



**Constitution (Citizenship) Amendment Bill**  
4 March 1999

**Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders):** I support this Bill introduced by the member for Hartley. In Australia we have one of the most, if not the most, stable political systems in the world. We do not have to look far afield to realise the advantages that we enjoy. Therefore, anything we can do to strengthen our parliamentary system should be applauded.

Dual citizenship harks back to the days of colonial rule. This State is no longer a colony but a sovereign State in its own right. Our laws should reflect our sovereignty along with the pride that we have. It is self-evident to me that members of Parliament should have allegiance only to Australia. I cannot see why anyone should object to that. In the Second World War, people of German descent were forcibly put into camps for the duration of the war. I understand that some of these people had Australian citizenship only, having been born and raised in Australia. Such was the insecurity felt by many Australians at that time.

Imagine, therefore, a situation where a member of Parliament held citizenship of a country with which Australia was at war. It cannot be said that this would never happen. However, this Bill removes the necessity for consideration of hypotheticals and anchors members of Parliament firmly in allegiance to their State. I believe that residents of this State should have no doubts as to the undivided loyalty of every member of Parliament to the State of South Australia.

This Bill ensures that the issue is faced and dealt with prior to someone's taking a seat in the House—not an unreasonable expectation. I was bemused to note that Opposition members made a miserable attempt to tie this Bill in with One Nation. It was the very law which the Bill proposes that stopped a woman in Queensland taking up her elected role as Senator for One Nation because she had dual citizenship.

It appears to me that conflict of interest from Opposition members in the matter of citizenship is stronger than commonsense or fact. It seems ludicrous that conflict of interest can be alleged to be of extraordinary effect in financial or business matters, to the extent that all my financial affairs and those of my husband and family are disclosed to the public in full each year but are of no effect at all in citizenship, and, therefore, allegiance to South Australia.

I commend the member for Hartley in describing Australia as a mosaic where backgrounds of so many nationalities make up our people. A mosaic is an entity consisting of diverse colours and textures welded together. That picturesquely describes multicultural Australia. With the increased mobility of people in today's world, this Bill takes on a significance that did not exist in earlier times. We hear a lot today about rights but not nearly so much about responsibilities. This Bill makes members of Parliament face and accept their responsibilities—not people in ordinary jobs, but people who have been chosen to lead. It involves 69 people who are responsible for the laws under which we live.

I can see no problem with dual citizenship for ordinary citizens but, where the interests of South Australia are paramount (and that should be the case with elected members of Parliament), it is quite a different matter and I would expect this Bill to be passed without dissent. I challenge every member of this House to support this Bill as a declaration of their undivided loyalty to South Australia and to the best long-term interests of this State.