

## **Inquiry to consider the Australian Citizenship Amendment (Allegiance to Australia) Bill 2015.**

Dear Madam/Sir

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the Inquiry. I appreciate that participation in democracy is one of the great freedoms provided by Australian citizenship. Like the Prime Minister, I am an immigrant, and I became a citizen in 1987. It is a privilege that I think can be taken for granted by those who choose to flout Australian values and laws.

### **Revocation of citizenship for dual nationals engaged in terrorism**

I support the Government's proposal in this way only as long as it is also applied for other equally serious crimes. Terrorism should not be treated any differently from any other organized criminal enterprise in relation to the revocation of citizenship. The Government is concerned that 'at least 100 Australians fighting with or supporting terrorist groups'. The Australian Crime Commission 'conservatively estimates organised crime to currently cost Australia A\$15 billion annually'<sup>1</sup>, and 'not only has a direct impact on individuals, but also affects our communities, our economy, our government and our way of life.' It includes violence, drugs, fraud, firearms, cybercrime, human trafficking, child sex offences and corruption. The Australian Government defined it as 'a threat to Australia's national security.'<sup>2</sup> Those involved undermine Australian values and act 'inconsistently with their allegiance to Australia' (s33A(1)) and should also face the same laws as terrorists.

If Australia is to look at revoking citizenship for those who are demonstrably terrorists, then we must be consistent. If the Government proposes to revoke the citizenship of those who might harm Australians, then any crime of violence with the charge 'attempted' or 'conspiracy' in the title must also have citizenship revoked. Anyone who harms another or takes an Australian life must, to be consistent, face the same penalties. It would be absurd to strip the citizenship of someone who has never harmed an Australian, and may never do so, yet leave intact those who have in the grossest ways violated core Australian values.

I strongly oppose the proposal to enable the Minister to give notice of renunciation of citizenship. Ministers are prone to political pressure, populism and personal whim. As with any other law with serious consequences, the state has a duty to prove wrongdoing, and this must be done transparently and according to due process. Wrongdoing should be determined by a body set up to make such judgements, such as a tribunal. Implementation of a law should be free from the influence of those who make the law. This also applies to rescission and exemption from the law - I would not like to see those whose families make financial political donations receive different treatment under the law. The grounds for rescission and exemption should also be made clear.

If it is intended that the law is to build on the omitted 32A and address those who serve in the armed forces of a country at war with Australia, then the Bill should also clarify that the terrorism being addressed in this amendment is in support of international causes, such as ISIL.

Yours sincerely

Janine Truter

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<sup>1</sup> [Organized Crime in Australia](#), Australian Crime Commission, 2013

<sup>2</sup> Above, p9