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Jewish Groups Demand Action After Neo-Nazi March in Melbourne

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Jewish organizations have urged the Victorian Government to take immediate action following a neo-Nazi march through Melbourne's central business district, highlighting the need for stronger anti-hate laws.

On August 8, 2025, over 100 individuals, described as neo-Nazis by authorities, marched through Melbourne's central business district (CBD) at approximately 12:40 AM, prompting outrage from the Jewish Council of Victoria (JCV). The group, identified as the National Socialist Network (NSN), wore black masks and chanted slogans, dispersing at Flagstaff Gardens by 1:30 AM, according to Victoria Police, as reported by 7NEWS Australia. The JCV called on the Victorian Government, led by Premier Jacinta Allan, to

“act now” to implement promised anti-masking and anti-hate symbol legislation, set to take effect next month, per The Sydney Morning Herald.

Victoria Police, limited by current laws, escorted the group to maintain public safety, as no arrests were made. Premier Allan condemned the march, stating, “Nazis don’t belong in this country, and they know it,” and emphasized that new criminal anti-vilification laws would soon grant police greater powers, according to ABC Australia. The JCV criticized the government’s current strategy of de-escalation, arguing it fails to deter such displays of hate, especially after recent incidents like the December 2024 firebombing of the Adass Israel Synagogue, as noted by The Australian Jewish News.

Adam Slonim, director of the Middle East Policy Forum, voiced frustration, stating, “The government’s approach of letting hate burn out is failing Jewish families and all Victorians,” per The Australian Jewish News. He urged the outlawing of hate speech inciting violence, such as “From the River to the Sea,” and the banning of groups like Hizb ut-Tahrir, which he claimed promote division. The march follows a pattern of rising extremist activity, with the NSN, led by Thomas Sewell, known for media stunts and recruitment drives, as reported by ABC News.

The Victorian Government faces pressure to act decisively when parliament resumes next week. The JCV stressed that unchecked hate threatens public safety, citing disruptions like the cancellation of Myer’s Christmas windows display due to protester threats. Victoria Police reiterated their stance against hateful behavior, encouraging reports via Crime Stoppers at 1800 333 000, per 9News.