

The below article was taken from:  
<http://www.radiojamaica.com>

### The intricacies of renouncing US citizenship

Monday, 14 April 2008



The Jamaica Labour Party's (JLP) Daryl Vaz who's representing the West Portland constituency has started the process of renouncing his US citizenship.

Mr. Vaz went to the Embassy on Tuesday morning to begin the paper work.

This is just days after a court ruling which stated that Mr. Vaz is unqualified to representing constituents because of his

of his dual citizenship.

But, how easy is it to renounce one's US citizenship?

RJR News Centre spoke with a legal expert specialising in the handling of such cases, University of Miami Law School Professor David Rowe.

He feels its possible Mr. Vaz may not be able to complete the process in the 42 day time frame he envisions.

Professor David Rowe said Monday's move by Mr. Vaz is only the first of a series of steps in a process that could take between six-months and a year to complete.

He said renouncing one's US citizenship is it not as simple as just handing over one's passport.

"This is not going to be a rush through application but I believe the State Department will examine this application for renunciation very seriously. I do not think it is going to take a period of less than a month," said Professor Rowe.

"Obviously with the lawyers pressure can be placed but sometimes the Department of State is sometimes very truculent when it comes to matters such as this and it is not impossible that this could take over six months, in fact over a year before they are satisfied that the individual lacks or does not lack the full understanding of renouncing his citizenship," he continued.

In order to renounce the person who no longer wishes to be a US citizen must travel to the States and sign an oath of renunciation.

A consular officer will then do a thorough interview with the applicant, essentially to make sure that he or she understands the implications of voluntarily giving up citizenship.

The consular office will then request that the applicant be issued a certification of loss of nationality.

Professor Rowe stresses the importance of the applicant, in this case Mr. Vaz, fully understanding what renunciation of citizenship means.

The Consular officer must also investigate to ensure that the applicant is not wanted by United States law enforcement and that he understands that he is still expected to service any tax obligations or debts pending on US soil.

Professor Rowe adds that the applicant must accept certain realities.

The renunciation is irreversible, so once you give up your citizenship and you are over 18 years old, you cannot reapply for it.

Additionally the individual will never again be able to travel on a US passport alone, so he will have to have obtain a battery of visas.

If he wants to live in the US in the future, he will have to try to qualify for permanent residence in the future, a process that is fraught with obstacles if one is not a US citizen.

**[From Intricacies of Renouncing US Citizenship to  
Constitution and Rights Home Page](#)**