



Executive Council
of Australian Jewry Inc.

Message to the Australian Jewish Community for Rosh Hashana 5779

As we approach the Yamim Noraim, our time of reflection and renewal, we take stock of the year that has passed and express our hopes for the year to come.

The past year has seen an acceleration in the polarization of western democratic societies at every level. The benefits of advancements in knowledge and technological innovation have not been equally shared. Disparities in wealth and incomes are becoming wider, not narrower. The economic pressures on ordinary citizens who consider themselves to be part of the middle class have never been greater. The very concept of a middle class has begun to fracture, and the underpinnings of democracy are therefore under threat as never before.

With the weakening of social cohesion has come fear, political instability and a resurgence of xenophobia, nativist populism and racism. We have seen this process unfold throughout Europe, in the UK, in the United States, in Israel and even in our own beloved country of Australia.

Where racism and bigotry in any form are resurgent, antisemitism is never far behind. The threat of antisemitism from Islamist and far left sources are ongoing, as is the recrudescence of racism from the far right of politics.

As a community, we cannot afford to allow our individual ideological predilections to blinker us from the seriousness of antisemitism from any source. Our own community is not immune from the pressures of polarisation, as increasingly shrill voices from the extremes of left and right falsely purport to speak on our behalf. The challenge to our community to stand united and vigilant has never been more difficult - and the need to meet that challenge has never been more urgent.

Whether we are looking after the security of our community, defending Israel from the vile slanders of those who seek to destroy it, combatting antisemitism and other forms of racism, preserving the memory of the Shoah, upholding religious freedom, or protecting the truth and integrity of our people's history, the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, as the elected representative body of the Australian Jewish community, asks you to stand with us again in the coming year and support our work

representing the interests of the Jewish people in this country and throughout the world.

On behalf of all of us at the ECAJ, we extend best wishes to each and every person in our vibrant community for a shana tova umetuka k'tiva v'chatima tova, a year of health, happiness, prosperity and peace.



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