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Premier Slams Neo-Nazi March in Melbourne CBD

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Victorian Premier Jacinta Allan denounced a group of over 100 masked neo-Nazis who marched through Melbourne's CBD in the early hours of August 9, 2025. She promised tougher anti-vilification laws and police powers to address such hateful actions.

In the early hours of August 9, 2025, over 100 masked individuals, identified as members of the National Socialist Network (NSN), marched through Melbourne's Central Business District (CBD), prompting a sharp rebuke from Victorian Premier Jacinta Allan. The group, dressed in black and carrying Australian flags and a "White Man Fight Back" placard, chanted as they moved through Bourke Street Mall to Flagstaff Gardens, dispersing by 1:25 am, according to Victoria Police. Allan condemned the marchers as "cowards" and

“goons,” stating that such ideologies have no place in Australia and highlighting their use of masks to conceal their identities.

Victoria Police responded to the “pop-up protest” at 12:40 am, maintaining a strong presence but making no arrests. A 26-year-old man who confronted the group was allegedly assaulted and hospitalized with non-life-threatening injuries, as reported by ABC News. Allan praised the police response but emphasized the need for enhanced powers, noting that new criminal anti-vilification laws will take effect in September 2025, with additional “unmasking” powers for police to follow, per The Mercury. These measures aim to address hate-based behavior, which police stated has “no place” in society.

The march, linked to the NSN, a neo-Nazi group formed in 2020 and led by Thomas Sewell, follows a pattern of provocative demonstrations in Melbourne. A prior incident in June 2025 at Northland Shopping Centre saw similar displays, condemned by Allan as “hateful” and “extremist,” according to the National Indigenous Times. Community leaders, including Shadow Police Minister David Southwick, criticized the government’s handling, arguing that police were “powerless” to act decisively, as noted by 9News. Southwick called for stronger measures to prevent such gatherings, echoing public frustration over unchecked extremist activity.

The incident has fueled debate over balancing protest rights with public safety. Allan’s Labor government faces scrutiny for delays in implementing robust anti-hate laws, with critics arguing that current policies allow such groups to exploit legal gaps. The upcoming legislation, including bans on hate symbols, aims to close these gaps, but its effectiveness remains to be seen. For now, the march underscores ongoing challenges in curbing extremist displays in Victoria’s capital.