

'I am not a Nazi': Liberal Democrats candidate 'deeply regrets' white supremacist Facebook posts

Anthony Bull cited the works of US terrorist David Lane and wrote 'victory' over Indigenous Australians should be celebrated



Liberal Democrats candidate Anthony Bull (front left) alongside current One Nation senator Malcolm Roberts at the 2017 "LibertyFest" in Brisbane. Bull says he deeply regrets a Facebook post celebrating the "white power salutes" being given by the people behind him. Roberts says he 'wholeheartedly rejects all forms of racism'.

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The Liberal Democrats candidate for the federal seat of Brisbane says he "deeply regrets" a history of offensive Facebook posts, including messages that were antisemitic, described Indigenous Australians as "the enemy" and celebrated white supremacist culture.

One photo uploaded by the candidate, Anthony Bull, shows him smiling next to One Nation senator Malcolm Roberts as a group of young men make hand gestures – described by Bull as "White Power salutes" - behind them. Roberts is not making a hand gesture.

"Wherever x amount of AYPS [Australian Youth Political Space] members meet, a group photo with Senator Roberts making White Power salutes must be taken," Bull wrote as a caption to the post in 2017.

The hand gesture, traditionally used to signal “OK”, has also been co-opted by far-right movements to become what the US Anti-Defamation League says is a “hate symbol”.

Bull shared the image – taken at the 2017 “LibertyFest” in Brisbane – to a Facebook group which has 6,000 members.

Responding to Guardian Australia questions about the photo, Roberts said he “was not aware of what the people behind me were doing”.

“I don’t know what a white power symbol looks like. I wholeheartedly reject all forms of racism,” Roberts said.

In another post from 2017, Bull tells a Facebook friend to look up the terms “14 words and the 88 precept”, coined by prominent US white supremacist David Lane, now deceased, who was jailed over the killing of a Jewish radio host in 1984.

The term “14 words” is a reference to Lane’s white supremacist slogan: “We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children.”

The term “88 precepts” refers to a document Lane wrote regarding “natural law”. The Southern Poverty Law Centre says 88 stands for “Heil Hitler” among neo-Nazis, because “H” is the eighth letter of the alphabet.

Bull also used the antisemitic meme the “Happy Merchant” and referred to the term Annuda Shoah, which is commonly used to mock Jews and the Holocaust.

Most of the offensive comments on the Facebook profile were posted in 2017 and 2018. More recently, the account has shared posts promoting Bull’s candidacy for the Liberal Democrats, as well as images of his family.

In a statement to Guardian Australia, Bull said he is “deeply regretful for these posts”.

“They were statements I made in my 20s which I thought were edgy memes at the time but I now know that they were immature and wrong,” Bull said. “I am not a white supremacist, Nazi, racist or anything. I do not support these views.

“I have grown since then, especially since I became a father and I sincerely regret these posts and their content.”

The Liberal Democrats did not run in the seat of Brisbane in the 2019 election, and attracted less than 1% of the vote for the Senate in Queensland. However, the party has enjoyed a bigger profile in 2022 off the back of former Queensland premier Campbell Newman’s candidacy.

Bull also ran unsuccessfully as a LDP candidate for Ipswich city council in 2020.

His LinkedIn profile says he has a background in digital marketing and attended the University of Queensland.