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Details of Filing

Document Lodged: Affidavit - Form 59 - Rule 29.02(1)
Court of Filing: FEDERAL COURT OF AUSTRALIA (FCA)
Date of Lodgment: 7/01/2026 3:52:39 PM AEDT
Date Accepted for Filing: 8/01/2026 10:58:14 AM AEDT
File Number: VID1612/2025
File Title: TARNEEN ONUS BROWNE & ANOR v ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OF
POLICE, NORTH WEST METRO REGION & ANOR
Registry: VICTORIA REGISTRY - FEDERAL COURT OF AUSTRALIA

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Important Information

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Form 59
Rule 29.02(1)

Affidavit

No. 1612 of 2025

Federal Court of Australia

District Registry: Victoria

Division: Administrative and Constitutional Law and Human Rights

TARNEEN ONUS BROWNE and BENJAMIN ZABLE

Applicants

CHIEF COMMISSIONER OF VICTORIA POLICE and the STATE OF VICTORIA

First Respondent

Affidavit of: **Benjamin Zable**

Address: [REDACTED]

Occupation: Artist

Date: 6 January 2026

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Filed on behalf of (name & role of party) Benjamin Zable (Second Applicant)
 Prepared by (name of person/lawyer) Sarah Schwartz
 Law firm (if applicable) Human Rights Law Centre
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Benjamin Zable *SA*

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Benny Zable

I Benjamin (Benny) Zable, of [REDACTED] artist and political activist affirm:

1. I was born on 1 October 1945 and am 80 years old. I am Jewish by birth. I was born in New Zealand and came to Australia when I was 3 years old in 1948.
2. I am a performance artist for peace and the environment currently based in Naarm/Melbourne. I regularly attend peaceful protests across Australia and globally in costume. I have been doing performance as part of consciousness raising on war and peace issues, human rights and the environment since the 1970s, and have been doing a particular type of protest wearing costumes since 1980.
3. For me, the costume and props are essential to express my opinions and messages.
4. The facts stated with this affidavit are within my own personal knowledge and true to the best of my knowledge, information and belief.
5. I do not intend anything in this affidavit to waive any privilege.

Costume and facemasks are an expression of my political beliefs

6. As part of my performance art and political expression, I create costumes with characters to wear at protests. I combine art, costume, performance, protest, and installation work to send a message about nuclear disarmament, environmental protection, anti-war, peace and social justice. I think protest and performance is a really important nonviolent way to create social change. For me, it's about contributing to a 'culture of peace'.
7. The first one of my "exposing the shadow costumes" was GREEDOZER AND COMPANY, with recycled black plastic and cardboard at the NSW Middle Head sand mining action in 1980. At the Save the Rainforest blockade on Mt. Nardi, Nimbin, the first of my stylised costumes with mask was made. Again, at the Franklin River Dam in Tasmania in 1982, which would have destroyed a large area of the Tasmanian wilderness and area of Indigenous heritage. I made up images and installations, with other people, which were used at that protest. I set up a studio in the rainforest to workshop to create signs and installations which protesters used.
8. In the Greedozer costume, the mask represents a figure of corporate greed, war and environmental destruction. The gas-mask, with painted skull-like features, is to project the shadow side of humanity. I wear dark robes and write slogans like "Work Consume Be Silent Die", "It's costing the earth". This is designed to project images to remind people of the destructiveness of war, of uranium mining and the build-up of nuclear

Benny Zable

weapons, and the fossil fuel industries driving global warming which are unravelling the web of life on our planet.

9. I've worn the Greedozer and other costumes to protests across Australia and overseas. I've worn it at the Occupy Wall Street protests in New York City in 2011 and at United Nations actions. Over decades I have worn it at environmental rallies, at Palestine rallies, and other anti-war rallies.
10. The face mask component of the costume is critical to the messaging. The mask lets me express myself without having to speak. It's a form of silent peaceful protest. It means I don't have to get into an argument or in a reactive situation with anyone.
11. The mask component of the costume is also about anonymity. It keeps 'the me' out of it. Because it's not about me. It's about the image and the message. The costume is for people to see; it's not about the person wearing the costume, it's about the issues presented by it.
12. The masked costume is effective for street performance. People often come up to me and have their photo taken with me.
13. One of my masks and costumes worn, called 'GREEDOZER II' was exhibited in the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney at an exhibition starting on 31 July 2001, and it's currently part of their collection. There is another costume, 'GREEDOZER I' which was exhibited in the National Museum of Australia in Canberra. It was featured at the opening of that Museum on 11 March 2001. Now shown to me and marked **BZ-1** is a screenshot of the National Museum of Australia's website with a reference to an outward loan of my costume to the City of Melbourne. Now shown to me and marked **BZ-2** is a copy of the relevant pages of the exhibition catalogue of the 'We Protest' exhibition, run by the City of Melbourne on 11 May to 11 August 2018, featuring my costume.
14. I was invited to wear one of my costumes at the opening of the National Museum of Australia on 11 March 2001. Now shown to me and marked **BZ-3** is a copy of the relevant pages of a journal article which references me regarding the opening of the National Museum of Australia.
15. The facemask component of my costume is also in the National Museum's teaching resources online. Now shown to me and marked **BZ-4** is a copy of the National Museum of Australia's online teaching resource referencing my costume. In November 2025, I went to an exhibition about protest at the Treasury Building next to Parliament House in Victoria, called 'Protest Melbourne', and there was a picture of my costume and a sign about me and the Greedozer costume. Now shown to me and marked **BZ-5** is a copy of the relevant pages of the Treasury Building online exhibition featuring my costume.

B. White

16. In the 1980s, I received a grant from the former Arts Council of Australia (now referred to as Creative Australia), for my 'anti-nuclear' show. The show was an installation with nine 44-gallon drums, made-up into a tower. I would perform from the top of the tower in my costume, including the mask. I travelled all around to do the show. I remember doing a show at Parliament House in Canberra. Now shown to me and marked **BZ-6** is a copy of a photo, and my annotation, from my personal archive, of me performing at the anti-nuclear show in front of Parliament House in Canberra in the 1980s.
17. Now shown to me and marked **BZ-7** are copies of photos of me wearing my Greedozer costume around the world. Some of these photos are from my personal archives.

Police ability to unmask me in a Designated Area

18. There have been a couple of times in Victoria when I have been told by Police to remove my facemask when I have been peacefully protesting.
19. On Wednesday 11 September 2024, I went to a Palestine protest in the Melbourne CBD against an International Defence Force Exposition. I was wearing my Greedozer costume with a broken missile that said "End the Arms Race". It also has other slogans on the missile. My black cloak said "War is Costing the Earth". I have been told that the area around the Defence Forces Exposition had been declared a designated area at the time. Now shown to me and marked **BZ-8** is a copy of the Victorian Government Gazette from 2 September, which states that certain areas of the Melbourne CBD were declared as a designated area, during certain times from 11 to 13 September 2024.
20. At some time that afternoon I was approached by a group of police officers. I think it was around three of them.
21. One of them came up to me and said "remove your mask". I don't recall if they said to remove it because I was in a designated area.
22. I started to remove my mask. As I was trying to lift the facemask off, one of them grabbed hold of the mask and started pulling it up and said something like "I told you to take it off" and I said something like "I'm trying to". The strap was still caught under my chin so when he was pulling it up, it felt like strangulation.
23. I was shaken up when that happened and worried about what they were going to do next.
24. After that, once my facemask was off, they left. I stayed at the protest wearing my costume without my facemask.
25. Since that incident, I have been alert to such reactions from the police. Now, if police approach me, even before they have given me a direction, I generally lift my mask up to



- talk to them. I've had incidents in the past where police have pushed me off my pedestal. I know they get a lot of flack from other protesters, but I feel like they took it out on me even though I was peacefully performing.
26. I am worried about this happening again at other protests and police officers hurting or harassing me when I wear my costume. It's made me a bit paranoid.
27. Another time I remember was around September 2025, but I can't remember the exact date. I was wearing my Greedozer costume at a Palestine protest which was an occupation of the intersection of Flinders and Swanston Streets. Before the action took place, police started approaching people individually telling them to remove their masks. I saw police approaching other people around me to remove their facemasks. They were just wearing usual hospital type masks.
28. I was approached by a police officer and told to remove my facemask. I think the officer said something like "you have got to show your face, you can't conceal your face, remove your mask". I don't remember the exact words. I was in front of St Paul's Cathedral. This was just before the protest was going to start and people were assembling.
29. I took my facemask off. But I told the officer that people wanted to photograph me, and he said something like, 'okay, but after they photograph you, you have to lift the mask up to show your face'. I stayed in front of the Cathedral and the officer was keeping an eye on me to make sure that I complied with his order.
30. I last went into the CBD wearing my costume and facemask on 4 January 2026. I stood outside the State Library of Victoria where they have people there protesting about many issues, including about Palestine. It's always at the back of my mind whether police will approach me. But I wasn't given any direction to remove my costume. Now shown to me and marked **BZ-9** is a photo of me which I posted on my Facebook account on 5 January 2026 protesting outside the State Library of Victoria on 4 January 2026.
31. I plan to attend the Invasion Day rally in Naarm/Melbourne with my costume this year and make a reference in the costume to what Invasion Day is about. I have gone to Invasion Day rallies wearing my full costume in the past, if I have permission from mob to wear it. I come with flags with Aboriginal motifs and the message on the costume is about Invasion Day. I also go to most of the Palestine rallies and environmental and anti-war rallies and if one of them comes up before Invasion Day, I will go to them with my costume and facemask.
32. I think that by telling me to remove my facemask and ordering me to leave a protest if I don't remove my facemask, the police are interfering with my rights to express myself in



public. I believe it's gradually affecting all of our democratic rights to express ourselves peacefully in the public domain.

Affirmed by the deponent
at Melbourne
in Victoria
on 6 January 2026
Before me:

)
) 
)
) _____
) Signature of deponent
)



Signature of witness

Keren Adams, Legal Practitioner

Certificate Identifying Annexure

No. 1612 of 2025

Federal Court of Australia
District Registry: Victoria
Division: Administrative and Constitutional Law and Human Rights

TARNEEN ONUS BROWNE and BENJAMIN ZABLE

Applicants

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, NORTH WEST METRO REGION and others

Respondents

This is the annexure marked "BZ-1" now produced and shown to Benjamin Zable at the time of affirming his affidavit on 6 January 2026.

Before me:



Keren Adams, Legal Practitioner

Annexure "BZ-1"

Filed on behalf of (name & role of party)	Tarneen Onus Browne, First Applicant and Benjamin Zable, Second Applicant
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Law firm (if applicable)	Human Rights Law Centre
Tel	[REDACTED] Fax
Email	[REDACTED]
Address for service (include state and postcode)	17/461 Bourke Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

9am–5pm Free general admission Shop Contrast



WHAT'S ON

VISIT

EXPLORE

LEARN

ABOUT

JOIN & SUPPORT



18/380 - Registration - Core business - Outward loan - 2018 - City Gallery (City of Melbourne) - 'WE PROTEST!' exhibition - Gas mask from Benny Zable protest costume

18/502 - Registration - Core business - Outward loan - 2018 - National Sports Museum - Peter Norman feature exhibit - Peter Norman's Australian Olympic team running singlet, and Olympic kit bag

18/589 - Registration - Core business - Exhibitions - Gallery of First Australians - Inward loan - David Kaus - Resin on eucalypt twig

18/36 - Collections and Content - Yarrenyty Arltene collection - Vicki McGeoch - Cultural Gifts Program - Tjanpi figures

18/220 - ATSIP - Repatriation workshop - 9-10 May 2018 - Discontinued

18/303 - Collections & Content - Azroum McKenzie collection - Aboriginal dance gear from Lustre launch

18/477 - Collections and Content - One People of Australia League collection - Two bark paintings

Certificate Identifying Annexure

No. 1612 of 2025

Federal Court of Australia
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TARNEEN ONUS BROWNE and BENJAMIN ZABLE

Applicants

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, NORTH WEST METRO REGION and others

Respondents

This is the annexure marked "BZ-2" now produced and shown to Benjamin Zable at the time of affirming his affidavit on 6 January 2026.

Before me:



Keren Adams, Legal Practitioner

Annexure "BZ-2"

Filed on behalf of (name & role of party)	Tarneen Onus Browne, First Applicant and Benjamin Zable, Second Applicant
Prepared by (name of person/lawyer)	Sarah Schwartz
Law firm (if applicable)	Human Rights Law Centre
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Address for service (include state and postcode)	17/461 Bourke Street, Melbourne VIC 3000





a placard to wave or a slogan to shout. However, on the other hand, street protest needs to be understood as more than a colourful routine practice. It might sometimes look like a playful carnival – and there is, in fact, often a playful dimension – but the history of street protest is, as Gary Foley suggests, the history of perpetual struggle for justice, on a number of fronts. To take to the streets in public protest is nearly always to give voice to a profound moral concern: a concern for peace (and an opposition to killing and to questionable wars); a concern for equal rights and fairness; a concern for the wellbeing of our planet; a concern for the rights of people persecuted on the basis of their particular ethnicity or beliefs or political status. These are not frivolous concerns. In most instances, street protest is a means for persistent prosecution of deeply held beliefs.

Getting out in the street – marching and making a lot of noise – is vital to the future of the struggle. And it's vital because, apart from anything else, it's fun. It gives everyone a sense of being a part of something much bigger... It reaffirms everything that you're fighting for.

GARY FOLEY | HISTORIAN AND VETERAN ABORIGINAL RIGHTS ACTIVIST

We might celebrate the fact that, quite simply, protesters are us. (At least protests include many of us, at some time or another.) But we might also take the view that protesters in some way constitute our better, altruistic selves. Protests about particular industrial issues are not simply about the personal interests of the people marching; rather, they encompass a concern for broader issues of fairness and dignity. Similarly, trade unions have historically played a significant role in protests about issues far removed from industrial rights, including,

for example, protests in opposition to the Vietnam War and to cargoes of uranium on ships at Swanson Dock. In fact, most protest campaigns in Melbourne have been concerned with issues beyond the immediate world of this particular city. There is a link to be drawn between anti-nuclear campaigns in the 1970s and 80s and current protests against the proposed Adani coal mine in north Queensland. Another link might be drawn between, say, the local campaign in support of East Timorese independence and protests against the current Australian government's indefinite detention of asylum seekers on Manus Island and Nauru. And there's a link too, of course, between historic campaigns for the decriminalisation of homosexuality and recent demonstrations in support of gay marriage.

Melbourne-born artist and activist Benny Zable is a veteran of innumerable street protests in his home city and all around the world. Assuming the character of 'Greedozer', a kind of post-apocalyptic Grim Reaper, he sometimes displays a hand-painted banner that reads:

WORK
CONSUME
BE SILENT
DIE

I RELY ON YOUR APATHY
IT'S COSTING THE EARTH

Zable's message provides a critical frame for the story of public protest in this city, implicitly paying tribute to those with sufficient conviction to take to the streets.



OPPOSITE
It's Costing the Earth
 Benny Zable's
 'Greedozer' takes
 centre stage as the
 Palm Sunday peace
 rally proceeds across
 Flinders Street, 1984.
 Photograph by John
 Ellis (University of
 Melbourne Archives)

THIS PAGE
**I Am Not an
 Ingredient**
 Vegan activists
 march to promote
 a compassionate
 cause, 2017.
 Photograph courtesy
 of Animal Liberation
 Victoria

OVERLEAF
No Blood for Oil
 Thousands march
 down Swanston
 Street in protest
 against the Persian
 Gulf War, January
 1991. Photograph by
 John Ellis (University
 of Melbourne
 Archives)

WE PROTEST!

Celebrating the streets of Melbourne as a democratic domain, open to any of us with a banner to push, a placard to wave or a slogan to shout.

11 May to 11 August 2018

City Gallery
Melbourne Town Hall

melbourne.vic.gov.au/citygallery

ISBN 9780471250405



CITY OF MELBOURNE

Inside front cover

Women Against Pornography

A group protesting its membership at a rally held in Melbourne City Square on 11 November 1988.

commemorating the meeting of the Windsor government 12 months ago. Photographed by the City of Melbourne Archives.

Inside back cover

Mayor Popert

Museum of Melbourne with the Mayor and the Melbourne Declaration signed in November 2012. Photographed by the City of Melbourne Archives.

Museum of Melbourne with the Mayor and the Melbourne Declaration signed in November 2012. Photographed by the City of Melbourne Archives.

Museum of Melbourne with the Mayor and the Melbourne Declaration signed in November 2012. Photographed by the City of Melbourne Archives.

Cover

Mark McKinnon is an author, broadcaster, creator and photographer, working widely in the realms of social history and digital media. He has an abiding interest in the local history of living, creating and the new technology of local remembrance. Over the past 20 years his work has encompassed contemporary filmmaking, exhibitions, urban planning, public and community art projects, online writing and publications.

Thanks to

University of Melbourne Archives (special thanks to Stephen Clarke, Lisa Daniels, Sarah West and Jack Wood, and also to the very generous John & Bill, friends of the South Beach Trust); City of Melbourne; Friends of the East Trust (special thanks to Charlotte Christie); National Museum of Australia; Art and Liberation Victoria; RAGOSH Foundation; United Daily News; Friends of Victoria; Anneke Ellis; Anthony, Patricia, and Lyn; Friends of the Melbourne; Sara Maher; Karl Armstrong and Phil Macchi.

Thanks to all who agreed to be interviewed for the album that forms part of this collection: Barry Zinke, Leah McCann, Gary (Tony) Barry Clarke, Phil Vanden, Emma Henderson and Stephen Day Street.

Thanks to Barbara Oswald and Fiona Campbell (in association with World & Day Productions) and the Australian Centre for the Moving Image, who kindly provided some of the material that is reproduced in this album.

Thanks for assistance and support to many general returnees and visitors, in particular, Stuart Macgregor, Graeme Maclellan, Phil Williams and Juliana Deane.

Thanks to Barry Clarke for his photography and to Stephen Daniels and others for their role in the work of the realisation of this project.



WE PROTEST!

11 May to 11 August 2018

City Gallery
Melbourne Town Hall

melbourne.vic.gov.au/citygallery



CITY OF MELBOURNE

Rowdy, impassioned mobs have frequently and conspicuously occupied roads, parks and open spaces in central Melbourne, demonstrating in all manner of political and social issues. Perhaps you have been among them? The city is a democratic domain, open to any of us with a banner to push, a placard to wave or a slogan to shout. WE PROTEST! presents an overview of this rude history.

Certificate Identifying Annexure

No. 1612 of 2025

Federal Court of Australia
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Division: Administrative and Constitutional Law and Human Rights

TARNEEN ONUS BROWNE and BENJAMIN ZABLE

Applicants

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, NORTH WEST METRO REGION and others

Respondents

This is the annexure marked "BZ-3" now produced and shown to Benjamin Zable at the time of affirming his affidavit on 6 January 2026.

Before me:



Keren Adams, Legal Practitioner

Annexure "BZ-3"

Filed on behalf of (name & role of party)	Tarneen Onus Browne, First Applicant and Benjamin Zable, Second Applicant
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- Garry Wotherspoon (ed), *Gay and lesbians perspectives III: essays in Australian culture*, University of Sydney, Sydney, 1996, p166; Ariss, op cit, pp283–84.
- 84 Ariss, op cit, pp285.
- 85 *ibid*, p284.
- 86 *ibid*, p285.
- 87 *ibid*, p292, p279.
- 88 M. Drake, 'Lesbian visibility at what price?', in *National AIDS Bulletin*, February 1992, p23, as cited in Edwards, op cit, p175.
- 89 For an overview of this story, complete with historical sources, see: French, *Camping by a billabong*, op cit, pp17–20; and Wotherspoon, *Public History Review*, op cit, p152.
- 90 Museums Australia Incorporated, op cit, p3, p4.
- 91 *ibid*, p1.
- 92 This information regarding the absence of information on gay history at the sites was collected by the author. For the story of lesbianism at the female factories, see: French, *Camping by a billabong*, op cit, pp13–15.
- 93 Personal correspondence with the convener of GLAMA.
- 94 Gowing, op cit, p53.
- 95 For example, see footnote 2 of Wotherspoon, *Public History Review*, op cit, p159; Wotherspoon, *City of the plain*, op cit, p9.
- 96 See, for example: Liz Ross, op cit; Ruth Ford, 'Lesbians and loose women: female sexuality and the women's services during World War II', in Joy Damousi and Marilyn Lake (eds), *Gender and war*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 1995, pp81–104; Ruth Ford, 'Speculating on scrapbooks, sex and desire: issues in lesbian history', in *Australian Historical Studies*, vol 27, April 1996, pp111–27; Ruth Ford, 'Lady friends and sexual deviationists: lesbians and the law in Australia, 1920s–1950s', in Diane Kirkby (ed), *Sex, power and justice: historical perspectives on the law in Australia, 1788–1990*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1995, pp36–42; Joy Damousi, 'Depraved and disorderly: the sexuality of convict women', in *Labour History*, no 68, May 1995, pp30–45; Kay Daniels, 'The flash mob: rebellion, rough culture and sexuality in the female factories of Van Diemen's Land', in *Australian Feminist Studies*, no 18, Summer 1993, pp151–73.
- 97 Steven Angelides, 'Gay liberation and the paradox of bisexuality', in David Phillips and Graham Willet (eds), *Australia's homosexual histories: gay and lesbian perspectives 5*, Australian Centre for Gay and Lesbian Research, Sydney, and the Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Melbourne, 2000, pp113–32.

White hot history: the review of the National Museum of Australia

GUY HANSEN

The representation of the past contained within the walls of the National Museum of Australia (NMA), and the debates surrounding them, provide a unique meeting ground of popular and academic views of Australian history. Tracing these debates is a difficult task with the ground constantly shifting. In July 2003, however, the Government released *The review of the National Museum of Australia: exhibitions and programs*. This is a fascinating artefact because it crystallises many of the current debates about public history in a single document. Reading the review raises a number of fundamental questions about the practice of history in public institutions. What is the role of a national museum? What influence should a government have over the type of history presented by that institution? What happens when professional practice clashes with governmental expectations? Is it possible, or even desirable, to provide an authoritative account of national history? Is the social and cultural history approach that has been championed by history museums over the last thirty years unable to engage with providing a history of the nation state? Is it even possible to do critical history in a context of a national museum?

As a curator who has worked at the NMA since 1991, I feel these questions are of central importance. Over the last twelve years I have experienced the struggle of attempting to turn the idea of a museum, originally articulated in the Pigott Report (1975) and then mandated in the National Museum of Australia Act (1980), into a working institution. During this time I have contributed to a wide range of exhibitions and collection projects. Most importantly, I worked as the lead curator on the *Nation: symbols of Australia* exhibition, one of the semi-permanent exhibitions produced for the opening of the NMA in 2001. Reading the Review and following the debates surrounding it has provided an opportunity to reflect on this process and to reassess my professional practice as a history curator.

To understand how the Review of the museum came about it is necessary to go back to the first few days of this new institution. On 11 March 2001 Prime Minister John Howard officiated at the opening of the NMA. While politely thanking all who had participated in the museum project the Prime Minister's speech was understated. Describing the Museum as 'un museum like'

he warned his audience that the museum approached Australia's national history in a 'somewhat different way'. Perhaps hinting at his own dissatisfaction with the museum's content, he predicted there would be a debate about how the NMA presented Australian history. He concluded, 'the support that the Government has given to this great flagship project is support that is very much committed to a deeper and better understanding of the nature and history of the Australian story and the experience of the Australian people in that story'. Following the formalities, the doors were officially opened and somewhere in the vicinity of 20 000 visitors queued to view the galleries, eager to be amongst the first to explore this new addition to Australia's cultural landscape.¹

The opening of the NMA not only marked the arrival of a new cultural institution but also rang the commencement bell for another round in the ongoing history wars. Previous battles had included debates over the bicentenary, political correctness, reconciliation and the report on the stolen children. The NMA proved to be ideal territory for these arguments to be rehearsed once again. Conservative newspaper columnist Miranda Devine fired off an early salvo with a column entitled 'A nation trivialised'. Devine described the underlying message of the museum as 'one of sneering ridicule for white Australia. It is as if non-Aboriginal culture is a joke, all upside down Hills Hoists and tongue-in-cheek Victa lawn mowers'. After decrying what she saw as the lack of celebration and pride in the exhibits Devine concluded, 'the whole museum is a lie. To find the national identity you'd be better off going to the porn museum which also opened yesterday, just around the corner'.²

The tone and tenor of Devine's article was picked up by talkback radio host Alan Jones. On his high rating morning program on Sydney radio station 2UE Jones quoted Devine's article at length saying that the Museum's message was disgraceful.³ Piers Ackerman, writing in the *Sunday Telegraph* also criticised the Museum. Perceiving an inherent bias, he described the displays as paying 'more than a nod to this politically correct position'. Ackerman, however, pulled back from complete condemnation of the museum encouraging readers to find out for themselves, conceding that they 'probably won't be disappointed by the experience'.⁴

This conservative attack on the NMA in the popular media paralleled an internal struggle within the museum over the presentation of Australian history. Documents obtained by *The Sydney Morning Herald* via a Freedom of Information request revealed how David Barnett, a museum council member, attempted to intervene in the development of content for the museum's exhibitions. Barnett, a former Liberal party staffer and author of the authorised biography of Prime Minister John Howard, sent a memo deriding draft exhibition label text to Tony Staley, the Chair of the NMA Council, in October 2000. Barnett was alarmed by what he saw as a systematic bias in the museum's displays. The museum should not be a contributor to the reworking of Australian history into political correctness, which, as we saw at the

as I plod through all this I will come across people who served their country, sacrificed themselves for it, made it a better place, or even what it is today'. He was horrified to find what the museum included people such as the anti-nuclear demonstrator Benny Zable and Lenin Peace Prize recipient William Morrow in exhibits. 'These people are not my heroes' he wrote. 'Why Benny Zable and not Hugh Morgan, who created wealth for Australians and jobs for Australians? ... What about H.R. Nicholls and Charles Copeman for the Hall of Fame... what about Chris Corrigan?' Barnett concluded: 'I would have thought a National Museum in the national capital might have managed interesting exhibits dealing with the founding fathers and telling us who past prime ministers have been and something about them without being egregious'.⁵

These criticisms of the NMA reflect two basic concerns. Firstly there is the claim that the NMA's content is 'politically correct' or biased. Barnett argues that this is part of a larger reworking of Australian history currently underway by forces unnamed. Secondly there is the allegation that the Museum does not celebrate Australian achievement. In Barnett's case this is reflected in a call for entrepreneurs to be recognised in a 'hall of fame' and for interesting exhibits about the 'founding fathers'. One suspects that underlying the desire for achievement to be recognised is a strong yearning for the 'great men' of Australian history to be reinstated in the national story.

After receiving Barnett's memo Staley instituted a review of label text. At the recommendation of eminent historian Geoffrey Blainey, Professor Graeme Davison of Monash University was approached to provide a second opinion. Davison reviewed the text and, while finding some minor errors, determined the exhibits were based on sound scholarship. Furthermore, Davison completely rejected Barnett's allegation of any systematic bias in the label text. He expressed the view that, 'while individual items may express interpretations that David might read as PC, they are not preponderant'. In an interview with *Sydney Morning Herald* journalist Joyce Morgan, Davison concluded: 'The thrust of Barnett's interventions was, in a sense, ideological'.⁶

Following Davison's rebuttal of Barnett's critique, the Museum's Council did not intervene in the content development process and the majority of exhibits went ahead unchanged. The struggle for the type of history that would be presented in the museum, however, was only just beginning. The next broadside was delivered by revisionist historian Keith Windschuttle. In an article entitled 'How not to run a museum: people's history at the post-modern museum', Windschuttle took the Museum to task over a number of its exhibits, particularly those relating to frontier conflict, and set out to demolish the intellectual underpinnings of the NMA. Carrying on where Barnett left off, Windschuttle outlined his own views on how national history should be presented:

Any attempt to tell a national history, in either a book or a museum, is obliged to explain these major influences on the lives of all the nation's members. This means

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No. 1612 of 2025

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District Registry: Victoria
Division: Administrative and Constitutional Law and Human Rights

TARNEEN ONUS BROWNE and BENJAMIN ZABLE

Applicants

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, NORTH WEST METRO REGION and others

Respondents

This is the annexure marked "BZ-4" now produced and shown to Benjamin Zable at the time of affirming his affidavit on 6 January 2026.

Before me:



Keren Adams, Legal Practitioner

Annexure "BZ-4"

Filed on behalf of (name & role of party)	Tarneen Onus Browne, First Applicant and Benjamin Zable, Second Applicant
Prepared by (name of person/lawyer)	Sarah Schwartz
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Greedozer mask worn by political activist and performance artist Benny Zable at the Franklin Dam protests in the early 1980s.
Photograph by Jason McCarthy, National Museum of Australia.

GREEDOZER MASK

This mask is part of a costume created by protestor and performance artist Benny Zable, worn as the character 'Greedozer'. Zable was one of the most distinctive participants in the protests against the construction of the Franklin Dam in Tasmania in the early 1980s.

Environmental activism

Zable created Greedozer to make a strong political statement. He argued that rampant greed and consumerism could destroy the world's natural environment and wore the mask with black robes printed with slogans including:

- 'Work Consume Be Silent Die'
- 'I rely on your apathy'
- 'It's costing the Earth'.

Right to protest

Zable's views were shaped by world events including wars, nuclear accidents, student uprisings and general strikes. He has been involved in many protests including peace marches, anti-nuclear campaigns and environmental blockades.

Protesting is one way people can try to influence public opinion and decision makers, such as politicians and political parties, to support a particular point of view.

In Australia, people generally have the right to protest because they live in a democracy. Most states issue permits allowing protesters to gather and march in a specific area, but sometimes people choose to occupy areas without a permit. This is called civil disobedience and can lead to arrests for trespassing. Civil disobedience draws attention to a dispute, and was one of the methods used during the campaign to save the Franklin River.

QUESTIONS

1. **What are some of the issues or causes people might protest about? What actions might they take?**
2. **What are people who are protesting trying to achieve?**
3. **Why do you think Benny Zable created the Greedozer character?**

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Photograph reproduced courtesy University of Melbourne Archives

By the 1970s anti-nuclear campaigns revolved around the issues of uranium mining and nuclear testing, US military bases and nuclear ship visits and the creation of a nuclear-free zone in the Pacific. Australia was, and is still, one of the world's largest exporters of uranium.

In 1978 peace activists and anti-nuclear campaigners assembled at Station Pier in Melbourne, protesting the arrival of the *USS Queenfish*, the first nuclear-attack submarine to visit an Australian port. Police and protesters clashed and several people were injured and arrested.



Palm Sunday rally outside Flinders Street Station in Melbourne, 1984

Photograph reproduced courtesy University of Melbourne Archives

Anti-nuclear protests embraced many issues - disarmament, the global weapons race, harm to the environment, the ethical and health-related impact of nuclear testing on First Nations communities and security risks.

Throughout the 1980s the anti-nuclear movement maintained a presence through marches, notably the annual Palm Sunday rally. One of the largest was in 1985, when more than 300,000 people marched across Australia.



Benny Zable at the Palm Sunday Rally, April 1984

Photograph reproduced courtesy University of Melbourne Archives

Peace activist, Benny Zable, has protested in Melbourne for three decades. Zable created a caricature costume of the grim reaper: 'I visualised a dark character with a skull head, "Greedozer", to portray the ugly side of civilisation.'

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The Toxic Tower Live-in
 Installation
 Nuclear Free Future
 show in front of the
 then Parliament House in
 the 1980's
 This was the last show before
 leaving overseas, in 1989 on 9
 after 3 years travelling the
 country.

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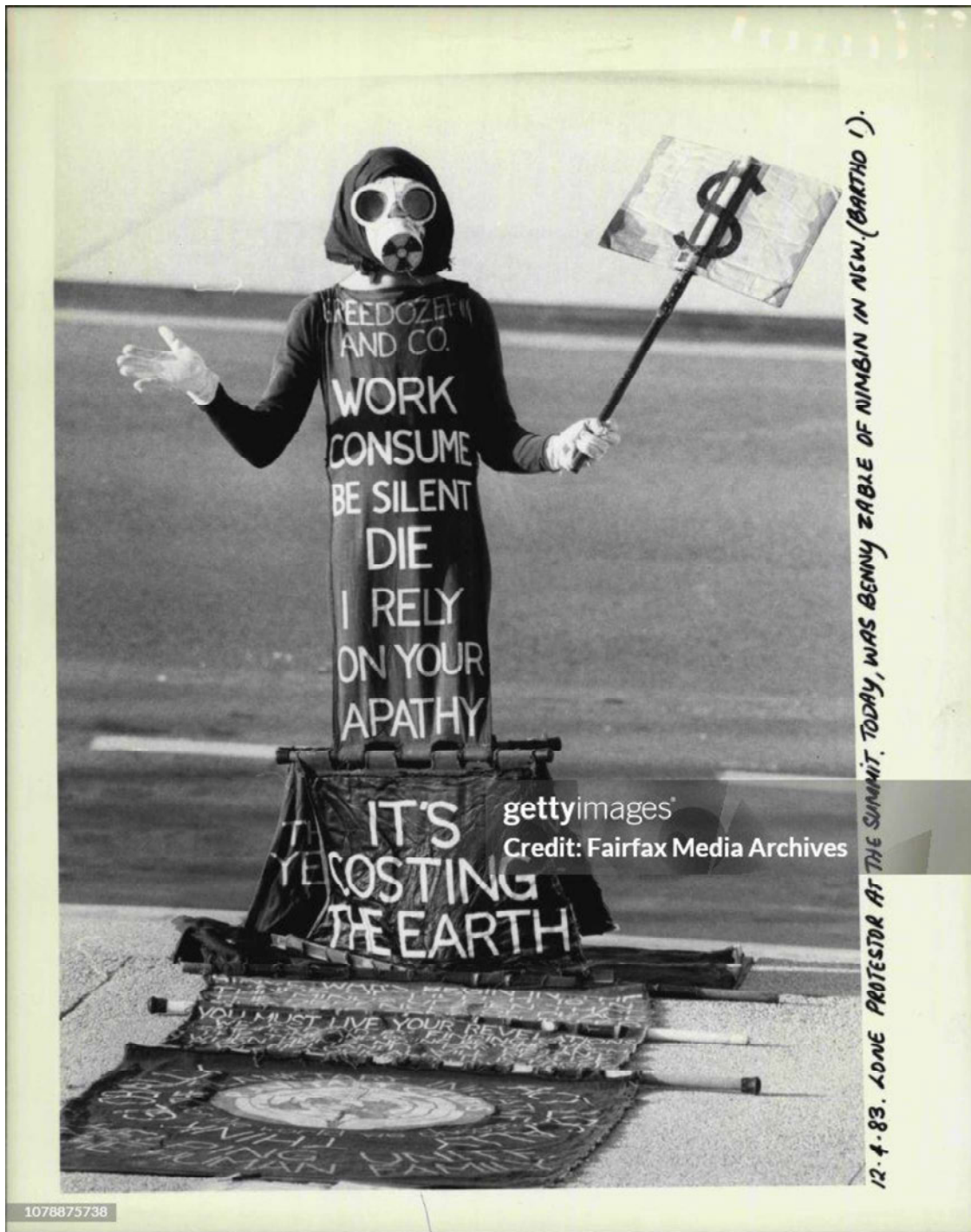


Image owned by Fairfax Media, accessible via Getty Images.

Date 12 April 1983.

Inscribed: Lone protestor at the summit. Today, was Benny Zable of Nimbin in NSW (Bartho I).

Online access: <<https://www.gettyimages.com.au/detail/news-photo/lone-protestor-at-the-summit-today-was-benny-zable-of-news-photo/1078875738>>.

Summit likely means the Bob Hawke National Economic Summit in Canberra – see <https://www.naa.gov.au/explore-collection/australias-prime-ministers/robert-hawke/during-office>.



Image from article dated 13 May 2024.

Harsha Prabhu, 'Pot for Peace: From Gaza to Nimbin for MardiGrass 2024' *New Matilda* (online, 13 May 2024) <<https://newmatilda.com/2024/05/13/pot-for-peace-from-gaza-to-nimbin-for-the-2024-mardi-grass/>>.



Image owned by the University of Melbourne part of series 'Negatives for photographs by John Ellis'.

Image titled: 'Benny Zable at Palm Sunday rally, April 1984'.

Image description: 'Benny Zable at Palm Sunday rally, April 1984, organized by the People for Nuclear Disarmament. The rally commenced at the gardens opposite the Arts Centre.'

Online access:

<<https://archives.library.unimelb.edu.au/nodes/view/276889?lsk=6a39d304d801512469caa0ed11f65ff8>>.

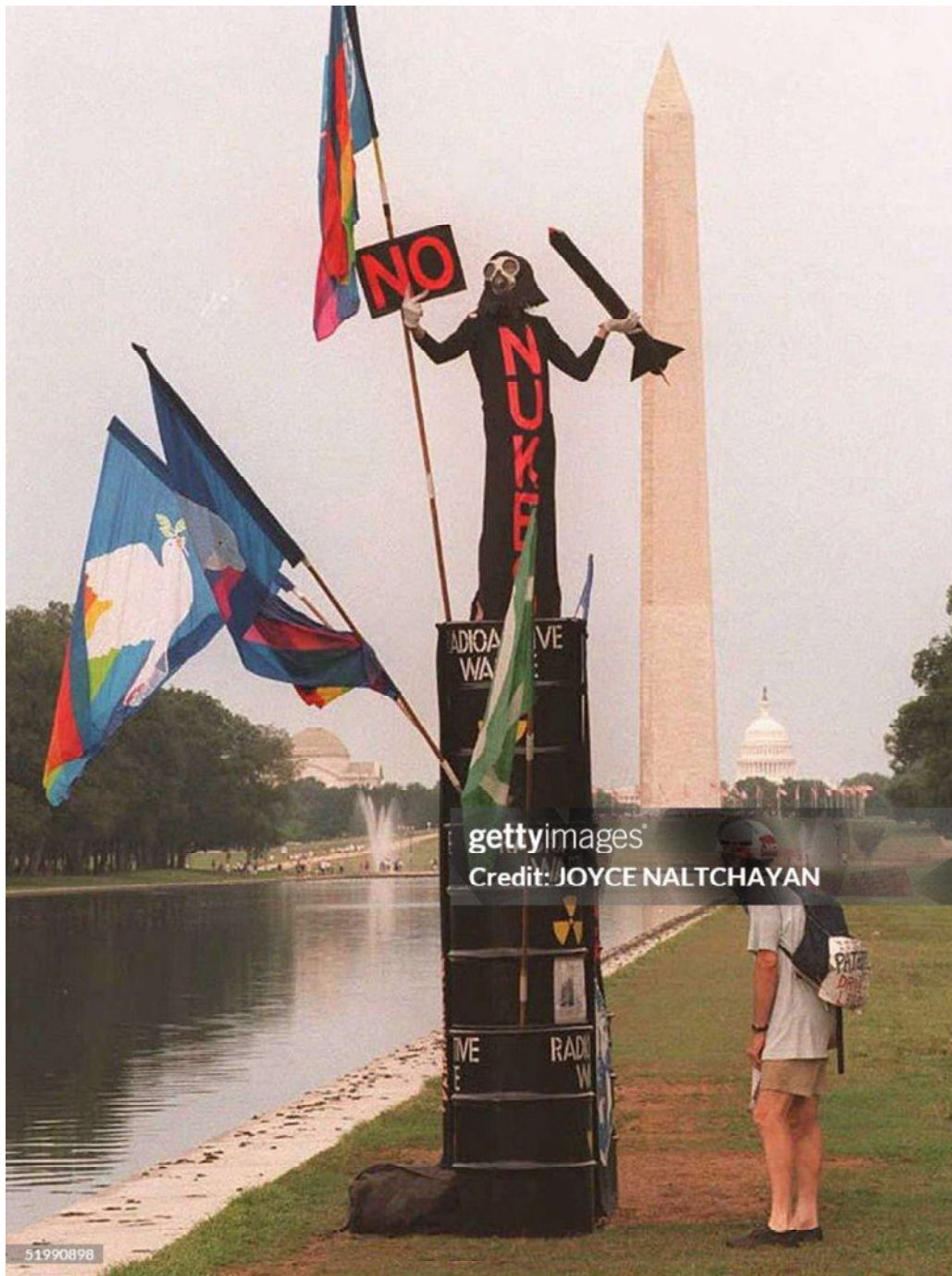


Image owned by Joyce Naltchayan, accessible via Getty Images.

Date: 5 August 1995.

Image title: 'Benny Zable, an australian peace and environmental'

Image description: 'Benny Zable, an australian peace and environmental performance artist, protests against french nuclear testing 05 August on the National Mall in Washington DC. Zable's demonstration was part of the 50th anniversary remembrance of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan.'

Online access: <<https://www.gettyimages.com.au/detail/news-photo/benny-zable-an-australian-peace-and-environmental-news-photo/51990898?adppopup=true>>.



Image owned by Lisa Maree Williams, accessible via Getty Images.

Date: 5 May 2019

Image title: 'Anti-Adani Convoy Prepares For Canberra Rally'.

Image description: 'Benny Zable a performance artist for peace and environment stands in costume outside Parliament House during a stop-Adani rally on May 05, 2019 in Canberra, Australia. The stop-Adani convoy of environmental activists led by former Greens leader, Bob Brown, travelled from Tasmania to Canberra via New South Wales and Queensland to bring to light the issue of the Adani coal mine and climate change.'

Online access: <<https://www.gettyimages.com.au/detail/news-photo/benny-zable-a-performance-artist-for-peace-and-environment-news-photo/1147042036?adppopup=true>>.



On the Washington Mall - Wednesday August 16 1995

Benjamin Zable private collection



Gulf War protest in the city square



Bourke Street Mall street Vic.

0165 N444 4 27 APR 86 10x15



To Benny Zable
 from Gary Natural

 120 hour rally against
 Uranium, 9th - 13th July '84
 Coulierra

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Victoria Government Gazette

No. S 466 Monday 2 September 2024
By Authority of Victorian Government Printer



VICTORIA POLICE

Control of Weapons Act 1990

DECLARATION OF DESIGNATED AREA UNDER SECTION 10D(1)

Planned Operation at Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre and Surrounds

The Assistant Commissioner, Transit and Public Safety Command, acting as a delegate of the Chief Commissioner of Police, under section 3A of the **Victoria Police Act 2013**, declares as a designated place at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre by all public places within the area bound by and including, the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.



This declaration will operate as follows: 12.00 pm Friday 6 September to 12.00 pm Sunday 15 September 2024, during which time members of the police force are authorised to exercise the following powers:

- a) in a public place in the designated area, without warrant, stop and search for weapons:
 - i) any person;
 - ii) any thing in the possession or control of the person;
 - iii) any vehicle with a person in or on the vehicle; and
 - iv) anything in or on such vehicle;

SPECIAL

- b) detain a person or vehicle for so long as is reasonably necessary to conduct a search;
 - c) seize and detain any item the member reasonably suspects is a weapon;
 - d) request a person who is the subject of a full search to disclose his or her identity;
 - e) direct a person to leave the designated area if the police officer reasonably believes the person is wearing a face covering primarily to:
 - i. conceal their identity; or
 - ii. protect them from the effects of a crowd control substance;and the person refuses to remove the face covering when requested to do so; and
 - (f) direct the person to leave the designated area if the police officer reasonably believes the person intends to engage in conduct that would constitute an affray (section 195H **Crimes Act 1958**) or violent disorder (section 195I **Crimes Act 1958**).
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Benny Zable

1d · 🌐



First Sunday of 2026. Spent a couple of hours demonstrating outside the State Library.



Screenshot of Benny Zable facebook page.

Screenshot taken 6 January 2026.

Image date: 5 January 2026.