

BAN ON SALE NAZI MEMORABILIA

To whom it may concern –

My name is Aldo. I am deeply disturbed and distressed by the Government lead hysteria around Nazi emblems that has overflowed and impacted into the realm of collecting historical military items i.e. – medals, badges, uniforms etc.

I have been collecting since I was a young child, antique bottles, stamps, coins – just like many others of my generation without the modern distractions of today. As a teenager I saw a friend's display of uniforms which caught my interest and I started collecting Italian militaria brought back by Australian soldiers, which quickly expanded to Australian, German and Japanese etc items. I have contributed to books on Militaria and have increased my knowledge over many years in this area and thought of myself as preserving important and historic items relating to Australia and enjoyed the camaraderie of other collectors.

I also started dealing as an Antique & Collectables dealer in the late 80's and have been self-employed ever since. Never have I heard of the negative comments or hysteria as mentioned coming from our Government from the general public. I suspect it is because of Dr. Dvir Abramovich, whose name I learnt from the owner of Antique Bazaar back in February 2022, from whose Antique Centre I sell many items.

Mainly standard antiques and collectables but I have a couple of cabinets of various Military items, i.e. – Australian, British badges, hats and helmets etc and amongst them was German WW2 cloth badges and medals etc. Apparently one of Dr Dvir's scouts had unbeknown to the owner taken photos of a small German badge among the other World badges and sent it to Dr. Dvir.

The owner contacted me very upset as he threatened to expose his shop to the media with very negative connotations which I am reluctant mention. It is ironic that this Dr. Dvir Abamovich is chairman of the Jewish anti defamation board, but he doesn't mind calling collectors and dealers something that they are not !

The owner knew that German items sell well as many people like the design and like to own the iconic iron cross for valour. He did not like asking me to remove them, but I offered as he did not need the bad publicity.

This is when I started to contact some local South Australian Politicians to express my disgust as I am not a "Nazi" and don't like being labelled as one! The political staffers that I talked to agreed with me that the owner could take it further, as it was not illegal to sell the items or collect. It is History. But the owner has a young family and has enough stresses and didn't need to fight someone who has so much influence.

I rent another dealer's shop outlet in Adelaide who took the items and have sold from there without any problems.

Then Sarah Game MLC comes along and proposes tougher penalties and legislation to ban Nazi Swastika symbol with threats of jail and heavy fines, so I once again contacted local MPs to be a witness on the select committee of looking into the legislation and was told that they would call me

at an appropriate time to be a witness. This hasn't happened, and Connie Bonaros' office hasn't in recent days responded to my phone calls. I only get to talk to staffers not the MP, and have even offered to show my collection (which I am very guarded and protective of) to them, so they can understand the gravity of this legislation. As mentioned I am deeply concerned now as the new Federal push to rush through proposed draconian bill to ban sale, trade of Nazi memorabilia. I prefer to call it German WW2 memorabilia as the term Nazi and Fascist is misused completely these days. What happens to honest collectors as myself who have collected for almost 50 years an historic and important collection of which some items the War Memorial would love to own. People who collect German WW1 and WW2 militaria, collect because the items are iconic, impressive uniforms and can be seen every week numerous times in documentaries on TV. Will you ban this as well? Hogan's Heroes and the likes. How come coin and stamp collectors will be exempt? Why are you singling out militaria? When it has more significance to the Aussie War effort than coins or stamps with Swastikas.

I thought I had a valuable asset, some of which as I reach the age of 65 this year, I would sell to help my children with finances. Now I feel that overnight what I spent a lifetime of collecting and legally buying, a so called democratic government, who I believe Dr. Dvir has the ear of, wants to turn me into a criminal and Nazi with threats of fines and jail if I try and dispose of legally collected items. Instead of leaving my children, as I would always say no debt but an asset, now if this legislation gets through, I will leave them a big problem. What sort of Government would prevent you from recouping your money?

And finally I have recently attended two general Antique collectable fairs, and I took some German items to sell among other country items and I was inundated with support from the general public, saying how crazy this legislation is. THIS IS HISTORY! Not one detractor. I do not recognise this country as a democracy any more. My mother's family are a Pioneer family and my father an Italian immigrant, who worked until the day he died. We are an honest family of hard workers and good citizens. I cannot express my disgust with the way this country is heading. It is so divided and the average citizen is never heard.

Who will compensate collectors like me who put our life's passion in preserving museum quality artefacts, because of the ignorance of others? Some collections are from tens of thousands into millions of dollars. Is this to be stolen from us? I would gladly sign any Statutory Declaration that I am not a Nazi sympathiser and are disgusted with what Hitler did as any decent person would be. Even this is not enough to stop the zealots such as Dr. Dvir Abramovich. It has been stated around this legislation proposal that people who collect or sell are supportive of the Holocaust and profiting from a crime. How defamatory is this?

Thank you for taking the time to read this,

Aldo Sbrissa

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