Pre-ceremony letter to citizenship judge.

Dear . . .,

This is to let you know that immediately after my citizenship ceremony on ??? ??, ????, I will be following the advice of Weiler J.A., Lauwers J.A., and Pardu J.A., in their ruling on McAteer v. Canada against my co-appellants and myself, 2014 ONCA 578, paragraph 76:

“. . . the appellants have the opportunity to publicly disavow what they consider to be the message conveyed by the oath. . . . “

As a further explanation, allow me to quote from my own September 2012 affidavit to the court, in this matter:

I find the phrase “I affirm that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada, Her Heirs and Successors” repulsive. To me, it states that some people, the royals and their heirs, are born with privilege. It is a historic remnant of a time we all believe has passed, in which the children of peasants could be nothing but peasants, and in which aristocracy existed as a closed club.

I appreciate that the monarchy in Canada is mostly symbolic (I could not live here had it been anything more). Yet it is precisely the wrong symbol: a symbol that we aren’t all equal and that some of us have to bow to others for reasons of ancestry alone.

. . . I feel that the requirement of taking the (first half of) the oath is tantamount to hazing. To be initiated as a Canadian, I am required to participate in an initiation ritual that I find disturbing and humiliating. It is a ritual that has no practical meaning and only carries what I regard as a repugnant symbolic meaning. Moreover, it is a ritual that born-Canadians are not subject to.

. . . I feel there is much value in becoming a Canadian citizen. Should this Application be dismissed and possible subsequent appeals be denied, I will likely hold my nose and shut my eyes, surrender to some hazing and unhappily take the oath of citizenship in contradiction to my conscientious beliefs as indicated above.

Sincerely, . . .

Disavowal Letter.

Dear . . . (citizenship judge, ministers of justice, immigration),

In specific reference to the Citizenship Oath, the Court of Appeal for Ontario, in their decision against my co-applicants and myself (McAteer v. Canada, 2014 ONCA 578, paragraph 76):

“. . . the appellants have the opportunity to publicly disavow what they consider to be the message conveyed by the oath. . . . “

As explicitly suggested by the Court, I hereby completely disavow whatever I thought the Citizenship Oath conveyed when I took it earlier today (though if an oath can possibly stand for more than what the oath-taker thinks it stands for, that extra bit possibly remains standing, without my awareness or consent).

I find it regrettable that I have to do this; I have done my best to avoid it. In my mind, oaths are not meant to be disavowed. But I must have misunderstood something about what oaths mean in Canada, and the courts have put me right.

As explicitly suggested by the Court, I attach a copy of the letter I sent you prior to this ceremony.

Needless to say, I remain subject to the laws of Canada and to basic principles of democracy, human rights, and decency towards others. I am proud to have become a citizen of this wonderful country, and I plan to fulfill my duties as a citizen.

Sincerely, . . .

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