

To the Committee Secretary
Senate Legal and Constitutional Committee
Department of the Senate
Parliament House ACT 2600 Australia

Dear Sir/Madam,

re Inquiry into the provisions of the Anti-Terrorism Bill (No. 2) 2005

I am the editor and publisher of a national journal on visual arts and am very aware of the crucial importance of a free and fair environment for writers and artists to operate in the pursuit of their job which is at least in part to reflect and challenge the intellectual debates of the day. I would like to offer the following as a formal submission to your inquiry on this matter:

I appreciate Senate's efforts to defend Australia, but equally important is that the new anti-terrorism laws do not compromise our democratic heritage. I believe that the sedition provisions are framed in an archaic form which will make them very difficult to interpret. Overall I believe they are likely to do more harm to Australian democracy than good. Please consider the appended amendments to the proposed anti-terror legislation. These were drafted by the President of Australian Lawyers for Human Rights and have come to me through the National Association for the Visual Arts.

Thanking you,
Yours sincerely,
Ms Stephanie Britton AM

Executive Editor
Artlink
Henley Beach SA

Proposed Amendment to the Anti-Terrorism Bill 2005
Omit sub-sections 80.2(7), (8), (9) Insert after 80.2(6) the following:
380.2A Exemption
Sections 80.1 and 80.2 do not apply to anything said or done reasonably and in good faith:
(a) in the creation, performance, exhibition or distribution of an artistic work; or
(b) in the course of any statement, publication, discussion or debate made or held for any genuine academic, artistic or scientific purpose or any other genuine purpose in the public interest; or
(c) in making or publishing:
(i) a fair and accurate report of any event or matter of public interest; or
(ii) a fair comment on any event or matter of public interest if the comment is an expression of a genuine belief held by the person making the comment.

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