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November 28th 2020

Re: "Your contact with AHRC" – Roger Karge

Dear Rebecca,

I refer to your initial response email of November 19, 2020 to my Complaint.

Please take this letter as a confirmation that, after reading your email, I do wish to pursue this matter with the Commission.

Please find attached an updated Complaint form where I have 'unchecked' the '**racial discrimination**' claim, and correctly 'checked' the '**racial hatred**' claim. I confirm that I wish to make a claim of racial hatred, instead of racial discrimination.

As you have requested, I have also provided some additional information, which I believe supports,

- a) my claim that the 'defacement' book-cover can be said to be 'reasonably likely to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate' in all the circumstances, *and*
- b) my claim that the 'defacement' book-cover was done because of my race, national and ethnic origin.

As supporting evidence of (a) above, it should be noted that an ordinary, reasonable reader, when looking at the book-cover would easily notice,

- that the white family members had each been defaced in thick, black, **forceful** scribbles;
- that the words on the book-cover,

*'After empire, after colony after white supremacy...twelve diverse writers imagine **an alternative Australia**' [my emphasis]*

are given in a style of language and structure that is highly suggestive that white Australians and their society (having been based on colonialism) are to be removed and after their empire/colony/supremacy is gone, replaced with a society as imagined by diverse (that is 'people of colour' and/or non-European descent; non-white) Australians; *and*

- the defaced images of the white family and these accompanying words are designed to excite. Their juxtaposition has a heightened capacity to convey implications beyond the literal meaning of the words alone and, I claim, leads a non-white reader to be incited to racial hatred in the belief that if white Australians are removed, 'diverse', non-white Australians will be the beneficiaries by the replacement of a more just, equitable, de-colonised and non-white Australian society.

If one accepts that, 'an ordinary reasonable reader or viewer is a person of fair average intelligence who is neither perverse, nor morbid or suspicious of mind, nor avid for scandal; does not live in an ivory tower but can and does read between the lines in the light of that person's general knowledge and experience of worldly affairs', then I claim that the book-cover would be viewed as inciting racial hatred by an ordinary reasonable reader or viewer in all circumstances.

One only needs to view some recent examples of 'defacement' of candidate's posters in the last Federal election campaign of 2019, which were widely condemned as examples of racial hatred (see here : [Reference 2](#)), to see that the book-cover, '*After Australia*', falls into the same 'racial hatred' category.



I claim that any 'ordinary reasonable reader or viewer' would find the above two election poster defacements as examples of racial hatred, each particularly so for the Chinese community in the Hua poster example, and the Jewish community in Mr Frydenberg's example.

Similarly, I claim that any 'ordinary reasonable reader or viewer' who is a 'white, European-descent Australian', such as myself, would experience racial hatred after viewing the *After Australia* book-cover.

I argue that the act of 'defacement' has a 'profound and serious effect', and is 'not likened to a mere slight'. In my case I feel a deep unease and heightened anxiety and concern for

myself, my family and other white families in Australia after viewing the book-cover. In addition, I am profoundly affected given that the editor of the book, *After Australia*, Michael Mohammed Ahmad, who has responsibility for the 'defaced' book-cover has said in a podcast interview regarding his *After Australia* book, on July 9th 2020 that,

'...Australia...for tens of thousands of years starts with an Indigenous voice and that the end of this country has to be an indigenous voice as well; that, this is a black country and that's what we are on, and we need eventually need to be in a time where the country is led by Indigenous people'. [Listen here from 40:14](#) [Ref. 1].

This statement leads me to believe that the book-cover for *After Australia* is indeed based on **racial hatred** and it incites people to accept the notion that any current leaders in Australia - in the Government, business, the public service and senior community - who are 'white and of European descent', need to be eliminated from positions of power and replaced with Indigenous people.

This aim sounds frightening similar to what my father experienced in Soviet controlled Europe and what occurred during the Soviet purges as I detailed in my original complaint to the book publishers.

As supporting evidence of **(b)** above, that my claim that the 'defacement' book-cover was done because of my race, national and ethnic origin, I note that

- all the four people depicted, as being examples from the 'old' colonial Australia, are white, despite the fact that there were many non-white, colonial people and their families involved in the history of Australia. (See here : [Reference 3](#)). The publishers chose to be 'racially selective' in only depicting a family of my 'white' race. The 'defacement' only occurred because the family were my race, that is 'white'.

- the words on the book front cover clearly suggest an anti-white, racial hatred incitement by including, 'after white supremacy', and on the back cover, 'white genocide' and 'police brutality.'

There is no counter balancing mention of the fact that the majority of the colonial police brutality, such as it was, was perpetrated by the 'Indigenous' and 'black' Native Police (see here : [Reference 4](#)) There is no attempt by the *After Australia* book-cover to reflect on the nuances of our colonial history to account for the fact that skin colour did not always determine who were the oppressed and who were the oppressors;



The great majority of Colonial Police were Indigenous and 'black'



Indigenous and 'black' troopers arresting a 'white' prisoner

- the words 'After Australia' and 'white supremacy' clearly led me to believe that I, as a 'white Australian', was being racially vilified by 'defacement' by the publishers.

One reason for my Complaint is that I genuinely believe that the HRC was set up to conciliate on potential racial hatred issues in an endeavour to prevent an escalation of racial hatred and violence in Australia. It is my claim that a 'line in the sand' needs to be drawn with regard to our society's widely acknowledged non-acceptance of the 'defacement' of images of Australian citizens. To allow the publication of a book-cover depicting the defacement of a white Australian family is a step over this line.

I am NOT wishing to ban this book, its contents or even the words and the image of a white family on the cover. What I vehemently oppose is the inclusion of the 'defacement' scribble-lines drawn over the faces of the four, white family members.

As an expression of good faith, and to avoid adding to an escalation of racial hatred in Australia, the publisher should agree to remove the 'defacement' scribble-lines on the white family on their book-cover on any future print runs of this book.

The publication of this 'defacement' image in its current form, is morally and ethically uncalled for and un-Australian.

Reference 1 - The Garret: Writers on Writing - Michael Mohammed Ahmad on : After Australia. [<https://thegarretpodcast.com/michael-mohammed-ahmad-on-after-australia/>]

Reference 2 – The ABC : 'The resurgence of racism in the 2019 federal election — a deep and disturbing trend'. [<https://www.abc.net.au/religion/the-resurgence-of-racism-and-antisemitism-in-the-2019-federal-e/11167332>]

Reference 3 – Coloured Colonials History Website [<https://colouredcolonials.yolasite.com>]

Reference 4 – The ABC : Coming to terms with the brutal history of Queensland's Native Mounted Police [<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-07-24/native-mounted-police-indigenous-history-aboriginal-troopers/11296384>]