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16. Draft text of ECRI General Policy Recommendation No. 9 on the fight against anti-Semitism, European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, 22 March 2004, Strasbourg.
17. Written Declaration on Anti-Semitism, European Parliament (DC\529686EN.doc), 29 March 2004.
18. "Results of the European Workshop: Education on anti-Semitism," American Jewish Committee Task Force on Education on anti-Semitism, 18–20 April 2004, Berlin.
19. Berlin Declaration, OSCE Conference on Anti-Semitism, Berlin, 28–29 April 2004 (PC.DEL/696/04).
20. *Ibid.*
21. "Jews Everywhere Must Feel that the United Nations Is Their Home Too," speech by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, 21 June 2004 (www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2004/hr4773.doc.htm).
22. Conclusions by the Chair of the OSCE Meeting on the Relationship between Racist, Xenophobic and anti-Semitic Propaganda on the Internet and Hate Crimes, OSCE, 16–17 June 2004, Paris (PC.DEL/514/04).

CONFRONTING REALITY: ANTI-SEMITISM IN AUSTRALIA TODAY

Jeremy Jones

Australia has a well-earned reputation as being not only accepting but welcoming of Jews. Successive Australian governments have believed Australia has a role in combating anti-Semitism internationally, and acted accordingly. Anti-Semitism has often been spoken of as an illness of the Old World and the Third World, with Australian opinion leaders suggesting that the Australian national ethos of giving everyone a "fair go" effectively renders their country immune from anti-Semitism. In recent years, however, there has been a growing acknowledgment both of the presence of anti-Semitism in Australia, and that it is the responsibility of political and moral leadership to confront it.

On 16 February 2004, the House of Representatives of Australia deliberated on the issue of anti-Semitism.

A Private Member's Bill, introduced by Peter King, a government parliamentarian representing the electorate of Wentworth in Sydney's Eastern Suburbs, stated that the parliament took note of:

the long history of anti-Semitism and its lethal capacity to influence many people to express hatred and carry out violence against Jewish people; [an] alarming rise in the incidence of violent anti-Semitic

great drive and political power, from substantial influence on governments to “world domination.” One of the sources used to support this notion is the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, which is advertised in many anti-Semitic, extreme right-wing, and New Age publications and reportedly sold at Arabic-language bookshops.⁹ This view is also tolerated or espoused by a number of self-described left-wing groups. For Australian Islamic and fringe rightist groups, the statements on “Jewish power” by then-Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamed of Malaysia to the Organization of the Islamic Conference¹⁰ were sources of inspiration and encouragement.¹¹

Predominantly in Sydney, during the last quarter of 2003 after mainstream Jewish organizations opposed the award of the “Sydney Peace Prize” to PLO propagandist Hanan Ashrawi,¹² a so-called Jewish lobby was invoked as typifying the misuse of influence.

The presentation of Jews as holders of mysterious power can potentially spread the image of Jews, all Jews, as part of an implicitly conspiratorial elite, who cannot be treated as simply another group of Australians involved in public policy debates. For example, part of the reaction to revelations that there are Nazi war criminals in Australia holding Australian citizenship has been to stereotype Judaism as driven by the pursuit of vengeance.¹³

In the conspiracy theories of some extremist organizations, Judaism has been portrayed not only as un-Christian but also as anti-Christian. The Australian League of Rights, the Adelaide Institute, the British-Israel World Federation, “Identity” churches, and some self-styled “Biblical fundamentalists” cast Jews as religious, racial, or political opponents of Christianity.¹⁴

Some far-right activists have promoted the idea that Jewish power and influence has duped Australians into believing that the Nazis committed genocide, allowing Jews to impose their will on a guilt-ridden population.¹⁵ Indeed, virtually all Australian far-Right and anti-Semitic organizations either advocate Holocaust denial or argue that Holocaust deniers have a right to serious academic consideration. Holocaust denial is usually a central plank in the anti-Semitic organizations’ platforms, even though some of these groups simultaneously express admiration for Hitler’s policies toward Jews. In the Federal Court case *Jones v. Tobencm*,¹⁶ the judgment established that Holocaust denial committed in Australia is racist as a matter of law. Nevertheless, Holocaust deniers have been establishing their own historiography and have shown an ability to exploit media opportunities and modern communication techniques to harass and intimidate Jews while attempting to mislead the Australian public.

The stereotyping of Jews as stingy or ostentatiously wealthy reinforces prejudices, leading in turn to further vilification.

Organized Extremist Groups

Let us turn now to a closer look at some of Australia’s anti-Semitic organizations.¹⁷ On the far Right are the Australian League of Rights, active in promoting anti-Semitism since the 1930s, which claims to consist of Christians who believe that Judaism is responsible for all the sins for which right-wing Christian churches have blamed the Jews historically, as well as the neo-Nazi, anti-immigrant Australian Nationalist Movement, which sees Jewish influence behind anything it regards as a social evil. The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission has identified the Australian League of Rights as the country’s best-financed racist organization.¹⁸

The far Right also includes small organizations claiming, among other things, that the Holocaust was an invention of Jews to extort money and guilt from Western societies. Historically, the most important of these has been the Australian Civil Liberties Union, which has links to the Institute for Historical Review in California. The highest-profile Holocaust-denial group is the Adelaide Institute, a collection of extreme right-wing propagandists whose activities, as noted above, have been found to be in breach of Australia’s racial hatred laws. This group had previously gained prominence through its online presence. Indeed, the Internet permits some small organizations to maintain an existence and gives potential recruits a point of contact.

Some extreme left-wing organizations in Australia also publish material that is extremely defamatory of Jews, generally but not exclusively in the context of their attacks on Israel’s existence. Most of these groups compare Israel to Nazi Germany¹⁹ and imply that Jews control or unduly influence important national and international governmental instrumentalities.²⁰ An Independent candidate in the 2003 New South Wales state election declared publicly: “I am standing at the NSW elections to offer this to the people, to understand the fact that the US and China and Russia are the greatest threats to world peace. Oh, I almost forgot to mention the Zionist bankers, who appear to be financing all sides of the conflicts as well.”²¹ There have been many reports by individual Jews—some of whom attended the rallies out of sympathy with the specific causes, some of whom were passing by—of being subjected to overt anti-Semitic abuse at extreme left-wing meetings and rallies, a logical consequence of this incitement.

Although the small groups on the Australian far Left often denounce racism in all its forms, demonization of Israel is a common thread and so is “Jewish internationalism.” Thus, the far Left’s themes are almost indistinguishable from those of the far Right. Most of the far Left groups say ambiguous, sometimes internally contradictory things about Jews and Middle East politics.

Not all the anti-Semitic organizations can be classified as far Right or far Left. Conspiracy-theory groups identified with quasi-New Age, Libyan-inspired "Third Way," and political Islamist ideologies also provide their followers a steady diet of anti-Jewish propaganda.

In addition to organizations, though not necessarily separate from them, are individuals who are actively involved in distributing anti-Semitic material via the Internet, leaflets, and hate mail, or who express themselves via the mainstream media in the form of calling talkback radio, letters to the editor, soliciting attention from journalists, and so on. Often these individuals act in the name of an organization of which they are either the only member or the only active member.

Recent years have seen an increase in anti-Semitism from organizations and individuals representing a New Age or other fringe, alternative ideology. These groups' rhetoric is heavily laden with conspiracy theories, as they seek to portray their views as rational alternatives to lifestyles imposed by forces acting to suppress or control "natural" behavior. There is a large overlap between far-Right organizations and those more directly concerned with promoting stories of visitations from other planets, nonconventional medical alternatives, and opting out of the organized economy.

Paranoid and extremist views about the "political and economic establishment" have drawn together far-Right, far-Left, and some anarchist groups in opposition to "globalization," to various government policy proposals that they perceive as empowering a state that is an enemy, and to Israel. There has been almost interchangeable anti-Semitic rhetoric coming from groups that would regard themselves as being diametrically opposed, politically and ideologically.

Arab and Muslim Groups

Some of the most overt anti-Jewish rhetoric in recent years has come from the Muslim and Arab communities, despite the fact that key Muslim organizations have been active in speaking out against anti-Semitism and in collaborative ventures with Jewish groups.

In 1988, Sheik Taj El-Din El-Hilaly, then the imam of the largest mosque in Australia, gave a speech at Sydney University in which he described Jews as the cause of all wars and the existential enemy of humanity. The speech was entirely devoted to "the nature of the Jews."²² At that time Hilaly was already in breach of the visa permitting him to live and work in Australia, and had attracted public attention because of speeches denouncing not only Jews but also Christians and women. Despite an attempt to deport him, political events transpired

that allowed him to remain in Australia, and he was subsequently made the first and, so far, only mufti of Australia.

Hilaly's principal adviser, a prominent member of the Lebanese Muslim Association named Keysar Trad, has not only acted as chief apologist for Hilaly but also linked his community with a number of extremist organizations. For several years Trad's website was linked to Radio Islam, hosted by the notorious anti-Semitic Swede Ahmad Rami. In 2003 Trad addressed a meeting of the Australian League of Rights, and in 2004 he signed a petition promoted by Lyndon LaRouche's followers in Australia.²³

Within the Arab and Muslim communities there is a group of activists who seek at every opportunity to denigrate Jews, not only in association with attacks on Israel. In 2003 one Arab group, the Australian Arabic Communities Council, urged Australians to boycott certain Australian businesses, along with international companies, some of which had committed no greater offense than to have Jewish members on their boards of directors. Several Arabic-language newspapers have published vehemently anti-Jewish articles, including some promoting blood libel,²⁴ some espousing Holocaust denial,²⁵ and others maintaining that the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*²⁶ are not only historically accurate but are used by Israel as a guide to military and political strategy.

A real challenge for Australians concerned at the growth of anti-Semitism is the emergence of an Australian-educated Islamic generation that includes unambiguously anti-Israeli and anti-Jewish elements. For example, the president of the Federation of Australian Muslim Students and Youth, Seyed Sherifdeen, was quoted in 2003 as saying he was "deeply saddened by the genocide and collective punishment that is taking place against humanity in Palestine."²⁷

The discussions on Islamic and Arab Internet forums, and the content of postings to newsgroups, testify to a vigorous anti-Jewish subculture.²⁸ For example, on the IslamicSydney forum, postings claimed that "Jewish power" in the United States was the cause of most or all of the world's problems, making a direct analogy between Israel and Nazi Germany. It was stated that "the 13 million Jews around the world are the most prosperous and powerful ethnic group in the world," that "Anti-Semitism" has "NOTHING to do with Jews or Judaism," that the U.S. media is Jewish controlled, that "'expert' Jews flow with ease between important national security jobs in the Government and Jewish owned or Israeli funded Washington Think Tanks," that Jews donate to American political parties on the basis of which party "allows Israel a free hand to drench the soil of peace in the Holy Land with Arab Christian and Muslim blood" and that the existence of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum is

9. On 18 May 2003, columnist Tim Blair of *The Bulletin* magazine reported that he had been to an Islamic bookstore in Sydney's Lakemba suburb that sold discounted copies of *The Protocols*. In its February 2003 edition, the New Age publication *Hard Evidence* advertised *The Protocols* with a long article asserting that they are true and that Jews were responsible for the Bali terrorist bombings.
10. 17 October 2003.
11. On 29 October 2003, a letter to the *Central Coast Herald* asserted that "I believe Dr. Mahathir was right when he said that Jews are the global financiers of wars that benefit them, with interest." On the web forum Islamic-Sydney, 18 October 2003, a series of contributors criticized "Jews who control the world's wealth."
12. On 25 October 2003, *Sydney Morning Herald* political reporter Alan Ramsey claimed the fact Hanan Ashrawi "is a Palestinian" is "enough to ensure a virulent campaign of distortion and ridicule by Jewish critics to brutalise her image." Philip Adams, writing in *The Australian*, criticized the "so-called Jewish lobby" for "its efforts to suppress and censor" its enemies.
13. The most notable public figure to make this equation was Jeff Kennett, at the time premier of Victoria state and generally regarded as highly sympathetic to Jewish concerns. His views were reported by Tom Salon in the *Herald Sun*, 22 August 1997, p. 7, and condemnations by Jewish leaders were also widely reported at the time.
14. According to Betty Luks in *On Target*, 4 April 2003, Rhodesia was "lost" to Christianity because of "the Jews."
15. See Jeremy Jones, "Holocaust Denial: Clear and Present Racial Vilification," in *Australian Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (1994).
16. *Jones v Toben* (includes explanatory memorandum) [2002] FCA 1150 (17 September 2002) at <http://www.ecaj.org.au>.
17. Jones, in *Report on Antisemitism*, pp. 51-90, refers to twenty-eight different groups that had come to the Jewish community's attention during the previous twelve months.
18. *Racist Violence: Report of National Inquiry into Racist Violence in Australia*, Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Services, 1991), p. 200.
19. On 19 March 2003 *The Guardian*, the weekly newspaper of the Communist Party of Australia, published an article that opened with: "Under the cover of a war against Iraq the Israeli Government is preparing drastic measures against the Palestinian people in an outrageous [*sic*] act of suppression which, if they are implemented, could only be compared to the measures taken by the Nazis against the people of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and other countries during WW2."
20. See P. Mendes, "The Australian Left and Anti-Semitism," ADC Special Report No. 15, November 2003, B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation Commission.
21. Nic Faulkner, *Byron Bay Echo*, 4 March 2003.
22. James Murray, "The Imam of Invective and His Doctrine of Hate," *The Australian*, 21 November 1998, p. 7.
23. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 June 2004. LaRouche runs an international political cult that promotes anti-Semitic conspiracy theories. For more details

- on Lyndon LaRouche, his movement, and the anti-Semitism at the base of the theories, see Dennis King, *Lyndon LaRouche and the New American Fascism* (New York: Doubleday, 1989), esp. pp. 280-285.
24. For example, *An Nahar*, published in Sydney, printed an article "The Zionist Plan" that claimed Jews "have awakened the Christians' hatred for them when they boldly embarked upon kidnapping Christian men and children and slaughtering them to obtain their blood for the purpose of kneading it with the unleavened bread of the Passover celebration," 12 September 1985 (authorized translation). *An Nahar* was censured for this article by the Australian Press Council (Adjudication No. 294, 21 August 1986).
25. "The presumed holocaust was disproved by great writers and historians of the second world war events...The purpose is to blackmail the world" (translation by Ethnic Affairs Commission of New South Wales Translation Unit), Michael Haddad, *An Nahda*, 16 July 1992.
26. For example, an article by Charlie Ayoub, "Chattering in the Face of the Death Machine," *El Telegraph*, 29 April 1996, led to a formal apology after a successful complaint was lodged by this author under the federal Racial Hatred Act (1995).
27. *Salam*, August 2003.
28. See Jones, *Report on Antisemitism*, 2001, 2002, 2003.
29. Mohamed Khodr, IslamicSydney, 9 January 2003.
30. Sheikh Imran Hosein, Islamic Sydney, 2 April 2003.
31. Hana Dover, IslamicSydney, 16 April 2003.
32. Vincent Rankin (Anglican priest), *Daily Telegraph*, 12 April 2003.
33. Tom Frame (Anglican bishop), ABC Radio, 20 April 2003.
34. Rev. Dallas Clarnette, *Herald Sun*, 22 September 2003.
35. *Racist Violence: Report of National Inquiry*.
36. Australian National Dialogue of Christians, Muslims, and Jews, 24 March 2004, <http://www.ecaj.org.au/media/240304.htm>.
37. One example of this was the letter to Prime Minister John Howard from the National NGO Coalition against Racism, 29 April 2002.
38. "A Call by Jewish, Muslim and Christian Leaders in Australia," 11 April 2002, issued by the Australian National Dialogue of Christians, Muslims and Jews,
39. <http://www.preventinggenocide.com/files/declaration.pdf>.
40. *Racist Violence: Report of National Inquiry*.
41. Sam Lipski, *Australian Jewish News*, 9 November 1990.
42. For a recent comment on concerns of the Jewish community in this regard, see Martin Daly, "Walking in the Shadow of Hate," *The Age*, 14 June 2004.