Submission to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights: Freedom of Speech in Australia Inquiry

The Need to Reform s18C of the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth)

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Dear Committee Secretary,

Please accept this submission by the NSW Young Liberal Movement to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights: Freedom of Speech in Australia Inquiry.

The NSW Young Liberal Movement comprises approximately 2000 members aged 16 to 30, with a concentration of members aged 18-25.

Free speech is a gatekeeper right because it offers us the unique ability to prevent or seriously curtail negative discrimination, to challenge the status quo, to argue for truth, and to combat misconceptions. In a modern liberal democracy, we believe that the right not to be offended is no right at all.

We submit that s 18C of the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth) is a blight on our country's statute books. It infantilises minority groups and shuts down legitimate debate.

Ordinary Australians feel unable to voice their opinions. University students, cartoonists, columnists and politicians face protracted legal battles merely because they do not conform to an ever-narrowing and ever-entrenched orthodoxy.

In this submission, our Movement outlines the case for change. It gives voice to legal, general policy and philosophical considerations, and the views of Young Liberals from ethnic minority backgrounds.

For the reasons provided herein, we submit that changes must be recommended. Should the inquiry seek any further submissions, in person or in writing, we will with pleasure make ourselves available.

Regards,

Alex Dore
President
NSW Young Liberal Movement

Chaneg Torres
Officer
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Introduction:

The NSW Young Liberal movement is committed to the classical liberal value of free speech. This submission explores the philosophical underpinning behind our support for reform, drawing on JS Mill's argument that freedom of speech and opinion, no matter how offensive, must be preserved for the pursuit of truth. This, we contend, is vital to the functioning of a democracy where voters must have available to them contending points of view to make an informed position. We then explore the problems with the legal construction of s18C and s18D, particularly that the standard to be considered under s18C for the calculation of an offence is too wide and open to abuse and the way the Bolt Case highlights the stifling effect s18C has on legitimate public debate. We finally consider the importance of protecting ethnic minorities in our multicultural community and give voice to Young Liberal voices who have ethnic backgrounds yet have concerns with s18C.

s18C and the Importance of Free Speech:

As a movement, the NSW Young Liberal Movement is committed to the preservation of classical liberal values; among these are freedom of speech. s18C(1) of the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Cth) makes it unlawful for a person to do an act, otherwise than in private if:

a) The act is reasonably likely, in all the circumstances, to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate another person or a group of people and
b) The act is done because of the race, colour or national or ethnic origin of the other person or of some or all of the people in the group.

The Young Liberal Council passed the following motion in 2014:

The NSW Young Liberals support changes to Section 18C and S18D of the Racial Discrimination Act as outlined in the Governments Exposure Draft. Specifically we support the removal of the terms 'offend, insult' and the inclusion of the term 'vilify'.[1]

Our support for reform of s18C of the *Racial Discrimination Act* stems from the belief that as a liberal democracy, one of the pillars of success and flourishing in Australia is the maintenance of the freedom to express one's views without fear of sanction by the State. Whilst s18C purports to protect vulnerable minorities, we believe its practical effect is to stifle free debate. Further, it can be used as a ready legal tool by ideologues to oppress those they may disagree with ideologically or who they believe they can win a symbolic victory over to make an ideological point, leading to disproportionate and unjust outcomes, as seen in the Bolt and QUT cases. Whilst ultimately the majority of cases brought under the section are dismissed, we argue that by its very existence, it chills speech and it oppresses via the legal process people must go through when a complaint is made.

We contend that ontologically, human beings are creatures who will seek to find meaning by pursuing truth in order to live out a particular conception of the good life, however dimly it may be perceived as finite creatures. John Stuart Mill, a giant of classical liberalism, gave

[1] NB: Within the NSW Young Liberal Movement, there is room for debate as to whether vilify should be included and whether the word's scope would be just as problematic as 'offend'. This submission does not explore this area of contention.

four reasons why thought and discussion, no matter how offensive, should not receive state sanction.[2] The first three centred around this need for the pursuit of truth:

1. *'If any opinion is compelled to silence, that opinion may, for aught we can certainly know, be true. To deny this is to assume our own infallibility.'*
2. *'Though the silenced opinion be an error, it may, and very commonly does, contain a portion of truth, and since the general or prevailing opinion on any subject is rarely or never the whole truth, it is only by the collision of adverse opinions that the remainder of the truth has any chance of being supplied.'*
3. *'Even if the received opinion be not only true, but the whole truth, unless it is suffered to be and actually is earnestly contested, it will, by most of those who receive it, be held in a manner of prejudice, with little comprehension or feeling of its rational grounds.'*
4. *'The meaning of the doctrine itself will be in danger of being lost or enfeebled, and deprived of its viral effect on the character and conduct…precenting the growth of any heartfelt conviction from reason or personal experience.'*

The limited, contingent nature of human existence, 'seeing in a mirror darkly', makes the pursuit of truth all the more vital. Mill recognised that human beings cannot assume infallibility, but must always be open to having their opinions tested so that society may continually strive towards greater understanding, however imperfect. Indeed, even if a stance were to achieve axiomatic status, assumed by everyone to be true, it is vital that it be open to being tested so that in its testing, people will be able to truly affirm or 'feel on rational grounds', why such a stance is worth cherishing.

As political society is ultimately a partnership in the good life, and as our polis is a constitutionally mandated representative democracy, this freedom to pursue truth and express opinions is vital for its proper functioning. In the context of s18C, many policy areas touch on the subject of race. For instance, in the case of Indigenous affairs, all agree that we owe it to our fellow Indigenous Australians to direct special effort toward to the goal of improving their condition, which is on average unacceptably below the rest of Australia. But there are legitimate differences in opinion as to how this should be achieved and whether particular policies or gestures are helpful or do little to advance their interests. It is easy however to imagine a situation, like the Bolt case, where in the course of debate something clumsy may be said that someone with an ideological axe to grind takes 'offence' to or feels 'insulted' by. s18C provides them with an ideological weapon to use to stifle debate.

In order for people to make informed voting choices in a representative democracy, and where many legitimate policy debates touch on race, it is imperative that debate be kept free. In tolerating the most offensive or carelessly expressed opinions, society ensures room for the most considered opinions that may cut against the grain of the status quo and ensures that such opinions that challenge accepted belief will be protected.

Problems with the Construction of 18C:

This part of the submission of the NSW Young Liberals will examine some of the implications of various decisions regarding the construction of and proper approach to be taken in respect of 18C. There are three submissions that will be put;

[2] J.S Mill, *On Liberty*, Hackett Publishing Company, 1978, pg50

1. That the legal remedial purpose of the section is obfuscated
2. That the standards to be considered for the calculation of offence are open to abuse and are an affront to robust and free discussion and
3. That points of view held by individuals necessarily must include matters of race.

Pertaining to the first submission, as a matter of legal policy and framework, the remedial purpose of 18C when considered in light of its construction is obfuscated. The decisions of *Eatock v Bolt*[3] and *Prior v QUT*[4] have decided that it is not necessary for the activation of 18C that an individual is in fact offended but only that relevant actions could be reasonably likely to offend, insult or humiliate a person or group of people. Thus, it is not clear why 18C should be included in the civil law with compensation available to individuals. In other areas of the civil law, 'damage is the gist of the action' – not so with 18C.

Secondly, the standards of values and offence to be considered for the operation of 18C are not those of the community at large but of the person or group of people to whom the alleged unlawful conduct is directed. As Jarrett J in *Prior* noted at [30],*"It is the values, standards and other circumstances of the person or group of people to whom s.18C(1)(a) refers that will bear upon the likely reaction of those persons to the act in question."* This approach is simply untenable in a free society and is manifestly open to abuse. It subjects defendants to a standard which is not necessarily held by the community at large but by an abnormally sensitive person or group of people. Indeed, *ad absurdum*, it contemplates the possibility that a group of people may identify themselves accordingly and fabricate their own values, standards and circumstances to which they hold society at large.

The third submission of the NSW Young Liberals is that while decided cases have held that if a person is offended where the true cause is a point of view, 18C will not be activated as it is "the intolerance of the receiver of the message rather than the intolerance of the speaker that is responsible for causing the offence."[5] However, it is clearly evident that the construction of 18C has resulted in a very narrow construction of what may be said to be a point of view. Clearly, in *Eatock v Bolt*, the court did not feel that Andrew Bolt was expressing point of view which was the cause of offence. The court pointed to the substantially politically incorrect content of various opinion pieces which he wrote and deemed that these were not merely points of view which were offensive but was offense propagated because of race. Undoubtedly in those articles, Mr Bolt had much intention to make a point which was satirically phrased and couched in larrikin-like rhetoric. However, his points were very valid and fair points of view – namely, that various systemic advantages given to several minority groups is unfair or unwarranted. While this may not be a popular opinion in modern political discourse, it is a point of view which may be fairly held and is a matter of substantial policy. It is not relevant whether Mr Bolt sought to be satirical, poorly humorous, even perhaps rude. He is entitled to an artistic licence in the way in which he outlines his points of view.

What is evident from the case law around 18C is that courts appear unable to contemplate that an individual may reasonably hold a point of view which is based around the culture or circumstances of a particular group of people without acting frivolously for the sake of hatred. This comes directly from the construction of 18C, which facilitates and approach which does not allow sufficiently for robust discussion and points of view in connection with the culture or circumstances of individuals of a particular race to be held.

[3] *Eatock v Bolt* [2011] FCA 1103.
[4] *Prior v Queensland University of Technology & Ors (No. 2)* [2016] FCCA 2853 [30].
[5] *Eatock v Bolt* [2011] FCA 1103 [256].

There are also many issues concerning the operation of 18D and particularly in the requirement that the defence will operate where an act is done 'reasonably and in good faith' in a number of different scenarios. This has been held by the courts to import a requirement of proportionality,[6] does not contemplate actions which are 'gratuitously insulting or offensive,'[7] actions which are 'deliberately provocative and inflammatory'[8] and actions which seem to exceed what is necessary to make a point.[9] These restrictions are wholly and finally incongruent with any vague notion of free speech. They impose a court based standard as to how an individual may argue or make a point, the shock or satirical value they seek to make and arguably infringe on a right to protest in respect of certain points of view lest these actions be deemed to exceed what is necessary to make a point. Such restrictions to the operation of the defence are not conducive in any way to a robust public debate filled with the liberty of the individual to express, argue and persuade on genuinely held points of view.

It is the submission of the NSW Young Liberals that the case law surrounding 18C and 18D has dragged the provisions into areas which unreasonably and disproportionately encroach on personal liberty and public discourse.

Are The Vulnerable Adequately Protected?

There's no doubt that the introduction and continued defence of 18C was and is for the best of motives. The Keating Government's Attorney General Mr Lavarch stated in the Bill's Second Reading speech that '*The Racial Hatred Bill is about the protection of groups and individuals from threats of violence and the incitement of racial hatred that leads to violence.*'[10] We affirm as a movement the central role of government to do justice for the vulnerable. We also affirm the centrality of a multi-ethnic society united in loyalty to Australia and its democratic values as a core part of the Australian story and identity. Thus any suggestion that people are not welcome on the basis of race or that they are not worthy of being accorded the full dignity owed to them as a human being is to be repudiated. As Liberals, we believe in the fundamental rights of life, liberty and property. Thus, speech that incites violence against those of a particular race should receive state sanction. This is why the movement's official position is to leave the words 'humiliate' and 'intimidate'[11]. Further, any denial of equal treatment under the law and denial or access to civil institutions and privileges granted to citizens merely based on race, as was historically the case with voting in the United States or immigration in Australia, is to be repudiated as well.

However, the issue here is not one of threats to life, liberty and property or a denial of civil rights. Whilst the aforementioned moral values and sentiments of equality and equal justice have been appealed to in defence of 18C, it is important to explore the reasons why we believe 18C does little to protect those who are vulnerable to racial abuse and thus, while directed toward worthy ends, is not reasonably appropriate or adapted to those ends, unduly burdening freedom of speech.

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[6] *Bropho v HREOC* [139]-[140].
[7] *Bropho v HREOC* [81].
[8] *Toben v Jones* [43]-[45].
[9] *Eatock v Bolt* [414].
[10] Commonwealth, *Parliamentary Debates,* House of Representatives, 15 November 1994, pg 3336
[11] NB: Within the NSW Young Liberal Movement there is much room for debate as to whether the words 'humiliate' and 'intimidate' unduly burden free speech whilst not actually protecting people from harm and therefore that the whole section should be repealed

We recognise that there are groups who have truly historically been victims, communities who still feel the trauma of great injustice, and so are understandably very cautious about any voices who echo their historic oppressors. Mill recognised that some views may be seen to be so inappropriate and offensive that it would be argued that surely there could be nothing wrong with prohibiting the expression of these dangerous views. He stated, '*There are, it is alleged, certain beliefs so useful, not to say indispensable, to well-being that it is as much the duty of governments to uphold those beliefs as to protect any other of the interests in society….it is often argued, still often thought, that none but bad men would desire weaken these salutary beliefs, and there can be nothing wrong, it is thought, in restraining bad men and prohibiting what only such men wish to practice*.'[12] However, as mentioned earlier, axiomatic beliefs and historic truths that all affirm must be allowed to be challenged so that, as offensive and ignorant as propagators of certain views against the status quo may be, we as a society are able to again affirm, to experience the 'heartfelt conviction', that certain acts of injustice toward groups must never happen again. This is what it means to be a free society.

In his essay on social change, American social theorist James Davidson Hunter described the sentiment of 'ressentiment': identity built around injury leading to a desire for revenge: *'Ressentiment is grounded in a narrative of injury, or, at least, perceived injury: a strong belief that one has been or is being wronged…over time, the perceived injustice becomes central to the person's and the group's identity. Understanding themselves to be victimised is not a passive acknowledgement but a belief that can be cultivated…And so it is, then, that the injury, real or perceived, leads the aggrieved to…seek revenge on those whom they see as responsible. The adversary has to be shown for who they are, exposed for their corruption and put in their place.'*[13] We know there are people in our society who are determined to take offence, and it doesn't matter how reasoned the argument is, they will find some way to be offended and shut down debate.

Mill recognised the nature and danger of subjective offence. He stated: *'…if the test be offense to those whose opinion is attacked, I think experience testifies that this offence is given whenever the attack is telling and powerful, and that every opponent who pushes them hard, and whom they find it difficult to answer them, if he shows any strong feeling on the subject, an intemperate opponent…to suppress facts or arguments, to misstate the elements of the case, or misrepresent the opposite opinion…is so continually done in perfect good faith by persons…(that) still less could the law presume to interfere with this kind of controversial misconduct.*'[14] We are concerned that far left ideologues with ressentiment, who have built their identity around a sense of victimhood, are quick to label opinions they are disagree with as bigoted, quick to appeal to emotion and feeling, but slow to engage respectfully in debate or to address facts they may find difficult to answer. For the law to arm far left ideologues who possess ressentiment with coercive legal sanction cannot have a place in a free liberal democracy that values the pursuit of truth and the free inquiry and debate that is essential for the functioning of democratic government. Many members of our movement are students who know people like this on university campuses. Such people already use their aggression in labelling those they disagree with to suppress debate. The availability of the law as a tool to shut down legitimate debate for those who have already shown willingness to suppress debate is thus a concern.

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[12] J.S Mill, *On Liberty*, Hackett Publishing Company, 1978, pg 21
[13] James Davidson Hunter, 'Power and Politics in American Culture' in *How To Change The World*, 2010, Oxford University Press, pg 107
[14] J.S Mill, *On Liberty*, Hackett Publishing Company, 1978, pg 50

Whilst arguably government can have a subsidiary role in promoting certain virtues 'helping to preserve the moral ecology in which people make their morally self constituting choices and educating people about moral right and wrong',[15] and this might be seen in the positive promotion of multicultural Australia and the public affirmation of welcome for all, or the implementation of a robust history curriculum and public statements of support for ethnic communities, ultimately the law cannot change people's hearts and a law like s18C which may be used to try to do so, can only in effect end up 'chilling' free speech and debate. Natural Law theorist Robert P George, though disagreeing with Mill's liberalism, states that '*Laws cannot make men moral. Only men can do that; and they can do it only by freely choosing to do the morally right thing for the right reason. Laws can command outward conformity to moral rules but cannot compel the internal acts of reason and will which make an act of external conformity to the requirements of morality a moral act*[16]*.'*

We recognise a central role of government to ensure a cohesive society. Our multi-ethnic society is the result of people from all around the world choosing to make Australia home because of the opportunities it presents to allow people to flourish in freedom and equality under the law and under democratic government beholden to the rule of law. People freely choose to join and identify with the Australian community: a choice that would be absurd if they felt there was a latent capricious and racist spirit in the Australian polity ready to reveal itself unless suppressed by special legislation. It is doubtful that one would find an Australian with an immigrant background whose family chose to come to Australia because they were attracted to the protections to their feelings that the *Racial Discrimination Act* had to offer. Free and open debate brings racists and bigots into the open to be condemned in the open, rather than driving them underground to fester.

Ultimately, s18C assumes the worst in the Australian people and fuels far left ideological ressentiment which will only lead to the chilling of speech and the ressentiment of the mainstream who feel stifled. This surely will not contribute to a cohesive society. We believe that ultimately, free and open debate can be the only guarantor of social cohesion.

Young Liberals from Ethnic Backgrounds:

The NSW Young Liberal Movement is a diverse organisation that includes active members coming from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. The debate around 18C is often assumed to be a niche ideological 'hobby horse' of members who belong to the 'privileged majority' who, by virtue of their privileged status, have nothing to fear from the removal of the purported protections that 18C provides. An oft neglected perspective are the voices of young Australians from ethnic backgrounds who have great reservations around 18C and are concerned about its effect on free speech.

The following are quotes from members of the NSW Young Liberal Movement with an ethnic minority background who have expressed concerns, to different degrees, about the effect of 18C on freedom of expression:

'I arrived to the free country of Australia, now my home, with my mum and brother, as a six year old, simply believing I was on a trip to see my dad whom I hadn't seen since I saw three. Little did I known my father arrived to this blessed nation as a refugee, fleeing for his life

[15] Robert P George, *Making Men Moral*, Oxford University Press, 1993, pg 1
[16] Robert P George, *Making Men Moral*, Oxford University Press, 1993, pg 1

from a country, a government that told him, 'No! You cannot voice against us'. A determined man, my father wrote against the Melese regime, until the final toll to be paid was that of his life. For our sake then, the sake of his family, he fled, leaving at midnight. He crossed the border to Kenya in tears. He was ousted by a people, his people, who bought the sword to bear on his right to speak his voice of conscience. It is with this background I have concerns about 18C: to suppress the ability for one to talk one's mind, whatever that speech may be. It is utterly discouraging to bear, that this wonderfully free and democratic country would carry the sentiments of authoritative regimes. Ought a free democratic nation not have faith in its people i.e. that even if abuse of one's freedom was displayed in speech, the people would NOT heed that voice, rendering that voice empty and shameful. Is it not clear that such blockages imposed by government engenders fear in its people, which will harvest and eventually burst out in revolt causing disunity'

- **Afework Assefa (Australian-Ethiopian)**

'Broadly speaking, the official position of the Armenian community leaders is to keep s18C the way it is. This is because we as a community still carry the scars of historic genocide that still goes unrecognised in some quarters. But personally, as an Australian Liberal, I feel some if not all provisions in s18C suppress the right and freedom for expression, opinion and free speech.'

- **Armen Arakelian (Australian-Armenian)**

'My experience as a Chinese-Australian, born and raised in Sydney, informs my perspective of an inclusive, diverse and aspirational Australia. But it's also one where racism still persists. It persists in the most subtle forms of dialogue and mannerisms, where presumptions are made and backs are turned depending on the individual's ancestry. I have received manifestations of those racial presumptions when people have asked why I am "not like the other Asians". It is notable when peers and the media scorn the "Asianisation" of my school, a predominantly Asian populated selective one, in ways that inevitably bind parochial stereotypes of a lack of social ability, narrowness and a sense of being undeserving. Those subtle presumptions sometimes, unfortunately, filter into wider, overt assaults on one's identity. Discriminatory language, assault and workplace biases still exist. But in my experience, solutions to this begin with engaging with diverse individuals. That's how I have been able to constantly break down barriers to knowledge, as well as challenge my own biases. I don't believe the offensive or potentially insulting words that I have heard should have been litigated against. It's a social problem that requires social engagement. Yet at the same time, political discussions around protecting the right to say those words should never instigate tendencies to indulge in divisive politics.'

- **Brendan Ma (Australian-Chinese)**

'Our laws should protect individuals from racial abuse, however not in the current form of the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth) s 18(c). The words 'insult or offend' are subjective in nature, and leave the door open, for the inconsistencies in the application of the law. In order to have effective law in this area, the language of the statute needs to be made objective. Moreover, reform of s 18(c), needs to be accompanied with reform of the Human Rights Commission. Specifically, the Commission should not have the power to pursue trivial cases, or cases which are not founded (as seen in the QUT case).'

- **David Nouri (Australian-Greek/Persian)**

'Growing up, there is no denying I experienced racism. I have probably perpetuated racism myself. It is not ok and there must be measures in place to stop discrimination based on race. Having said that, S18C as it stands is far too vague and difficult to measure, for it to be

effective legislation. The word "offend" in particular is of bother to me. What is 'offensive' to me is not 'offensive' to another second generation Korean-Australian.'

- **Harnsle Joo (Australian-Korean)**

'Artificially distorting the marketplace of ideas does not eliminate discriminatory sentiments. Ultimately the consequence of such a restriction is the further entrenchment of racism beyond the realm of public discourse.'

- **Jamie Ryan (Australian-Chinese)**

'Having this law provides incentives for abuse of power, and inequality for individuality. It also prevents accountability with public opinion, by keeping hidden views inside the household privately discussed rather than the whole public debate, where there is a clear winner. This is the issue with identity politics as it prioritises equality over freedom, thus weakening the foundations of our democracy, limiting our freedom of speech, and locks people in specific categories largely at the expense of individual liberties.'

- **Nicholas Smerdely (Australian-Greek)**

"Section 18c of the RDA is a disgraceful, poorly-written piece of legislation that stifles freedom of speech, expression, and debate. It should be amended to have the words "insult", "offend", and "humiliate" repealed. As a member of an ethnic minority and person of colour, I believe sunlight is the best disinfectant. I want racist views aired out in the open, not censored. I want racists to be given a public platform so they can be challenged and refuted. I find s18C to be infantilizing and patronising. While racism must always be confronted and challenged, governments cannot combat racism through legislation. Unfortunately, hate speech is still free speech, and part of being a liberal western democracy means being tolerant of ideas that are offensive. s18c however, goes further than just censoring racist views. It creates an environment where political correctness causes damage and harm to minority groups. We have seen multiple examples of this, most recently involving the Bill Leak case, where important issues cannot be openly discussed for fear of being labelled 'racist' and causing offence. I would openly encourage all of you to review s18C and make the necessary amendment. It was Ronald Reagan that famously proclaimed, "Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction". Section 18C of the RDA has no place in a modern Australia. It must be repealed."

- **Ranjith Raj (Australian-Indian)**

'I belong to a visible ethnic minority group. In a crowd of people I don't know, I am often most easily identifiable by my skin colour. Laws such as the Racial Discrimination Act, including the controversial section 18C were written to ensure people like me are not disadvantaged and discriminated against because of our ethnicity. Unlike many community leaders however, I am strongly of the opinion that Section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act, as it stands, has no place in a free society. I became a citizen of this country because I subscribed to its core values. A fundamental value of our society and of Western civilisation more broadly is freedom of speech…Even though I am exposed to racist insults as an Indo-Australian, I do not want to live in a society where people can be dragged through the courts because someone's feelings were hurt…As an ethnic minority, it is important to me to know who the racists are. Freedom of speech is a beautiful thing as it allows racists to incriminate themselves. I would much prefer to able to identify the racist bigots and shun them, than have to second-guess them.'

- **Virad Mathur (Australian-Indian)**

Conclusion:

The best way to counter ignorance and prejudice is with the blinding light of truth. As the English poet John Milton said in his famous poem Areopagitica, '*Though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, so Truth be in the field, we do injuriously, by licensing and prohibiting, to misdoubt her strength. Let her and Falsehood grapple; who ever knew Truth put to the worse, in a free and open encounter.'* We claim to be freer and more tolerant today. Yet today, there are certain opinions and issues of concern surrounding race, whether immigration or Indigenous policy, that many reasonable mainstream Australians hold, which would be considered heretical to the champions of political correctness. The continued existence of 18C creates a culture where the mainstream feel that they cannot give voice to their legitimate concerns, less they be branded as bigots and receive the sanction of the law. 18C empowers ideologues with ressentiment more than it protects minorities. Thus the NSW Young Liberal Movement recommends reform to push back against this culture of censorship and recover a culture of free and open debate that doesn't treat the Australian people with suspicion and that values the pursuit of truth.