

Submission to the Royal Commission on Antisemitism and Social Cohesion

Josh Burns MP

Federal Member for Macnamara
Special Envoy for Social Housing and Homelessness

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Image published by the Herald Sun, 19 June, 2024. Picture: David Crosling

25 May 2026

By email: ASCRC.Submissions@royalcommission.gov.au

Commissioner The Hon Virginia Bell AC
Royal Commission on Antisemitism and Social Cohesion
PO Box 4926
Kingston ACT 2604

Dear Commissioner Bell,

I welcome the establishment of the Royal Commission on Antisemitism and Social Cohesion and the opportunity to contribute to its work through a submission.

The rise in antisemitism across Australia, culminating in the horrific terrorist attack on 14 December 2025, has deeply shaken the Jewish Community and the broader Australian public. As the [Letters Patent](#) make clear, this Commission has been tasked with examining the circumstances of the attack, understanding the broader drivers of antisemitism, its impact on the daily lives of Jewish Australians and the effectiveness of institutional responses to it.

As the Federal Member for Macnamara, home to one of the largest and most vibrant Jewish communities in Australia, I have heard from constituents who feel less safe, less visible and less certain in their place in Australian life. Since being elected in 2019, my role has often included ensuring that the Jewish community feels heard and represented. Yet, since October 7 2023, the needs of the Jewish community have drastically shifted. My team and I spend a significant amount of time responding to incidents of antisemitism and ensuring that the Jewish community has the support they need, all while navigating antisemitic abuse which has targeted my own office. In a personal capacity, as a Jewish member of Parliament, I have also been subject to vilification and abuse that represents a deeply concerning shift in how antisemitism has become normalised in this country.

Prior to October 7 2023, I rarely experienced antisemitism and never experienced violence or threats based on my identity. As a Member of Parliament, there is a level of disagreement and robust debate that comes with the job. Yet, over the past two and a half years, I have had to spend a significant amount of time ensuring that my staff and I are safe to do our jobs representing the people of Macnamara. My staff have experienced daily abuse and vilification on the phone, and we have been forced to factor in my own physical safety when planning my engagements and community appearances.

I am grateful to have had the support of my colleagues and the Parliament, but I am putting forward this submission because my experiences are only a fraction of what the Jewish community faces. Politics should be a place where every Australian regardless of religion, race, gender or sexuality, feels like they can have a voice. I worry that Jewish Australians look at the abuse directed at me and feel that politics is not an avenue for them.

I am making this submission as I believe it is important for the commission to hear not only from someone who has personal experience of antisemitism, but also from a public figure who has navigated the responsibility of representing the Jewish community during times of trauma, grief and pain. These experiences have been some of the most difficult of my professional career and my personal life, but they are in no way unique - they are reflective of the broader realities of Jewish life in Australia today.

Robust political debate is an essential part of a healthy democracy. In putting forward this submission I do not wish to prohibit or discourage legitimate criticism of Australian or even Israeli government policy. We should be having more difficult conversations, especially with people we disagree with. However, what I have experienced is the crossing of the line between robust political discourse and conduct which targets individuals and communities through derogatory stereotypes, dehumanisation or collective blame. When that line has been crossed, it ceases to be political expression and instead becomes a vehicle for hate, with real and harmful consequences.

This submission makes three recommendations that target significant gaps in combatting the antisemitism that I have personally experienced, and that I have witnessed being directed towards other Jewish Australians. They are:

1. Understand and define antisemitism
2. Legislate to protect people from vilification
3. Strengthen the Online Safety Act to protect people from online hate

It is also essential that while the recommendations are centred around my experiences and the experiences of the broader community, the legal protections recommended should apply to every Australian, not just the Jewish Community.

Not every hateful comment leads to violence, but every act of hate-based violence begins with words.

My experiences are not isolated. The evidence heard by this Commission shows that vilification is happening across schools, universities, workplaces, places of worship, public spaces and especially online. They speak to a pattern of behaviour that goes beyond individual incidents and instead points to systemic challenges that require a considered and coordinated response.

I offer this submission in the spirit of ensuring that the voices and experiences of affected communities are heard and that the Commission's work leads to meaningful and lasting change.

My grandparents came to this country as refugees fleeing persecution. My grandmother was discriminated against because of who she was before she even learnt how to read. In Australia her family found freedom, safety and belonging. They were able to rebuild their lives, and less than a century later, her grandson is a member of the Federal Parliament as a proud Jewish Australian.

My family's story is not unique, and it is a wonderful reflection on our country that people of all backgrounds can contribute to public life regardless of their race, religion, gender, sexuality or any other part of their identity.

I hope that this commission outlines the pathway that will ensure Australia remains a safe home for my daughters, and for generations to come.

As a member of the Government, I have worked hard to see unprecedented government action to now, including the establishment of this Royal Commission. However, there is sadly much more to do to protect Jewish Australians.

If it assists the Commission, I would be pleased to appear as a witness before it to discuss this submission or any relevant matters.

Thank you for considering this submission and best wishes for your deliberations.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Josh Burns', written in a cursive style.

Josh Burns MP

Federal Member for Macnamara

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1 - Define antisemitism

The Royal Commission should recommend the adoption by industry peak bodies of a comprehensive definition of antisemitism which encompasses the full spectrum of anti-Jewish hatred whilst protecting legitimate political expression.

Recommendation 2 - Strengthen vilification laws

The Royal Commission should outline a serious vilification offence that protects Australians against vilification with careful consideration given to its implementation, and how it can maintain consistency across jurisdictions.

Recommendation 3 - Strengthen the Online Safety Act

The Royal Commission should recommend that the Online Safety Act be amended to empower the eSafety Commissioner to remove digital content which targets groups on the basis of race, religion, culture or ethnicity, as well as putting greater onus on platforms to remove harmful content.

UNDERSTANDING ANTISEMITISM

Defining the line between criticism and vilification

My grandmother came to Australia as a refugee. She left her home in Europe fleeing persecution and was able to build a life here thanks to the rights afforded to every Australian in this country. I grew up in Macnamara, the community I am proud to now represent. I attended Jewish day school, played sports with the local Jewish basketball team, and was active in Jewish youth movements. I can count on one hand the incidents of antisemitism I had experienced prior to getting involved in politics.

When we were taught about antisemitism and the Holocaust in school, it was presented as a legacy for us to understand the consequences of what racism can lead to. We heard stories of how Australia was a safe haven for our families. Australia was a place where they were able to express their Jewish identity freely, and my family and so many others felt so much gratitude because of that. It is the rights and freedoms which Australia provided my own family which underpinned my journey into politics.

Since October 7 2023, there have been countless incidents of antisemitism which ended with violence. We saw the firebombing of the Adass Israel Synagogue in my electorate, the car vandalism attacks in Sydney and unfortunately, the horrific antisemitic terrorist attack at Bondi beach.

However, the vast majority of incidents I am aware of are not the ones which make the news. They are the casual antisemitic jokes which are excused in the classroom, the dismissal of the concerns of Jewish peers and the exclusion of Jewish artists from places they used to present their music, theatre and artwork.

Since the October 7 attacks, my office has received between 8,000 and 10,000 emails, over 1,000 phone calls, and countless social media messages about the conflict in the Middle East. The overwhelming majority reflected strongly held views, often deeply critical of government policy, expressed in the way you would expect in a healthy democracy. I welcome that engagement, even when people disagree with me passionately. I have had countless productive and constructive conversations with members of my electorate about the conflict in the Middle East - from all different political persuasions. No matter what the conversation was focused on or whether our views differed, these are conversations I value. Robust debate on international affairs is fundamental to democratic life and should be encouraged.

But within that volume, a pattern emerged that was something else entirely. A portion of the correspondence was not about policy, the conflict, or what the Australian Government should do. It was directed towards me and it centred around my Jewish identity. It drew on stereotypes that have nothing to do with the Middle East and everything to do with centuries-old hatred of Jewish people: claims of dual loyalty, of secret control, of collective responsibility for the actions of a foreign government and even justifying vilification or violence to me. Most of the time, these vilifying comments bore no reference or resemblance to anything I had said or done.

Discussing policy is legitimate. Vilifying a person or a group of people because of who they are is not.

In the early hours of 19 June 2024, a group of individuals firebombed and vandalised my electorate office in St Kilda. They came with kerosene and a hammer. They smashed windows, drew horns on my face, spray painted slogans including “Zionism is facism” on the outside and inside of the office, and lit fires at the front of the building and at the entrance to the residential apartments above. The people who live in those apartments had their lives put at risk. The damage was estimated at around \$100,000.

My office is where my staff help people with their NDIS applications, their visa issues, their Centrelink problems. That is what was attacked. And it was not an isolated event. It was the most extreme point in a daily pattern of vilification that my staff and I have lived with since October 2023 - one that this submission documents in detail.

I am a public figure, and I have thicker skin than most, but this was a deeply personal, confronting thing for me to see, and to have my staff subjected to.

Within hours of the attack on my office, commenters on social media said this happened because ‘I represent Israel not Australia’ or that I was ‘funded by the perpetrators of this’. There were some accusations that it was a false flag attack organised for publicity. Others went to the comment section to justify the smashing up of my electorate office as a valid response to perceived political positions of mine.

When I read the comments, I saw the normalisation of age-old antisemitic tropes – dual loyalty, wealth and collective blame. What was most frightening about that whole experience was not the comments themselves, but the lengths individuals went to justify their conduct as valid political discourse, not antisemitism, especially from people who hail from progressive political circles who normally advocate against violence of any kind, but especially against minorities.

The dismissal, justification and denial of antisemitism was not unique to the attack on my office. Just a few weeks ago, I posted a [video](#) in collaboration with my two federal colleagues, Allegra Spender and Julian Leeser, calling on members of our communities to make submissions to this commission. The comments included denials that antisemitism exists, accusations that the Jewish community is exaggerating, and blame being placed on the Jewish community. Some individuals purported to dismiss the concerns of the Jewish community by suggesting that antisemitism is the result of the actions of the State of Israel. While others referenced the “Israel lobby.”

I have sat in my office listening to Jewish artists who have lost work. I have listened to Jewish students tell me that they were spat on at a campus orientation week stall. I visited my old high-school and spoke to students the day after the campus was graffitied with ‘die Jews’. Blatant antisemitism and hatred causes real harm, but so does the dismissal of it.

When individuals are quicker on social media to justify incidents of pain and hurt experienced by Jewish Australians than they are to consider the impact, we see hatred become normalised. I have seen my community retreat inwards, forced to take extraordinary steps to participate in Jewish life in Australia. As a member of Parliament who loves my community, it's heartbreaking. And as a Jewish Australian, I feel it too.

Individuals may not believe they hold hatred towards Jewish people, but I have seen how a lack of understanding of the history of antisemitism, and therefore its modern manifestations, has contributed to the antisemitism we face here in Australia today.

These attacks do not stop with me. My partner, Georgie Purcell, is a Member of the Victorian Parliament. She has been subjected to sustained abuse purely because of her relationship with me. People question her loyalty, dismiss her advocacy, suggest she lacks moral judgment, all because her partner is Jewish. Much of this abuse is deeply sexist, built on the assumption that Georgie's views and decisions are not her own. What makes this particularly confronting is that it often comes from people and communities who would not tolerate other forms of discrimination but somehow give misogyny a free pass when it is directed at someone associated with a Jewish person.

I can only scratch the surface of the abuse Georgie has faced - it is of course her story to tell, not mine. But it is devastating that her mere association with me has subjected her to this level of ferocious abuse. It is very hard to see that it has come from people who, for a long time, supported her and her politics. That a woman who has been an incredibly outspoken and articulate voice for progressive politics in this country would be turned on so quickly and so vitriolically, the moment they discovered who she was dating.

The impact on Georgie is deeply personal to us both, but it also speaks to just how toxic the climate around Jewish people has become in this country, particularly in sections of the progressive movement, and her treatment is just one example of the guilt by association so many are unjustifiably subjected to.

The following sections of this submission document these experiences in detail, trace the historical roots of the tropes that drive them, and set out three recommendations for strengthening the protections available to all Australians.

Old becomes new: utilising hateful tropes in the age of conspiracy

The tropes I described - dual loyalty, secret control, collective blame - are not modern political arguments. They are old hatreds. Claims that Jewish people secretly control financial institutions, governments or media, portrayals of Jewish people as disloyal to the countries they live in, accusations of collective responsibility for the actions of a foreign state - these formed a central pillar of Nazi propaganda and broader antisemitic movements across Europe, and were deliberately used to justify discrimination, exclusion, persecution and ultimately mass violence.

What makes their contemporary resurgence particularly insidious is how these tropes are adapted. They rarely announce themselves as antisemitism. Instead of "Jews control the

banks," the claim becomes that "the Zionist lobby's tentacles reach into every aspect of ethnic community groups." Instead of overt accusations of dual loyalty, Jewish Australians are expected to denounce a foreign government as a precondition for participating in public life. The language has been updated. The logic underneath remains.

This matters because it is precisely how antisemitism has always operated at its most dangerous. The tropes that were used to justify exclusion, persecution and ultimately mass violence in the twentieth century did not begin as calls to violence. They began as ideas: that Jewish people are not truly loyal, that they operate in secret, that they bear collective guilt. Those ideas created the conditions in which discrimination was normalised, exclusion was justified, and violence became possible. The same pattern is visible in Australia today.

The use of "Zionism" or "Zionists" as a target of vilification is evident in the evidence supplied below. I have no doubt the Royal Commission will receive many submissions on the distinction between antisemitism and anti-Zionism, and informed criticism of Zionism as a historical movement or political ideology can be, like criticism of any political ideology, legitimate. But in the examples that follow, the word is not being used to engage with an ideology or its history. It is being used as a substitute for "Jew," deployed alongside antisemitic vitriol, and wielded as a shield against the charge of antisemitism. That is not political criticism. It is hate, dressed in political language.

EXAMPLES

The examples below document how antisemitic tropes manifest in practice - in the emails, voicemails, social media messages and public commentary directed at me and those close to me since October 2023. They fall broadly into four categories:

1. Ancient antisemitic blood libels
2. Questioning the loyalty of Jewish Australians
3. Attribution of blame for the actions of Israel to Jewish Australians
4. Justification of attacks on Jewish Australians

These categories do not operate in isolation. They reinforce each other, building a narrative that moves from stereotype, to blame, to justification - a pattern this submission provides in detail.

Underlying many of these examples is a common narrative and logic pathway which seeks to dehumanise Jewish Australians in the following way:

- There are things that make Jewish people evil and/or Jewish people are not loyal to Australia;
- ↳ Therefore, the actions of the Israeli Government can be attributable to Jewish Australians;
- ↳ Therefore, attacks on Jewish Australians can be justified.

This narrative does not always lead people to commit violence against Jewish people, but it does present a pathway to either violence or the justification of/agreement with violence against Jewish people.

And as we saw from the perpetrators of the Bondi terror attack, the murder of fifteen Australians was motivated by antisemitic views so deeply held that they were used to justify opening fire on innocent people simply because they were Jewish.

These examples carry a personal weight that is difficult to convey in a submission like this. It is difficult to witness people you love being targeted. My partner, my family, my staff have answered the phone to shouting and abuse, have come to work with windows smashed, have been vilified because of their association with me.


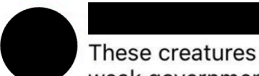
And what makes it harder still is knowing that my experiences have not been as difficult as so many in the Jewish community, who have lost so much and are questioning their place in this magnificent country of ours.


Warning the examples below contain explicit language and racism and racial slurs

Examples	Date	Evidence of
<p><i>“Mr Burns, This is Australia, not Israel. If the Australian government had protested against Israel and declared Israel a terrorist state, then maybe the violence against the Jews in Australia would not have happened. Every day, hundreds of Palestinians are killed by Israel, and you said nothing, did nothing. ... It is politicians like yourself, the Jewish Council of Australia, and the Israeli government that are responsible for the violence.”</i></p>	<p>Email on 15 December 2025, a day after the Bondi terrorist attacks.</p>	<p>Attribution of blame for actions of Israel</p>
<p><i>“We all know you work for Israel, but allowing AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN TO BE BRAINWASHED is DISGUSTING.”</i></p>	<p>Email in November 2025.</p>	<p>Ancient antisemitic blood libels Questioning the loyalty of Jewish Australians</p>
<p><i>“Hi, I’m just wondering when Josh is going to make a statement about the Jewish activists that are on the Flotilla, that have been kidnapped illegally by Israel. Yeah, there are Jews on there, Josh. Remember, that’s the only thing you post about. Us Jews. Yeah, you only post about them when it suits you. You don’t care about all Jews, you claim to care about Jews but you are selective with which Jews you care about. ... last I heard you were the minister that was for an Australian country I think, you work in Australia ... why are you posting about Manchester, a synagogue in Manchester. That’s not your job bro.”</i></p>	<p>Voicemail that was sent to my electorate office in October 2025.</p>	<p>Questioning the loyalty of Jewish Australians</p>

<p><i>“So I do think it is fair to say that many white Australian citizens such as myself have ‘grievances’ and I fully expect 2026 to be the year in which Jewish (i.e. Edomitish) adherents of the synagogue of Satan (i.e. Satanists) in Australia, together with their cherished non-white immigration into Australia, housing market in Australia and banks in Australia, begin to wither under their intensity.”</i></p>	<p>Email in early January 2026.</p>	<p>Questioning the loyalty of Jewish Australians</p> <p>Ancient antisemitic blood libels</p>
<p><i>“Here’s a reminder of what many jews think about non Jew (goys/goyims/gentiles), which is why they so freely believe they have the right to dehumanise, slain and subjugate anyone who isn’t a Jew.”</i></p>	<p>Email in October 2024.</p>	<p>Ancient antisemitic blood libels</p> <p>Justification of attacks on Jewish Australians</p>
<p><i>“Why after years of hatred towards Jews do jews continue to wear hats, clothing & jewellery that clearly identify them as Jews?? Iam a Methodist BUT no one by looking at me would be able to identify me as a christian??”</i></p>	<p>Email to all Federal Jewish Members of Parliament in May 2026.</p>	<p>Ancient antisemitic blood libels</p>
<p><i>“You are disgusting, we don’t want you people here. Especially if you are a dual national, but you’re not even Jewish, you’re Scottish Josh, that’s what I’ve heard. Anyway, keep crapping on with it, we are sick to death of zionism taking over this country ... at least [the LNP] don’t hide their hate for Palestinians and Muslims, or pretend to be a progressive or leftist when you’re just a zionist c***.”</i></p>	<p>Voicemail sent to my electorate office in St Kilda, received in October 2025.</p>	<p>Questioning the loyalty of Jewish Australians</p> <p>Attribution of blame for actions of Israel</p>

<p> commented: My favourite thing to do in machamara is feel ashamed because my MP is a genocide loving freak 😞 7m </p> <p> commented: The genocidal maniac MP 32s  ♡ Reply</p>	<p>Comment on Instagram post by Josh Burns.</p>	<p>Attribution of blame for actions of Israel</p>
<p> 17h There is nothing like a nice open fire on a cold, wintery night. Throw another Zion1st on and let's warm up 🔥👐</p>		<p>Justification of attacks on Jewish Australians</p>
<p> 8h <u>700</u> it's not that Josh can't do anything, is that he won't. It blows my mind how someone descended from Holocaust survivors can suggest because things are not in our immediate control, we can't do anything about them. I wonder what a Jewish person during the Holocaust would tell Josh today.</p>		<p>Attribution of blame for actions of Israel</p>
<p> 20m Which master is he loyal to and to whom is he in service to? The blue and white team so it wld seem</p>		<p>Questioning the loyalty of Jewish Australians</p>
<p> Josh Burns is an agent for a foreign state at this point. </p>		<p>Questioning the loyalty of Jewish Australians</p>

 <p>This could all end tomorrow though if Josh Burns resigned from Parliament. In that sense, he's responsible for these attacks and is using his staff as human shields.</p>	<p>Published on x.com on 21/06/2024.</p>	<p>Attribution of blame for actions of Israel</p> <p>Justification of attacks on Jewish Australians</p>
 <p>If only you would condemn the real evil: #IsraelWarCriminals. A window vs. the slaughter and ethnic cleansing of a people, and you choose the window. What a profound disappointment you are.</p>	<p>Published on x.com on 20/06/2024.</p>	<p>Attribution of blame for actions of Israel</p> <p>Justification of attacks on Jewish Australians</p>
 <p>These creatures have infiltrated our weak government and perverted the minds of their constituents with propaganda fed to them by the Zionist government of Israel</p>		<p>Questioning the loyalty of Jewish Australians</p> <p>Ancient antisemitic blood libels</p>
 <p>It's not antisemitic. He's clearly not a semite, being Jewish doesn't make you Semitic. whoever did that artwork is based, sums up zionists well</p>	<p>Published on x.com on 20/06/2024.</p>	<p>Ancient antisemitic blood libels</p>

 <p>You're right.</p> <p>They should have added a tail as well.</p>	<p>Published on x.com on 19/06/2024.</p>	<p>Ancient antisemitic blood libels</p>
 <p>Is Josh Burns jewish?</p> <p>9:13 pm · 19/6/2024 from Earth · 35 Views</p> <p>1 Like</p> <p>🗨️ ↺️ ❤️ 📌 ↗️</p>  <p>He's a genocidal Zionist, that's what's relevant here.</p>	<p>Published on x.com on 19/06/2024.</p>	<p>Attribution of blame for actions of Israel</p> <p>Ancient antisemitic blood libels</p>
 <p>josh burns is a jew we better make it a statement and not a question as people of melbourne are stupid and will go off</p> <p>hence why his office was attacked last night always seems to be more stupid in melbourne mexicans stupid d7ck in the street that is responsible for all the hate</p>	<p>Published on x.com on 19/06/2024.</p>	<p>Justification of attacks on Jewish Australians</p>

 <p>This cry baby Jew was pushing the failed Aboriginal Voice to Parliament last year and now the decolonial left has turned on him for his hypocritical support for Jewish EthnoNationalism, diddums Josh 🙄</p>	<p>Published on x.com.</p>	<p>Justification of attacks on Jewish Australians</p>
 <p>Josh received his 30 pieces of silver from the israeli lobby group so he's ready to say anything to promote israel. They just tell him what to say and he says it. He is not representing Australians, that's for sure</p>	<p>Published on x.com on 20/06/2024.</p>	<p>Questioning the loyalty of Jewish Australians</p> <p>Justification of attacks on Jewish Australians</p> <p>Ancient antisemitic blood libels</p>
 <p>Josh Burns is funded by the perpetrators of this and as such him and his offices can go fuck himself.</p> <div data-bbox="229 1323 708 1518" style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p> Adam Bandt @AdamBandt · 4h</p> <p>Reports overnight that at least 9 Palestinians were killed and 30 injured in an Israeli military strike that hit citizens waiting for aid at the Kerem Shalom border crossing.</p> <p>...</p> </div>	<p>Published on x.com on 20/06/2024.</p>	<p>Questioning the loyalty of Jewish Australians</p>
 <p>I wish I could get a prise for ethnonationalism if I just pretend to be the victim too</p> <p>Reply</p>		<p>Ancient antisemitic blood libels</p>

 <p>The weakest leader ever. You are a disgrace to Australian values and the TRUTH. Jew cock sucker</p>		<p>Questioning the loyalty of Jewish Australians</p> <p>Ancient antisemitic blood libels</p>
 <p>When the Jew strikes you, he cries in pain</p> <p>Reply</p>		<p>Ancient antisemitic blood libels</p>
 <p>Put this Nazi/terrorist supporter last on your ballot paper.</p> <p>And also his Eva Braun - Animal Justice Party MP Georgie Purcell.</p>	<p>Published on x.com</p>	<p>Ancient antisemitic blood libels</p>
 <p>Maybe we all thought @SenatorWong was an articulate, ethical, clever, decent person because she was in Opposition so long & could afford to espouse humanitarian ideas. Power has just shown us who she really is, & maybe always was. And I'm as sad as anyone to find out. #auspol</p> <p>148 296 1.2K 36K</p>  <p>Follow</p> <p>She's a shill for the Israel Lobby, she answers to 2 Paymasters like the PM, Josh Burns, the former AG, the DPM I'm sure others can add to the list.</p> <p>Our govt has been infiltrated by the Israel Lobby.</p>	<p>Published on x.com on 23/06/2025.</p>	<p>Questioning the loyalty of Jewish Australians (and those associated with them)</p>

EXAMPLES DIRECTED TO MS GEORGIE PURCELL MP

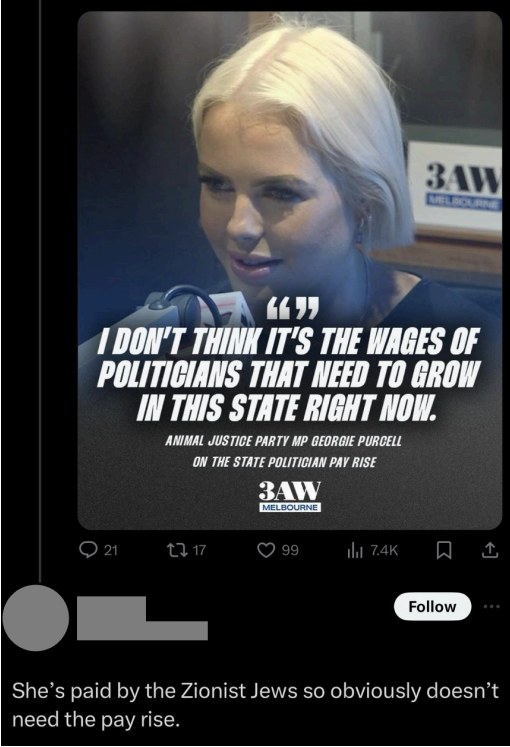
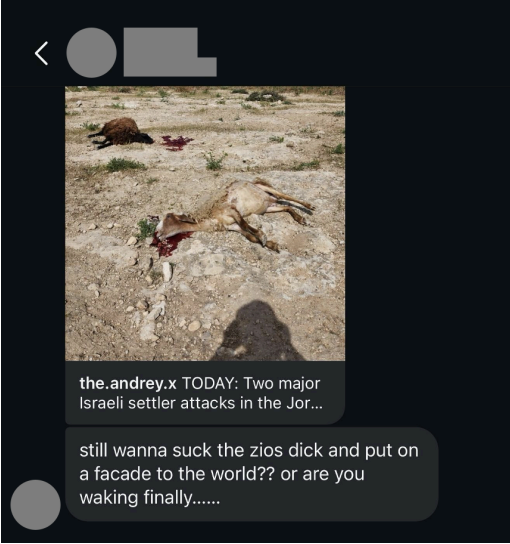
The following are only a small sample of the hateful comments directed at my partner Georgie because of her association with me. I have included them in this submission because they demonstrate some important points.

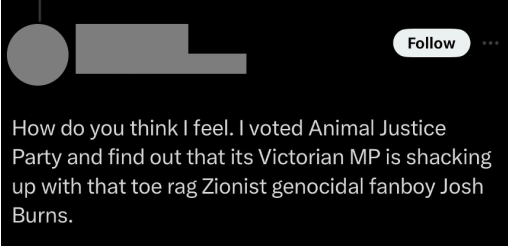

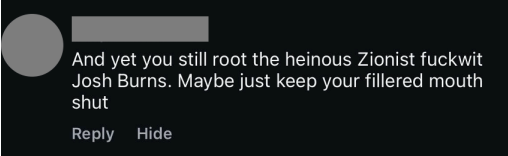

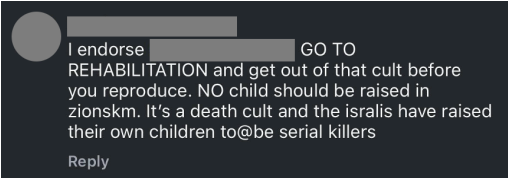
Firstly, the antisemitism directed at the Jewish Community is also directed at those associated with them, even though they are not Jewish.

Secondly, the language in the examples reveals how antisemitic abuse directed at Georgie is compounded by misogynistic, often violent and sexualised commentary - directed at her because she is a woman.

Warning the examples below contain explicit language and misogyny

Examples	Date	Evidence of
	<p>Comment on Facebook</p>	<p>Ancient antisemitic blood libels</p> <p>Misogynistic and sexualised vilification</p>
	<p>Comment on Instagram</p>	<p>Questioning the loyalty of Jewish Australians and their associates.</p> <p>Misogynistic and sexualised vilification</p>
	<p>Comment on Instagram</p>	<p>Misogynistic and sexualised vilification</p>

 <p>She's paid by the Zionist Jews so obviously doesn't need the pay rise.</p>	<p>Published on x.com</p>	<p>Ancient antisemitic blood libels</p> <p>Questioning the loyalty of Jewish Australians and their associates.</p>
<p>@georgie.purcell.ajp</p> <p>"not ur average politician" ? ur a liar with a superiority complex seems pretty average to me</p> <p>imagine being such a terrible feminist that not only can you not de-center men from your life you couldnt even de-center the zionist pig man living in your house</p>	<p>Post on Instagram</p>	<p>Ancient antisemitic blood libels</p> <p>Misogynistic and sexualised vilification</p>
	<p>Private message on Instagram</p>	<p>Questioning the loyalty of Jewish Australians and their associates.</p> <p>Misogynistic and sexualised vilification</p>

 <p>How do you think I feel. I voted Animal Justice Party and find out that its Victorian MP is shacking up with that toe rag Zionist genocidal fanboy Josh Burns.</p>	<p>Published on x.com on 3/10/2024</p>	<p>Questioning the loyalty of Jewish Australians and their associates.</p> <p>Misogynistic and sexualised vilification</p>
 <p>Still rooting a Labor Zionist though you claim to support Palestine, you absolute fraud. No way I will ever support AJP whilst you are in it.</p>	<p>Comment on Facebook</p>	<p>Attribution of blame for actions of Israel</p> <p>Misogynistic and sexualised vilification</p>
 <p>And yet you still root the heinous Zionist fuckwit Josh Burns. Maybe just keep your filled mouth shut</p>	<p>Comment on Instagram</p>	<p>Questioning the loyalty of Jewish Australians</p> <p>Misogynistic and sexualised vilification</p>
 <p>Big ups to you georgie, but your posts are getting so out of touch when you have a Zionist boyfriend!</p> <p>A dodgy greyhound trainer is more humane than your boyfriend!</p>	<p>Private message on Instagram</p>	<p>Attribution of blame for actions of Israel</p>
 <p>I endorse [redacted] GO TO REHABILITATION and get out of that cult before you reproduce. NO child should be raised in zionskm. It's a death cult and the isralis have raised their own children to@be serial killers</p>	<p>Comment on Instagram</p>	<p>Attribution of blame for actions of Israel</p> <p>Misogynistic and sexualised vilification</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS IN DETAIL

Recommendation 1 – Define antisemitism

The Royal Commission should recommend the adoption by industry peak bodies of a comprehensive definition of antisemitism which encompasses the full spectrum of anti-Jewish hatred whilst protecting legitimate political expression.

It is not possible to combat antisemitism unless institutions and individuals understand it in all its manifestations. The first step to understanding antisemitism is listening to the Jewish community.

Adopting a clear and appropriate definition of what constitutes antisemitism is not only important for understanding, but it sends an important signal to the Jewish community - that antisemitism is taken seriously.

Definitions of antisemitism are not designed to be legally binding. They serve to guide understanding and decision-making when dealing with incidents or complaints. A definition should also be used as a prevention tool so that people can understand where legitimate political debate ends and where prejudice and vilification begins.

The Australian Government has adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism as “a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

While I personally endorse this definition, whether organisations across Australia adopt the IHRA definition, or another definition, is a matter for each institution.

For example, in response to the work of the Parliamentary Inquiry into Antisemitism at Australian Universities, the Special Envoy to Combat Antisemitism worked with Australian Universities to design a specialised definition. All 39 Universities affiliated to Universities Australia have endorsed a formal working definition of antisemitism which is built on these three pillars:

- Discrimination, prejudice, harassment, exclusion, vilification, intimidation or violence towards Jews on the basis of their religion or ethnicity
- Perpetuation of harmful stereotypes, assumptions or conspiracy theories about Jews
- Attribution of blame to Jews for the actions of the State of Israel, or denial of the right of Jews to self-determination

This is a welcome step and should be seen as a blueprint for building nationwide consensus and adoption of a definition by institutions.

In defining antisemitism, institutions set parameters so that political debate and freedom to criticise policies can occur without crossing into harmful conduct. They also give confidence to Jewish Australians that they understand antisemitism.

Passionate and robust criticism of government policies, including Israeli Government policies, are made by many Jewish Australians and many Israeli citizens. It is fundamental to our democracy that this debate is not shut down.

By defining antisemitism, institutions will better facilitate robust debate by having clear policies that will determine where this debate strays from legitimate criticism to harmful and dehumanising vilification - and where it doesn't.

Recommendation 2 - Strengthen vilification laws

The Royal Commission should outline a serious vilification offence that protects Australians against vilification with careful consideration given to its implementation, and how it can maintain consistency across jurisdictions.

In response to the Bondi terrorist attack, the Government proposed the Combatting Antisemitism, Hate and Extremism Bill 2026 to crack down on hate speech, including the creation of a new vilification offence that would make it illegal to publicly promote or incite racial hatred. The proposed vilification offence was ultimately abandoned after the Coalition and Greens announced their opposition.

Two principal concerns were raised regarding the proposed vilification offence:

- That the offence may unreasonably infringe upon the right to freedom of speech, religion and political communication
- That the offence did not include hatred on the basis of other protected attributes such as religion and sexuality

These are legitimate concerns and they deserve an opportunity for extensive consultation and consideration. Previous consultation on the Criminal Code Amendment (Hate Crimes) Bill 2025 also touched on, but did not consider in detail, the complexities of a proposed standalone vilification offence.

However, based on my experience, a vilification offence is essential reform for our legislatures. On too many occasions, legitimate debate or criticism of policy has become subsumed by harmful and familiar tropes, which have been directed at myself, people associated with me and the broader Jewish Community.

The aim of a serious vilification law would be to prevent people from spreading hate, to protect people from discrimination, and ultimately to reduce the pipeline of antisemitism, and other forms of hate, that can lead to violence.

Recommendation 3 - Strengthen the Online Safety Act

The Royal Commission should recommend that the Online Safety Act be amended to empower the eSafety Commissioner to remove digital content which targets groups on the basis of race, religion, culture or ethnicity, as well as putting greater onus on platforms to remove harmful content.

Under the current Online Safety Act, the eSafety Commissioner is empowered to remove digital content that is menacing, harassing or offensive, and intends to cause serious harm to an individual in Australia. However, the Act provides no mechanism through which the Commissioner can remove online content which targets minority groups generally but does not single out any individual.

Adult cyber abuse can involve hate speech including misogyny, racism, homophobia, transphobia, antisemitism and islamophobia, but for this abuse to meet the definition in the Adult Cyber Abuse Scheme, it must target an individual rather than a group of people and it must be menacing, harassing or offensive and intended to cause serious harm. For example, eSafety cannot act on behalf of an organisation that is experiencing racist or misogynist abuse online, as this abuse is directed at a group rather than a specific person.
[\(<https://www.esafety.gov.au/report/options-if-esafety-cant-investigate>\)](https://www.esafety.gov.au/report/options-if-esafety-cant-investigate)

Broad and non-specific attacks on minority groups have the potential to inflict just as much, if not more, harm upon members of these groups as specific attacks against individuals - legitimising a culture of targeted abuse and hatred which has no place in our country.

Such commentary often occurs in response to an individual, but does not target an individual directly, leaving the e-Safety commissioner with little recourse to act.

The Commission should also consider how platforms can be made to remove hateful content on their platforms. The onus should be on the platforms themselves, before the eSafety Commission is compelled to act. However, without an independent oversight or regulatory mechanism, there is little evidence to show that the platforms themselves will adequately respond to vilification on their platforms.

Currently, the social media platforms allow and often promote harmful content, with little transparency on how or why this occurs.

This recommendation is a simple and practical one which is a significant gap in the eSafety Commissioner's powers under the Act, but it is by no means sufficient to address the prevalence of antisemitism and extremism on social media without the platforms themselves acting.

I would also urge the Royal Commission to seek further expert advice on the role played by social media algorithms in pushing antisemitic and extremist content into people's feeds.

Numerous reports and studies have noted that social media algorithms are designed to make their platforms as addictive as possible - pushing people towards content which keeps

them scrolling by prioritising content which excites and angers them. This prioritisation of content keeps people online and often pushes them down dangerous rabbit holes.

[One study](#) by American civil rights organisation the Anti-Defamation League, in conjunction with the Tech Transparency Project, has directly focused on the way social media amplifies antisemitic content by pushing it to people who have been identified by its algorithms as being vulnerable to conspiratorial content.

The speed of hateful content being spread online is unprecedented, yet the regulation and governance of platforms is woefully inadequate. These simple changes would strengthen the powers of relevant authorities to remove harmful content if the platforms fail to do so.

SCOPE OF SUBMISSION

This submission addresses the following matters in the Terms of Reference, as outlined in the Letter Patent:

- a. tackling antisemitism by:
 - i. investigating the nature and prevalence of antisemitism in institutions and society, and examining its key drivers in Australia, including religious and ideologically motivated extremism and radicalisation, including in the lead up to the antisemitic Bondi terrorist attack on 14 December 2025;
 - ii. identifying any opportunities to enhance the responses of governments to antisemitism including, but not limited to, best practice approaches to de-radicalisation and strengthening social cohesion;
 - iii. making recommendations to counteract and prevent manifestations of antisemitism;
 - iv. assessing the impact of antisemitism on the daily life of Jewish Australians including with respect to security, physical and mental health and wellbeing;
- b. making any recommendations to assist law enforcement, border control, immigration and security agencies to tackle antisemitism, including by:
 - i. improvements to guidance and training within law enforcement, border control, immigration, and security agencies to respond to antisemitic conduct;
 - ii. having regard to existing security arrangements for the Jewish community, improvement of protective security for Jewish places of worship, major sites, educational and cultural facilities, public events and community leaders;
 - iii. whether these authorities have sufficient powers and resources to respond to antisemitic conduct;
- c. make any other recommendations arising out of your inquiry into the matters set out in paragraphs (a) to (c) that would contribute to strengthening social cohesion in Australia and countering the spread of ideologically and religiously motivated extremism in Australia;
- d. any matter reasonably incidental to a matter referred to in paragraphs (a) to (d) or that you believe is reasonably relevant to your inquiry.

SUMMARY

This submission has been informed by personal experience and the experience of members of my constituency of Macnamara, as well as policy recommendations informed by my role as a Member of the Federal Parliament that focuses on major gaps where antisemitism and vilification have not been combatted.

This submission seeks to distinguish between legitimate policy discussion and vilification. For that purpose, it provides a range of examples of speech which cross the line into vilification, including personal attacks on me and those closest to me.

In doing so, it identifies four manifestations of antisemitism to which members of the Australian Jewish community, including myself, are often subjected:

1. Ancient antisemitic blood libels
2. Questioning the loyalty of Jewish Australians
3. Attribution of blame for actions of Israel
4. Justification of attacks on Jewish Australians

These forms of antisemitism do not present discretely, but often as part of a cohesive narrative that seeks to dehumanise Jews.

Accordingly, this submission makes three recommendations:

1. Understand and define antisemitism
2. Protect people from vilification
3. Strengthen the Online Safety Act to protect people from online hate

I thank the Commission for your important and difficult work, and for the opportunity to make this submission. To conclude I offer this excerpt from a speech I delivered to the McKinnon Institute in 2025.

For the past two years, I have been thrust into the spotlight for reasons that I didn't choose.

For me, two moments stand out.

First, I remember thinking to myself when my office was set alight:

What do they think of me? What do they think I am?

That somehow, I want to see war continue.

That somehow, I would want to see poor innocent people be killed.

When the truth couldn't be further from that.

Secondly, I have pierced in my memory the morning where a synagogue was burnt down only five minutes from my home – reminding me of the nightmares of Jewish history.

But in the quiet moments after the Adass synagogue was attacked, I found myself standing inside the burnt ruins with the Prime Minister of our country. There were hundreds of people, angry and hurt outside.

However, inside it was silent and solemn.

The congregants did not speak of revenge, or even anger.

They spoke of love for our country, love for their community and what it means to them to have a place to practice their faith here in Australia.

Of how this country has been a safe haven, and how they just want to be a quiet and peaceful community, living in beautiful Ripponlea.

Just as the congregants from Adass demonstrated, it is in those moments where our humanity and compassion are needed most.

The past two years have been the hardest of my professional and community life.

As a Jewish member of Parliament, I have sought to be a voice for my community experiencing immense pain.

And across society, I have tried not to exacerbate pain or use my position to divide.

Of course, I have seen the deep pain and grief felt by my friends in the Palestinian community.

I do not want any more violence, any more vilification, any more dehumanising.

I want Palestinian people to have dignity, rights and safety. Just as I want it for my own family and friends.

And I hope that as we move through this chapter of history, we sit with more people we disagree with.

We see each other's pain.

We acknowledge each other's humanity.

Healing takes time, but it starts with recognising one another.

That is how we bridge the communities who are suffering right now.

And that is our country at its best.