

Media Release: Greens defend protections against hate speech

Senator Richard Di Natale, Australian Greens Leader

Senator Nick McKim, Australian Greens Justice spokesperson

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The Greens will always defend protections against hate speech, and resist any weakening of the Racial Discrimination Act.

Greens leader Dr Richard Di Natale said that we have a responsibility as leaders to protect the values of equality, diversity and multiculturalism that make our society so great.

"Malcolm Turnbull has an opportunity here to stand up for the values of inclusion and diversity that we all thought he believed in before he came under such unrelenting pressure from the far-right wing of his party.

"I hope that Malcolm does the right thing but I'm afraid what we'll see is the completion of his capitulation."

"Instead of bending and bowing to the Tony Abbott-wing of the Liberal Party in an attempt to chase votes from One Nation, Malcolm Turnbull should stand with the Greens in making sure that our multicultural society continues to be one that nurtures and protects diversity, not one that attacks it."

Senator McKim, who is the Greens' representative on the Human Rights Committee, said the Greens issued a dissenting report because the committee had failed to recommend the retention of 18C as it stands.

"Racism and hate speech are doing serious harm to people across Australia. This has been made painfully clear through horrific evidence presented to the inquiry," he said.

"The report supported by Labor and the Liberals in a blancmange which fails to take a stand to protect Australians from racist hate speech."

"It is irresponsible of the Labor and Liberal Parties to countenance changes that would water down hate speech protection."

"Failing to defend these protections would be a betrayal of multicultural Australia."

The Greens' dissenting report can be found below:

http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Human_Rights_inquiries/FreedomsofSpeechAustralia

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