

**Submission
No 11**

MEASURES TO PROHIBIT SLOGANS THAT INCITE HATRED

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**Submission to the NSW Parliament
Committee on Law and Safety
Inquiry into the Use of Slogans Directed at Communities to Intimidate
and Instil Fear of Violence**

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Electorate: Whitlam

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Introduction and expertise

I make this submission as a resident of New South Wales and as someone professionally trained to analyse how systems of power use language and narrative to classify risk and legitimise scrutiny.

I hold a PhD in Creative Arts and Communication, with research focused on surveillance, narrative control, and the ways individuals and communities come to be framed as threats through repeated political and institutional language. My work examined how slogans and stories are used to justify monitoring, discipline, and exclusion, and how these processes affect democratic participation. My memoir, *Snakes and Ladders*, which applies this framework to lived experience, was shortlisted for the Ned Kelly True Crime Award in 2020.

This expertise informs my concern that the framing of this inquiry risks producing selective scrutiny rather than a principled response to harm.

Selective framing and risk of discriminatory focus

The terms of reference provide only one illustrative example of allegedly intimidating speech, the phrase “globalise the intifada”. No comparable examples are offered from other contexts, despite the existence of well documented hate speech and intimidation in New South Wales directed at Muslims, Arabs, migrants, LGBTQ+ people, and others.

The choice of examples in an inquiry is not neutral. It shapes public understanding and enforcement priorities. By identifying only a Palestine linked slogan, the inquiry risks establishing an association between Palestinian political expression and intimidation or violence, while leaving other forms of hate, including Islamophobia, comparatively unexamined.

This creates a serious risk that the inquiry will function in practice as selective scrutiny of Palestinian people and those who support them, rather than an even handed examination of intimidation across communities.

From selective framing to selective enforcement

Even where laws are drafted in neutral terms, selective framing leads predictably to selective enforcement.

When one political cause is repeatedly presented as emblematic of threat, police attention and public suspicion concentrate there. The foreseeable outcomes include disproportionate scrutiny of people who support Palestinian human rights, policing of speech by association rather than conduct, and a chilling effect on lawful political participation.

At the same time, other forms of hate, particularly Islamophobia, risk continuing with insufficient attention. This undermines the stated aim of protecting community cohesion and instead entrenches fear and silence.

Political expression is not violence

Political slogans are not acts of violence. Their meaning depends on context, intent, audience, and accompanying conduct.

The framing of this inquiry risks collapsing non violent political advocacy, protest language, and symbolic expression into the category of intimidation or incitement, without adequate differentiation. This is particularly concerning given the diversity of people involved in Palestinian solidarity, including Jewish, Muslim, Arab and non aligned Australians motivated by humanitarian and human rights concerns.

Treating contested political language as inherently hateful risks criminalising expression itself rather than addressing genuine threats or incitement.

The United Kingdom as a cautionary example

The inquiry asks the Committee to consider the United Kingdom as an example of best practice. It is therefore essential to consider actual enforcement outcomes, not only legislative intent.

Recent UK experience shows that expanded powers relating to slogans and protest have been used to justify large numbers of arrests for non violent conduct, including sitting, silent protest, and holding signs. Reporting from 2025 documents arrests in the hundreds at single protests, enforcement focused on symbolic expression rather than violence, and elderly participants among those arrested, with only a small proportion ultimately charged.

These outcomes have been widely criticised for chilling lawful political communication and eroding trust in democratic institutions. If similar approaches are adopted in New

South Wales without strong safeguards, comparable outcomes are foreseeable, particularly for communities already framed as suspect.

Conclusion

For this inquiry to maintain legitimacy and public confidence, it must avoid selectively charged examples that focus scrutiny on one community, explicitly address the risk of discriminatory enforcement, and examine Islamophobia and other forms of hate with equal seriousness.

Any regulation of slogans or political language must be narrowly framed, evidence based, and focused on actual incitement or threats, not contested meaning. An inquiry intended to protect communities must not, through its framing, enable a witch hunt against Palestinian people and those who support them, nor allow other forms of hate to continue unchecked.