

Submission  
No 4

## INQUIRY INTO CRIMES AMENDMENT (DISPLAY OF NAZI SYMBOLS) BILL 2021

**Organisation:** Australian Jewish Association

**Date Received:** 10 January 2022

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A U S T R A L I A N  
J E W I S H  
A S S O C I A T I O N

Standing Committee on Social Issues

NSW Legislative Council

**10 January 2022**

**Crimes Amendment (Display of Nazi Symbols) Bill 2021**

Dear committee members,

The Australian Jewish Association (AJA) commends you for taking up the issue of rising antisemitism. AJA supports the proposed Bill banning the public display of Nazi symbols, although with reservations about its effectiveness.

Naziism was an ideology that attempted the mass murder of an entire people on an industrial scale. The Holocaust affects the Australian Jewish community personally. It is the darkest stain on human history. AJA takes seriously the 'never again' lesson and does everything it can to stamp out this type of bigotry.

There has been a steady increase in the use of Nazi symbols to intimidate members of the Jewish community, escalating to physical assaults. The issue has grown during the Covid-19 pandemic. Images have circulated on social media blaming Jews for spreading disease or characterising Jews as vermin or various other ugly tropes.

AJA supports this Bill because it removes the Nazi Swastika as a rallying symbol for extremists.

However, Nazis are few in number and far from the most pressing antisemitism concern facing the Jewish community. There are important steps that the NSW Parliament could take which would be far more effective in countering rising antisemitism.

We commend the NSW Government, Opposition and Christian Democratic Parties for adopting the IHRA working definition of antisemitism. However, for adoption to be effective it relies on implementation. AJA has identified educational institutions as well as media and government departments as priority areas.

A second important tool to fight antisemitism is discriminatory boycott (anti-BDS) laws. These laws have been introduced in 35 US States and have been used successfully to counter antisemitic boycotts. Anti-BDS laws ensure that government funding does not support those engaged in discriminatory boycotts.

While Naziism remains a unique evil, modern antisemitism has morphed into groups like BDS. By narrowly focusing on countering one form of historic antisemitism, the more pressing instances of antisemitism if left unaddressed, will grow.

Yours sincerely,

Director of Public Affairs