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M.J.R. MacKELLAR, M.P.

Opposition Spokesman on
Immigration.

Speech to the Ethnic Communities Council of New South Wales

"The establishment of the Ethnic Communities Council of NSW is to be welcomed as a further means of ensuring ethnic groups are given access to policy decisions affecting both migration matters and broad areas of ethnic integration." Mr. Michael MacKellar, Opposition Spokesman on Immigration said at the inaugural meeting of the Ethnic Communities Council of New South Wales in the Sydney Town Hall last night.

"It is to be hoped that differences of cultures, whether they be intra-nation or inter-Australian, will not mar the desired development of a multi-national homogeneous Australian society"

Mr. MacKellar remarked.

"It would be foolish to believe that ethnic settlement and integration in Australia is without problems. There are difficulties apparent in the family, in language understanding and in matters of broad social interaction."

"It is important to remember that each Australian, whether of native origin or foreign birth, has a responsibility to act with some form of social conscience; to develop an understanding and appreciation of other cultures; to become tolerant of minority groups and individuals. Only when this is achieved in Australian society will we have arrived at the cohesive, multi-ethnic community that all political parties desire."

"The government has a responsibility to all migrants and ethnic peoples, who are too often a disadvantaged sector of the community, to take a special interest in the particular problems of health, housing and education that many migrants have to encounter. Strongly affected by changes in the economy, and sadly to say, often exploited in the workforce, the government must ensure that any form of social inequality or denial of the right of opportunity does not take place.

In this regard, personal contact referral centres such as migrant consultative councils, and ethnic community groups, should be established to act not only as a complaint point, but also to express the views and concerns of the ethnic peoples."

"I am confident that the difficult problems our society is at present facing, and the problems we have yet to encounter, will be tackled far more competently and efficiently with the help of organisations such as the Ethnic Communities Council. I heartily welcome its inception, I encourage the continuation of its apolitical nature, and I wish it the success

and good fortune that intelligent understanding and sensitive communication must bring."