

The Commission of Inquiry into Antisemitism at Australian Universities Bill 2024 (No. 2).

I am a Jewish Australian, born and raised in Western Australia (WA), and have lived here with my family for 65 years. I am deeply concerned about the rise of anti-Semitism in Australia and globally. My greatest concern is the lack of strong leadership from those in positions of power and authority in Australia. These leaders often appear reluctant to take decisive action against anti-Semitism, possibly to avoid offending the larger Muslim community and risking their political support.

The Jewish community, like other ethnic and immigrant groups, has made significant contributions to the prosperity of Australia. Therefore, it is imperative to enforce laws and maintain order to address the current and increasing incidents of anti-Semitism.

Recent evidence points to a spike in anti-Semitism on university campuses following the terrorist attacks on October 7. This issue is not new. A survey of Australian Jewish students released in August revealed that 64% experienced anti-Semitism on campus, and 19% avoided campus because of it. Since October 7, incidents have escalated, including Jewish students being spat on, taunted with swastikas, Jewish staff offices being vandalized, and some academics denying the occurrence of the October 7 rapes. University leaders have failed to adequately address these issues, often downplaying them as a necessary price for free speech. A collective statement from 39 university chancellors was so pathetic it didn't even mention Jews or anti-Semitism.

A recent Monash University report, "Australian Jews in the Shadow of War," found that over two-thirds of Australian Jewish university students faced hostility on campus in the five weeks following the October 7 attacks. Additionally, 43% of Jewish Australians aged 18 to 29 reported personal experiences of insult or harassment due to their Jewish identity, and 71% did not report these incidents to any authority.

Another alarming development is the capitulation of Sydney University, Australia's oldest university, to a group led by Hizb ut-Tahrir, an extremist Islamist organization. Hizb ut-Tahrir has praised the October 7 attacks and called for the destruction of Israel. Despite being listed as a terrorist organization in several countries, Hizb ut-Tahrir has gained significant influence at Sydney University. The university has negotiated with them, even agreeing to set up a working group to review its defense investments and grants, giving the group a seat at the table.

This situation poses a major national security issue. Allowing an extremist group to influence defense agreements at a time when the AUKUS agreements require our best and brightest minds is a serious concern. This could lead defense organizations to disengage from Sydney University, causing a significant loss for the institution and the city.

The appeasement of Hizb ut-Tahrir has set a dangerous precedent. Jewish staff and students are leaving Sydney University, and the Jewish community's relationship with the university has been severely damaged. The government must not remain

passive. An inquiry led by the Human Rights Commission, an organization with systemic racism issues against Jews, is insufficient.

The bill proposed by Mr. Julian Leeser MP is the only viable solution to the unprecedented level of campus anti-Semitism. What happens on campus shapes the next generation of leaders and sets the tone for society. The failure of university leaders and the government to take this issue seriously is exacerbating anti-Semitism across Australia.

Despite occasional condemnations from the government, nearly nine months have passed since October 7 without any substantial action. We have seen no new directives to police and law enforcement, no standalone inquiries, no new laws, and no new institutions to combat anti-Semitism. Instead, we have witnessed inflammatory language from certain political groups and attacks on MPs' offices, such as the disgraceful attack on the office of the member for Macnamara.

To address this problem, resources must be allocated to identifying and prosecuting those promoting anti-Semitism in Australia. Universities must enforce their policies to stop anti-Semitic encampments and hate speech. Additionally, banning anti-Semitic groups like Hizb ut-Tahrir is necessary.

Thank you for considering my submission.