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ON YOUR SIDE? RECOGNISING PALESTINIAN STATE NOW ENSHRINED IN ALP PLATFORM

'TODAY WILL LIVE IN INFAMY'

GARETH NARUNSKY

RECOGNISING a Palestinian state is now an official part of the platform of Australia's alternative government.

Shadow foreign affairs minister Penny Wong moved an amendment at the ALP conference on Tuesday elevating the status of a 2018 resolution that "calls on the next Labor government to recognise Palestine as a state and expects that this issue will be an important priority for the next Labor government".

But in moving the amendment, she implied a future Labor government would not be bound by it.

"It has no greater or lesser weight [than the 2018 conference resolution]," she said. "It reflects our belief that Israelis and Palestinians deserve to prosper in peace behind secure and recognised borders.

"It reflects this conference's prior expression of its view on statehood, while recognising this is a decision for a future Labor government. An Albanese Labor government will take a principled approach to these issues."

Insisting Labor's policy "has not changed at all", Macnamara Labor MP Josh Burns said, "We remain supporters of a two-state solution and we remain strong and unwavering friends of the State of Israel."

But Burns' predecessor Michael Danby – who was to have spoken in support of a withdrawn amendment conditioning recognition upon a Palestinian state meeting certain criteria – claimed party leaders Anthony Albanese and Richard Marles had not only adopted former UK Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn's pro-Palestinian policies "but also his Stalinist methods by suppressing debate on the foreign policy motions".

He added, "This raises signifi-



ALP leader Anthony Albanese addressing the ALP conference on Tuesday.

Photo: AAP Image/Mick Tsikas

cant legal issues about whether the platform adopted is valid.

"Associating Labor with a homophobic, fundamentally undemocratic, kleptocratic, misogynist Palestinian regime is bizarre enough, but attempting to create the false impression that this is accepted by all delegates is worthy of Stalin.

"Today will live in infamy where a significant shift in policy about a scumbag regime was implemented using the same sort of Stalinist thuggish tactics as the Palestinian regime uses."

Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ) co-CEO Peter Wertheim called the recognition outside a negotiated agreement "entirely counterproductive".

"Which entity is the ALP suggesting is deserving of statehood? The Islamists of Hamas? The PA which continues to incite the murder Jews through their policy of 'pay to slay' and ongoing vilification taught

to school children?" he asked.

"Recognising a non-existent Palestinian state can only serve to entrench the Palestinian policy of rejectionism of Israel's right to exist as the state of the Jewish people."

He continued, "If the ALP is elected to government, Albanese will be under greater pressure than previous leaders to bow to those pushing an extreme line on this.

"Many people, not only in the Jewish community, will feel very let down by this outdated, one-sided approach."

Zionist Federation of Australia president Jeremy Leibler said the platform now calls "for the next Labor government to be a party to a direct violation of an international peace agreement".

"Pretending that 'Palestine' meets the minimum criteria for a state when it manifestly does not is virtue signalling, and would only undermine Australia's reputation as

a law-abiding and pragmatic honest broker," he said.

Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council (AIJAC) executive director Colin Rubenstein said offering unilateral recognition of statehood "without suggesting any obligations on the Palestinian side clearly rewards Palestinian intransigence".

"Given senior shadow cabinet figures have offered assurances that the platform's language remains non-binding and any future ALP government will make up its own mind on the subject, AIJAC hopes this vote will not unduly hinder the cause of peaceful Israeli-Palestinian coexistence," he said.

The criteria in the alternative amendment included the PA holding free and fair elections, upholding women's and LGBTQI+ rights, recognising Israel and renouncing violence and calls for its destruction, and recognition forming part of a negotiated settlement.

Positions on Iran and Hezbollah welcomed

IN contrast to the statement about recognising a non-existent Palestinian state, Labor's policy on Iran "displays the kind of nuance and realism people expect from the party of Australia's alternative government", ECAJ co-CEO Peter Wertheim said this week.

"So too does the ALP platform's condemnation of Hezbollah, although it is regrettable that the ALP has accepted the fiction that Hezbollah's external security organisation can be treated separately from the rest of the organisation," Wertheim added.

The Iran resolution called for an improved, more robust agreement to curb its nuclear ambitions and working to ensure Tehran does not use proxies to foment civil war across the Middle East, while Hezbollah was condemned for its role in Syria's civil war.

AIJAC executive director Colin Rubenstein said, "Iran and its proxies including Hezbollah represent the gravest threat to Middle East peace, so we welcome the resolutions and are pleased that they have recognised this problem. However, the threats posed are far more wide-ranging than recognised by the resolutions, so we believe they need to go further."

The ZFA also said it welcomed the additional resolutions on Iran and Hezbollah, "which recognised their negative impact across the Middle East, and the need for whole-hearted Iranian cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency, with full verification".

YOM HAZIKARON
יום הזיכרון

TUESDAY 13 APRIL | 7:30PM

Robert Blackwood Hall, Monash Clayton
Doors to open at 7:00pm
Immediately followed by EREV SHIREI ZIKARON

COVID-SAFE EVENT | EVENT WILL ALSO BE STREAMED VIA SOCIAL MEDIA

TICKETS REQUIRED! - WWW.ZIONISMVICTORIA.ORG.AU/YOMHAZIKARON



COMMUNITY FESTIVAL
THUR 15 APR 2021 4:00PM - 9:00PM
CAULFIELD RACECOURSE
COVID-19 SAFE EVENT | QR CODE REGISTRATION REQUIRED

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