



Leader of the Opposition

YOM HA'ATZMAUT

It is with great pleasure I wish the State of Israel and members of our Australian Jewish community a hearty Mazel Tov on the occasion of Yom Ha'atzmaut.

When it was first proclaimed in 1948 by David Ben-Gurion, that declaration of independence was nothing less than the triumph of hope. It was a triumph made all the more remarkable by coming only three years after the darkness of World War II and the Shoah.

For the Australian Labor Party it will always be a source of immense pride that it was one of our leaders – Doc Evatt – who played a crucial role at the United Nations in the birth of the modern state of Israel. As Evatt noted in his memoirs, “I regard the establishment of Israel as a great victory of the United Nations.”

Evatt was empowered at the UN by the tireless efforts of Australia's Jewish community and the Zionist Federation of Australia. Among them were luminaries including John Monash, Alex Masel, Max Freilich, Horace Newman, Rabbi Max Schank, Ruby Cohen and Abe Landa.

That strong relationship has continued with Labor Prime Ministers Bob Hawke and Julia Gillard both being awarded the Jerusalem Prize by the ZFA, State Zionist Councils and the World Zionist Organisation.

Israel at 72 years is a remarkable tale of triumph over adversity – a world-leading source of innovation in the fields of technology, medicine, science and the environment. We all have much to learn from Israel and we value not just our friendship with Israel but our strong economic ties.

This year, of course, it will be a celebration with a difference as the COVID-19 pandemic keeps us apart. But it separates us only physically. We will stay connected and we will celebrate, and by the time Israel's 73rd anniversary comes around I have every hope we will be together again.

No matter which party is in power here, Israel will have Australia's friendship and support.

As leader of the Australian Labor Party, I can tell you that you will always have ours.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anthony Albanese', written over a light blue circular stamp.

Anthony Albanese

Leader of the Australian Labor Party