

4 BONDI'S LEGACY: BATTLE AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM



Secret report on risk exposes festival at war

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dismissal would not be legal. At that point Ms Adler was reappointed to continue as AWW director, with board members hoping she would make good on a reassurance to include more diverse voices, including some conservatives, at the 2026 and 2027 events.

Asked to comment for this story, Ms Adler provided the following one-line response: "In October of 2025 I agreed to an extension of my contract at the request of the board to deliver the 2027 Writers Week."

Sources have described the working relationship with Ms Adler as "broken", "framed by mistrust" and "a guessing game", as the board tried to ensure the Adelaide Festival did not suffer reputational and commercial harm from a perception of heavily biased programming and the inclusion of militant voices, which exceeded the boundaries of free speech.

They trace the tensions back to a controversial 2023 Writers Week program, which was stacked with anti-Israel voices, the most controversial being American-Palestinian author Susan Abulhawa, who had described a Jewish-American civilian shot by terrorists while attending a family wedding in Israel as "human garbage" who did not deserve to be mourned.

Former board members have also disputed suggestions that South Australian Premier Peter Malinauskas was to blame for the decision to uninvite Dr Abdel-Fattah, revealing that the board had been "agonising for months" about the wisdom of her inclusion, with some members pleading with the Premier to involve himself.

The Australian understands some board members unsuccessfully approached Mr Malinauskas late last year asking him to intervene, as was also the case in 2023 when he resisted calls to demand the exclusion of Ms Abulhawa from the AWW lineup.

It was only after the Bondi attacks that Mr Malinauskas decided to write to the board advising of his concerns about Dr Abdel-Fattah's inclusion in this year's lineup, his letter still stressing that he was in no way ordering them to dump her.

'Sense of mistrust'

The concerns of the former board are laid bare in the risk assessment, which was prepared in September, three months before the Bondi terror attacks.

The risk assessment shows there was already serious concern not just about Dr Abdel-Fattah but what the report describes as "a palpable sense of mistrust" around the conduct of Ms Adler and her Writers Week team.

The report says that not only did board members suspect Ms Adler was failing to keep the board adequately updated on programming decisions, there was also a perception that she and her AWW team were resisting calls from the board for Writers Week to be more inclusive of writers "with diverse and contrary opinions" - especially in the context of the Israel-Gaza war.

The report also states that if Dr Abdel-Fattah were to take part in the 2026 Writers Week, she risked looking "hypocritical", given she and other academics had campaigned for the removal of Jewish-American author Thomas Friedman from the 2024 AWW lineup over what they regarded as an offensive column he had written for The New York Times.

Mr Friedman did not attend the 2024 event, and former Adelaide Festival board members are now openly questioning claims by Ms

Adler that his non-appearance was simply due to a scheduling clash.

While the risk assessment report did not recommend that Dr Abdel-Fattah be uninvited from the 2026 AWW program, it warned that her presence was "high-risk" due to her social media statements and her key role in demanding the removal of Mr Friedman from the 2024 program.

The identity of the author of the report has been redacted in the copy obtained by The Australian; however, this newspaper understands he is a senior male arts administrator with many years' experience in SA and well-respected across the artistic sector.

His report chastises Ms Adler for allegedly failing to fully alert the board to the potential risks of having Dr Abdel-Fattah as part of the 2026 program.

"There is a palpable sense of mistrust that has emerged around the programming of AWW," the report states. "In relation to how this programming links to a broader critique of the AWW director, that she has 1) not been transparent in her programming (and) 2) not taken on feedback from the board to be inclusive of writers with more diverse and contrary opinions, particularly on controversial and political subjects, and even more particularly on the subject of the Israel-Gaza war."

'Her appearance runs contrary to current community expectations of unity, healing and inclusion'

SA PREMIER PETER MALINAUSKAS'S LETTER ABOUT RANDA ABDEL-FATTAH

On the first point, the risk assessment report states the following about Ms Adler:

"While the director should have flagged the high-risk elements of the program prior to the presentation of the program-in-development at the 4 September meeting, she did present a full list of names at that meeting and invited questions and discussion."

Despite that criticism of Ms Adler, the risk assessment concluded by saying the Adelaide Festival supported her work and believed she was the right person to lead Writers Week through such politically charged times. "There is a highly distressing military conflict at the heart of the conversations that we are having, which inevitably brings controversy when addressed in a literary festival context," it says.

"It is intrinsic to both AWW and the broader AF program to engage with difficult, sometimes uncomfortable topics."

"I firmly believe that in these moments we are fortunate to have a director who is clear in their values, firm in their position, and capable of withstanding the significant pressure that inevitably accompanies public scrutiny."

Hypocrisy claim

The report is less charitable about Dr Abdel-Fattah, noting the "hypocrisy" of her demanding Mr Friedman be uninvited despite having made multiple controversial comments of her own.

The report highlights her two contentious and now deleted social media posts - "May 2025 be the end of Israel" and "If you are a Zionist you have no claim or right to cultural safety" - but stresses that her 2026 AWW appearance was to be limited to discussion of her new novel, Discipline.

However, the report says that

her role in the campaign against Mr Friedman had placed both her and the Adelaide Festival in a difficult position.

"The correspondence to which Dr Abdel-Fattah was signatory instigated a very difficult and uncomfortable situation and process for the Adelaide Festival," it says.

"It is entirely reasonable to regard the stance taken by Dr Abdel-Fattah and her colleagues in the correspondence as hypocritical."

Malinauskas letter

The Australian has also obtained the full letter Mr Malinauskas wrote to former Adelaide Festival chair Tracey Whiting, who along with every other board member bar one, Adelaide City Council representative Mary Couros, quit the board en masse this week.

In the letter, sent on January 2, Mr Malinauskas says that in light of the Bondi attacks he did not believe it was appropriate for Dr Abdel-Fattah to be included in the 2026 AWW program due to her past comments.

"In light of the Bondi terror attack, her appearance runs contrary to current community expectations of unity, healing and inclusion," it reads.

"Dr Abdel-Fattah has made several public statements and actions that have been widely construed as antisemitic."

"I am of the belief that should these historical statements and actions surface, in the context of her attendance at Adelaide Writers Week, they are likely to cause significant distress to the families and loved ones of the victims of the terror attack and broader Australian Jewish community - and indeed - are likely to provoke division, disunity and hateful debate at a time when our nation desperately needs to strive for inclusion and tolerance."

In the letter, Mr Malinauskas refers to the risk assessment now obtained by The Australian as indicative of the board's own concerns about Dr Abdel-Fattah.

He also references the resignation of former board member Tony Berg AM, who this week claimed that Ms Adler threatened to quit as AWW director if the board did not support the removal of Mr Friedman from the 2024 program amid complaints from anti-Israel academics, including Dr Abdel-Fattah.

The Australian understands that former board members, including Mr Berg, were "enraged" that Ms Adler and her AWW team failed to stand by Mr Friedman in the same way they defended Ms Abulhawa in 2023 when she was under attack for her social media comments demanding no sympathy for a terror victim.

In a statement that confirmed the tensions on the former board, Ms Adler this week took aim at Mr Berg, albeit without confirming or denying his claim that she had threatened to quit if Mr Friedman was not uninvited.

"I consider discussions at the board table to be confidential and I'm rather surprised that a former CEO of Macquarie Bank has breached these confidences," Ms Adler told The Age. "It's indicative of the way the former board operated - a rich case study for future management students."

Mr Malinauskas said in his letter that there was enough evidence in the board's own risk assessment that Dr Abdel-Fattah should not attend the 2026 Writers Week, a point underscored by the resignation of Mr Berg in protest at her proposed inclusion.

"I am advised that the Adelaide Festival board has itself considered a risk assessment in which the inclusion of Dr Randa Abdel-Fattah



GLENN CAMPBELL, JOHN FEDER

Whitney Luxford and daughter Jessica Lee made cupcakes. Below, from left: Rabbi Aron Moss and son Eli; the Kids Giving Back charity hosts a Mitzvah Cook; Brian Berger and partner Mia in Melbourne. Opposite page: Bukky Kennedy and children Atarah and Miykal prepare meals for those in need



AFC quietly settles defamation dispute with Abdel-Fattah

TIM DOUGLAS
THOMAS HENRY

The Adelaide Festival Corporation quietly settled a defamation dispute with Palestinian-Australian writer Randa Abdel-Fattah after she had been disinvited from appearing at Writers Week, before issuing a fresh apology and inviting the author to appear on the 2027 program.

The terms of the settlement were not clear, but Dr Abdel-Fattah's legal representative, Michael Bradley of Marquee Lawyers, told The Australian the complaint against Adelaide Festival Corporation "has been resolved".

Mr Bradley also said individual former board members, whom The Australian understands earlier this week were in the legal crosshairs over

the Writers Week furore, were "off the hook".

But Dr Abdel-Fattah on Friday said she still intended to pursue defamation action against South Australian Premier Peter Malinauskas over comments he made at a press conference, further accusing him of "deliberately misrepresenting" her words.

Dr Abdel-Fattah's public disinvitation to Writers Week triggered the withdrawal of 180 writers, the resignation of artistic director Louise Adler and four of eight AF board members, and culminated in the cancellation of the 2026 event.

Adelaide Festival executive officer Julian Hobba on Friday refused to rule out reappointing Ms Adler, while the festival proper narrowly averted disaster with headline opening-night act Britpop band Pulp withdrawing in protest over the debacle, only to be talked around by a new board in crisis mode.

In announcing Dr Abdel-Fattah's disinvitation last week over historic comments on

Israel, the board in a statement said her appearance would not be "culturally sensitive" in the wake of the Bondi anti-Semitic terror attacks in which 15 people died.

Marque Lawyers, on behalf of the writer, on Monday sent a letter to AFC. Mr Bradley claimed at the time the manner of the board's decision "trampled on" his client's human rights.

After refusing the previous board's olive branch, Dr Abdel-Fattah this week accepted an apology saying she would consider the 2027 invitation "at the appropriate time but would be there in a heartbeat if Louise Adler was the director again".

A festival spokesperson declined to comment.

In reaffirming her intent to pursue the defamation complaint against Mr Malinauskas, Dr Abdel-Fattah said the Premier was "throwing wild accusations and claims" around.

"I have never called for Jewish people to not have

cultural safety. Every single human being, every single racial group has the right to cultural safety, but political ideologies cannot use cultural safety as a shield from criticism," she told ABC Radio. "I'm fed up with the way my words are being deliberately and mendaciously mischaracterised to paint me as an antisemite. The Premier is just throwing (around) wild accusations and allegations and claims about me."

Mr Malinauskas said he had a responsibility to "call out those who expressly commit themselves to deny other people a voice".

As at the time of publication, a crowdsourcing page raising funds to pursue Dr Abdel-Fattah's legal claim against the Premier had reached \$66,000 of its \$100,000 target.

The Macquarie University academic previously stated Zionists had "no claim or right to cultural safety" and publicly shared a private WhatsApp group doxxing hundreds of Jewish creatives.

source said. "The wheels had well and truly fallen off."

The handling of the announcement by the former board has been described as "farcical" by some who believe the board not only "ran and hid" from its decision but issued a public statement so "squeamishly apologetic" it almost goaded the authors into their boycott. "It was basically urging every self-styled progressive in the country to start stoning us because we have sinned," the source said.

The refusal of anyone on the former board to speak publicly in support of axing Dr Abdel-Fattah left the Premier as the sole public voice defending the decision.

South Australians go to the polls on March 21 and Mr Malinauskas was hounded over the AWW issue all this week while trying to focus on daily election announcements over IVF funding and Adelaide Hills road upgrades.

"Mali" was a sitting duck because no other bastard would stick their head above the parapet," one Labor figure told The Australian.

The saga ended in chaos this week with the announcement of a new Adelaide Festival board headed by former chair Judy Potter, which has now decided to reinstate Dr Abdel-Fattah to next year's Adelaide Writers Week.

The new board has also apologised to both Dr Abdel-Fattah and Ms Adler over their treatment.

The Australian understands the new festival board was fearful its headline act, cult British indie band Pulp, would pull out of its free headline concert opening the festival next month in solidarity with Dr Abdel-Fattah.

The Malinauskas government is exhausted by the whole affair.

"With all these apologies flying around, I just wonder if anyone is going to say sorry to Thomas Friedman," one MP said.

Despite the new board's decision, and the continuing threat of legal action, the Premier is standing by his view as per his January 2 letter that Dr Abdel-Fattah should not take part in Adelaide Writers Week, be it this year or next.

Legal scramble as Liberal Party warned ... don't cede high ground on hate speech

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powers to deny visas to people who might stir racial hatred.

As he works to ensure his response to the Bondi attack passes and he avoids a major political defeat, Mr Albanese made it clear that the current legislation was just an "exposure draft" and he was willing to make changes in the name of national unity.

"There is no legislation before the parliament at this point in time. I want the parliament to come together, I want the nation to come together. I think that's what the moment demands.

That's what I've consistently argued for," he said.

The intelligence and security committee has received more than 7000 submissions on the government's hate speech and gun reform bill, in a fresh challenge to Labor's push to fast-track the legislation.

While only 113 of the submissions were posted on the Parliamentary Joint Commission on Intelligence and Security's website by mid-afternoon on Friday, the committee's secretary has warned members of the avalanche of new submissions lodged by stakeholders and members of the

public by its Thursday 4pm deadline. Deputy chair Phil Thompson said the submissions were overwhelmingly opposed to the bill in its current form, although the claim could not be independently verified.

"The majority of the submissions I have read thus far do not support this bill in its entirety, and people are particularly concerned over the creeping impact of the government's proposed changes on freedom of speech," Mr Thompson said.

A Labor member of the committee said many of the last-minute submissions appeared to be the

result of lobbying by One Nation and conservative group Advance.

With some government and Liberal MPs hopeful of finding a pathway towards bipartisan agreement, the PJCS was expected to work over the weekend to finalise its scrutiny of the bill.

A majority report by Labor chair Raff Ciccone is set to be tabled on Monday along with a dissenting report of Coalition members. The Labor report could potentially recommend amendments to the bill in light of the submissions and testimony by stakeholders this week.

The Greens and Coalition have

both raised concerns over the bills inclusion of a religious text exemption, with the minor party sceptical of a provision that shields potential bigotry as long as a religious text is invoked.

Liberal MPs saw the exemption as a loophole for hate preachers to continue being antisemitic, however there is also apprehension in the party over removing the provision due to the principle it would set for Christians invoking Bible passages seen as homophobic.

Mr Leaser stressed in the Coalition meeting that the opposition needed to "focus its scope" on ensuring the bill targeted only anti-

semitism, something some colleagues disagree with because of the belief there needed to be a "one rule for all" rather than selective treatment.

Mr Leaser was contacted for comment.

If the Coalition refuses to agree to a deal, Labor faces having to do a deal with the Greens, which have laid out a laundry list of changes need for their support.

These include expanding the bill to include more forms of hatred, removing the extra powers for the Home Affairs Minister to cancel visas, ensuring that criticism of countries such as Russia,

China and Israel weren't banned and lowering other thresholds that criminalise "promotion" of hatred.

Greens home affairs spokesman David Shoebridge pressured the government to split the legislation so gun reforms could be passed separately - something Labor is unlikely to do in order to challenge the Greens to vote against firearm restrictions along with the other reforms in the bill.

Despite the sizeable demands, senior Labor sources said they were confident the list would be "cut down" during negotiations between government and the minor party.

Mr Albanese has also flagged the legislation could be considered in a "quick Senate inquiry" on Monday night, which The Australian understands would likely look at the ability for the bill to capture other forms of hate, as part of efforts to woo the Greens.

It came as Archbishop Fisher, along with other faith leaders, on Friday sent a letter to Mr Albanese, Home Affairs Minister Tony Burke and Attorney-General Michelle Rowland expressing "alarm" at a deal with the minor party, and calling for the current hate speech legislation to be radically reformed.

BONDI'S LEGACY: BATTLE AGAINST ANTI-SEMITISM 5

acts of community kindness bring light to the darkness



IKE MORRIS
JACKSON ROBB

After witnessing horror descend on Bondi Beach, Whitney Luxford and Jessica Lee knew they had to do something, make some kind of gesture, no matter how small, to help bring a glimmer of light to the mourning community.

In the days after the terror attack, the mother and daughter from the Sutherland Shire in Sydney's south delivered more than 250 individual cupcakes – more than 20 batches – to first responders at Bondi and Kogarah police stations in Sydney.

They not only wanted to show their appreciation for the efforts of those who worked tirelessly at the scene of the atrocity but also spread a little kindness.

Ms Lee's father was a NSW police officer for 22 years, while Ms Luxford, 55, is a former NSW Ambulance paramedic. "It's in our DNA because we come from a family who give back and serve the community," Ms Luxford said.

"It takes someone special to put on that uniform every day and go out and do what they do," Ms Lee, 33, added.

Ms Lee – the founder of a baking business in the Sutherland Shire – made the first batches of her vanilla and chocolate cupcakes Christmas-themed. But when the tragic loss of 10-year-old Matilda, the youngest victim of the Bondi attack, became public, Ms Lee decided to decorate the remaining batches with two bumblebees, in her honour.

"Bees also symbolise hard work, community and teamwork, which seemed fitting for the police officers. This is what they do every single day," Ms Lee said.

Ms Luxford said the Bondi police officers were taken aback when the cupcakes arrived but were "so appreciative" of their generosity and spent 15 minutes speaking to them about their stories and the attack.

"We asked to see the duty officer and he gave us a big hug. His first comment was, 'Guys, you absolutely didn't need to do this', and we were like, 'Yeah, we absolutely had to,'" Ms Luxford explained.

"Being able to have just something that can take their mind off what's going on for a few moments while they have a cup of tea or coffee together (makes a big difference).

"I really felt for these officers because no one knows how they're going to react at any one time, and whilst they are trained, (they're) never trained for every situation."

The gesture is just one of many acts of kindness that have organically sprouted following the attack on December 14, which killed 15 people and injured dozens more.

For the Jewish community, such an act is known as a mitzvah. They are the good deeds or moral responsibilities that unite the community and bring light during tough times. A mitzvah is not defined by any particular action – it can range from checking in on a neighbour to volunteering your time or efforts to a community organisation.

For Carole Schlessinger, co-founder and CEO of Kids Giving Back, it has meant organising a series of "Mitzvah Cooks" for January.

The initiative encourages children and their parents to make meals that will be donated to charity partners, first responders and homeless shelters across Sydney.

Ms Schlessinger said she hopes to empower young people to "feel the difference that they've made" and contribute to the "healing process" within the Jewish community.

"What we're very much focused on is something tangible," she said.

"We need to build a generation of kindness, and you can never start too young."

At the former site of the floral memorial at the Bondi Pavilion, eight-year-old Eli Moss has spent

his school holidays helping visitors and locals perform mitzvahs.

"I'm trying to be here every day," he told *The Australian*.

Eli, who is about to start year 3, has visited hospitals and comforted grieving survivors of the attack to "help make sure everything is all right".

He has handed out sweets to visitors at Bondi and given people cards with acts of kindness written on them that they can complete to continue "spreading the light".

"I've also been doing it to help the people who have gone. Who are very upset at what happened," he said. "After everything that happened, we have to make sure that everyone is happy."

Eli's father, Rabbi Aron Moss, praised his son's ability to bring people together in the aftermath of such an atrocity.

"From the day after the attack happened, Eli wanted to go out on the street and spread goodness," he said. "There is no greater pride for a parent than to see their child doing good."

Eli believes there are "two sides of your heart" that have allowed him to grieve what happened in Bondi, but also remain committed to spreading acts of goodness through the community. "It makes me feel happy," he said. "At Bondi, we can all stay united."

The NSW government has launched a One Mitzvah for Bondi campaign, designed to "strengthen the community and bring light in moments of darkness".

Despite its origins in NSW, the campaign has had ripple effects throughout the country.

'From the day after the attack happened, Eli wanted to go out on the street and spread goodness'

RABBI ARON MOSS
ON SON ELI'S EFFORTS TO
BRING HAPPINESS

Brian Berger, from Melbourne, was among those wanting to find a way to bring some joy back to his community. On the last night of Hanukkah, he proposed to partner Mia under the light of the menorah.

"People's spirits were not where they normally would be, particularly given the time of the year," he said. "The whole community felt like they were on their knees."

Mr Berger described his proposal as "creating a positive in a time where there is darkness".

"There is the ability to remember that we are celebrating and we need to continue to be that light together," he said.

Miri Lipskier, who works with young girls as a youth director at Chabad Youth in Melbourne, said children had a special ability to spread goodness.

"Increasing light is not just something that adults can do," she said.

Ms Lipskier recalled how young campers in Melbourne took part in a mitzvah auction and designed a mural highlighting each other's positive attributes. She said it showed the young girls "the ripple effects of mitzvahs".

"I felt like it was such a healing experience for all the girls, for them to see these little acts of kindness generate such light," Ms Lipskier said.

In South Australia, linguist Ghil'ad Zuckerman said people from outside the Jewish community had wanted to demonstrate their support and show their kindness.

"Non-Jews contacted me following the massacre asking me what can they do for the Jewish community," he said. "People who otherwise would never have reached out, reach out."

In Sydney, Ms Luxford and Ms Lee urged people to undertake a mitzvah of their own, not just in the aftermath of Bondi but every day.

Pro-Palestine cases a no-go for activist judge, A-G rules

EXCLUSIVE

LACHLAN LEEMING
NSW POLITICAL
CORRESPONDENT

A criminal barrister set to be elevated to the Supreme Court, despite a history of criticism of Zionists and police, will primarily handle common law and murder cases, NSW Attorney-General Michael Daley says, in an effort to avoid any "apprehension of bias" in matters related to pro-Palestine protests or demonstration laws.

The swearing-in of Phillip Boulten SC will proceed next month, Mr Daley confirmed, following a snap review triggered by The Australian's reporting on his prolific social media commentary attacking antisemitism envoy Jillian Segal, police and Israel.

Speaking exclusively to *The Australian*, Mr Daley said "extensive inquiries" found Mr Boulten's online commentary did not meet the threshold required to overturn the appointment.

"I don't support the comments he made. I don't agree with them, but the removal of a sitting judge in NSW is exceedingly rare, and it is a hugely serious issue," he said.

"Phil's comments, as unsavoury as they were, don't rise to the level of judicial misbehaviour or incapacity to the extent that he can be removed."

Mr Daley said he had discussed with NSW Chief Justice Andrew Bell which matters Mr Boulten would handle in the Supreme Court, given his strident online criticism of Israel and police.

Protesters chant 'intifada' at first post-attack rally

LACHLAN LEEMING

An unprecedented police presence including more than 100 officers has watched over the first major pro-Palestine protest to descend on Sydney's streets following the Bondi Beach terror attack.

Chants of "Long live the intifada" and "Long live the resistance" rang out at Sydney's Town Hall on Friday afternoon, when more than 300 people rallied in protest against laws passed by the state government banning protests for up to three months in the wake of a designated terrorist attack.

At least one man, holding a sign reading "Blame Hamas", was detained by police at the

start of the rally, before being released without charge. Police confirmed three other people were spoken to for similar "breach of the peace" incidents before moving from the scene.

Protesters held up signs including one reading "Globalise the intifada", a phrase at the centre of a state parliamentary inquiry that is analysing whether hateful slogans should be banned from being chanted in public.

Protesters also railed against Israeli President Isaac Herzog's planned visit to Australia and federal laws tackling anti-Semitism, which are due to be debated next week in Canberra.

Jepke Goutsmil, from activist group Jews Against the Occupation '48, told the crowd Mr Herzog's invitation was "an act of buckling into Zionist pressure" and that NSW Premier Chris Minns was "trying to make NSW a police

state with extraordinary haste".

"There is absolutely no link between the free Palestine movement and the Bondi massacre – let it be said again," Ms Goutsmil shouted at the crowd, which was met with a rapturous applause.

The new state protest laws, which can be applied for two weeks at a time for a maximum of three months, were first enacted by NSW Police Commissioner Mal Lanyon on Christmas Eve and remain in place until next week unless extended again.

The Friday rally was the first major event since the Bondi terror attack, after a smaller protest against US intervention in Venezuela at the same location last week.

It's understood the protest was organised by the Stop War on Palestine group, but promotional material shared online beforehand showed it was

backed by other movements including the Palestine Action Group, the Hizb ut-Tahrir-linked Stand for Palestine, Labor Friends of Palestine and the Greens.

The Australian arm of Hizb ut-Tahrir, a radical Islamist group, on Thursday launched an extraordinary attack on ASIO director-general Mike Burgess in which the group accused the national security chief of spreading "lies and disinformation".

Hizb ut-Tahrir Australia, which is facing a potential ban under new federal hate speech laws to be voted on next week, wrote a wide-ranging open letter to Mr Burgess on Thursday, accusing him of acting as a "propaganda mouthpiece for those seeking to demonise Islam and Muslims".

ADDITIONAL REPORTING:
JACKSON ROBB, IKE MORRIS

signed from the party upon his appointment to the Supreme Court last month.

His appointment comes at the same time as deep internal concerns within the Labor Party over antisemitism in its ranks.

Last month party members wrote to Labor's NSW leadership urging a crackdown on widespread antisemitism and anti-Israel rhetoric within the ALP.

"Antisemitism, I've said before, is a scourge that needs to be addressed with vigour anywhere it arises. Antisemitism is not tolerated in the Labor Party and not toler-

Chris Dawson, Harriet Wran – the daughter of former NSW premier Neville – and in former NRL star Jarryd Hayne's rape case.

"Phil Boulten brings to the role an almost unprecedented experience, and he is probably the pre-eminent criminal barrister in NSW," Mr Daley said, adding he would also be obliged to take a binding judicial oath. "He's a serious practitioner. He understands the depth and ... the critical importance of that oath, and he will be required to abide by that oath."

Mr Boulten, a past president of Labor's Kings Cross branch, re-

flicts of interest with Mr Boulten ... in the first instance it would be the responsibility of the Chief Justice of NSW to make sure that he doesn't sit, or is not allocated or rostered on to a case where there might be an apprehension of bias," Mr Daley said. "He'll be sitting in the common law division ... a lot of the work of the common law division is murder trials."

Mr Daley pointed to Mr Boulten's experience in criminal trials as another reason he was backed for the job.

The high-profile silk has previously acted for wife murderer

The Attorney-General said he expected Mr Boulten's caseload to largely revolve around common law issues, such as murder.

The NSW opposition said it was "unprecedented" for a such a direction to be handed down before a judge was even sworn in to the bench.

The Supreme Court in the past year has handled matters including applications for pro-Palestine marches in Sydney and challenges to protest laws passed by the NSW government.

"The Chief Justice has assured me that he will manage any con-

Jihadist preacher Haddad targets mosques over counter-extremism work

EXCLUSIVE

MOHAMMAD ALFARES
JOANNA PANAGOPOULOS

Jihadist preacher Wisam Haddad has accused mosques tied to one of the nation's top Islamic organisations that participate in countering violent extremism of betraying the Muslim community and preaching a "watered-down version of Islam".

Mr Haddad, in a recent series of videos posted to Instagram, de-

nounced mosques and the Australian National Imams Council that "run deradicalisation programs under the title of social cohesion and security".

He also singled out mosques tied to ANIC that are involved in countering violent extremism, claiming such programs amount to the promotion of a "watered-down" and "government-approved" version of Islam.

"ANIC has done this with certain individuals and organisations," he said. "ANIC was now able to control them, and ANIC

was able to go back to the government and say, now we control them, now we can get them to say and act how we want to act."

ANIC is Australia's peak Muslim body that only represents imams.

Mr Haddad's denunciation of the so-called "Dirar" mosques – places of worship he says are mischievous and meant to sow division – is closely tied to his public defence of his "brothers" in Hizb ut-Tahrir, the extremist organisation the Albanese government is preparing to outlaw under pro-

posed federal hate-group legislation.

Mr Haddad argued that mosques that engage with the government, accept public funding or promote interfaith dialogue and democratic participation fall into this category, and therefore lose their legitimacy as true places of worship under Islamic law.

"How many of such places call the youth to interfaith, give fatawa (rules) to the youth to go and join the police, to join the army, and to join the navy," he said in a fiery sermon last week.

"How many of them have been compromised with so-called government grants in the leadership of such masjid (mosques), external influences that accept money or they accept control in exchange for information on the community and individuals of the community, when they run to promote programs of kufr (disbelief), such as countering violent extremism, when they run deradicalisation programs under the title of social cohesion and security and then report back to the disbelievers when they preach a watered-down ver-

sion of Islam, a government-approved version that fit the criteria of Masjid Dirar."

In a separate video, Mr Haddad expressed solidarity with Hizb ut-Tahrir supporters, describing the government's move against the group as a "shakedown" designed to force independent Islamist organisations into submission.

Mr Haddad claimed pressure from spy agency ASIO was channelled through ANIC by acting as an intermediary between Muslim communities and authorities.

According to Mr Haddad,



Wisam Haddad

YOUTUBE