

# Australian Anti-Terror Laws Threaten Anti-War Writers

Contributed by Gideon Polya  
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Right-wing political and media hysteria over a "terror threat" to Australia has led to installation of draconian Anti-Terrorism Laws with even stronger laws set to be passed before Christmas 2005. An Australian Senate Committee enquiring into the new Anti-Terrorism Laws has posted 276 submissions on the Web Society + Culture, Background; Australia threatened by US state terrorism  
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Right-wing political and media hysteria over a "terror threat" to Australia has led to installation of draconian Anti-Terrorism Laws with even stronger laws set to be passed before Christmas 2005. An Australian Senate Committee enquiring into the new Anti-Terrorism Laws has posted 276 submissions on the Web (see: [here](#)).

Among many other matters in a 25 page submission (#112) to the Senate Committee, I pointed out that the Anti-Terrorism Laws are actually "terrorist" themselves as defined by the Oxford Dictionary - "terrorism" is defined as "furtherance of views through coercive intimidation" and "terrorists" "intimidate" by causing "terror" ("intense fear"), typically by killing people. The draconian Australian Anti-Terror Laws are achieving political ends through intimidation - and by threatening pacifist and humanitarian anti-war activists (such as myself), will promote current US wars and hence the continuing, DAILY death toll of 1,100 under-5 year old infants in the Occupied Iraqi and Afghan Territories.

MWC News readers should be interested in an expanding list of writers, artists and scholars authoritatively named as being in potential breach of the "sedition" sections of the proposed new Anti-Terror Laws e.g. Professor Noam Chomsky, Professor Walden Bello, cartoonist Michael Leunig and outstanding expatriate Australian journalist John Pilger. Now a MWC correspondent has joined the list. As a pacifist, humanitarian, anti-war writer and trenchant critic of both non-state and state terrorism, I have also been named as being in potential breach of the proposed Anti-Terror Laws in an authoritative submission (#84) to the Australian Senate Inquiry, this humane and informed submission citing a recent nationwide broadcast I made about Australian complicity in Iraq mass mortality (see: [here](#)).

These Anti-Terrorism Laws - and particularly their broad-ranging "sedition" provisions - threaten Australian non-Europeans, Muslims, journalists, writers, academics and universities and have elicited extremely strong objections from artists, writers, academics, minorities and all sections of the legal profession (see the submissions to the Senate Inquiry: [here](#)).

After carefully considering the "sedition" provisions, a brilliant linguistics researcher (in submission #84 to the Senate inquiry) considers that NOAM CHOMSKY, WALDEN BELLO, GIDEON POLYA, brilliant mainstream but anti-war and humanitarian cartoonist MICHAEL LEUNIG and HIMSELF (by repeating their views and perhaps even by listening to them) have broken the proposed "sedition" laws. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) recently broadcast a top legal opinion that outstanding expatriate Australian journalist JOHN PILGER had also broken the proposed "sedition" provisions by his forthright comments on Iraq (potentially 7 YEARS IN PRISON under the new Australian Anti-Terror laws).

The EXISTING Anti-Terrorism Laws provide draconian imprisonment penalties, namely 1 year (for not surrendering your passport immediately), 3 years (for intentionally associating 2 times with a person who promotes a Government-proscribed organization), 5 years (for reporting the preventative detention without charge of someone), 5 years (for not being able to prove that you do not possess an "answer" or a "thing" demanded during interrogation), 10 years for being associated with a Government-proscribed organization) and 25 years (for leading such an organization).

The PROPOSED Anti-Terrorism Laws provide further draconian imprisonment penalties, namely 2 years (for revealing a Document Demand Order), 5 years (for contravening Control Orders that could involve home detention, wearing a tracking device, no work, restricted associations, no telephone, no internet and no possession of specific "things"), 5 years (for revealing Preventative Detention without charge of anyone), 7 years (for extremely broad-ranging "sedition" offences, including not being able to prove that you did not intend by your actions to assist Australia's enemies or disturb the peace - noting that it is not possible in science to prove a negative) and life imprisonment (for donations that are thence transmitted to a Government-proscribed organization).

Remarkably, for all the hysteria over the "terror threat", neither politicians nor media have given any QUANTITATIVE estimates of the actual risk. One of the submissions to the Senate Inquiry (that of myself, #112) DOES provide such information: for an Australian, the "annual probability of dying" is about 1 in 1,000,000 (at the hands of a Muslim terrorist), 1 in 100,000 (at the hands of a family member or acquaintance), 1 in 10,000 (from a car accident) and 1 in 1,000 (from

cigarette smoking).

My submission also quantifies the “body count” from “jihadist” non-state terrorism (“terrorism” in the mainstream media) and UK-US state terrorism (what the perpetrators call “democratic imperialism” but which is better described as democratic tyranny, democratic Nazism and horrendous passive genocide). Thus about 5,000 Western civilians have been murdered by Muslim terrorists and insurgents over the last 20 years. In contrast, the post-invasion avoidable mortality (excess mortality) in the Occupied Palestinian, Iraqi and Afghan Territories now totals 0.3, 0.5 and 1.6 million, respectively - this being corroborated by independent estimates of post-invasion under-5 infant mortality in these Occupied Territories of 0.2, 0.3 and 1.4 million, respectively.

However the Australian Anti-Terrorism Laws, while not specifying Muslims, will in fact TARGET them because all 18 presently Government-proscribed organizations are Muslim. As with the “old” White Australia Policy and the “secret” New White Australia Policy, the Anti-Terrorism Laws will target Asians and Muslims by “secret executive interpretation”. Thus Australian Jews will be free to serve as soldiers in the illegally-occupied West Bank or Syrian territories and free to donate money towards illegal Israeli settlements - while a peaceful Australian Muslim could face life imprisonment for a charitable donation at a mosque.

Australian media will simply NOT report the horrendous US Coalition “passive genocide” in the Occupied Iraqi and Afghan Territories now totalling 2.1 million post-invasion avoidable deaths in gross violation of the Geneva Conventions through the non-provision of life-sustaining requisites. NOR will Australian media report the 0.4 million post-2001 global drug deaths linked to the US Coalition restoration of the Taliban-destroyed Afghan opium industry (currently about 90% of global market share) – this death toll including 2,000 Australians, 1,200 Scots, 3,000 Canadians, 3,200 Britons and 50,000 Americans.

In addition to such scientific assessments of the relative effects of “jihadist” non-state terrorism and US state terrorism, my submission also mentioned dangers of this draconian legislation to Australia in relation to trade, tourism and overseas students.

The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade reports that in 2003-2004 the total value to Australia of exports of goods and services was \$143 billion, of which international visitors consumed \$17 billion and education services exports accounted for \$6 billion (see: here).

Draconian, Muslim-targeting Anti-Terrorism Laws will discourage Asian visitors. The associated “sedition” laws will force teachers and academics (including humanities-, social science-, science- and law-based academics) to LIE BY OMISSION – why should about 300,000 overseas students pay an average of \$20,000 per annum to be taught LIES by fearful Australian academics under threat of 7 year prison terms for broad-ranging “sedition” offences?

Under EXISTING laws, a peaceful, US anti-war teacher Scott Parkin was recently hauled off the street, imprisoned for about a week without charge, deported with 2 escorts and then charged \$12,000 for the insult.

The hysteria- and Islamophobia-driven, Police State Anti-Terrorism Laws will violate major international human and civil rights agreements (notably the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights).

These draconian Anti-Terrorism Laws will threaten free speech and the integrity of Australian teachers, researchers, schools and universities – and hence profoundly corrupt the next generation of Australians. Driven by media lying and hysteria, Australia is about to become a proto-Nazi Police State.

As a peaceful, anti-violence, anti-war humanitarian I am horrified that the post-invasion avoidable mortality in the Occupied Palestinian, Iraqi and Afghan Territories totals 0.3, 0.5 and 1.6 million, respectively, in gross violation of the Geneva Convention for the protection of civilians in time of war. However “secret executive interpretation” of the new Anti-Terror Laws is set to constrain expression of such humane anti-war sentiment in Australia by threat of 7 year prison terms for broad-ranging “sedition” offences. Please inform everyone.

Dr Gideon Polya, a contributing editor to MWC News Magazine, published some 130 works in a 4 decade scientific career, most recently a huge pharmacological reference text "Biochemical Targets of Plant Bioactive Compounds" (CRC Press/Taylor & Francis, New York & London, 2003), and is currently writing a book on global mortality ---

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