



**AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY CONFERENCE
23 November 1995**

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): I endorse the words of the member for Mawson. Locking out political journalist Mike Duffy from the Labor Party's convention was directly against the basis of democracy. However, it is not a surprise, when I understand one of the resolutions debated at the convention was that members of Parliament should no longer have the right to a conscience vote on matters acknowledged to be decisions that should be decided by an individual's conscience. This is an attempt to stifle further expression of opinion by a political Party that already will not allow a diversity of voice on other matters, let alone allowing a member to cross the floor on daily matters that are of particular concern to them.

It is a very unhealthy state not to allow dissension. It does not take much imagination to see how such an attitude can lead to the dangerous totalitarian states that have been so disastrous in the history of the world. One can see how this Party tries to gag any opposition and to control people. The Labor Party's rationale for excluding Mr Duffy was that he was not a member of a union. If you could make every adult join a union of your choice and then get the union to totally dictate what its members will and will not say on pain of expulsion and exclusion from the workplace, obviously you can control all opposition. How dangerous is this, particularly when it involves the media? The action against Mr Mike Duffy must be strongly condemned by all thinking people of all Parties.