

We The People

Program 18

The Rise of Political Correctness



I believe that older Australians are the guardians of our culture and a necessary brake on a society lurching wildly from one view point to another. I say older because it's difficult to have acquired wisdom until a person has experienced a great deal of life. Many people especially the academics, confuse wisdom with knowledge and yet while knowledge can be gathered and is valuable, wisdom must be earned and not all people acquire it. The reason I reflect on this is because of the rise of political correctness and how it's gone far too far and we need wisdom to subdue it because common sense has failed.

Political correctness was generally introduced in the 1990's and sponsored by Paul Keating to excess which in my view gave licence to the minority fringe dwellers to push the theme to extreme and it was subsequently picked up by some politicians with a propensity to represent a minority view. As the theme rolled on and gathered speed it became a catch cry to suppress the truth at times and certainly takes away freedom of speech on occasions. Losing real freedom of speech is a loss of democracy at its core, so perhaps it's time we wound back political correctness to common sense levels even though that's like trying to unscramble an omelette. Excessive political correctness should be seen for what it is, a nonsense.

I cringe in the street when I see a person hole cover or a sanitary engineer collecting the garbage or hear a wife called a domestic manager. Why just the other day I saw a short man or more correctly a vertically challenged person closely followed by the post person delivering the mail. Now add to this the ogre of discrimination and we have a potent mix which divides society rather than uniting it. No one argues that society must adopt fair and reasonable language and be tolerant but the proportions of social engineering being driven by political correctness are now out of control. I for one must call aborigines 'indigenous' but they are at liberty to call me a white Australian. Aren't we all just plain Australians and it's a good example of where more discrimination is the outcome of political nonsense.

Extreme political correctness is forged unwittingly in schools and in politics and minority groups. The loss of Yule tide carols because it might offend others or the banning of church bells because some religions cant wail from their towers is just plain ridiculous. I for one love church bells but they all fall silent now just as many of our precious rights and freedoms do. George Orwell wrote his classic piece titled '1984' about 60 years ago where he predicted government invaded every aspect of life and where control of language and meaning was used to control the people. Orwell paints a bleak picture of a social model trapped in its own claustrophobic language. No synonyms or antonyms, just words bereft of emotional expression. He was indeed spot on and it's getting worse.

Excessive political correctness is a perversion of free speech and requires constant state intervention to rule by legislation and that's not the role of government. We have a sanitised bureaucratic nanny state in the making and ironically subduing this menace is our democratic responsibility and a right we must not surrender. Treat others well but resist the excesses of political correctness and tell your children and grand children that self expression and our Australian traditions are just fine.

Until next time this is Kent Bayley