




Speech By
Dr Christian Rowan

MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

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**FIGHTING ANTISEMITISM AND KEEPING GUNS OUT OF THE HANDS OF
TERRORISTS AND CRIMINALS AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (5.00 pm): I rise to address the Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026. This is a very serious issue. We must begin with Bondi, where the shocking event of 14 December 2025 took place. Last year on the shores of one of Australia's most iconic locations, an anti-Semitic terrorist attack occurred where 15 innocent people lost their lives. Families were shattered and communities were traumatised. The Australian Jewish community, already feeling increasingly vulnerable, was left grieving and fearful—in fact, all decent Australians were traumatised. This was a brutal reminder that hatred, when left unchecked and, in fact, cultivated by Labor and the Greens, can result in catastrophic violence.

To the families who lost loved ones: I extend my deepest sympathies. To the Jewish community of Queensland and across Australia: we stand united with you. In my own electorate of Moggill, the impact was immediate and deeply personal. Residents contacted my office in disbelief. Small business owners spoke of fear and sorrow. Faith leaders described a renewed sense of vulnerability. Many in my community felt something else as well. They felt frustration. For years they had warned about the rising tide of anti-Semitism. They had heard slogans growing ever louder. They had seen rhetoric becoming more extreme. They had seen hostility creeping into spaces where it should never have been tolerated. They had even seen elected Greens and Labor representatives fostering hatred.

Anti-Semitism does not begin with violence. It begins with words. It begins with phrases and slogans. It begins with extremist ideology. It begins with the dehumanisation of a people. What starts as vile ideas becomes hateful speech. Hateful speech becomes intimidation. Intimidation becomes vandalism. Vandalism becomes violence. We have seen this pattern before in history. I have personally visited Auschwitz, which is located in Poland, and also seen the remnants of Dachau, near Munich in Germany. I have stood in places where anti-Semitism, once expressed through phrases and propaganda, culminated in industrialised racial elimination. I have seen the remnants of Nazi Germany. I have seen the belongings of victims and I have seen what happens when extremist ideology is allowed to fester.

I also remember in the 1970s having family friends whom we used to see quite regularly. The father of this particular family had been in Dachau. I remember as a small child, seven years of age, seeing on his arm a number which had been tattooed onto his arm and asking my mother, who has now died, at the time why he actually had that there. She obviously explained it to me and, whilst I could not really appreciate all of the matters and what had transpired during the Second World War, it really stuck with me for years and years—certainly that, combined with seeing what I have seen in overseas countries, in both Germany and Poland. History really teaches us that the descent into atrocity does not happen overnight. It is incremental and it can be normalised. It is excused and it is rationalised. That is why the Queensland parliament must act with clarity, purpose and resolve.

This bill is not rushed. It is not reactive. It is a comprehensive, measured and considered response to a national tragedy that demanded leadership. The Crisafulli Liberal National Party state government has calmly and methodically developed legislation that targets both the spread of anti-Semitic hatred and the mechanisms that enable acts of violence. It strengthens bans on hate symbols by expanding the prohibited symbols framework, ensuring that terrorist organisations and state sponsors of terrorism listed under Commonwealth law can be proscribed in Queensland.

It increases penalties for displaying prohibited symbols to 150 penalty units, or two years imprisonment. It provides greater flexibility so that those who seek to evade the law through minor alterations cannot escape accountability. Importantly, it introduces a new offence for the public recitation, publication or display of two specific prohibited expressions—‘globalise the intifada’ and ‘from the river to the sea’.

Let us speak plainly and truthfully about these phrases. They are not neutral. They are not benign. In their historical and contemporary context, they have been used as calls to eliminate Jews and deny Jewish self-determination. They have been chanted in environments where Jewish Australians have felt threatened. They have been involved in settings where violence has been glorified, and this is where I must address a troubling narrative. There are those who have falsely claimed in this House that this is freedom of political expression. Let me be absolutely clear: a call for the elimination of an entire race is not political free speech. It is inhumane, it is an abhorrent and it is inexcusable.

No amount of cheap verbal gymnastics can erase the history associated with these slogans. No claim that it is merely activism dressed up as free speech can deny the intent that so often accompanies them. When words are used in a way that could reasonably be expected to menace, harass or intimidate and when they cause a reasonable member of the public to feel threatened or targeted, they cross a line.

This legislation is carefully framed. It does not criminalise genuine academic, artistic, religious or historical discussion. It does not shut down legitimate debate. It requires that conduct meets a clear threshold. It provides reasonable excuses. It leaves ultimate determination to the courts. This is not about suppressing dissent; it is about preventing intimidation and the incitement of hatred.

The bill also strengthens protections for faith communities and increases penalties for assaulting or threatening a person officiating a religious ceremony from two to five years imprisonment. It introduces an offence for intimidating or obstructing individuals entering or leaving places of worship. It increases penalties for wilful damage to places of religious worship. These protections apply to all religions. Every Queenslanders has the right to worship freely and without fear. Only weeks ago we saw a vehicle ram into the gates of the Brisbane Synagogue. That incident reinforces why strong and modernised protections are necessary. Queenslanders will not tolerate attacks on faith communities.

While this bill addresses anti-Semitism directly, it also recognises that preventing violence requires strong firearms reform. The bill introduces a new offence capturing acts done in preparation to cause death or grievous bodily harm. This closes a legislative gap and empowers police to intervene before tragedy strikes. Prevention must be our priority.

It increases the maximum penalty for stealing a firearm or ammunition from 10 to 14 years imprisonment. Hundreds of firearms are stolen every year. Seventy-five per cent are never recovered. Every stolen firearm strengthens the illicit market and weakens community safety. It creates a new offence of reckless discharge of a weapon towards a building or vehicle, with penalties of up to 16 years imprisonment and higher penalties in aggravated circumstances.

It establishes an offence prohibiting possession and distribution of blueprint material or 3D printed firearms, recognising the growing threat of untraceable weapons manufactured from digital files. It limits weapons licences to Australian citizens residing in Queensland, consistent with National Cabinet decisions, while providing practical exemptions for genuine occupational and sporting purposes.

It strengthens storage requirements by mandating solid steel containers for certain categories of firearms, with a 12-month transition period. Secure storage is a fundamental preventive measure. It broadens the matters that can be considered when determining whether a person is fit and proper to hold a licence, ensuring relevant violent conduct or weapons related history can be taken into account.

It reforms firearm prohibition orders so that police can act swiftly where individuals pose a serious risk. It aligns controlled operations thresholds with other jurisdictions, ensuring Queensland police have the same tools available elsewhere in Australia to disrupt serious criminal activity. These reforms are targeted. They are proportionate. They are about prevention, not reaction.

This legislation is ultimately a test for the Labor state opposition. It is a test of whether Labor are prepared to confront their own anti-Semitism and history of Jewish hate openly and honestly. It is a test of whether Labor are willing to acknowledge that anti-Semitic rhetoric is not harmless. It is a test of whether they are prepared to give police the tools they need to prevent violence before lives are lost.

In the electorate of Moggill and communities across Queensland, people expect leadership. They expect their parliament to draw firm boundaries against hatred. They expect their children to attend school without fear. They expect their places of worship to be safe. They expect firearms to be tightly regulated and kept out of the hands of criminals and terrorists.

This bill answers those expectations. It sends a clear message that anti-Semitism has no place in Queensland. It sends a clear message that those who seek to terrorise faith communities will face serious consequences. It sends a clear message that if you traffic, steal, modify or recklessly discharge a weapon the penalties will be severe.

History demands vigilance. Experience demands action. Responsibility demands resolve. This is not political; it is moral. It is about safeguarding democratic values and social cohesion. It is about ensuring that 'never again' is not merely a phrase but a commitment reflected in our laws. This is what all Australians and all Queenslanders expect, and as such I commend the bill to the House.