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The 'Anti-discrimination' Bandwagon – Coming To A School Near You

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You have to hand it to the 'anti-discrimination' warriors – they are effective. Watch them go from city to city preaching 'tolerance' and 'diversity', the only catch being you must submit totally to their worldview.

This cottage industry has seen great success in Western Australia, Queensland, and the Northern Territory: jurisdictions that have all sought to curtail religious freedoms. Since taking the reins of power in Canberra, the Albanese government has similarly been only too happy to oblige – accepting calls for a review on religious exemptions for schools in federal law.

But the feel-good, anti-discrimination messaging of the review's supporters disguises a radical agenda, one which strips schools of protections that allow them to operate according to a self-determined set of values.

The new provisions, released by the Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC), fly in the face of religious freedom and parental rights. As it stands, political parties would be allowed to hire staff who share their ethos, while schools would not.

Most fair-minded individuals would be appalled by such blatant double standards.

The Institute of Public Affairs' submission to the Commission's inquiry found the proposed reforms would; curtail the right of parents to give their children an education consistent with their values; facilitate sectarianism by pushing religious disagreements into the courts; and give government bodies, such as the Australian Human Rights Commission, the power to control what faith-based schools can do, say, and teach.

The ALRC wants government agencies to enforce compliance with new restrictive standards. And yes, you read that right, the ALRC essentially wants to take parents out of the equation and disregard the values and beliefs they want instilled in their children.

It is something straight out of George Orwell's dystopian novel *1984*, except it's likely to become reality in Australia.

Make no mistake, religious freedom is under direct attack in Australia, and the first formal steps towards new religious discrimination laws have been taken by the Albanese government.

Out with the old and in with the new. Freedom, choice, and Judaeo-Christian values are to be replaced with a rigid creed, which entrench radical ideologies on gender and sexuality.



Worse still, the ALRC wants its reforms extended to all religious bodies in due course, which is perhaps the most concerning part of the whole Consultation Paper. If the narrative that religious protections are harmful to certain marginalised groups takes hold, then the cottage industry of activists has won.

Left-wing activists have been working hard for years to normalise this very idea with little courage shown by religious groups, who have typically been desperate to accommodate the howls of activists at every turn.

The bottom line is that when harm is equated with hurt feelings and is used to put a stop to the dissemination of genuinely held beliefs, religious freedom is dead. The proposed changes will foster greater intolerance and, as such, impacts all people of faith: Muslims, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, and Christians alike.

By pushing for legislative change, the 'anti-discrimination' warriors have ensured their cottage industry will continue to thrive long after this debate fades from public discussion.

Advocates have praised the reforms as progressive, but ultimately the recommendations are in direct conflict with Australia's long-standing tradition that upholds religious toleration and pluralism.

In the name of progress, 'anti-discrimination' warriors are determined to throw out the Western intellectual tradition and replace it with identity politics and Critical Race Theory. Here, the subjective feelings of the individual are elevated above basic freedoms of religion, association, and expression.

Fortunately, there has been some pushback from the Christian community on this issue. Two major Christian schooling associations that represent 150,000 students across the country, have pulled out of the consultation process with the ALRC. The groups claim to have 'lost faith' in the inquiry remaining 'balanced' in addressing the issue.

As one Catholic Bishop warned late last year, preventing religious schools from requiring staff to teach in line with the school's faith would strip these schools of their religious essence, while ushering in a Woke quota system for hiring, rather than a system based on shared worldview.

The provisions, if enacted, will also do parents a disservice by taking away their choice to send their child to a school with a genuine religious ethos.

This move against religious freedom also highlights a deeper and more troubling phenomenon occurring across Australia, the detachment of the political class and inner-city elites from mainstream Australians who want their freedoms preserved and to get on with their life.

As you go about your busy day, you may ask yourself, why all the fuss? As former High Court Chief Justices Mason and Brennan once wrote in a joint judgment, freedom of religion is the '*paradigm freedom of conscience*' and '*the essence of a free society*'.



Ultimately the proposed changes will foster greater intolerance and impact all people of faith – Muslims, Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, and Christians alike. This is not only a serious problem for religious freedom, but also seriously problematic for free speech.

Never forget, many had to fight for the freedoms we enjoy today, we must ensure they are not surrendered in silence.

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