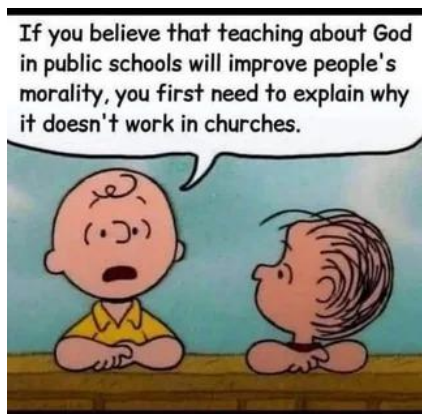


Part H. The Antisemitism Envoy's Prescription: A Pandora's Box

1. Ms Jillian Segal, Australia's Special Envoy to Combat Antisemitism, released her *Plan to Combat Antisemitism* in July 2025. One of the thirteen "strategic focus areas" mandates Holocaust and antisemitism education in school curricula, embedded alongside Jewish history and supported by teacher training and guidance for public servants.

2. The implications of this prescription for the Australian education system are the subject of ongoing and polarising debate. A core concern is that it risks undermining education in a multicultural society. I reiterate these widely discussed concerns here only to [lead into proposing a better path. Cultural Intelligence, for achieving the aims that the Envoy seeks](#), without unleashing potentially divisive controversies:

- Will the content of the curriculum reflect 2000 years of Judaism's history or just the 140-year-old Zionist movement's interpretation of it?
- What of the sensitivities of children of other faiths? Will non-Jewish parents have a say? Will it not invite reciprocal demands from other faiths with their own histories of antagonism, each wanting its point of view explained (often against another's version)? Would embedding one faith's history in the public school curriculum create an asymmetry that the others will, rightly, contest?
- Would it not be perverse to teach about, say, the Holocaust while the genocide of First Nations people remains largely unknown to today's children? Is it not more urgent to focus scarce resources on combating the continuing racial discrimination and marginalisation they face, and so promote social cohesion in Australian society?
- The plan assumes classroom facts curb street bigotry. Do churchgoers shed their vices after sermons? It is doubtful that classroom learning about faiths inevitably translates into gentler behaviour beyond the school gate.
- Australia has a long history of state support for independent schools representing different faiths and denominations. This principle was cemented during the acrimonious state-aid debates of the 1960s between the Catholic lobby, headed by Archbishop Mannix, and the Protestant establishment, led by Robert



Menzies. (Ming conceded handsomely, partly in order to sow divisions in the Australian Labor Party).

- The Australian public education system has been built on the principle of secularism. Shaping the curriculum around the sensitivities of a (politicised) Zionism masked as Judaism will undermine that secular character.
- Should public servants have a role in the manner or content of how any single faith is taught?

3. In practical terms, focusing on a single faith in schools will provoke conflict among management, parents, teachers and children, necessitating expensive and time-consuming conflict-resolution machinery. A more constructive path is to promote **interfaith and intercultural communication** within and between schools and community centres, and to make this a condition of government support for independent schools of all faiths.

4. Ms Segal's goal is to erase antisemitism in Australia. That is laudable. The question is how. Prejudice is not dissolved by elevating one community's history above all others in the classroom; that would only prompt other groups to demand the same. It is dissolved slowly when people of every faith are brought together to listen and discuss as a public community – in our schools and well beyond their gates. Let combating of antisemitism not be pursued in isolation, as a special case, but as part of the larger, unfinished work of teaching a plural society to live with itself. That, in the end, is the difference between opening Pandora's box and quietly keeping its lid in place.

5. There is a broader point to ponder. Appointing domestic Envoys for this or that aspect of social cohesion is an official confession that the existing government machinery is not doing its job. The Australian Government has appointed well-funded Envoys for combatting Antisemitism and Islamophobia.

- What was the extent of their cooperation to resolve a national, not communal, problem?
- Jillian Segal unveiled the *Plan to Combat Antisemitism* in 2025. The Government has already enacted some of its recommendations.
- Australian Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia, Aftab Malik, unveiled his "A National Response to Islamophobia: A Strategic Framework for Inclusion, Safety and Prosperity," in September 2025. He made 54 recommendations. What action has been taken on any of them?

- Is it not basic **common sense** that the two (expensive) Envoys charged with recommending measures to enhance social cohesion in Australia should have worked together to produce a Joint Report to the people of Australia?

6. Such appointments confirm that the bodies for overseeing and advancing Multiculturalism are sidelined. Today, there are:

- A Race Discrimination Commissioner;
- The Australian Human Rights Commission
- Anti-discrimination legislation
- National Anti-Racism Framework, which, in 2024, made 63 recommendations for systemic change across the social landscape. What transpired?

7. When all this is done and dusted, it appears that only one form of prejudice, antisemitism, has gained official traction. The establishment of the Royal Commission devoted solely to it confirms antisemitism as Australia's primary social ill far above any other that confronts us.