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Dear Mr Leermakers

Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage: Anglicare Australia Contribution

Anglicare Australia is the peak body for a national network of locally based Anglican care organisations serving the needs of disadvantaged Australians and their communities. It is a network of 43 agencies across Australia providing services in every region and across the lifespan. Over 21,500 volunteers 12,500 staff and over \$624 million support over half a million vulnerable Australians every year.

Anglicare Australia seeks to influence social and economic policy to advocate for a society where the contribution, dignity and participation of everyone is equally valued.

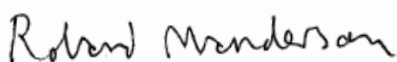
Anglicare Australia has previously argued that Social Inclusion is not measured by, or limited to, our economic participation in society but includes our capability to add intrinsic value to society in all the roles we undertake.

In response to your request for our perspective on breaking the cycles of disadvantage I draw your attention to Anglicare Australia's work addressing barriers to *full* participation in Australian society. Summaries and urls of some of the latest work are provided below and a full copy of these documents have been attached in a separate compendium.

I understand that the unit plans to circulate a draft of the paper and conduct face to face consultations. Anglicare Australia would welcome the opportunity to provide specific feedback at that stage of the project.

Please contact me should you require further information and I look forward to responding more fully in the future.

Sincerely



Roland Manderson
A/g Executive Director

10 July 2010



The voice for Anglican
care and social justice in
Australia

Anglicare Australia Work On Social Inclusion: Summaries

A. Keeping Connected in the Community

- http://www.anglicare.asn.au/documents/Sept09_KeepingConnectedintheCommunity_AreportforAnglicareAustralia_001.pdf

This paper is a report on a combination of projects funded by the Department of Health and Ageing under the banner of *Keeping Connected in the Community*, aimed at addressing the social exclusion of older people in our society. The project highlighted clearly that social relationships and networks have an important role to play in promoting health and well-being for older people and that addressing social isolation needs to be built not just into the goals of health promotion strategies, but into the goals and funding formulas of programs such as Home and Community Care. Furthermore, very isolated older people, who may have experienced social exclusion at many points during their lives, will require extra support and resources.

Human beings have inherent dignity and it is the moral obligation of any society to develop in such a way as to include all as equal citizens. Working towards a socially inclusive society is the vision Anglicare Australia has described for itself and the Keeping Connected in the Community projects have demonstrated our commitment to that vision. The diversity of older people and the life challenges that they often face, including health and mobility difficulties, changing social roles and relationships, widespread ageism and discrimination mean that it is incumbent upon bodies such as the Anglicare Australia network to make special efforts to ensure that their philosophies and practices incorporate an active approach to the social inclusion of older people.

B. Social Inclusion

- http://www.anglicare.asn.au/documents/discussion_paper_social_inclusion.pdf

This paper asserts that so far as possible, social inclusion policy should be integrated with economic policy; but also justified on independent, moral grounds. The emphasis of the Government's agenda is on the first of the five elements in Labor's election policy statement: securing jobs. At the very least, it is necessary to adopt a conceptual framework that includes the whole population in such a way that the majority of elements of Labor's social inclusion agenda are available to all. It requires a different approach to fusing economic and social participation.

To be sure, employment is a most desirable outcome for those who are employable. But social participation and all that is necessary for it is an end in itself, one of the conditions of being a member of society: of being (in a moral, rather than legal, sense) a *citizen*.

Instead, then, of prosperity, our aim should be prospering. Sustainable macroeconomic growth is an essential means to this end. And investment in human capital is a crucial means of realizing such growth; but only a subset of the more fundamental right and obligation of maximizing the human capabilities of all members of society.

C. How to Exclude Without Really Trying- Parity: Homelessness and Social Inclusion edition

- http://www.anglicare.asn.au/documents/AnglicareAust_Parity_Vol23_Issue4_pp19_20_001.pdf

In an article published in the Homeless and Social Inclusion edition of *Parity* Anglicare Australia argued that we need to ensure that we offer the opportunities to build the capacity that people need to fulfill their obligations as citizens and address issues such as oppression through language, a lack of affordable housing and limited community grace which detract from this.

When it comes to social inclusion and homelessness it won't be possible to make everyone the same. Instead we need to get back to living with diversity and difference. So we need a broader social understanding to build our communities to be inclusive, in terms of education and capacity building at the one end, and in terms of urban development at the other. It is only when all developments in our suburbs and cities, and the activities within them, include a social mix of citizens as a matter of course, that housing will no longer be a tool of exclusion.

D. State of the Family 2009: Beyond Economics

- <http://www.anglicare.asn.au/documents/SOTF09Final.pdf>

This report focuses on the impacts of the global financial crisis (GFC) on families and the work of Anglicare Australia. Under circumstances such as those resulting from the GFC, it is more important than ever to articulate and further the interests of those with the weakest voices and least influence.

We should be encouraged to examine the current crisis in a different light. It is not only financial and economic but also cultural, political and social — and above all moral. As Anglicare Australia has long argued, the predominant concentration of public policy on matters economic represents a serious failure of both imagination and will.

So the 'wicked' problems thrown into relief by the global financial crisis, such as emergency relief, child protection, resilience and relationships of families in the face of economic downturns and sustainable economic and social participation, do have a distinct ethical dimension and cannot be resolved by technical policies alone. The challenges we face go well beyond the niceties and pieties of financial, economic, let alone party political argument, to take in the deeper questions of life: ultimately, what it is to be human, what it takes to create a civil society, and, in particular, what responsibilities we have to those with whom we share the planet.

E. State of the Family 2008: Creative Tension

- http://www.anglicare.asn.au/documents/StateoftheFamily2008_FinalCopy.pdf

This report maintains that the Social Inclusion agenda should not be *solely* built on economic terms and reliance on participation in the 'free market'. Through a detailed investigation of employment and workforce participation, housing affordability and early

childhood the assertion is made that at a time of unprecedented prosperity it is unacceptable and inefficient that significant sections of the community are excluded from mainstream social and economic participation.

The social inclusion agenda is a good starting point, but it needs to be both broader and more precise than an appeal to compassion or the prospect of getting a job. The reliance of senior government ministers on the primacy of economic prosperity as a means of promoting social inclusion is inadequate. We need a renewed vision of the common good or common wealth and a complex understanding of society's intermediate associations, working from the 'bottom up' rather than 'top down'. This has to be the outcome of a national conversation.

The basic issue is not that of state intervention versus laissez faire, but of a clear understanding of how and why government should intervene. The view that morality derives solely from self-interest demonstrates an impoverished view of human dignity and potential. We must go beyond such a narrow, economic position to one that embraces something we might term, cautiously, the self-interest of morality.

F. Living Without Shame: A submission to the *Australia's Future Tax System Review*

- http://www.anglicare.asn.au/documents/HenrySubmissionFinal_000.pdf

In this paper it is in the context of the tax and transfer system that an argument is made for a form of social contract theory; that as citizens, a reciprocal social and moral obligation exists between us to ensure that each person has the opportunity to enjoy the full realisation of their capabilities.

In summary, the social contract has a number of defining characteristics, all variants of the fundamental insight that social and economic spheres of life are not separate.

- The individual is to be considered above all a citizen (as distinct from, but as well as, other roles, such as 'consumer' or 'taxpayer'). This entails mutual responsibility, or the collective rights and obligations of participation in civil society.
- Growth as a basic aim of government policy has to give way to a larger conception of 'the common wealth'. This is in line with mainstream economic thinking about indices of wellbeing other than GDP.
- The identification of 'productive' and 'nonproductive' forms of participation has to be broadened, to include many nonmonetised activities like volunteering and caring.
- The distinctions between capital and labour and public and private spheres have, similarly, to be revised.

The moral underpinning of market society, as covered by classical economists, is reinforced by the interdependence of fairness and efficiency. In particular, non-contractual relations based on trust and reciprocity are fundamental to the development of workable bargains.