

In the *Good Weekend* (May 6), *The Age* published a letter describing Tony Abbott as “[a]rrogant, intolerant, [and] obnoxious”, the “perfect credentials” to be a Liberal Prime Minister or Pope.

This is neither fair comment nor reasoned debate. Rather it is ugly, the language of vilification and hate, and as such has no place in your letter columns or for that matter, in any public discourse.

The recent controversy about the ‘Mohammed cartoons’ engendered vigorous discussion about the boundaries of free speech. Surely language so contemptuous and disparaging of an individual, a political group and, perhaps particularly, the leader of a major religion goes beyond those limits.

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