

The Royal Commission on Antisemitism and Social Cohesion

Religions damage social cohesion

Submission on behalf of the Atheist Society, Melbourne and the Secular Party of Australia

About the author: Dr John L Perkins has qualifications in Economics and Econometrics from London and Monash Universities. As well as a career in economic modelling he has spent the last 25 years undertaking research into the philosophy and origins of religions. He is convenor of the [Atheist Society](#) Melbourne and president of the [Secular Party of Australia](#).

Thank you for the opportunity to present this submission. We wish to address the issue of “religious and ideologically motivated extremism”. We seek to do this in a well-informed forthrightly non-religious manner. We do not seek to cause offence. We ask that our views be considered with an open mind. We are well aware that religious views are commonplace, and we seek to present an alternative view. The emergence of humanity from the Dark Ages to the Enlightenment, ushered in the greatest era of human progress. Therefore we suggest that the expression and consideration of non-religious views are vitally important with regard to the issues we face today. These issues include antisemitism and social cohesion.

This submission has the following structure:

Imagine a hypothetical world

We invite you to consider a world governed by mass delusions. Then we elaborate that different ethnic groups are affected by different but similar delusions. What if these mass delusions were all contradictory and antagonistic to each other?

The nature of religious beliefs

We suggest that religious beliefs lack evidential basis but this is ignored. We note that the contradictions between religions “alternative truths” are also ignored. Religions cause division and conflict and yet they are considered benevolent and beneficial. What kind of confusion is this?

Judaism, Christianity, Islam

We look at each of these religions separately and the specific doctrines in each one that could be used to motivate violence, particularly in the current context.

The Koran on women, The Koran on violence

The Koran is sacred to Muslims and must be obeyed, so we look at a list of quotations. It is impossible to understand Islamist behaviour without reference to these texts.

Religious violence in Australia

We consider the Bondi massacre in relation to Islamic doctrine.

The special religious envoys

The envoys for Antisemitism and Islamophobia were appointed to promote social harmony but do they?

Zionism and racism

Zionism is not racism, but what is it? Sectarianism?

Israel's right to exist?

We don't answer this question but we do look at some opinions regarding the legitimacy of Israel's formation.

Israel: the aftermath

A world of unforeseen consequences

Recommendations

We suggest that the best way to achieve social cohesion is to overcome our religious differences. Secularism is a means of reducing tensions. Reason and rationality should be our guide. In the light of all the information we provide we have several suggestions.

Imagine a hypothetical world

Imagine a hypothetical world of mass delusions, in which most people have deeply held beliefs, which affect their perceptions of reality and morality, but that these beliefs are false. They are deluded in these beliefs. How would this situation affect the functioning of society? How would it affect the world?

Imagine there are delusions that give people comfort, and a sense of belonging. They may involve rituals that enhance social bonding. The delusions may deeply and emotionally held, so that to challenge them may cause offence. The truthfulness and authenticity of these beliefs would be rarely challenged. There may be an element of coercive control.

Those who do question the historical and scientific accuracy of the narratives on which the delusions are based, may find that there is no evidence to justify or support them. So to the few, it is quite apparent that they are delusions.

The delusions could be promoted or even enforced with a degree of official imprimatur. They may be maintained and endorsed, if not mandated, by governments. Children may be indoctrinated, passing delusions between generations

People simply may not care whether what they believe is true or not. The delusions may be comforting. If all family and friends have the same delusion, there may seem no reason to question it. They would not realise it is a delusion. This would be despite the obvious existence of contradictory alternative delusions.

Believers and promoters of one form of delusion may realise that there may be absurdities and inconsistencies in other delusions, but do not highlight these, for fear that their own delusion may be similarly challenged. The truth may be something that is systematically avoided. A dystopian situation could arise where the actual truth is debased, and the concept of "multiple alternative truths" is accepted.

Now, imagine that the delusions were not just randomly distributed between populations but are ethnically based. Different nationalities, cultures or ethnic groups have loyalties to different delusions. These belief systems are mutually exclusive: adherence to one precludes adherence to another. They make mutually contradictory truth claims. So, the world would be divided up into different delusional belief allegiances.

Imagine that these delusions cause conflict between nations and peoples. Those adhering to one delusional belief may be pitted against those of another. Such beliefs may lead to a sense of superiority of one over another. This could lead to disputes over doctrines, where one would attempt to oppress another out of a sense of righteousness.

In this hypothetical world, the doctrines of the delusions may contain specific references to violence against others, even suggestions that other groups should be completely wiped out. This could lead to terrorism, wars of conquest, even genocide: a breakdown of world order.

If we imagine such a hypothetical, then what we would observe is exactly what we see today. Observations exactly match the hypothesis. On this evidence, we live in a world of mass delusions.

The nature of religious beliefs

Every society on earth had its creation myths. In the past, people had no other explanation of our origins. However, belief in these myths has been debunked for at least 150 years. More recently, archaeological and historical findings have exposed the foundations of all major religions as false.

In the 2001 book *The Bible Unearthed* archaeologists Finkelstein and Silberman, found that the first ten books of the Bible are purely mythical. The Prophet Abraham, the founder of the three so-called Abrahamic religions, did not exist. The Exodus did not happen. There was no great ancient kingdom of David three thousand years ago. These were all made up stories used to justify ancient territorial claims. Judaism is not a justified belief. Yet the facts have little influence. People don't care about truth when it comes to religion.

Two thousand years ago, the Romans kept good historical records. There is no record of anyone resembling the Jesus of Nazareth in their *contemporary* historical records (i.e. mid first century). No preacher with huge crowds, no disruption of the temple. No trial before Pontius Pilate of a "King of the Jews". Absence of evidence is indeed evidence of absence. Nazareth did not exist at that time. Tacitus was not yet born. The references to Jesus in the writings of Josephus are later insertions or [interpolations](#). No reference is made to Josephus' Jesus until the third century. There was no biblical Jesus. Yet this finding is culturally unacceptable. Historians contrive to maintain the mythology.

Please note: the fact that what we state in the previous and following three paragraphs is not common knowledge is due to the power of religion to control people's minds. All this is a matter of record and should be common knowledge in a modern, informed, democratic society.

Islam depends on the story of a conquering hero riding from the desert and conquering the Byzantine and Persian empires in the early 600s and spreading a new religion. This did not happen. Mecca did not exist at that time. There was no water at Mecca. It is not an oasis. Islam arose from an anti-Trinitarian Christian sect. The doctrines of Islam were contrived up to 200 years after the supposed events.

I say this after several years of personal investigation, including studying a large volume of literature produced by the German school of ancient history and archaeology, the [Inarah Institute for Early Islamic History and the Koran](#). See also my Atheist Society presentation March 14, 2024, [Arab Prophet: Fact or Fiction](#). The Arabs in Syria and Iraq were Christian, not Muslim. They minted Christian coins. The coins had Arabic writing and Christian crosses. From this you can reliably tell who was in power. I have such an ancient coin myself. It is actual and authenticated. It came from 7th century Homs and cost £200. They are not that rare.

Of course. Islamists go to great lengths to try to intimidate and cover up the truth about their elaborately fictional Prophet Muhammad. However, given that Islamic scriptures rely on the equally non-existent, Abraham, Moses and Jesus, they already have no basis in truth. Most historians fail to recognise or articulate the non-historicity of religious narratives because they themselves are religious, or otherwise just conform to the cultural norm.

Belief is acceptance without proof. Religious beliefs are acceptance despite proof. Religions are not true. If religions were true, they would not be religions. Of course religious delusions are not clinical delusions because they are specifically excluded from DSM-5. They are cultural mass delusions.

The believers in these ethnically based religious delusions do not care that they are deluded. They do not want to know the truth. That is why religions are delusions. It is not possible to properly understand the world unless we see religions as mass delusions.

Humans are innately tribal. This enables ethnically based delusions to be powerful and dominating. We may wish to believe that religions are basically benign, but unfortunately, they are not. To see this, we need to look at the religious texts themselves. Without that, we cannot understand how frighteningly dangerous religious delusions actually are.

We can identify three aspects of religious delusion. The counter factual delusion: people believe their own religion is true, despite evidence. The multiple-truth delusion: people believe that all religions are true or pretend that they are. The benevolence delusion: people believe that religions are always good, especially theirs. Because of the obvious existence of alternative delusions, people are compelled to believe in the superiority of their own delusion. This leads to a dangerous progression: religious superiority leads to ethnic superiority, which leads to violence justification. Religions are pathological delusions.

Please note: it is not my intention here to denigrate or vilify anyone. My criticisms are entirely directed towards the beliefs, not the believers. People are free to believe in delusions if they wish. We just need to be aware of the harm they cause. We now look at different religions in turn.

Judaism

We can have sympathy and admiration for the Israeli people. We need to also consider their point of view. Their lived experience cannot be ignored. They have been persecuted for centuries. They live in fear that the Palestinians, Arabs and Iranians want to kill them. They see it, they know it. They argue that they were not the first ones to resort to violence. They say that everything can be justified by the need to defend themselves.

Regarding Judaism, we are all aware of the "chosen people", "promised land" contentions. It is obvious that this could be problematic. We can observe the consequences. Jews have maintained their communities over centuries by an imperative not to "marry out".

Consider a particular Jewish doctrine that has current relevance. This is 1 Samuel 15:3: "Now go and smite the Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." This refers to the ancient Israelites quest to establish their land by conquering the land of the Amalek by wiping out all the inhabitants, the Amalekites.

In popular Israeli culture, the Palestinians are referred to as "sons of the Amalek". This biblical passage was referenced by Netanyahu as justification for Israel's actions against the Palestinians in Gaza. This reference has been cited as inciting genocide.

When South Africa brought its case before the International Court of Justice, accusing Israel of genocide, Netanyahu's endorsement of the genocide of the Amalek was cited as proof. The physical evidence was supported by words indicating intent. This was not the only purported statement of genocidal intent.

In late January 2024, the ICJ presented its interim judgement. It said some of South Africa's assertions were plausible, and issued provisional measures requiring Israel to prevent genocide against Palestinians in Gaza. Note however, that this is the same South Africa that supported Russia's plausible genocide in Ukraine.

The Amalek reference is not the only instance of religious delusion influencing Israel's behaviour. There is increasing support for the messianic end-times concept of a Greater Israel. This is supposed to be the recreation of the mythical ancient Kingdom of David. It involves the defeat of Persia and the rebuilding of the "Third temple". Some Israeli soldiers have badges on their uniforms depicting maps of Greater Israel and the Third Temple. Religious delusion is now central to Israel's military motivation.

Not all Jews support Israel. Jews who supported the establishment of a Jewish state are called Zionists. Zion refers to a site near Jerusalem linked to Jewish mythology. Not all Jews are Zionists. Not all Zionists are Jewish.

Christianity

There are more Christian Zionists in America than Jews. Their motivation comes from the Book of Revelation, which is the last book in the Christian New Testament. With its rivers of blood, massacres and monsters, Revelation is surely the most maniacal religious text there is. At the end of days, Jesus will return to the Holy Land, trumpets will sound, and a chosen 144000 will be raptured up to heaven and everyone else will die. Christian Zionists believe in this and want it to happen, soon. It is hard to imagine a more absurd and dangerous religious delusion.

Zionists, both Jewish and Christian, have enormous influence in the US government. Vast amounts of money are devoted to promoting the cause. Sometimes it is called the "Axis of Epstein". Currently, the chief Christian Zionist in the US government is Pete Hegseth. He has religious tattoos on his body e.g. "God wills it" in Latin. He renamed his department, from the Department of Defense to the Department of War. He uses biblical references such as Psalm 144: "Praise be to the Lord my Rock, who trains my hands for war, my fingers for battle." He prayed during a religious service at the Pentagon that there be "overwhelming violence of action against those who deserve no mercy".

Hegseth describes the war that he, Trump and Netanyahu started on 28 February 2026 as a Holy War. This illegal war was started supposedly to prevent a maniacal religious theocracy from obtaining nuclear weapons.

Islam

Now, we need to look at the doctrines of Islam, without which we cannot understand the world today. Iran is Shia and the Arabs are Sunni. Both regard each other as heretics in the manner of Protestant versus Catholic antagonism. The dispute between them did not arise because of the

disputed succession to a non-existent Prophet. There was an ancient Persian legend of a prince on horse being assassinated. This was grafted onto the Prophet legend as a point of departure. They both use the same Koran.

When the Ayatollah Khomeini came to power in the 1979 Iran revolution, he released a "Little Green Book" with his sometimes-bizarre theological musings. Some of the sayings warrant quotation. "Holy war means the conquest of all non-Moslem territories. (...) It will then be the duty of every able bodied adult male to volunteer for this war of conquest, the final aim of which is to put Koranic law in power from one end of the earth to the other", "Islamic faith and justice demand that within the Moslem world, anti-Islamic governments must not be allowed to survive." That is a Shiite perspective.

Islam divides the world in two, Darul Islam, the land of Islam, and Darul Harb, the land of war. This is a so-called "legal" ruling is derived from consideration the three sources of Islamic doctrine: the Koran, the Sunnah and the Hadith. The Sunnah refers to the life of the prophet and the Hadith refers to the sayings of the prophet. These are important to Muslims but have no historical authenticity, being devised at 200 years after the supposed life of the apocryphal prophet.

The biography of the heroic prophet is described in elaborate detail. The preacher from Mecca started from humble beginnings but managed to assemble a large devout band of warriors in Medina. From there, after a long series of battles he triumphantly establishes Islam throughout Arabia, then Syria and Persia. Along the way he beheads an entire Jewish tribe in Medina. He has a six-year-old wife called Aisha. This is fiction. Nothing of this exists in the historical record.

From this, we can understand something of Islamic ideology, but the most important document is the Koran. The origin of the Koran is actually quite old, and can be dated to the 7th century. It appears have been derived from an anti-Trinitarian Arab Christian sect.

It is important to know what is in the Koran, because all Muslims are required to be loyal to it and cannot contradict anything it says. This is despite the fact the vast majority of Muslims have little idea what the Koran says because they cannot read ancient Arabic.

The Koran on women

Here is some of what it says on the subject of women. I give chapter and verse references (Penguin, Dawood translation).

It is stated that: "men have authority over women because men are superior (4:34), that disobedient women may be beaten (4:34), that women are feeble minded (4:5), and are created for men" (30:21). Also that "as a witness one man is equal to two women (2:282), and that a male may inherit twice as much as a female" (4:11). A man may "marry up to four wives but any number of slave girls: (35:50), and that a man "may have sex with his wives or his slave girls" (70:35). Women have to be veiled to avoid being molested: "Prophet enjoin your wives, your daughters and the wives of true believers to draw close their veils ... so that they may be recognised and not molested" (33:59). This is why Muslim women wear veils.

In the chapter on divorce, wives can be divorced after a waiting period of three months, including child wives. "For wives who have ceased menstruating, their waiting period shall be three months. The same shall apply to those who have not yet menstruated. As for pregnant women, their term shall end with their confinement" (65:4).

The Koran on violence

The Koran says: "Believers, take neither Jews nor Christians for your friends" (5:51), "Fight those that fight you but do not attack them first. Slay them where you find them" (2:191), "Fight them until no other religion is left" (2:193), "Believers, make war on infidels who dwell around you", and "slay the idolaters wherever you find them. Arrest them, besiege them, and lie in ambush everywhere for them" (9:5).

There is more. "Those that make war against Islam shall be slain or crucified or have their hands and feet cut off on alternate sides, or be banished" (5:34). God's punishment for antagonists will be to wear garments of fire, "Scalding water shall be poured on their heads, melting their skins and inside their bellies. They shall be lashed with rods of iron". Meeting unbelievers in battle, "strike off their heads, lay them low" (47:4), "I shall cast terror into the hearts of the infidels. Strike off their heads, strike off the very tips of their fingers" (8:12). "Make war on them until idolatry ceases and Islam reigns supreme" (8:39). "He that chooses a religion other than Islam, it will not be accepted of him." (3:85). "Strike terror into the enemy", (8:60), and "make war on the unbelievers" (9:73).

It is wise to have some knowledge of the content of the Koran, because when a reference comes up we know the original source. Regarding the Royal Commission and the Bondi massacre, terrorism experts have said that an Islamic State hate speech entitled "Slay them wherever you find them" could have motivated the perpetrators. The experts appeared to have little idea that that title is a direct quote from the Koran.

Obviously the vast majority of Muslims do not act on these commands. That is a testament to their humanity. Those who do act, do not follow an extreme interpretation. They follow a literal reading.

Every atrocity committed by Islamic State was justified with a quote from the Koran. The oppression of women in Afghanistan and elsewhere is justified by reference to the Koran. Yet religion itself is never blamed. Blame is attributed to culture or extremist interpretations. Religion is always privileged and protected. This is a symptom of mass delusion. It is the benevolence of religion delusion.

Religious violence in Australia

The Royal Commission on Antisemitism and Social Cohesion was established following the 14 December 2025 Bondi massacre. This tragedy was the worst of its kind in Australian history and our deepest sympathy is extended to the Jewish people. To characterise it simply as an issue of local antisemitism, or as a failure of our immigration system, would be a misdiagnosis. We implore the Commission to look at the wider issues that we raise.

The Bondi massacre was motivated by the Islamic religion (see Koran quotes). The Gaza genocide is motivated by the Jewish religion (see Biblical quote). The Jewish Council of Australia has stated that the Gaza genocide is equivalent to 5000 Bondi massacres. The Gaza situation is not irrelevant. The official mourning ceremony for the Bondi massacre was taken by the Jewish community as an opportunity to promote Judaism. This was understandable but unfortunate. It is symptomatic of our society that we turn to religion as a solution when religion is the problem. We urge the Commission to recognise this.

Every other threat to human health and safety comes with government warnings or government supervision. Instead, religious institutions and schools are supported and promoted by governments. Religious schools compete for students by providing facilities worth millions. These schools

indoctrinate our children. Despite a cost of living crisis more parents are sending their children to expensive private religious schools. Why?

Our society is totally oblivious to the fact that religions are both untrue and harmful. Despite the obvious detriment to social cohesion, we fail to do anything to counteract them. Nothing is done to counsel against them. Is this not a symptom of mass delusion? Would it be possible to suggest that Commission should counsel for rationality and reason?

The special religious envoys

After wave of serious antisemitic attacks across Sydney, and the firebombing of synagogue in Melbourne in December 2024, there was a public outcry. As a result, a Special Envoy for Antisemitism was appointed, who subsequently released a report. The recommendation was to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition of antisemitism. In this, questioning Israel's right to exist, and comparing Israelis to Nazis, is antisemitic. The Royal Commission has adopted this definition also. We think that unwise.

Following the Antisemitism Envoy, to square the ledger, a Special Envoy for Islamophobia was appointed. The introduction of their report was written by Australian cricketer Usman Khwaja. In lamenting the apparent Islamophobia after September 11 2001, he seemed to deny that those terrorist attacks had anything to do with Islam. It is not a phobia if they are actually trying to kill you. The recommendations of the report were that all public servants should be trained in Islamic doctrine and that Islam should be publicly promoted. This is nonsense.

Section 116 of the Australian Constitution does not allow the establishment of any religion or allow any religious test for public office. The Envoys and their reports do just that. They are a public office that requires a religious test. It is impossible to imagine that the Envoys for each religion would be of that religion. They violate the Constitution. Did anyone notice? Their reports do not promote social cohesion. They sow division. The offices of these Special Envoys for Antisemitism and Islamophobia should both be abolished.

Israeli President Herzog's visit

Following the Bondi massacre, the President of Israel, Isaac Herzog was invited to Australia. He has publicly endorsed the bombings of civilians in Gaza. For some people, his apparent complicity in war crimes was an issue. At protest in Melbourne, Palestinian advocate Hash Tayeh said "All Zionists are terrorists" For this, he was prosecuted and convicted of hate speech. I think this was unjust. It is an unwarranted constraint on freedom of speech.

David Harper, a former appeals court judge, wrote an article in The Age on 7 February 2026, entitled "Herzog has big questions to answer". He raised questions of International law. I would like to summarise what he said.

Reconciliation needs a search for objectivity, he said. Upon its admission to the United Nations in 1945, Israel said that it unreservedly accepted the United Nations Charter, including compliance with the International Court of Justice. There have been serious violations including ICJ judgements and a Security Council resolution.

On December 23, 2016, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 2334. The USA abstained. It stated: "The establishment by Israel of settlements in the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem has no legal validity. It constitutes a flagrant violation under international law, a major obstacle to the establishment of a two-state solution and a just and lasting peace. The

Council demands that Israel immediately and completely cease all settlement activity." This resolution was ignored by Israel and its non-compliance was also ignored.

The International Court of Justice has issued two pronouncements. On 26 January 2024 it said: "a plausible case of genocide in Gaza has been made out by South Africa". On 19 July 2024 it said: "Israel's continued presence in the occupied Palestinian Territories is unlawful. The UN General Assembly should consider what action should be taken to end Israel's unlawful occupation."

Nothing has happened. The settlers continue to claim that their religious belief entitles them to evict Palestinians from their land. Their brutality has only increased, now also with genocidal fervour.

Neither Israel nor Herzog provided any answer to the questions asked by David Harper in his newspaper article. Instead, in response to the protests at the Herzog visit, The Age headline read: "Herzog accuses protesters of seeking to deny Israel's right to exist."

At the start of the Royal Commission into Antisemitism, the presiding judge, Virginia Bell said that they would adopt the definition of antisemitism whereby it is antisemitic to claim that Israel's existence is a racist endeavour. She acknowledged that it may be controversial but said it was "basically sound". We think that this may be correct but only in a technical sense. Is Jewishness a race, a religion or an ethnicity? Whatever it is, the whole purpose of having a Jewish State, with a Jewish flag, is to privilege Jewish people over others.

Zionism and racism

There has long been controversy over whether Zionism embodies racism. UN Resolution 3379 in 1975 declared that "Zionism is racism". It passed by a 72-35 vote with 32 abstentions. It was rejected by Israel. Under pressure from the USA in particular, the resolution was revoked in 1991, partly on the grounds that it implicitly challenged Israel's "right to exist". Implicitly, the argument is that Zionism privileges a religion not a race, so is therefore not racist. Symptomatically, this argument was not made explicitly.

The American Jewish Committee argues that being one of the chosen people is a burden rather than a privilege, that Israeli Jews are comprised of multiple races, and that some rights of Jews in Israel are also given to non-Jewish citizens of Israel. It is argued that Judaism is related to the need for a Jewish state, that it is racist to suggest that Zionism is racist (see AJC "[Zionism is racism](#)").

These arguments are convoluted. If Zionism expresses a religious characteristic then it would not be racist. However the charge of "antisemitism" appears to identify Jewishness as a racial or ethnic characteristic rather than a religious one.

If equal rights are denied on the basis of religion rather than race, then the result may be little different. The word "sectarian" is used to describe a "narrow-minded adherence to a specific religious or political group, often causing conflict, discrimination, or intense prejudice against other groups". So it would be appropriate to describe Zionism as sectarian. The fact that sectarianism is deemed acceptable but racism is not, can be attributed to the prevailing delusion of religions benevolence. In this case it seems rationality does not apply and need not apply.

The bombing of the synagogue in Melbourne was later discovered by ASIO not to be an act of local antisemitism but was carried out by agents for Iran for which the Iranian Ambassador was expelled from Australia. It was act of religious warfare carried out in accordance with the stated aims of Iran and Islam. Likewise, the Bondi massacre was not an act of antisemitism, but an act of religious warfare carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Islamic religion as specified in the

Koran. Both of these religious attacks were in response to the acts of religious warfare carried out by Israel against the Palestinians.

Jewish peoples everywhere have a right to exist and be free from prejudice, persecution and attack. The cycle of violence in the Middle East has a long history. The attacks of Hamas on 7 October 2023 were an atrocity, Israel had a right to respond. But where do we go from here? What is the solution? What is the end game? From the evidence we see, Israel's only solution is genocide, It is not acceptable.

Israel's right to exist?

There is nothing in international law that grants a nation a right to exist. People have rights, religions and states do not. Peoples' rights are defined in the Universal Declaration. Looking at the Articles in that Declaration. Israel's treatment of the Palestinians seems to entail multiple violations. These apply more to Palestinians in the occupied territories but also to the Palestinian citizens of Israel. If Israel has a right to exist then why not Palestine?

We cannot say: "from the river to the sea". We cannot say "globalise the intifada". The questioning Israel's right to exist is effectively prohibited. If Israel was to change its name would it still exist? If it granted equal rights to the Palestinians would it still exist? If it became a secular state rather than a Jewish or Judaic state, would it still exist? Surely these are issues we may discuss.

Territorial claims based on 2000-year-old historical ties have no basis in international law. The Romans cannot reclaim Britain. Jurists argue that the Balfour Declaration of 1917 was illegal because Britain did not have sovereignty over Palestine. It was a mandate. That declaration proposed a homeland for the Jews while not disadvantaging the non-Jewish population. It ignored the wishes of the vast majority of the population of Palestine. (see wikipedia.: [Legitimacy of the State of Israel](#))

UN General Assembly Resolution 181 of 1947 called for the partition of Palestine. Critics of this argue that the distribution of land proposed was unfair, that the resolution only passed after intense Jewish lobbying. Jurists say that the United Nations did not have power to partition land. (wikipedia) . All those in favour of the resolution were Christian and all those against were non-Christian (our observation)

In the wikipedia page on the legitimacy of Israel, religion is never mentioned. But surely this is fundamental. The confiscation of other people's land cannot be justified on the basis of religious belief. But this is exactly what has happened and is still happening in the West Bank. In what kind of deluded world can the main issue, religion, be ignored as if it does not exist? It is not just a mass delusion of religion, is it a mass delusion about religion.

How should we regard the legitimacy of a religious state? May we compare the legitimacy of the Judaic State with Islamic State? Motivated by the tenets of their religion, both purport to privilege the rights of people of their religion, and seek to engage in territorial expansion. Apart from the degree of barbarity, what is the difference in principle? How is it that the existence of one religious state cannot be tolerated and the other cannot be criticised? If Israel has a right exist, why not Palestine?

Israel: the aftermath

The long history of Zionism and the creation of Israel, and the related ensuing violence, is too much to recount here, but there is something else that warrants recognition. Following the Enlightenment,

the world was on a long-term trend towards human progress and humanism. Religion was fading in terms of global power and influence. Religious wars were largely a thing of the past. This all went into reverse with the establishment of the Jewish State. For the first time in modern history a religion was the basis of a national foundation and territorial expansion.

The PLO was originally a nationalist movement, not Islamist. After their defeat in the six-day war in 1967 the Arabs decided that their god had forsaken them and they needed to become more pious. It gave rise to [Islamic extremism](#). This pattern has been repeated through history countless times. When disasters happen, people turn to religion. After the September 11 attacks, perhaps the greatest crime ever committed in the name of religion, America became more religious.

The term Islamic terrorism was not really known before 1960 (Google ngrams). Islamism was a reaction to Zionism. Can we cite the Islamic Revolution Iran in 1979 as a reaction to Zionism? Would this have happened without Israel's foundation fomenting sectarianism? Religious action creates religious reaction. From the 1990s the Saudis used their oil money to establish mosques and Islamic schools all round the world including here. Would this have happened if Judaism had not established a state in Palestine?

In the 1990s Malay girls wore miniskirts. Now practically all Muslim women and girls in Malaysia and Indonesia wear hijabs. There is a similar pattern in other countries, In Afghanistan, at least some women used to be more free. Now, hundreds of millions of women around the world are oppressed by Islam. Would this outbreak of Islamism have happened had a Jewish state not been established? What other hypothesis is there?

To understand why Hamas attacked Israel on October 7, 2023 look at the quotes from the Koran that are used justify it. To understand why Israel practices genocide look at the biblical reference to the Amalek. To understand the behaviour of Iran, Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan, see the Islamic references. To understand the behaviour of the USA? That is difficult, but religion definitely is involved.

The 24 February 2026 unprovoked attack on Iran instigated by Israel was motivated by religion. The US joined this attack because it too was motivated by religion. The Arab States joined the war on Iran because of their religious antagonism to Shiites. (Why else?). Iran was attacked because of its religion and what that religion motivated it to do. The current war on Iran is a religious war. Only in a world beset by religious delusion could a religious war occur without it being recognised as such.

This religious war is now causing damage and hardship to the entire planet. It is the worst energy crisis in world history (International Energy Agency). Fuel price increases may cause a global recession. Lack of fertiliser could cause famine. The disruption to world trade will cause many other hardships. Increased public debt could cause a financial crisis. At the time of writing this submission (late April 2026) the situation in the Strait of Hormuz seems a stalemate. A long duration will be catastrophic. The mass delusion of religion has never been more pathological.

If people put aside their religious beliefs, the land that is now Israel could be a homeland for both Jews and Palestinians. It could be a secular state, where all people have equal rights and where no religion predominates. The solution exists, if only we were not blind to it.

Recommendations

We understand that the primary purpose of the Royal Commissions is to seek to protect the Jewish people of Australia. We submit that this cannot be done without looking at the situation in a wider

global context. Israel is not irrelevant to Jewish people. The Interpol warrant for the arrest of Prime Minister Netanyahu on the charge of war crimes is not irrelevant. Seeking to protect Jewish people in Australia by preventing criticism of Israel is not a viable long-term strategy for addressing antisemitism, nor for addressing intolerance generally.

The Commission has the responsibility to address the issue of religious extremism. As should be clear from the information we have provided, the problem is not religious extremism but the nature religion itself. The two cannot be separated. We need guidance. The Commission must state this in its findings. Failure to do so will simply confirm the deeply delusory grip that religion has on our society.

The Commission should find that the issue of antisemitism cannot be entirely addressed by seeking to provide special rights and protections to the adherents of a particular religion. In dealing with all religions, the Commission should suggest that we exercise a greater degree of critical thinking, not blind faith, and that reason and rationality applied to religion will provide a path to greater social cohesion.

Australia was founded as a secular country. The purpose of Section 116 of the Constitution was to ensure social cohesion by keeping the peace between Protestants and Catholics. The Commission has an historic opportunity. It can do something that no politician can do. It can find that in the furtherance of social cohesion, secularism is a valuable ideal. It can enlighten Australia by finding that Enlightenment values and humanism are preferable to sectarianism.

The Commission should find that the Bondi massacre was not an act of antisemitism but an act of religious warfare. Similarly, the Melbourne synagogue bombing was not an act of antisemitism but an act of religious warfare. Obviously so, as Iranian agents were found to have instigated it.

The Commission should confirm Zionism is not racist but it is sectarian. Zionism purports to establish the superiority of one religion in Israel. Unfortunately, and tragically, evidence suggests that this has triggered a global outbreak of Islamic sectarianism and militancy. This again has spawned a wider reaction, the culmination of which is the religious war we now see in the Middle East. The Commission should find that the long-term implementation of Zionism has not had desirable consequences for Jewish people or for the world.

In this regard, the Commission has an historic opportunity to make a finding, not just for Australia but for the world. This is that antisemitism is best addressed by a solution to the Middle East problem. In this regard, the adherence to religious beliefs does not justify the trauma they create. Israel should seek to become a country where no religion predominates and all people have equal rights. Israel would then truly be a light to the world.

Dr John Perkins, Melbourne, April 2026.