



MULTICULTURALISM and the IMMIGRATION DEBATE

ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEE, UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA
Resolution 88.86

In view of the divisive nature of the debate on immigration policy which has taken place in the community over the last few weeks and the hurt caused to many Australians of Asian origin,

88.86 It was resolved

- (i) to remind members of the Uniting Church in Australia of the statement of the 1985 Assembly: 'The Uniting Church is a Multicultural Church', and the Uniting Church's commitment to a multicultural society;
- (ii) to reaffirm that statement and, in particular, the pleasure that was expressed in the fact 'that successive governments have substantially removed racial criteria from the policies covering the selection of migrants and the reception of refugees, and that in particular, significant groups of people from Asia and the Pacific have been welcomed to tis land';
- (iii) to express grave concern at the way in which some participants in the present debate have distorted the true picture of immigration in Australia and have singled out Asian people for special restrictions. Support for policies based on race has been a significant factor in the increase in race violence that has occurred in recent weeks, and has given permission and respectability for people to express the dark and racist side of Australian society;
- (iv) to express its pastoral support for the many people from Asia, both members of the church and those outside the church – who have been hurt and alarmed by this debate which questions their place in Australian society, and to assure people of all races of the Uniting Church's support for their efforts to make a home in Australia;
- (v) to request the President to take these resolutions into consideration in preparing his pastoral letter to the church;
- (vi) to send a copy of the above resolution to the Refugee Council of Australia.