

Nation Race and Citizen – HTAV Talk March 27th, 2011

Dot Point One: The hopes and fears which helped create the new nation and shaped ideas about citizenship, belonging and responsibilities.

What did those who led the federation movement and those who supported it, hope for?

- A safe, secure and independent nation
- A pure white British style Australia.
- A prosperous nation with a high standard of living.
- An efficient well run nation.
- A democratic nation.
- An egalitarian nation including rights for women
- A caring nation that looked after its citizens
- A well educated nation.
- A healthy nation
- A united and cohesive nation

What fears helped to shape the push for and support for federation?

- Fear of invasion from European countries
- Fear of racial 'contamination' from non-whites
- Fear of competition for jobs from outsiders.
- Fear of lack of economic progress.
- Fear of declining working conditions.

There were also fears that actually slowed down the movement towards federation. These included:

- Fear of loss of states' rights, powers and influence.
- Fears about the unequal size and power of the colonies.
- Anxieties about Protection and Free Trade.
- Fear about weakening of ties to Britain.

Dot Point Two: The processes of inclusion and exclusion which formed a nation of Australian citizens up to 1914.

There are **TWO concepts** that you need to understand here:

1. **Citizenship** - What did citizenship mean around the turn of the century?
(Note that there was no official Australian citizenship until 1949. All Australians INCLUDING Aborigines were 'British subjects'.)
2. **National Identity** - What did this mean?
 - To what extent was there a sense of national identity in the lead up to federation?
 - How important was national identity in the formation of the nation?
 - To what extent did the sense of national identity grow stronger in the years from federation to 1914?

Citizenship and belonging were largely determined by TWO PROCESSES

- The Constitution – the document drawn up which formed the blueprint for the structure of the nation.
Example of exclusion through the constitution: Sections 53 and 127 which denied Aborigines the right to be counted in the census and denied the Commonwealth any power to make laws for Aborigines.
- Legislation – the laws passed by the Commonwealth and State Parliaments between 1901 and 1914.
Example of inclusion through legislation: All women over 21, whether they had the right to vote in their Colonial parliaments or not, were given the right to vote in Commonwealth elections under the 1902 Franchise Act.

Social and cultural policies and practices which made some people feel included and some excluded also helped to determine citizenship and belonging.

Example of social/cultural exclusion: unmarried mothers were legally included under the Maternity Allowance Act of 1912 but socially excluded and even shunned by mainstream society.

There were no official laws banning Aborigines from entering certain premises such as pubs or sporting clubs. However, the unwelcoming behavior of many white Australians conveyed the impression that they did not belong.

NOTE THAT SOME GROUPS WERE NOT COMPLETELY EXCLUDED BUT MARGINALISED - eg Some Chinese long term Chinese residents such as Quong Tart

<p>Dot Point Three : The <u>benefits and responsibilities</u> extended to those who belonged to the new nation, including work education and welfare legislation, women and motherhood, national defence and conscription</p>
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The benefits extended to those who belonged: predominantly white males of British origin.

- Political rights – vote, right to stand for Parliament etc
- Workers rights – Right to have disputes heard, right to basic wage, rights to pensions etc
- Prosperity and high living standards – These were expected to follow from the above, plus laws such as 'The new Protection' and the establishment of the Commonwealth Bank.
- Welfare –Right to basic wage, maternity allowance, Invalid and Aged pensions etc
- Protection – Right to feel safe through military training, the establishment of a citizen army and the establishment of Australian Navy

- Education (state responsibility) – all children were entitled to a free primary education (to Year 8). Education was compulsory but Aboriginal children were not forced to go to school.
- Health (state responsibility) – most people had access to medical care but the quality often depended on the wealth of the patient.
- Sense of belonging and acceptance – most white people received messages through laws, political speeches, newspapers, literature, plays and paintings that they were members of one of the finest and most progressive societies in the world. They were encouraged to feel positive about Australia. In 1883, Englishman REN Twopenny visited Australia and he wrote:

'In Australia, a man feels himself a unit in the community, a somebody...This brings with it a greater sense of self-respect and responsibility.'

The responsibilities placed on those who belonged:

- All white men (and after 1902, all white women) - to vote and be engaged in the political process.
- White males and boys as young as 12 – to undergo military training.
- Employers – to pay the basic wage and provide ‘decent’ working conditions (for the time)
- Workers – to work hard and contribute to the nation’s prosperity.
- White women – to produce white babies.
- Governments (State and Commonwealth) to pass laws that would look after the welfare of the citizens, especially in areas of education and public health.
- All - Continue to support the Empire.

Some or all of these benefits were denied to:

Most Aborigines
Most Chinese
Some workers

Most South Sea Islanders
Some Women and children
Some town and city dwellers

Some traders and merchants (espec in NSW) over Protectionist Policies.

<p>A final point to consider is the extent to which the original hopes and fears had been realised by 1914.</p>
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Largely – By 1914, Australia could be described as:

- A Safe nation
- A White nation
- A nation with a high standard of living
- Democratic nation
- A nation that cared for its citizens.
- Nation loyal to Britain
- Australian identity and unity were emerging.

But Not completely – By 1914, aspects of the hopes and fears had not been fully met:

- Still only a limited sense of national identity
- Non whites denied access to many aspects of citizenship.
- Not really a ‘workingman’s paradise’ - still many poor working conditions.
- Women did not have equal rights in many aspects of life.
- Most Aborigines and Asians and Some Southern and Eastern Europeans were socially excluded.
- Australia not really able to defend herself, still relied on Britain
- Some farmers and businessmen were negatively affected by Protection policies.

WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO IN THE EXAM FOR QUESTION 2

You have to answer THREE questions worth 4, 6 and 10 marks. Pay particular attention to the dates on the questions. NB – Always use the words or terms of the question!

1. Question 2a, worth 4 marks

- This usually asks for Two points – two hopes or fears, two aspects of citizenship, two laws, two processes of inclusion or exclusion, two features of national identity etc.
- Distinguish between the two points – *‘One hope was.... Another aspect of citizenship was... and devote equal time to each point.*
- For each point, name the hope, fear, aspect, law, process etc, give a brief explanation then give evidence (a quote, a law, an aspect of the constitution, a cartoon, a painting.)

2. Question 2b worth 6 marks

- This question usually asks for fuller explanation than question 2a.
- If it asks a general question, ie *‘What processes were used to indicate inclusion and exclusion in the nation?’* you should begin by listing as many processes of inclusion and exclusion as you can. Then go on to develop two: eg clauses in the constitution that excluded Aborigines; laws relating to wages and welfare etc.
- If the question stipulates TWO processes, laws, hopes or fears, aspects of citizenship, ideas about being Australian etc, then deal separately with two. Try to make them different eg race and gender, defence and a high standard of living, egalitarianism and white Australia, Australian identity and British identity etc.
- For each point, offer an explanation and evidence (as for 2a but more detailed).

3. Question 2c worth 10 marks

- This is usually a mini essay beginning with the words *‘To what extent....?’*
- You should challenge the central idea to some degree. Eg *‘To what extent were the ideas that shaped the federation brought to reality in the early years of the new nation?’* You could reply that many ideas did come to reality, but that some did not.
- Offer about three paragraphs each one dealing with an idea that was brought to reality. Support each paragraph with specific evidence - (a quote, a law, a statistic etc)
- Then offer at least one paragraph that deals with an idea that was not brought to reality – Eg *‘However, not all ideas were brought to reality. One hope that was not fully met by federation was the hope for women’s equality. It was 1908 before Victorian women could vote in state elections. Moreover, women did not have equal pay, equal property rights or equal rights in cases of divorce or desertion.*
- Conclusion- come back to the question and indicate the extent to which you agree.

