

Section 22

From: CCH Parliament <politicalalert@cch.com.au>
Sent: Thursday, 9 July 2015 1:08 PM
To: politicalalert@cch.com.au
Subject: Political Alert - Sean Edwards Backs 18C Removal In Newsletter Rant (FED)
Attachments: 190S1103.PDF

Please find attached:

SEAN EDWARDS BACKS 18C REMOVAL IN NEWSLETTER RANT (FED)

Shadow Minister for Citizenship and Multiculturalism, Michelle Rowland, said South Australian Liberal Senator, Sean Edwards, has joined the conga line of Coalition MPs still pushing for protections against racist hate speech to be weakened. In a strange rant in his online newsletter, Senator Edwards has backed the Federal Liberal Council's motion advocating the removal of "insult" and "offend" from Section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act. Senator Edwards then cites the waterfront dispute, the Occupy protests and the "global Islamist movement" amongst other things to justify watering down Section 18C.

190S1103

Total number of pages 6

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MEDIA RELEASE

MICHELLE ROWLAND MP SHADOW MINISTER FOR CITIZENSHIP AND MULTICULTURALISM SHADOW ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS MEMBER FOR GREENWAY

SEAN EDWARDS BACKS 18C REMOVAL IN NEWSLETTER RANT

South Australian Liberal Senator, Sean Edwards, has joined the conga line of Coalition MPs still pushing for protections against racist hate speech to be weakened.

In a strange rant in his online newsletter, Senator Edwards has backed the Federal Liberal Council's motion advocating the removal of "insult" and "offend" from Section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act.

Senator Edwards then cites the waterfront dispute, the Occupy protests and the "global Islamist movement" amongst other things to justify watering down Section 18C.

Despite the Senator's valiant attempts with these new and bizarre arguments that you really have to read to believe, communities around Australia have made their views clear. Section 18C has served Australians well for almost 20 years and should not be watered down.

Now, more than ever, we need community harmony – every politician has a responsibility to promote inclusion and respect.

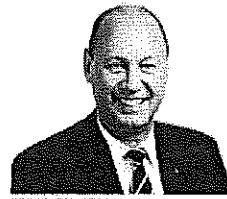
The Coalition should join with Labor and rule out supporting the divisive and damaging proposed legislation currently before the Senate that seeks to weaken protections against racist hate speech.

Labor will fight any move to weaken protections against racist hate speech. The Abbott Government must rule out any support for changes to Section 18C and rebuke the divisiveness of comments such as that of Senator Edwards.

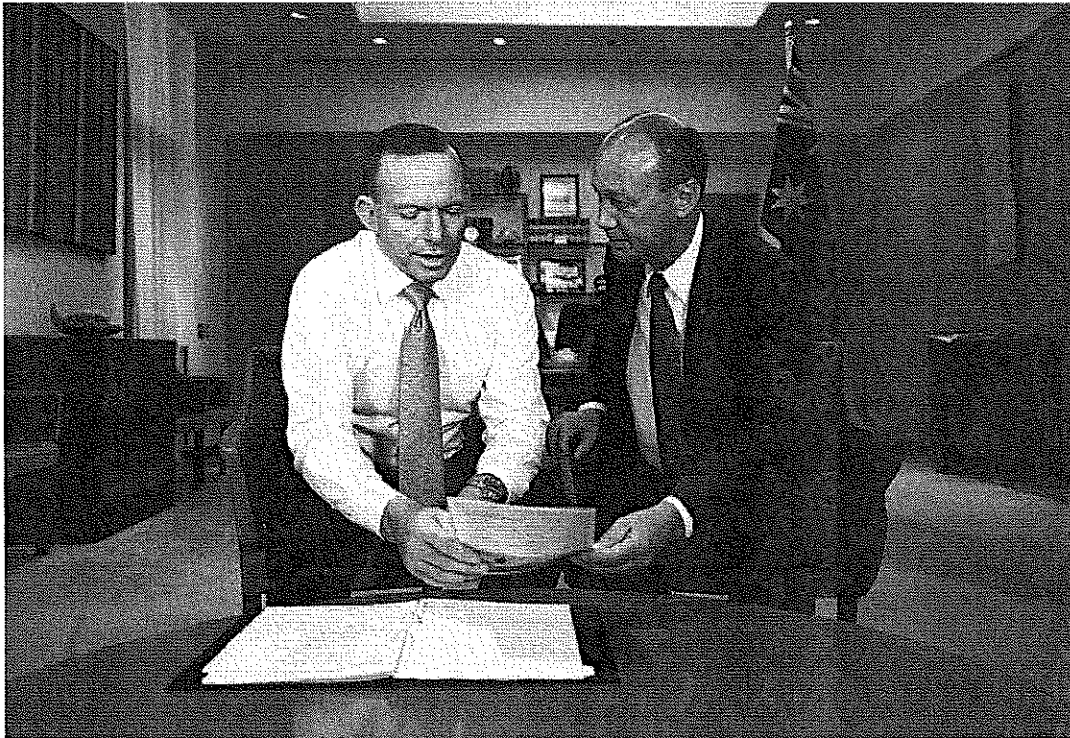
THURSDAY, 9 JULY 2015

MEDIA CONTACT: NICK TRAINOR 0407 078 138

Newsletter



LIBERAL SENATOR
Sean Edwards
FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA



Dear

If we consider what most fundamentally distinguishes Western Civilisation from the cultural cavemen of the global islamist movement, it's the free and forceful exchange of ideas and the way those ideas influence the evolution of our society. The recent Federal Council raised once again the issue of Section 18c of the Racial Discrimination Act and its impact on reasonable debate in Australia.

It's the public debate of ideas and values that leads to social change and it's their debate in Parliament that enshrines those changes into law.

But while the latter is protected by Parliamentary Privilege, public debate in

Australia is threatened by an overbearing Racial Discrimination Act and its hypersensitive Section 18c. If free speech is muzzled, we can't be sure our society evolves in the direction the community wants it to.

The freedom of speech debate has never been an argument about limitless speech. Freedom of speech is not absolute and nor should it ever be, as no reasonable person could possibly support, for instance, the expression of views that induce unjust violence or that intentionally mislead for commercial gain or legal advantage. This is really a debate about where we draw the line.

Section 18c draws the line at the point where a statement relating to race is interpreted as being insulting and it offers special redress when it is. Taking this principle to its full logical conclusion, if legal protection should be afforded to hurt feelings on one basis, why shouldn't it extend equally to a range of other sensitivities such as speech that is insulting on the basis of religion or gender? Why exclude speech that insults someone on the basis of their politics or their class?

After all, it wasn't racial but religious rhetoric with which pro-islamist rioters intimidated and insulted non-believers in Hyde Park, Sydney.

It wasn't racial but class rhetoric with which anti-capitalist protestors humiliated and insulted mainstream Australians during the Occupy protests.

It wasn't racial but political rhetoric with which dock workers intimidated and insulted their colleagues during the waterfront dispute.

Historical examples are plenty but Section 18c also threatens the most important of debates here and now.

The Government plans to specifically recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in the Constitution but discussion of who is and is not an Aboriginal person for the purpose of this amendment may well fall foul of the law. So Section 18c may literally prevent Australians from commenting freely on changes to their

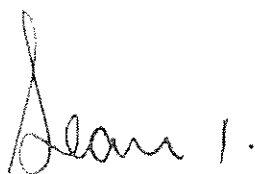
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Constitution.

Section 18d was envisaged to provide a number of exceptions to the sanctions of Section 18c for scenarios like journalism, art and academic debate. However in doing so it invites a judge to decide whether you hold your view "in good faith" and whether or not it is "reasonable" of you to do so before he or she decides whether they'll let you off.

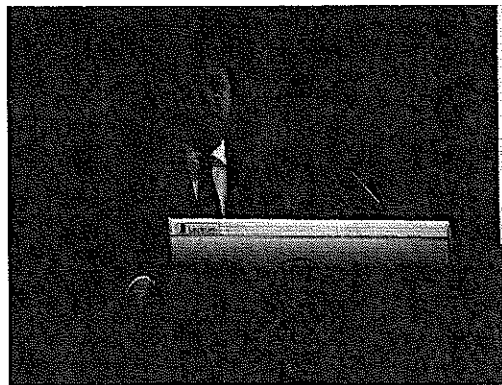
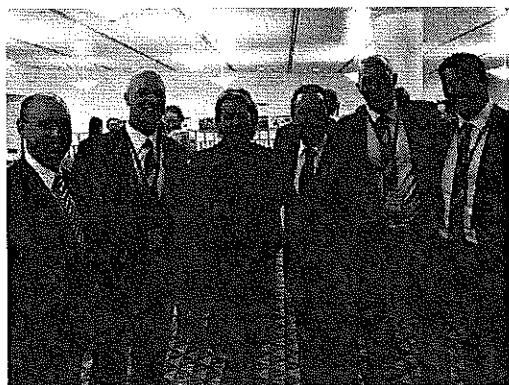
Australia did not become the civilised, culturally advanced society that it is by chance or by having our thoughts vetted by the judiciary. We got here through an evolution of ideas, values and beliefs and having them validated or otherwise by the best test there is: public debate.

That Federal Council passed a motion calling for removal of the words "offend" and "insult" from the Racial Discrimination Act will, I hope, inspire further attention to the matter from in the Parliamentary Liberal Party.

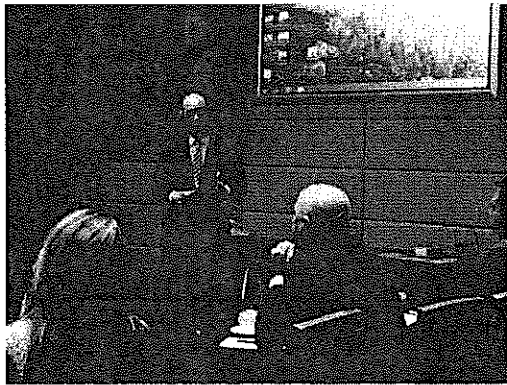


Sean Edwards

Liberal Senator for South Australia

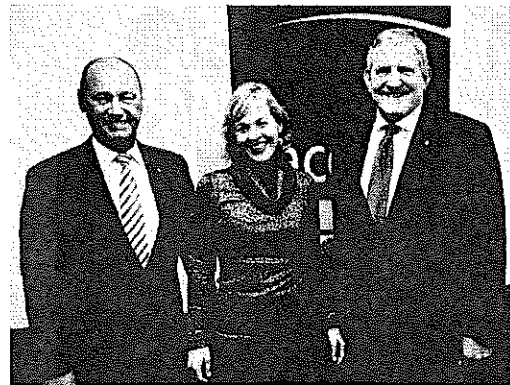


We woke up to some shocking news in Adelaide last Friday, with the murder of Crows coach Phil Walsh. We saw supporters of both our AFL teams united for the first time as they gathered at Adelaide Oval to pay their respects over the weekend, such was the impact Walsh had at both clubs. I was pleased to have had the Adelaide Football Club attend Parliament House for the Crows in the Capital event last month with Education Minister Christopher Pyne and Minister for Sport Sussan Ley. (Pictured L-R Sean Edwards, Nigel Smart, Minister Ley, Minister Pyne, James Podsiadly, Andrew Fagan)



The responses and feedback for my proposal for a nuclear recycling industry in South Australia were well received by the Eyre Peninsula Mineral & Energy Resources Community Development Taskforce in Pt Lincoln last month.

Australia is home to the world's largest uranium reserves and we export uranium products to many countries all over the world and so it stands to reason that Australians are intrigued by the potential of our involvement in the nuclear fuel cycle. I enjoyed the opportunity to provide the closing remarks at the National Workshop on Nuclear Energy for Australia hosted in Adelaide by CRC Care.



I recently convened a roundtable at the South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy with Dr Gemma Munro (centre) from leadership consultancy Inkling Women, together with Minister for Industry and Science Ian Macfarlane (right), who spoke about having achieved forty per cent female representation on his statutory boards.

Thank you for reading.





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Our mailing address is:

Senator Sean Edwards
187 Grenfell St
Adelaide, SA 5000
Australia

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