

Submission to the Senate Enquiry
“Anti-Terrorism Bill”

Dr. Stephen Morey
Sandringham,

I will start my submission by stating that all acts of violence by human against human are repugnant and to be condemned. I absolutely support the arrest and charging of any persons who are planning terrorist activities. I absolutely support tough legislation against terrorism. All perpetrators of such acts of violence, whether Governments, non-Government organisations or individuals, should be brought to justice. Insofar as the Bill you are considering might bring this about, I would support it.

In making such a statement, I strongly condemn the perpetrators of **all** acts of violence. I will list the worst of those committed in the present century, all inexcusable acts: the attack on the World Trade Centre, New York in September 2001, the bombings of night clubs in Bali in October 2002, the war against Iraq commencing in March 2003, the Madrid train bombings of March 2004, the genocide in Darfur province, and any other acts of brutality by human against human.

And I condemn those who have committed these acts, whether they be the Government of Sudan and its Janjawid militia, the Al-Qaeda organisation, the Government of the USA, the Government of Australia, the Jama'a Islamiya or whoever.

The distinguished American linguist and commentator, Prof. Noam Chomsky, has made the point that there is no difference between blowing up cafes, trade centres and bars on one hand, and dropping bombs on markets, hospitals and schools on the other. In each case, innocent people die, children are orphaned, and people are horribly maimed. In each case, violence is being used for political purposes, and in each case that violence is repugnant.

In Prof. Chomsky's argument, the use of violence by Western Governments, particularly the US and the UK, and we may add Australia, is no different, either in intent or effect, from the use of violence by Al-Qaeda and others. The attack on Iraq that commenced on March 20, 2003, was an illegal, brutal and outrageous use of force. Terrorism is the use of violence for political ends, and the Howard Government has done exactly that.

By saying these things, I have probably already offended the sedition laws that you are being asked to pass, and almost certainly will pass. The Prime Minister, Mr Howard, and the Attorney General, Mr Ruddock, have both promised that the laws will not impugn on the rights of Australians, like me, to disagree with the Government. I hold no confidence in their promise. Both gentlemen have shown themselves to be untruthful on so many occasions (Children overboard, the sinking of the SIEV-X, weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, the deportation of Vivien Alvarez Solon and others) that I give no credence to their statements.

The laws that you are considering make it an offence to give any support, moral, financial or otherwise, in thought or in deed, to any individual or group that is fighting the Australian military.

But the serious question is, what is an honest person to do when the Australian army is sent to fight an illegal war, as happened with the invasion of Iraq on 20th March 2003?

The distinguished Philippines professor, Waldon Bello, has argued that the present insurgency in Iraq is having the effect of preventing the invasion of further countries by the USA and its allies. We must not forget that Iran, Syria, North Korea and Cuba have all been mentioned as possible targets. In Prof. Bello's argument, which is complex, but I will simplify here, the battles in Iraq today are keeping enough of the US military and its allies busy that they do not have the resources to mount further invasions.

Prof. Bello is arguing, in other words, that the current insurgency against the aggression in Iraq has the benefit of preventing wars in other countries. Since Australia is one of the aggressors, his words are presumably sedition.

Like all decent people, I condemn the Iraqi insurgents use of suicide bombing, even against the aggressor invaders, just as I condemn the brutality of the occupation troops in their continuing attacks on towns and cities throughout Iraq. It must be pointed out that we are not receiving a balanced picture of the war in Iraq. Our media always reports the suicide bombings, but the retaliation that costs probably many more lives is rarely mentioned.

Very occasionally it is, however. A couple of weeks ago, Prof. Gideon Polya made the following point on ABC radio: (Ockham's Razor 28/8/2005).

In 2003 the US, UK and Australia illegally invaded and conquered Iraq. I have calculated that the under-5 infant mortality was 1.2-million for Iraq since 1991; 0.2-million for Iraq since the 2003 invasion; and 0.9-million for Afghanistan since the 2001 invasion.

If Prof. Polya is correct, then Australia is complicit in one of the worst acts of brutality of the new millenium so far. He went on to point out that:

Jihadist violence has taken roughly about 5,000 Western civilian lives over the last 20 years, with most of the victims dying on 9/11 (about 3,000) and the remainder including murdered Israeli civilians and the victims of atrocities such as Madrid, Lockerbie and Bali.

However this jihadist violence has had immensely bloodier consequences through the hysterically and dishonestly promoted War on Terror that has been associated with post-invasion avoidable deaths in Iraq and Afghanistan alone that total 1.6-million.

As I read the sedition provisions of the Bill that you are considering, Professors Chomsky, Bello and Polya have all broken them, and I have broken them for repeating

their views, perhaps even for listening to them. And the wonderful Michael Leunig has broken them for drawing cartoons in *The Age* critical of the Howard government and accusing it of crimes against humanity.

I do not suppose that the three professors and Mr Leunig will be arrested at once, since I suppose the first act under the new laws will be to prevent any mass media from airing their views. Little by little we will forget that there ever were alternative views.

I urge the Senate to remove all Sedition provisions from this Bill. They serve only one purpose, the purpose for which they were intended, namely the prevention of the expression of alternative views.