

Kay Wood



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To whom it may concern,

Thankyou for the opportunity to respond to the Australian Security Intelligence O Bill Amendment.

Fiirsty, I would like to express my deepest concern about changes to Acts/Laws during a time when an Emergency has been declared by the Federal Government. This is not the time to change laws/acts. Sure, we may need temporary measures in place for the type of emergency taking place at the time within a reasonable time frame and "On just terms", however drastic law changes without the Australian people noticing or even knowing they are being changed, is dangerous and unethical. Therefore I do not agree to the changes to the ASIO Amendment Bill.

Do not be complacent in thinking that because there are not many submissions from Australian citizens, or we are in a Declared Emergency that this is grouds to pass this Bill That in itself is a security risk which needs to be investigated thoroughly and ethically. I say no more law/act changes during a declaration of an emergency. Complacency within our society does not give governments the right to abuse their power for the benifit of themselves, or a select few with vested interests. The Australian public has always generally trusted the system to ensure democracy, generally relied upon that system and tend to have a false sense of security that we would not have a government in power in Australia who could or would abuse that trust and strip away our rights. The trouble with that is in this case, given the power entrusted by the people, it can and will be abused for the greater detriment of the people at any time, and to the advantage of a select few. We just trust that would never happen, not.in our lifetime, not in this era!! In truth it can and does happen. If all the safeguards to prevent corruption and abuse of power is taken away one by one, and goes by un-noticed by the public, that is when security is severely threatened. It will be the publics security threat caused by the governments abuse of power to control and use force to control the Australian people. This is wrong and in my eyes criminal in Australian society.

Temporary measures with the approval of experts experienced in the type of Emergency that needs to be responded, that is just and fair, and needs to be honest and transparent. Firstly do not change laws during an emergency declaration- During an emergency the Australian Constitution states that laws may need to to be temporarily introduced, not implemented. This bill in question, has dangerous consequences for Australias freedoms and rights, and future ethical changes once implemented. I do not agree to this Bill.

To put it into context, Imagine the laws changed drastically, like the are trying to do now. During World War Two, while Australians and their allies were fighting to protect

countries from the oppression takeover by Hitler, to ensure freedom and rights, imagine that when the War was over, that the Australian People found out that in the mean time, the government of the time abused their power to change the very laws the people went to war to fight against. Although this is not exactly the same type of Emergency, this is heading drastically and dangerously towards an outcome that will very well end what little is remaining of our rights, beliefs and freedoms. This Bill in itself will in fact cause social unrest and violence not seen in Australia before. It will lead to acts of terrorism and threaten national security if it is passed. It will end Democracy and peace in Australia.

To change the laws/acts like the government is doing now with little public awareness is in my strongest belief, is criminal and deceitful, and I believe this very Bill, if the changes were to be implemented, could be classed as terrorism or a takeover by stealth or deceit by the government in power. It could mean just by saying what I am saying now I could be a criminal and unlawful in the governments eyes.

It also leads me to strongly believe that the government is more concerned that once the smoke clears and the Emergency Orders are lifted, Australians will realise they no longer have freedom or rights, and the Australian citizens will be angry(rightfully and justly so). Thereby this Bill could well be a government back up plan to ensure, enforce and threaten anyone who dares question their authority. Laws and acts can protect Australia and Australian citizens, but they can and also be used against Australia and Australian citizens. It will allow for a government to gain power and control over peoples rights and freedoms. I think the government is scared, not so much because of foreign invasion, but simply because they know that what they are doing is scathingly deceitful and for the benefit of themselves, and not the protection, rights, health, welfare and benefit of Australia and Australian citizens protections.

I would also ask you to carefully consider why this includes defence/military and policing forces? They are there and trained to protect infrastructure and the people of Australia. There are ethics and human rights to consider and justly so. To have it specified in the act about a rebellion etc from these forces, would only indicate to me that if this were to occur, then it is highly likely that they are really doing their jobs and protecting Australian citizens from a government that has taken away the Australian citizens rights. Ethics comes into play here. It distinguishes between barbaric policing to gain power over the people in any means and takes away rights, just terms and accountability from the government abusing power, use of the military and policing for their own means, beliefs, cause or gain. Instead of seeing injustices overseas in Authoritarian countries, this without a doubt could very well be us. This very Bill would then undermine Australias security if it became law. The great risk to National Security is a rogue government(Either individually or as a group and from top to bottom ie Leader, Members,Representatives Governor General, Attorney General and up the ranks). There needs to be mechanisms and laws in place to ensure when this happens or is occurring now, they can be removed swiftly by envoking democracy failure and then by public vote. (Without news media preference and large corporation interference)

A little mentioned threat to Australian Security, is Media control. At present Media is controlled by a Few select stakeholders. I remember when I was younger hearing via media, a politician speaking about the importance of ensuring Australians that News Media could own a certain percentage of Newspapers, television stations and radio. This was meant to prevent the majority being owned by a select few who could manipulate media stories, political agendas and the owners/stakeholders agenda to influence, scaremonger, manipulate and divide the Australian Public. It made sense then and makes even more sense now. This issue needs to be addressed urgently as this is now a reality and a major issue.

Unfortunately this Security Issue was overlooked and now there is no such thing as freedom of press or importantly, even though a select few own media, it is not utilised to inform the Australian public about Bills governments are changing, or about fact, nor in the best interests of the public and law changes that need to occur and be debated by Australians. The media has a lot of influence over people still, though more and more people do not believe a word the media says, because there is little truth and it is one sided. This is a major security threat to Australia, because stories, not facts are blasted across all media news platforms to scare and divide people, and are very much politically biased. If someone decides one party or group/individual doesn't suit their agenda or gain, then stories focus on changing or manipulating people and their opinions or beliefs. It also detracts from the facts and truth. People then turn to social media or other media in the search of truth.

Blocking alternate types of media is not the solution because it takes away people's right of opinions. It can often "validate" that person or group's social media to be true because why else would it be blocked if it was just opinion? Media is a powerful tool. When used correctly, when ownership of news media outlets are not dominated by a select few, and journalists are allowed to investigate and present the facts and be unbiased without fear of police raids, jail time or restrictions from owners with vested interests, only then will it increase National Security. We are in a situation now where no-one really believes the media from any one source. People are aware of scare mongering by news media and creating a sense of panic, fear and control. This amounts to abuse of power and eventually ends up being dangerous as more people realise the truth or agenda behind the story, when a real true situation comes about that requires the public's attention, less will take note. Another side of this is that it could end up with people feeling justified to ridicule, isolate and condemn based on opinions rather than facts. It will lead to more violence, increased censorship, prejudice, racial vilification, unjustified surveillance, increase and powers to invade privacy, less unity and understanding about the difference between opinion and fact. This law will target what we know as the law abiding citizen, a certain political party, race, group or organisation that "threatens" or "benefits" the agenda of the time.

There has been no real mention of the Security threat regarding man-made climate change. This is fact and no longer debatable. I wonder if this has only been mentioned by its word because the solutions to mitigate climate change by the government is being completely ignored. Saying you are compared to acting to legitimately mitigate climate

change are two entirely different things. In fact, the threat of security to Australia is severely high on this issue. Not acting appropriately and with real determination is setting up Australia to fail.

I believe the Australian public will react far better, be pro-active and less inclined to "riot, protest or use acts of terrorism" as perceived in the bill, by truth and integrity. This is regardless of what the rest of the world is doing about it or intending to do. In fact the next 10 years are critical, we are already experiencing climate change, and by being pro-active in mitigating climate change and involving the public in positive solutions and actions forward, there will be less chance of "rebellion". That approach will put us in a better place too, whilst continuing to mitigate, work together, assist communities, businesses, farmers, environment and find valuable solutions to further reduce impacts of climate change.

The powers that are blocking changeover have the most to fear of retribution. They could instead invest in green energy. One thought on a possible solution I had many years ago is that possibly their fears was "how could they make money from this? I thought that not everybody can afford green energy, so why not rent it out reasonably priced of course? These powers that are dominating the polluting industries are a security threat to Australia. It not only increases the risk of our security but every aspect of survival and a promising future. Why not negotiate with them about real positive solutions-green energy change and less to negligible environmentally impacting ways. Whether they like it or not, if they continue to dominate and ignore the facts, the greater it will impact them as much as the rest of the world. If they work with the Australian people honestly and openly then it could lead to more positive and productive outcomes and benefit everyone, including protecting and enhancing the environment and culture. Therefore increasing other countries uptake to reduce climate change and the effects. The longer this is swept under the carpet, the harsher the environment.

To even consider lowering the age of interrogation powers is adominable. There are already measures in place to thwart true terrorists threats. I think violonce with violence never works. No matter what the persons age or crime. It also forgets to take into account that according to studies, childrens brains, critical thinking etc are not fully developed. This approach may have the reverse effect and create a full blown "terrorist" It leaves too many unethical questions. It will also cause distrust of police,military etc. Distrust leads to conflict and abuse of power with no consequence.

Surveillance increase will not make most people feel safer. In some areas it has its advantages. To handover this much power of serveillance is invasive and dangerous. Survey, Seize and control sounds dangerously exactly like, an Authoritarian government system. Increased powers and surveillance will be used for evil intent.

Seizing items could and will lead to evidence being destroyed, accused or targetted group or person being set up, and no accountability or justice for the person/group targetted. Innocent people/goup will be villified and portrayed as criminals with no justice or consequence. The greater the Security Law, the greater it will be abused.

This will lead to further distrust of government and Law enforcement and greater probabilities of "terrorist" activities and volatility. It may "turn" a law abiding citizen or group into a criminal. Laws, as we know, cannot be assumed to mean one intention.

In conclusion, the Australian public are generally well behaved and law abiding citizens. We felt secure when we felt we had the safety of the rights of the people, and when rights of everyone were being far better implemented in our laws. We will feel safe when we have an open, honest and transparent system of governance. Safe when we know surveillance is in the right place and in the right hands. It is not that surveillance is curtailing and catching criminals and it is them who do not like it, it is that horrible sense that someone is always watching, always checking and probing and knowing your every move. It is stifling freedom of speech. If this was another law it would be stalking and abuse.

To recommend or implement this bill is dangerous, and will only bring fear and mistrust in the communities. As an example, sensorship/removal of websites that are unethical and abhorrent needs to be removed. Laws already are working to catch pedophiles and foreign threats. Now sensorship is in overdrive, and if someone does not agree (usually a government authority) with what they see, read or hear, then it is shut down. This causes mistrust and doubts in the public. It likely leads to people to find illegal sites/form conspiracy theories to a degree that no-one believes or trusts anything they see hear or believe. Greater surveillance will only cause greater unrest, and leave law abiding citizens to become criminals, further risking National Security.

It also creates issues with human rights UN. I do not consent to my address being published. As I had trouble submitting online ASIO asked me to send my submission via pjcis@aph.gov.au

Regards,

Kay Wood