

# PRESS RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **In light of today's press conference, the LMA requests Mr Dutton to engage in a genuine discussion**

The Lebanese Muslim Association (LMA) seeks, in the stated good spirit of open discussion, that the Immigration Minister Peter Dutton engage with the Lebanese community, or remain silent. The continued derogatory statements being made have left the Lebanese Australian community alienated and further marginalised.

The fact that the LMA (the largest Lebanese organisation in Australia) or any other Lebanese Australian Muslim organisations, has not been contacted for a discussion or meeting to address such stated issues prior to his comments, is an indictment on Mr Dutton himself and his office.

Mr Dutton has maintained that this is a discussion based on facts, so in light of this, we wish to demand some answers from Mr Dutton and his party on the following issues:

- Where exactly did Mr Dutton get his numbers? The LMA would like to know what source Mr Dutton used to acquire this data, as the LMA has conflicting information.
- Where exactly did ex-Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser go wrong? Is Mr Dutton implying that Mr Fraser was negligent for not screening Lebanese migrants in the 1970s for crimes their grandchildren may or may not commit? Is this same judgement being imposed on other communities?
- What does Mr Dutton presume Mr Fraser should have done? The inhumane thing and allow people to remain persecuted? Or be selective in his choice based on the possible future of their grandchildren?
- Is Mr Dutton implying that Australia requires racial profiling in its immigration policies?
- If Mr Dutton is focused on facts, we would appreciate he provide us with data on the numbers and ethnicities on other criminal activities that threaten the social fabric of our country. What are the predominant religious beliefs and how does this affect the safety of all Australians? If this is an open and honest discussion on facts, the entire picture needs to be considered.
- When will the grandchildren of these migrants, and the following generations, be referred to as Australians? Why does our community continue to face ongoing interrogations on our identity and loyalty?

If you want to talk about facts, the simple fact that the LMA needs to ask these questions is a reflection on Mr Dutton and his approach to this conversation.

Mr Dutton is clearly not interested in having an open and honest discussion on the topic, and his attempt to circumvent the issue this morning by pinning it on other political representatives is a poor attempt to dodge the issue.

Mr Dutton and his office have gone so far as to block the LMA on social media platforms, in an attempt to maintain his disregard for the community he so easily denigrates.

The LMA seeks answers from Mr Dutton on these issues, and hopes that he will honour the intellect of the Australian public, and stop insulting an entire community in the name of false justifications and baseless accusations.

For more information please contact LMA media Officer at [media@lma.org.au](mailto:media@lma.org.au).

**END**

*Our Community, our future*