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## Citizenship Test Discriminatory and Divisive

The President of the NEMBC Mr George Zangalis said today that the citizenship test announced by Mr Howard yesterday is discriminatory and divisive. Mr Zangalis who represents ethnic community broadcasters' across Australia said:

“We see this as a two pronged attack on diversity in this country” Mr Zangalis went on to say “Raising the bar on citizenship and dismantling of Multiculturalism are all part of an attempt by John Howard to feed into some kind of new Hansonite racism.”

The NEMBC regards the whole issue of values as a smokescreen. Multiculturalism as a social policy has over the last 30 years demonstrated that it is capable of delivering opportunity, respect and harmony within a frame work of social diversity. Ethnic community radio representing over 900 language program groups across Australia is an example of multiculturalism in action.

The Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship, Andrew Robb, has failed to give reasons why the current test is inadequate. The NEMBC believes that the citizenship test is aimed at excluding the latest wave of immigrants from Middle Eastern and African countries. On that basis it is racist and divisive.

We challenge the Prime Minister to demonstrate how pseudo values such as mateship and a fair go constitute a genuine Australian ethos. If that were the case then Australia's long held reputation as a larrikin nation with a healthy suspicion of self serving politicians is at risk.

**For further comment contact:**

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