

Response to Proposed Human Rights and Anti-discrimination Bill 2012

Rev Les Percy

20th December 2012

Introduction

We all discriminate. We all need to discriminate. I discriminate against Holden and Ford and drive another vehicle. I live in Brisbane and discriminate against living in the southern States.

I know that the Federal Executive of the Labor Party discriminates against employing members of Bob Catter's Australia Party and I know that the Liberal/National Coalition would not employ a member of the Greens.

Christian' in Society

As a Christian I want to see Christian Schools, Hospitals and Welfare Agencies being able to continue to discriminate in employing only those who are in favour of the ethos and ethics of Christians. I also want to see Muslims, Buddhists, and those of other faiths and non-faith, also able to employ only those who are not out of step with the their faith position within the Civil Law of Australia.

Free Speech

Free Speech must be protected. I get offended by blasphemy against the Person of Christ. I can get offended by those who call me an ignorant fundamentalist Christian. But I accept that this is not a matter to take someone to an Anti-discrimination Commission.

I do not want to see a repeat of the situation in Victoria where two Christian Pastors were taken to the Anti-discrimination Commission for comments made in a Christian seminar on the complaint of Muslim converts.

The Criminal Code provides protection against threats of violence. If need be it should be used. There is a need to prevent anti-discrimination legislation being use as a weapon against those with whom we disagree.

Onus of Proof

I am also concerned that the onus of proof is reversed. A person should be considered innocent until proved guilty. It is unjust to have a person considered guilty until they prove their innocence. There is a danger of anti-discrimination legislation being us for vexatious attacks on political or religious opponents.