

As a young Australian I would like to voice my concern over the proposed '*Migration Amendment (Designated Unauthorised Arrivals) Bill 2006*'. Not only is this Bill detrimental to human rights throughout the world, it is also a threat to security, economically irresponsible, class based and racially discriminatory.

1. The Bill is clearly a reaction to the forty-three West Papuans who arrived on Australia's shores in March this year. Forty-two of whom were found to have been genuine refugee claims and whom were granted TPV's (temporary protection visas). This Bill clearly is appeasing the Indonesian Prime Minister after his uproar over Australia granting the protection visas. Australia should not appease countries that are imposing human rights abuses. The act of turning back boats which reach Australian waters coming directly from a country of persecution, is a breach of Article 33 of the Refugees Convention, to which Australia is a signatory. Furthermore, as this Bill is a reaction to "stem the flow" from West Papua, it is also in breach of Article 3 of the Refugee Convention which states, "The Contracting States shall apply the provisions of this convention to refugees without discrimination as to race, religion or country of origin".

2. In regard to the proposed name change in some parts of the Bill, for example:

- Subsection 46A(5)(b) 'Omit "offshore entry person", substitute "designated unauthorized arrival".

These are PEOPLE we are omitting and substituting. They are mostly students who have seen the effect of wars with their own two eyes, not just seen it for two minutes on the news each night. These are people that live with fear in their lives everyday. Fear of the soldiers, fear for their children, fear enough to get onto a 'leaky' boat to try to sail for a better life.

3. This Bill denies refugees the protection they need. Once a refugee claim is refused, the Bill will not allow for review by the Refugee Review Tribunal. For some source countries, the RRT found that 89% of refusals by DIMA were wrong.

4. The Bill does not outline who will be in charge of these detention centres, but private management will be inevitable. It is very important that non-government organisations, independent lawyers and religious groups have access to these areas to monitor the conditions of the centres and the people housed there. Housing refugees on such isolated centres creates a wealth of problems for those groups, including serious mental health issues and detention of women and children, to matters that were supposedly recently dealt with by coalition backbenches.
5. This Bill is very class-based as those that can afford to buy a visa, fly into Australia and overstay their visa will eventually be processed in Australia. However, those that will be excised from Australia because of the Bill, the 'boat people' are poor people fleeing the terror with, in many cases, no more than the clothes on their back and who cannot afford to buy a plane ticket. Is it ethically sound to turn these people away and make them wait for an indefinite time period till some other country takes them in? This is a direct breach of Article 31 of the Refugee Convention which states, "States shall not impose penalties, on account of their illegal entry or presence, on refugees who, coming directly from a territory where their life or freedom is threatened..."
6. Financially, this Bill is a scandal. The BILLIONS of dollars that will be spent on the military 'protecting' Australia's borders and the setting up and housing of asylum seekers (currently priced at \$195,000 per asylum seeker housed on Nauru). This 'program' to take harmless war-torn people away from Australia, to be processed 'off-shore', is financially wasteful to a ridiculous extent. Would not the money be better spent helping the nations where these people come from to secure proper sustainable refugee camps?
7. The dehumanizing of refugees in this country, particularly since 2001, is shocking. This dehumanizing has led people to think that is alright to excise Australia for fear of the 'flood' of refugees arriving on our shores. Compared to most countries

in the world, Australia has one of the fewest numbers of asylum seekers crossing our borders. Yet we dehumanize these people to the point that racial vilification and violence is common knowledge and to some extent, accepted in many areas of Australia. The Cronulla riots of December 2005, is a perfect example of racial hatred fuelled by alcohol and more importantly, fuelled by years of dehumanizing of 'the other'.

8. We are now a very globalised society and the actions we take are not just Australian public knowledge but our actions are viewed by the rest of the world. How do you think the rest of the world will view Australia when we are portrayed to say, we don't care how sick you are, what you have gone through, that you might get killed or tortured at any moment; you will never be allowed to come to Australia. Ten years ago, Australia had quite a good international human rights record; (apart from the treatment of Indigenous Australians which still remains an issue). Now, the world sees that we are battering down the hatches and refusing to take in people who are being persecuted. In the latest edition of the international 'Refugees' magazine from UNHCR, an article titled 'The Perfect Scapegoat' talks about a world wide phenomena of intolerance towards refugees. In it is a photograph of the Cronulla riots of 'white' youths assaulting a male of 'middle eastern description' with the caption 'Simmering tensions in Australian coastal suburbs exploded last December, with violent race-based assaults carried out by local youths of different origins'. Many of these males are around my age and younger. The dehumanizing and demonizing people of 'other' 'colours' has fuelled tensions to the extent that events like the Cornulla Riots have happened. Instead of combating racial hatred, and proposing new Bills to secure social justice for minority groups, the Government is 'fanning the flames' and proposing Bills that marginalise minority, religious and community groups. Is it not violent to lock women and children up in detention centres for an unlimited time frame?
9. This Bill will allow for one of the worst human rights atrocities to occur. Children will be put back into detention centres. They, the innocent, shall once again view

with their eyes, suicides from total and utter loss of despair and hope, they will view atrocities such as people sewing their lips together and other forms of self-harm. Don't let the innocent suffer more than they already have.

10. My generation has so much weight upon its shoulders with situations which need repairing, securing and rectifying, things have happened that never should have and we have to deal with the consequences. Please don't make this another thing that we have to deal with along with global warming. The insecurity and inhumanity that will arise from this 'program' will be phenomenal. Please fulfill your moral and legal obligations, so that my generation and those just coming into the world are not viewed as inhumane.

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