

# Herald Sun Oped

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**Date:** Tue, 21 Mar 2023 22:58:55 +1100  
**Attachments:** JP Herald Sun Oped.docx (15.51 kB)

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Please see attached the oped from JP I've drafted for the Herald Sun this Friday.

This oped obviously can't be all about Moira. It needs to also be about our vision for the party and the state JP wants to lead.

We need to remember it's a Herald Sun audience and Liberal voters including our MPs will read it so I've written it with them in mind.

Let me know what you think. We need to submit it Thursday morning and have 800 words.

Thanks

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Next Monday's special meeting of the Victorian Parliamentary Liberal Party to consider a motion to expel Moria Deeming is about so much more than just one individual.

It's about the future of the party I lead here in Victoria and ensuring we strive to represent all Victorians so we can be not just an effective opposition but set ourselves on the path to winning Government in 2026.

The scenes we witnessed on the steps of Parliament last Saturday were an affront to the values we hold dear as Victorians. Nazis have no place in our community and those who share platforms with people who associate with extremist groups, including neo-Nazi activists, have no place in the Liberal Party.

This is not about freedom of speech. I acknowledge there are a range of views on a wide range of issues including women's rights and I encourage civil and respectful debate. The Liberal Party is a broad church and I respect everyone's right to express a view.

But with all rights comes responsibilities. And there is a responsibility to draw the line at hatred, discrimination and violence. Freedom of speech should never include hate speech.

That's why I've acted because regardless of religious faith, race, sexual preference and identity, Victorians everywhere need to know that the Liberal Party is inclusive and can be a voice for them.

No matter what our background we all share the abiding bond of humanity. Unlike the Premier, who thrives on dividing people, I want to bring people together. I want the Liberal Party to be a modern, diverse and dynamic party that is welcome to all.

Along with our coalition partners, the National Party, we also need to be an effective opposition to the tired, corrupt and incompetent Andrews Labor Government. A strong democracy demands nothing less.

In the midst of a cost of living crisis, many Victorians families and small businesses are simply struggling to pay the bills and are being belted by a Government that has introduced no fewer than 44 new or increased taxes since it came to office.

A Government that continues to drive up power bills and has no plan to guarantee our future energy supplies. A Government that is on its way to accruing a whopping \$7.4 billion in debt that will leave us paying \$20 million a day in interest alone over the next two years.

Every dollar spent paying off our debt is a dollar not spent on essential community services like schools and hospitals. Money that needs to be urgently spent because of the Government's failings in our health and education systems.

A Government with a culture of waste that has seen it rack up a staggering \$30 billion in cost overruns on major projects since it was elected nearly a decade ago thanks to its economic mismanagement.

A Government dealing with a fiscal crisis led by a Premier already warning Victorians to expect the worst when it brings down its Budget in May. Expects job losses, higher taxes and charges and a further reduction in services.

A Government mired in corruption led by a Premier who will do anything to silence and punish those who dare even question him. We need to focus on holding the government to account on these and many other vital to all Victorians.

With my fellow Liberals and Nationals, I want to present a vision for better and bolder Victoria. I want Victoria to be the best state in Australia. A state with the best health and education systems, the best economy and jobs and the best place to live, learn, work and raise a family.

A state that can once again pride itself on its integrity and decency led by a Government focused on people rather than politics. A Government focused on solutions instead of spin. A Government that governs for all Victorians and not just those who voted for them.

I also want all of my team to have the privilege of serving Victorians. To be able to build a great legacy for our State and to be proud of the contribution they can make to people's lives. A state where there is equality of opportunity, an enterprising culture that benefits all and families and communities can live harmoniously together and share in Victoria's prosperity.

We need to reflect the values of those many diverse communities. To be inclusive and welcoming to everyone regardless of who they are, where they come from, what they look like and what they aspire to be.

I love Victoria. It has given me, the son of Italian migrants who grew up in the Latrobe Valley, so many opportunities. I also love the Liberal Party and I'm desperate for it to win because I want to make Victoria the state I know we can be.