



Wednesday, 31 August 2005

Hon John Howard MP,  
Prime Minister Of Australia,  
Suite MG 8  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister,

**Ref: Hon. Bronwyn Bishop's proposal to ban Muslim girls  
from wearing headscarves**

Ms. Bishop's remarks are unfortunate, out of place and outdated. In the prevailing tense climate of fear, panic and anxiety, it should be the aim of the people's representatives to make statements to dispel misunderstanding, to strengthen the bonds of understanding and friendship amongst the people, and not to fuel racism by making such xenophobic statements. The Sikh Council Of Australia strongly opposes any such proposal. In a multinational and multicultural country, such as Australia, where the constitution guarantees freedom of religion and cultural practices and where people from diverse ethnic backgrounds are living harmoniously, one wonders how some one's dress can symbolise a clash of cultures. People should not be discriminated against on the basis of dress or ethnicity.

Sikh Council Of Australia highly appreciates your insight into the long-term consequences of the proposal and your views and subsequent stand on the matter.

Yours sincerely,

Bawa Singh Jagdev  
Secretary  
Sikh Council Of Australia Inc.  
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