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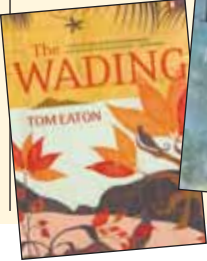

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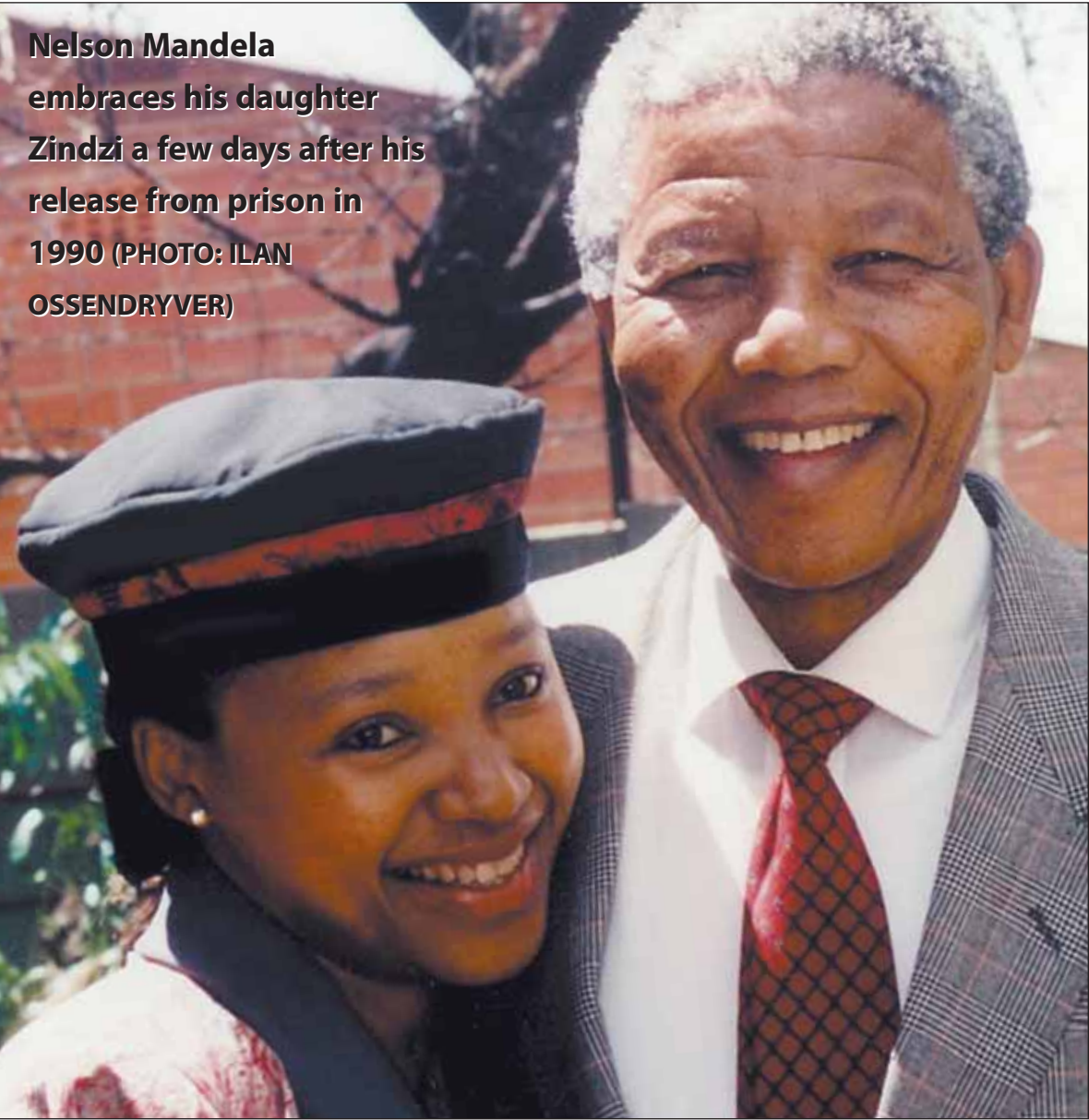
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Prisoner swap: Israel gets its two soldiers back - in a coffin

ELDAD REGEV and Ehud Goldwasser, the two Israeli soldiers captured in 2006 by Hezbollah on the Lebanese border, in an incident which triggered the Second Lebanon War, are indeed dead, as had been rumoured and feared. The Israeli army identified the remains of the two, handed over by Hezbollah as part of a prisoner swap, Israel radio reported on Wednesday. **SEE PAGES 3 & 13**



Nelson Mandela embraces his daughter Zindzi a few days after his release from prison in 1990 (PHOTO: ILAN OSSENDRYVER)

OUR BEST WISHES TO A GREAT MAN

Today, July 18, is an auspicious day in SA history. Nelson Mandela turns 90. With the Jewish Report, a random selection of prominent SA Jews wish Madiba many more healthy birthdays. We thank him for what he has meant to our country's fledgling democracy after 1994.

Israeli Ambassador Ilan Baruch
On behalf of the people and Government of Israel, I wish to convey our best wishes for good health to Nelson Mandela on the occasion of his 90th birthday. Israelis of all walks of life are deeply inspired by Mandela's vision of co-existence, dignity and mutual respect, which gave guidance to the abolition of apartheid and the creation of modern South Africa, one of the most revered political achievements in modern times.
By that, the world was enriched with a universal and historic legacy of peace, which we aspire painstakingly to implement in our war-torn region of the Middle East.
Success in our peace endeavours, which, when achieved, will be added to that legacy as well.

Chief Rabbi Dr Warren Goldstein
On first meeting President Mandela, he inscribed the following message for my son in a children's version of *A Long Walk to Freedom*: "To a great leader of the future."
He sees greatness in others. His faith in us inspires us and challenges us. His reverence for the greatness of the human spirit and its capacity for overcoming adversity, are the essence of his inspiring leadership and his humility. On behalf of the South African Jewish community, I extend best wishes for G-d's continued abundant blessings and may he live until 120 (years of age).

Motty Sacks
Chairman, Board of Trustees, Israel United Appeal
South Africans of all persuasions owe an immense debt of gratitude to former President Nelson Mandela.
The political transformation of South Africa could never have occurred without Dr Mandela's supreme statesmanship and inspired tolerance.
Dr Mandela, we wish you many more years in good health to continue to enjoy the rewards of your extreme personal sacrifices on behalf of the people of South Africa. **SEE PAGE 2**

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Israel gets its 2 soldiers back - in a coffin

OWN CORRESPONDENT
JERUSALEM

ISRAEL'S WORST fear has come true. Eldad Regev and Ehud Goldwasser, the two Israeli soldiers captured in 2006 by Hezbollah on the Lebanese border, in an incident which triggered the Second Lebanon War, are indeed dead, as had been rumoured and feared. The consensus in the IDF had been that both men had been killed during the cross-border abduction attack on July 12, 2006.

The Israeli army identified the remains of the two, handed over by Hezbollah as part of a prisoner swap, Israel radio reported on Wednesday.

In return, Israel handed over five Lebanese prisoners and the bodies of 200 Lebanese and Palestinian fighters.

The capture of the two Israeli soldiers sparked a month-long war between Israel and the militant Hezbollah movement.

Israeli generals on Wednesday officially broke the sad news to the families of the two men.

Earlier, the soldiers' relatives broke down in tears as they saw the images of Hezbollah handing over the two coffins. Before the swap, it had been unclear whether the two soldiers were alive or dead.

The prisoners in the swap, including Samir Qantar, who had served a series of life sentences for

murder and had been in jail since 1979, left the jail before dawn. Some in Israel had held out hope that the two Israeli men might still be alive, but the images of two plain black coffins being delivered to the border, told the soldiers' family what they had long suspected, said the BBC's Wyre Davies on the Israel-Lebanon border.

Earlier, the Lebanese prisoners were taken to the Rosh Hanikra border crossing on the Israeli-Lebanese border. The exchange was mediated by the Red Cross.

Lebanon declared a national holiday to mark the swap, after which Israel held no more Hezbollah militants. Under the deal - the fruit of two years of delicate German mediation - Hezbollah also agreed to return the body parts of Israeli soldiers killed in south Lebanon in 2006.

The agreement has caused controversy in Israel, with some ministers opposed to the possibility of exchanging live Hezbollah prisoners for dead bodies. But Israel says it has a moral obligation to bring its soldiers home.

Israel's Cabinet gave its final approval for the exchange of five Hezbollah prisoners, on Tuesday.

The biggest controversy - and objection - revolved around Qantar being part of the swap. He had been in jail for a deadly terrorist raid in which he killed three Israelis, including a child. The killings had been particularly

brutal.

Cries of horror sounded at the Regev residence on Wednesday, as the family witnessed the TV broadcast of the prisoners exchange at the Lebanese border, showing Hezbollah turning over two coffins to the Red Cross.

In Beirut the exchange caused jubilation for Hezbollah, who are claiming the deal as a victory. The leader of Lebanon's mainly Maronite Christian Free Patriotic Movement and former army commander-in-chief, Michel Aoun, said the swap proved Israel had been defeated.

"I believe today is the crowning glory of the (2006 Israel-Hezbollah) war... There is national unanimity to welcome the prisoners and the martyrs' bodies. Everything calls for optimism and a new revival in Lebanon," he said.

But Ehud Goldwasser's father, Shlomo Goldwasser, said he was mystified by the Lebanese celebrations. "I cannot understand what the Lebanese are so glad about and happy about," he said.

"They sacrificed over 700 of their best warriors and all their economy, and what they get for what they did is a murderer, a bloody murderer of a three-and-a-half-year-old girl and her father - and for this they are making all this glory, for this they sacrificed so much. So I feel only pity for them." **SEE PAGE 13**

AROUND THE WORLD

NEWS IN BRIEF

BLAIR CANCELS GAZA VISIT

JERUSALEM - Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair cancelled a high-profile visit to the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip over concerns for his safety.

The Quartet peace envoy was to have traveled to Gaza on Tuesday but pulled out on short notice, with a spokeswoman citing "specific threats against him".

Israeli sources said Defence Minister Ehud Barak advised Blair to stay away from the coastal territory as he could be targeted for attack.

Hamas was to have provided security for the visit by Blair, though he was not slated to meet any officials from the Palestinian Islamist group.

The Quartet has conditioned contacts with Hamas on it first recognising Israel and renouncing terrorism.

Still, the Blair visit might have helped Hamas's international image, as Western dignitaries have largely avoided Gaza since it was violently taken over by the Islamists a year ago. (JTA)

WORLD LEADERS HEADED TO BEIJING

NEW YORK - Few world leaders are staying away from the Beijing Olympics despite concerns over China's role in Sudan.

Though human rights groups have waged intense campaigns against China in the run-up to next month's Games, German Chancellor Angela Merkel is among only a handful of leaders who say they will not attend. A group of rabbis has urged Jewish tourists to stay away.

President George W Bush, Israeli President Shimon Peres and French President Nicolas Sarkozy are slated to attend the

opening ceremonies on August 8.

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown is expected for the closing ceremonies. On Monday, a prosecutor filed an indictment against Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir on charges of genocide.

The same day, the British Broadcasting Corp claimed that China was training Sudanese pilots and that Chinese military vehicles were found in Darfur, the region in Western Sudan where hundreds of thousands have been killed in what some Western observers describe as a genocide. (JTA)


BARAK POSTPONES US VISIT

JERUSALEM - Ehud Barak has postponed his working visit to the United States.

The Israeli defence minister and leader of Labour, was scheduled to fly out to Washington late on Monday for three days of talks on Iran and other regional issue, but


cancelled. Aides said he was needed in Israel for the prisoner exchange on Wednesday with Hezbollah, which required final Cabinet approval on Tuesday.

Barak would likely reschedule his US visit for early August, aides said. (JTA)



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Some of the workers of the WIZO Johannesburg North branch which runs the Elise Gift Shop, Ruth Lazarus, Chairman Ethel Amoils, Zelia Abramson and Becky Flekser. In front is Zelia Abramson.

‘Elise’ finds its niche in Fairmount

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY RITA LEWIS

THE MEZUZAH for the new premises for the Elise Gift Shop in the Genesis Centre in Fairmount, will bring G-d’s protection not only for the workers but to the shop itself said Rabbi Michael Katz of Chabad of Illovo.

In fact, he said, although G-d’s protection was always around us, the mezuzah was our “security firm” safeguarding us from harm.

Rabbi Katz was speaking after fixing the mezuzah to the doorpost of the new shop and reciting the relevant prayers. He said this was a simcha or happiness shop being that it sold a wide variety of beautiful gifts which would be given away for happy events; baby births, weddings, engagements and birthdays - among other things, at the same time helping WIZO.

Explaining the make up of the mezuzah, he said that on the outside of every mezuzah were the Hebrew letters shin, daled and yud, standing for “The Guardian of the Doors of Israel” but reading the word Sha-dai (A-mighty).

In the old days when Jews were fleeing from their oppressors or wandering in search of refuge or sustenance, a home with a mezuzah on it was a welcome sign. The mezuzah has therefore become a sign of hospitality and brotherly love because “Kol Yisrael Chaverim - all Jews are family.

The shop which had been in Balfour Park for around two years, recently moved to the new centre which is more central to where the hub of “Jewish Johannesburg” is located.

It is run by a team of 10 women (volunteers and staff) who work on a rotational basis. They are the chairman of the branch Ethel Amoils, Zelia Abramson, Becky Flekser, Sonya Janit, Lee Joffe, Blanche Kaplan, Ruth Lazarus, Zelia Meinstein, Lorraine Shein and Maureen Shapiro.



Rabbi Michael Katz fixes a mezuzah to the doorpost of the new Elise Gift Shop.

The idea of the shop was originally mooted by the late Elise Kaplan together with Marlene Mitchell, who together made up a selection of small gifts for a donor function.

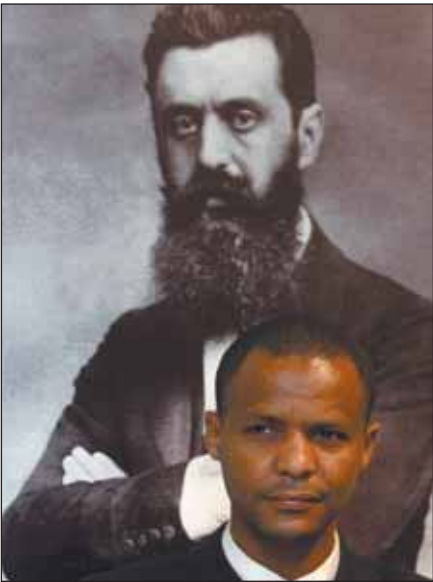
At the time the project was run from Kaplan’s home, but soon moved to the homes (and garages) of different members of the committee - finally finding a permanent home in a garage at Foxhill, a block of flats in Illovo.

Directors of the operation at the time were Elise Kaplan and Berjulie Press who soon co-opted a group of women to help them.

As their business grew, so did their need for decent premises and accordingly the committee of volunteers moved to Corlett City in Bramley.

After several years, with the deterioration of the Corlett City centre, the Elise Gift Shop moved to Balfour Park and then on to Fairmount. During this time the name of the project became the Elise Wizo Gift Shop and was run very successfully by several capable women.

Celebrating Israel’s 60th with an exhibition



Elias Inbram in front of a photo of Theodor Herzl.

LIONEL SLIER

FOR THE unbroken connection between South Africa and Israel, the SA Zionist Federation thought that an exhibition celebrating Israel’s 60th birthday, would be appropriate. Therefore an exciting exhibition was put on at the Rabbi Cyril Harris Community Centre in Johannesburg to honour Israel’s diamond anniversary, with the emphasis on the relationship between the two countries.

At the opening Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein also took a swipe at the recent South African “human rights delegation” to Israel, which the chief rabbi called “a chutzpah and outrage”.

Avrom Krengel, chairman of the SAZF, welcoming the visitors at the opening said: “This is a special year, a milestone in the unique connection between South African Jews and Israel. This exhibition is about those who came before us and on whose shoulders we stand.”

Israel’s ambassador to South Africa, Ilan Baruch, spoke about the moving and extremely interesting history and relationship between South Africa and Israel. It is shown by the aliyah flight which is leaving here on July 21, which has 100 South Africans aboard who are going to settle in Israel.

“Making aliyah seems so natural and when we ask: ‘Why Israel?’ the answer is that it is a Jewish state and we are entitled to it and it is ours.”

Baruch added: “I came here three years ago and I was embraced by South African Jews. I could see that Israel was in your hearts and it is such a deep unique commitment.”

His assignment would end in December this year but he admitted: “I carry the flavour, a South African flavour in the way I speak English. I am proud of it. Look at the pictures here (in the exhibition) and you can be very proud and I am proud of it.”

Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein congratulated the SAZF on the task and mission which they undertook to



Avrom Krengel, Ilan Baruch and David Sussman.



Isla Feldman with Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein.

express the community’s commitment to a connection spanning 60 years.

“Today’s exhibition marks the kind of work in a proud Zionist tradition. There is a deep sense of pride and loyalty, with G-d’s blessing to a state which many Jews never previously had.”

Taking a different tack, the chief rabbi pointed out that Jews had been attached to “this land” for thousands of years and therefore it was a moral outrage for people to talk about an occupation.

He mentioned the so-called “fact-finding mission” which visited Israel in order to “kick Israel in the teeth.

“It is a chutzpah and outrage,” he said. “There were two judges on the mission and they should know that there are two sides to a question. There were members of the South African Jewish community on the mission and that is also an outrage.

“We are not uncritical about Israel but we are fair and loyal and we love it with a passion. We need to say loudly and clearly exactly where we stand on this point. The mainstream press in Israel ignored the mission.”

Guest of honour, David Sussman - who incidentally was born on the day of the establishment of the State of Israel - said: “I had never asked what it was like to live as a Jew (before 1948) without the State of Israel. I asked my dad to tell me. He had fought in the Second World War, was captured twice but also visited Palestine when on leave.

“Palestine? I thought with shock. The Romans had sought to destroy the oldest title deed in history - the ancient Judea - by changing its name to Palestine.

“Rabbi (Yossi) Chaikin, in a drosha had said that only when water was taken away from the Jews wandering in the desert, did they remember what a blessing it was. So must we remember Israel as a blessing. We must accept Israel as a fact of life.

“This exhibition shows what has been done since the establishment of the State. We live with a great legacy.”

The exhibition itself consists of 22 panels, some of which have some truly historic photographs, some going back to the first Zionist Conference in Johannesburg in 1898. There are photos of some of the prominent Israelis who visited here - David Ben-Gurion, Chaim Herzog, Mordechai Hod, Moshe Dayan...

Among the large panels are some smaller ones, which tell the story of the SAZF within the context of its relationship with Israel and also the changing relationship between Israel and African states.

There are panels about the IUA-UCF, the Media Team, Keren Kayemet. WIZO, Western Province and KZN Zionist Councils, Maccabi, MDA, youth movements, Machal, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and more.

There is also a smaller exhibition of 15 panels with photos of Herzl, Jabotinsky and Weizman. There are six sports panels as well.

In fact the exhibition is a walk through the history of the Jews of South Africa and the SAZF since its beginnings and its relationship with Israel.

The SAZF must be congratulated on an excellent exhibition. It deserves to be on permanent show.

SA gets an online medical library

JOHANNESBURG - MELiSA (the Medical Electronic Library of South Africa) has launched South Africa’s first national online medical library providing affordable access to an extensive range of international medical literature.

In a media release MELiSA says international medical journals are a key resource for keeping up to date with current trends and therapies. Up till now, access to a wide range of top medical literature has been the luxury of university staff and students, leaving the vast majority of the medical profession in South Africa to subscribe to journals individually.

However, due to the expense of international journal subscriptions, practitioners are limited in the number of journals to which they subscribe, if any.

MELiSA is the leading medical information website in South Africa with access to over 1 000 international journal titles, 100 text book titles and various online programmes and databases, spanning all fields in medicine.

Using MELiSA, the release says, is convenient, the content easy to access and available anytime, anywhere, and with today’s mobile technology, literally at the bedside if needed.

MELiSA is sponsoring internship and

community service doctors with markedly reduced fee access to resources that will assist them in treating their patients. The release sees this as a lifeline to young professionals who are serving the country for three years, with very little backup in many instances and who, since graduating, no longer have access to the resources they studied with through their alumni libraries.

• For more information please visit the Medical Electronic Library of South Africa at www.melisa.co.za or contact MELiSA via info@melisa.co.za

Israel has a 3 000 year claim of legitimacy

RITA LEWIS
PHOTOGRAPHS: ILAN OSSENDRYVER

THERE WAS no country in the world which would put up with what Israel has had to deal with, said Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organisations, on a recent visit to southern Africa. Hoenlein who has “previously visited South Africa three or four times”, was here on a two week tour of southern African organised by Sharei Tzedek Hospital in Jerusalem, with 65 members of Friends of Sharei Tzedek.

As an example of what Israel has to put up with, he mentioned the lies being levelled against Israel’s people, new demands constantly coming in, 7 000 rockets falling on its citizens in the south and 41 000 rockets facing it in the north, violations of UN Resolution 1701, new territorial concessions being demanded of it by Hezbollah and Hamas and others, as well as facing three existential dangers, namely Syria, Hezbollah and Hamas, and all the time Iran.

Hoenlein said that although there was presently a debate going on at the UN on the settlements in Israel, there was really a much more fundamental issue.

“There is not country on earth with a greater claim to legitimacy - sanctified by 3 000 years of sacrifice, of blood, of tears, of prayers - than the Jewish State and nobody can take that away.”

He added: “We must fight all the anti-Semitism and anti-Israel talk.”

The problem today, he said, was that we were raising the bar every day of what we are prepared to tolerate. There were TV reports being aired and actions being taken that we would never have tolerated 10 years ago - but we were being worn down.

“We must not let this happen,” he urged. The poisoning of the elite in Britain was going to happen in the United States - “if we don’t stop it - and we can.

“People don’t care if you fail; only if you



Dr Mathews Phosa, treasurer general of the ANC and Motty Sacks, chairman of Netcare.

succeed do you become a challenge.”

But Jews must deal with these challenges. (Iranian President Mahmoud) Ahmadinejad was not a threat to Israel alone; he was a threat to the entire world, to the entire Middle East, to every Sunni in the world, to every Christian and every Buddhist, just as he was to every Jew. He said the world should better sit up, take note and do the right thing.

Then there was the Islamisation of Europe... which happened because the countries did not take the appropriate steps (timeously) to deal with it in its infancy.

In the Passover Haggadah one reads that in every generation there will rise up someone who seeks to destroy us. This is in the present tense - to remind us that our enemies are present in every generation, Hoenlein warns.

We can ask: Wasn’t there one generation where there wasn’t this hatred and bigotry? But, he said, even when there will be a period of peace and calm, Jews have to be aware that their enemies are always there planning



Malcolm Hoenlein and Motty Sacks.

to annihilate them.

The second guest speaker was Dr Mathews Phosa, National Executive Committee member of the ANC and also treasurer-general of the organisation.

He said to much laughter, he had been asked by Motty Sacks (chairman of Netcare) to address so many Jewish functions that he was thinking of changing his name to Phosavitch.

He said there were many challenges at present facing the government, including how to combat crime, corruption and how to finance our democracy.

However, “we have to admit our past mistakes and chasing the whites away was one of them. We must address this.

“Another thing we have to do is to get (President) Thabo Mbeki and ANC President Jacob Zuma together to talk.”

The ANC, he said, believed in international partnerships. The Jewish community was one example of this.

He stresses that the ANC would not engage in anti-Israel politics despite the


many challenges in the area.

Israel’s Ambassador to South Africa Ilan Baruch said: “South Africa is a unique country undergoing great and meaningful change and transition. The South African Jewish community has a unique quality which is second to none in the world. I will not miss an opportunity to laud and support the rapport between South Africa and Israel.”

Motty Sacks, who was hosting the 65 visitors from overseas and the invited guests including Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein and Ambassador Ilan Baruch, thanked the speakers. He said so many South Africans had interjoined with the Americans from the group, that it showed that Jews from everywhere had much in common.

After the function he presented Hoenlein with a book, *Beyond Redemption* written by Dr Harold Serebro and another to Phosa which was taken from his own library, called “Jews and Blacks”. He said it showed that “Jews and blacks can transform the moral and cultural landscape of the world”.

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Hostess Felicity Brest with her daughter Tiffany.



Hymie Brest jokes with Lynette Allan.

Pleasure doesn't equate with happiness

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY RITA LEWIS

THIS YEAR the Samantha Amy Brest Endowment Fund, which provides a learner at King David High Schools with an entire outfit for her matric dance, took on the idea of a motivational talk for both mothers and daughters.

The personally designed dress, shoes, makeover, hairdo - everything - including a limousine to travel in, is given to a deserving learner who would otherwise not be able to be provided with all these items for the biggest night of her school career.

The idea of the fund was originated by Felicity Brest and established under the auspices of the King David Schools' Foundation, whose director is Elliot Wolf, former headmaster of KDHL.

The foundation raises money for the schools and for bursaries for deserving learners.

Wolf recalled being contacted by Brest after she tragically lost her young daughter Samantha, asking for ideas for a suitable way of perpetuating her daughter's memory.

"We realised that creating a fund could be constructive and helpful and the memory of Samantha could be kept alive as she would have loved.

"We came up with the idea of an annual fundraising event to assist selected King David girls in financially preparing for the school-leaving dance."

Samantha's sister Tiffany reiterated this, saying: "One of the fondest thoughts of a girl's high school career is the memory of her matric dance night.

"The fund affords the chosen learner the opportunity of experiencing a night of her dreams. Thank you for helping with this."

In her talk on "Finding Joy", Judy Alter first asked: "How do we get a sense of balance and find joy? What in fact is joy and what is happiness?"

She emphasised that both were important.

Happiness could be achieved, but was an external process where goals needed to be aimed for. Happiness came when these were reached but we then needed to find another goal.

Happiness was something we could go out and search for - and if we were lucky, could find it.

"On the other hand, joy is an internal process," she said. "It is defined by how we look at our lives." It was something we experienced when we didn't know we were experiencing it.

It could strike us in an activity such as gardening, listening to music etc, she pointed out. "We experience joy when being involved in an activity. We often repeat the experience hoping that we can get lost in it again."

The pursuit of happiness and joy was a lifelong process and we should stop seeking pleasure. However, this was a hedonistic society with the need to find self-pleasure, but paradoxically this did not achieve happiness.

It is important to love "what is" and not just what we want - or think we want.

"Because, what is, is what is."

She said we must accept this because "we all have suffering; every single one of us has challenges".



Guest speaker Judy Alter speaks on "Finding Joy".



Mother and daughter Ronel and Michel Zeff (Ronel is King David Schools Foundation's marketing officer).



Elliot Wolf, executive director of King David Schools Foundation with Matie and Bianca Talpert.



Gina Itzikowitz and Laura Isaacman.



Tracey Cohen and Zilla Rakusen.



Robynne Posniak, Laura Sack and Heather Gluckman.



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COMMUNITY BUZZ

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JOHANNESBURG

From Bernard Green:

“Talking about Balfour Park: All and sundry had to pass through the ‘Louis Hack Memorial Gates’. Louis was one of the Hack family whose consisted of two sisters, Hettie and Hilda and four brothers who all originally lived at 6 Upper Page Street, Doornfontein.

“After Balfour Park Club became a shopping mall and after the Memorial Gates had its ‘relevant plaque’ stolen, the gates were removed to a new home, the Jewish Guild Club in Rivonia.

“Re the four Hack brothers: Louis, when a 24-year-old accountant enlisted in the Israeli army in 1948 as a machalnik. He was killed by a sniper’s bullet in the north of Israel on October 23 1948 a day after a truce had been declared.

“These days the accountancy practice Louis Hack had formed with Maish Litvin, namely ‘Litvin, Hack Associates’, is still going strong. Maish Hack, well-known in various sporting circles, emigrated to Israel where he passed away on a kibbutz, aged 89.

“The late Abe Hack was a prominent boxing promoter who, together with the late businessman, Dave Levin, brought out heavyweight boxing legend, ‘Rocky’ Marciano to visit South Africa on a promotional visit.

“Then there is Jack Hack who presently resides at the retirement home in Lyndhurst, ‘Elphin Lodge’. And so life and living carries on.”

PORT ELIZABETH

Denzil Levy on his father, Rev Abraham Levy:

“While at Jews’ College, Rev Levy was visiting minister to the Aldershot Hebrew Congregation, superintendent of St Stephen’s Hebrew Classes Religious Education Board and lecturer at Toynbee Hall Teachers’ Hebrew and Religious Classes. In 1903 he became qualified as an associate of Jews’ College.

“The chief rabbi, the very Reverend Dr Hermann Adler, sent for and ordered him to go to the colonies and accept the position of first minister to the new shul of the Durban Hebrew Congregation, a shul that was to be opened officially in July 1904.

“In the June 29 edition of *The Sun* newspaper in London, the following report appeared: ‘The Jewish community in London are to lose the services of one of their most popular ministers in the person of one

Rev A Levy who has accepted a call as minister of the Durban Congregation, South Africa.

“Mr Levy has endeared himself to the worshippers of the principal London synagogues and he leaves England this week with the heartiest wishes of his many friends. Mr Levy has had a brilliant academic career and he has actually identified himself with the Jewish literary societies of England and as lecturer to the teachers attending the Toynbee Hall Hebrew Extension Classes.”

a.. Toynbee Hall in East London (Great Britain) was founded in 1884 by Canon Samuel Barnett and named after Arnold Toynbee the English economist and social reformer (d 1883).

The plan was to attract students from leading universities to the east end of London to live and teach the poor and deprived inhabitants during the vacation periods.

b.. During later times it has acted as a citizen’s advice bureau offering assistance on a raft of services, many of a welfare nature. It has taken an active part in the Campaign against Racial Discrimination.

JOHANNESBURG

During a short visit to Johannesburg, journalist Paula Slier gave a talk at the RCHCC and she told about a funeral service, which she attended for a woman resident of Alexandra Township in Johannesburg.

She had died of Aids as had her husband a short while previously. Left behind were a daughter of 16 years, herself with a baby and a young brother of nine. A social worker told her that the 16 year old was now head of the household, living in a house and attempts had already been made to break into the house as criminals now knew that there were no adults to protect the children.

The fear was also that the 16-year-old could be raped. The home badly needed burglar proofing and a security system.

After the talk two members of the community separately approached Paula and one offered to pay for the security system to be installed, plus R1 000 in cash for the family; the other coincidentally offered the same amount of money and furthermore clothing for the children.

Their contact numbers have been passed on to the social worker who was so appreciative and thankful.

OPERATION MAGIC CARPET

In the *Jewish Report* of June 27, mention is made of the efforts of the Israeli government to bring Jews from Muslim countries to Israel by air soon after the establishment of the State in 1948.

There is the story of one group brought from Yemen by plane. Now, most of these Jews had never seen

an airplane, never mind ever been in one. When the plane landed in Israel (at Lod Airport as it then was), it overshot the runway with brakes screeching, then turned sideways and tilted before righting itself.

What impressed flight attendants was that there was absolutely no sign of panic or even concern among the passengers. They just remained quietly in their seats. Then the flight crew realised that the passengers obviously thought that the landing was normal, exactly as it should be.

CRICKET

From Adam Bacher:

“One hundred and nineteen cricketers of Jewish birth have played first-class cricket, 79 of them are South African and seven have been involved in international matches. They are Ali Bacher 12 tests, Manfred Susskind 5 tests, Norman Gordon 5 tests, Dennis Gamsy 2 tests, Mandy Yachad 1 test, Lawrence Seef 1 test and Adam Bacher 19 tests. Norman Gordon is the oldest living test cricketer - over 90 years old.

“The first class cricketers of other countries are as follows: Australia 15 - J Weiner played in six test matches. Raymond Phillips toured England but did not play in a Test. England has had 1, but no internationals. Ireland 1, Scotland 1, India 1, West Indies 1 - Ivan Barrow who played in 11 test matches.

“The first Jewish first-class cricketer is J E Raphael of London Counties, Oxford University and Surrey in 1901. In 1910 Solomon Levy played for Gloucestershire. The first South African was J Frank in 1925/6 and the following year C Cloenberg. In the 1928/9 season Australians R Levy and A Marks played.

“The highest scores in first-class cricket by Jewish players are: Terence Lazard Boland v Western Province 307. Ali Bacher Transvaal v Australia 235. Adam Bacher Transvaal v Griqualand West 210... M Aromstan 210* Northerns v Boland. C Grainger 233 Transvaal v OFS B. J Livingston Northampton v Somerset 210 (one of four double centuries). A Marks NSW v Queensland 201. J Wiener 201. M Yachad 200.

“An interesting point: Mike Barnard of Hampshire and Portsmouth Football Club is the only player with over 200 county cricket games and 50 matches in English First Division football, as it then was. He also played against the South African cricket team touring England in 1965 when Ali Bacher and Dennis Gamsy played - probably the only first class cricket game played in England with three Jewish players.

“He is also the only Hampshire player ever to score a century against a visiting Australian team.”

* A first-class cricket match is one played by top teams for at least three days.

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AROUND THE WORLD

NEWS IN BRIEF

AHMADINEJAD TO ATTEND UN SUMMIT

JERUSALEM - Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad plans again to attend this year's summit at the United Nations in New York.

He told state television Monday he would fly to New York in September for the annual gathering of international leaders at the UN General Assembly.

His speech, Ahmadinejad said, would discuss "ruling the world based on justice". Ahmadinejad's attendance at the UN last year drew fierce protests over his statements against Israel and in denial of the Holocaust.

The Iranian president used that visit to appear at Columbia University. A year before that, he took time out from the UN summit to address the prestigious Council on Foreign Relations in New York. (JTA)

OBAMA TO VISIT PA

JERUSALEM - US Democratic presidential hopeful, Barack Obama will meet with PA President Mahmoud Abbas in the West Bank on his Middle East trip next week.

Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat said that Obama, would visit Ramallah on July 23 and would meet with Abbas. Obama will first travel to Israel on July 22-23, where he is scheduled to meet with Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, Defence Minister Ehud Barak, President Shimon Peres and opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu, according to Israeli officials.

John McCain, the presumptive Republican presidential nominee, visited Israel in March but did not travel to the West Bank. Instead he spoke with Abbas by telephone. (JTA)

Watch the Israeli enemy from within

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY
SHELLEY ELK

RAMALLAH, Lebanon, Gaza, Kosovo... Political hotspots, war zones. These are no strangers to South African-born journalist Paula Slier. Now based in the Middle East - in Israel, matter of fact - she's also correspondent for Russia Today TV.

Slier, on a brief visit to Johannesburg, last week brought some of her latest news stories to a meeting of the United Zionist Luncheon Club in Johannesburg.

Slier's focus is in covering stories of interest involving Russians living in Israel.

"Of seven million people living in Israel, about one million are Israeli Arabs and six million are Israeli Jews and of that six million, one in six comes from the former Soviet union."

As a journalist, said Slier "you don't want to be telling the same story over and over again as "most of us are feeling right now, with the current peace talks and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, meeting almost every second week with Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas.

"Very few journalists even report on the clash of the two leaders because Palestinians and Israelis don't really have confidence that these are the right men to be nego-

tiating peace talks."

She said Olmert's popularity stood at less than five per cent and he had corruption charges and scandals hanging over his head. Slier said Israelis felt that the talks were a way of drawing attention away from Olmert's own problems at home and similarly on the Palestinian side. Abbas, the Palestinian president representing Fatah, did not represent a majority of the Palestinian people.

The belief on the ground, said Slier, was that talks between these two leaders were not going to yield any real results, but "in all likelihood there will be general elections in Israel within the next year." Labour party's Ehud Barak or Benjamin Netanyahu from Likkud, were poised to "fight it out" for a possible future prime minister position. Kadima's Tzipi Livni, also a possible contender, was the only leader in Israel with no corruption charges hanging over her head.

"The Israeli landscape is rife at the moment with internal politicking," she said.

In discussing the last two terror attacks in Israel, namely the "bulldozer rampage" which caused the death of three people and the second "yeshiva incident" a few months ago, where a terrorist shot and killed young yeshiva students, she said: "The feeling is that some

of the assistance is coming from insiders (within the country). Even when you have a suicide bombing, a lot of the suicide bombers come from outside but they need somebody inside Israel to drive or guide them to the venue or assist them in some way.

"So, where are these people coming from? Are they coming from the Arab population inside Israel?"

Analysts and political observers, said Slier, were talking about growing dissatisfaction among the million Arabs living in Israel, presenting a "problem bubbling below the surface".

An interesting story Slier was watching in Israel, involved the religious far-right Shas Party. Shas' was mostly supported by the ultra-Orthodox. "But five per cent of those voting for Shas are Arabs. Most of the party's support since it was established in 1984, has been from North African Jews from places like Morocco."

A common set of problems they faced included a lack of electricity, money, and municipal infrastructure. Arabs living in Israel faced similar problems.

"The poorest people in Israel are



Journalist Paula Slier.

Arabs and the very religious Jews."

Leaders of Shas promised Arab communities electricity and pipes for sewerage. Arabs voted for the ultra-religious Jews not because they believe in their ideology, but because it was a way to address their concerns.

"The Arab population in Israel is also something that as journalists we believe could become a boiling pot in the future. It is a story that we keep watching."

Another very poor community in Israel was Holocaust survivors, with at least 50 per cent of them living below the poverty line. Slier mentioned an Israeli media investigation into funds from Germany earmarked for Holocaust survivors that never was distributed.

"A lot of the money from countries like Germany was supposed to go to Holocaust survivors but stayed in government hands. Investigations are still under way, but it smacks of corruption."

Many survivors did not understand their legal rights or did not know that all this money needed to be handed to them. Perhaps because survivors were the older members of the community, those in government or those responsible

for distributing the money, were hoping that "if they just keep postponing it the money will never have to be distributed".

Slier mentioned a list of the 10 most wanted Nazi war criminals recently issued by the Simon Wiesenthal Centre, which tracked down Holocaust Nazi war criminals.

"Many of these war criminals are in the former Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe, where governments are not co-operative. Ivan Demjanjuk (Ivan the Terrible) a guard at Treblinka extermination camp, was number two on the list and was tried in Israel in 1988 and sentenced to death. Due to a technicality the verdict was overturned and today he lives in the United States.

An organisation at the Simon Wiesenthal Centre was trying to campaign for him to be prosecuted or for something to be done "but in 2008 you have this list of known Nazi war criminals and nothing has been done to prosecute them".

Slier had the audience riveted with fascinating stories she has covered, including one about a "surreal interview with Abdul Kassim, atop a derelict building with his gunmen in tow", another involving Druse community members, separated by borders, who communicated at the screaming hills, and interviews with families' members of the kidnapped soldiers.

Journo and writer Henry Katzew, passes away

HELEN FEINER

WELL-KNOWN South African journalist and writer Henry Katzew, born in Johannesburg in 1912, passed away on July 11 in Sarasota, Florida, in the United States.

He was the second of the seven children of Harry and Annie Katzew, immigrants to South Africa from Lithuania at the turn of the 20th century.

From his teenage years, Henry was a journalist and writer, his

vocation for over 70 years, interrupted only by service in the South African Navy during the Second World War.

He was deeply involved in the politics of South Africa and Israel and reported and offered commentary on the political situations in both countries during the turbulent mid- and late 1900s.

Henry wrote for the Jewish, as well as the secular English and



Afrikaans press, both in Johannesburg and from abroad when he lived in England, Israel and in the United States.

He was the author of three books, a freelance journalist, and the editor of the weekly *Zionist Record* where, for many years, he wrote a column under the pen name of Karl Lemeer. He was a regular contributor to *The Star*, the *Rand Daily Mail*, *Die Beeld*, and *Rapport*.

He was an avid reader of very few books: The Book of Psalms, the works of Ralph Waldo Emerson, and the plays of Shakespeare. He entertained his children and grandchildren by reciting the famous soliloquies from Hamlet, which he knew by heart, in English, Afrikaans, and Hebrew.

In his 80s he wrote a self-published Katzew family history which is treasured by his progeny as well as his nephews and nieces.

Henry was married for 62 years

to Ethel (Simon) who passed away in 2002. He is survived by his three children, Michael (Sandra), Helen (Alec) and Tony (Celeste); by his seven grandchildren Len, Debbie, Adele, Gillian, Sharon, Rowan and Gareth; and five great-grandchildren Ella, Amelia, Kate, Asher and Isaac.

Henry Katzew led a full and fortunate life. Burial and a graveside service took place at the Beth El Cemetery in Bergen County, New Jersey, in the United States.

Bride & Groom competition elicits huge response

"THE PHONE has not stopped ringing, we have been inundated," said Marcia Parness, honorary life vice president of WIZO, about the newly-launched "Bride and Groom of Yesteryear" competition which kicked off two weeks ago.

"People in the community are very excited. They have said 'for once we are being recognised, and teachers from one of the schools (who don't qualify for the competition) said they are going to send in pictures of their parents. We are hoping for an avalanche of pictures."

Every year, for the last number of years, WIZO, in conjunction with the *Jewish Report*, has run a highly popular Jewish Bride of the Year competition.

But this year WIZO Johannesburg's Glenlinks branch has come up with a novel and fun idea that instead of the (usually) young brides in the competition, they will be

running a competition for couples who have been married for at least 40 years.

WIZO's "Bride & Groom of Yesteryear" is looking for your wedding pictures!

Couples who have been married for at least 40 years and are resident in South Africa, are eligible to enter. All you need to do to enter, is a hard copy wedding photograph of you and your spouse, together with the details appearing in the entry form. Prizes are still being finalised, but it's guaranteed to be mouth watering stuff!

Finalists must be present at the culminating function in Johannesburg on November 16 (at their own cost) where the winners will be announced. The venue will be announced later.

Entries for the competition close on October 24 and the final date on which photographs will be published is November 7.

"Judging," said Parness, "will be done by a panel who are not participating in the competi-

tion. Finalists will be announced, and must be present at the function, where elimination will occur."

Chairman of WIZO Glenlinks, Alice Butkow, and Parness are co-ordinating the competition.

Rules of the competition:

- Couple must be married for a minimum of 40 years.
- Resident in South Africa.
- Entries must accompany a hard copy photograph.
- Finalists must be present at the culminating function on November 16. Out of town finalists must note that travelling expenses are for their own account.

Photographs can be delivered to the WIZO Johannesburg offices at Beyachad, 2nd Floor, 2 Elray Street Raedene. (for either Rolene/Sandy or Sheila's attention).

Entry form:

• Bride and groom's name and bride's maiden name.
• Place of chuppah and date of wedding
• Contact numbers: cell, business, home
• E-mail address
• Postal address
• Signature of consent
• Would you like your picture back: yes/no



Harry and Lorraine Rosmarin (nee Harris), at their wedding on February 27 1966 at Cyrildene Shul.



Hymie and Alice Butkow (nee Savitz) at their wedding on August 19 August 1956 at Beth Hamedrash Hagadol, Doornfontein.



Bernard and Lily Neuhaus (nee Naim) at their wedding on October 27 1963 at Oxford Shul.



Harry and Doreen Malin (nee Woolfson) at their wedding on December 13 1953 at Yeoville Synagogue.



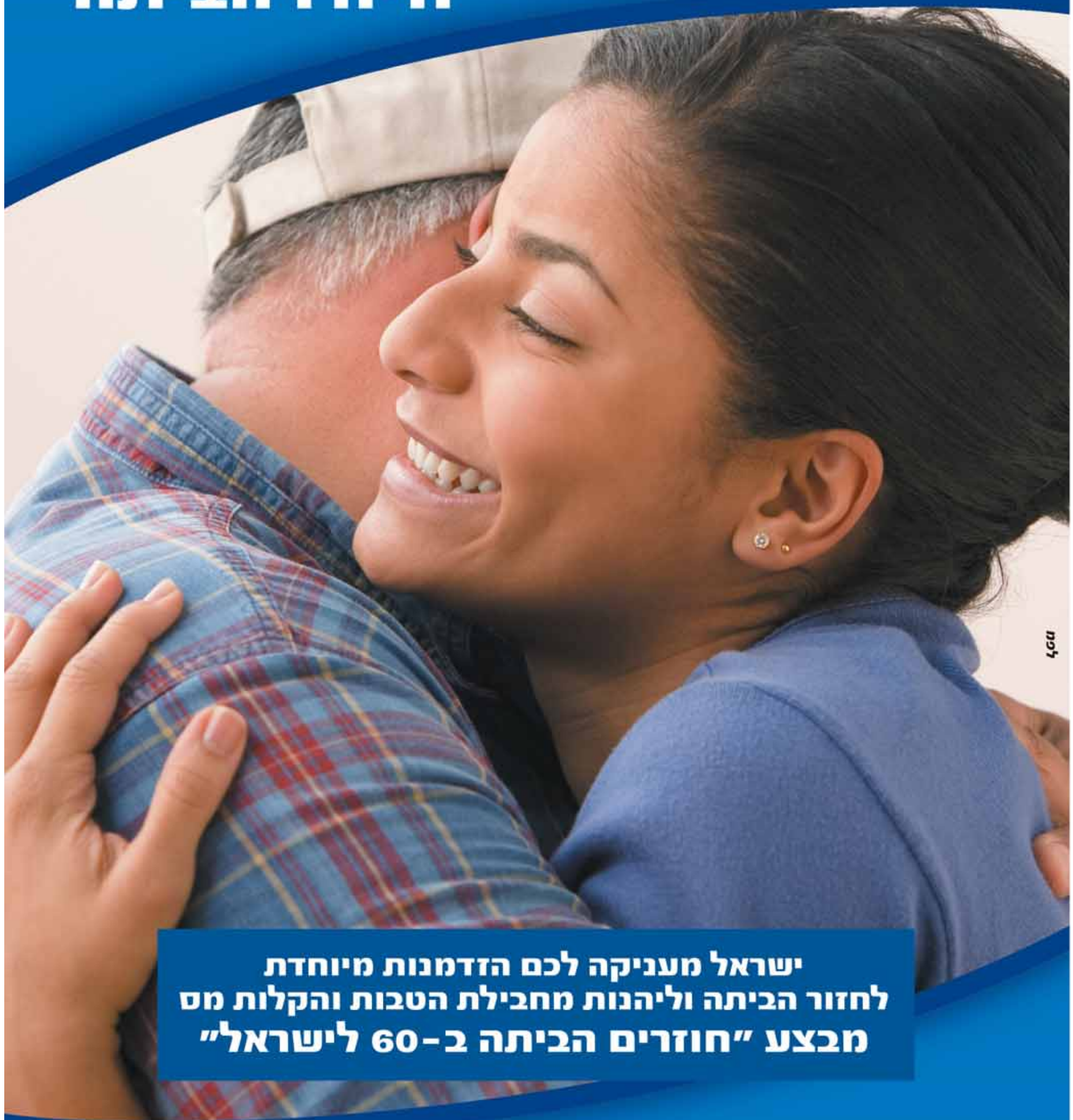
Billy and Pearl Kahn (nee Sive) at their wedding on November 27 1949 at Greenside Shul.



Lester and Irene Fainman (nee Krausz) at their wedding on November 16 1958 at Yeoville Shul. The function is on the day of their 50th anniversary.

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OPINION AND ANALYSIS

FORUM FOR DIVERSE VIEWS

Jewish Report

‘Human rights’ delegation to Israel - naive or serious?

THE VISIT of the “human rights” delegation to Israel has generated significant debate (see articles on pages 10-12). Good leadership should make the parties concerned with the issue embrace such engagement, if the visit is not to end up as merely an episode that came and went, without generating anything positive.

This will not be easy - debate on the interminable Israeli-Palestinian conflict tends more often than not to quickly degenerate into vitriol, with everybody shouting and no-one listening. But if it is done in good faith, it can potentially enhance understanding on all sides, and perhaps even lead to more capable, well-intentioned people being drawn to working together for Middle East peace rather than slandering each other from across a chasm.

Aside from some angry letters to the *Jewish Report* even before the delegation left, the response of the mainstream Jewish community to the visit, including its official leadership, has been measured - at least publicly. A “wait-and-see” approach has been adopted, giving the delegates the benefit of the doubt.

For some Jews, under the surface lies instinctive mistrust, involving questions such as: Why did they go with trumpets blaring, as self-appointed “human rights activists” - which has a slightly pompous ring to it - instead of quietly visiting on a fact-finding mission if they wanted to learn about the situation?

If their objective is to help end Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, was it not also imperative to engage with the hugely complex macro-political reality and “peace process”, and not only focus on the “facts on the ground” in Hebron and other places - which do not tell the whole story about why things are the way they are?

Is this not naïve? Some Jews contend that their itinerary was slanted towards seeing abuse of Palestinian human rights by Israelis, more than abuse of Israeli human rights by Palestinians engaged in terrorism.

To these questions the delegation will justifiably react with its own answers and questions. Most members are experienced, serious people who have “paid their dues” by courageously standing up for human rights in this country in tough circumstances, and can draw on a reservoir of meaningful activism.

They feel a kinship with the human rights activists, both Israelis and Palestinians, with whom they linked up during their trip. They cannot be dismissed in a knee-jerk fashion as if they were merely driven by obsessive hatred of Israel.

Some members of the delegation would ask their own uncomfortable questions of the Jewish community, such as: Why does a discussion of human rights issues in Israel/Palestine evoke such anxiety in the community? If most South African Jews support a two-state solution to the conflict, why are they not criticising the expanding settlements in the West Bank, which are rapidly making the achievement of such a solution impossible? Do Jews here not know that there is a significant group of full-blooded Israelis, who have served in the army and are loyal to their country, who are working in NGOs - such as the ones who hosted the delegation - together with Palestinians to cross the barriers of hatred and seek non-violent solutions to the conflict?

Why is it so hard to criticise Israel without being called a “self-hating Jew” or anti-Semite? And so on.

There are no simple answers to the above questions, either in the first list or the second. Some of them evoke furious responses from people on the other side - the bitter blame-game of accusation and counter-accusation quickly gets going.

But it is noticeable that since the delegation returned, both sides seem to be demonstrating - at least in their public pronouncements - a desire to engage with each other in good faith. If this continues, perhaps something new and positive can come out of it. It is worth the try.

Case for (human) rights or wrongs

A SELF-STYLED “human rights delegation” from South Africa has just returned from the West Bank and East Jerusalem, where they met with Israeli and Palestinian human rights organisations, whose primary purpose is to lobby against the effects of Israel’s occupation of the disputed territory.

One of the group was Jonathan Berger, who during the trip posted his impressions of his visit to Hebron, on his *Mail & Guardian* Thought Leader blog. It seems that they were greeted by “settlers with a loudhailer, loud voices and abusive language”, the poor sensitive souls!

Berger devotes a lot of space to exposing the ultra-rightwing views of Baruch Marzel, whose Jewish National Front (which received, as Berger himself points out, just under one per cent of the vote in the 2006 Israeli elections) among other things calls for “a state run according to Torah laws, the ‘encouragement’ of Arab emigration and the expulsion of Israel’s enemies”.

The latter is defined to include “terrorists, terrorism sympathisers and those who call for the destruction of Israel”. Muses Berger, it presumably also included those who called for “a single democratic state for all in the territory of Israel, the West Bank and Gaza”.

Funny - Berger never mentions Hamas, which can be seen as the Palestinian equivalent of the Jewish National Front. Hamas, after all, seeks a state run according to Islamic law (while its Charter envisages not the emigration but physical annihilation of all Jews, not just in Israel, but everywhere).

Nor does he mention Fatah, the other main Palestinian political grouping, whose Palestinian National Covenant states that only Jews who lived in Palestine before the “Zionist invasion” (ie before 1917) will be regarded as Palestinian. The remainder would also presumably be “encouraged to emigrate”.

Together, Hamas and Fatah won well over 90 per cent of the Palestinian vote in the last elections. As such, they overwhelmingly represent the opinion of the Palestinian popula-



BARBARIC YAWP
David Saks

tion. Berger, however, was more interested in publicising what a small, Israeli fringe group had to say.

There was another odd anomaly in Berger’s post. Marzel’s hatred, he points out, was “not limited to Palestinians and so-called self-hating Jews”. In November 2006, he had threatened violence against lesbian and gay people as well.

Well, there you have it. Homosexuals had better watch out if they go anywhere near Jewish settlers. But Berger knows as well as I do that under Israeli law, homosexual activity is not proscribed, but on the contrary, is fully protected.

Moreover, homosexuals can march publicly in the streets of Jerusalem openly proclaiming their “orientation”, even when this is repugnant to the great majority of the inhabitants of the city. Palestinians who behaved similarly in Gaza or Ramallah would face the death penalty. Did this slip Mr Berger’s mind?

Apropos “self-hating Jews”, Berger describes this as a widely used tool by “Marzel and his goons”, and those like them. Actually, I am none to comfortable with the expression myself.

It seems to me that far from being “self-hating”, Jewish-born Israel bashers are more often than not awfully fond of themselves. No doubt at least some of them conscientiously see themselves as Hebe versions of Bram Fischer or Beyers Naudé, that is, as brave, principled voices of conscience willing to brave the wrath of their Neanderthal community of origin in order to stand up for what is right.

In turn, they can always count on a

Why boycott Limmud?

SOME 25 years ago I described - in a chapter for Marcus Arkin’s book, *South African Jewry: A contemporary survey* (1984) - the specifically religious make-up of South Africa’s Jews. The portrait I drew is now almost unrecognisable.

Then, we were a unique, predominantly Orthodox and fiercely pro-Zionist community, deeply attached to tradition. A small Reform community had emerged in 1933 against considerable opposition.

One reason for its smallness may be that a large body of Orthodox Jews, who did not follow a fully observant lifestyle, felt no need to change their affiliation. They could ride to shul on Shabbat and pick and choose which mitzvot to observe.

I labelled them the “non-observant Orthodox” and their predominance was the key to understanding the religious expression of our community at the time.

The preponderance of Orthodox affiliation in South Africa is an accident in history because such Jews would have felt distinctly uncomfortable in an Orthodox congregation in the US, for example.

The rabbinate, of course, did not encourage this religious laxity as Orthodoxy, in essence, cannot. But they did not condemn it either. As long as Jews were affiliated to Orthodoxy, it was felt, there was room for improvement. One aspect severely lacking, however, was Jewish scholarship.

But, by the mid-’80s, a resurgence of Orthodoxy had begun. The large synagogue was being displaced by new house shuls. Young people were attracted to the more holistic lifestyle that they - centred on charismatic young rabbis and accompanied by intensive Torah study - offered.

They also attended in droves evening shiurim, hugely boosting traditional Jewish scholarship.

I noted the petty rivalry among these emerging groups, their challenge to some of the established institutions - like the



ON BALANCE
Jocelyn Hellig

chief rabbinate, and the clearly non-Zionist stance espoused by some of them.

But I was optimistic. The new diversity was an indication of congregational strength and seemed also to promise intellectual diversity in South African Jewish expression. Alas, that was not to be.

Over the years, rabbinic positions have hardened. Despite the infinite range of possible interpretations available in the Talmud, specific rulings on a host of issues are foisted onto the community - like barring female singers at Jewish occasions of a wholly secular nature.

It comes as no surprise, therefore, that the Southern African Rabbinical Association has banned Orthodox rabbis from participating in this year’s Limmud programmes in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban (SAJR July 4 2008).

Limmud, (literally “learning”) founded in the UK in 1980, has spread like wildfire. It has become the premier Jewish learning and cultural experience for Jews the world over, appealing to Jews from a wide range of backgrounds.

I was privileged to participate in the inaugural meetings in both Johannesburg and Cape Town last year. A small group of young Jews had taken upon themselves the task of organising a massive programme of multiple parallel sessions covering every conceivable area of Jewish interest - like Jewish history, philosophy, literature, music, sociology and talmudic learning.

Knowing how phlegmatic Jewish youth

heavily partisan press to promote their activities. Rampant egomania rather than self-hatred would seem to motivate them.

But one should not generalise (something I am prone to do when formulating my Grand Unifying Theories). Even the most left-leaning of the Jewish members of the above-mentioned delegation are far from being in the Kasrils-Zapiro mould.

There is also no reason to doubt the sense of dismay they feel over an objective reality in which large numbers of Palestinian Arabs are being subjected to a whole range of repressive measures by Jews. They want this situation to end, and so do the rest of us.

It is when it comes to apportioning blame that the differences emerge. There would seem to be a mental block, a wilful myopia, among many of Israel’s critics, whether Jewish or not.

I do not refer here to those who are motivated by hatred of Israel and who merely use the Palestinian plight as a way of legitimising that hatred. Rather I mean the soft left, who are probably genuine in their desire to see the conflict resolved for the sake of both parties, but cannot bring themselves to hold the Palestinians accountable for their actions.

True, suicide bombings are condemned, but almost as an afterthought, so heavily weighted is the criticism of Israel’s counter-terrorism measures (not, of course, described in such terms by them).

Moreover, terrorism is denounced as a kind of abstract evil; almost never are the perpetrators of that evil - which includes the Palestinian political and religious leadership, media, the educational system - singled out by name.

What this amounts to is that the Palestinians are not regarded as actors capable of determining their own destiny, but as victims who are acted upon by an all-powerful “other”. Apart from failing to dissuade them from pursuing policies that are both morally repugnant and counter-productive, it is fundamentally patronising.

can be about Jewish culture, I had doubts whether all the parallel sessions would adequately be attended. But, as the one-day programme in Johannesburg got going, cellphones began to buzz. By lunchtime, all the venues were filled.

Hundreds of Jews, mostly young and unaffiliated, had poured in, attracted by the very diversity that characterises Judaism at its best and that has been increasingly silenced by the Orthodox rabbinate.

There are at least two ways of studying Judaism. The first is characterised by intensive study of the holy texts as a guide to life and basis for religious devotion. The scriptures (including the Talmud) are regarded as the word of G-d, immutable and unaffected by time or space. All parts are regarded as equal in relevance and value.

The second approach emerged after the Enlightenment. It steps outside of these texts, examining them critically and assessing their role in Jewish history and institutions. Growth and change, it asserts, are the universal concomitant of all human institutions.

These two modes of study are essentially antithetical, but not in all areas. The ideally educated Jew should be a master of both.

In a religious tradition as rich and sophisticated as Judaism’s, the open-minded should be able to cope with ambiguity. Our tradition does not call for blind faith.

The triumph of Orthodoxy here has given our Orthodox leadership a virtual stranglehold over our community. Since it views study of areas outside of the Talmud, its commentaries and codes, with suspicion and scorn, we have to be censored as well.

Limmud’s purpose is to inform and build, not to destroy. Is Orthodoxy here so unsure of its status that it needs to suppress the best chance we have of feasting on a cornucopia of Jewish scholarship?

OPINION AND ANALYSIS

FORUM FOR DIVERSE VIEWS

Human rights in the ‘here and now’

DORON ISAACS

TWENTY THREE South Africans from diverse backgrounds spent an incredible and important week in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. We went with modest aims, with no illusions as to what we might achieve, but we came away feeling that every minute had been worth it.

The challenge now, to all of us, is to create the space for a rational, reflective discussion in which the entire South African community can participate; a discussion which needn’t threaten our community, but rather allow us to make friends and build the kind of cross-cultural partnerships that we were so privileged to see in Israel and Palestine.

This human rights delegation was born out of friendships between South Africans and Israelis. In late 2002, the day Officer Mikhael Menkin finished his army service, he boarded a flight to South Africa.

He wanted physical and mental space from his role as a soldier in the West Bank - like many young Israelis who travel to India and South America - and he came, with Rabbi David Rosen’s help, to work for human rights in South Africa, ultimately as personal assistant to Treatment Action Campaign Chairman Zackie Achmat.

Certain comrades objected to the choice of an IDF soldier, but Zackie shrugged them off and built a close bond with the young officer, a practising Orthodox yeshiva graduate. I met Mikhael and spent hours trying to unpick his theological contentions, also building a strong friendship.

In 2007 he visited us again. He had founded “Breaking the Silence”, an organisation that recorded over 300 Israeli soldiers testi-

fying to on-duty acts they had come to regret. I had spent time marching for human rights for Zimbabwe, and litigating with TAC for Aids treatment, while remaining involved in the Jewish community.

Mikhael said they needed our help. He told me that Israelis and Palestinians working for peace were courageous, but too weak to turn the tide of history without international support.

He also told me about life in Palestinian villages in the West Bank, places I had never visited despite more than 10 visits to Israel. And about Palestinians he worked with: people with names. Thereafter Mikhael and his Israeli and Palestinian partners began working with Nathan Geffen, Andrew Feinstein and myself.

We decided to take a group of impeccably credentialed people to support the joint Israeli-Palestinian work being done, and to witness life under occupation, while also spending considerable time in Israel and paying attention to Israel’s concerns.

Unlike the usual approach of progressive South Africans interested in Israel/Palestine, we did not come with South African solutions or with much focus on solutions at all.

This was about human rights in the here and now: if all parties could be held to respect each other’s rights, then perhaps the conditions for a settlement could emerge. With that in mind we built a programme with considerable focus on the law: its use and misuse.

It was crucial that the delegation was independent. If we had collaborated with the Jewish communal leadership most of the delegates would not have accepted invitations. Moreover, we wanted legitimacy not only in



Jewish eyes, but in all South African eyes.

In order to speak, and be heard, on the immoral and counterproductive use of violence against Israeli civilians, total independence was the only sensible choice. But this should not be mistaken for disregard of the community.

On the contrary, unlike other Jewish critics of Israel we do not separate ourselves from the Jewish community, but are part of it. We do not ridicule Jewish fears and concerns because we share them. And if others neglect domestic human rights abuses while focusing on Israel’s, the members of this delegation have been, and remain, among the most vocal voices in this country, sometimes at personal cost.

What we saw in Israel and the West Bank devastated us. We were disturbed by the pictures of young Palestinian “martyrs” in Nablus, and the lack of non-violent popular forms of organisation in Palestinian society.

But we also began to understand the dehumanising conditions under which they live. There is far less poverty and death in the West Bank than there is in South Africa, but the extent of the control, the utter denial of normal life, is an unspeakable impairment on people’s dignity.

Nablus is surrounded on all sides by settlements and checkpoints, creating a feeling of permanent siege. The West Bank, beyond the separation barrier, has separate roads for settlers, separate legal systems, separate electricity grids, separate water systems, and a permit system of never-ending permissions and refusals simply to move or stay in an area.

Syria’s Assad snubs Olmert

DEVORAH LAUTER AND JTA STAFF
PARIS

DESPITE OVERTURES by Israel’s prime minister to Syrian President Bashar Assad, Assad refused to acknowledge, shake hands, be photographed with, or listen to Ehud Olmert when the two shared a conference room at last Sunday’s Union for the Mediterranean in Paris.

Just hours before the Paris summit, Olmert sent Assad a message pressing for direct talks between the two countries before a new US administration takes office, and insisting on his “serious” desire for peace.

Israel and Syria are engaged in indirect peace talks through mediation by Turkey, which delivered Olmert’s latest message to Assad.

But Assad chose to rebuff Olmert rather than engage in any rapprochement with him at the 43-nation Paris confab.

“We are not seeking symbols,” Assad told a French TV station, saying he avoided a handshake with Olmert because Syria and Israel were still only in indirect peace talks.

In some ways, the elaborate conference held at the Grand Palais, an imposing Art Nouveau structure with a glass roof and pale green arches, served to highlight the long road left to go before Israel is recognised by some of its Arab neighbours in the Mediterranean region.

Several Arab leaders refused to be photographed with the Israeli leader, so there was no joint photo at the meeting’s end.

A Reuters photographer captured a shot of Olmert apparently trying to catch Assad’s attention while Assad blocks his face with his hand to avoid eye contact.

On Monday, an Israeli official said in an interview with JTA that although “Olmert sat through and listened to everything Assad said” during the Syrian leader’s speech at the conference, “Assad left when Olmert spoke”.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy denied that any intentional snub took place



Syrian President Bashar Assad, right, accompanied by the leaders of Lebanon, Qatar and France, refused to be photographed with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert at the summit in Paris. (CREDIT: DEVORAH LAUTER)

on Sunday. Assad reportedly left the conference room for hallway consultations a half-hour before Olmert spoke.

Last week, Israeli and French officials had expressed hopes that some sort of direct contact between Assad and Olmert might take place at the weekend summit.

Before the conference, Olmert asked Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan to convey to Assad that Olmert was “extremely serious in his desire to move forward in peace talks” with Syria, Israeli officials said.

Despite the undiplomatic manoeuvring, attendees and observers noted that the broad participation in the conference might have helped lay a foundation for improved dialogue and co-operation in the region.

The leaders of such countries as Syria, Algeria, Morocco and Israel all shared a common table, and they reached some concrete agreements toward improving co-operation on regional issues.

Assad’s cold shoulder wasn’t the only snub at the conference. Morocco’s king reportedly skipped a meeting attended by the president of Algeria due to the rivalry between the two countries.

Despite Assad’s avoidance of Olmert, Assad told Al-Jazeera TV on Sunday that he wanted to “normalise” relations with Israel once a peace accord was reached. (JTA)

South African
Human Rights Delegation
to Israel and The Occupied
Palestinian Territories

From 5-11 July twenty three South African human rights
leaders were in Israel and the West Bank.

OCCUPATION AND COEXISTENCE: A REPORT
BACK ON 5 EXTRAORDINARY DAYS

Some members of the delegation will discuss the time
they spent together in the Middle East. They will offer
their insights on the problems of Israeli-Palestinian
relations and occupation. Ways forward, both there
and in South Africa, will be suggested. An open
discussion will follow.

CAPE TOWN:

Speakers: Dennis Davis (Judge & SAJBOD),
Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge (MP) & Barbara Hogan (MP)
Date: Tuesday 22 July
Time: 7pm
Venue: Albow Centre, Hatfield Street
(Also, with other speakers, Monday 21st 7pm at Bo Kaap Museum and Monday 23rd 6pm at UCT)

JOHANNESBURG:

Speakers: Jody Kollapan (Chairperson Human Rights
Commission), Janet Love (Director LRC & ANC NEC) &
Mondli Makhanya (Editor Sunday Times)
Date: Monday 28 July
Time: 7pm
Venue: WITS University, Senate House SH6

OPINION AND ANALYSIS

FORUM FOR DIVERSE VIEWS

Israeli visit ‘depressing and inspiring’

MOIRA SCHNEIDER
CAPE TOWN

GEOFF BUDLENDER found his visit to Israel as part of a group of 23 South African human rights activists, both “depressing and quite inspiring”. A former president of Nusas and anti-apartheid activist since his student days at the University of Cape Town, he now chairs the UCT Council.

He told *Jewish Report* that the visit was depressing “because of the circumstances in the occupied territories, where life seems very hard, very divided and very undermining of any attempt to build consensus.

“On the other hand, we were with wonderful young Israeli and Palestinian activists who are working for peace - it was really very inspiring and very moving to see what they are doing.”

Budlender, a practising advocate who has served as an acting judge of the High Court, noted that the group only saw “one piece” of the situation, saying that its attention was more focused on conditions in the occupied territories.

“We got a good picture of what was happening there, but we didn’t try to see Israel itself, neither did we really go there to suggest solutions for the problems that they have.”

The five-day trip has brought him no closer to having a view on what the answers might be, but he feels that the “seemingly perpetual occupation and the seemingly ever-greater separation” do not bode well for a consensual solution. What also struck him forcibly was the “very deep impact” that the suicide bombings have had on the Israeli people.

“Now standing back, one can see that they’ve not only caused terrible suffering, but were actually a terrible strategic mistake and miscalculation by those who were carrying them out and have also made any solution much more difficult. Everybody still clearly has them in their minds and understandably so.”

He agreed that the phenomenon has “coloured Israel’s response” in terms of the security measures it has adopted. Nor, he said, could one dispute the fact that the separation wall had been effective in putting an end to the suicide bombings.

“One can understand that that is a high priority for Israel, but on the other hand, it seems to have other lasting consequences which just make settlement difficult.”

Budlender said he had “certainly” gained a greater understanding of Israel’s predicament since going on the trip. “But I have to say that it seems to me that the response is in the wrong direction - and I’m not sufficiently well-informed to say what ought to be done - but I do think that a response which is increasing separation and what seems to be an increasingly harsh occupation, are reducing the prospects of a settlement.”

He recalls feeling despair during a visit to Hebron when ultra-Orthodox settlers rounded on the group and its three Israeli peace activist tour guides, hurling abuse at them and “causing a helluva commotion”. When police arrived, they arrested the tour guides for disturbing the peace.

“This was a very vivid illustration of what we had previously been told by some Palestinians we’d met in Hebron, who said the police were not a neutral force and would not take any action against the settlers.”

Budlender has agreed to work with some of the lawyers doing human rights and peace work in Israel, by helping to set up networks of lawyers in other parts of the world that can assist them in various ways.



Advocate Geoff Budlender. (PHOTO: UCT)

South Africa’s false halo

BEN COHEN
Z WORD BLOG

I FIRST learned of the visit of a “South African human rights delegation to Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories” when I was on a brief visit to London last week. In a corner store I flicked through that day’s edition of *The Independent* and came across an article by Donald Macintyre, the paper’s Jerusalem correspondent, headlined “This is like apartheid”.

“Veterans of the anti-apartheid struggle,” Macintyre began, “said last night that the restrictions endured by Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied territories was in some respects worse than that imposed on the black majority under white rule in South Africa.” And so on.

Over the next few days, I did some more research and established that the delegation’s perspective, despite a website with the hackneyed image of a gun-toting Israeli soldier and smiling Palestinian kids, was a little more nuanced than Macintyre’s account allowed for.

Even so, my initial reaction to his piece (basically, “why on earth are the judgments of this group portrayed as definitive?”) remains, I think, valid.

Because of the legacy of apartheid, South African interventions into international debates about human rights enjoy a certain privilege. Therefore, when the word “apartheid” is invoked, people, especially those on the liberal left, tend to stop and listen, even if, as Rhoda Kadalie and Julia Bertelsmann have so eloquently argued, it is done stupidly and maliciously, as it is in the case of Israel.

I am tired of this halo effect, and I don’t think I am alone. Yes, South Africa has made some huge advances since the nefarious apartheid regime was dismantled, but South Africa is not the embodiment of global conscience.

It is one state among many. The views of its leaders, parliamentarians and opin-

ion-formers are just as prone to error and distortion as those of the rest of us.

But whereas Jews are frequently told, when it comes to Israel, that they are either exploiting the Holocaust or ignoring its lessons, post-apartheid South Africans are seen as untouchable.

No matter what their government does elsewhere in the world, any South African with even a vague amount of clout who analogises Israel and apartheid, is guaranteed a respectful, even gleeful, audience.

Hence the innate power of a human rights delegation to Israel and the Palestinian territories. If South Africans are there expressing concern, the logic goes, then that is because of the inescapable comparisons with apartheid.

By virtue of being South Africans, they know, better than we do, what human rights abuse really means, especially in the Middle East. It is a particularly intriguing and effective way of muzzling debate.

Yet reality has to intrude. The record of South Africa’s government over neighbouring Zimbabwe, where (President Robert) Mugabe has turned torture and political murder into a grizzly routine, has been a disgrace.

On the very day that Macintyre’s report was published, South Africa voted against a UN Security Council resolution toughening sanctions against Mugabe and his cronies.

In the last 40 days, in defiance of the UN’s main refugee agency, South Africa has sent a breathtaking 17 000 Zimbabwean refugees back to Mugabe’s hell on earth. And that’s not even mentioning the anti-foreigner pogroms which erupted across the country in May, leaving scores dead and injured.

Imagine if, during this unspeakable violence, a group of Israelis, solemnly invoking the persecution, ghettoisation, murder and genocide which have indelibly marked the Jewish experience, had

landed in Johannesburg on a fact-finding mission. Such a delegation would have been - to say the least - mocked and reviled.

Does it then follow that all of the conclusions of the delegation to Israel and the Palestinian territories should be dismissed? No, not necessarily. Certainly, the delegation’s credibility was done no favours by Macintyre, or by an even more ludicrous article in *Ha’aretz* penned by Gideon Levy.

Their complete inattention to the security-driven aspects of Israeli policy - put bluntly, how many suicide bombers were there from Soweto? - was jaw-dropping. But their collective conclusions were basically moderate, if unremarkable (...“it is clear to us that there should be freedom and security for all who live here”), and occasionally astute (for example, High Court Justice Dennis Davis observing to the BBC that if “Israelis and Palestinians are serious about a two-state solution, it has to be an amicable divorce because they are going to end up living side by side”).

All of this is trumped, however, by a truth that the delegation will find unpalatable. It is only because of the false, ugly apartheid analogy that their views are given more credence than those of a delegation from Mexico, say, or Iceland.

In other words, this seemingly noble discourse rests upon a lie.

Some South Africans might draw the right conclusion from that, and focus instead on a principled, genuinely international fight against racism, rather than franchising the word “apartheid” out of political expediency.

A delegation might be sent to, for example, Italy, which has been sharply rebuked by the European Parliament for fingerprinting Gypsies (although they should be as wary of saying “apartheid” there too; it’s more properly called “discrimination”). Or they could focus on their own continent.

Palestinian situation ‘shocks’ Achmat

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY
MOIRA SCHNEIDER
CAPE TOWN

ZACKIE ACHMAT, chairman of the Treatment Action Campaign, describes his first trip to Israel as part of a South African human rights delegation, as “a life-changing experience”.

He added on his return: “It made me understand a great deal better where people who are angry with Israel, are coming from and also reinforced my understanding that non-violent, joint work is the only way out of this crisis,” he said.

“Of course there has to be a solution that gives freedom and human rights to everyone and also gives security to both sides.”

Although the idea of the visit was to examine human rights violations on both sides of the conflict, Achmat said the key focus was “to learn first-hand what is meant when people say that Palestinians are oppressed; we learned an incredible amount”. The group also met with Israel’s chief justice and a range of Israeli and Palestinian peace activists who work together.

While ill-health prevented Achmat from joining the group on its visit to the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial, he felt that this had been “critical” to members’ understanding of the Jewish community’s fears.

“Being in Israel, at the holy sites, gave people a very, very different perspective” from that gained by being exposed to “filtered” sources such as books and the media, he noted.

Achmat said he was moved to tears on several occasions, one of which took

place during an unofficial visit to Hebron with two Israeli colleagues. “What struck me more than anything was seeing the Star of David on the front doors of (deserted) Palestinian homes - most of them had been forced out - and seeing it used the way the swastika was used, as a symbol of oppression.

“For me, that was the most painful, anti-Semitic experience that I have ever had, because I felt it a deep insult to every victim of the Holocaust.”

He described seeing video footage - which he hopes to show here - of settler children harassing, stoning and beating Palestinian children and older teachers on their way to school in the area on a Saturday, while the police, the army and settlers stand by.

Achmat said that after the principal closed the school on Saturdays, the settlers burnt half of it down. He stated that “a big problem” under Israeli law was that children below the age of 14 years could not be held responsible for their actions, “so the settlers get their kids to do things they can’t do themselves”.

Comparing the levels of hate in these children and in those of the Palestinian refugee camp at Nablus which the group visited, Achmat commented that “among the people who hate each other, never under apartheid did I see such hate”.

He said that from being “a little bit more pro-Zionist” when he left, he had come back “non-Zionist and pro peace and security for both sides. I never knew that things were as bad for the



Zackie Achmat.

Palestinians,” he explained.

“For a long time, I understood the predicament that the Israelis were in because I learned a great deal through the Jewish community here. Being in the territories, I actually got a greater understanding of the predicament that the Palestinians are in.”

Achmat said he found the “incredible” control that the state and the security apparatus had over Palestinians’ lives, “deeply shocking. I

couldn’t believe that there were Israeli-only roads from which Palestinians are banned - that never happened under apartheid,” he said, adding that he disagreed with this analogy to the Israeli situation.

Stating that he was “very, very impressed” with the work of Israeli and Palestinian activists engaged in joint peace initiatives, Achmat said they were, however, “a minority. That’s what gave me hope - otherwise I probably would have hung myself in the Old City.”

The fact that he was detained briefly at Ben-Gurion Airport on arrival in the country, didn’t help matters either. “I was let out because of the immediate intervention of the Israeli ambassador in South Africa,” Achmat recalled.

Following on from the trip, Achmat hopes to have “good conversations” with the Muslim and Jewish communities here.

“What’s also important for us is to make sure that we get more people to go and see and to find ways in which we can financially, morally and personally support those (peace) activists,” he said.

OPINION AND ANALYSIS

FORUM FOR DIVERSE VIEWS

Israel recalls the 2006 Lebanon War

URIEL HEILMAN
JERUSALEM

FOR MANY Israelis, the timing of this week’s scheduled prisoner swap with Hezbollah serves as a bitter reminder of the failings of the Second Lebanon War.

Two years since the 34-day conflagration - sparked by Hezbollah taking two Israeli soldiers captive in a cross-border attack - the war’s ostensible goals appear to be unrealised.

Rather than suffering a long-term blow, Hezbollah has managed to rearm and refortify itself in Lebanon. The Iran-backed group has gained veto power over Lebanon’s government and more than tripled the number of missiles in its arsenal from before the war, according to Israeli estimates.

Hezbollah chief Sheik Hassan Nasrallah, rather than being cowed or damaged by the war, has emerged as a popular hero in the Arab world, inspiring confrontation with Israel from Gaza to Tehran.

And Israel, rather than recovering its two captive soldiers in the war, was reduced to negotiating with Hezbollah to bring its boys, Eldad Regev and Ehud Goldwasser, home.

Two years on, there is a sense in Israel that the war’s lessons have not been internalised by a government distracted by other things, from the profane to the profound.

“Reading the newspapers this week, on the eve of the second anniversary of the Second Lebanon War, you don’t know whether to laugh or cry,” Yoel Marcus wrote

in *Ha’aretz* last week.

Marcus cited Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert’s legal troubles, accusations of embezzlement against former finance minister Abraham Hirschson, Deputy Prime Minister Haim Ramon’s sexual harassment affair and former President Moshe Katsav’s demand for perks, including a new office and a car and driver, while still under indictment for sex crimes.

“Flip another page and you discover that the government debate on the Haim Ramon affair was two hours longer than an urgent Cabinet meeting this week to discuss the arms race being carried out by Hezbollah and Iran,” Marcus wrote.

“Instead of holding symposia on the past, which nothing is going to change, we need to focus on the immediate future.”

Chief among those concerns is the threat of a nuclear Iran, which is inextricably connected to the Hezbollah problem. If Israel carries out a strike against suspected nuclear sites in Iran, the Jewish state must expect a retaliatory attack from Hezbollah, Iran’s proxy in Lebanon.

According to Israeli assessments, Hezbollah now has some 40 000 missiles, with ranges of up to 185 miles (296 km). That puts most of Israel’s population within range of rocket attack, including Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and possibly even Dimona, the site of Israel’s nuclear reactor in the Negev Desert.

During the 2006 war, Hezbollah’s missiles reached no more than 45 miles (72 km) inside

Israel.

Over the past few days, Israeli Defence Minister Ehud Barak and Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni both have spoken up about the failure of UN Security Council Resolution 1701, which ended the 2006 war. The measure called for Hezbollah’s disarmament and a beefed-up UN presence in Lebanon, UNIFIL, to prevent Iranian and Syrian arms shipments from reaching Hezbollah.

“Resolution 1701 is being violated,” Barak told a Labor Party meeting on Monday. Hezbollah continues to get stronger with the ongoing and intimate assistance of the Syrians.

“The delicate balance that exists on the northern border should not be violated on the two-year anniversary of the Second Lebanon War. We should make an explicit statement: Resolution 1701 did not work, it is not working, and all indications are that it will not work in the future. It is a failure.”

What many Israeli pundits want to know is why government officials only now are complaining of the failure to implement the UN resolution.

The government’s lack of action in the face of the growing Hezbollah threat raises questions about whether the government has a clear plan for how to confront the more complex and multifaceted Iranian threat.

Professor Yehezkel Dror, a key member of the Israeli panel that reviewed the government’s performance in the 2006 war, created a stir earlier this month when he said that Olmert’s lack of a coherent defence strategy

was harming the country.

Dror added that he regretted not calling explicitly for Olmert’s resignation in the final report by the Winograd Committee.

“The current state of affairs worries me greatly; I would not trust this government with making critical decisions,” Dror told Israeli reporters.

He called on Olmert to resign, saying the prime minister clearly “does not show strategic thinking.”

“It might be tragic for the prime minister, but better have this than a tragic outcome for the state,” he said.

Dror’s call has been echoed in the Israeli media. A recent editorial in *Ha’aretz* called on Olmert to go on vacation immediately and let someone else steward the country while he sorts out his legal troubles. The Jerusalem Post urged Olmert’s political party, Kadima, to elect a new leader.

If there is a silver lining to Israel’s failures vis-à-vis Hezbollah, it is that the 2006 war served as a wake-up call for the Israel Defence Forces.

In 2006, the army found itself ill-prepared to fight the war in Lebanon due to its almost exclusive focus on Palestinian terrorism over the preceding five years. Now, military analysts say, the IDF has resumed intensive training for battles of the sort it saw in Lebanon.

That could be helpful not just against Hezbollah but if the IDF has to fight Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

Indeed, Israel’s stalemate with Hamas in Gaza is a by-product of the IDF’s shortcomings in the Lebanon War.

Taking a page from Hezbollah’s playbook in 2006, Hamas was able to use rocket fire from the Gaza Strip to leverage a ceasefire from an Israel reticent of repeating in Gaza the mistakes it had made in Lebanon - namely, launching a major military offensive against a guerrilla army in hostile territory with unclear long-term goals and the likelihood of high casualties.

But some Israeli commentators say Olmert was wrong to apply the lessons of Lebanon to Gaza, since the failures in Lebanon were in the implementation of military strategy, not the decision to go to war.

“They didn’t learn about the limits of military power, they learned about the limits of military power when it’s used ineffectively and poorly led,” Michael Oren, a senior fellow at the Shalem Centre, said of the conclusions Olmert and his Cabinet drew from Lebanon. “The army could be more effectively led, more disciplined.”

“Every time we are on the edge of victory, we stop the battle one step too soon - two years ago in Lebanon, and now with Hamas,” Israel Harel wrote in *Ha’aretz*.

“This allows the enemy to recover and claim victory, continuing the struggle, justifiably from his point of view, until the Zionist Jewish entity comes to an end.” (JTA)



Soldiers returning to Israel on July 27, 2006 after rescuing the bodies of their comrades killed in battle with Hezbollah guerrillas in South Lebanon. (CREDIT: BRIAN HENDLER)

AROUND THE WORLD
NEWS IN BRIEF

SARKOZY SAYS HE'S WORKING TO FREE SHALIT

PARIS - French President Nicolas Sarkozy said in a Bastille Day speech he would take steps to free abducted Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit.

"We're going to mobilise to get him out," the French president said on Monday after honouring Ingrid Betancourt, a French Colombian who was rescued recently after being held hostage for six years by Colombian rebels, with the Legion of

Honour. Shalit has been held captive by Hamas since 2006.

Sarkozy also told journalists that "we talked a lot about Gilad Shalit" over the course of a diplomatically charged weekend, in which unprecedented meetings were held with Syrian President Bashar Assad.

Assad may be able to push Hamas to free Shalit, who is also a French citizen. (JTA)

IRVING ON US SPEAKING TOUR

NEW YORK - Accused Holocaust denier David Irving is on a US speaking tour.

Irving is slated to speak in more than a dozen US cities in July, according to a page on the website IrvingBooks.com. The site promises "many more" appearances throughout August.

The site does not disclose the location of the talks, which are described as "private

American functions", and says it reserves the right to refuse admission. Admission costs about \$16.

Irving was largely discredited as a historian of the Third Reich after losing a libel suit brought against Emory University Professor Deborah Lipstadt in 2000. He later was jailed for violating Austrian laws regarding Holocaust denial. (JTA)

המקום יצחם אתכם

We are deeply saddened by the passing of
Ha’rav Yitzchok Dovid Groner z”tl of Melbourne,
Australia, giant of Jewish leadership, esteemed father of
Ha’rav Sholom Ber Groner, Mashpia and Rov of
Chabad Johannesburg, and Mrs Chaya Haller and their
entire family.

May Hashem comfort them, their mother and all the
family among the mourners of Zion, and may he be a
Melitz Yashar for them and Klal Yisroel.

Rabbi Mendel Lipskar
CHABAD-LUBAVITCH COMMUNITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Civic, Braamfontein: In the Nelson Mandela, “Le Grand Cirque”, until August 3. In the Tesson, “Cha Cha Heels”, until August 10. In the People’s Theatre, “Winnie the Pooh”, until August 9. (011) 877-6800.

Constitutional Court, Hill-brow: An exhibition, curated by Natalie Knight, celebrating Nelson Mandela’s 90th birth-day, until July 31. 083-399-6770.

RCHCC, Oaklands: Michael Schur’s exhibition, until July 31. (011) 728-8088.

Lyric Theatre, Gold Reef City Casino, Ormonde: “African Footprint”, choreo-graphed by Debbie Rakusin, until August 3. (011) 248-5168.

Market, Newtown: In the Laager, “A Touch of Madness” from Herman Charles Bosman’s writings, starring David Butler, until August 24. In the Barney Simon, “Ten Bush”, by Mncedisi Shabangu and Craig Higginson, until August 17. In the Main, “Maru”, by Bessie Head, directed by Phyllis Klotz, July 21 - August 24. (011) 832-1641.

Montecasino, Fourways: In the Studio, “Mooi Street Moves”, by Paul Slabolepszy, directed by Moira Blumenthal, until August 31. In the Pieter Toerien, “A Handful of Keys” with Roelof Colyn and Jonathan Roxmouth, until August 16 (011) 511-1988.

National Children’s Theatre, Parktown: “Cinderella”, direc-ted by Joyce Levinsohn, until July 26. (011) 484-1584.

Old Mutual Theatre on the Square, Sandton: “Hard Love”, a play by Motti Lerner, with Ashley Dowds and Keren Tahor, directed by Alan Swerdlow, until July 26. (011) 883-8606.

SA Jewish Museum, Cape Town: “When Cape Art was Coffee with Joe”, until July 31. (021) 465-1546.

University of Johannesburg Arts Centre, Auckland Park: In the theatre, Swiss specialists in make-believe, Mummen-schanz, until July 20. (011) 559-2099.

Victory Theatre, Houghton: “Rocky Horror Show”, choreo-graphed by Vicky Friedman, until July 31. (011) 728-9603.

Wits Theatre Complex, Bra-amfontein: The 969 Festival, showcasing highlights from the Grahamstown Festival: “Chat-ter”, by Anton Krueger in the Amphitheatre, “Bar Flies”, with Craig Morris, Gerard Bester and Rayzelle Sham, in the Downstairs Theatre, “Crocodile Tears”, directed by Tsepiso Konopi in the Nunnery. All end July 19. (011) 717-1380.

Between a touch of genius and a touch of madness

CHRISTINA KENNEDY

Show: “A Touch of Madness” (Laager, Market, Newtown (011) 832-1641)
Cast: David Butler
Director: Nicky Rebelo
Until: August 24

MANY OF Herman Charles Bosman’s stories have graced South African stages - most notably, by the late Patrick Mynhardt. But Bosman’s brief, turbulent life was arguably more fantasti-cal than his art, and this is explored in “A Touch of Madness”.

This play, culled from Bosman’s writings, first performed five years ago, remains absorbing, compelling viewing. This is largely thanks to Rebelo, a Bosmanphile who recently staged Bosman’s only known play, “Street-Woman”.

But, sporting his subject’s trademark fedora, it is David Butler who strikes the balance between portraying a touch of the man’s genius, and a touch of his madness.

Read either of the two Bosman biographies: Valerie Rosenberg’s subjective *Sunflower to the Sun* or the more sober and detailed Stephen Gray tome and you’ll realise the man who is pos-sibly the best short-story writer this country has ever produced was, undeniably a tortured soul.

Controversial rumours regarding his parentage notwithstanding, the facts speak for themselves: he was sentenced to death for the murder of his step-brother, he was married three times before his death at age 46, and he battled drug and alcohol addiction.

Without succumbing to pedantry or idealisa-tion, “A Touch of Madness” traces his life, adding fuel to the notion that much of the world’s groundbreaking creativity emanates from minds troubled and unhinged.

Using a sparse set that comprises a desk, typewriter, wine bottle and ashtray on one side, and a solitary streetlamp on the other, Butler evokes glimmers of the life of a remark-able, complex man: one who was seduced by life’s beauty, often imperilling his foothold in the real world; one whose lust for life some-times led him to make impulsive, foolish deci-sions.

A man who revelled in his status as outcast, yet who secretly pined to be among those Jeppe boys immortalised on the honours board.

It’s an engaging journey, from his birth in Kuils River in the Cape to his death in Edenvale Hospital, evoking “old” Johannesburg along the way. Don’t expect Oom Schalk Lourens tales. You’ll find



David Butler is Herman Charles Bosman, in “A Touch of Madness”. (PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY MARKET THEATRE)

extracts from Bosman’s prison memoir *Cold Stone Jug* and other musings, jigsawed together into part whimsy (his “Recognising Blues” gem brings the house down), part uncomfortable reality.

A 90-minute show can only provide a fleeting snapshot of such a life; Rebelo and Butler accomplish it immaculately. What a show! What a writer! What a man!

Heavy text negotiates hairpin twists with ease

Show: “Hard Love” (Old Mutual Theatre on the Square, Sandton (011)883-8606)
Cast: Ashley Dowds, Keren Tahor
Writer: Motti Lerner (translated from Hebrew by Anthony Berris)
Designer: Declan Randall
Director: Alan Swerdlow
Until: July 28

REVIEWED BY ROBYN SASSEN

FROM CLARINET strains, through compli-cated forays into legalities, legalisms, choic-es and punishments that comprise Jewish practice, “Hard Love” provokes. Zvi was married briefly to Hannah 20 years ago. Their paths diverged: she took the high road; he, another.

They were raised Haredi and lived in Mea Shearim. He rejected its customs and cos-tumes; she remains cupped in its shelter. Bullied by her family into another marriage with a man 35 years older, she’s scrubbed and covered according to halacha.

Sexually flippant Zvi is a novelist. He offers her something more, something less, something freer in Tel Aviv, but she needs to be eased and teased beyond the values she’s been brain-washed into. Power struggle follows; Hannah uses her womb to confuse and alienate Zvi, as she did 20 years ago.



Keren Tahor as Hannah and Ashley Dowds as Zvi in a scene from “Hard Love”. (PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OLD MUTUAL THEATRE ON THE SQUARE)

The story is not without hairpin twists, but it is text heavy. The makeup-less gauche Haredi woman, bedecked in snood, skirt to the floor and gaze there too, is easy to stereotype cruelly.

Tahor embraces her empathetically, lending her quiet dignity, which make the smashing of her beliefs horrifying. She is deliberate in ges-tures, prayer, lies, modesty. As her priorities

crackle and shift, she is revealed as an innocent with scuppered values; she must take decisions which, like her sexu-ality, remain beyond the play’s borders.

Zvi is like a character out of a Chaim Potok novel. Dowds seems too young, though he holds his Israeli accent well. His interpretation doesn’t lend convic-tion to Zvi’s history.

It manifests a worldliness that erases even a negative residue of his Haredi upbringing. Also, the magic between Hannah and Zvi sputters to life but fal-ters.

Can this work be readable for a non-Jewish audience? It is, admittedly, heav-ily peppered with traditional references, but you’ve got to look with care.

“Hard Love” is about cultural schism and love, made complex by nebulous truths, the reliability of tradition, and the thoughtless sanctuary it offers from real life choices.

This work is directed with soul, written with heart. It’s not a happy tale, but it’s not meant to be a snippet of Jewish nostalgia. Ultimately, it reflects both sides as flawed.

High road, low road, road in-between; the ground lies grey; difficult choices get made, clo-sure remains open-ended. The play is satisfy-ingly balanced.

After 8 years African Footprint still charms

Show: African Footprint
Conceived and directed by: Richard Loring
Choreography: Debbie Rakusin and David Matamela
Music/Lyrics: Dave Pollecutt
Set: Anthony Farmer
Costumes: Lindy Joubert
Lighting: Declan Randall
Sound: Mark Malherbe
Venue: Lyric Theatre, Gold Reef City
Until: August 3

REVIEWED BY PAUL BOECKKOOI

AFRICAN FOOTPRINT, like no other show in post-apartheid South Africa, represented African euphoria like we’ve never experienced before and never since. I remember the opening season in May 2000 all too well.

We were still celebrating the glowing success of our country’s transition, President Nelson Mandela proved to be a world-class statesman instead of a mere political figurehead, our econ-omy was sound, and we were all looking forward to the establishment of a real African renaiss-ance that would sweep the continent, as propa-

gated by our second democratically elected president, Thabo Mbeki.

Now, more than eight years later, history has taken its course and Richard Loring’s African Footprint is still, artistically speaking, repre-sentative of that beacon of hope and optimism - an idealistic tool to entertain the masses and to lure overseas audiences to appreciate the exotic pulling power of our African traditions.

On Saturday afternoon last week I took my 10-year-old son along to the thrill that African Footprint still is - even if, as it would be clear to any adult viewer, the subtext has shifted base over the years.

Let’s face it: We don’t need to be pussyfooting to fully realise that Loring and the company’s commitment and discipline towards the project has in no way abated. This performance with only a handful of original cast members on stage (if that many) really had one on the edge of one’s seat.

Each of the 17 scenes is still evoking the icon-ic mysteries of the continent, but also the pulse of our own country’s traditions, like the gum-boot dances, the Pantsula and the wonderful reflective quality of a long lost tradition one



Members of the African Footprint ensemble - a show still iconic after all these years. (PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY IDEA ENGINEERS)

finds in “Sophiatown Tap” with, among many other things, tap dancing setting the spirit free.

The wide spectrum of traditional and con-temporary African dancing styles as choreo-graphed by Debbie Rakusin and David Matamela, still represents the show’s core attraction. It’s the beat and the foot tapping that really lingers on.

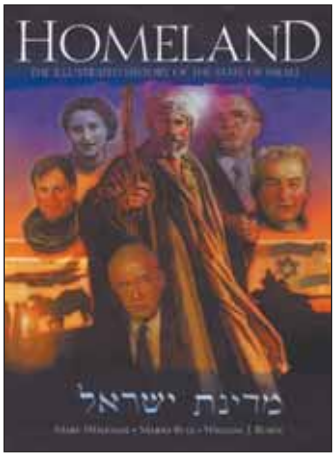
As a whole the show is as mesmerising as ever and an electrifying instrument in the sus-pension of disbelieve which many still think is the “raison d’être” for theatre in any society.

TAPESTRY

ART, BOOKS, DANCE, FILM, THEATRE

What’s new on the book front

REVIEWED BY GWEN PODBREY



Homeland: The Illustrated History of the State of Israel by Marv Wolfman, Mario Ruiz and William J Rubin (Nachshon Press, price on request)

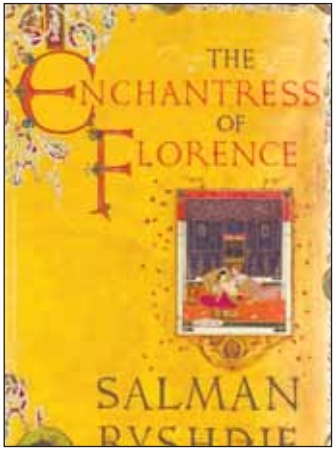
Timeously released to coincide with Israel’s 60th anniversary, this is a simplified, beautifully illustrated overview of over 3 500 years of Jewish history, starting with Abraham and culminating in the State of Israel.

While the book is really better suited to children, and draws very lightly on political and non-Jewish perspectives in contextualising the Middle East situation, it is an extremely useful pocket guide with just enough information to inspire readers to learn more.

The painted art on the pages is provocative, expressive and fresh, while the text - though brief - has been carefully chosen to convey a sense of the depth and richness of Judaism on all its levels. Highly recommended for teachers, parents, synagogues, libraries and anyone seeking pointers to our heritage. Also an ideal bar- and batmitzvah gift.

The Enchantress of Florence by Salman Rushdie (Random House, R212)

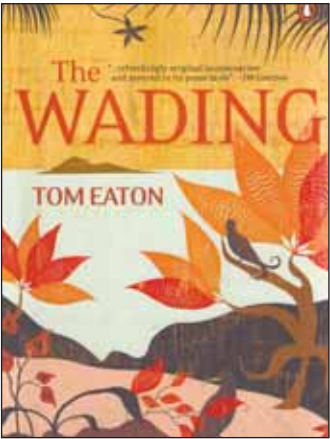
When a tall, blond European calling himself “Mogor dell’Amour” (the Mug-



hal of Love) arrives at the court of the real Grand Mughal, the Emperor Ekbar, he tells an intriguing story about his royal origins, encompassing sorcery, abduction and passion.

Against this backdrop, Rushdie presents a woman in an intensely chauvinistic world attempting to control her own life. Ultimately, the novel explores the clash of two great cities and cultures - the hedonistic Mughal capital and the equally opulent Florentine world of humanism - and the contradictory elements within them.

A seductive, disturbing novel about power, brutality and the sexes.



The Wading by Tom Eaton (Penguin, R160)

While rumblings of war threaten to disturb the idyllic tranquillity of Cape Formosa, its inhabitants still manage to retain their sense of isolation - until a regular supply aircraft flies into a storm and is forced to crash-land, stranding the pilot and his granddaughter, Claudette, on the island.

The arrival of the foreigners augurs the disruption of this peaceful world and forces a confrontation between Muller, the aged servant of an outdated regime, and young Steven Bee, the embittered son of martyrs.

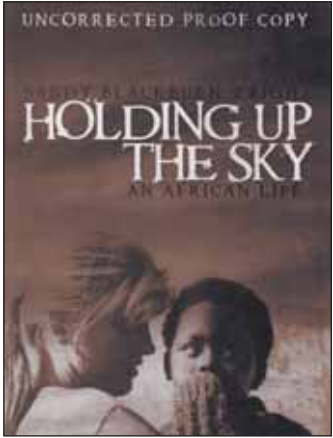
The men’s harshly contrasting views of the island, and all its history represents, clash and force them to come to terms with their personal losses, betrayals and passions.

An intriguing novel by a local columnist and screenwriter.

Holding Up the Sky: An African Life by Sandy Blackburn-Wright (Wild Dog, R175)

An autobiographical account of the Australian-born author’s 15 years in South Africa (1988-2003), at a time when the country was undergoing its most violent convulsions of socio-political change.

A community development worker in the townships, Blackburn-Wright witnessed not only the brutality of life under



apartheid, but also the astonishing resilience and spiritual richness of the regime’s victims.

Her story includes her marriage into a black family and her metamorphosis from foreign onlooker to a member of a traditional, rural family.

The demands of this transition proved to be overwhelming and she eventually left both her husband and her adopted country to return to her homeland; nevertheless, her handling of these experiences is poignant and searingly honest.

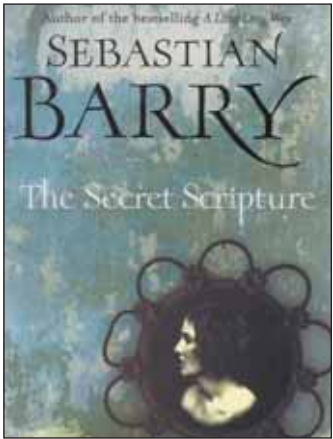
The Secret Scripture by Sebastian Barry (Faber & Faber, R199)

Roseanne McNulty is approaching her 100th birthday in the Roscommon Mental Hospital, where she has spent most of her adult life. As she prepares to die, her discussions with her trusted psychiatrist, Dr Grene - who is mourning the recent death of his wife - take on a new and urgent dimension.

While McNulty shares her own harrowing life story, encompassing abuse, ignorance and trauma in 1930s Sligo, both patient and doctor find common ground in their respective losses.

The novel challenges not only accepted wisdom by offering a secret, alternative history of Ireland, but also our definitions of sanity, madness and justice.

A beautiful - but shattering - novel from a thrilling writer.



FELDMAN ON FILM

Peter Feldman

Bank Job

Cast: Jason Statham, Saffron Burrows, Stephen Campbell Moore, Daniel Mays
Director: Roger Donaldson

“Bank Job” is a wonderfully entertaining caper. This intelligent production is loaded with plenty of surprises and its English cast turns in commanding performances.

Saddled with an uninspiring title, this juicy little enterprise, nevertheless, delivers on all fronts. It extracts the most from a true-life incident in London in 1971 and keeps the revs up throughout a lively jaunt.

A robbery took place at Lloyds Bank in London that involved a royal sex scandal. The cunning thieves, led by a credible Jason Statham and a seductive Saffron Burrows, have been seduced financially into robbing the place by highly connected people who are using them in order to get their hands on incriminating pictures in a deposit box.

Director Roger Donaldson certainly knows his craft; he fleshes out his characters, avoids flashy cinematography and edits and cranks up the suspense to almost breaking point in delivering his cinematic statement.

Woven into the fabric of the story are large number of subplots, including police corruption, MI5 gamesmanship, hard-core criminal activity (including murder and extortion) and the caper itself.

The “Bank Job” is a heist film in the classic tradition. It spends time on the plot, detailing both the planning stage and the aftermath, and though the story is complex, it’s all neatly tied up at the end. What more can one ask?

Lust, Caution

Cast: Tang Wei, Tony Leung Chiu Wai, Joan Chen, Wang Lee-Hom
Director: Ang Lee

After the success of “Brokeback Mountain,” Ang Lee’s new production is a studied and beautifully textured drama for the art house set. It also contains hot and passionate sex scenes that fall just short of outright pornography.

The sex, which is so integral to the story, however, forms just one aspect of a lengthy study of two characters slowly being seduced by one another.

Set in the Second World War period during the Japanese occupation of China, the story deals with a young woman, Wang, played by Tang Wei making a stunningly impressive debut.

She joins the resistance and is instructed by them to become the mistress of a highly placed collaborator, the ice-cold Mr Yee (a flawless Tony Leung Chiu Wai), as part of a plot to have him killed.

The narrative, which stretches between the years 1938 and 1942, has a wonderful feel for pace and period and will require patience from its audience to appreciate its many nuances. The build-up may be long and lingering, but the end result is wholly satisfying.

just**LETTING**

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The letters page is intended to provide opportunity for a range of views on any given topic to be expressed. Opinions articulated in the letters are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, staff or directors of the Jewish Report

SAJBD AND SAZF ON ‘RIGHTS TOUR’ TO ISRAEL

The recently concluded visit of a delegation of South African human rights activists to the West Bank and East Jerusalem has caused a great deal of concern in Jewish circles, particularly as members of our community were centrally involved in organising the initiative.

The express purpose of the visit was to meet with Israeli and Palestinian organisations that are working together on the ground to foster peaceful co-existence between Israelis and Palestinians and to oppose “human rights violations” resulting from Israel’s occupation of the West Bank.

In principle, the South African Jewish leadership fully supports all initiatives aimed at achieving a peaceful, negotiated settlement to the Middle East conflict. Israel itself has long demonstrated its willingness not only to negotiate with its neighbours, but also to take considerable risks and make enormous sacrifices in order to create the necessary conditions for peaceful co-existence to take root.

However, peace-making cannot be a one-way street; both sides must demonstrate, in word and deed, that they are prepared to eschew violence and make essential compromises.

In this regard, unfairly saddling Israel with the lion’s share of the blame in the failure to achieve peace is not only grossly unfair, but actually counter-productive.

The concluding statement issued by the delegation on its return clearly avoided taking an overtly political stance, nor did it seek to apportion blame for the current situation.

Rather, it expressed solidarity with those on both sides who are committed to pursuing peace, justice and normalcy for all peo-

ples in the region by non-violent means.

It is nevertheless indisputable that the itinerary was heavily weighted towards meeting with those whose focus is primarily to address Palestinian grievances, and that it is therefore highly unlikely that the group would have been sufficiently exposed to the pressing security concerns that Israelis are forced to deal with on a daily basis.

While there is no reason to doubt that the members of the delegation genuinely have the interests of both Israelis and Palestinians at heart, the failure to broaden the itinerary so as to include different, but just as relevant, viewpoints can be seen as a lost opportunity on their part.

It is also regrettable that the organisers consciously excluded the mainstream Jewish leadership from their planning. By deliberately sidelining the democratically-elected representatives of the Jewish community, they can be said to have undermined their own credibility, as well as making their initiative an exercise in preaching to the converted.

At this stage, it is not yet known how the members of the delegation will convey their experiences to the South African public at large.

Rather than prejudging what they have to say, the decision of the Jewish leadership has been to adopt a wait and see approach and respond on that basis.

Zev Krengel
National Chairman,
SA Jewish Board of Deputies
Avrom Krengel
National Chairman, SA Zionist
Federation

SUPPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS DELEGATION TO ISRAEL

HOW CAN a reasonable person not support the human rights delegation that has recently returned from Israel?

It does not seek to delegitimise Israel; its mission statement and concluding statement call for mutual recognition, freedom and security. Its members are against terrorism directed at Israelis; its mission statement explicitly speaks about non-violence and mutual security. These are available at www.humanrightsdelegation.org

In terms of Israeli policy, all it seeks to condemn is Israel’s 40 year occupation of the West Bank. To my mind, therefore, only those who support this occupation, who do not want it to end, have a reason to fear this delegation.

Those of us who want it to end, or at least know that it must, should see this group as helping to push this forward. If the leaders of the Jewish community dismiss and marginalise this group, then they will have shown their true colours as supporters of the occupation.

We are comforted by their historical sensitivity (the visit to Yad Vashem) and by their appreciation of Israeli fears (their

meeting with an Israeli father whose daughter was killed in the Ben Yehuda Street suicide bombing).

We may not feel comfortable with certain places this group is visiting: the separation barrier and refugee camps, for example. But we like to talk of balance.

Has the Jewish community ever organised a tour that visited a Palestinian refugee camp? This is probably the first tour ever to leave South Africa that has truly heard from “both sides”.

The central message of this delegation is right: End the occupation and dismantle the settlements. Without urgent efforts to do these things, the future for Israel as a Jewish democratic state is very bleak.

A great many of us who grew up as staunch Zionists have come to see the occupation as a blight on Israel and the Jewish people. We are ready for those who hold office in the Jewish community to give expression to that.

Sean Feinberg
Sea Point
Cape Town

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MISBEHAVING AND EXUBERANCE

IN RESPONSE to Dr Saul Wisnowitz’s letter (SAJR July 18) referring to “misbehaving” on the Bnei Akiva Hadracha flight to Israel:

On the El Al flight of July 5 2008, we sent our annual Hadracha Tzeira to Israel. Our channichim were extremely vibrant and excited, as can be expected from 16 year olds visiting Israel for their first time.

They were occasionally boisterous, so the madrichim made sure they quietened down and the channichim reacted appropriately.

The madrichim were extremely active in keeping the kids controlled, however, we sincerely apologise if the noise level was disturbing to any of the passengers.

The majority of the Bnei Akiva channichim were at the back cabin of the plane and a minority were dispersed throughout the plane. The few passengers who were positioned in the back cabin - with the Bnei Akiva group - were offered to switch seats with the dispersed channichim at the front of the plane. However, they declined to do so.

The allegations made in the letter on this page are totally unfounded and this religious attack slurring Bnei Akiva, is totally

uncalled for. We would prefer if you (Dr Wisnowitz) would bring your accusations directly to us before sending it to the *Jewish Report* in the future.

Bnei Akiva provides a safe environment for our channichim to experience and grow in their Judaism. While Bnei Akiva is a dati youth movement, we pride ourselves of being heavily involved in kiruv and the majority of our channichim are not necessarily dati.

In the future please contact me directly and I’ll be very happy to discuss any trouble you have.

Bevirkat Torah VeAvodah

Daniel Kaplan
National Chairman Bnei Akiva SA

On this page we publish the letter by Dr Wisnowitz. In light of the serious allegations it contains, we contacted Bnei Akiva to get their comment. We also contacted El Al who told us they had received no complaints about the youngsters’ behaviour. We tried to get comment from Archbishop Makgoba but at our going to press he was still overseas. - Editor

WHOSE ‘HUMAN RIGHTS’ DO THEY REPRESENT?

I WISH to question the integrity and sincerity of the South African “human rights” delegation that recently, visited Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

While one might admire the collection of titles on the list of participants, the stated agenda and goal of the trip is as yet unclear. Even the participants themselves seem to be uncertain on exactly where they collectively stand.

At the press conference held prior to their departure, Nathan Geffen made it clear that “Everyone who has been selected believes that Israel should exist”; Yet Zackie Achmat (of the TAC) admitted that he believed “in a single state solution”.

Doron Isaacs was proud to be one of the trip organisers, but only a few months previously he signed a student resolution calling on writer Nadine Gordimer not to visit Israel, even thought she too was to be meeting with Palestinian groups.

Notably absent from this delegation was a single representative of either the affiliated or practising Jewish or Muslim communities.

The delegation did, however, contain a selected group of academics and left-wing elites, renowned for their extreme personal agendas.

Other than the meetings with “fledgling” groups of Israeli left-wingers, activists and Palestinians living under harsh occupation, the group avoided meeting groups like the founders of the Gush Etzion settlements whose parents and grandparents were butchered by the Arab legion in May 1948.

The group met with Palestinian residents of Hebron who are “harassed” by settlers, but ignored the last remaining survivors of the Arab massacre of Hebron’s Jewish community.

The delegation even met with Palestinians who suffer at checkpoints, but they shunned discussions with serving IDF soldiers who face daily risks finding heavily armed fanatics, with very little regard for human life, who blissfully shield themselves behind civilians.

Whose “human rights” does this motley crew of activists really represent?

Shaun Sacks
Jerusalem, Israel

I DOFF A HAT TO MACHAL VOLUNTEERS

I WISH to heartily endorse the sentiments expressed by my friend Mendel Cohen in you last issue concerning “a conspiracy of silence” regarding the 1947/8 Machal volunteers.

As so accurately described by Cohen, the Machal volunteers deserve an illuminated chapter in the history of South African Zionism and its contribution towards the establishment of the infant State of Israel.

Special mention should also be made of the efforts of the then Betar’s “Giyus”. Betar secretly trained over 200 volunteers for the then Etzel (Irgun) of whom just 100 were flown - via Europe - to Israel and served in the War of Liberation. Attempts were even made to cross Africa by lorry, which unfortunately failed.

One of the very first to sacrifice his life was a Belari from Port Elizabeth - Matey Silber - who died defending Jerusalem.

The then Betar managed to not only train these volunteers but through its own inde-

pendent efforts chartered planes to carry them to Europe and subsequently by boat to Eretz Israel. All this was largely due to the late Raphael Kotlowitz and Otto Seidman and a score of devoted Betarim.

It is time some of these volunteers recorded in writing their heroic efforts to reach and serve the nascent Israel. Letters from these volunteers to their families should also be dug up and used as background to their endeavours.

Many of these volunteers subsequently went on aliyah and are now resident in Israel - they in particular should be canvassed to contribute their recollections.

Thank you Mendel Cohen for raising this long-overlooked saga.

Len Kohl
Parkhurst
Johannesburg

BNEI AKIVA YOUNG ON FLIGHT EMBARRASSED US

ON THE El Al flight to Israel on July 5, I took my seat and noticed a striking-looking gentleman sitting three seats away from me whom I was later informed is Archbishop of Cape Town Thabo Makgoba.

Minutes later the back of the plane was filled with teenagers. I initially thought it was a school group, but was informed, that it was the Bnei Akiva Hadracha group.

I realised at that point that I would not sleep on the flight and I was proved correct. But more importantly, I sat in horror as I watched the Archbishop’s seat being bumped and kicked continuously, disturbed by flash photography and foul language, unable to sleep, and yet too dignified to make a fuss.

As the plane took off, the children screamed and crowed with inconsiderate abandon, setting the tone for their behav-

iour throughout the night.

There were two or a maximum of three madrichim accompanying these 90 odd teenagers, and these madrichim stayed in their chairs in dereliction of duty as their young charges acted as if they were inebriated revellers at a barmitzvah party.

Passengers on either side of me were deeply disturbed to see unsupervised children engaging in heavy petting, with one calling it a “sex fest”. When I saw similar behaviour two seats from the Archbishop, I wanted to jump out the window.

I was under the impression that a dati youth movement would inculcate values of personal modesty, but this experience has disabused me of that illusion.

Dr Saul Wisnowitz
Neve Itamar, Israel

IN DEFENCE OF HABONIM DROR

I WAS quite shocked to see a headline in the letters page of the *SA Jewish Report*, calling for South African Jews to dissociate themselves from the youth movement which had the largest machaneh in 2007 (namely Habonim Dror).

I would like to ask the letter writer, Ryan Heitner whether South African Jews should dissociate themselves from Habonim Dror when they currently have over 120 members in Israel on either the grade 10 Shorashim programme or on the 10-month gap year programme Shnat?

Using Heitner’s logic, he should also ask South African Jews to dissociate themselves from Betar, because Nathan Geffen, an organiser of the human rights delegation (to Israel) is a past member of that movement, or he should ask South African Jews to dissociate themselves from Bnei Akiva because of a Bnei Akiva rabbi in Israel claiming that there is no future for the Jewish community in South Africa.

Doron Isaacs is not a member of Habonim Dror; he was last active in 2003 but is no longer a member. Habonim Dror had nothing to do with the organisation of the recent human rights delegation and was not associated with it in any way.

Habonim is a Zionist movement which cares deeply about the future of the State of Israel as a strong, secure, Jewish and democratic state. Habonim is committed to a negotiated settlement between Israel and the Palestinians and like over 70 per cent of Israelis, realises that in order for the State of Israel to prosper, there will have to be a two-state solution with Israel agreeing to make significant territorial concessions.

It is impossible for the Jewish State to survive in the long term as a democratic state if we do not make difficult sacrifices.

Adam Sack
Mazkir Klali
Habonim Dror

YOUTH TALK

Shelley Elk jewishreport@yahoo.com



Chaya Singer (national chairman); Stephanie Hodes (Wits social officer); Barry Sherman (national vice chairman); Jason Daleski (national deputy vice chairman); Sarah Pearson (Wits chairman); Gabi Lifshitz (national special projects officer); Jenna Solarsh (national social officer and ball co-ordinator); Benji Shulman (national research officer); Egal Orlovik (national Zionist officer); Jon Isakow (national treasurer); and Grant Harli (national outreach officer).



Stephanie Hodes (Wits social officer), Michael Fourie and Megan Barlin.



Ricki Tatz and Tali Singer.



Romy Sarembok, Chloe Lob, Jenna Solarsh (national social officer), Sarah Pearson (Wits chairman) and Tali Singer.



Jason Deleski (deputy vice chairman), Sarah Pearson (Wits chairman) and Stephanie Hodes (Wits social officer)



Jonty and Ora Weiner (Wits vice chairman) with Grant Harli.

Having a ball the SAUJS way

SAUJS fulfilled its role of uniting Jewish students again this year with their SAUJS ball, which was an elegant success.

ROMY SALANT
PHOTOGRAPHS: SHELLEY ELK

TAKING PLACE at the stylish Crystal Room at the Killarney Country Club, the hall was inviting with simplistic sophisticated decor. Each table was adorned with a modern centrepiece of a lemon-filled vase with a white flower arrangement on top.

The autumn green, yellow and white colour scheme and classy chandeliers breathed warmth into the venue and set the tone for the fun filled night that emerged.

Welcoming shooters of different colours and hors d'oeuvres of sautéed sausages and crumbed mushrooms were served as a taster to what would come.

With a delicious three-course buffet from an assortment of salads, rice, pasta, kebabs and meats to shwarma and chips was on offer. Topping it off was fresh fruit and decadent puddings.

"The music and food was awesome and overall it was a great night", Michael Barnett told the *Jewish Report*. The trendy beats by Ben Mansano, the DJ of the evening, delicious food and a plentiful drinks all complimented the success of the evening.

As the guests chatted and danced the night away, it was evident that the SAUJS Ball was a recipe for success.

"It was a great evening to socialise and meet new people from our wonderful Jewish community," said Stefanie Slowatek, who attended the event. SAUJS Ball was not only an enjoyable social event but also fulfilled SAUJS motto to represent and meet the needs of Jewish students on and off campus.

- The South African Union of Jewish Students is a non-profit organisation that was founded to represent the needs of Jewish students at tertiary educational institutions throughout South Africa.

Zionism, Jewish identity and South Africa form the three pillars of SAUJS. The many social events that are held, foster an affiliation to Judaism and Jewish culture and allow Jewish students to express their identity.

Chaya Singer, national chairman of SAUJS explains: "Instilling a sense of pride and identity among Jewish South African youth is one of the primary aims of SAUJS. We see social events as a worthy investment to this end."

- SAUJS has many exciting upcoming social events such as the SAUJS poker tournament in September and a SAUJS Seminar in November. If you are not a member yet, sign up at www.saujs.co.za



Lilford Dixon demonstrates wire work techniques to grade sevens.

Getting all wired up at KDS’ workshops

Workshops demonstrating wire construction have been one of the highlights at our school in the second term. The art department invited Lilford Dixon (an informal worker) whose expertise includes wire work, silkscreening and float building) to run the workshops for the learners.

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY VIVIANNE WEINER

SCULPTURE IS an integral part of our art curriculum, so it made sense to include wire as an additional medium of exploration. Figure sculpture is usually in need of an armature. The grade 6s modelled a simple figure from wire, learning techniques of cutting, twisting, joining and shaping. The wire figures appeared as finished art works. Decorating or using them merely as armatures often became unnecessary and detracted from their beautiful execution. In forecasting the theme of “Roots” for our annual art exhibition, the grade 7s co-operated in groups to create wire trees. Manipulation of pliers and cutters as well as joining and twisting skills, were mastered. Projects such as these facilitate the integration of art and technology in our school curriculum. The learners’ enthusiasm and enjoyment during the process of creation, is testimony to their excellent end-products.



Grade 6s at King David Sandton display wire models created in art class.

The different colours of Birkenau death camp

JOSH SCHEWITZ

“THE TORAH tells us about Shimshon who caught 300 foxes and tied torches to their tails and sent them into the fields of Pleshet... On June 19, 35 foxes (in the shape of student leaders) went to Poland in order to have torches tied to their tails. Today, after coming back, we’re ready to set you all aflame,” said Noah, who is one of the foxes. The World Union of Jewish Students brought together Jewish student leaders from around the world to experience and learn about the truth and horror of the Holocaust. There were representatives from Israel, South Africa, Australia, Canada, Ukraine, Russia, Spain, France and Poland. The SAUJS delegation included Chaya Singer, Jon Isakow, Jenna Solarsh, Joshua Schewitz and Sarah Pearson. The programme made sure there was a concrete knowledge of the Holocaust. This is important because of the phenomenon of Holocaust denial. The Holocaust denial that appeared on the Palestinian Solidarity Committee’s sponsored graffiti wall at Wits earlier in the year, is what we were given the tools to fight. We saw the gas chambers, the crematorium, the human ash pile... the shoes, the glasses and the conditions the inmates lived in. To deny the Holocaust is to deny reality. The facts are self-evident. Holocaust denial stems not from truth

but from an anti-Jewish/anti-Zionist agenda. In 15 years or so, there will be no more survivors to confirm the Holocaust. It is going to be up to us, the future generations, to keep alive the memories of the six million who perished. The death camps are one big paradox. There is life in a place of so much death. There physical beauty is in total contrast to the reality of what happened inside 63 years ago. The uniformity and order of Birkenau is aesthetically pleasing. When one stands in one of the guard posts looking across the green symmetrical camp, one’s eyes appreciate the beauty while one’s heart screams with pain. At Birkenau we prayed mincha in the area of the gas chambers and crematorium. We prayed with our backs to the gas chambers and our prayers towards Jerusalem. It was emotionally inspirational to know that our prayers are moving away from Birkenau death camp towards the centre of life, the Kotel. Everyone was overwhelmed with the whole experience. When thinking about the Holocaust one thinks in black and white. The colour of reality is far more complicated. The camps look unreal, in the sense that one is looking at a place of such tremendous suffering and death and it is very difficult to place that suffering and death in the colour of reality. Each delegate took home something dif-



At Birkenau: “Looking towards Jerusalem”.



At Birkenau death camp in Poland, Joshua Schewitz (SAUJS national officer), Sarah Pearson (SAUJS Wits chairman), Jan Gebert (Poland Student Union), Chaya Singer (SAUJS national chairman), Jenna Solarsh (SAUJS national officer), Jon Isakow (SAUJS national treasurer).

ferent and at the same time took home the same drive to fight for the memories of those who can no longer defend themselves. Too light the fields on fire with our knowledge.

South African barmitzvah boys in Israel

Ten 13-year-old boys and their fathers from Bnei Akiva in South Africa decided to celebrate their barmitzvah ceremony in Israel, instead of a big and fancy party back home.

IN A media release Rabbi Ramon Widmonte of Bnei Akiva, said that last week “the boys led a guided tour for their dads, cousins and madrichim of the Kotel Tunnels”. Three months in preparation to become “tour guides”, involved video conferencing and e-learning on being tour guides about the entire tunnels system underneath the Kotel. “We returned tired but elated after the boys did amazingly,” said Rabbi Widmonte, adding: “This exemplified the reason we are doing the tour - relevant, hands-on, educational, fun, experiential and awesome Judaism creating a bond between the generations of fathers and

sons.” Rabbi Widmonte said the programme had been jam packed and challenging for the boys and parents. The group travelled all over Jerusalem: The city of David and the underground water tunnels, engaged in learning in Yeshivat Hakotel, Krav Maga (Israeli Army hand to hand combat), the Tunnel Tours and much more. “We have had a daily learning session with the fathers and sons. Last Friday we spent the day at Neot Kedumim (a biblical game reserve) doing leadership exercises.” He said in general the effect on the fathers and sons had been beautiful to see and uplifting.



Barmitzvah boys, certificates in hand with Rabbi Ramon Widmonte (of Bnei Akiva, Horizons for Greatness Barmitzvah programme, in front) with their proud fathers looking on.

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At the Benmore Gardens store, you can expect to find something that is classic but clever, underpinning Biggie Best's focus on keeping its décor fresh and up-to-date.

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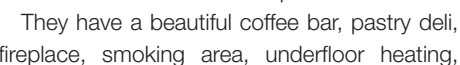
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Toy Zone ~ a Megastore with an Attitude

Major tenant Pick n Pay is to relocate from a very tired and much needed upgraded area, to their new stunning premises on the ground floor level towards the end of 2008.



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They are well priced and offer good value for money meals. This is definitely a coffee shop with a difference. You can book at (011) 883-6998. Address: Shop 22 Benmore Gardens Shopping Centre.

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Hand Painted By Carmel ~ colourful delight

HAND PAINTED By Carmel, the Johannesburg-based world-renowned coated tablecloth company, has opened its flagship store in the newly relaunched Benmore Gardens Mall.

The new Hand Painted By Carmel store features the latest designs for spring/summer 2008/9 along with classic designs from the distinctive collection.

Shoppers can choose from the range of coated tablecloths (of all times), placemats, chair cushions and upholstery fabric in all sizes.

Hand Painted By Carmel tablecloths are all produced on 100 per cent raw bull denim coated, which after being hand painted, is treated with Textile Shield™ technology so that it never needs to be washed but simply wiped down after use.

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Bev initially ran her business from a home studio and then from the Rosebank Rooftop Market. Upon completing her law articles, she realised that her hobby was indeed her passion and she decided to set about turning it into a fulltime business.

The first retail outlet was opened in Benmore Gardens Shopping Centre. With the help of her parents, Pearl and Maurice Laffer and sister, Michelle, the business flourished. Bev, then persuaded Michelle to take a sabbatical from dentistry and a partnership was born.

Now, it is a family affair. In 2005, a second store was opened in the stylish Atholl Square. The store caters for those who favour understated elegance and refined sophistication.

In 2007, a third store opened in the vibrant Norwood Mall. In this store, one can find an array of stunning articles, some handmade locally, others sourced from abroad.

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Metro Restaurant celebrates contemporary urban culture

METRO RESTAURANT is a gathering place for Johannesburg trendsetters, with its urban chic and boudoir aesthetic it offers a unique ultra-lounge and café dual experience.

The restaurant has appealing furnishings. The warm, earthy tones of the café's dining area are complemented by the ivory and red ceiling chandeliers that add a dramatic finesse. The décor of the restaurant alludes to the glamour of a European brasserie, a mix of a bistro and fine dining eatery.

The wooden staircase leads to the upstairs ultra-lounge area where the mood of the restaurant assumes a more intimate romantic feel.

With ceiling drapes, a dining area, comfortable couches and a well stocked bar, it creates a charming atmosphere to hold a private function or to enjoy an after dinner drink and cigar. A rich chocolate brown and burnt orange interior is illuminated by the inviting fireplace.

The cuisine is a mixture of Italian and French tastes with a touch of Greek flavours. Try the scrumptious starters and main dishes, which cater for all tastes. Stuffed with rosemary, the pastry chef cooks up your sweet fantasies.

Also, a must is the homemade traditional dishes among other staples like hamburgers, pizzas and pastas. The cheese and deli boards are a great complement to be enjoyed with a drink on the impressive outdoor balcony with a spectacular view.

The restaurant kitchen is open from 10:00 till 22:00, with drinks served till late. Dress code is smart casual and booking in advance is advised. Be part of this urban hub and book a date at Metro.

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Looking ahead to 2010, Travelex will be opening in the brand new Central Terminal Building at OR Tambo International Airport on September 1 this year. This positions Travelex

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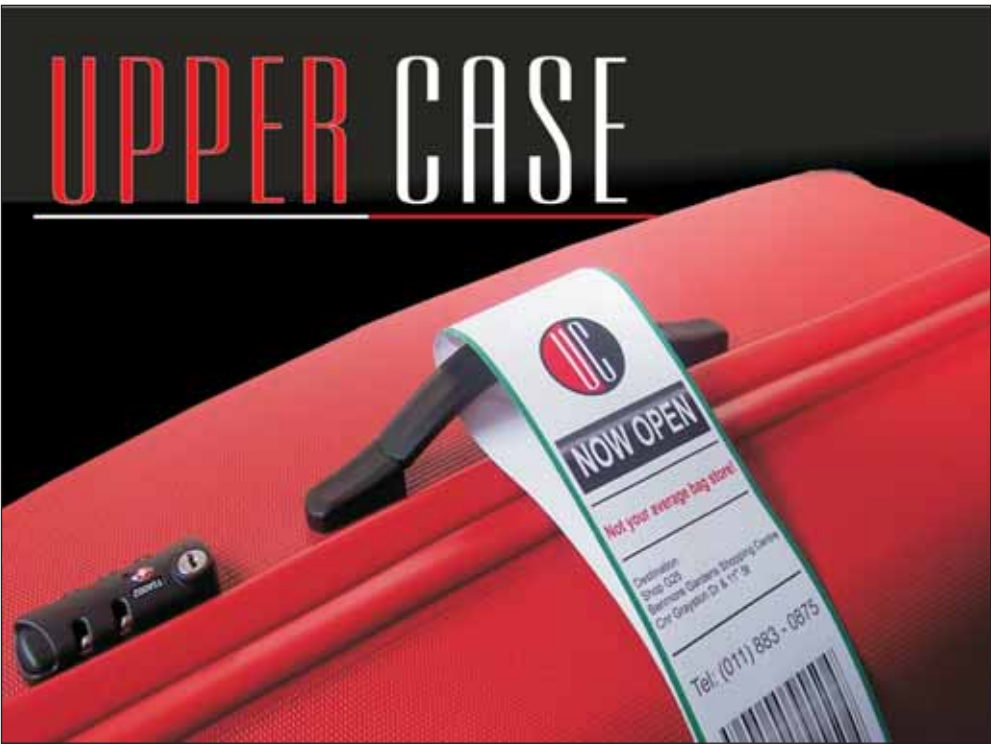
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An appeal to come and bleed for your country

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY RITA LEWIS

THE LEVEL of stocks of blood at the country’s transfusion centres was at an extremely critical level with only one day’s supply left in many of the centres, said Maurice Creswick who is not only himself a blood donor, but serves on the committee of the Linksfield Terrace Blood Transfusion Centre and a director of the board of the South African National Blood Service (SANBS).

Creswick said the SANBS was facing its biggest crisis for many years with stocks plummeting to absolute crisis levels. He said they aimed to stock at least 3 000 units - which was three days’ supply, of which half should be of the Group O type.

The reality was that the demand for blood Group O was actually outstripping the intake.

He said the reason for this was that Group O was the most highly needed, being that it could be used in cases where a patient’s blood was of another blood group and there was no blood of that group readily available. It was for this reason it was called the “universal group”.

Creswick explained that there were four groups A, B, AB and O and that Group O could be substituted for any of the others except O negative.

The Linksfield Terrace Clinic is staffed by a sister, two operators and one helper, with the target for blood donations being around 380 units per month. They were not even taking in half of that amount. To make the clinic viable 10 donors are needed every single day for six days a week.

He said the low intake was probably due to the flu which was doing the rounds, the cold weather which was keeping people indoors and general apathy.

He urged everyone to come and give a pint of blood - even if they only come for the tea and biscuits given out afterwards!

The basic requirements of a donor are that their blood pressure should be in the range of, and not less than, 100 over 80 and they should be between the ages of 16 and 65. (Those over this age may bring a doctor’s



Concerned blood donor Maurice Creswick, director of the board of the South African National Blood Service, whose stocks of blood are running extremely low.

letter stating that their health is good enough to give their blood).

He said strict measures were in place to ensure donors’ safety, eg anyone with a blood pressure over 120 over 100 would not be bled and no donor was allowed to donate blood more often than every 56 days. It takes that amount of time for the hemoglobin (iron factor) to be replaced, although the actual volume of blood is replaced by normal activity within 24 hours.

Creswick who holds the Guinness Book of Records award for having donated the highest number of pints of blood in 2005, 2006 and 2007, has also received some interesting awards for his donations.

In 2001 he received the Community Service Award from (then) Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris who said it was a mitzvah to give blood. In fact, it was not only permissible, but an honour.

He was also the first non-Greek to have received a medallion from Greek Archbishop Seraphim, the archbishop of both Johannesburg and Pretoria, who himself took a sample of Creswick’s blood to Greece when it was needed for a rare medical case there.

ORT shapes the future

MOIRA SCHNEIDER
CAPE TOWN

A DELEGATION of nine South Africans attended the general assembly of World ORT held in Warsaw and Tel Aviv in June, with the theme: “ORT commemorates the past, discusses the present, shapes the future”.

World ORT is the world’s largest Jewish education and vocational training non-government organisation and has benefited more than three million people - Jewish and non-Jewish - in 100 countries since its foundation in Russia in 1880.

In looking at the past, ORT’s involvement with the Warsaw Ghetto was highlighted, specifically the educational skills the group imparted through its workshops during the war years in the ghetto.

“They say that, because of their activities, the Germans allowed the ghetto to continue for longer because they needed the skills that ORT taught,” Nilly Baruch, national vice chairman of the organisation, told *Jewish Report* on her return.

After the lighting of a memorial flame at the Ghetto Memorial, the 600-strong crowd was addressed by Israel’s Ambassador to Poland, David Peleg and the deputy mayor of Warsaw, Włodzimierz Paszynski, who said it was an honour that World ORT had chosen Warsaw as the venue for its general assembly and saluted Israel on its 60th anniversary.

Also in the Polish capital, the group visited the Janus Korczak Orphanage, which is partly supported by World ORT.

Baruch said that 120 Russian children were brought to the conference. “They are, for the first time in their lives, receiving Jewish education, including Hebrew, in ORT schools throughout Russia.”

Delegates travelled by train to Auschwitz-



Herbert Rajak, Betty Rajak, Linda Behr, Nilly Baruch, Martin Behr and Zvi Baruch, part of the nine-strong SA delegation to World ORT’s General Assembly in June.

Birkenau and representatives of 32 countries placed wreaths at the memorial site there.

Members of the group then travelled to Israel to visit World ORT projects there.

ORT South Africa national executive member, Martin Behr was among those who visited Shifman High School in the north of the country, the latest school to have 10 of its classrooms transformed into hi-tech smart classes as part of World ORT’s programme to raise the level of science and technology education in Israel.

“It was fantastic how quickly the teachers and students adapted to the smart classes - I found that very exciting,” he said. “We watched them using the interactive white board and connected laptops for teaching physics and geography and it was brilliant, just brilliant.”

Closer to home, Baruch said that ORT-Jet-Chabad seminars for teaching skills to Jewish business people, would be starting in Cape Town on July 22. ORT Cape Town also runs Internet Café, a weekly programme for “bobbas” and “zeidas” to learn computer skills.

WHAT’S ON

Shelley Elk carro@global.co.za

NOTE: Deadline for all entries is 12:00 on the Friday prior to publication.

Key to organisations, venues, contact details and cost:

- The Jewish National Fund (JNF) Choir, Beyachad, 2 Elray St, Raedene. Contact Crystal Kaplan. 083-376-5999.
- The Jewish Women’s Benevolent Society (JWBS) - Sandringham Gardens, 85 George Avenue Sandringham 2192. Contact Carolyn Sabbagh. (011) 485-5232.
- The Jewish Outlook Team. Contact Ryan Cane, Support line: 27 76 215 8600; e-mail info@jewishoutlook.org.za; website http://www.jewishoutlook.org.za
- Nechama Bereavement Counselling Centre - Room A304, 3rd Floor, hospital wing, Sandringham Gardens, 85 George Avenue, Sandringham, 2192. Contact (011) 640-1322.
- New Friendship Ladies Group - A group for single women - contact Lucille (011) 791-5226 or 082-927-5786.
- ORT and ORTJET South Africa - 44 Central Street, Cnr 10th Ave, Houghton. Contact (011) 728-7154.
- Rabbi Cyril Harris Community Centre (RCHCC) and Great Park Shul, Johannesburg. Contact Hazel, (011) 728-8088 or Rene Sidley (011) 728-8378. Cost usually R50, including refreshments.
- Second Innings, Johannesburg - Jewish Community Services - Donald Gordon Centre, 85 George Avenue Sandringham. Contact Grecia Gabriel, (011) 532-9616.
- The Israel Centre. Contact Debbie (011) 645-2560.
- The Simcha Friendship and Cultural Circle (SFCC), Johannesburg - Sandton Shul. Contact Sylvia Shull, (011) 783-5600.
- The United Sisterhood, 38 Oxford Road Parktown. Contact Helen (011) 646-2409. website:http://www.unitedsisterhood.co.za
- Society of Israel Philately (SIP) - daniels@wbx.oc.za. Contact Maurice (011) 485-2293.
- South African Zionist Federation (SAZF), Johannesburg - Beyachad, 2 Elray Street, Raedene. Contact Froma, (011) 645-2505.
- South African Jewish Board of Deputies (Jhb) - Beyachad, 2 Elray Street, Raedene. Contact (011) 645-2500 or (011) 645-2523.
- United Zionist Luncheon Club (UZLC), Johannesburg - Our Parents Home. Contact Gloria, (011) 485-4851 or 072-127-9421.
- Union of Jewish Women (UJW), Johannesburg - 1 Oak Street Houghton. Contact (011) 648-1053. Cost R10 for the Friendship Luncheon Club.
- Union of Jewish Women (UJW), Cape Town - (021) 434-9555, e-mail: info@ujwcape.co.za
- WIZO Johannesburg - Beyachad, 2 Elray Street Raedene. Contact Joyce Chodos (011) 645-2548 or Sandy Kramer (011) 645-2515.
- Bikkur Cholim - Jewish Society for Visiting the Sick, 7A Chester Road, Greenside East, Johannesburg. Joy Gafin (011) 447-6689.
- Tiyulim (Jewish Outdoor Club) - Contact Greg 082-959-9026 or Martin 082-965-7419.
- King David Schools’ Foundation. King David Alumni info@kdsf.org (011) 480-4723.
- CAJE - College of Adult Jewish Education, Sydenham Highlands North Shul (011) 640-5021.
- JAFFA - Jewish Accomodation for Fellow Aged. (012) 346-2007/8.
- SAIJE - Sandton Adult Institute of Jewish Education, Sandton Shul (011) 883-4210. E-mail: saije@sandtonshul.co.za.
- CSO - Emergency phone number 086 18 000 18.

Today, Friday (July 18)

- **UZLC** is hosting Rhoda Levy speaking on “The Jewish community of Curacao” at Our Parents Home.

Sunday (July 20)

- **Second Innings** hosts Mo Skikne who will talk about “The military achievements of the tank battalions in the Israeli wars”, at Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres.

Wednesday (July 23)

- **SFCC** is having Israeli folk dancing lessons with Ora at 10:00 in the games room at Sandton Shul.

- **Second Innings** presents a four part DVD series “Planet Earth” at 14:30, Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Cost R10 at the door for tea, excluding Golden Acres residents who have paid in advance. Grecia Gabriel (011) 532-9718.

- **UJW, AED Cape Town** is hosting Judith Giesenow who will relate her experiences of life from Eastern to Western Germany at 10:00 for 10:30 at Stonehaven. Cost R15.

Thursday (July 24)

- **WIZO health and beauty expo** at the Vineyard Hotel, Claremont from 09:30 to 12:00. Cost R200.

Friday (July 25)

- **UZLC** is hosting Ronnie Mink who will talk on

“The Ukraine as the last frontier of Holocaust research.”

Sunday (July 27)

- **Tiyulim** will be going on 702’s 5km walk. Meet at the start at Marks Park at 10:30. Contact Jeff 082-854-3505 or Greg 082-959-9026.

- **The Israel Film Club, Israel Centre, and Beyachad Library**, is screening “The Body Corporate” (English subtitles) at 20:00 at Beyachad. Cost R40 includes refreshments. Contact Naomi 082-496 1111.

Wednesday (July 30)

- **JWB Emmarentia** is having a book sale at Balfour Park.

- **UJW Cape Town** is hosting Dr David Scher on “Jewish tales from the Titanic”.

- **Second Innings** presents a four part DVD series “Planet Earth” at 14:30, Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Cost R10 at the door for tea, excluding Golden Acres residents who have paid in advance. Grecia Gabriel (011) 532-9718.

Sunday (August 3)

- **UJW Florentia Cape Town** is having a luncheon at 12:00 at 7 Albany Road in Stonehaven. Cost R75.

- **Second Innings** hosts Barbara Holtmann on “Breaking the cycle of violence for a safe south Africa”. She’s group leader for crime prevention, safety and security research and developments contracts manager at the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and vice-president of the International Centre for the Prevention of Crime (ICPC).

- **Second Innings** will attend a “Le Grande Cirque” matinee at 14:00. Depart from Oxford Shul parking promptly at 13:15. Cost R210, (additional R20 for bus). Ros Berman (011) 880-6864, before 18:00.

- **UOS and Jews for Judaism** are hosting Pnina Taylor who will talk about her journey back to Judaism, at the Capri from 09:00 to 11:00. Cost R180. Women only. Bookings (011) 485-4865 or email jfjsa@uos.co.za

Monday (August 4)

- **SIP** - Lecture and report-back on Israel 60 Philatelic International Exhibition by South African commissioner. At 19:30 Waverley Shul boardroom. Entry free. Refreshments.

- **UJW, Johannesburg** hosts Hilary Joffee, senior assistant editor, Business Day at 09:30 - “Eskom’s power problem - an ongoing saga”.

Wednesday (August 6)

- **SFCC** is hosting Professor Trefor Jenkins, dept of genetics, SA Institute for Medical Research, at the Sandton Shul at 10:00.

- **UJW, Johannesburg** is hosting Dr Lorraine Chaskalson, former lecturer, English Department, Wits at 09:30 to 11:30, on “Jane Austin’s Persuasion - a novel of second chances”.

Sunday (August 10)

- **Second Innings** hosts Rhoda Levy on “My visit to what was the Soviet Union”, at the Gerald Horwitz Lounge.

Monday (August 11)

- **UJW Na’arot, Cape Town** is having a “My Fair Lady” gala evening at ArtScape.

- **UJW, Johannesburg** at 09:30 hosts Raenette Taljaard, director of the Helen Suzman Foundation and columnist for various newspapers, on “Pre election politics”.

Tuesday (August 12)

- **WPZC, BZA WIZO and P2K-Partnership 2000** are hosting a dinner at Claremont Shul Hall. R250 per person.

- **UJW, Johannesburg** is hosting Estelle Sher, presenting “Encore Rachmaninov” at 09:45 for 10:00 at 301 Eton place, Kernick Ave, Melrose North. Cost R20.

- **Second Innings, Men’s Not Out Club**, is hosting Taffy Adler, head of the Johannesburg’s Development Agency, at Our Parents Home at 14:15 for 14:30.

Wednesday (August 13)

- **UJW, Johannesburg** is hosting Dr Lorraine Chaskalson former lecturer, English Department, Wits at 09:30 to 11:30, on “Jane Austin’s Persuasion - a novel of second chances”.

Thursday (August 14)

- **WPZC, BZA WIZO and P2K-Partnership 2000** are hosting a “Seniors tea” at the Marais Road Shul hall. Eats by Ethnic Cooks. Entrance by donation.

Contact: Dorel Beer on 083 376 9034 or Adele Kazilsky on 083 447 3456
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Cricket legend Jonty Rhodes in his heyday as arguably the world's best fielder.

Jonty upbeat about cricket in Israel

JERUSALEM - Former South African cricket great, Jonty Rhodes, believes Israelis would make great cricketers due to their tenacious attitude.

Rhodes is in Israel where he played in an Israel Invitation XI in a three-match one-day series against India A, which ended on Wednesday. It was organised as part of the celebrations marking the 60th anniversary of the State of Israel.

The Israel Invitation team didn't do too well against an India A team, and Rhodes on Monday retired injured.

The 38-year-old Rhodes played for the South African national team from 1992 to 2003 until he was forced to retire due to injuries. He was voted one of the Wisden Cricketers of the Year in 1999, and is considered by many cricket experts to be the best fielder the game has ever known.

In an interview with *The Jerusalem Post* at the Israel Invitational XI practice ground in Hadar Yosef, Rhodes said developing cricket in a country with no history and culture of the game was difficult, but definitely positive. He also said he thought Israelis had what it took.

Admitting that his only experience of Israel was through Leon Uris's book "Exodus", Rhodes was "desperate" to come to Israel, and is taking the time off between

his three games, to travel to the north and to Jerusalem with his wife.

"I'm a Christian, so for me this place has a massive relevance and I was desperate to come. Leon Uris's *Exodus* is the closest I've ever got. I loved it, couldn't put it down," Rhodes said, adding that he hadn't been to a new country since he played in Bangladesh for the first time in 1998.

"My knowledge of Israel comes from *Exodus* and how tenacious and determined the people here are to have transformed the desert into this thriving economy. It's genius, and the people here are tenacious to be able to make a living in a really harsh environment," he said. "I think they really would make great cricket players."

"If you can turn a desert into a garden, you would be an awesome cricketer because you have determination and grit."

The Israeli invitation team consists of Jewish cricketers from around the world, including former South Africa international player Adam Bacher. Bacher, who captains the Invitation team, has been to Israel on several occasions in the past, and has represented strong South African teams to the Maccabiah.

Other players will come from Australia, Ireland, India, South Africa and Israel.

One Israel team member, Solomon

Varsulkar, the 20-year-old left arm spinner, was the first Israeli ever chosen by International Cricket Council Europe as one of the world's finest young talents, to participate in the 2008 ICC Cricket Academy 2008 in India.

Chairman of the Israel Cricket Association Stanley Perlman, also a former South African, is proud that the series is being played.

"This is an achievement in itself to assemble the greatest Jewish cricket players from around the world," he said. "There aren't many Jewish players in the world today," but he assured the fans that, "the guys are cricketers in their own right".

In bringing this international match to Israel in celebration of the country's 60th anniversary, Perlman hopes to spread the fanfare of the game in Israel.

"We are building it up. The demand is small, but it is the strongest non-Olympic sport out there right now."

The BCCI, the governing body for cricket in India, accepted the invitation from Perlman earlier this year to send a team to the event. The India A team will consist of "fringe players", and those who have caught the eye of the Indian selection committee during the recent Indian Premier League tournament, according to Cricinfo.

Bensiyon Songavkar, an Indian Jew, is in the interesting position of playing for the Israel Invitational team against his countrymen.

"I will be playing against an Indian team in Israel for an Israeli team and that will be a bit strange. But I am looking forward to the trip," Songavkar said.

The Israel Invitation XI lost their opening match against India A by nine wickets but although improving in their second match in Ashdod on Monday, they still went down to the same team by 90 runs.

After capitulating for just 52 runs on Sunday, the Israel team will be proud of scoring 223 all out in its innings, but was still well short of India's 313 for five.

India A now leads the three-match series 2-0 and the Israel Invitation XI will only have pride to play for in the third and final match that took place at Ashdod on Wednesday.

Bacher put in a superb batting performance for the hosts, scoring 74 runs off 57 balls in an innings which included a massive eight sixes. Rhodes, one of the best fielders the game has known, was also included in the squad but retired injured on Monday after scoring three runs before pulling a hamstring. He was adjudged run out.

It appears age is finally catching up with Jonty.

Tennis is the game at Sandringham

JACK MILNER

THE RECENT Wimbledon final between Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer is already being hailed as one of the greatest ever. And this weekend South Africa will be playing a Davis Cup tie against Denmark at Emperors Palace.

These events have drawn attention to the sport and Neville Richards, coach of the Sandringham Tennis Club, is intent on seeing it grow to its former glory in South Africa.

"I currently coach 50 juniors at the club and I would like to see it double to 100," he said.

In order to make that happen, Neville has employed two more experienced coaches in Martin Verednick and Sharni Hart. "They have the right attitude and they are great tennis coaches," he said.

But for Neville it is more than just about tennis. "Our children need to get out into the fresh air and sunshine, away from just sitting behind computers and televisions. Tennis is the perfect way to attain this."

Neville has played at top level and knows what it takes to produce a champion - talent, dedication, good attitude, hard work, fitness and a good diet.

* Anybody interested in getting hold of Neville can call him on 082 977 6946.



Nadav Ossendryver, a member of the Sandringham Tennis Club, plays a backhand at a training session conducted by coach Neville Richards.

Hospice race day at Turffontein on July 27

THE INAUGURAL Hospice race day is to be staged at Turffontein racecourse on Sunday, July 27. There will be a lunch in the Aquanaut Room at a cost of R300 per head. All funds will go to Hospice.

There is also a special prize for the best-dressed couple who will win a weekend for two at Sabi Sabi game par, valued

at R2 500.

To help you find a couple of winners, bookmaker Lance Michael and *Jewish Report* sports editor and Racing Express managing editor Jack Milner, will give their advice to prospective punters.

Anybody wishing to attend can call Danny on (011) 483 9170.

Thank You Madiba