

**Chapter 1 : H. V. Evatt - Wikipedia**

*This book, which uses a variety of primary sources from Australia, Israel, the United Kingdom and the United States, provides a valuable study of Evatt the Zionist, as well as illuminating a fascinating political figure.*

He was the fifth of eight sons born to Jane Sophia known as "Jeanie" and John Ashmore Hamilton Evatt; two of his older brothers died in infancy. He arrived in Australia at the age of 16, and eventually settled in Morpeth, where in he married Jeanie Gray, the daughter of a marine engineer from Sydney. His parents – both Anglicans – moved to East Maitland in , where they managed the Hunter River Hotel until and then took over the smaller Bank Hotel. His father suffered a protracted bout of ill health and died in October, when his son was seven. The house was eventually demolished to make way for the Sydney Harbour Bridge. He attended the school from to , in his final year serving as head prefect and captain of the cricket and rugby union teams. He finished second in the state senior examinations, and was dux of his school. He became a prominent industrial lawyer in Sydney, working mainly for trade union clients. Re-elected as an "Independent Labor" candidate in , Evatt served in the Legislative Assembly until . Regarded by some as a brilliant and innovative judge, he delivered a number of minority judgments, several of which were adopted by High Court majorities decades later. Evatt could, however, be partial on the bench. Ltd 58 CLR that Evatt was on that occasion "full of antagonism to the respondent He became deputy leader of the Labor Party after the election, under the leadership of Ben Chifley. He put forward convincing arguments as to the need to re-establish sporting relations and the financial benefits of the tour and the MCC agreed to the –47 Ashes series. There was a strong view in Australia that any softening of the White Australia stance might result in cheaper labour being imported from overseas. Another prevailing sentiment was that multiculturalism resulted in instability. Evatt, opposing resolutions which could have led to more Asian immigration to Australia, told the Chinese delegation at San Francisco: You have always insisted on the right to determine the composition of your own people. Australia wants that right now. What you are attempting to do now, Japan attempted after the last war [the First World War] and was prevented by Australia. Had we opened New Guinea and Australia to Japanese immigration then the Pacific War by now might have ended disastrously and we might have had another shambles like that experienced in Malaya. In , he played a leading role in the founding of the UN. He was President of the United Nations General Assembly from to , and was prominent in the negotiations that led to the creation of Israel as chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Palestinian Question. He wrote in his memoirs: At this election, Evatt faced war hero Nancy Wake and suffered a massive swing in his own electorate, seeing his majority reduced from a very safe . He faced Wake again in the double dissolution election of and was nearly defeated, seeing her off by only votes out of more than 41, cast. When Ben Chifley still Labor leader suddenly died several months later, Evatt was elected unopposed as his successor. At first his leadership went well. Many convinced anti-Communists in the Labor Party believed this was both bad politics and bad policy because of the active Communist infiltration of numerous trade unions, and because of the threat to national security posed by Communism. He reportedly believed Menzies had conspired with the security services to bring about the defection of a Soviet diplomat see Petrov Affair, and to do so with the specific purpose of discrediting Evatt. Evatt appeared before the Royal Commission as attorney for his staff members. Evatt claimed this denial was because of judicial bias in favour of the Menzies government. He compounded this by writing to the Soviet Foreign Minister, Vyacheslav Molotov, asking if allegations of Soviet espionage in Australia were true. When Molotov replied, naturally denying the allegations, Evatt read the letter out in Parliament, bringing the House into silence momentarily before both sides of Parliament began laughing. The disaffected formed the Democratic Labor Party, which directed its preferences against Labor at subsequent elections. This, together with an obsessive hatred of Menzies, led Evatt into a number of unforced errors. For the election, he transferred to Hunter, one of the few safe country seats for Labor. He offered to resign as leader if the DLP would return to the party. The offer was rejected and Labor was soundly defeated again. Even with his sometimes turbulent nature, the relationship was one of devotion. In , aged 50, Peter died by accidental electrocution while trying to repair a faulty electric toaster. He was survived by his six children. His

death was reported by The Age on 27 December

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*He has understandably been drawn to H. V. Evatt's (and Australia's) controversial role in the establishment of the state of Israel. Yet he has managed to produce an objective (as far as possible) and valuable scholarly account.*

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