

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF CANADA
(ON APPEAL FROM THE FEDERAL COURT OF APPEAL)

BETWEEN:

EARL MASON

APPELLANT
(Appellant)

-and-

THE MINISTER OF CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

RESPONDENT
(Respondent)

AND BETWEEN:

SEIFESLAM DLEIOW

APPELLANT
(Appellant)

-and-

THE MINISTER OF CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION

RESPONDENT
(Respondent)

(Continued)

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(Pursuant to Rule 42 of the *Rules of the Supreme Court of Canada*, S.O.R./2002-156)

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PARTS I & II: OVERVIEW AND STATEMENT OF FACTS AND ISSUES

1. The Canadian Muslim Lawyers Association (“CMLA”) is a national not-for-profit association of Muslim lawyers from all Canadian provinces and territories. It has over 200 members across Canada, with active chapters in Alberta, Atlantic Canada, British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec.
2. The CMLA takes no position on the facts and does not purport to expand the issues in this appeal.
3. The CMLA intervenes in this appeal to make the following submissions.
4. The actual impact of an impugned legislation, particularly on vulnerable populations, must be considered in the context of the statutory interpretation, including of section 34(1)(e) of the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (the “*IRPA*”).¹ This includes assessment of the social context in which the impugned legislation currently operates. Relevant to this analysis is the effect of section 34(1)(e) on vulnerable and marginalized communities.
5. The lived experiences of Muslims in Canada provide telling insight into the manner in which racialized communities are disproportionately affected by the enforcement of inadmissibility provisions contained within the *IRPA*.
6. Broadly interpreting section 34(1)(e) of the *IRPA* will further entrench the disproportionate impact that vulnerable racialized communities experience. Allowing inadmissibility under section 34(1)(e) to include acts of common violence, regardless of criminal conviction, would have a significantly adverse effect on racialized communities that have historically faced over-policing and historic discrimination within the criminal justice system.
7. If the effect resulting from the proposed interpretation of an impugned provision has the potential to result in further inequity, it should not be adopted. The interpretation that would

¹ *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, S.C. 2001, c. 27, as amended, s.34(1)(e).

result in the least infringement of the rights of marginalized communities should be preferred.

PART III – STATEMENT OF ARGUMENT

a) Statutory interpretation requires assessment of the social context in which the impugned statute operates

8. Statutory interpretation requires an appreciation of how laws operate in practice and not only how they may operate theoretically. This is in line with the modern principle of statutory interpretation which requires the words of an Act to be read in their entire context and in their grammatical and ordinary sense harmoniously with the scheme of the Act, the object of the Act, and the intention of Parliament.² In the process of identifying Parliament's intention, Courts are to assume that the Legislature is aware of the social context in which legislation operates.³
9. As part of that social context, this Court has historically identified when legislation has a disproportionate impact on vulnerable or marginalized communities as relevant to its' interpretation.
10. For instance, in *Moge*, this Court considered that feminization of poverty was an entrenched phenomenon, which in turn informed the social context within which the *Divorce Act* was enacted.⁴

² *Canada (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration) v Vavilov*, 2019 SCC 65 at para. 117, citing *Re Rizzo & Rizzo Shoes Ltd. (Re)*, 1998 CanLII 837 (SCC), [1998] 1 S.C.R. 27 at para. 21 [*Re Rizzo*], and *Bell ExpressVu Limited Partnership v. Rex*, 2002 SCC 42 at para. 26, both quoting Elmer Driedger, *Construction of Statutes*, 2nd ed (Toronto: Butterworths, 1983) at p. 87.

³ *Moge v. Moge*, 1992 CanLII 25 (SCC), [1992] 3 SCR 813 at p. 857 [*Moge*].

⁴ *Ibid* at p. 853.

11. Similarly, in *Marzetti*, this Court deemed social reality and public policy to be relevant to its interpretation of a provision of the *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act*.⁵
12. In the very recent case of *Kirkpatrick*, this Court considered how a narrow reading of the sexual assault provisions in the Canadian *Criminal Code* would impact vulnerable communities, including women and gender diverse individuals, and racialized members of those communities.⁶
13. Therefore, in this case, real world consideration requires examination of the lived experiences of those mostly affected by the legislation in question,⁷ including the challenges faced by racialized minorities.

b) Racialized communities are disproportionately impacted by the inadmissibility provisions contained within the IRPA

14. In the context of this case, when looking at the social context of the law’s operation, it is relevant that the Canadian Border Services Agency (“CBSA”) is given significant power to enforce the *IRPA*.⁸ This includes the power to pursue allegations of inadmissibility against individual permanent residents or refugee claimants in Canada in cases that it – in its *sole* discretion - deems appropriate.⁹
15. In practice, therefore, not every person who might be caught under a particular inadmissibility provision will necessarily face inadmissibility proceedings that may lead to adverse consequences. Only those that the CBSA wishes to pursue allegations of inadmissibility against will.

⁵ *Marzetti v Marzetti*, 1994 CanLII 50 (SCC), [1994] 2 SCR 765 at pp. 800-801; See also *Sparks v Nova Scotia (Assistance Appeal Board)*, 2017 NSCA 82 at paras. 58, 60-61. In *Sparks*, the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal was mindful of the disproportionate effect of the impugned legislation on women and children.

⁶ *R. v. Kirkpatrick*, 2022 SCC 33 at para 62 [*Kirkpatrick*].

⁷ *Lynch v St. John's (City)*, 2016 NLCA 35 at para. 75.

⁸ *IRPA*, *supra* note 2, s.4(2).

⁹ The CBSA exercises this discretion without the benefit of an oversight body.

16. Of concern, given the vast discretion to enforce the *IRPA* afforded to the CBSA, are allegations of racial profiling levied against it.¹⁰ On a very recent and publicly available survey, a quarter of CBSA agents report witnessing a colleague engage in discrimination against a traveler entering Canada, for reasons connected to the traveler's national or ethnic origins.¹¹
17. Unsurprisingly, the enforcement of inadmissibility provisions has been carried out disproportionately against racialized populations. The disproportionate impact can be seen starkly when reviewing the case law involving determinations of inadmissibility pursuant to section 34(1)(f) of the *IRPA*.
18. Section 34(1)(f) of the *IRPA* renders persons inadmissible to Canada on security grounds based on their membership in an organization that there are reasonable grounds to believe engages, has engaged or will engage in terrorism.¹²
19. Under this provision, allegations of inadmissibility based on membership in a terrorist organization have extended far beyond rogue organizations that operate outside of the political process. Rather, major political parties from Muslim-majority countries have been singled out as constituting "terrorist organizations" for the purposes of creating inadmissibility for membership pursuant to section 34(1)(f) of the *IRPA*.
20. According to current interpretations of section 34(1)(f), findings have been made that membership in the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (the "BNP") is sufficient to warrant a finding of inadmissibility based on security grounds, on the basis that it can be considered a terrorist group for having organized large scale protests, which are sometimes marred by violence.¹³ This interpretation persists despite the recognition of the Immigration Refugee

¹⁰ See, for example, National Council of Canadian Muslims, *NCCM Policy Paper: CBSA Oversight Bill*, October 2020, online <<https://www.nccm.ca/cbsa-oversight/>>

¹¹ Canada, Canadian Border Services Agency, *Evaluation of travellers processing through a GBA+ lens*, July 2022, online <<https://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/agency-agence/reports-rapports/ae-ve/2022/sec2-eng.html#a2.1.3>>

¹² *IRPA*, *supra* note 2, s.34(1)(f).

¹³ *Opu v. Canada (Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness)*, 2022 FC 650 [*Opu*]; *Miah v Canada (Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness)*, 2020 FC 38 [*Miah*]; *Hossein v Canada*

Board and / or the Court that the BNP is a legitimate and established political party – as the second largest in Bangladesh, it is either in power or in opposition.¹⁴

21. A similar approach was pursued with Pakistani Muslims who were found to be inadmissible to Canada for being members of the Mohajir Quami Movement (“MQM-A”), also a functioning political party.¹⁵
22. Recently, membership in the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood has been found to create inadmissibility to Canada on security grounds, despite the fact that the Canadian government has not listed the political party as a terrorist entity.¹⁶
23. The expansion of the organizations that constitute terror entities to encompass entrenched and active political parties has almost exclusively been reserved for allegations against Muslims.
24. In the majority of these cases, there is no allegation that the individuals concerned were themselves involved in any acts of wrongdoing. Moreover, their inadmissibility was upheld regardless of whether the person was still a member of such organization, or how much time has passed since the alleged conduct took place.
25. This is but one example of how broad readings of inadmissibility provisions disproportionately affect racialized populations, and how particular groups can find themselves targeted by the CBSA for enforcement. While section 34(1)(e) of the *IRPA* has

(Citizenship and Immigration), 2021 FC 91; *Ferdous v Canada (Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness)*, 2019 FC 1115; *Khan v. Canada (Citizenship and Immigration)*, 2019 FC 899; *Rahman v. Canada (Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness)*, 2019 FC 807; *Saleheen v. Canada (Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness)*, 2019 FC 145; *Kamal v. Canada (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship)*, 2018 FC 480; *A. (S.) v. Canada (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness)*, 2017 FC 494; *Gazi v. Canada (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration)*, 2017 FC 94.

¹⁴ *Opu*, *ibid* at para. 13; See also *Khandaker v Canada (Citizenship and Immigration)*, 2019 CanLII 90449 (CA IRB) at para. 69; *X (Re)*, 2018 CanLII 145572 (CA IRB) at para. 65.

¹⁵ *Naeem v. Canada (Minister of Citizenship & Immigration)*, 2010 FC 1069; *Faridi v. Canada (Minister of Citizenship & Immigration)*, 2008 FC 761; *Daud v. Canada (Citizenship and Immigration)*, 2008 FC 701; *Jalil v. Canada (Minister of Citizenship & Immigration)*, 2007 FC 568; *Kashif Omer v. Canada (Citizenship and Immigration)*, 2007 FC 478.

¹⁶ *Elmohamady Elmady v. Canada (Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness)*, 2021 FC 1476.

not been widely employed by the CBSA as a ground of inadmissibility to date, there is no reason to believe that it would not similarly be used to disproportionately target racialized individuals.

c) Broadly interpreting section 34(1)(e) of the IRPA will further entrench the disproportionate impact on vulnerable racialized communities

26. A broad reading of the inadmissibility provision in question will provide the CBSA with an equally broad enforcement mandate, in a context where the CBSA already has untrammelled discretion. It is inevitable therefore that stereotyping and profiling can seep into the exercise of discretion afforded when determining whether or not to pursue an inadmissibility finding against a particular person.
27. Racialized people would be particularly vulnerable if the reading of section 34(1)(e) of the *IRPA* was interpreted expansively, to include conduct that might endanger public safety without any conviction, or nexus to serious national security risks.
28. Just as the expansion of terrorism-related inadmissibility provisions has disproportionately affected Muslims, a broad interpretation of section 34(1)(e) of the *IRPA* would have disproportionate impact on racialized communities that are subject to over-policing.
29. This court has already recognized the reality of racialized communities being over-policed in Canada in *Grant*.¹⁷ In that case, this Court acknowledged “[a] growing body of evidence and opinion suggests that visible minorities and marginalized individuals are at particular risk from unjustified ‘low visibility’ police interventions in their lives.”¹⁸
30. In the more recent case of *Le*, the Court ultimately concluded: “we have arrived at a place where the research now shows disproportionate policing of racialized and low-income communities.”¹⁹

¹⁷ *R. v. Grant*, 2009 SCC 32 at para. 154.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *R. v. Le*, 2019 SCC 34 at para. 97.

31. Historic over-policing of racialized communities leads to greater potential that racialized community members will be caught under an interpretation of 34(1)(e) of the *IRPA* that encompasses all interactions where violence is alleged in criminal proceedings, even those which do not result in a conviction.
32. Moreover, when deciding whether someone's conduct amounts to violence that may be a danger to public safety, the outcome may be informed by the decision maker's personal biases and prejudices towards racialized communities.
33. Although expanding the interpretation of section 34(1)(e) of the *IRPA* to include acts of common violence without any nexus to national security may seem neutral on its face, it will have a disproportionate impact on marginalized communities, resulting in further harm to historically disadvantaged communities.

d) Where ambiguity exists, the interpretation that does not perpetrate inequity against historically disadvantages communities should be adopted

34. Given the profound impact on racialized populations that may follow from differing interpretations of inadmissibility provisions, it follows that this Court should seek to assure itself that its preferred interpretation does not create further inequity.²⁰
35. The entrenchment of societal inequity – of which Parliament is presumed to be aware - must be seen to be contrary to Parliament's intent, as opined by the Honorable Justice L'Heureux-Dube in *Moge*.²¹
36. It is well settled that Parliament does not intend absurd consequences.²² In addition, legislation ought to be interpreted as consistent with the values entrenched in the *Canadian*

²⁰ *Willick v. Willick*, 1994 CanLII 28 (SCC), [1994] 3 S.C.R. 670 [*Willick*].

²¹ *Moge*, *supra* note 4 at pp. 853 & 857.

²² *Tran v. Canada (Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness)*, 2017 SCC 50 at para. 31, citing *Rizzo*, *supra* note 3 at para. 27.

Charter of Rights and Freedoms, including its principles of equality and freedom from discrimination.²³

37. In *Kirkpatrick*, this Court specifically rejected an interpretation of a statute that would further inequity of vulnerable groups, including racialized individuals, and deny equality under the law.²⁴
38. Rejecting an interpretation of a statute that perpetuates inequity recognizes that the interpretative process is infused with public values.²⁵
39. It also accords with the general principle that where a statute removes substantive rights, a narrow interpretation is preferred.²⁶ This is a well-known rule of statutory interpretation of penal provisions.²⁷ It has also been used in the immigration context. In *Vavilov*, this Court recognized a need to limit the interpretation of provisions of the *Citizenship Act* which would deny citizenship rights.²⁸ Given the consequences that flow from a finding of inadmissibility to non-citizens – including the potential for detention and deportation – there is no principled basis upon which to treat the interpretation of these provisions differently.
40. In this case, the interpretation that will result in less infringement of the rights of racialized communities ought to be given preference.
41. Finally, the CMLA submits that it would be unduly restrictive to require, as the Federal Court of Appeal did, that individuals affected by the interpretation of section 34(1)(e) of the *IRPA* bring forward all considerations which may be relevant to the tribunal at first instance

²³ *Willick*, *supra* note 21 at p. 705, citing *Hills v. Canada (Attorney General)*, 1988 CanLII 67 (SCC), [1988] 1 S.C.R. 513 at p. 558, and *Slaight Communications Inc. v. Davidson*, 1989 CanLII 92 (SCC), [1989] 1 S.C.R. 1038 at p. 1078.

²⁴ *Kirkpatrick*, *supra* note 7.

²⁵ *Canada (Attorney General) v. Consolidated Canadian Contractors Inc.*, 1998 CanLII 9092 (FCA), [1999] 1 FC 209.

²⁶ *Brossard (Town) v. Quebec Commission des droits de la personne*, 1988 CanLII 7 (SCC), [1988] 2 S.C.R. 279 at p. 307, relying on *Ontario Human Rights Commission v. Borough of Etobicoke*, 1982 CanLII 15 (SCC), [1982] 1 S.C.R. 202, and in *Bhinder v. Canadian National Railway Co.*, 1985 CanLII 19 (SCC), [1985] 2 S.C.R. 561.

²⁷ *R. v. McIntosh*, 1995 CanLII 124 (SCC), [1995] 1 SCR 686 at p. 702.

²⁸ *Vavilov*, *supra* note 3 at para 192.

before they can be considered by a Court.²⁹ It is too burdensome a requirement for individuals belonging to marginalized communities who wish to raise evidence of how a law disproportionately affects them. Such an approach would perpetuate system inequities.

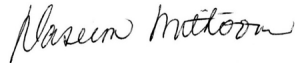
42. As noted by the Honorable Justice Martin “In the end, a system that can account for the social dynamics which act to impoverish certain members of society over others, or to prevent them from accessing the courtroom and reclaiming their rights, is a fairer system for all.”³⁰

PARTS IV and V – SUBMISSIONS ON COSTS AND ORDER SOUGHT

43. The CMLA does not seek costs and requests that no costs be ordered against it. The CMLA takes no position on the outcome of this appeal.

ALL OF WHICH IS RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED this 2nd day of September 2022.

Per:



Naseem Mithoowani

²⁹ *Canada (Citizenship and Immigration) v Mason*, 2021 FCA 156 at para. 74. [AR Part I, Tab 8, p.84]

³⁰ *Michel v. Graydon*, 2020 SCC 24 at para. 101.

PART VI – TABLE OF AUTHORITIES

Authority	Paragraph Reference
<i>A. (S.) v. Canada (Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness)</i> , 2017 FC 494	20
<i>Bell ExpressVu Limited Partnership v. Rex</i> , 2002 SCC 42	8
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<i>Daud v. Canada (Citizenship and Immigration)</i> , 2008 FC 701	21
<i>Elmohamady Elmady v. Canada (Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness)</i> , 2021 FC 1476	22
<i>Faridi v. Canada (Minister of Citizenship & Immigration)</i> , 2008 FC 761	21
<i>Ferdous v Canada (Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness)</i> , 2019 FC 1115	20
<i>Gazi v. Canada (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration)</i> , 2017 FC 94	20
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<i>Kashif Omer v. Canada (Citizenship and Immigration)</i> , 2007 FC 478	21
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<p><i>Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, (S.C. 2001, c. 27)</i> <i>Loi sur l'immigration et la protection des réfugiés, (L.C. 2001, ch. 27)</i></p>	<p>4(2), 34(1) 4(2), 34(1)</p>