

The Chairman of the Committee Enquiring into the new Counter terrorist legislation:

As a concerned elderly citizen I would like to make a submission to your Committee.

I am deeply concerned that in an apparent attempt to protect our democracy, the proposed legislation makes serious inroads into that very democracy by seriously restricting those civil liberties which it pretends to protect. In particular, I feel that those sections of the proposed laws pertaining to sedition might well inhibit frank and open discussion of contentious issues, particularly by those people on whom the general public rely to examine and comment on the actions of the Government - people such as journalists, political commentators and cartoonists and the like. It would seem to me that the proponents of the Bill are using the very real fear engendered by terrorist attacks in various parts of the world to bring in draconian legislation that will impinge on people's right to dissent. At a time when the Government is trying to convince the Iraqi people that the devastation wreaked upon their country along with the deaths of over 20,000 civilians is a price worth paying for democracy, we in Australia are being asked to accept serious limitations being placed on our own democratic rights and freedoms because we fear that there might be a handful of potential terrorists in our midst

Respectfully, Herbert Thomas Hodges, Duffy. ACT