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# Jewish Report



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Friday, 06 May 2011 / 2 Iyar, 5771

Volume 15 Number 16

## Dershowitz: US attack on bin Laden validates 'targeted killing'

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### HIS SPIRIT SOARED ABOVE ADVERSITY

Ben Helfgott was an inspired choice as keynote speaker at this year's Yom Hashoah ceremony at Johannesburg's West Park Cemetery. He personifies the best qualities of the human spirit, which refuses to accept adversity as a fate one cannot escape from. As a Holocaust survivor aged 15, having lost his family in the Nazi death camps, he did his adopted country, Great Britain proud by going on to captain its Olympic team as a weightlifter. In the photograph Helfgott shows the photographs of five young girls from the Polish ghetto he lived in, each having written a poem about how precious life was. (PHOTOGRAPH: ILAN OSSENDRYVER) PAGES 4, 5

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Photograph of Denese, her mom and sisters

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17:43	18:35	Cape Town
17:00	17:50	Durban
17:20	18:10	Bloemfontein
17:15	18:06	Port Elizabeth
17:07	17:59	East London

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EDITOR - Geoff Sifrin  
geoff@sajewishreport.co.za  
Sub-Editor - Paul Maree  
Ed Co-ordinator - Barry Bilewitz  
barry@sajewishreport.co.za

Senior Reporter - Rita Lewis  
rita@sajewishreport.co.za

Sports Editor - Jack Milner  
jackmilner@telkomsa.net

Books Editor - Gwen Podbrey

Arts Editor - Robyn Sassen  
robyn@sajewishreport.co.za

Youth Editor - Alison Goldberg  
alison@sajewishreport.co.za

Cape Town correspondent  
Moira Schneider: 021-794-4206

Pretoria correspondent  
Diane Wolfson: 082-707-9471

Manager: Distribution  
Britt Landsman

britt@sajewishreport.co.za

Sales Executives - (011) 023-8160  
Britt Landsman: 082-292-9520

Manuela Bernstein: 082-951-3838  
Murray Schoeman: 083-627-6670

Freelance Sales Executive  
Marlene Bilewitz: 083-475-0288

Classified Sales  
jrclassified@global.co.za

Design and layout  
Frankie Matthysen

Nicole Cook

Website

www.sajewishreport.co.za

Ilan Ossendryver

IC-Creations

ilan@ic-creations.com

Subscription enquiries  
Avusa Publishing (Pty) Ltd

Tel: 0860-13-2652

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## PARSHA OF THE WEEK

## Ambassadors wanted

THESE ARE heady days for the Jewish people. Our community - as Jews the world over - has observed the Annual Holocaust Remembrance day, we will soon be remembering the State of Israel's fallen heroes and celebrating its birthday.

In the midst of all of this, one of our nation's mortal enemies has finally been eliminated by American Special Forces in Pakistan. I think it is appropriate to reflect on where each of us stands, how the individual Jew fits in to the bigger picture and how we are all part of a greater whole.

Not all of us will serve with distinction in Tzahal, become major philanthropists for the Jewish cause or be an international defender of Israel like Alan Dershowitz, but every one of us can make a difference to the global stature and well-being of our people, each in our own little way.

There was a time when Jewish people's faith in the one G-d of Israel was challenged on a regular basis. During the Crusades, for example, many thousands of Jews were forced to choose between "the cross and the sword".

Would they be prepared to deny their Judaism and embrace the dominant faith or would they rather die than desecrate the name of G-d? Indeed, countless Jews gave their lives Al Kiddush Hashem - in sanctification of the name of G-d. They became martyrs for their faith and heroes for eternity.

Thankfully, today it doesn't often happen that we have to make that choice. Tragically, we still have far too many martyrs nowadays; a family with little children butchered in Itamar; a young man praying at Joseph's tomb killed by Palestinian police or a young couple blown apart by bombers in Morocco leaving their toddler orphaned. But these Jews were not asked to make a choice. They didn't choose martyrdom. It was forced upon them.

The commandments to sanctify the name of G-d and never to desecrate it, are found in this week's Parsha (Leviticus 22, 32). Generally, today, the concept of Kiddush Hashem, sanctifying the name of G-d, is observed not by dying as Jews but by living as Jews. How does a Jew give G-d a good name? When he or she behaves as a good Jew should.

When other people see a Jew behaving honestly and uprightly,



## PARSHAT EMOR

Rabbi Yossy Goldman  
Sydenham Highlands  
North Shul

that gives Jews and Judaism a good reputation. And ultimately it all goes back to Torah, the word of G-d. G-d Himself gets the credit for the noble behaviour of His people.

It doesn't necessarily require major heroics or martyrdom. There are little things that make a discernible difference. Some classic scenarios would be returning money to a shopkeeper if you were given incorrect change in your favour or calling attention to the fact that a client overpaid you. Although it is only right to do these things, the fact is that others might have kept quiet about it and when a Jew acts with honour he brings honour to his faith and his G-d.

Sadly, it also works in the reverse. Jewish slumlords do not give Jews, or the G-d of Israel, a good name. "Look at those greedy, miserly Shylocks!" is not something we want to hear - especially when there may be some grounds for the accusation.

Albert Einstein is reputed to have once stated: "If my theories prove correct, the Germans will claim me as a German, the French will say I am theirs and the Americans will call me their own. If my theories are incorrect, they will all say I am a Jew."

How proud are we when one of our own does something especially noteworthy like winning a Nobel Prize or performing a valiant humanitarian act. Conversely, how ashamed are we if there is a moral or financial scandal involving one of our own.

I once protested to the general manager of a well-known radio station in our community because I felt he was giving far too much exposure to Jews and Judaism in relation to our numbers and, unfortunately, the publicity wasn't always flattering.

At first he denied it. But when I presented him with statistical proof, his plain and honest answer was "Jews are news".

Fair or not, the fact of life is that Jews are scrutinised far more carefully than others. Like it or not, every Jew is representing his faith, his people and his G-d. Ultimately, how we act will bring fame or infamy upon all of us. Please G-d, we will all be successful ambassadors.



Yvonne Cohen and Bessie Feinblum (PHOTOGRAPH SUPPLIED)

## The Royal Wedding - Pretoria style

DIANE WOLFSON, PRETORIA

A GROUP of friends in Pretoria decided to celebrate the Royal wedding in regal style when Fay Lurie sent out invitations to attend the wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton at her palatial residence.

According to Myra Egdes, one of the invited guests, instructions were to wear hats but other clothing was "come as you are, as nobody ever accused the Brits of being chic - pomp, ceremony and grandeur yes - but chic, oh no!"

"Even this cliché was put to rest as we watched the crowds of magnificently dressed women with those spectacular hats to die for and their elegant ensembles just waiting to be oohed and aahed at.

"As we sipped our pink champagne and ate our paper-thin cucumber sandwiches and warm

scones with clotted cream and strawberry jam, we remembered to extend our little fingers as we discussed (with frequent interruptions of "Shut up - I can't hear the commentator") what was happening on the TV screen in front of us."

The wedding proved to be a fairy tale delight and the group unanimously decided that the handsome prince and his beautiful princess were, like all good fairytales, destined to live happily ever after.

The lunch reception after the main event, was as good, if not better, than that being served at the Queen's venue and all left with a smile on their lips and a song (albeit the British national anthem) in their hearts.

What a pleasure to forget the troubles of the world and their problems for a few fun hours and bask in the happiness of others.

## KASHRUT NOTICE

## PESACH FEEDBACK REQUIRED

This time the Union of Orthodox Synagogues are inviting product feedback from Jewish consumers.

"Every year, shortly after Pesach, we meet with the major retailers and manufacturers to provide them with community feedback."

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- What products did you like?
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Feedback can be sent to [kashrutnotice@uos.co.za](mailto:kashrutnotice@uos.co.za).

## FOR THE RECORD

## TWO ERRORS IN LAST WEEK'S PAPER

In last week's issue of the Jewish Report, the English date for our Shabbat listings was incorrect. Also the incorrect advertisement for Stamelman Properties appeared. We regret this error.

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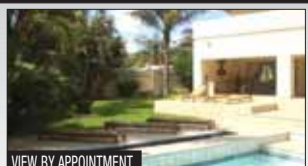
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# Worldwide joy, but Muslim anger at bin Laden's death

ALISON GOLDBERG

BLATANTLY anti-Israel Islamist groups in South Africa, the Muslim Judicial Council and the Al-Quds Foundation, of which Maulana Ihsaan Hendricks is president and director respectively, have castigated the United States for its "extra-judicial killing" of Osama bin Laden.

The two did not react to bin Laden's pivotal role as mastermind of the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York and a host of atrocities elsewhere. The US for years had been taunted by its "enemy number one", bin Laden (pictured). The Al-Qaida founder had over the years become a more strident anti-Zionist proponent.

Hendricks on Monday said inter alia: "The Muslim Judicial Council condemns the failure of the United States to arrest Osama bin Laden in order to maintain international global standards of law by affording him the opportunity to present his case through humane and legal avenues.

"The order to kill (bin Laden by American Naval Seals) is fundamentally not supported by any legal standards and contradicts the standards that American (sic) claims to want to maintain and uphold through the war on terror."

In the Gaza Strip similarly, Palestinian Hamas leader Ismail Haniya has condemned "the assassination of a Muslim and Arab warrior".

According to The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Centre, the MJC is a member of the Union of Good, an umbrella organisation comprised of more than 50 Islamic charitable funds and foundations worldwide.

The latter, which transfers money to Hamas, is designated as a terrorism-supporting organisation and is outlawed by Israel and the United States.

Come late June, MJC and Al-Quds are planning an aid convoy across the African continent to the Gaza Strip. Its humanitarian assistance is expected to be sent by sea. Hendricks apparently received Hamas' Haniya's blessing for the dispatch of the convoy. In addition, Hendricks met with senior IHH figures in Istanbul in January, who pledged their support for the convoy.

Professor of Religion Studies at the University of Johannesburg, one of the chief organisers of the notorious UJ Petition Committee to sever formal ties between UJ and Ben-Gurion University, (along with fellow committee member Palestinian Solidarity Committee spokesman Salim Vally), also failed to condemn Bin Laden in an interview with SABC TV3, suggesting only that his death "would be perceived to be a loss to the Muslim world".

He also stated that bin Laden represented the idea to Muslims that it was possible to stand up to the United States as a religious Muslim.

Esack and Hendricks did not respond to



more pointed questions from the SA Jewish Report on their own perception of the acts of terrorism committed by bin Laden and Al-Qaida since its founding in 1988.

The South African government in the meantime in what could be described as "a fence-sitting" statement, has called on all countries across the world to "co-operate in stemming the demon of terrorism in

all its manifestations" in global politics.

The statement was issued by Clayton Monyela, spokesman for the Department of International Relations and Co-operation on May 2, in reaction to the killing of bin Laden in Abbottabad in Pakistan. The operation, launched from Afghanistan, was carried out by members of the United States Navy Seals from the Naval Special Warfare Development Group, under the command of the Joint Special Operations Command, in conjunction with US Central Intelligence Agency operatives.

The killing received overwhelmingly favourable reaction in the US, from United Nations secretary-general Ban Ki-moon, Nato, the European Union and a large number of other countries all over the world.

Importantly, the Palestinian Authority spokesman, Ghassan Khatib said: "Getting rid of bin Laden is good for the cause of peace worldwide but what counts is to overcome the discourse and the methods - the violent methods - that were created and encouraged by bin Laden and others in the world." The PA and Hamas met on Tuesday and Wednesday to hold unity talks.

In a cautionary to Jewry about the more euphoric public reactions of the kind seen on Sunday night outside the White House and at Ground Zero, Rabbi Michael Lerner of the (San Francisco) Bay Area congregation Beyt Tikken and chief editor of the US Tikken magazine wrote: "The Jewish tradition has much to say on the killing of our vicious and even murderous enemies. When Pharaoh's troops were drowning in the Red Sea as they sought to re-enslave or kill the Israelites, the angels began to sing praises (the Hallel prayers: Psalms 113-118)."

G-d proclaimed: "My children (the Egyptians) are sinking in the sea, and you are singing praises?" "Yet G-d did not silence the Israelites, knowing that at that moment it would be hard for humans not to celebrate the death of an oppressor.

"Nevertheless, the Jewish tradition then instituted two practices in accord with G-d's response: First, that the Hallel prayers be cut down to a partial saying of some of the psalms on the last six days of Passover. And second, that when we do the seder on Passover and recite the plagues that were used against the Egyptians to get them to free the Jews, we put our finger in the cup of wine, symbolic of our joy, and dip out a drop of wine for each plague - this symbolises that our cup of joy cannot be full if our own liberation requires the death of those who were part of the oppressor society."

## Chief Rabbi: Victory for forces of goodness

CHIEF RABBI WARREN GOLDSTEIN

THE DEATH Of Osama bin Laden must be seen in the context of a global battle between those who cherish and defend the values of the sanctity of life, compassion and freedom, and those who oppose these values.

In this context bin Laden's death is a powerful and symbolic victory for the forces of goodness in the world.

Especially at a time like this, Judaism teaches that we need to maintain our sensi-

tivity for any human suffering and death, while maintaining the moral clarity of the distinction between good and evil.

Let us take note that in this global war the State of Israel finds itself on the front-lines of defending the values of freedom, human dignity and the sanctity of life.


Let us all pray to Hashem that these moral values of goodness will prevail so that war and suffering can come to an end forever as part of the Divinely-promised Final Redemption so beautifully described by the great prophets of our people.



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## Just say bingo – and fill a hall

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY RITA LEWIS

THE POPULARITY of holding bingo evenings to raise money for schools, organisations or the like, seems to have no bounds.

Whether it is the anticipation and possibility of winning exciting prizes that is the draw-card or whether it is the camaraderie of friends sitting together all in “the same boat”, all waiting for their numbers to be the next one to come up.

Recently, two bingo evenings were held. The first was when the hall of the Hebrew Order of David was transformed into a Beijing scene for the annual Torah Academy Bingo Evening, organised by the Torah Academy Primary School PTA.

In keeping with Torah Academy's Chinese theme, some interesting specialities of traditional Chinese food were served.

Keeping the excitement going was the possibility of winning one of the prizes totalling around

R74 000. The prizes included flat screen television sets, iPods, jewellery, a four-night diving getaway at Sodwana Bay, appliances, watches, cellphones and store vouchers, kosher eateries, etc.

The second bingo event was when the Jewish Benevolent Society held their function at the Capri Hotel in Savoy - prior to which a delicious meal was served with more food arriving throughout the evening.

As an opener to the event, each participant received a numbered entrance ticket. The owner of a selected number was the recipient of a “very nice” prize.

Other prizes were stays at various game lodges, tyre and retread vouchers, chocolate fountains, a Restonic bed, hairdressing facilities, arrangements from a flower market and airway tickets.

Both Rabbi Dovid Hazdan, dean of Torah Academy, and Jackie Feldman, JWBS chairman, stressed the importance of the takings of the evenings for their respective organisation and school.



Moshe Montrose with Sidney and Henriette Blecher.



Hillel Solomons.



Bingo caller Ivan Solomon.



Organisers of the Torah Academy Bingo Evening Ellen Moss and Rochel Zlotnick.

# In Pretoria, the six million are commemorated

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY DIANE WOLFSON PRETORIA

IN SPITE of inclement weather, a fairly large crowd gathered at Rebecca Street Cemetery in Pretoria to commemorate Yom Hashoah. Among the numerous dignitaries were ambassadors and representatives from the American, Argentinean and Austrian embassies, the British High Commission, Croatia, Cyprus, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi and the Netherlands.

As in previous years, each attendee was handed a sheet of paper with a photograph and what remains recorded of a victim of the Holocaust. Each person was asked to regard themselves as having been “twinned” with this family, adult or child, to pay homage to these lost souls.

The message on behalf of the youth was given by Shelley-Anne Nowosenetz who spoke of the ordeals suffered by the children in the ghettos.

Advocate Lawrence Nowosenetz brought a message from the SA Jewish Ex-Service League and a poem was read by high school learner, Leora Fine.

In the absence of Israeli Ambassador Dov Segev-Steinberg, Eda Cohen, PA to ambassadors for the past 40 years, read his message.

“I am the son of survivors, therefore I too, am a survivor. All that is

absent is the belief that this need will never again rise - that the lessons of so great a catastrophe have created a new world order where the need for places of refuge from persecution are an anachronism and something of the distant past.

“Sadly, for Jews, that is far from the truth, and the necessity of having an Israel today is as dire as it was in 1948. The fact is that hatred of the Jew still lives on within our midst.”

Victor Gordon, chairman of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies, Pretoria, said: “As we speak, a letter has been submitted by a Dr Jan Biro of the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, Sweden to the Nobel Prize Foundation suggesting that the “excessive numbers of past Jewish laureates supports a strong suspicion of ‘Jew bias’ in their selection process, warranting the total exclusion of Jews from future consideration, and the suggestion that future selections should be based solely on race and focused on the exclusion of Jews.”

Gordon ended with a personal account of his recent visit to Auschwitz, Birkenau and Monowitz, aware that he would not find inner peace until he had stood on the hallowed ground on which one and a half million of those who shared his faith, had met their end and that, “sadly, frustratingly, anti-Semitism will not simply go away”

Main speaker was Tracey Farber, a psychologist who has spent many hours interviewing survivors. Unfortunately, a survivor of

the Holocaust, Shimon Pieperz, who was supposed to share the podium, was not well enough to attend.

“In every culture there is a ritual of burial and mourning that gives closure to the bereavement process. The survivors had no closure about the death of their families. There was no body, no burial and no shiva. Many still do not know how their family members died. Some say that as they age their loss is felt more intensely as they review their lives.” said Farber.

“Our Lithuanian parents and grandparents came to South Africa before the Holocaust and many lost family who were living in Europe. They too, had no closure and no formal mourning process. Yom Hashoah, Holocaust remembrance day - is our day of mourning for all the six million who died for “Kiddush Hashem.”

The survivors offer us inspiration, when we see their resilience, the way that they were able to bounce back after catastrophic trauma. As children and teenagers many lost one if not both parents, including siblings and extended families. They lost their childhoods and their education.

They emerged sick, traumatised and emaciated after the Holocaust. They were taken to strange countries and had to learn to speak new languages. They built their lives, worked, married and built families and did their best to make the world a better place.

## Every year there are fewer left...

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY MOIRA SCHNEIDER CAPE TOWN

SIXTY-EIGHT years ago, Miriam Lichterman was rounded up and left the burning walls of the Warsaw Ghetto. Her destination: the Majdanek, Birkenau, Auschwitz, Ravensbruck and Malhof concentration camps.

“To some of our young people gathered here today, it might seem a long time ago. For me, it was my youth, torn away in a most brutal manner,” the Holocaust survivor told the thousand-strong crowd at the annual Yom Hashoah V’Hagevurah commemoration at Pine-lands Cemetery.

The event was heralded by the haunting sound of a siren. The kindling of memorial lights by members of the survivors’ organisation, some of whom were in wheelchairs, added poignancy.

So too did a heart-rending account by survivor Shmuel Keren of the massacre of his family as seen through the eyes of his 18-month-old brother who perished, read by Herzlia head girl Dalit Anstey.

Speaking of her experience, Lichterman said that what had sustained her were the teachings of her parents: “Even in inhuman circumstances, one should behave humanly and be a ‘mensch’.

“The last face I can see in my mind like a pale picture is my brother Israel who managed to get across to my section (of the ghetto) after my parents had been brutally taken away,” she remembered. “He wanted to give me a last hug and kiss and to tell me that they were planning resistance.

“I will rather die defending myself and the honour of my people than in a gas chamber,” were his last words to her. Israel died during the Warsaw Ghetto uprising of 1943.

“I still marvel at the miracle of



Holocaust survivor Sarah Jerusalemi, 90, kindles a memorial light, assisted by her niece Liliane Alhadeff (behind) and Morris Kushner of the Chevrah Kadisha.

my own survival at Auschwitz,” Lichterman related. During the selection, her number was written down for the gas chamber, but removed by a Czechoslovakian Jewess.

“I walked through the valley of the shadow of death, but Hashem was with me. She will always remain in my memory as a symbol of courage in inhuman circumstances,” she said of her rescuer.

Despite everything, Lichterman believes that every human being has the potential to be good, “otherwise I would have been a pile of ashes”. She also made an impassioned plea for communal unity.

“To our enemies, it made no difference where we came from - we were Jews and we died together. So let us learn to live together,” she urged.

Delivering the main address, founding director of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre Myra Osrin, outlined the almost total destruction of Lithuanian and Latvian Jewry 70 years ago. Despite a “modest” revival of Jewish life in Lithuania since independence in 1990, the country had “done little to confront its past”, she noted.

“There are today disturbing signs of ever-present and growing anti-Semitism. There has been a

notable failure to prosecute a single Lithuanian Nazi war criminal.

“On the other hand, Lithuanian Jewish resistance fighters who had fought the Nazis, have now been threatened with war crime prosecutions,” she stated.

Describing the growing list of post-Holocaust genocides in Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda and Darfur as “painful”, Osrin said: “Let us resolve never to be silent when injustice and genocide are being perpetrated - anywhere, at any time, against anyone.

“There is no greater way to honour the memory of our six million.”

Li Boiskin, chairman of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies (Cape Council) under whose auspices the commemoration was held, said that individuals should “respect the diversity of all, no matter their skin colour, language or sexual orientation”. One should “challenge the abuse of power and human rights and highlight the dangers of apathy in the face of abuse”, she urged.

The service concluded with the communal Kaddish led by Cantor Ian Camissar of the Cape Town Hebrew Congregation and the singing of Nkosi Sikelel iAfrika and Hatikvah.

# Ben Helfgott - a symbol of an indomitable spirit

DAVID SAKS

OF THE millions of Jews who fell into the hands of the Nazis during the Second World War, only a fraction - well under 20 per cent - hung onto life long enough to be liberated by the Allied forces.

Among this surviving remnant was the 15-year-old Ben Helfgott, who from the capture of his Polish home town of Piotrkow in November 1939, until then had witnessed the progressive annihilation of family, friends and community. Shortly before the end of the war, he had been transferred to the Theresienstadt concentration camp, where he was liberated by Russian troops.

Prior to this, he had just learned of the death of his father, shot while trying to escape from a death march. His mother and eight-year-old sister were already long murdered, taken out of the Piotrkow ghetto and shot in the neighbouring forest several years before, but this final loss, coming so cruelly near to rescue, was something he would never really

come to terms with.

Helfgott (see front page picture) was the keynote speaker at last Sunday's Yom Hashoah commemorative ceremony at Johannesburg's West Park Cemetery. He also spoke at the Durban ceremony which took place the following day.

With dignity and restraint, he related the horrific details of the catastrophe that destroyed forever the life he knew as a small-town Polish Jewish boy and claimed the lives of so many of his loved ones.

The final message Helfgott left the large crowd attending the ceremony with, however, was a profoundly positive one.

Many survivors were permanently broken and embittered by what they had witnessed and endured, and who can blame them? Others, however, found within themselves the inner resilience to rebuild their shattered lives, despite and sometimes even because of their traumatic experiences.

Helfgott was one of these. More than most Holocaust survivors, his subsequent life would be a dramatic demonstration of how human beings can triumph in the face of the most harrowing adversity.

After liberation, he was one of 732 young Jewish survivors - known simply as 'The Boys', although around 100 girls were among them - who were resettled in England. There, he embarked on a successful new life, distinguished by multiple professional and sporting achievements.

Among the latter was him for many years representing his adopted country in international weightlifting events, including at the 1956 and 1960 Olympic Games. Helfgott movingly recalled his feelings at the 1956 Olympic opening ceremony in Melbourne, when he thought of how

proud his parents would have been to witness what their son had achieved.

He also felt that he was representing not just himself, but also all those who had not been fortunate enough to survive.

Helfgott's post-Shoah triumph has been as much mental as physical. He had emerged from the living hell of Nazi barbarity with few illusions about human nature, he said, but at the same time he had refused to poison his life with hatred and thoughts of revenge.

Rather, he saw it as his life's goal to continually fight against bigotry and intolerance and to preserve the memory of those who had perished so barbarically.

Helfgott has indeed been much involved in Holocaust commemoration, education, asset restoration and survivor support initiatives. Inter alia, he has served for 46 years as chairman of the '45 Aid Society, an association formed by the 732 Jewish survivors who were brought out to the UK.

The Johannesburg ceremony was presided over by SAJBD Gauteng Council Chairman Jeff Katz. Ya'akov Finkelstein, deputy Chief of Mission at the Israeli Embassy, delivered a message from the Israeli government.

He said that the "tikkun" (reparation) that the international community should do for its failure to prevent a Holocaust, was to take with the utmost seriousness the threats by Iran and such groups as Hamas to wreak another genocide against the Jewish people and act accordingly.

The programme also included readings from Holocaust literature in English, Hebrew and Ladino, lighting of the memorial lamps by survivors and a "Tribute to Fallen Soldiers" by the SA Jewish Ex-Service League. Learners from King David Victory Park, Yeshiva College and Torah Academy participated by delivering readings and introducing the Yiddish song Shtiler Shtiler, and Gina Fainman, grand-niece of Holocaust survivor Dan Krausz, from King David Linksfield spoke on her recent trip to Auschwitz.

Chazzan Chilly Chrysler, accompanied by Evelyn Green, sang the Haskara and Shtiler Shtiler and led the Johannesburg Jewish Male Choir in the singing of Ani Maamin, the Partisan Song and Hatikva.

# Yom Hashoah launches new Dbn Holocaust Centre

LAUREN SHAPIRO

THE DURBAN Jewish community gathered this Yom Hashoah not only to pay tribute to the victims of the past, but also to take bold steps into the future with the reopening of their state-of-the-art Holocaust Centre.

On May 2, a bold yet dignified ceremony combined fine art and drama with words of Torah and a candle-lighting ceremony, pairing Holocaust survivors with members of the community's youth.

The morning's keynote speaker was Ben Helfgott, a survivor of three concentration camps who went on to compete in the Olympic Games for Britain. But his real strength is not that which allowed him to lift weights; it is his indomitable spirit.

"I refused to poison my life with revenge and hatred for hatred is corrosive. Instead I was left with a dream - to live in a world of understanding, compassion, fraternity and love for my fellow man."

The Durban Holocaust Centre, established three years ago was re-launched this week in a larger venue.



Holocaust survivor, Don Krausz in the crowd facing the Holocaust memorial where the ceremony took place. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ILAN OSSENDRYVER)

## YOM HA'ATZMAUT 63

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## OPINION AND ANALYSIS

FORUM FOR DIVERSE VIEWS

## Jewish Report

## What to say about bin Laden's death

THE KILLING by US Special Forces of Al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden - arguably the most reviled person on the planet since Adolf Hitler - was called by Brenthurst Foundation head Greg Mills a combination of "revenge, justice, victory and martyrdom". Political leaders everywhere have rushed to express overwhelmingly positive responses.

Those of various African countries, reported by Radio Netherlands Worldwide, included Kenyan Prime Minister Raila Odinga: "His killing is an act of justice"; Ugandan foreign affairs minister Sam Kutesa: "It's good news... a momentous event"; Mali's Foreign Minister Soumeylou Boubeye Maiga: "We welcome (his) death"; Morocco's Communications Minister Khalid Naciri said the entire world suffered from bin Laden; Tanzania's President Jakaya Kikwete said the news was a "relief".

In comparison, the brief statement from South Africa's Department of International Relations and Co-operation was sadly muted and woolly: "The Government of the Republic of South Africa has noted the news of the passing on of Mr Osama bin Laden, as announced during the early hours of today, Monday, May 2, 2011... South Africa reaffirms the commitment to the system of global governance of multilateralism.

"Our resolve to support peace, security and development in the world remains. We call upon all countries across the world to co-operate in stemming the demon of terrorism, in all its manifestations, out of global politics."

At the time of writing on Tuesday evening, President Jacob Zuma had refrained from commenting, saying he had not received an official report and was not prepared to comment "at this stage".

ANC spokesperson Jackson Mthembu refused to comment, according to the Mail & Guardian, until there is evidence of the body, despite US confirmation of the death by DNA tests: "Even President (Barack) Obama hasn't seen the body... Until all of us are convinced, we will not issue a formal statement."

The contrast was embarrassingly glaring between SA's subdued comments and those of numerous major countries outside Africa, which were bold and upbeat. Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard said, according to the BBC: "I welcome the death of Osama bin Laden"; Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte: "(his death is) an important blow"; Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper: "Canada receives the news... with sober satisfaction"; UK Prime Minister David Cameron: "It is a massive step forward"; Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi: "A great result... for all democracies"; Russia: "The Kremlin welcomes the serious success the US achieved"; Japanese Prime Minister Naoto Kan: "We welcome this significant progress in counter-terrorism"; New Zealand Prime Minister John Key: "The world is a safer place"; French President Nicolas Sarkozy: "Terrorism has suffered a historic defeat." Jerzy Buzek, EU president: "We have woken up in a more secure world... (he) claimed to be acting in the name of Islam, but in reality he made a mockery of the basic values of his and all other religions"; Swedish foreign minister Carl Bildt: "A world without (him) is a better world"; German Chancellor Angela Merkel said she was "relieved".

Even Palestinian Authority spokesman Ghassan Khatib said: "Getting rid of bin Laden is good for the cause of peace worldwide."

A conspicuous counter-view from the Middle East came from Ismail Haniyeh, head of terrorist organisation Hamas in Gaza: "We condemn the assassination and the killing of an Arab holy warrior... a continuation of the American policy based on oppression and the shedding of Muslim and Arab blood."

South Africa has been hailed as Africa's leader. Why do we not show leadership and take a stand? Surely our place should be with the countries mentioned above? What we got was obfuscation from Zuma and his government, characteristic of his indecisive style. Why not say something like: "If this is true, it is a great moment for the free world?"

Is this weak response calculated not to lose Muslim votes in the coming local elections? Surely elimination of an arch-terrorist like bin Laden should override parochial interests?

We had high expectations in 1994 - founded on the world's best constitution - about the moral high ground South Africa would fill in Africa and the globe. Alas, we have been shown not to have the leadership qualities we hoped for. This does not make us proud as South Africans.

## Targeted killing is vindicated

ALAN DERSHOWITZ

THE DECISION to target and kill Osama bin Laden is being applauded by all decent people. Approval to capture or kill this mass-murdering terrorist leader was given by Presidents Barack Obama and George W. Bush. It was the right decision, both morally and legally.

Although bin Laden wore no military uniform and held no official military rank, he was an appropriate military target. As the titular and spiritual head of Al-Qaida, he was the functional equivalent of a head of state or commander in chief of a terrorist army.

From the beginning of recorded history, killing the king was the legitimate object of military action. The very phrase "check mate" means "the king is dead," signifying the successful end of the battle.

Yet, there are those who claim that all targeted killings are immoral and illegal. These critics characterise such actions as "extrajudicial executions" and demand that terrorist leaders and functionaries be treated as common criminals who must be arrested and brought to trial.

The operation that resulted in bin Laden's death was a military action calculated to kill rather than to "arrest" him. It is possible, though highly unlikely, that he could have been captured alive and brought to trial. The decision to employ military personnel with guns, rather than a drone firing rockets, was probably made by generals rather than lawyers.

Had it been militarily preferable to fire a rocket, that option would almost certainly have been selected - as it was by the Nato forces that rocketed Gaddafi's compound. A rocket attack would have been a pure targeted killing with no possibility of live capture.

The operation directed against bin Laden may have been designed, in part, to have preserved the theoretical option of "arrest", though the likelihood of a live capture was virtually impossible under the circumstances. Indeed it is likely that bin Laden's death was deemed preferential to his capture and trial, because the latter would have



raised the probability that Al-Qaida would take hostages and try to exchange them for bin Laden.

Indeed, a US national security official has confirmed to Reuters that "this was a kill operation" and there was no desire to capture bin Laden alive. This was a targeted kill appropriate for a military combatant but not for an ordinary (or even extraordinary) criminal.

Nonetheless, our government felt it necessary to announce that bin Laden was shot after he allegedly resisted, thus suggesting he was not killed in cold blood. But it is clear that he would have been killed whether or not he resisted, since this was a kill operation from the outset and it is unlikely he was ever given the opportunity to surrender, an opportunity not required under the laws of war.

Accordingly, those who have opposed the very concept of targeted killings should be railing against the killing of Osama bin Laden.

Among others, these critics include officials in Britain, France, Italy, Russia, the EU, Jordan, and the United Nations. A former British Foreign Secretary once said: "The British government has made it repeatedly clear that so-called targeted assassinations of this kind are unlawful, unjustified and counterproductive."

The French foreign ministry has declared "that extrajudicial executions contravene international law and are unacceptable." The Italian Foreign Minister has said: "Italy, like the whole of the European Union, has always condemned the practice of targeted assassinations."

The Russians have asserted: "Russia has repeatedly stressed the unacceptability of extrajudicial settling of scores and 'targeted killings'." Javier Solana has noted: "The European Union has consistently condemned extrajudicial killings."

The Jordanians have said: "Jordan has always denounced this policy of assassination and its position on this has always been clear." And Kofi Annan (former UN secretary general) has declared that "extrajudicial

killings are violations of international law".

Yet none of these nations, groups or individuals have criticised the targeted killing of Osama bin Laden by the US. The reason is obvious. All the condemnations against targeted killing was directed at one country. Guess which one? Israel, of course.

Israel developed the concept of targeted killings and used it effectively against the "Osama bin Ladens" of Hamas, who directed terrorist attacks against Israeli civilians, killing and wounding more Israelis, as a percentage of its population, than the number killed by bin Laden.

It was when Israel managed to kill the head of Hamas, that the international community, with the striking exception of the United States, decided that targeted killing was illegal and immoral.

But now that it has been used against an enemy of Britain, France, Italy and other European nations, the tune has changed. Suddenly targeted killing is not only legal and moral, it is praiseworthy (except, of course, to Hamas, which immediately condemned the US killing of bin Laden).

Well, the truth is that when used properly, targeted killing has always been deserving of approval - even when employed by Israel, a nation against which a double standard always seems to be applied.

Indeed, in Israel, the use of targeted killings has been closely regulated by its supreme court and permitted only against terrorists who are actively engaged in ongoing acts of terrorism. In the United States, on the other hand, the decisions to use this tactic is made by the President alone, without any form of judicial review.

So, let the world stop applying a double standard to Israel and let it start judging the merits and demerits of military tactics such as targeted killing. On balance, targeted killing, when used prudently against proper military targets, can be an effective, lawful, and moral tool in the war against terrorism.

• This article first appeared on Prof Dershowitz's blog.

## Royal wedding popular even in Sandringham



Transfixed by the romantic spectacle of the recent Royal wedding, two young observant Jewish women watch on the TV monitor at Mooz Bros kosher bakery/restaurant in Sandringham, Johannesburg last Friday. (PHOTOGRAPH: ILAN OSSENDRYVER)

