

## The Benefits of Political Correctness

*The worst enemy of truth and freedom in our society is the compact majority. Yes, the damned, compact, liberal majority.*

*Henrik Ibsen, 'An Enemy of the People'*

Those that dare support political correctness usually suggest, somewhat meekly, that 'it does have a purpose.' As Angus Roxburgh wrote:

Political correctness, so derided by all the politicians of the far right, developed for a reason: it is the product of civilisation, and reflects a basic desire to tolerate, not persecute, those who have different faiths, beliefs, or skin colour.<sup>1</sup>

To the extent that it can modify thoughts and behaviour in individuals, political correctness helps stop the strong abusing the weak. It is a powerful weapon to promote basic decency of behaviour, when simple courtesy has failed. It stops white football crowds shouting racist abuse at black footballers, it stops employers refusing to employ homosexuals, and it stops the able-bodied jeering at the disabled. It encourages people to open their minds to those who are different rather than simply stereotyping them, such as East Enders seeing their Sikh neighbours as people rather than as turban-wearers.

Political correctness can ameliorate the institutional callousness of large organisations, too often blind to the needs of non-mainstream groups, from access to the disabled to the hiring of ethnic minorities.

One of the main purposes of civilisation is that it protects the weak and curbs abuses by the strong. Few could oppose the basic underlying aim of political correctness, to redistribute power from strong to the weak, just as to some extent the role of government is to redistribute wealth from the rich to the poor.