




Speech By
Hon. Steve Minnikin
MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH

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**FIGHTING ANTISEMITISM AND KEEPING GUNS OUT OF THE HANDS OF
TERRORISTS AND CRIMINALS AMENDMENT BILL 2026**

 **Hon. SJ MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (Minister for Customer Services and Open Data and Minister for Small and Family Business) (4.20 pm): I rise to speak to the Fighting Antisemitism and Keeping Guns out of the Hands of Terrorists and Criminals Amendment Bill 2026. Some bills carry a great deal of historical significance, and I am confident in stating that this is, indeed, one such bill. Martin Niemoller's famous ode reads as follows—

First they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a socialist.

Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out—because I was not a trade unionist.

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.

That ode is as poignant today as it was when it was written all those years ago. As I have said in this House before, symbols matter. Symbols are powerful. Some symbols are even more powerful than others. In my 14 years in this chamber, one of the greatest privileges I ever had was to entertain a gentleman who sadly passed away in 2022. That gentleman's name was George Stein. He was the embodiment of all that is good in mankind. In fact, I dedicate this brief contribution to his memory. He was Jewish. He stared down a dark time in history. He was a Holocaust survivor, a survivor of the Shoah. The symbol that George Stein had a vexed relationship with all of his life was six numbers tattooed onto his wrist—a symbol that he refused to remove. He wanted to make sure that sign of the Holocaust was never forgotten.

No-one has a fount of all wisdom when it comes to matters, particularly on a topic such as this. I was very privileged in 2020 to visit Israel. When I saw that horrific footage of 7 October 2023, it immediately brought back a haunting memory for me. I saw imagery of a children's playground in a little town not far from the Gaza border called Sderot. At Sderot, we were given training to get to a bomb shelter in eight seconds. That was the way they lived.

I also saw some other amazing things in Israel. I was absolutely moved when I went to the Tel Aviv hospital and met a doctor who had performed surgery on a teenage girl. That teenage girl's father was a suicide bomber who actually killed his own wife, yet he lovingly tended to her wounds.

I acknowledge the bravery even closer to these shores of Ahmed Al Ahmed, who was, indeed, the hero of Bondi. No nationality has a mortgage on decency; it comes from purity of heart, which is why I am so proud to be supporting this bill in the House this afternoon. As others in this chamber have done, I acknowledge those 15 people who were tragically murdered by the lunacy of terrorism unchecked on 14 December in Bondi. That date will be indelibly inscribed in all of our collective memories.

I also acknowledge a dear friend of mine: Jason Steinberg from the Jewish Board of Deputies. I have reached out to Jason for many years. I take a lot of solace from his compassion, his dignity and his sheer humanity. I thank Jason for what he has been able to do on behalf of the Jewish community.

I will only speak for a short time because I want to give my dear friend the member for Toowoomba North an opportunity to also say a few words on this particular bill. It is important. As I have said, we have to get through a lot of work in this chamber and we do it for the betterment of Queensland. Occasionally there are bills that are of complete historical significance, and I will look back on the passing of this legislation knowing in my heart of hearts how important it is. I will say this: I have heard some fantastic contributions to the debate in this chamber. I do want to highlight the one that was made yesterday by the member for Oodgeroo. I thought her contribution to this particular topic was simply outstanding.

I know that this bill covers a large degree of material, including symbols. It also picks up on important gun law reform. As has been said by the member for Gympie, we made sure to handle it in a methodical and calm way. I am proud of the significant law reform that has been done in relation to weapons in this particular bill as well.

I simply say: I hope that when we adjourn tonight most people in this chamber reflect on their own personal conduct and contribution to the wider society. Before I end my contribution I will repeat: symbols; what we say and do; what we support with little emojis, ticks and likes; and what we repost can have dire consequences. At the end of the day, we really are civic leaders in our respective patches. It is something that I have always taken seriously, with earnest responsibility, in my 14 years in this chamber. I hope that when we adjourn tonight some other members in this chamber reflect on what they have been doing with their contributions to make sure we remain the greatest example of multiculturalism in the Western world.