering a whole range of facets in the settlement process of non-English speaking groups and individuals.

The Report's real impact, however, will not come from any particular originality in its identification of the problems or in its approach to their solution. It will come from the fact that the Government has put money (a lot of money, at first view at least, especially in a period of severe austerity) behind it.

In the last 10 years or so ethnic relations have become a topic of common interest in Australia. The explosion of studies, surveys, reports, researches, position papers, proceedings of seminars and workshops, and articles has been such that it is impossible to keep complete track of all of them. But certainly much of the analysis of the migrant's experience, and the

basic lines of intervention detailed by the Galbally Report are easily identifiable in this massive body of literature. In this light, maybe, the most notable contribution to our knowledge of ethnic affairs given by the Report lies in the volume of Appendices, which is a mine of information, mostly of a statistical nature, some of it hitherto unpublished.

An evaluation, therefore, of the Report must be done by comparing it with the entire body of literature - not including statements of Government policies, ministerial press releases, etc - available before its release. The present article covers just a few of these documents, namely most of the official reports issued by Federal and some State governments in the last ten years or so. (The list of official documents presented in this article does not claim to be fully comprehensive. It is based on those reports which immediately come to the mind of one with some experience in these issues. All of these documents are available for consultation at the Clearing House on Migration Issues and some may be purchased from it.) Its purposes are to help people to read the Galbally Report in the context of the background of data and recommendations which were available before its appearance, to evaluate its content by comparing relevant official documentation, and to deepen the understanding of the issues covered by the Report.

For simplicity, the documents will be listed under the main chapters of the Report: however many of them are relevant to several topics and therefore their listing under one heading should not be taken in a restrictive way.

### **General introductory documents**

There are a few documents which cover various facets of the migration experience in Australia

and as such should be regarded as necessary reading.

On the development of Australia's immigration policies and their impact on the demographic and economic structure of the country, some basic information can be found in the two volumes of the first Report of the National Population Inquiry **Population and Australia: A Demographic Analysis and Projection** (1973). This Report was forcefully criticised by the Priorities Review Staff in its **Report on the Borrie Report** (1976). Also the published research reports prepared for the Population Inquiry should not be missed, in particular Charles Price's **Australian Immigration** and Maris E. Buchanan's **Attitudes Towards Immigrants In Australia**.

To assist in obtaining a picture of current trends the recent annual reports of the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs are useful. In the main these are accounts of Government "achievements" during the financial years covered, but the special central inserts of **Review '77** and **Review '78** contain most up-to-date "Facts and Figures" .

Completely outside the normal form of any official annual report, and mandatory reading for an understanding of the disadvantaged position of migrants with regard to the courts, employment, health services, education, and the like, are the **Annual Reports of the Commissioner for Community Relations** . The First Report (1976), also contains an excellent chapter on "A Multicultural Australia", outlining the rationale for the building of a cohesive Australian society.

Still on the theme of immigration policies and the general experience of migrants in Australia, there is **Immigration Policies and Australia's Population - A Green Paper** (1977) by the Australian Population and Immigration Council. Although a little optimistic in its outlook, the Green Paper reveals much of the reasoning behind the Government's belief that mass migration has to be encouraged, notwithstanding the sort of problems alluded to

by, for instance, the Australian Ethnic Affairs Council in its submission on the Green Paper, **Australia as a Multicultural Society** (August, 1977). This submission is important for two reasons. Firstly it outlines the approaches which should be adopted by this country in such matters as settlement policy, education of adults and children, and ethnic media. Secondly, it presents a very useful theoretical framework with which to study ethnic relations, focussing on the three social issues which confront Australia today - social cohesion, equality and cultural identity.

An aspect of immigration policy which has been constantly in the foreground of public opinion in the last two or three years is the question of refugees. Strangely enough public documents on this issue, apart from the official government statement and press releases, are very few.

There are only two reports worthy of mention in this context. One, on Vietnamese refugees, will be discussed later on, given its special relevance to the resettlement process. The other is on the question of the policy that Australia should adopt with regard to the effects of the Lebanon crisis on the international community and this country in particular. **The Lebanon Crisis: Humanitarian Aspects** (December, 1976) by the Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence provides background information, particularly of a political type, on Lebanon and an analysis of the role Australia could provide in coming to its aid. The repercussions on immigration policy are discussed as well as the attitudes of Australian media and ethnic communities.

Five years before the Galbally Review Group, Australia saw its first co-ordinated, national effort to identify the main problems her immigrants are facing. Extensive groundwork for the Review Group had, in fact, already been done by the various Migrant Task Forces, established by the then Minister for Immigration, Al Grassby, which considered a variety of issues including migrants and industrial safety, housing, migrant women, youth (**Report to the Minister** by the

Tasmanian Task Force, December, 1973), English language training, employment and the imbalance of the sexes (**Initial Report** by the Migrant Task Force of Queensland), interpreter services, adult and child migrant education, community attitudes (**First Report** by the South Australian Migrant Task Force, September, 1973), welfare services, mental health, migrants and the law (**Recommendations to the Minister of Immigration** by the Victorian Task Force). A consolidation of all the recommendations by the State Task Forces was made on the occasion of their national conference held in Canberra in February 1974 and issued in a set of documents on information social services, interpreter needs, and community relations. Although not as deeply and extensively documented as the Galbally Report, these documents show that the Task Forces had effectively grasped many of the issues; unfortunately they did not have at their command the money necessary to put their recommendations into practice!

The **Interim Report** (August, 1974) together with the **Final Report** (September, 1975) of the Committee on Community Relations may be considered as the first of a "new breed", in that they discuss the issues of discrimination against migrants and their exploitation by employers, and the inability of migrants to make use of community services and resources because of language and cultural obstacles. These reports give strong emphasis to the need for changing general community attitudes towards those who are not of Anglo-Saxon extraction.

The first "scientific" and comprehensive study of the real immigrant experience in Australia carried out by the Government is to be found in the report on the Australian Bureau of Statistics 1973 Immigration Survey, **A Decade of Migrant Settlement** (1976), released by the Australian Population and Immigration Council. Because of the importance of employment prospects (more so today) in planning and controlling the intake of migrants, and the importance of employment to the adjustment of the individual migrant, this study is heavily slanted towards information on migrants' employment histories. But it also

provides and cross-relates very valuable information about such topics as possession and utilisation of qualifications, fluency in English and the effectiveness of English language classes, intentions to remain in Australia, economic welfare and characteristics of migrants' accommodation. The migrants surveyed are those who came to Australia between 1963 and 1973: this gives a unique longitudinal outlook which no other study or report provides on migrants in general and on the largest single groups (Greeks, Italians, Yugoslavs, British and Irish, Latin Americans, Middle Easterns and Indians).

Very rarely have individual ethnic groups been the topic of government reports. There have been exceptions, however, which reflect some of the concerns emerging vis-à-vis new, small groups. An assessment, for instance, of the settlement experience of Latin Americans is given in the **Survey of South American Settlers** (November, 1973) carried out in Sydney and Melbourne by the Survey Section of the Department of Immigration. Assisted settlers from the United States of America are the subject of the **Survey of American Settlers** (November, 1969), whereas the social and economic conditions of a particular immigrant settlement area are examined in **Migrants in Gringilla** (March, 1974), a report to the Department of Immigration by a special Task Force.

Not all migrants remain in Australia: the rate of return has sometimes worried government officials and, to understand the reasons for this substantial loss, the Committee on Social Patterns of the Immigration Advisory Council was requested to undertake some in-depth research. Both its **Progress Report** (October, 1972) and **Final Report on the Inquiry Into the Departure of Settlers from Australia** (July, 1973) clearly expose areas in which the experience of migrants has found disturbing shortcomings and in which Australia, by comparison with other countries, appears to lag. Besides being valuable for the identification of the main causes of the departure, and listing recommendations for action which today may

be taken for granted, the Final Report is one of the few documents which contains a detailed analysis of housing conditions of migrants.

### **Settler arrivals by category 1977-78**

Family reunion	26.9%
New Zealand residents and other unclassified	15.8%
Refugees	12.7%
Occupationally eligible plus dependants	39.2%
Specially approved	5.4%
Total	75, 732

### **Initial settlement**

This section of the Galbally Report is perhaps the most original contribution from the Review Group: there are no other specific government reports covering this area.

The only document which is significant and which probably provided a framework to the Review Group's thinking is **Australia and the Refugee Problem** (December, 1976), a report from the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence. In June, 1975, this Committee was given the task of examining, besides refugee policy issues, the response of the Australian Government to the requests made both from within Australia and at the international level for assistance in the matters of resettlement and rehabilitation of Vietnamese refugees, and the areas of operation in which the Australian nation could render appropriate and effective assistance. The committee considered submissions from a wide range of interested persons and organisations, held public consultations, and visited refugees in the Wacol Migrant Hostel in Brisbane. Its report contains an extensive overview of these events and of major responses in Australia. It also formulates major recommendations on resettlement policy.

In the appendices there is a valuable summary of Prof. Jean I. Martin's study on the settlement experience of refugees accepted by Australia.

### **Teaching English**

Various reports, as already mentioned, have questioned the effectiveness of these programs. Still more have spoken of them in the context of education in a multicultural society.

There are also a few reports which focus on the practice of teaching English as a second language and which deserve mention.

The report which, on the national level, can be considered as the first to dramatically bring to the attention of educators and administrators the appalling conditions under which "migrant English" was implemented, is the **Report on the Survey of Child Migrant Education In Schools of High Migrant Density In Melbourne** (March, 1973) conducted by the Commonwealth and State Departments of Education, the Department of Immigration and the Catholic Education Office. It outlines the actual and potential problem areas in schools with a large immigrant population.

The shortcomings of the current educational system were again exposed in the **Inquiry into Schools of High Migrant Density, 1974** (June 1975) which focused its analysis on a sample of schools of Victoria and New South Wales. Its recommendations are designed to assist in overcoming the major impediments to the provision of effective educational programs (not confined to merely improving knowledge of English) in all schools which have a significant number of pupils of non-English-speaking background.

The Migrant Task Forces were also very concerned about these general trends and their impressions and recommendations can be found in **Migrant Education** (1974), one of the booklets prepared for their national conference in Canberra. It deals with a variety of inter-related issues such as teaching training, experimental projects, on-the-job training,

ethnic schools, pre-school, child migrant education programs, etc.

Specifically on adult English teaching, the Survey Section of the Department of Immigration carried out a **Survey of Migrants' Reactions to the Second Series of the M.E.T.V . Programme "You Say the Word"** (March, 1973) outlining problems to be solved in the attempt to make it more popular.

To gauge the extent of specific learning difficulties of migrant children with a mother language other than English, valuable although highly technical information is provided by the exhaustive data published in the three volume research, **Australian Studies In Schools Performance** (1976) done by the ACER for the Education Research and Development Committee of the Australian Department of Education.

On the State scene, New South Wales seems to have been the first to raise the question of English teaching in its two reports on the **Education of Migrant Children, Survey 1968-1969** by the State Department of Education and on **Adult Migrant Education, Survey 1968-1969** by the same Department in conjunction with the Department of Immigration.

## **Communication**

Interpreting and translating services started to emerge as an issue of some concern just over five years ago.

**The Report on the Survey of Interpreting and Translating Needs In The Community** (October 1973) by the Survey Section of the Department of Immigration is the first Australia-wide attempt to quantify the experience of a representative cross-section of organisations and individuals who could be expected to have dealings with immigrants in the course of their daily activities. It documents the many communication problems in the areas known to be of particular significance to the settlement, welfare and integration of

immigrants, like employment, accommodation, welfare, health, education, legal and law enforcement, finance and insurance, local government and transport.

At the same time a first evaluation of the new Telephone Interpreter Service was done in **Surveys of the Operation of the Emergency Telephone Interpreter Service (E.T.I.S.), Sydney and Melbourne - 1973. Overall Summary of Findings and General Conclusions** (October, 1973).

Two surveys provide additional information on communication problems. One is the **Survey of Views of Local Government Authorities Relating to Immigrant Settlement and Integration** (1974) by the Department of Immigration. It draws attention to the extent to which language and communication difficulties isolate migrants in their own local community. The second is the **Survey of Interpreting and Translating Needs In the Community** (March, 1976) conducted by Jan Borland for the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs. It attempts to collect accurate information indicating in which areas and to which extent translation and interpreting services should and need be established in Melbourne. One of the elements which makes the information particularly useful is that it also indicates the individual community languages most in demand in specific areas of need.

On the actual structure and organisation of interpreting and translating services two committees have reported. **The Language Barrier** (1977) is the 1974 report submitted to the Committee on Overseas Professional Qualifications by its Working Party on Interpreting. It calls for the establishment of standards for the registration of interpreters and translators and the overall improvement of the level of interpreting and translating services available to the community. This groundwork is further advanced in **Interpreters and Translators** (1977), a report by the Interdepartmental Working Party which examined future requirements for interpreting/translating services, the various

facets of training and accreditation requirements and the areas where the need to employ interpreters and translators is most pressing.

The only State which has published some kind of report is South Australia with its **Report of the Working Committee on Interpreting and Translating Services** (May, 1977) giving, besides a set of recommendations, a comprehensive picture of the services available in that State (courts, health, education, police etc.).

### **Voluntary, self-help services for migrants**

On the topic of welfare needs of migrants, the literature has become more abundant in the last few years, due particularly to the many researches carried out by, or on behalf of, the Commission of Inquiry into Poverty. A good deal of these government reports cover a variety of areas: most of them will be presented in later sections of this article, but the reader should be aware that these various sections are very strictly interrelated.

The complex picture of migrant welfare in Australia could not escape the attention of the Commission of Inquiry into Poverty. As a matter of fact the First Main Report, **Poverty In Australia** (April, 1975) by Prof. Ronald F. Henderson, has an entire chapter on migrants. In it, and in other parts of the report, he discusses topics such as housing, employment, information and communication, the roles of ethnic groups and of the, then, Department of Labor and Immigration in the provision of services. This volume can be considered a good summary of the findings and thinking of the Commission, findings which have been subsequently examined in more detail by quite a few of the other reports issued by the Poverty Inquiry.

"The Role of Ethnic Groups In Migrant Welfare" is the specific focus of a study by David Cox commissioned by the Poverty Commission and published in the volume **Welfare of Migrants** (1975). Dr. Cox's contribution consists of a general overview of

the development of various ethnic groups in Australia (Greeks, Italians, Yugoslavs, Turks, Poles, Ukrainians, Dutch, Jews, Chinese and Ceylonese). Although most of the statistics and data are outdated in today's context, this study is still one of the best, concise introductions to the kaleidoscopic structure of Australian society.

In examining voluntary and self-help services, the migrant's relationship with other community services is critical. Here, too, the Poverty Commission has published some interesting reports.

The question, for instance, of utilisation of local resources and participation in the decision making process is analysed in **A Study of the Hindmarsh (South Australia) Community** (1975) by M. G. Duigan. Additional data and insights on the use of and expectations from welfare services on the part of ethnic groups are provided in the report of the Poverty Inquiry **Community Services: Four Studies** (1976).

A further report on **Consumer Views on Welfare Services and Rented Housing** (1975) contains an analysis by the Australian Council of Social Service of various submissions made to the Poverty Commission in the area of income maintenance, accommodation, legal services, health and medical care, and education with occasional direct references to migrants.

The perceptions that migrants (mostly from non-Southern European countries) on welfare benefits have of the way Government departments operate can be found in the research report "Communication between Welfare Agencies and Clients" by H.J. Cunningham issued in **The Delivery of Welfare Services** (1977) by the Poverty Inquiry.

Finally, looking, from the other side at the service deliverers, the research by Prof. C. P. Harris on "Local Authorities and Social Welfare Services and Facilities" (published in the same Poverty Commission Volume) investigates the social welfare provisions of local governments on behalf of migrants and the extent to which they are effective in reaching them.

## **Areas of special need**

Here the documentation is still more abundant.

### **- Some aspects of the law**

The second Main Report of Poverty Inquiry, **Law and Poverty in Australia** (1975) by Prof. Ronald Sackville, provides an overall presentation of the extent migrants are disadvantaged in the face of the Australian legal system.

The main document in this respect is however the special research report by Andrew Jakubowicz and Berenice Buckley, **Migrants and the Legal System** (1975). It is certainly the most extensive survey ever done of the difficulties encountered by migrants vis-à-vis the police, the courts, employment, industrial accidents and compensation, housing and consumer affairs, legal aid and discrimination in law and in practice. Very little has changed since this Report was released, it is therefore essential reading on the subject.

Finally, the Law Reform Commission has not kept silent on the issue of migrants and the law. Its interim report **Criminal Investigation** (September 1975) calls for the enactment of special protection for members of minority groups (migrants, Aborigines, children, and the mentally retarded) when in police custody. Also its **Complaints Against Police: Supplementary Report** (1978) raises pertinent questions in this respect.

### **- Income security**

The Galbally Report focuses in particular on issues such as residence qualifications for pensions and benefits, maintenance guarantees, special benefits, pensions from overseas and tax rebates for dependant relatives overseas.

The most relevant Government document in this field remains the **First Main Report** of the Poverty Commission, which has formulated, particularly in respect to residence

qualifications, more liberal (and in my opinion more humane) recommendations.

Useful additional data can be found in other documents. For instance "The Economic Conditions of Migrants" and particularly the extent of poverty among migrant families is the subject of the research report by Jean I. Martin published in the Poverty Commission's **Welfare of Migrants** (1975). This study utilises previously unpublished data provided by the National and Immigration Surveys of 1973.

Also the report on the **Inquiry Into Unemployment Benefit Policy and Administration** by Dr. D. W. Myers assesses to what extent current Government policy and administrative arrangements need to be changed to meet present-day requirements, among others, of immigrants.

### **- Employment**

The Review Group, under this heading, covers issues such as industrial safety, recognition of qualifications, relationships with the trade union movement, etc. Very little on these matters, besides what is mentioned in other reports already quoted, is to be found in specific Government documents.

There are, however, other areas in relation to employment problems of migrants which are the subject of some Government reports.

For instance, in discussing the objectives and functions of the service, the **Report of the Review of the Commonwealth Employment Service** (June, 1977) headed by J. D. Nogard includes an investigation of the special assistance provisions needed by migrants.

The problems of the migrant work force are not touched upon in the Report to the Prime Minister by the Committee to Advise on **Policies for Development of Manufacturing Industries** (1975) or "Jackson Report" as it has more commonly been known. However valuable information is provided in the "Study of Human Resources and Industrial Relations at

the Plant Level in Seven Selected Industries" by G.W. Ford, reproduced in Volume IV of the Committee's report.

A useful listing in this context is also the **Summary of Recommendations made on Migrants in Industry** issued by the Victorian Ethnic Affairs Advisory Council, Sub-Committee on Industrial Conditions (1978) which reports findings, recommendations and conclusions of various Commonwealth, State and voluntary research committees as they relate to government, trade unions and employer organisations.

### - Health

The relationship between poverty and health conditions of immigrants has been fairly closely scrutinized by the Poverty Commission. The Third Main Report, **Social/Medical Aspects of Poverty In Australia** (1976) by the Rev. George S. Martin for instance, identifies the main physical and health problems of immigrants and outlines their cultural-linguistic communication difficulties in facing the present structure of Australian health services.

In the research report on the "Use of Health Services by Greek Immigrants" by Susan Treloar, Dora Petritsi-Jones and Charles Kerr, published by the same Commission in **Health Studies of Selected Disadvantaged Groups** (1977) there is a presentation of difficulties which appear to be pervasive and often particularly traumatic for migrants who have to utilise Australian health care services and encounter voluntary health insurance systems.

The extent to which health and welfare services are in fact meeting the needs of immigrants is considered by Valerie Douglas in "A Study of Health and Welfare Services in Melbourne" published by the Poverty Inquiry in the volume **Community Health Services** (1977).

Patterns of actual usage of various health services by immigrants are also indicated in the report on "Accessibility of Services in Brisbane" published by the Poverty Commission in

**Community Services: Four Studies** (1976).

**Family Planning and Health Care for Infants and Mothers** (1977) is still another useful Commission report. The studies by Wendy Salter and Tom Selwood ("Non-attendance among Post-natal Women at a Hospital Family Planning Clinic") and by Tim Murrell and John Moss ("Health Care for Infants and Mothers") describe the use of family planning, ante-natal care, confinement and infant care services on the part of immigrants living in Melbourne and Adelaide respectively.

Finally, on mental health conditions and the causes of psychiatric disturbances, the **Survey of Repatriation and Waiver Cases** (1973) by the Survey Section of the Department of Immigration is of relevance. Further documentation is available in **Poverty and Mental Illness** (1977) which published two research reports commissioned by the Poverty Inquiry: "A Study of the Effects of Psychiatric Hospitalisation upon the Well-being of the Family" by Jerzy Krupinski and "A Survey of Conditions of Ex-patients of a Psychiatric Hospital" by Anne D. Liddy and Margaret L. Bassen.

### **Special groups**

Young children, migrant women, the handicapped and the aged are the four groups which in the opinion of the Galbally Report need special consideration, and rightly so as confirmed by other Government reports.

### - Children

The needs of migrant children regarding the provision of early childhood services are, for example, considered in the Report of the Australian Preschool Committee, **Care and Education of Young Children** (1973).

On the State level, some considerations of needed child care services are given in the **Report** (July 1976) of the Committee of Inquiry into Child Care Services in Victoria.



Whereas the Review Group limits its analysis to young children, migrant youth attracted some attention not too many years ago. The collection of information, for instance, on the attitudes, values and socioeconomic characteristics of young people in Victoria, particularly in reference to those born overseas or of migrant parents, was the topic of the **Survey of Youth in Victoria** (1967) jointly carried out by the Good Neighbour Council of this State and the Department of Immigration.

Also, the Australian Immigration Advisory Council took some interest in 1970 in the specific problems faced by migrant youth and published a **Report of the Committee on Migrant Youth In the Australian Community**, 1971 (1973) which as well as covering issues relevant to pre-school age and school-age children, school leavers and young single migrants, discusses the findings and implications of a special survey of participation in youth organisations by migrant youth in Sydney.

#### - Migrant women

The International Women's Year provided the forum to start focusing specifically on migrant women.

The Conference held in 1975 on all aspects of Women's Health sponsored by the Department of Health and the National Advisory Committee for International Women's Year paid particular attention to ethnic women in isolation. Volume 5 of the proceedings of the Conference, **Women's Health In a Changing Society** (1978) contains various interesting papers on their medical problems (Alex Tahmindjis, Susan Wall), their isolation in Australian society (Dorothy Buckland, Petronella Wensing), their strife when living with large families (Jeanette Eggmolesse) and their industrial plight (Anna Livissianis). The range of recommendations listed in Volume One of the proceedings, is in itself a Galbally Report in miniature!

Scattered throughout the five volumes of the

**Final Report of the Royal Commission on Human Relationships** (April, 1977) the interested reader can discover what could be defined as the most up-to-date documentation on migrant families and in particular migrant women. It discusses problems in doctor-patient relationships, fertility and fertility control practices, abortion, childbirth, patterns of family life, child care, attitudes towards family law, women and trade unions, communication difficulties, etc. Also the report to the Minister for Social Security from the Family Services Committee, **Families and Social Services In Australia** (May, 1977) focuses on the needs related to the family's cultural backgrounds with particular emphasis on working migrant women.

#### - The handicapped

The Galbally Report focuses in particular on the rehabilitation services available for migrants. Interesting reading in this context is the report for the Poverty Inquiry. **The Australian Government Rehabilitation Service** (1977), by E.J. Le Seuer who outlines the disadvantages immigrants appear to find in the selection process for rehabilitation.

#### - The aged

The aged are the minority within the minority groups and have, up to now, attracted little more than lip service.

**A Study of Older Immigrants Interim Report** (1974) by the Committee on Social Patterns of the Immigration Advisory Council is the main report available on the issue. It traces some of the main facets of the problem and makes specific recommendations in the areas of accommodation, employment and occupation, health and organisational services to the aged.

Very little more is available in official reports. The Social Welfare Commission touches upon ethnic or migrant aged in its discussion paper **Care of the Aged** (1975) and some discussion of specific policies and programmes needed can be found in the **Report of the Committee on Car e**

of the Aged and the Infir m (January, 1977).

Finally, some basic crude statistics on aged migrant housing are given in Volume 2 of the **Aged Persons Housing Survey** (1976) carried out by the Department of Environment, Housing and Community Development.

## **Multiculturalism**

Many of the documents referred to before bear, directly or indirectly, on the problems and advantages to the nation represented by Australia's cultural and ethnic diversity.

But is particularly in the area of schooling of migrant children that the issue is most clearly confronted.

The Schools Commission's Reports, beginning with **Schools in Australia** (May, 1973) and constantly through its yearly programmes (e.g. **Report for the Triennium 1976-1978** - July 1975; **Rolling Triennium 1977-79** - July, 1976) are a very relevant source of information both as to the way the funds are allocated and as to the evolution of trends and the effectiveness of the efforts made.

That immigrant children are amongst those "at risk" is shown by the Fifth Main Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Poverty, **Poverty and Education** (1976), by Dr. Ronald T. Fitzgerald. It stresses how the most important factor in restricting life chances for migrants lies in the characteristic way institutions and structures of Australian society have responded to the presence of non-English speaking minorities, and it calls for a policy of multiculturalism. The Report further points out how the educational system effectively operates as a discriminatory agent in keeping migrants in poor jobs.

The **Report of the Committee on the Teaching of Migrant Languages in the Schools** (March, 1976) is also valuable, not only for the recommendations it formulates but also for the wealth of substantial data and information, (updated to 1975) it provides on community

language teaching in Australian primary schools, secondary schools, the role and strength of the ethnic schools, the availability and training of teachers, etc. This report should be read in conjunction with the survey of schools carried out by the Research Branch of the Department of Education. Published under the title **The Teaching of Modern Languages in Australia**, 1975 (1977), it brings together under one cover all the survey findings and associated analysis which provided the basis for the above-mentioned Committee's report.

The areas in curriculum development in need of attention and the action currently undertaken can be seen in the reports and paper issued by the Curriculum Development Centre, particularly the **Triennial Program 1977-79: New Directions in Curriculum Development, with an Emphasis on Lower Secondary Schooling** (1977).

How restricted opportunities to benefit from educational services result in failure and powerlessness in future life of immigrant children is shown by the studies "Poverty, Education and Adolescents" conducted by A. Wright, F. Headlam, U. Ozolins and R. T. Fitzgerald, and "Disadvantaged at School and Post-school Experience" by R.E. Stroobant, both published by the Poverty Inquiry in its report **Outcomes of Schooling: Aspects of Success and Failure** (1977).

The Working Party on Languages and Linguistics of the Universities Commission in its report **Languages and Linguistics in Australian Universities** (May 1975) documents the neglect at the tertiary level of teaching and research in the languages and cultures of those people who represent a significant component of Australia's migrant intake.

On the State scene, the New South Wales Department of Education has constantly shown concern for the issue of community languages. The study done by its Division of Planning, **Trends in Foreign Language Candidature in New South Wales Schools** (early 70s) examines the situation in that State for the high school

generation extending from 1965 to 1970. But particularly the research papers issued by the Centre for Research in Measurement and Evaluation of the same Department (e.g. **Foreign Language Study in NSW: State of the Art, 1973** - July 1973; **Where Does Foreign Language Study Belong in the Curriculum? A Look at Foreign Languages and Social Studies in the Secondary School** - May, 1974; **Resources for Teaching Languages Other than English in the Primary School: Teacher Opinions, Experiences and Qualifications** - July 1977 all by Gail L. Robinson) are a continuous reminder of the need for more in-depth action.

Victoria has moved along different lines and has given a comprehensive picture of the ethnic composition of the individual state schools in the **Child Migrant Education Survey 1970**, by G. J. Gallagher and I. Margitta and in the **Child Migrant Education Survey 1975** by Irene Elliott and Ivan Margitta.

## **What makes the difference**

The body of knowledge which has preceded and accompanied the Galbally Report cannot be called minimal or irrelevant. In some cases, attempts have also been made to systematise the available material in some kind of logical order - as was done by the Task Forces or the Community Relations Committee.

What has been lacking has been the political willingness to carry the recommendations through as shown by a little publicised working paper prepared by the Ethnic Affairs Commission of NSW, **Summaries of Previous Surveys** (1977) which has painstakingly gone through most of the documents reviewed in this article, listed the various recommendations advanced in them and indicated the action taken or proposed in relation to them. In most cases under these two headings the pages are monumentally blank!

At the same time as the Review Group was galloping around Australia to consult with different organisations working with migrants

and meeting in Canberra to write their report, another group, the Ethnic Affairs Commission of New South Wales, was focusing on similar issues of relevance to their own State.

**Participation**, its Report to the NSW Premier (June, 1978) came out only a few weeks after the Galbally Report. It is impressive, not because of its massive size (over 600 pages) but because of its completely different approach to the very same issues. It is what the Galbally Report could have been if it had not been a political document. It is full of insights, ideas, original research, information and documentation which, presented in an organised way, can provide a blueprint for change. Above all it is a document which - maybe also because it is mostly written by immigrants themselves - makes the reader feel all the stresses ethnic groups and individuals have to go through to survive in this "multicultural" society.

All of the above is not said to minimise the value of the Galbally Report, both for its systematic analysis of a fragmented picture already well documented by many other Government and non-Government researches, and for its valuable documentation contained in the volume of Appendices. Rather it is pointed out because it shows that most times "what really makes the difference is not the thought but the money -behind it!" Luckily for Australian non-English speaking immigrants, thirty years after they began to come in mass to this country, Government has found \$50 million to spend, and the work of the Review Group is to be put to the test.