

STATEMENT

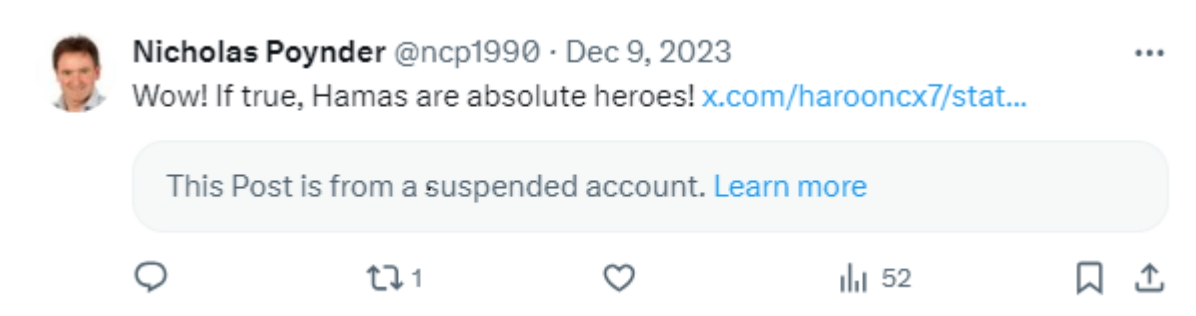
I am entitled to make public my opinion on world events.

I am proud of my independence as a barrister. The motto of the New South Wales Bar is “servants of all and yet of none”.

I will not bow to the pressure of lobbyists and nutters who misrepresent my views.

With regard to the article in today’s *Australian* newspaper:

1. The accusation that I said that Hamas are “*absolute heroes*” egregiously misrepresents what I said in my tweet of 9 December 2023. I was responding to a (since suspended) post which covered good works being done by Hamas in the Gaza community, protecting and assisting those civilians being attacked by Israel. My actual comment was: “Wow! If true, Hamas are absolute heroes!” The Australian took the latter part of my post out of context, suggesting that I support what Hamas did on October 7, 2023. I did not express any such support, but I did (and do) recognise Hamas as the only entity which is currently defending Gazans from the genocidal onslaught by Israel which has, thus far, killed some 29,000 people, of which more than two thirds are innocent women and children.



2. My post of 5 February 2024 calling Israelis “monsters” was in response to a post which described the IDF as running a Telegram channel featuring homemade “snuff” films in which Gazans are brutally murdered by Israeli forces and captioned with celebrations of the gore and pain. As any thinking person, I was shocked to the core when I read this post, and I reacted in an entirely understandable way.
3. My support for NSW Greens MP Jenny Leong was not unconditional; I simply pointed out that “*To be fair, she did correct herself*”, by referring to “*the Zionist lobby*” after her reference to “*the Jewish lobby*”, which I took to be a correction. I would never characterise the Zionist Lobby as the Jewish lobby; the latter clearly crosses into antisemitism.

4. My description of Zionism as “*a stain on humanity*” referenced and echoed a comment made in a post dated 4 November 2023 by a paediatric intensive care doctor with MSF, “Tanya”, who used this phrase to describe what was happening to children in Gaza. Again, the repulsive conduct of the IDF in the killing of so many children, at the behest of the Israeli Government and apparently with the support of a clear majority of the Israeli people, led to my horrified response.
5. There is nothing controversial about my support for a single state of Greater Israel with equal rights for all. In fact, this is likely the only workable solution to the problem in the Middle East. Before 7 October 2023 I believed in a two-state solution; however, after hearing from those who support the destruction of Gaza and the killing of its people, I have modified my view and now consider that the two-state solution is likely impossible due to loss of infrastructure in Gaza and the illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank. The other alternative, being to forcibly push the Palestinians out of Gaza and the West Bank, would amount to a crime against humanity.
6. My reference to Caitlin Johnston calling stating “*Get out of the middle east. Get the f...ck out. Stop backing genocide in Gaza...*”, is clearly not a call for all Jews to leave the Middle East. It is an expression of sympathy for Zionists to get out of the Middle East, where they have caused so much death and destruction. I appreciate the unbroken Jewish presence in the Middle East for 3,000 years; however, this has never justified the forced dispossession and relocation of the Palestinians and others since 1948.
7. The Australian also omitted numerous posts in which I denounced antisemitism and criticism of the Jewish religion; for example:
 - a. On 9 December 2023, I agreed with a post stating that “*Antisemitism is un-Australian*”.
 - b. On 11 December 2023, in response to a post from Orthodox Jews praying for the disappearance of the Zionist State, I posted, “*I’m with those of the Jewish religion*”. The same day I also reposted a post showing children of the Jewish religion participating in a “Free Palestine” rally in Sydney, and another post of a Jewish woman stating, “*Israel is committing genocide in Gaza*”.
 - c. On 13 December 2023, in response to a Guardian article about a Polish priest using a fire extinguisher to put out Hanukah candles, I said, “*This is a disgrace! I stand against antisemitism*”.
8. At no time have I criticised people for their Jewish religion. However, I am against Zionism. As has been stated time and time again the world over, anti-Zionism does not equate to antisemitism.
9. I have a record of some 34 years as a human rights lawyer, including years of work with asylum seekers and refugees, working as a senior legal officer with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, and working for years in the area of immigration law and anti-discrimination law. I know my human rights law.

10. What Israel is doing in Gaza and the West Bank, with the full support of those who believe in Zionism and only patchy support from the Jewish religious community, represents one of greatest breaches of human rights and humanitarian law in the past 75 years. As recently recognised by the International Court of Justice, what is happening in Gaza amounts to a plausible case of genocide. All people of conscience must be supported to speak out against this obscenity.

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Nicholas Poynder
Frederick Jordan Chambers
Sydney.