

**Southern Cross Group E-Bulletin to Members**  
17 May 2001

**Australian Dual Citizenship Announcement**

Dear Southern Cross Group Friend,

Australian Immigration Minister Philip Ruddock has just announced that the government is not prepared to take a decision on whether to repeal section 17 of the Australian Citizenship Act 1948. Australians will continue to forfeit their Australian nationality on acquisition of another citizenship while the government engages in further community consultation of undetermined duration.

We know that at least 1,000 Australians around the globe have written, e-mailed and faxed Canberra on this issue over the last two years. It is a subject which many feel strongly about and many individuals have suffered hardship because of the provision over the years. Thank you for supporting us in our campaign in the way that you have. We are disappointed and frustrated that the government has ignored our voices. This is purely and simply a stalling tactic.

The full text of the Minister's press release can be viewed through a link up on the Southern Cross Group website, along with the Group's own press release which has been sent to media in Australia and elsewhere.

Many will know that the Australian Labor Party has indicated it will repeal Section 17 if it comes into government later this year. There are some indications that PM Howard may go to the polls early before his term expires in October. Our website will carry updates on this and provide ideas for next steps in the coming days.

Best regards,  
Anne MacGregor/John Russell  
Southern Cross Group Management Committee  
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**IMPORTANT:** A Federal election is looming in Australia. If you are one of the Australians overseas who still qualifies to vote, make sure you get organized now so that you can exercise your fundamental right to vote. The section "Call for a Global Electorate" on our website has links to the forms you will need.

For those many thousands of Australians overseas who can no longer vote under Australian electoral law, we think it's time we had something to say: send us your comments and watch our website.