

NAZI SYMBOLS — LEGISLATION

169. Mr S.A. MILLMAN to the Premier:

I refer to the abhorrent displays of bigotry and racism over the weekend on the steps of the Victorian Parliament. Can the Premier advise the house what measures this government is taking to stop similar displays of hatred in Western Australia?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I thank the member for Mount Lawley, who represents a large part of the Western Australian Jewish community in his electorate, for that question.

Obviously, like most right-thinking people, I was shocked and appalled by what I saw at the Victorian Parliament the other day. A group of men were dressed in black basically presenting with the Nazi salute at a rally in Australia in 2023. Many of them were doing so proudly. Many of them were cowardly in that they had their faces covered, and others did not have their faces covered, so they were quite proud of what they were doing. I found that shocking, as someone who has studied the history of that era in great depth and continues to do so. The fact is that Australians and our allies fought and died against people who promote that sort of ideology. I find it shocking that Australians would do that, and do it proudly, and do it in an area in which there are still men and women alive who experienced those events. I actually know people who experienced the Holocaust. I know people who went through it—who were in concentration camps—who are actually still alive, and their children and grandchildren. The fact that these people are out there is shocking. It is un-Australian and it has no place in our society.

We will bring in legislation to criminalise the display and possession of Nazi symbols. We know it is offensive to people; we know they are used in association with anti-Semitism; we know they are now used to marginalise groups, particularly Muslims and people from the LGBTIQ community. We will prohibit the display of those symbols in certain circumstances as part of this legislation. It is not appropriate that people engage in that sort of conduct. We will watch very carefully for that sort of conduct and whether it occurs in Western Australia. All those people are doing is trying to spread fear, hate and division in our community. We want to have a harmonious community in which people can live free of fear and hate. Those people who served and continue to serve our country against people who promote those sorts of things deserve our support and do not deserve to see that sort of conduct occurring within our great country.