



The Diversity Within Unity Platform

We, the endorsers of the Diversity Within Unity Position Paper, have come together from many different social backgrounds, countries, and viewpoints to address our fellow citizens about the place of immigrants, and more generally minorities, in our diversifying societies.

I. OUR BASIC ORIENTATION

We note with growing concern that very large segments of the people of free societies^{*} sense that they are threatened by massive immigration and by the growing minorities within their borders that hail from different cultures, follow different practices, and have separate institutions and loyalties. We are troubled by street violence, verbal outbursts of hate, and growing support for various extremist parties. These are unwholesome reactions to threats people feel to their sense of identity, self-determination, and culture, which come on top of concerns evoked by globalization, new communications technologies, and a gradual loss of national sovereignty. To throw the feelings of many millions of people in their faces, calling them “discriminatory,” “exclusionary,” “hypocritical,” and worse, is an easy politics, but not one truly committed to resolution. People’s anxieties and concerns should not be dismissed out of hand, nor can they be effectively treated by labeling them racist or xenophobic. Furthermore, telling people that they “need” immigrants because of economic reasons or demographic shortfalls makes a valid and useful argument, but does not address their profoundest misgivings. The challenge before us is to find legitimate and empirically sound ways to constructively address these concerns. At the same time, we should ensure that these sentiments do not find antisocial, hateful, let alone violent expressions.

Two approaches are to be avoided: promoting assimilation and unbounded multiculturalism. Assimilation—which entails requiring minorities to abandon all of their distinct institutions, cultures, values, habits, and connections to other societies in order to fully mesh into the prevailing culture—is sociologically difficult to achieve and unnecessary for dealing with the issues at hand, as we shall see. It is morally unjustified because of our respect for some normative differences, such as to which gods we pray.

^{*} To allow for productive deliberations, we limit this initial examination to well-established nations and those with democratic governments, including those in Western Europe, North America, Japan, and Australia. We do not deal with immigration and identity issues in countries that are in the nation-building stage (and hence might need to first build a shared identity and shared institutions before they face the question of how these might be protected or changed) or in those that rely on a non-democratic government to deal with the issues at hand. The discussion covers both immigrant and minority groups of citizens within a country.

Unbounded multiculturalism—which entails giving up the concept of shared values, loyalties, and identity in order to privilege ethnic and religious differences, presuming that nations can be replaced by a large number of diverse minorities—is also unnecessary. It is likely to evoke undemocratic backlashes, ranging from support for extremist, right-wing parties and populist leaders to anti-minority policies. It is normatively unjustified because it fails to recognize the values and institutions undergirded by the society at large, such as those that protect women’s and gay rights.

The basic approach we favor is Diversity Within Unity. It presumes that all members of a given society will fully respect and adhere to those basic values and institutions that are considered part of the basic shared framework of the society. At the same time, every group in society is free to maintain its distinct subculture—those policies, habits, and institutions that do not conflict with the shared core—and a strong measure of loyalty to its country of origin, as long as this does not trump loyalty to the society in which it lives if these loyalties come into conflict. Respect for the whole and respect for all is at the essence of our position.

We observe that such Diversity Within Unity enriches rather than threatens the society at large and its culture, as is evident in matters ranging from music to cuisine, and most notably it greatly enhances the realm of ideas to which we are exposed and expands our understanding of the diverse world around us. We further note that, in each society, the basic shared core of identity and culture has changed over time and will continue to do so in the future. Hence minorities that hold that this core does not reflect values dear to them are free to act to seek to change it—via the democratic and social processes available for this purpose in all free societies.

The unity of which we speak is not one imposed by government orders or regulations, not to mention by police agents, but one that grows out of civic education, commitment to the common good, the nation’s history, shared values, common experiences, robust public institutions, and dialogues about the commonalities and requirements of a people living together and facing the same challenges in the same corner of the earth.

Such Diversity Within Unity allows one to fully respect basic rights, the democratic way of life, and core values, as well as those minority values that do not conflict with it.

Which elements belong in which category—the realm of unity or of diversity—is a matter that can be readily decided about many key items. Basic rights must be respected by one and all. For instance, discrimination against women cannot be tolerated, whatever a group’s cultural or religious values. Respect for law and order is essential. Democratic institutions are not one option among several. No one who seeks citizenship in a given country, and membership in a given society, can buy out of the collective responsibilities that society has for its past actions and toward other societies, assumed by treaty or otherwise.

At the same time, little deliberation is required to recognize that there is no reason to object if minorities are keen to maintain their language as a second one, close ties with another country (as long as they do not trump loyalty to the current country, as already indicated), and special knowledge and practice of their culture. All of this is not to deny that much deliberation and public dialogue are called for on contested issues such as how “law and order” is to be interpreted and how strong and how deep-down liberal-democratic approval should go. Deliberation and public dialogue are also crucial before one can conclude whether certain other items belong in the realm of unity or diversity, as is explored below.

In short, we ought not to sacrifice unity or diversity to the other part of the equation, but ought to recognize that we can learn both to live with more diversity and to protect well legiti-

mate unity.

II. ISSUES AND POLICIES

1. The law: variances, basic rights, and compelling public interest

Assimilationist models favor maintaining universal laws—those that apply to all citizens and other people within a given jurisdiction. They tolerate some variations and exemptions, but those are to be based on individual needs (e.g., mental illness) or demographic categories (e.g., minors), not on ethnic or racial groupings. Group rights are not recognized.

Unbounded diversity favors allowing each community to follow its traditions, even if they conflict with prevailing laws (for instance, allowing for forced marriages and female circumcision), although most pro-diversity approaches recognize that some universal laws must be observed. According to this approach, ethnic and racial groups should be granted a great measure of autonomy to set and enforce their own laws, either by being accorded considerable territorial autonomy or community-based autonomy—for instance by religious authorities such as imams or rabbis. Also, by this approach, people are viewed as imbued with strong rights just by being members of a protected group, such as native Canadians or Americans.

The Diversity Within Unity (DWU) model favors a bifocal approach: it sharply distinguishes between those laws that all must abide by and those for which various group-based variances and exemptions are to be provided. Although there is room for disagreement on what falls within these two categories, several criteria suggest themselves as principled guides to which laws and policies must be universal, and which can be group-particular.

Leading the universal category are basic human rights, as defined by the country's constitution, basic laws, the laws of regional communities such as the European Union and the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Thus no one can be legally bought and sold, detained without due process, refused the right to vote, and so on, by any member group of any society. Leading feminists are correctly opposed to several group variances because they fear that these would entail “losing whatever we gained in terms of gender equality.”

Compelling public interest provides another universal criterion. If carrying guns is considered a major safety hazard, no group should be exempted from this rule. The same holds for violations of public health, such as a refusal to immunize children. (Many states in the United States, and other countries such as the Netherlands, exempt parents who claim religious objections from this requirement, a policy that deeply troubles public health officials.)

Whatever is not encompassed in such policies should be considered legitimate subjects for variation. These might well include variances regarding laws, such as those concerning closing days (e.g., laws might require shops to be closed one day a week, but not necessarily Sunday) and those concerning animal rights (to allow ritual slaughter); variances on zoning regulations (e.g., to allow building Mosques); exemptions to allow the use of controlled substances during religious services; and some limited exemptions from various occupational safety, food preparation, and related regulations to help newly established ethnic businesses. (Some of these variances might be limited to a transition period and combined with helping immigrants and minorities in general to adapt to the prevailing laws.)

Arguments that territorial groups or the home-born have a higher level of rights than immigrants are incompatible with the DWU model. Indeed, groups that are territorially concentrated are more inclined than others to push diversity to the point that it may endanger unity, as we witness with groups that are concentrated in one given area, which are much more likely to secede than dispersed groups. Some minority groups may have legitimate reasons to seek to secede, but this constitutes the death knell of unity. While in the past struggles for self-determination were usually involved in the break-up of empires and hence as a rule enhanced democratic representation, regions that now break away from democratic societies are unlikely to enhance self-government and may well weaken it.

Our focus is on practices, not on speech. Thus, it is acceptable for a given group to advocate illiberal practices, but until the laws or constitution are changed, the group should not be allowed to practice them, and surely not impose them on others. Extreme followers of one religion or another may argue that banning some of their practices undermines their whole distinct culture; however, being a member of a free society entails avoiding practices that treat any members in ways that violate their basic rights.

There are no reasons to oppose compromises—if they meet the criteria just articulated. Thus, if Sikhs are willing to wear their daggers but modify them so they cannot be unsheathed, that might bridge the difference between subculture and basic laws.

Whatever position one holds regarding economic equality and social rights, we assume that everyone has the same moral worth bestowed upon them just by being human, whether or not they are citizens, and that discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, or gender is illegal. (Whether this applies to private organizations, such as social clubs that receive no public support or tax exemptions, is an open question.)

Rights carry with them corollary responsibilities. This principle can be fully applied to member groups. Thus if a nation is engaged in war with another nation, minority members who have historical and cultural ties to that other nation must serve in the army of the new homeland, like other citizens. If fight we must, no one is exempt on the basis of being a member of a specific racial or ethnic group. (People who are conscientious objectors on religious or secular ethical grounds, assuming their commitments are verified and they are willing to engage in alternative national service, may well be exempt.) The same holds for attending to one's children, paying taxes, Good Samaritan acts, and so on.

2. State and religion

Most of the states here under discussion have historically had (or still have) one religion they formally recognize as their only one—Christianity in many of them (including a specific version of it, such as Lutheranism in Sweden). In addition, these states provide extensive financial support directly and indirectly to the institutions of the official state religion, mainly for clergy and places of worship. (France and the United States are the exceptions in this regard as, in the commonly used phrase, they have no established religion.) Almost all of these nations now face massive immigration and growing numbers of minorities that believe in different religions, especially Islam.

Where might one go from here? One option is to maintain the official church. Although often the official religions have placed relatively few demands on people (whether members of minorities or the majority), supporters of assimilation in effect expect considerable stripping of the beliefs held by minorities who often have strong religious commitments. Importantly, under

this approach, minority children are expected to attend public schools in which the values of the governing religion are taught; minority residents and citizens are required to participate in public events in which the prayers are those of another religion; and public life is studded with symbols of the governing religion and laws reflecting it. This is a maximal challenge to diversity.

A second option is to lift all religions to the same status as the official one. This would entail not only fully supporting the clergy and places of worship (and social services) provided by all religions, but also opening official events with multiple prayers, displaying in public buildings and schools religious symbols of all groups on an egalitarian basis, and so on and on. Such a move would likely be perceived as a direct assault on the historical and cultural identity of a nation, and would be apt to lead to a high level of contention. It would undermine unity considerably.

A third option is for the official standing of the prevailing religion to gradually lapse (as it did in Sweden). Under this model, no new religion would be recognized as the official religion of the state, but financial support for the clergy and places of worship of all religions would be provided. The amount would be determined by the number of people who indicate, annually, that a given religion is theirs. (This would get the state out of the business of determining who is entitled to get support.) This is especially an issue for countries that rely heavily on voluntary associations and social groups to administer social services paid for by the public, as is common in parts of Europe. If religious groups are not included, this amounts to discrimination against those whose primary social affiliation is religious. At the same time, no such support should be available to groups that promote values, whether religious or secular, that are illiberal.

This third model is most compatible with the DWU approach because removing formal recognition of any state religion puts all religions on more equal footing (at least in legal terms and financially) without directly challenging history and identity. Although such a move constitutes a step away from tradition, it does not replace it with any new official requirements. It allows the majority to retain a sense of the centrality of its values (which is not fully satisfactory to minorities). At the same time, it allows the minorities to recognize that the majority has accommodated them in a major way (which leaves some of those who hail to the majority less than fully content). This model allows for diversity without explicitly undermining unity. (It finds a precedent in the way shops were once required to be closed on Sundays, for religious purposes, but are now allowed to have a closing day suiting any religion—say, Friday or Saturday—without officially demoting Sunday.) The sensibilities of the majority are also to be respected.

3. Schooling

Schooling should neither be used to suppress all cultural differences and distinctions, nor to reinforce the segregation and ghettoization of minorities.

The assimilationist model assumes that immigrants and minority members of society will be taught in public schools, that they will be taught basically the same material as other members of the society and more or less the same material as was previously provided. An unbounded diversity model calls for setting up separate schools—publicly supported—and distinct curricula for various ethnic groups from kindergarten to grade 12, such as, for instance, separate Muslim or Jewish schools, not merely as “Sunday” schools but as full-time schools.

A DWU approach, based on the concept of neighborhood schools, suggests that (a) a major proportion of the curriculum—say, 85 percent or more—should remain universal (i.e., part of the processes that foster unity). The commonalities of sharing 85 percent or so of the curriculum are intended not merely to ensure that all members of the next generation are exposed to a considerable measure of the same teaching materials, narratives, and normative content, but also that they

will mix socially. Hence, teaching the same material but in ethnically segregated schools is incompatible with our approach. (Granted that the segregating effects of such schooling can largely be mitigated if they teach a considerable amount of the “universal” material and endeavor to provide for social mixing, if not in their own confines, elsewhere. Although teachers of all backgrounds should be welcomed, insisting that children must be taught by teachers who are members of their ethnic group is not compatible with the DWU model. (b) Minorities should have major input concerning 15 percent or so of the curriculum; this could be in the form of electives or alternative classes in which students particularly interested in one subject or history or tradition could gain enriched education in that area. (c) The universal, unity-related content of the curriculum should be recast to some extent to include, for instance, more learning about minority cultures and histories.

Bilingual education might be used, but only during a transition phase before mainstreaming begins and not as a continuous mode of teaching that is, in effect, segregated along ethnic lines. (Reference is to education that is conducted in the languages of immigrants and not to educational policies in a country that has historically embraced two or more languages.)

Of particular concern is the teaching of values. This issue is highlighted by the fact that many of the most contentious issues in schools, ranging from displacing crucifixes to requiring Muslim girls to wear swimsuits to banning Sikhs’ traditional turbans, relate to religion. One may start with the observation that schools must help develop character and teach basic values rather than merely being institutions for learning “academics.” One may also assume that the classes that all pupils will be required to attend (the unity sector of 85 percent-plus) will include classes in which basic civic values will be taught, such as respect for the constitution or basic laws, human rights, the merit of democracy, and the value of mutual respect among different subcultures. (These are to include civic practicums, such as playacting as parliament or civil court or doing community service.) But such education may well not suffice to provide the needed character education and is unlikely by itself to provide a sufficient substitute for the substantive values taught in the past by religions. Given that schools are in the character education “business,” the question must be faced, what substantive values are they to instill beyond narrowly crafted civic virtues?

Providing public school classes for each religion (in line with the notion of equal official recognition of all religions) and allowing students to choose which to attend (including classes in secular, humanist ethics) helps diversity, but does little for unity. One way to improve on this approach is for public schools to work with the various religious groups to ensure that the teachers selected for religious teaching (and the teaching materials they use) refrain from advocating or implementing illiberal religious practices. (Although we previously stated that we do not object to illiberal advocacy as distinct from practices, children, whose hearts and minds have not yet been formed, require extra protection.) It might be said that a democracy should tolerate the teaching of anti-democratic values so long as those who hold them are not seriously challenging the democratic system. However, not all the societies at issue have long-established and well-grounded democratic polities, and hence straining them is not called for. Above all, without leaving fundamentalism out of classrooms, no sufficient sharing of values may be found.

Many of us hold that only public schools can provide an environment in which children are exposed to a rich core of shared values, are protected from fundamentalism, and mix socially with children from different social and religious backgrounds. Some hold that the same may be achieved in private schools, even if controlled by one ethnic or religious group or another, as long as the state ensures that all schools teach a strong core of shared values. In either case, the

same essential criteria must be met if schools are to provide effective opportunities to move toward a DWU model in contrast to a homogenous, assimilationist model or a segregated, unbounded multiculturalist one: a core of shared values and social mixing.

4. Citizenship for qualifying, legal immigrants

Debates over immigration and citizenship policy have often been characterized by wild swings between emotionally fraught, divisive positions and radical proposals for assimilation or unbounded diversity: either we end all immigration or we open our borders to virtually anyone; either immigrants are a burden on taxpayers and responsibility for integration rests solely with newcomers or all newcomers should be given substantial public assistance and helped to maintain their cultures, languages, and identities; either all illegal immigrants should be deported immediately or there should be no distinction between legal and illegal immigrants.

A Diversity Within Unity approach emphasizes that societies are best served if those who are legal immigrants, and have met educational requirements, are allowed to become full citizens rather than treated as guest workers, which is often a term that conceals their true status as permanent, but second class, residents. The key to a democratically defensible and economically viable approach to immigration is to make decisions up front about the scope and nature of immigration that the nation favors. Then the government can provide permanent status for those admitted and facilitate their access to citizenship. This approach offers a more sensible way to staff the labor market, unite families, and allow citizens to assess the way immigration is shaping the national economy and culture.

Cultural preferences—for example, for Spain to prefer immigrants from Spanish speaking countries—are acceptable because they help sustain unity, so long as they do not prevent immigration for family reunification or refugee purposes and are based on culture rather than race or blood. Public support for immigration also requires that enforcement policies are carried out. Hence, better border control, employer sanctions, perhaps even a national identity card for all legal residents, are best included in any approach that aims to create an effective, publically defensible system. (These measures do not apply to true political asylum seekers.) More serious efforts to enforce immigration laws that are coupled with sound and transparent criteria for admission will also provide a way of dealing with the ongoing reality of illegal immigration in ways that are consistent with core democratic values. As such a system is introduced, a society can reorient its citizenship away from representing only a bundle of rights and towards an emphasis on civic participation and responsibility.

For legal immigrants, democratic nation-states must provide fair and objective procedures for admission, including reasonable application costs. Linguistic and educational requirements may well be set higher than the current ones, to ensure that citizens-to-be have acquired familiarity not only with the workings of democratic government but also with the unifying elements of the given society. Consideration may be given that immigrants who have not yet completed their citizenship processes could nevertheless be accorded the right to vote in local elections and to serve in civil service as ways to help them acquire the civic practice that makes for good citizens and to help create a civil service that is better equipped to deal with minorities.

Dual citizenship could be allowed or even encouraged so long as appropriate principles and practices for reconciling conflicts among loyalties can be established—notably the principle that the nation of permanent residence takes priority.

All in all: Citizenship constitutes a critical way a person becomes a responsible and accepted member of a community. Hence it should not be awarded without proper preparation

nor denied to those who have completed the required measure of acculturation.

Throughout this section we assume that citizenship is not based on bloodlines or racial membership but is based on becoming a part of an historical community, with its own culture and identity. To join this community is to come to share in that history, culture, and identity—up to a point, as characterized by the difference between elements of unity and diversity previously discussed. To reiterate, history does not stop, and culture and identity continue to be recast, in part under the influence of the new members.

Citizenship should not be a free good, but a communal undertaking, a status and identity that constitutes both rights and social responsibilities. This holds for those who seek to become citizens as it does for those who are already so endowed.

5. Language: an inescapable element of unity?

The assimilationist model tends to stress that all must acquire the prevailing language (sometimes, as in Belgium, at least one of them), that it should be considered the official language, and that the use of other languages should be banned in official business, courts, ballots, and street signs. Unbounded diversity opposes the recognition of any one language as the official one and seeks to provide a coequal status in courts, documents, etc., to several languages, sometimes a rather large number.

A DWU approach recognizes the strong advantages of having one shared language (two if necessary) and teaching it to all immigrants, minority members, and people whose education is lagging for other reasons. However, the state should provide ample translators and translated documents for those who have not yet acquired the shared language, even if this results in some lowering of the of the motivation for immigrants to learn the prevailing language.

Neighborhoods should be free to add signs in any language, but not to replace those in one (or two) of the shared ones. The state may well also encourage keeping the languages of immigrants as second languages and the teaching of second languages in general.

6. Core substance, symbols, national history, holidays, and rituals

In numerous situations, differences arise concerning matters that are relatively limited in importance in their own right, but acquire great symbolic meaning regarding the rejection, or partial or full acceptance, of people of diverse cultures. These include dress codes (e.g., regarding girls wearing headscarves), boys and girls swimming together, the display of ethnic vs. national flags, areas in which ethnic celebrations can take place, noise levels tolerated, and so on. In effect, practically any issue can be turned into a highly charged symbolic one, although some issues (such as flags) tend more readily to become such.

It is important to recognize that trying to deal with these issues one by one, or by focusing on the surface arguments, will often not lead to consensual resolution, as the matters at hand typically stand for deeper issues. The contested symbols serve as hooks on which people hang their resentment of those of different cultures (including the dominant one) and of the need to adapt to a different world. These symbols serve as expressions of people's sense that their culture, identity, national unity, and self-determination are all being challenged. Only as these deeper issues are addressed might societies be able to work out satisfactory resolutions of the symbolic issues.

Attacking deeply felt and deeply ingrained sentiments, denying that immigrants or minorities are different, and so on—especially labeling all such sentiments as “racist” or “xenophobic”

prejudices and demanding that people drop them or be subject to re-education if not rehabilitation—is as unfair as it is counterproductive.

A DWU position indicates that we understand why people feel the way they do, but also assures them that the cultural changes that they must learn to cope with will not violate their basic values, will not destroy their identity, nor end their ability to control their lives. Indeed, it is the prime merit of the DWU approach that it allows such a framing of the issue, not as a public relations posture or a political formula, but as a worked-out model of laws, policies, and normative concepts that gives substance to such assurances.

Once this basic position is established, we note that adhering to old patriotism, which demands an unquestioning embrace of a nation's past, is just as inappropriate as calling for the dismantling of national identity in order to accommodate diversity. Thus, to expect immigrants from previously colonized countries to see great glory in the imperial past is not compatible with the DWU model any more than is calling on a nation to give up its shared values, symbols, and meanings and to become merely a thin and formal affiliation. Arguments to “rethink what it means to be British” (or French, etc.) are welcome if they mean to redefine commonalities and to point to legitimate differences, but not if they are code words for abandoning shared substantive meanings and values. Nor should one assume that even in a full-fledged European federation, national identities and cultures will vanish in the foreseeable future, thus dissolving the deeper issues at hand.

The assimilationist model favors stressing the nation's shared fate and glorious achievements in textbooks (especially those concerning history), national holidays, and rituals. Some champions of unbounded diversity call for redefining history as long periods of lessons in national disgrace (for example, one scholar suggested that American history be taught as a series of abuses of minorities, beginning with Native Americans, turning to slaves, then to Japanese Americans during World War II, and so on). Others favor separate ethnic and religious holidays, such as Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanza, to replace rather than supplement shared national holidays.

The DWU position on these issues remains to be worked out. As far as the teaching of history is concerned, surely many would agree that to the extent that textbooks and other teaching materials contain statements that are truly offensive to minorities, they should be removed or corrected, and that recognition of minorities' contributions to the society should be added. In addition, history of parts of the world other than one's own should occupy an important part in any curriculum. Still, the teaching of history is a major way that shared meanings and values are transmitted and it should neither be “particularized” nor become a source of attack on the realm of unity.

As far as holidays are concerned, a combination of shared holidays (such as Unification Day in Germany) with separate ethnic and religious ones may be quite compatible with a DWU model. In effect, the existence of some ethnic holidays (such as Cinco de Mayo) enriches rather than diminishes the shared culture.

We focus here on shared and divergent values in a society that is a community of communities rather than a mindless, over-homogenized blend. This focus is in no way meant to distract attention from the need to be concerned with economic interests and their articulation and matters dealing with the distribution of power. However, given that these issues have been often explored, our focus has been on values (and related institutions), a core part of any society that is able to sustain itself and change peacefully at the same time.

The most challenging issue of them all is to consider, beyond changes in symbolic expressions and even in laws and policies, what would be encompassed in a modified but unified core of shared substantive values? Commitment to a bill of rights, the democratic way of life,

respect for basic laws (or, more broadly, a constitutional faith or civic religion), and mutual tolerance come (at least relatively) easily. So do the communitarian concepts that rights entail responsibilities, that working differences out is to be preferred to conflict, and that society is to be considered a community of communities (rather than merely a state that contains millions of individuals). However, as important as these are and as much as they move us forward, these relatively thin conceptions of unity (and those limited to points of commonality—overlapping areas of consensus—among diverse cultures) constitute an insufficient core of shared values to sustain unity among diversity.

The challenge for the DWU model is to ask how the realm of unity, however restated, can be thick enough without violating the legitimate place of diversity. The answer may be found in part in secular humanist values and ethics (including respect for individual dignity and autonomy) and thicker communitarian values that spell out our obligations to one another. It may encompass a commitment to building still more encompassing communities (such as the European Union), to assisting those in need in the “have-not” countries, and to upholding the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Still, the question stands as to what will provide a source of shared commitments to define and promote what is right versus wrong, and what will provide an answer to transcendental questions of life, as far as they concern public life, if it will not be based on religious doctrines, nor be sheerly relativistic or based on the beliefs of particularistic groups.

The DWU approach is a work in progress. It does not claim to have all or even most of the answers needed to bridge the schisms that have opened up between many immigrants and the majorities in the free societies in which they live. It does offer, we state, a basic orientation that respects both the history, culture, and identity of a society and the rights of members of the society to differ on those issues that do not involve the core of basic values and universally established rights and obligations.

Endorsers are of one mind on the broad thrust of this platform and the necessity of this intervention into the current dialogue, without necessarily agreeing with every single, specific statement. We look forward to future discussions of how this platform applies to other problems that arise and to various different societies. To see a full list of endorsers, please visit our website at www.communitariannetwork.org.

This position paper was drafted by Amitai Etzioni in summer of 2001. He benefitted greatly from comments by Leon Fuerth, Veit Bader and Noah Pickus. It was submitted for a two day communitarian dialogue in a meeting of 40 scholars from eight different countries and a few elected officials on November 1st and 2nd in a meeting organized by the Communitarian Network in Brussels. Following the meeting, the position paper was redrafted, drawing on notes from the meeting, reports from the rapporteurs of the five breakout sessions, and comments by members of a redrafting committee selected during the meeting and by other participants. The whole process was organized and much of the research conducted by Mackenzie Baris.

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