



The immigration debate in Australia: from Federation to World War One

Chad Cooper
Social Policy Section

Contents

Introduction	1
Immigration measures pre-1901	1
<i>Immigration Restriction Act 1901</i>	2
Amendments	7
<i>Pacific Island Labourers Act 1901</i>	7
Amendments	10
<i>Post and Telegraph Act 1901</i>	11
<i>Naturalization Act 1903</i>	16
<i>Contract Immigrants Act 1905</i>	19
1906 to 1914	23
War Precautions Act 1914	25
Amendments	27
Conclusion	28
Glossary	28
Abbreviations for political affiliations	28

Acknowledgements

The author is grateful to colleagues Sophia Fernandes and Zara Maxwell-Smith for their valuable input into this paper.



Introduction

Immigration policy has been at the forefront of political debate in Australia throughout its entire history as a nation. Prior to Federation, colonial governments were responsible for their own immigration policies. One of the first acts of the new Parliament following Federation in 1901 was to pass legislation that restricted non-white, non-British immigration. The *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* became the cornerstone of a policy aimed at keeping Australia white—what we now refer to as the White Australia policy. While such express racial exclusion may seem shocking now, this focus shaped immigration policy in Australia for seven decades, until the final dismantling of the White Australia policy by the Whitlam and Fraser Governments in the 1970s.

Debates over immigration policy at the time of Federation reveal how federal parliamentarians managed the complex and arguably contradictory task of fostering a national ideology based on racial exclusivity whilst remaining a civilised member of a diverse British Empire. When the colonies came together to form a nation in 1901, the new Parliament was forced to manage the sometimes competing interests of the fledgling ‘independent’ Australia, with those of the British Empire which remained its imperial overlord. The size and reach of the Empire meant that at the time of Federation the majority of British subjects were Indian or African. In addition, Britain had important trade and strategic interests in China and Japan. For these reasons, Britain was opposed to overt racial discrimination on the part of Australia.¹ How to build and maintain a white Australia without upsetting the Empire was clearly a matter of concern to the new Parliament.

This background note presents excerpts from parliamentary speeches relating to Australian immigration policies between 1901 and World War One. It is the first in a series of Parliamentary Library publications that plan to address major immigration debates in Australian history. The purpose of this paper is to outline the views of senators and members, the vast majority of whom were in favour of a white Australia. It is apparent from the parliamentary debates that immigration remained a contentious issue for successive Australian parliaments.

Immigration measures pre-1901

Prior to Federation, it was the responsibility of colonial governments to manage overseas migration. A number of colonies had already enacted legislation to restrict the entry of Chinese people before 1901. This was due in part to the increasing violence between white Australians and Chinese migrants who, since the 1850s, had travelled to Australia in search of gold. Colonial governments were so concerned about the influx of Chinese migrants that they discussed ways to prohibit Chinese immigration at the Intercolonial Conferences of 1880, 1888 and 1896.²

1. J Jupp, *From White Australia to Woomera: the story of Australian immigration*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002, p. 8.

2. For an analysis of the Intercolonial Conference on the Chinese Question 1888 and the protests of prominent Chinese individuals, see I Welch, ‘Alien son: the life and times of Cheok Hong Cheong, (Zhang Zhuoxiong) 1851–1928’,

Initially, colonial governments restricted Chinese migration based upon shipping tons, accepting one Chinese migrant for every ten tons of a ship's burden. By 1888 this ratio had increased to one migrant for every 500 tons.³ Short of national legislation prohibiting the entry of Chinese migrants, the shipping ton quota effectively prevented the majority of Chinese migration to Australia.⁴

A number of the colonial governments also introduced written tests to restrict non-white immigration. This was a significant development because from 1901 federal parliamentarians considered the written applications, in addition to immigration restriction laws in Natal, South Africa (1897) and New Zealand (1899), to be the basis from which the soon-to-be introduced *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* could be strengthened.⁵

The written test contained in the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* was more rigorous than those administered by the New South Wales (1898), Tasmanian (1898) and West Australian (1897) colonies, in that it required applicants to undertake a dictation test.⁶ Historian Myra Willard, in her account of the White Australia policy, explained that the dictation test was a more effective measure to restrict immigration than existing colonial legislation: 'The elasticity of the method [to exclude immigrants] was thus increased, and any evasion of it by sham knowledge was made practically impossible'.⁷

In 1900, section 51(xxvii) of the *Australian Constitution* granted the powers of immigration and emigration to the Australian Parliament, although a number of state governments conducted migration assistance schemes into the early twentieth century.⁸

Immigration Restriction Act 1901

The *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* was one of the first pieces of legislation passed by the Australian Government to deal with immigration. It restricted the migration of non-British peoples to Australia and symbolised the birth of what came to be known as the White Australia policy.⁹ The Act

Australian National University Digital Collections, 2003, viewed 8 June 2012,
<https://digitalcollections.anu.edu.au/bitstream/1885/49261/31/01front.pdf>

3. R Evans, 'The White Australia Policy', in J Jupp, ed, *The Australian People: an encyclopedia of the nation, its people and their origin*, second edn, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 44–49.
4. A Curthoys, 'Liberalism and exclusionism: a prehistory of the White Australia Policy' in L Jayasuriya, D Walker and J Gothard, eds, *Legacies of White Australia: Race, culture and nation*, University of Western Australia Press, Crawley (Western Australia), 2003, pp. 8–32.
5. *The Immigration Restriction Act 1897* (Natal, South Africa) No. 1, 1897; *The Immigration Restriction Act 1889* (NZ) no.33, 1899.
6. *Immigration Restriction Act 1898* (NSW) No. 3, 1898; *The Immigration Restriction Act 1898* (TAS) (62 Vict. No. 69); *Immigration Restriction Act 1897* (WA) (61 Vict. No. 13).
7. Willard, *History of the White Australia Policy to 1920*, second edn, Frank Cass & Co, London, 1967, p. 121.
8. *Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act 1900* (UK) (63 & 64 Vict.); and J Gothard, 'Assisted Female Immigration 1860–1920', in J Jupp, ed, op.cit., pp. 53–56.
9. Although the policies of colonial governments before 1901 contributed to an emerging sense of a White Australia Policy, the passage of the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* was one of the first actions of racial exclusion taken at

prohibited the entry of any person who failed to write out a passage of 50 words in any European language as dictated by a Customs officer.¹⁰

Parliamentary debate over the legislation was not about whether it was morally wrong to restrict non-white immigration. Senators and members were almost exclusively concerned with whether the dictation test would achieve the objective of prohibiting non-white immigration to Australia without being seen to contradict the British Government's stated commitment to non-discrimination on racial grounds.¹¹

A number of members argued that the Bill should explicitly ban people on the basis of their race.¹² The Acting Leader of the Opposition, William McMillan (FT),¹³ was a strong supporter of this position:

It is better for us, if we are to deal with this question at all, to put in an Act of Parliament exactly what we mean. What we mean ... is that we will prevent any large infiltration of alien elements into the component parts of our national life, and that we will preserve pure for all time the British element with which we started.¹⁴

There were few members who did not agree with the purpose of the Bill. Those members who objected to an explicit ban of non-white races did so on the grounds that the British Government was opposed to racial discrimination.¹⁵ When introducing the Bill, Prime Minister Edmund Barton (PROT) warned that prohibiting immigrants because of the colour of their skin could affect Australia's relations with Britain:

It is not a desirable thing in our legislation to make discriminations which will complicate the foreign relations of the Empire. It would be of untold evil and harm to us—and likely to lead to troubles even rivalling those which the future may bring forth to us from these causes.¹⁶

William McMillan, who was forthcoming in his views on race, articulated the crux of the new Parliament's position:

the Federal level of government. This is why the Act is considered to be the symbolic beginning of the White Australia Policy.

10. *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* (Cth) No. 17 1901

11. The British Government sent despatches to Queensland in 1901 and South Australia in 1897 objecting to legislation that prohibited migrants based on race. Willard, *History of the White Australia Policy*, op. cit., p. 120.

12. Ibid.

13. See the glossary for a list of abbreviations of political affiliations.

14. W McMillan, 'Second reading speech: Immigration Restriction Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 6 September 1901, p. 4627, viewed 22 May 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansard80%2F1901-09-06%2F0017%22>

15. M Willard, op.cit., p. 120.

16. E Barton, 'Second reading speech: Immigration Restriction Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 7 August 1901, p. 3503, viewed 22 May 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansard80%2F1901-08-07%2F0037%22>

We must undoubtedly see that we should do nothing to wilfully interfere with that union between ourselves and the country from which we have sprung, which is not merely one of affection or one of race, but one also of mutual interest. On the other hand we must recollect the great and impressive fact that we are a people situated practically in the eastern seas ... We must also recollect that the northern portion of our continent lies in close proximity to millions and millions of people of an alien and servile character.¹⁷

It is clear from members' speeches that the Immigration Restriction Bill was about racial exclusion. William McMillan spoke about the desire 'to prevent any alien or servile races from so occupying large territories in Australia, as to mix and interfuse, not merely among themselves, but with our own people'.¹⁸ The Leader of the Australian Labor Party, John Christian Watson, also expressed his concerns about 'racial contamination', declaring:

The objection I have to the mixing of these coloured people with the white people of Australia ... lies in the main in the possibility and probability of racial contamination ... The racial aspect of the question [to restrict migration to Australia], in my opinion, is the larger and more important one.¹⁹

Members who spoke about the 'purity' of the white race were expressing their belief in the superiority of white people. Prime Minister Barton affirmed this position by declaring that democratic principles of equality did not extend to race:

I do not think either that the doctrine of the equality of man was really ever intended to include racial equality. There is no racial equality. There is that basic inequality. These races are, in comparison with white races—I think no one wants convincing of this fact—unequal and inferior. The doctrine of the equality of man was never intended to apply to the equality of the Englishman and the Chinaman. There is a deep-set difference, and we see no prospect and no promise of its ever being effaced. Nothing in this world can put these two races upon an equality [sic]. Nothing we can do by cultivation, by refinement, or by anything else will make some races equal to others.²⁰

Underlying these comments was the fear of invasion. Prime Minister Barton warned that the dangers of invasion would become 'inevitable' if Australia was not 'careful'.²¹ During his second

17. W McMillan, 'Second reading speech: Immigration Restriction Bill', op.cit., p. 4626, viewed 22 May 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansard80%2F1901-09-06%2F0017%22>

18. Ibid.

19. J C Watson, 'Second reading speech: Immigration Restriction Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 6 September 1901, p. 4633, viewed 22 May 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansard80%2F1901-09-06%2F0020%22>

20. E Barton, 'Immigration Restriction Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 26 September 1901, p. 5233, viewed 4 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansard80%2F1901-09-26%2F0023%22>

21. E Barton, 'Second reading speech: Immigration Restriction Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 7 August 1901, p. 3503, viewed 22 May 2012,

reading speech, Prime Minister Barton quoted extensively from Professor Charles Pearson's *National Life and Character: a Forecast*, which predicted the territorial and economic expansion of the 'black and yellow races'. He quoted verbatim:

The day will come, and perhaps is not far distant, when the European observer will look round to see the globe girdled with a continuous zone of the black and yellow races ... We shall wake to find ourselves elbowed and hustled, and perhaps even thrust aside by peoples whom we looked down upon as servile, and thought of as bound always to minister to our needs ... Is that not something to guard against? We are guarding the last part of the world in which the higher races can live and increase freely for the higher civilization.²²

The Attorney-General, Alfred Deakin (PROT), who posited that 'the unity of Australia is nothing, if that does not imply a united race', used the rhetoric of national survival to emphasise the considered gravity of the task at hand:

We here find ourselves touching the profoundest instinct of individual or nation—the instinct of self-preservation—for it is nothing less than the national manhood, the national character, and the national future that are at stake.²³

In the same speech, Deakin mentioned the 'coloured races' surrounding Australia that were 'inclined to invade our shores'.²⁴

The possibility that migrant labourers would usurp Australian jobs was another reason members supported the Bill. Malcolm McEacharn (PROT), when moving an amendment to replace 'English language' with a 'European language', stated: 'I recognise that if Japanese can come here in any large number, they will compete at low rates with white labour, and I will be no party to that'.²⁵

John Watson (ALP) warned that 'coloured undesirables' were not only taking the jobs of white labourers, but were also thriving business owners:

At the present time in Sydney, we have whole streets which are practically given up to the businesses conducted by Chinese, Syrians, and other coloured aliens, and one cannot go today into more than five towns of any importance in the country districts of New South Wales without

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1901-08-07%2F0037%22>

22. C Pearson, *National life and character: a forecast*, MacMillan and Co, London, 1913, p. 83, quoted in Barton, 'Second reading speech', op. cit., p. 3503.

23. A Deakin, 'Second reading speech: Immigration Restriction Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 12 September 1901, p. 4804, viewed 22 May 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1901-09-12%2F0022%22>

24. Ibid.

25. M McEacharn, 'Immigration Restriction Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 1 October 1901, p. 5351, viewed 1 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1901-10-01%2F0045%22>

finding two, three, or perhaps half-a-dozen coloured storekeepers apparently doing a thriving business.²⁶

For Watson, this activity was a sign that Asian invasion was underway and made the task before the Parliament so much more pressing:

In each and every avenue of life we find the competition of the coloured races insidiously creeping in, and if we are to maintain the standard of living we think necessary, in order that our people may be brought up with a degree of comfort, and with scholastic advantages which will conduce to the improvement and general advancement of the nation, some pause must be made in regard to the extension of the competition of the coloured aliens generally.²⁷

One member of parliament who did not believe the rhetoric about Asian invasion was Arthur Bruce Smith (FT). He expressed his opinion on the Bill:

The public have been told over and over again that the purity and whiteness of the Australian Commonwealth is being endangered by the incursion of these hordes of Asiatics. I say that it is a fable; that it is altogether a fairy story.²⁸

Smith's speech, exceptional for its objection to the rhetoric of Asian invasion, supported the Japanese Consul-General's argument that the Japanese people were of a higher standard of civilisation than African, Pacific Islander and other Asian people. Therefore, Smith believed that Japanese people should be treated as equal to Europeans.²⁹ From Smith's perspective, members stoked fears of invasion because it was politically expedient: 'I venture to say that a large part of the scare is founded upon a desire to make political capital by appealing to some of the worst instincts in some of the more credulous of the people'.³⁰

Given the almost uniform consensus regarding immigration restrictions, it is perhaps unsurprising that the Leader of the Opposition, George Reid (FT), distanced himself from Smith's statements, stating: 'I suppose there is not a single member of this Chamber who does not honestly desire to prevent the influx of a large number of the coloured races of the world'.³¹

Reid's comments were substantiated by the successful passage of the Bill through both Houses of Parliament. The Immigration Restriction Bill received Royal Assent on 23 December 1901.

26. Watson, 'Second Reading Speech', op. cit., p. 4633.

27. Ibid., pp. 4633–4634.

28. A B Smith, 'Immigration Restriction Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 25 September 1901, p. 5160, viewed 11 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1901-09-25%2F0041%22>

29. M Willard, *History of the White Australia Policy*, op. cit., p. 123.

30. A B Smith, 'Immigration Restriction Bill', op. cit., p. 5158.

31. G Reid, 'Immigration Restriction Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 25 September 1901, p. 5167, viewed 6 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1901-09-25%2F0042%22>

Amendments

In the first decades of the Australian Parliament, the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* was amended in 1905, 1908, 1910 and 1912, making it 'more definite and more stringent'.³² The 1905 amendment ensured that the dictation test could be given 'in any prescribed language', and was largely designed to fulfil Japanese requests for equality with Europeans.³³ In response to a question regarding whether or not Indian British subjects would be exempt from the provisions of the Act, Prime Minister Alfred Deakin (PROT) explained the point of the amendment:

All we propose is that Japanese, Hindustani, and other languages may be added to the European languages for the purposes of the education test, if Parliament consents to that being done. This amendment of the law will not alter its principle or policy [of immigration restriction]. The language test is administered, not to discover the knowledge of an intending applicant, but to give effect to a policy of exclusion in the way thought to be least offensive to the peoples excluded.³⁴

The actual effect of the amendment was that it strengthened the powers of exclusion by increasing the number of languages in which the dictation test could be given.³⁵ This enabled immigration officers to administer the test in a language that was almost certain to not be understood by any given migrant.

Pacific Island Labourers Act 1901

The *Pacific Island Labourers Act 1901* stipulated that no Pacific Island labourer could enter Australia on or after 31 March 1904 except under a licence, and that the Minister for External Affairs could order the deportation of any Pacific Island labourer found in Australia after 31 December 1906.³⁶ It was one of the founding laws of the White Australia policy.

Pacific Islanders had been working as indentured labour (Kanakas) in the Queensland sugar industry since 1863 and had become an integral part of the economic development of north-east Australia.³⁷ Despite this, a majority of members believed that the practice had to change. The Leader of the Opposition, George Reid, cited public approval for repatriating Pacific Islanders in his support for the Bill:

An enormous majority of the people of that State [Queensland] are in favour of the stoppage of this kanaka traffic ... Outside of Queensland the views of the people of Australia generally are

32. M Willard, *History of the White Australia Policy*, op. cit., p. 125.

33. Ibid.

34. A Deakin, 'Immigration Restriction Bill Second Reading', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 6 December 1905, p. 6355, viewed 7 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansard80%2F1905-12-06%2F0051%22>

35. R Evans, 'The White Australia Policy', op. cit., p. 47.

36. *Pacific Island Labourers Act 1901* (Cth) No. 16, 1901.

37. M Willard, *History of the White Australia Policy*, op. cit., p. 136–137.

clearly, unmistakably, and absolutely against the continuance of any such traffic ... All Australia having expressed this opinion, I think that the Government are justified in bringing forward this legislation.³⁸

Speaking before the Bill was amended to include the prohibition date of 31 March 1904, Reid used his speech on the Pacific Island Labourers Bill to argue that the Immigration Restriction Bill should similarly prohibit migrants on the basis of their race:

They say in clause 3 that no Pacific Islands labourer shall enter Australia on or after the 1st day of March, 1901. That is a prohibition on account of race and colour—a totally plain, straightforward prohibition to all eternity of the Pacific Islands labourer. That is the sort of legislation that some of us are in favour of.³⁹

John Christian Watson was clear in his speech that the objective of a white Australia should be given precedence over any potential damage that could be done to the Queensland sugar industry:

The feeling that I entertain upon this question is that even if it means the absolute annihilation of the sugar industry, I am prepared to vote for the abolition of the kanaka ... I have always shown a leaning towards the protectionist side of the fiscal question; but if the planters do not get rid of black labour, they will get no protection from me.⁴⁰

Other members supported the Bill because they deemed the traffic of Pacific Islanders to be a cruel practice. The Member for Parramatta and future Prime Minister, Joseph Cook (FT), invoked Christian principles in declaring his support for the Bill.⁴¹ He quoted at length from his correspondence with Reverend J. D. Paton, who at the time was working in the New Hebrides:

In the best interests of humanity, in common with all who know of the cruel wrongs, oppression, fearful mortality among the kanakas in Queensland, and the blood-stained character of this kanaka labour traffic all along its history ... we rejoice, and praise God that by the legislators of our Australian Commonwealth it is likely now gradually to be suppressed, and this dark stain on Australia's honour blotted out for ever.⁴²

38. G Reid, 'Pacific Islands Labourers Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 9 October 1901, p. 5829, viewed 7 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansard80%2F1901-10-09%2F0046%22>

39. Ibid.

40. J C Watson, 'Pacific Islands Labourers Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 9 October 1901, p. 5848, viewed 7 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansard80%2F1901-10-09%2F0051%22>

41. H M Carey, 'Australian religious culture from federation to the new pluralism', in L Jayasuriya, D Walker and J Gothard, eds, op.cit., pp. 70–92.

42. J Cook, 'Pacific Islands Labourers Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 9 October 1901, p. 5834, viewed 8 June 2012,

Like Cook, a number of other members identified the practice of 'blackbirding' (kidnapping Pacific Island peoples) as a form of slavery. The Prime Minister, Edmund Barton, raised the issue when declaring the Government's objection to the Kanaka trade:

Putting aside all questions but the one great question of right and wrong, this Government thinks that the traffic in itself is bad, and must be ended. The traffic, we say, is bad, both for the kanaka and for the white man. It is bad for the kanaka ... I say this because in some aspects it must be slavery.⁴³

He later dismissed any suggestions that ending the cheap source of labour would ruin the sugar industry:

The kanaka is only one factor in the cost of production. If black labour is abolished, and one factor, the cost of labour, is thereby increased in price, the question arises, 'Cannot other factors in the production be cheapened?' I think they can.⁴⁴

Not everybody agreed with Barton about the viability of the sugar industry in the absence of Pacific Islander labour. Member for Melbourne, Malcolm McEacharn, drew upon the findings and recommendations of the 1889 Queensland Royal Commission to argue for the retention of workers from the Pacific Islands:

I contend that I have proved, as far as any one can prove, from the evidence of the Royal Commission, that it is utterly impossible in Mackay, and north of Mackay, to carry on this industry without kanaka labour. I think I have shown that the industry must die—these are the words of Sir Samuel Griffith—unless there is kanaka labour, and that something like £1,000,000 of money will cease to be distributed amongst white labourers. If the industry be destroyed a great deal of labour will be thrown on other markets. Our commerce will certainly be lessened, and great injustice will be done to [Queensland].⁴⁵

Likewise, the Member for Oxley, Richard Edwards (PROT), insisted that Queensland residents were against the Bill on the grounds that it would damage the industry and that this would translate into job losses for white workers:

... I believe that, by forcing the Government to pass this measure against the wishes of Queensland, they are doing a serious injury to the very people whom they particularly desire to

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansard80%2F1901-10-09%2F0047%22>

43. E Barton, 'Pacific Islands Labourers Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 2 October 1901, p. 5503, viewed 8 June 2012,

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansard80%2F1901-10-02%2F0029%22>

44. Ibid., p. 5501.

45. M McEacharn, 'Pacific Islands Labourers Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 9 October 1901, p. 5847, viewed 8 June 2012,

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansard80%2F1901-10-09%2F0050%22>

benefit. The passage of this measure will result in many thousands of white workers being thrown out of employment.⁴⁶

Edwards asked that the Bill be referred to a Royal Commission so that members could obtain 'more information upon the kanaka question and upon the sugar industry in Northern Queensland'.⁴⁷ However, Prime Minister Barton refused this request on the basis that no new information would be gathered from a Royal Commission:

There has not been shown throughout the debate one reason for expecting that facts, which are not already in printed documents, will be discovered by any such inquiry. If that cannot be shown, then I think there is no case for a Royal Commission.⁴⁸

Given that a majority of members were in favour of excluding Pacific Islander labourers, ultimately the debate came to centre upon the length of time that should be allowed to pass before the Pacific Islanders were deported.⁴⁹ The Member for Oxley requested an extension to the recruitment of kanakas 'for at least seven years' from the second reading debate,⁵⁰ but the Bill was eventually passed with the deadline remaining at 31 December 1906.⁵¹

Amendments

A Queensland Royal Commission was established in April 1906 to assess the repatriation process of Pacific Island labourers and the labour supply for the sugar industry. It reported that the deportation of Pacific Island labourers was inhumane and endangered the lives of those Pacific Islanders who had breached tribal law or who had escaped their enemies in their home islands.⁵² The Commission also found that some Pacific Islanders had been in Queensland so long that they would be complete strangers in their country of origin if forcibly repatriated.⁵³

46. R Edwards, 'Pacific Islands Labourers Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 5 November 1901, p. 6826, viewed 8 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1901-11-05%2F0030%22>

47. Edwards, 'Pacific Islands Labourers Bill', op. cit., p. 6824.

48. E Barton, 'Pacific Islands Labourers Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 7 November 1901, p. 7007, viewed 8 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1901-11-07%2F0043%22>

49. Willard, *History of the White Australia Policy*, op. cit., p. 182.

50. R Edwards, 'Pacific Islands Labourers Bill', op. cit., p. 6835, viewed 13 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1901-11-05%2F0034%22>

51. *Pacific Island Labourers Act 1901* (Cth) No. 16, 1901.

52. Queensland, Parliament, Sugar Industry Labour Commission, *Report of the Sugar Industry Labour Commission 1906*, Parl. Paper Vol. 2, Brisbane, 1906.

53. Ibid.

On the basis of the Commission's recommendations, the *Pacific Island Labourers Act 1901* was amended in 1906. The amended Act exempted from deportation labourers who had been introduced to Australia before 1 September 1879 as well as those who had lived in Australia for 20 years continuously. The amendments also exempted from deportation Pacific Islanders of 'extreme age' and those who had married before 9 October 1906.⁵⁴

Joseph Cook offered his absolute support for the Bill on the grounds that the 'drastic' measures of the 1901 legislation would be rectified:

These people are to be deported, and it devolves upon us, on the grounds of common humanity, to render their departure as complete and as easy as possible. Where marriages have been contracted, they should be honored, and where other engagements have been made, which make it impossible for us to deport the kanakas without outraging considerations of common humanity, we must allow them to remain here if they choose to do so.⁵⁵

According to historian Myra Willard, the deportation of Pacific Island labourers was both quick and smooth with only four per cent of Queensland's sugar being grown by Pacific Islanders by 1912.⁵⁶

Post and Telegraph Act 1901

The *Post and Telegraph Act 1901* prohibited non-white carriers from transporting mail to and from Australia. Subsection 16(1) of the Act stipulated that no contract or arrangements for the carriage of mail could be entered into on behalf of the Commonwealth unless it contained the condition that only white labour would be employed in such carriage.⁵⁷ Similar to the Immigration Restriction Bill, debate over the Post and Telegraph Bill was largely about whether it was in Australia's national interest to explicitly ban non-white people when Imperial relations could be affected. Alfred Deakin explained this issue:

The taxpayers of the Commonwealth shall feel that by their expenditure they are assisting to build up their own country and to support their own race, and that they are showing—as they naturally, and I think properly desire to do—a preference for people of their own race gaining the benefits of conducting the commercial business of the Commonwealth so far as it consists in the carriage of mails. Here, however, we have had in the past and are likely to have in the future partners who are entitled to consideration.

We have already called attention to the fact that to place on the face of the Bill and in set terms, a disqualification of certain classes of persons whom it is not desired to employ in connexion

54. *Pacific Island Labourers Act 1901–06* (Cth) No. 22, 1906.

55. J Cook, 'Second reading: Pacific Island Labourers' Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 3 October 1906, p. 5998, viewed 13 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1906-10-03%2F0066%22>

56. M Willard, *History of the White Australia Policy*, op. cit., p. 186.

57. *Post and Telegraph Act 1901* (Cth) No. 12, 1901.

with either class of contracts—either within or without the Commonwealth—would be obviously to place certain obstacles in the path of our legislation, which may or may not be removable.⁵⁸

Mr Deakin referred to the veto wielded by the British Government in 1897 when the Queensland Government had sought to ban coloured labour on mail carriers as evidence that the Bill could be rejected.⁵⁹

For the Attorney-General, the objective was to ban non-white carriers without explicitly stating so in the provisions of the Bill. If the House could do this, it would avoid the ire of the British Government:

To come direct to the point at issue, we have to ask ourselves whether it is not possible to deal with this problem of providing as to the class of persons to be employed in connexion with our mails, without expressing it on the face of the Bill; and yet as effectively putting the matter absolutely under the control of the House, and achieving that end almost as promptly as if it were put on the face of the Bill.⁶⁰

This issue received considerable attention from the Member for West Sydney, and future Prime Minister, William Hughes (ALP). Responding to the Attorney-General's warnings, Hughes expressed frustration that the British Government was impeding Australia's sovereign rights:

We were told before federation that if we federated we should become a nation, with one flag and one destiny. But now it would appear that we are to be much in the position of a kitten which is allowed to gambol at the end of a piece of ribbon, and permitted to go a certain length and no further.⁶¹

He believed that the vote for Federation had given the Australian Parliament the mandate to reject mail carriers on the basis of their skin colour:

We have been sent here with the clear and unmistakable mandate that we are to secure a white Australia, and if we cannot do that when we have the money in our hands to expend upon a service which is to be carried out for our benefit, we cannot do it at all.⁶²

58. A Deakin, 'Post and Telegraph Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 4 September 1901, p. 4485, viewed 12 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansard80%2F1901-09-04%2F0086%22>

59. Ibid.

60. A Deakin, 'Post and Telegraph Bill', op. cit., p. 4485.

61. W Hughes, 'Post and Telegraph Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 14 August 1901, p. 3735, viewed 11 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansard80%2F1901-08-14%2F0045%22>

62. W Hughes, 'Post and Telegraph Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 4 September 1901, p. 4489, viewed 8 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansard80%2F1901-09-04%2F0087%22>

The possibility that the Bill would affect British subjects did not dissuade Hughes. He saw a distinction between British-born subjects and lascars (seamen from South Asia):

I admit that the lascar is a British subject, and I accept the doctrine of the brotherhood of man. But, in the domestic circle, there is sometimes a brother whom one regards regretfully in that relationship; and that is very much the position of the lascar. The British Empire has not been built up by the aid of the people of India. India is a dependency of the Empire, although her people are allowed a certain amount of self-government; but we should not be prepared to permit the pruning down of our powers of government on their account.⁶³

With this approach, Hughes successfully argued that the Bill should be amended so that all carriers except white labour were excluded.

Whilst Mr Deakin saw the Bill as a measure to achieve a white Australia, the Prime Minister believed that the Bill had nothing to do with the White Australia policy:

I do not think this is a 'white Australia' matter. It does not relate primarily to the employment of Australians at all, because these crews are not shipped here. It is rarely a sailor comes on to a ship's articles in Australia, because the men are shipped in England, as any one who has travelled knows. There is employed on these vessels a class of labour which we, from our point of view, consider is not one on which we should spend our money. That, I think, is the sum and substance of the whole matter.⁶⁴

However, in case anyone questioned his commitment to the White Australia policy, Prime Minister Barton reassured members that, 'no one is less inclined than I am for the employment of coloured labour in connexion with any of our mail contracts'.⁶⁵

A number of members from the Labor Party urged the Government to include a ban because it was in the interests of white workers. The Member for Kennedy, Charles McDonald, stated:

I should like the Prime Minister to clearly understand that the labour party wish it to be definitely stated in the Bill that lascars or other coloured labour is not to be employed on subsidized mail steamers.⁶⁶

-
63. W Hughes, 'Post and Telegraph Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 14 August 1901, p. 3735, viewed 11 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansard80%2F1901-08-14%2F0045%22>
64. A Deakin, 'Post and Telegraph Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 4 September 1901, p. 4489, viewed 8 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansard80%2F1901-09-04%2F0086%22>; E Barton, 'Post and Telegraph Bill', *ibid.*, p. 4510, viewed 8 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansard80%2F1901-09-04%2F0103%22>
65. E Barton, 'Post and Telegraph Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 14 August 1901, p. 3736, viewed 12 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansard80%2F1901-08-14%2F0046%22>

King O'Malley, the Member for Tasmania, spoke about subsidising carriers who employed 'coloured labour' and the impact this had on the 'white man':

It seems to me that the present system is simply one of universal taxation for the killing-off of the white sailor and the advancement of the black man ... With all due respect to the Prime Minister, I hope that we shall notify that the Commonwealth of Australia is not going to tolerate any scheme which has for its object the destruction of the white man and the elevation of the coloured man.⁶⁷

Some members argued that white sailors were the only ones who could defend Australia in the event that Australia were to be involved in international conflict and ships employed in trading required to participate. They thus believed that the continuation of contracts with carriers who employed 'coloured labour' were putting national security at risk. William Hughes insisted that the lascar seamen were 'unreliable in time of danger' and asserted that: 'If we were to have any sort of defence force by sea in time of danger ... our mercantile marine should be recruited from the white nations of the world, and if possible, from the British race'.⁶⁸

The Member for Canobolas, Thomas Brown (ALP), explained how he believed the employment of lascars could damage Australia's defences:

In times of national emergency, we must look to our mercantile marine to assist in fighting our battles. If the naval defence of these States were to be left exclusively to the coloured races, there might be some ground for the contention that only that class of labour should be employed on our mail steamers. But when trouble comes, I am afraid that the lascar will disappear, and we shall have to look to the British bulldog to fight our battles. As custodians of the public purse, we should see that the men employed upon mail steamers, which we subsidize, are those of our own race.⁶⁹

Although he did not view the issue as a white Australia matter, and was cautious about existing mail contracts shared with the British Government, the Prime Minister was ultimately convinced that the

-
66. C McDonald, 'Post and Telegraph Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 14 August 1901, p. 3739, viewed 12 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1901-08-14%2F0050%22>
67. K O'Malley, 'Post and Telegraph Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 14 August 1901, p. 3740, viewed 12 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1901-08-14%2F0054%22>
68. W Hughes, 'Post and Telegraph Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 14 August 1901, p. 3735, viewed 12 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1901-08-14%2F0045%22>
69. T Brown, 'Post and Telegraph Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 14 August 1901, p. 3739, viewed 12 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1901-08-14%2F0049%22>

Bill should include a reference to 'white labour'. Agreeing with the amendment that would see the exclusion of non-white people from carrying mail put by Mr Hughes, Prime Minister Barton declared:

With regard to any anticipated difficulty we may have to face, the danger will not be so large if we use the words 'white labour' as it would be by any differentiation between subjects of the Empire and those of foreign civilized white nations. Having made this explanation and on this understanding, I am prepared to accept the amendment. I shall endeavour, if the amendment is carried, to secure that the Bill shall receive the Royal assent, and want it to be clearly understood that if it does not, the difficulties in the way, whatever they may be, will have been pointed out, because I shall be anxious to remove them, and shall strive to do so.⁷⁰

In the Senate, Postmaster-General James Drake (PROT) supported the exclusion of non-white carriers:

If it came to a question of carrying the mails I should say that there would be ample justification for insisting to the greatest possible extent that they should be carried by white persons. It would be almost justifiable in any civilized country to insist on a certain class of persons being engaged in that most important work.⁷¹

New South Wales Senator Richard O'Connor (PROT) declared the Bill necessary in order to preserve white Australia:

I was observing that one of the cardinal points of our policy in dealing with the Commonwealth is that Australia shall be maintained as a place for the white race.

...

it is necessary for our preservation that this injustice [to other parts of the Empire] should be done.⁷²

An example of the main reason for opposition to the amendment to exclude non-white mail carriers is provided in a statement by New South Wales Senator Edward Pulsford (FT). He objected to the amendment excluding non-white mail carriers because it went against Australia's position in the British Empire:

-
70. E Barton, 'Post and Telegraph Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 4 September 1901, p. 4511, viewed 12 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansard80%2F1901-09-04%2F0103%22>
71. J Drake, 'Post and Telegraph Bill', Senate, *Debates*, 3 October 1901, p. 5528, viewed 13 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansards80%2F1901-10-03%2F0043%22>
72. R O'Connor, 'Post and Telegraph Bill', Senate, *Debates*, 3 October 1901, p. 5534, viewed 13 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansards80%2F1901-10-03%2F0049%22>

Australia is part of the Empire, which is committed to a certain course. There are hundreds of millions of the coloured races under the Crown of Great Britain, and it ill becomes us to throw a slur upon them.⁷³

Likewise, Tasmanian Senator Henry Dobson (FT) argued that members should not damage Imperial relations in their pursuit of the White Australia policy:

The policy of a white Australia every one of us admits to be a true policy, and we are all in favour of it. But the whole point lies in the application of that doctrine. Do not my honorable friends know that all through their lives there are doctrines which have to be applied with discretion? Do they not recognise that it will be a cruelty and an injustice to vote simply for a craze regardless of its consequences?⁷⁴

Despite these objections, the Senate passed the amendment to exclude non-white carriers on 4 October 1901 by a slim majority of four, 16 votes to 12.⁷⁵ The Post and Telegraph Bill received Royal Assent on 16 November 1901.⁷⁶

Naturalization Act 1903

In the words of Postmaster-General James Drake, the object of the Naturalization Bill was 'to create a Commonwealth naturalization, and to lay down the conditions under which aliens may become entitled to the rights and privileges of British subjects in Australia'.⁷⁷ The Senate amended the Bill in order to exclude 'Aboriginal natives' from Asia, Africa and the Pacific Islands from applying for a certificate of naturalisation.⁷⁸ The Bill was then returned to the House of Representatives where some members expressed opposition to the amendment on the basis that it would affect Australia's relations with Britain.

Senator William Higgs (ALP) moved the amendment to exclude 'aboriginal native[s] of Asia, Africa, or the Islands of the Pacific'. His statement illustrates the extent to which, for him, the *Naturalization Act 1903* should be about stopping 'coloured' migrants from obtaining Australian citizenship:

-
73. E Pulsford, 'Post and Telegraph Bill', Senate, *Debates*, 3 October 1901, p. 5529, viewed 13 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansards80%2F1901-10-03%2F0044%22>
74. H Dobson, 'Post and Telegraph Bill', Senate, *Debates*, 3 October 1901, p. 5531, viewed 14 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansards80%2F1901-10-03%2F0048%22>
75. Australia, Senate, *Journals*, no. 62, 1901–02, p. 177.
76. *Post and Telegraph Act 1901* (Cth) No. 12, 1901.
77. J Drake, 'Naturalization Bill Second Reading', Senate, *Debates*, 1 July 1903, p. 1607, viewed 14 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansards80%2F1903-07-01%2F0066%22>
78. The amendment to the *Naturalization Act 1903* to exclude 'Aboriginal natives' from Asia, Africa and the Pacific Islands resembled Section 4 of the *Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902*. *Naturalization Act 1903* (Cth) No. 11, 1903; *Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902* (Cth) No. 8, 1902.

The object of this amendment is to prevent any of the 80,000 coloured aliens who are not naturalized at present, but who may be naturalized, or desire to be naturalised, in the future, from applying for Commonwealth naturalisation papers.⁷⁹

In arguing for the exclusion of Asian people from naturalisation, Senator George Pearce (ALP), who later served as Minister of Defence in 1908, drew on the example of laws in the United States that prohibited Chinese naturalisation:

Surely what was necessary in the United States is equally necessary in Australia. Whilst we wish to make the Commonwealth the home of the European races, we do not recognise the same principle with regard to Asiatics, and we ought not to afford them the same facilities for becoming naturalised.⁸⁰

Queensland Senator Anderson Dawson (ALP) concurred: 'there ought, in my opinion, to be some differentiation between the coloured alien and the white alien'.⁸¹

Other senators used the occasion to outright slander 'coloured' peoples. Senator James Styles (PROT) asserted:

The coloured races know nothing of our laws and care less; if they do try to make themselves acquainted with our laws it is usually for the purpose of evading them. If the Chinese have votes they exercise a privilege to which in my opinion they have no right.⁸²

However, there was considerable opposition to the amendment to exclude from naturalisation people native to Asia, Africa, or the Pacific Islands because of the concern that if the Bill was passed with this amendment it would have a negative impact on Australia's close relations with Britain. Tasmanian Senator Henry Dobson argued that the proposed legislation would not benefit Australia because it ignored the fact that Australia was a member of a diverse empire:

But legislation of this kind will affect the Empire. When we have aliens and subjects of the Empire of black and yellow colour, it seems to me a monstrous thing to place in our Act, without the slightest occasion for it, a restrictive provision which may make us look ridiculous, which may

-
79. W Higgs, 'Naturalization Bill', Senate, *Debates*, 3 July 1903, p. 1933, viewed 15 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansards80%2F1903-07-09%2F0027%22>
80. G Pearce, 'Second reading: Naturalization Bill', Senate, *Debates*, 2 July 1903, p. 1707, viewed 15 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansards80%2F1903-07-02%2F0059%22>
81. A Dawson, 'Second reading: Naturalization Bill', Senate, *Debates*, 2 July 1903, p. 1709, viewed 15 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansards80%2F1903-07-02%2F0061%22>
82. J Styles, 'Second reading: Naturalization Bill', Senate, *Debates*, 3 July 1903, p. 1755, viewed 15 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansards80%2F1903-07-03%2F0030%22>

make us false to the principles of Imperialism, and which under no conceivable circumstances can do any good.⁸³

The Postmaster-General, Senator Drake, disagreed with the amendment because Australia's laws would not be reciprocal with those of other countries and could adversely affect Australian citizens overseas:

If we introduce restrictions which do not exist in the Acts in force in other British countries, we shall find them a bar to reciprocity. That is the reason why we should prevent these restrictions being expressed in the way proposed, and why we should leave the settlement of these matters to the Governor-General in Council.⁸⁴

The disagreement in the Senate was substantial. The amendment referring to 'Aboriginal natives' of Asia, Africa and the Pacific Islands passed the Senate by the slimmest of margins, 11 votes to 10 votes, on 9 July 1903.⁸⁵

Upon the return of the Bill to the House of Representatives, members expressed similar objections to the explicit prohibition of 'Aboriginal natives' of Asia, Africa and the Pacific Islands to those that were raised in the Senate. Prime Minister Barton adopted the same position on the question of denying applications based on race to the one he had taken during the immigration restriction debate. He suggested that 'it would be better to carry out our object in such a way as not to cause any embarrassment to the Imperial Government'.⁸⁶ Prime Minister Barton cautioned members that he was 'not sure that it is an advantage to specifically draw the colour-line' in the Bill and moved that the reference to Asians, Africans and Pacific Islanders be replaced with the words 'not being of European descent'.⁸⁷

However, a majority of members rejected the Prime Minister's suggestion on the basis that the phrase 'Asians, Africans and Pacific Islanders' was more to the point. The Member for North Melbourne and Attorney-General from 1904, Henry Higgins (PROT), was one who took this position:

As the clause stands we except clearly specified classes whom we desire to except, but if we say that any person who is of 'European descent' may apply for a certificate of naturalisation, a

83. H Dobson, 'Naturalization Bill', Senate, *Debates*, 9 July 1903, p. 1942, viewed 15 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansards80%2F1903-07-09%2F0036%22>

84. J Drake, 'Naturalization Bill', Senate, *Debates*, 9 July 1903, p. 1934, viewed 15 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansards80%2F1903-07-09%2F0029%22>

85. Australia, Senate, *Journals*, no. 18, 1903, p. 64.

86. E Barton, 'Naturalization Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 9 September 1903, p. 4864, viewed 14 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1903-09-09%2F0045%22>

87. *Ibid.*, pp. 4863, 4864, 4866.

number of difficulties may arise. There are some very excellent members of this House who cannot claim to be of European descent.⁸⁸

The House of Representatives agreed to the clause on 9 September 1903. The *Naturalization Act 1903* received Royal Assent on 13 October 1903 and commenced on 1 January 1904.⁸⁹

Contract Immigrants Act 1905

In the early years of the Australian Parliament questions were raised about the effectiveness of the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*. Some senators and members cited instances where skilled white migrants had been refused entry to Australia because of restrictions on contract labour, whilst others pointed to the supposed increase in Asian people living in Australia as evidence that the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* was failing.⁹⁰ Overall, there was general consensus that migration to Australia should be encouraged so long as this migration was made up of white people. As the Prime Minister, Alfred Deakin (PROT) commented in 1905: 'As I have said, over and over again, an empty Australia is not a White Australia'.⁹¹

The *Contract Immigrants Act 1905* was introduced to tighten contract labour entry conditions and allay members' misapprehensions about white Europeans being refused entry to Australia.⁹² Under this Act, employers seeking to employ contract labourers had to gain approval from the Minister for External Affairs, which would only be granted under certain conditions: equivalent labour was unavailable in Australia; contracts were in writing; award wages were paid; and contract labourers were not being brought to Australia to incite or partake in industrial action.⁹³ The Act amended and superseded section 3, paragraph (g) and section 11 of the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*.⁹⁴

In his second reading speech, Prime Minister Deakin made it clear that the amendments were not meant to restrict white immigration:

88. H Higgins, 'Naturalization Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 9 September 1903, p. 4867, viewed 14 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1903-09-09%2F0049%22>

89. *Naturalization Act 1903* (Cth) No. 11, 1903.

90. Some senators and members argued that the contract clause in the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* had been used to delay the entry into Australia of six skilled workers from Britain. According to *The Argus*, the Prime Minister permitted the six men to land in Australia only after an inquiry into the incident had been conducted. For information on the 'Six Hatters' incident, see 'The "Six Hatters" scandal', *The Argus*, 12 December 1903, p. 17, viewed 20 June 2012, <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/10587451>

91. A Deakin, 'Second reading speech: Contract Immigrants Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 10 November 1905, p. 4950, viewed 15 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1905-11-10%2F0022%22>

92. *Contract Immigrants Act 1905* (Cth) No. 19, 1905.

93. M Langfield, *More people imperative: immigration to Australia, 1901–39*, National Archives of Australia, Canberra, 1999, viewed 7 June 2012, http://www.naa.gov.au/naaresources/publications/research_guides/guides/immig/frames/append2.htm

94. *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* (Cth) No. 17, 1901.

It [the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*] applied to people of our own race, and even to those of our own country, who might happen to be outside the Commonwealth. Consequently, the original provisions in relation to coloured peoples have affected British citizens who seek to enter the Commonwealth under contracts to perform manual labour. A great deal of misapprehension has thus occurred which ought to be removed.

Neither this nor any proposed Bill, nor any Act, excludes an uncontracted man who wishes to come to this country from Great Britain or from Europe.⁹⁵

According to the Prime Minister, the amendments had two aims. The first of these was that white people should be encouraged to settle in Australia:

It has been suggested that if the large fertile areas still unoccupied in Queensland and elsewhere are to be settled, it is quite possible that some contract proposals will have to be made with the object of introducing settlers and giving them a good start on land which those States rich in territory are both ready and anxious to offer. I can only say that proposals of that kind ought to be most sympathetically received.

The second aim was that the distinction between white settlers and 'coloured labour', which had been blurred by the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*, should be restored:

The purpose of the measure is to set out clearly and distinctly those whom it was intended to shut out under the original Act [non-white migrants]. Those whom it was designed to exclude are still prohibited.⁹⁶

Not all members were convinced that this distinction should be clearly set out in the Act. The Deputy Leader of the Free Trade Party, Joseph Cook, rejected the Bill because he saw it as an act of betrayal against the British Government. Whilst he believed that the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* had 'stopped the healthy flow of free immigrants from various portions of our Empire' and should be amended, Mr Cook also declared that the 'irritating amendments' proposed by the Government would shut the door in Britain's face.⁹⁷ That is, that it would run counter to the British Government's stated opposition to racial discrimination.

The Member for Echuca, James McColl (PROT), argued that the principles of the White Australia policy would be maintained if British citizens were exempt from the Bill:

But the policy of a White Australia does not mean that we should keep Australia for Australians. There are fine types of white men in other countries. Why should we turn our backs on our brothers and sisters in the old land? We all have relatives there, and to deprive our own flesh and blood in Great Britain of an opportunity to come to Australia, where they may enjoy a freer and better life, is not only cruel, but unpatriotic.⁹⁸

95. A Deakin, 'Second reading speech: Contract Immigrants Bill', op. cit., p. 4946 and p. 4947.

96. Ibid., p.4950.

97. J Cook, 'Contract Immigrants Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 7 December 1905, p. 6426.

98. J McColl, 'Contract Immigrants Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 7 December 1905, p. 6478.

Similarly, the Member for North Sydney, Dugald Thomson (FT), when moving an amendment to exempt British citizens from restrictions, urged members to recognise the 'difference between the people of the mother land ... and the most desirable or undesirable of foreigners'.⁹⁹ And the Member for Bland and then former Prime Minister John Christian Watson (ALP), consistent with his calls to ban people based on the colour of their skin, argued that 'white British subjects' should be exempt from the Act.¹⁰⁰

In response to these positions, the Prime Minister Alfred Deakin agreed that special provisions should be inserted to differentiate British citizens from 'undesirable' immigrants:

I am sure that the fact of our being able to discriminate in favour of our own kith and kin will be acceptable to every honorable member. The difficulty has been to discover a means by which this can be done effectively, without impairing the economic considerations on which this measure is based.¹⁰¹

Overall, the debate in the House of Representatives was about developing an approach that did not discriminate against British migrants and did not increase competition from foreign workers. Prime Minister Deakin reworded the suggestions of Mr Watson and Mr Thomson to exempt 'British subjects born in the United Kingdom or their descendents born in any part of the British Empire'. In a response to a member's question about 'coloured peoples', the Prime Minister stated that the dictation test could still be applied to non-white British subjects.¹⁰²

In the Senate, the Minister for Defence, Thomas Playford (PROT), introduced the amendments believing that the Government had found the right balance between encouraging white migration and protecting Australian jobs:

I do not think that any one can say that fresh blood is not required. I think that we ought to introduce immigrants, but at the same time I do not think it would be wise to bring them in at a time of depression—when we perhaps had undergone a severe drought, and every kind of

99. D Thomson, 'Contract Immigrants Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 7 December 1905, p. 6517, viewed 19 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1905-12-07%2F0071%22>

100. J C Watson, 'Contract Immigrants Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 7 December 1905, p. 6517, viewed 19 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1905-12-07%2F0071%22>

101. A Deakin, 'Contract Immigrants Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 7 December 1905, p. 6518, viewed 19 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1905-12-07%2F0073%22>

102. Ibid.

employment was scarce. The Bill contains a provision to prevent their introduction at any time when the Minister may think fit.¹⁰³

It is, I think, an improvement upon our present Immigration Restriction Act. It makes matters quite clear with regard to workmen whom it is desired to bring out under contract. It enables a person to bring out servants without any trouble, and it makes special provision in favour of our own countrymen, as against foreigners.¹⁰⁴

Nonetheless, a number of Labor senators expressed their opposition because they believed the Bill would reduce restrictions on contract labour and increase competition from foreign workers. Queensland Senator William Higgs (ALP) believed the Government planned 'to introduce contract labour into the Commonwealth'. He stated:

There are 7000 kanakas in Queensland—the majority of whom are to be sent away from the Commonwealth within the next few years, although those who are married and have families will no doubt be permitted to end their days here. I looked upon the legislation proposed to exclude coloured labour from Queensland as something which would prove a boon to the workers, and find employment for many men who are scattered about Queensland, and can find nothing to do.¹⁰⁵

The danger, according to Senator Higgs, was that 'if we allow contract labour to be introduced into any industry, we shall undoubtedly enhance the difficulties of the working classes who are already here, and cannot get employment'.¹⁰⁶

Similarly, West Australian Senator Hugh de Largie (ALP) declared: 'I am opposed to this Bill, because I believe it will relax our existing legislation dealing with the introduction of contract immigrants'.¹⁰⁷ He then stated: 'While there are unemployed persons in Australia we should not open the door to the introduction of contract labour'.¹⁰⁸

Queensland Senator James Stewart (ALP) argued that not only did the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* protect Australian jobs and thus did not require amendment, but that there was also no mandate from the Australian people to amend the Act:

103. T Playford, 'Second reading speech: Contract Immigrants Bill', Senate, *Debates*, 13 December 1905, p. 6815, viewed 19 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansards80%2F1905-12-13%2F0079%22>

104. Ibid., p. 6817.

105. W Higgs, 'Second reading speech: Contract Immigrants Bill', Senate, *Debates*, 14 December 1905, p. 6908, viewed 19 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansards80%2F1905-12-14%2F0071%22>

106. Ibid., p. 6910.

107. H de Largie, 'Second reading speech: Contract Immigrants Bill', Senate, *Debates*, 14 December 1905, p. 6942, viewed 20 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansards80%2F1905-12-14%2F0084%22>

108. Ibid., p. 6943.

When a law affecting the interests of the people of Australia is desired to be amended, the first duty which lies upon those who seek to alter its provisions is to show that a demand for the change has come from the people. Have the people of Australia asked for a revision of this Act? I emphatically say that we have not the slightest evidence to that effect.¹⁰⁹

In spite of these objections, the Senate passed the Bill on 15 December 1905 by a majority of 17 to 9 votes.¹¹⁰ It received Royal Assent on 21 December 1905.¹¹¹

1906 to 1914

Notwithstanding the amendments to the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* and the *Pacific Island Labourers Act 1901*, there were few Commonwealth laws enacted between 1905 and 1914 that regulated immigration to Australia. This absence of new legislation did not reflect a lack of parliamentary interest in immigration-related issues. Senators and members were certainly concerned with recurrent issues such as protecting Australian jobs and industries from Asian competition and strengthening existing legislation.

Senators and members continued to warn the Parliament about the increasing Asian population in Australia. Senator Hugh De Largie, reflecting upon his travels to north-western Australia, protested on 22 June 1906 about a burgeoning Asian population and the impact this had on white unemployment:

I cannot account for the number of Chinamen in Australia, but I know that there are more Asiatics in Western Australia, more particularly on the North West coast, today than there were prior to Federation. Undoubtedly the Japanese outnumber all the others. For instance, at Broome, 70 per cent, of the Asiatics are Japanese. But alongside the Japanese, Chinese carpenters are erecting the largest building which has yet been undertaken there. Not a white man is employed on the job. White men tendered for the work, but they were cut out. What show has a white man to tender successfully against Chinese?¹¹²

In 1907 the Member for Brisbane, Justin Foxton (ANTI-SOC), stated that two-thirds of the 3300 people living in the Northern Territory were 'Asiatics'.¹¹³

109. J Stewart, 'Second reading speech: Contract Immigrants Bill', Senate, *Debates*, 14 December 1905, p. 6951, viewed 20 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansards80%2F1905-12-14%2F0087%22>

110. Australia, Senate, *Journals*, no. 62, 1905, p. 235.

111. *Contract Immigrants Act 1905* (Cth) No. 19, 1905.

112. H De Largie, 'Supply Bill (No.1)', Senate, *Debates*, 22 June 1906, p. 643, viewed 21 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query%3DId%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansards80%2F1906-06-22%2F0035%22>

113. J Foxton, 'Governor General's Speech: Address in Reply', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 9 July 1907, p. 239, viewed 22 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1907-07-09%2F0032%22>

Even after the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* had been amended, a number of senators and members blamed the Act and immigration policy more generally for what they believed was an influx in 'Asiatics'. Senator Thomas Chataway (ANTI-SOC) complained that 'Asiatics' had not been adequately prohibited from entering Australia:

There is good ground for my belief that there is a mode of getting these Asiatics into Australia. I have not discovered what that mode is, but since 1904 nothing has been done to prevent Asiatics from coming in.¹¹⁴

Member for Fremantle William Hedges (WAP) expressed his shock at the supposed increasing number of Asian people living in Australia:

But the most astonishing figures are those which record the increase in the coloured and Asiatic population of Australia. I find that during the month of August the increase in the number of departures of Asiatics was 165, whilst the increase in the number of arrivals during the same month was 199. The increase in the number of departures for eight months was 740, and in the number of arrivals for the same period it was 926. These figures have been an eye-opener to me, because I was under the impression that we were gradually reducing the numbers of our Asiatic population.¹¹⁵

Members did ask the Government to explain the number of Asian people living in Australia. In 1912, the Member for Morton, Hugh Sinclair (ANTI-SOC), questioned the Minister for External Affairs, Josiah Thomas (ALP), about the number of immigrants arriving from China and Japan:

I should like the Minister to explain how it is that such a large number of Chinese and Japanese are coming into Australia. It is recorded that during the first half of this year 789 Chinese and 408 Japanese, or in all 1197 Asiatics, came to Australia, and that during the second half of last year 716 Chinese and 281 Japanese, or in all 1,001 Asiatics were admitted, making a total of 2198 for the year. This seems to be a very large increase on any previous figures. The departures have not increased; in fact, the Immigration Restriction Act is not fulfilling the object for which it was passed.¹¹⁶

114. T Chataway, 'Immigration Restriction Bill', Senate, *Debates*, 11 December 1908, p. 3140, viewed 22 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansards80%2F1908-12-11%2F0053%22>

115. W Hedges, 'Question Estimates', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 13 November 1912, p. 5569, viewed 22 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1912-11-13%2F0214%22>

116. H Sinclair, 'Question Estimates', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 13 November 1912, p. 5191, viewed 22 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1912-11-13%2F0143%22>

In response Mr Thomas said that he believed there was 'a considerable leakage under the Immigration Restriction Act' and that this may have been 'due to a very great extent to stowaways coming in by the boats'.¹¹⁷

It should be noted that amidst the discussion of an increasing Asian population, the state and Commonwealth Governments were encouraging white migration to Australia. A High Commissioner to the United Kingdom was appointed in 1909 to advertise Australia to suitable migrants and some states, including New South Wales (1906), Victoria (1907), South Australia (1911) and Tasmania (1912), operated settlement assistance schemes. These schemes offered grants of land and reduced travel fares to British citizens.¹¹⁸

War Precautions Act 1914

The *War Precautions Act 1914* was a significant piece of legislation that bestowed upon the Governor-General wide-ranging powers to restrict civil liberties and, in particular, to control the activities of aliens (non-British subjects) residing in Australia.¹¹⁹ According to section 5 of the Act, the Governor-General had the power to: prohibit aliens from landing or embarking in the Commonwealth; deport aliens from the Commonwealth; require aliens to reside and remain within certain places or districts; and require aliens to comply with such provisions as to registration, change of abode, travelling, and trading.¹²⁰

Due to the extraordinary state of war, the Government requested the hasty passage of the Bill. The debate in both Houses was curtailed and the legislation was passed in a single day without amendment. Some members were cautious about the powers conferred to the Executive, particularly in relation to martial law. However, members were largely willing to support the Bill because they believed that controlling the activities of aliens in a time of war was a matter of urgency.

When moving the second reading, the Attorney-General, William Hughes (ALP), explained the intent of the Bill:

Its aim is to prevent the disclosure of important information, to give power to deport, and otherwise deal with aliens, to interrogate and obtain information in various ways, and to appoint officers to carry into effect any orders or regulations which may be made under the Bill.¹²¹

-
117. J Thomas, 'Question Estimates', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 13 November 1912, p. 5191, viewed 22 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansard80%2F1912-11-13%2F0144%22>
118. M Langfield, *More people imperative*, op. cit.
119. Ibid.
120. *War Precautions Act 1914* (Cth) No. 10, 1914.
121. W Hughes, 'Second reading: War Precautions Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 28 October 1914, p. 369, viewed 20 June 2012,

He noted that the powers conferred by the measure were 'very considerable', but insisted that they were 'required' nonetheless.¹²²

The Leader of the Opposition, Joseph Cook (LIB), agreed with the Attorney-General that the degree of secrecy during wartime meant that the reasons for the Bill could not be discussed in-depth:

This is in some respects an extraordinary Bill, and one intended, I presume, to meet circumstances which are extraordinary. We shall have to trust the Minister absolutely in regard to it, because in the very nature of the case he cannot inform the House of, and thus make public, the circumstances which require the passing of it.¹²³

The former Attorney-General and Member for Flinders, William Irvine (LIB), raised the point that the powers of the Executive could lead to a state of martial law:

That provision [clause 4] is absolutely unlimited. It invests the Executive Government of the day with the most complete power to legislate, whether Parliament is or is not sitting, on any matter touching the actions or conduct of any member of the community.¹²⁴

However, he also declared his support for the Bill: 'I raise no objection to the Bill. In a case of urgency, responsibility for a measure of this sort must be taken by the Government.'¹²⁵

In committee, the Member for Capricornia, William Higgs (ALP), expressed concerns for people, particularly Germans, who had migrated to Australia. He stated:

While I am with the Government in every endeavour they make to get hold of any enemy in Australia, and to put him where he ought to be, I wish to know whether they are making due provision for the protection that ought to be afforded to every person who comes to Australia at our invitation, and who makes his home here.¹²⁶

He described the mood amongst some parts of the population towards German people:

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1914-10-28%2F0150%22>

122. Ibid., p. 370.

123. J Cook, 'Second reading: War Precautions Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 28 October 1914, p. 370, viewed 20 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1914-10-28%2F0151%22>

124. W Irvine, 'Second reading: War Precautions Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 28 October 1914, p. 371, viewed 21 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1914-10-28%2F0152%22>

125. Ibid., p. 372.

126. W Higgs, 'Second reading: War Precautions Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 28 October 1914, p. 374–375, viewed 20 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1914-10-28%2F0162%22>

What may be described as something of a 'panicky' feeling has taken possession of some members of the community, and it is causing a great deal of cruelty to be exhibited to certain persons who are good citizens of Australia.¹²⁷

The Attorney-General did reassure the House the Bill was 'not intended to harass any law-abiding person in the Commonwealth, naturalized, un-naturalized, or native born'. He also said that he had 'information which shows that persons regard the form of naturalization as a convenient cloak which they assume in order to operate more successfully against the Commonwealth'.¹²⁸

At the same time, Mr Hughes made reference to German expatriates when illustrating his point about the limitations of naturalisation:

If I were in Germany for 100 years, if I could live that long, I should still be British or Australian, and I would not think it wrong to do what I could for Great Britain or Australia. I put a German in Australia on exactly the same footing. His sympathy is for Germany in this struggle. Is it not a question of life and death with him and with us?¹²⁹

Senators also believed that the passage of the Bill was a matter of urgency. Standing and Sessional Orders were suspended so that the Bill would pass without delay. Senator Albert Gould (LIB) articulated the support that the Bill received in the Senate:

In dealing with a measure of this kind, we all belong to one party. Whatever proposal may be brought forward by the Government, if it is commended to us as being necessary in the interests of the Commonwealth and for the safeguarding of the Empire, it will receive fair and just treatment at the hands of every individual senator.¹³⁰

No substantial opposition was raised in the Senate. The Bill was passed without amendment on 28 October 1914 and received Royal Assent the following day.¹³¹

Amendments

The *War Precautions Act 1914* was amended a number of times during the war to broaden and strengthen the powers of the Governor-General to defend Australia from wartime adversaries. This was partly because the Bill had been hastily approved by the Parliament and partly because the provisions of the Act had been modelled on the *Defence of the Realm Act 1914* (United Kingdom),

127. Ibid., p. 375.

128. W Hughes, 'Second reading: War Precautions Bill', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 28 October 1914, p. 384, viewed 21 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansardr80%2F1914-10-28%2F0176%22>

129. Ibid.

130. A Gould, 'Second reading: War Precautions Bill', Senate, *Debates*, 28 October 1914, p. 343–344, viewed 21 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansards80%2F1914-10-28%2F0049%22>

131. *War Precautions Act 1914* (Cth) No. 10, 1914.

which in the words of Assistant Minister for Defence, Jens Jensen (ALP), 'was found not to do all that was required of it'.¹³² However, these amendments did not change the parts of the Principal Act that enabled the Governor-General to control the activities of alien subjects in Australia. The Act was ultimately repealed in 1920.

Conclusion

This background note has outlined the nature of the major immigration debates between Federation and World War One by chronicling representative speeches selected from the parliamentary debates. It has shown that most senators and members believed in a white Australia and were willing to support legislation that restricted non-British immigration. Early differences arose over the extent to which laws should target race and whether Australia should enact legislation that could affect Imperial relations. Some reasons why parliamentarians supported a restriction or complete prohibition on non-white immigration included the desire to maintain 'racial purity' and 'racial superiority', the protection of Australian jobs and industries from foreign competition, and the national defence of Australia.

A majority of senators and members were also in favour of encouraging white people to settle in Australia. The beginning of World War One saw unprecedented legislative action taken by the Parliament to curtail the activities of all citizens, and in particular alien subjects. The way in which Australia dealt with the subjects of former adversaries post World War One will be addressed in the next instalment of the Parliamentary Library's proposed series tracing immigration debates in Australia's history.

Glossary

Abbreviations for political affiliations¹³³

ALP	Australian Labor Party
ANTI-SOC	Anti-Socialist Party
FT	Free Trade
LIB	Liberal Party of Australia
PROT	Protectionist Party
WAP	Western Australia Party

132. J Jensen, 'Second reading: War Precautions Bill (No. 2)', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 23 April 1915, p. 2625, viewed 21 June 2012, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22hansard80%2Fhansard80%2F1915-04-23%2F0053%22>

133. Parliamentary Library, *Parliamentary Handbook of the Commonwealth of Australia 2011*, 32nd edition, Department of Parliamentary Services, Canberra, 2011.

© Commonwealth of Australia



Creative Commons

With the exception of the Commonwealth Coat of Arms, and to the extent that copyright subsists in a third party, this publication, its logo and front page design are licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Australia](#) licence.

In essence, you are free to copy and communicate this work in its current form for all non-commercial purposes, as long as you attribute the work to the author and abide by the other licence terms. The work cannot be adapted or modified in any way. Content from this publication should be attributed in the following way: Author(s), Title of publication, Series Name and No, Publisher, Date.

To the extent that copyright subsists in third party quotes it remains with the original owner and permission may be required to reuse the material.

Inquiries regarding the licence and any use of the publication are welcome to webmanager@aph.gov.au.

This work has been prepared to support the work of the Australian Parliament using information available at the time of production. The views expressed do not reflect an official position of the Parliamentary Library, nor do they constitute professional legal opinion.

Feedback is welcome and may be provided to: web.library@aph.gov.au. Any concerns or complaints should be directed to the Parliamentary Librarian. Parliamentary Library staff are available to discuss the contents of publications with Senators and Members and their staff. To access this service, clients may contact the author or the Library's Central Entry Point for referral.