

Dual citizenship wrong, says RSL

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THE RSL will fight moves to legalise dual citizenship in Australia. State president Bruce Ruxton said yesterday that veterans would campaign against the Federal Government if it tried to change the current law. "Migration, multiculturalism and dual citizenship could become a real weight around their neck," he said. The government is under pressure to act after two reports backing dual citizenship. In February the government-appointed Australian Citizenship Council recommended that legislation banning it be repealed. And Federal Parliament's joint standing committee on electoral matters has recommended that a referendum be held to allow the election of political candidates with multiple citizenships. The government is expected to respond to the reports soon. Sources said a submission by Immigration Minister Philip Ruddock to repeal section 17 of the Australian Citizenship Act (1948) had been rejected by Cabinet. The citizenship council, led by former governor-general Sir Ninian Stephen, said in its report that there were problems with section 17, which strips Australians of their citizenship if they take up another nationality. The council said this was anomalous because up to five million Australians already have or are eligible for dual citizenship. Mr Ruxton said the RSL would campaign against dual citizenship at an election. "We can't understand how any citizen could have a loyalty to two countries," he said.