



New South Wales
Council for
Civil Liberties

NSW COUNCIL FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES

STREET ADDRESS: SUITE 203, 105 PITT ST, SYDNEY, NSW 2000 AUSTRALIA
POSTAL ADDRESS: PO BOX A1386, SYDNEY SOUTH, NSW 1235

e: office@nswccl.org.au
p: 02 8090 2952
f: 02 8580 4633

www.nswccl.org.au

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To Whom It May Concern,

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO CONSIDER REFUSAL TO MS CHELSEA MANNING

The NSW Council for Civil Liberties understands that a Notice of Intention to Consider Refusal has been issued to Ms Chelsea Manning, who is due to visit Australia shortly for a speaking tour.

We note that Ms Manning fails the character test in s.501 of the *Migration Act 1958*.

That is not, on its own, sufficient to justify refusal of a visa.

The refusal of a visa to Ms Manning would be reprehensible.

There can be no reasonable apprehension that Ms Manning's speaking tour would cause harm to the Australian community. Her situation is entirely different from holocaust denialists or advocates of violent misogyny, who have been appropriately denied visas on character grounds. There can be no reasonable apprehension that Ms Manning will engage in criminal activity while in Australia or engender community violence.

The Australian community should be entitled to hear Ms Manning's views from her in person. To deny them that right would be inconsistent with the right to free speech.

There are suggestions that the US Government has communicated to the Australian government in relation to the possible refusal of a visa to Ms Manning. If this is correct, it would represent foreign interference with Australia's domestic affairs of a serious and unacceptable nature.

The right to free speech is at stake here. The Australian government should defend and promote it.

Ms Manning should be granted a visa forthwith.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Stephen Blanks'.

Stephen Blanks
President, NSW Council for Civil Liberties