

Open letter to Prime Minister Anthony Albanese from Hizb ut Tahrir / Australia

Anthony Albanese MP
Prime Minister
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

CC: Tony Burke MP
Minister for Home Affairs
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister,

We write this letter to you in the interest of facilitating open and robust discussion.

We note with concern proposed changes to legislation seeking to criminalise the Muslim community in the wake of the Bondi attack. We note with concern the lack of transparency regarding claims made against the Muslim community generally and Hizb ut Tahrir specifically — claims that have been repeated by both yourself and the Home Affairs Minister, that seek to assuage those who have sought to exploit the Bondi attack for narrow political gain instead of using this moment for genuine national reflection.

The genocide in Gaza shook the world, irrevocably. Nobody is the same after witnessing the horrors of genocidal extermination levelled against the people of Palestine. The shock is not just personal, it is political. We have seen an abandonment of any hope in the objectivity of international law, in the effectiveness of international institutions in preventing such a tragedy, and in the willingness of strong nations to intervene on behalf of the weak. The world finally realised the post-WWII world order was constructed precisely to enable such a genocide, just as it facilitated the first genocide in Palestine in 1947.

Notwithstanding, Gaza was an opportunity for brave leaders to stand on the right side of history, even if symbolically. Your continued defence of occupational violence leaves the Australian government forever condemned in the annals of history.

But we do not write to you on the basis of principles, despite your roots in pro-Palestinian activism that were long abandoned at the altar of an unforgiving political machination that unfortunately has its roots outside of Australia.

We write to remind you to put the interests of the Australian people first, not the interests of a foreign genocidal entity. Is Australia best served by a peaceful and stable world, built around actual rule of law, where all lives are equally measured and all transgressions equally punished? Or is Australia better served through the support of pariah states, who exterminate their populations, transgress against their neighbours, and ensure a perpetual cycle of reciprocal violence? What sort of message are we sending to countries in our region?

Zionist advocates in this country, who prioritise their loyalty to the genocidal entity, do not care about Australia. They do not care about dragging Australia into perpetual wars in the Middle East or exploiting a fake 'wave' of attacks in this country. They do not care about damaging Australia's social fabric or weaponising the very racism they ostensibly oppose. They

have already demonstrated their readiness to throw Australia under the bus with the fake Australian passport scandal in the United Arab Emirates. Their insistence on laying blame for Bondi on Islamist extremism, despite being contradicted by AFP Commissioner Kristy Barrett, is just another example of how Zionist advocates in this country are hoping to rehabilitate the Zionist entity's image by irrevocably damaging Australia's.

The proposed amendments to hate speech laws are nothing short of self-immolation. Hate is political theatre, not a legal argument, and is intended to be subjectively wielded against adversaries of all kinds. Whilst these laws have been flagged to initially capture groups such as Hizb ut Tahrir, their target is undoubtedly all pro-Palestinian activism, and beyond that, any form of activism sitting governments oppose.

But both yourself and your Home Affairs Minister have repeatedly emphasised Hizb ut Tahrir has never broken the law, despite laws progressively narrowing over the course of twenty years of the War on Terror to capture Islamically grounded political activism. But this admission has been offered as a mere footnote, as if operating with legal impunity in this country is nothing more than a formality.

Instead, you have relied upon the Islamophobia of the last twenty years to raise the spectre of Muslim hate speech and Muslim hate preachers, offering nothing but lies and misinformation to misrepresent Hizb ut Tahrir and preclude any right of reply. You and your Home Affairs Minister have expressly said you want us banned for the simple reason you don't like us, and you want to use lives lost at Bondi as nothing more than a convenient backdrop to blackmail Australia into agreeing with you. Is this the value you place on Australian lives?

In any case, are you seriously suggesting the construction of a two-tiered legal system, where laws are specifically introduced to criminalise voices with which sitting governments disagree, would make us all safer? Are you seriously suggesting governments who are granted such powers will never abuse these powers or exploit future tragedies to insist on even greater power? Is Trump's campaign against former political adversaries not a sign of where such power inevitably leads? For the sake of self-preservation, where even your past Palestinian activism would be criminalised, Australia cannot be allowed to cross this line.

Despite your invocation of Islamophobic tropes, who exactly are you threatening to place behind bars for twenty or more years anyway? You supported the war in Afghanistan on the premise it would free Muslims from the grip of a repressive government. You championed the rights of Muslim women to form free opinions, make free choices and organise themselves accordingly. Yet twenty years later, you are threatening to jail female Muslim university students who say genocide is wrong. You want to jail grandmothers, who lost their home in 1947, because they say dispossessing a people of their land is wrong. You want to punish Australian professionals, labourers and entrepreneurs because they say raping prisoners is wrong. Is this really about making Australia safe or making the occupying entity safe from criticism?

Gaza has truly changed us all. Rather than standing on the right side of history, Australia is being blackmailed into doubling down on genocide by protecting those who enacted it and punishing those who opposed it. The proposed ban on Hizb ut Tahrir is a distraction. What is truly at stake is our conscience and our capacity to express it. We cannot let the occupational violence of Gaza numb us to the political violence about to be unleashed upon Australia. The time to stand up is now.

﴿وَقُلْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ الْبَاطِلُ إِنَّ الْبَاطِلَ كَانَ زَهُوقًا﴾

“And say, ‘Truth has come, and falsehood has vanished. Surely falsehood is ever bound to vanish.’” [Al-Isra’ 17:81]

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