



**The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP**

Minister for the Environment and Energy

Federal Member for Kooyong

## **REMARKS**

### **ANZAC DAY**

MOUNT SCOPUS  
JERUSALEM, ISRAEL

25 APRIL 2017

Government representatives, diplomatic corps, military servicemen, religious leaders, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

It is a great honour to be here with you in Jerusalem on Mount Scopus.

We gather here today to honour the service and sacrifice of generations of Australians, more than 1.5 million of them, who have proudly served our great country in times of war, and the more than 100,000 men and women who have tragically lost their lives in battle, never to return home. They gave up their freedom so we could enjoy ours.

On this day - Anzac Day - Australia and New Zealand pause to remember the sacrifices made at Gallipoli. It is 101 years since Anzac Day was first observed and 102 years since the fateful landing at Gallipoli.

Picture this, teams of young, fit, brave Australian soldiers landing ashore pre-dawn on 25 April 1915. As they approached the beach, a Turkish outpost signalled the alarm at 4:29 am. They came under fire from Turkish forces. 749 Australians died that day.

With evacuation impossible, they dug in and fought tenaciously. By the end of the campaign in December that year, more than 8,700 Australians had lost their lives.

The toll was devastating and debilitating. Having himself lost nearly half of his 4,000 strong brigade, Australia's greatest citizen-soldier and son of Prussian Jewish migrants, John Monash, said: "If one stops to count the cost of the grief and sorrow of the people at home, one simply cannot carry on for an hour."

But from the darkness of that horror emerged a beacon of light. For Australia's national identity was forged on that battlefield – characteristics which have come to define us as a nation and a people.

Endurance. Courage. Ingenuity. Mateship – especially in the face of adversity.

These qualities speak volumes to what has been called our quiet but deep patriotism.

As we stand here in Jerusalem today we also remember the ANZACs who lie in the graves around us here, at Mount Scopus.

This year will mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Be'er Sheva.

At Be'er Sheva on 31 October 1917 like at Gallipoli, young Australian soldiers, this time 800 light horsemen, gathered at dawn. This would be the third attempt to break through the Turkish line running from Gaza on the coast to Be'er Sheva 43 kilometres inland.

After a day of hard-fought advances, just before sunset that afternoon, the 4<sup>th</sup> Light Horse Brigade commenced their famous charge.

They galloped towards the town of Be'er Sheva before falling upon enemy lines, dismounting and using their bayonets to carry them through the Turkish defences.

It was less than an hour before Be'er Sheva together with almost one thousand Turkish and German prisoners were taken.

This broke the line and set the stage for the rapid capture of Jerusalem, Damascus and Aleppo. And of course, these events would also eventually lead to the creation of the State of Israel in 1948.

Some young Australians would never return home from that battle. Like 16-year old Victorian trooper Harry Thomas Bell who in his unbridled enthusiasm to join the light horse brigade lied about his age and his name, calling himself Wickham, after creeping out of home at night while his father was sleeping.

Some time later, his father received a telegram from Army headquarters about the death of his so-called "nephew" Harry Bell. His father wrote back to Army headquarters to correct the record, saying I do not have a nephew Harry Bell, but I do have a son called Harry. But it couldn't be him he said because he's only 16 and you can't be in the army at that age.

Sadly it was his son. And his grave lies today at Be'er Sheva.

It's the memory of Harry and the sacrifice of others like him that our Prime Minister and Israel's Prime Minister will honour at Be'er Sheva on 31 October 2017.

Even as time passes, these events hold such importance for Australia as a nation and for many families on a personal level.

In closing I wanted to share with you some words by the mother of a young Australian soldier, Noel Edwards. He and two mates had shared a meal before going into battle. His mates survived, and one of them won the Victoria Cross, but Noel was cut down at only 21 years of age.

Years later, Noel's mum Harriett wrote:

*How I shall miss him – when from overseas  
The Anzacs come 'mid shouts of victory;  
When eager voices answering smiles awake,  
And hands press hands for old remembrance sake.  
Full many a face will wear a mask of joy,  
With heartstrings aching for the absent boy.*

For Harriet and so many others like her, they can rest assured we will remember them.

Today we remember those who fought all over the world and especially here in Israel.

Lest we forget.