

Dear Secretary

I strongly oppose the bill for the Anti-Terrorism Laws 2005. This is a very serious matter that needs to be dealt with in the most orderly manner, through proper community consultation and debate.

I request that if the Bill is referred to this committee that this correspondence be regarded as a formal submission to the enquiry, and hence be distributed to all members of the committee.

I strongly share the same concerns as other legal bodies, in particular Civil rights groups, politicians, judges and the rest of the community in that this Bill represents the most intrusive attacks on our valuable rights as ordinary citizens.

The basic rights of freedom of speech, presumption of innocence, due process and the right to a fair trial will be overlooked and effect the essence of what our civil societies are built on.

The rushing of the Bill through Parliament, will not give us the opportunity to analyse, and understand these attacks on our fundamental freedoms.

No case has been made for their necessity

The government has failed to explain how such measures will help to fight terrorism, in contrast to the already draconian existing anti terror laws that allows ASIO to question and detain a person for up to seven days.

Hence, there is no guarantee that these laws will be effective, as can be seen from the similar laws introduced in the UK, which did not stop the July 7 London bombings. These laws will only be counter productive, and lead to a worsening of relationships between the authorities and the community.

Muslim community concerns

I am really concerned that these laws will have a large impact on the Muslim community. This community has consistently and unequivocally denounced terrorism in all forms, but still they will be under deep surveillance and suspicion as a result.

I strongly object to the control orders of house arrest, limitation on communications and being forced to wear tracking devices, based on the "balance of probabilities" instead of "beyond reasonable doubt". This will without doubt lead to further stereotypes and racial profiling.

I strongly believe that every person has a right to be free from arbitrary detention, random stop and search powers. Because of the secrecy, and racial profiling already mentioned this will be an easy target for the muslim community, we don't know how many are going to be detained and for how long.

Impact of "Financing Terrorism" and Privacy

It is unjustifiable that there is serious potential that innocent people with a sincere intention to help others by donating to charity would end up in prison for having done no wrong. Everyone deserves their right to privacy without allowing police to intrude into a person's personal life in an unprecedented manner, through random stop, search powers and allowing ASIO access to information that are contrary to a person's freedoms.

Conclusion

Our human rights and personal freedoms must not be abused. These laws are very open to abuse. I strongly urge the committee to reject this Bill in its entirety.

Your sincerely

HANI ELJAMAL

BARDEN RIDGE NSW