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Australian Deputy PM disqualified over dual citizenship – 29th October, 2017

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Australia's deputy leader was disqualified from his position because he had dual citizenship when he was elected. Australia's constitution prohibits dual nationals from being elected because they are a "subject or citizen of a foreign power". Australia's ruling National Party has just 75 seats in the 150-seat House of Representatives. The deputy leader could return to office in the future because he renounced his New Zealand citizenship.

The deputy leader said the decision showed Australia's democratic values. He said: "I respect the verdict of the court...It has given us all the freedoms we see." He added: "The decision...is clearly not the outcome we were hoping for, but the business of government goes on." Many Australians believe the dual citizenship laws should change. Around 28 per cent of Australians were born overseas. Many have a family history that entitles them to dual citizenship.

Level 5

Australia's deputy leader Barnaby Joyce has been disqualified from his position because he held dual citizenship when he was elected. Four other politicians were also disqualified. Holding two passports made them dual citizens. This made them ineligible for being a "subject or citizen of a foreign power". Australia's constitution prohibits dual nationals from being elected. Australia's ruling National Party now has just 75 seats in the 150-seat House of Representatives. Mr Joyce could return to office by running in a by-election. He renounced his New Zealand citizenship in August.

Mr Joyce said the court's decision showed the democratic values of Australia. He said: "I respect the verdict of the court. We live in a marvelous democracy....It has given us all the freedoms we see. I thank the court." He added: "The decision of the court today is clearly not the outcome we were hoping for, but the business of government goes on." Many Australians believe the dual citizenship laws should be changed. Around 28 per cent of Australians were born overseas. Many have a family history going back generations that could allow them to have dual citizenship.

Level 6

Australia's Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce has been disqualified from his governmental position because he held dual citizenship when he was elected. He was one of five politicians who were deemed as being incorrectly elected because they held two passports and were thus dual citizens. They were ineligible because they were a "subject or citizen of a foreign power". Australia's constitution prohibits dual nationals from being elected. Mr Joyce's departure has put pressure on Australia's ruling National Party, which now has just 75 seats in the 150-seat House of Representatives. Mr Joyce could return to office by running in a by-election after he renounced his New Zealand citizenship in August.

Mr Joyce accepted the court's decision, which he said typified the democratic values of Australia. He said: "I respect the verdict of the court. We live in a marvelous democracy. With all the checks and balances, it has given us all the freedoms we see. I thank the court for their deliberations." He added: "The decision of the court today is clearly not the outcome we were hoping for, but the business of government goes on." Many Australians believe the dual citizenship laws should be changed. The latest census in Australia shows that 28 per cent of Australians were born overseas. Many more have a family history going back generations that would entitle them to claim dual citizenship.