

**Topic**

- □ Introduction
  - □ My name is Jacques Chester, standing for Liberty & Democracy Party
  - □ Thanks to Lois and ACL
  - □ I'm a local with deep love for Darwin
  - □ My religious background:
    - □ I was baptised Catholic, and with Irish blood this entitles me to generous doses of guilt.
    - □ Was a largely secular upbringing
    - □ Read a lot of the bible when I had an Adventist girlfriend
    - □ Today I am an atheist although I believe Christians are bloody nice people.
    - □ I may have become atheist due to early Saturday mornings. Those trying to win souls for Christ, be advised.
  - □ Liberty & Democracy Party is consistent in policy
    - □ For example, we oppose religious vilification laws as an attack on free speech
    - □ But we also support the right of gay people to get married -- but it would be left to churches to decide themselves who they recognise as married.
    - □ General principle: if you become involved in trying to enforce your beliefs through government, others will want to do the same. If everyone avoids interfering with each other, there's no need for conflict.
    - □ To put it otherwise: "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." -- Matthew 7:1-2
- □ ... will your party if it wins government establish partnerships with Indigenous people so as to better take into account their needs and priorities, and to sustain what good may be done by the "intervention"?
  - □ The intervention is the latest episode in a messy history of race relations in the NT
  - □ Ultimately I see economic realities applying to aboriginal people as well
  - □ And so if we allow the rule of law, equal treatment before law and non-interference take their course, aboriginal people will prosper too.
    - □ I do not see the Aboriginal Land Rights Act as "non-interference".
  - □ We do not need to assimilate or not assimilate: that is a matter for aborigines
    - □ Example of St Paul or Thomas Aquinas arriving in modern Christendom: would find much familiarity
    - □ Ditto ancient Romans and Greeks
- □ As of September 16, 2007 Australia became a partner in the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP). Describe how this partnership will impact the Northern Territory?
  - □ The LDP policy is that we are not pro-nuclear or anti-nuclear. We are pro-market. Nuclear power should succeed or fail on its economics.
  - □ The GNEP is more about foreign relations though.
  - □ My view is that our policy needs to address three needs: anti-proliferation, reducing radiotoxicity of waste and maximising returns from fuel cycle
  - □ GNEP does a better job of these through promoting a more advanced fuel cycle
  - □ Australia should either control and audit the fuel cycle or stop selling uranium overseas. I prefer control and audit.
  - □ In the framework of GNEP and LDP policy, this would mean allowing nuclear power plants with integral fast breeder capability, enrichment plants and yes, waste dumping.

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- □ South Australia is best place in world for nuclear waste.
- □ The wellbeing of Australian society and of Christian Church is built upon and strengthened by healthy family life, which is best supported by stable marriage. We live in a time where people actively seek to diminish the value of marriage and to redefine its meaning. While there may well be different expressions of family life, what commitment does your party have to promoting and supporting marriage, which is one of the foundations on which a stable society is built?
- □ Our view is that marriage is not a matter for the state, other than to provide a simple legal framework. Marriage is generally composed of a legal part, which we would largely retain in simplified form, and a cultural-religious component which we would remove from legislation.
- □ I support people of the same sex becoming married.
- □ I also support the churches' rights to refuse marriage ceremonies to whomever they please.
- □ In terms of financial aspects of marriage, our 30/30 plan does not discriminate against married couples and our \$6000 threshold boost recognises the challenges of couples with children. In general I see marriage as an important institution based on the research showing the disadvantages of children in single-parent homes.
- □ Australia is arguably a secular nation in which all citizens are entitled to their voice. Yet there seems to be increasing intolerance of the Christian voice when Church leaders and other prominent Christians speak out on matters concerning human life – abortion, birth technologies, cloning, euthanasia – and the values by which we live. What is your view about the place of the Christian voice and of the Churches in Australia today?
- □ My view is that churches must determine their own role.
- □ However I argue that churches do themselves and their religious cause a disservice by becoming involved in politics.
- □ There is biblical authority for the view that Christians should desist from enforcing their views on others through politics. Here's a few picks from the NIV:
  - □ Most famously, Matthew 26:21: "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, to God what is God's".
  - □ Also in Romans 12:17-19 "Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. 18If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. 19Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay,"[a]says the Lord."
    - □ That one is my favourite because I think it points out that God will enforce his own laws. He doesn't rely on you to do it for him. When Jesus says "I will knock on your door" he doesn't mean doorknocking in the political sense! He means in the gentle sense of calling you to Him, not commanding you to command others.
  - □ Sometimes people whip out Romans 13:1-7 as their argument for getting involved in politics. I would read it again. In 13:7 it says "Give to everyone what you owe them: Pay your taxes and government fees to those who collect them, and give respect and honor to those who are in authority."
  - □ I'd also point out that Paul was pretty terrible at following his own advice to the Romans.
- □ Would your party commit to: the reviewing of all materials made available to schools with the view to replacing them with those that have a stronger anti-drug message;

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and the retrospective removal of terms such as 'recreational or party drugs' in all government or government funded literature published in either print based or electronic format.

- No. In fact the LDP supports the regulated legalisation of several drugs in order to reduce harm, increase personal freedom and stop rewarding criminal enterprise with massive profits.