



Catch Pieter-Dirk Uys' Pick-A-Box show with a twist (page 12)

South african Jewish Report

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Netanyahu must learn from Sadat

Egyptian President Anwar Sadat said in 1977 that he would “go to the ends of the earth” to achieve peace. Within a short time he had signed a peace treaty with Prime Minister Menachem Begin of Israel. Would Israeli Prime Minister Bibi Netanyahu be willing do something similar – “go to the ends of the earth” to achieve peace with the Palestinians and the Arab world? In the picture, Netanyahu is seen during a trip to China visiting a technology exhibition. See page 6.

DA affirms its commitment to a two-state ME solution

Ian Davidson, Shadow Minister of International Relations and Co-operation, says the ANC's struggle history tended to “warp” its attitude to matters such as the Middle East conflict.

4

Jewish Achiever Awards! Nominations now open

Nominate your favourite Jewish achiever for the most prestigious acknowledgement of their success in the country. The date of the awards is August 15.

5



Hungarian anti-Semites protest WJC conference presence

The far-right Jobbik Party alleges that there is a Jewish conspiracy underfoot to buy up Hungary; they accused the World Jewish Congress of choosing to hold its four-yearly gathering in Budapest to “shame the Hungarian people”.

10

Restored Maputo Shul to be inaugurated on May 19

Today's Jewish community in Maputo bears a striking resemblance to its forerunner. Its membership is diverse, comprising both Mozambican citizens and long-term foreign residents, and it regularly welcomes visitors.

9

Karabus: 263 days

Still in UAE detention, Prof Karabus looks forward to May 14, when there is a possibility his passport may be returned, but he's learnt to be cautious (if not cynical) in his optimism.

3



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DAVID SAKS

Yom Yerushalayim was a celebration not just of a great military victory, but of one of the most privileged and blessed times in the 4 000-year history of the Jewish people, said SAZF National Chairman Avrom Krengel, at Tuesday night’s Yom Yerushalayim event at Beyachad in Johannesburg.

All subsequent speakers echoed this acknowledgment of how the liberation of Jerusalem in the 1967 Six Day War, and Israel’s astounding victory in that war as a whole, permanently transformed and uplifted the Jewish world.

A war that had commenced amidst fears of another Holocaust, had concluded within a week with the total defeat of Israel’s enemies and the restoration of Jewish sovereignty in the Holy City after more than 18 centuries of foreign occupation.

Gratitude to Hashem and humility in acknowledgment of the bravery and sacrifices made by the brave soldiers of the time, should be the dominant sentiments when remembering the miracles of 1967, stressed Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein.

Amplifying on this, Rabbi Laurence Perez pointed out how plans had been made to convert Israel’s parks into cemeteries in anticipation of the more than 50 000 deaths expected to be sustained in the conflict.

In the end, the final sacrifice had amounted to barely one per cent of this. The Six Day War, he said, had changed what it meant to be Jewish spiritually; the Baal Teshuva revolution of the past 40 years, marking an

ever-increasing return of formerly alienated Jews to their heritage, had very largely been inspired by it.

Likewise Israel’s international standing, particularly the close alliance it had since forged with the world’s leading superpower, the US, could be attributable to those spectacular successes.

The final speaker, Deputy Director of the Jewish Agency for Israel Shay Felber, remarked on the important shift that was taking place in the relationship between Israel and the Diaspora.

It was no longer just a matter of the latter, as was traditional, contributing (financially or otherwise) to the growth of Israel, but of Israel increasingly devoting resources to assisting the Diaspora in keeping Jewish life strong and viable. In South Africa, the Jewish Agency was working closely with the SAZF to this end.



Meskerem Worku, a representative of Impact for Christ Ministries came especially to Yom Yerushalayim to support Israel.

Karabus: And the waiting continues...

ROBYN SASSEN

At the time of our going to press last Wednesday, retired Capetonian paediatric oncologist Professor Cyril Karabus, 78, has been in a state of limbo for 263 days. And still it’s anybody’s guess as to when he will eventually be allowed to leave Abu Dhabi.

In 2000, while on a locum in Abu Dhabi, he treated a three-year old Yemeni girl suffering from myeloid leukaemia. The child was terminal and subsequently died. Two years later, Karabus was convicted and found guilty in absentia and without his knowledge of manslaughter and forgery.

Eleven years after this, in transiting through Dubai on his way from his son’s wedding in Canada, Karabus was arrested.

The ordeal has been immensely drawn out, costly and trying for this elderly man who suffers from angina, but ultimately he was completely exonerated by two Abu Dhabi courts. He is, however, still in limbo, owing, it seems to the slow turning of bureaucratic wheels in the United Arab Emirates.

Karabus’ wife Jenifer, has from Cape Town suggested the UAE authorities might have mislaid her husband’s passport.

At one point, Karabus was travelling every day to the prison to find out the whereabouts of his passport. According to various sources, he has been declared free to travel. His bail money had been refunded to him.

Says his lawyer, Michael Bagraim, from Cape Town: “Professor Karabus is now not travelling down to the prison each day. We are doing this telephonically. We have been informed that it is probably now only going to be Tuesday May 14.

“The South African Embassy has intervened,” he adds, “and have given him a temporary passport, but this is to no avail as we need to ensure that his name is properly cleared through the proper authorities. We can’t take the risk of him being in any way detained at the airport when he tries to leave.

“Karabus has contacted the Consulate there who are helping us to try and expedite the matter.”

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SHIRA DRUION

Affluence demands of us to be generous to the less fortunate who face challenging circumstances daily. Donors can, besides monetary contributions, afford recipients the dignity that every human being deserves.

Impilo, a children's home in Glenhazel in Johannesburg which opened its doors in 2003, is designed to meet the needs of children who do not have families of their own to care for them. It was the initiative of two Jewish social workers, Sue Krawitz and Sheri Shenker.

Impilo currently houses 12 abandoned and vulnerable children, ranging in age from new-borns to two years.

"The home provides the infants with excellent medical, emotional and physical care, which is all financed through generous donations, as we receive no government funding," says one of Impilo's adoption social workers, Janys Orelowitz.

"The Jewish community is a very philanthropic one, of which Impilo thankfully is a beneficiary."

Besides money, without which the home would not be able to

exist, donors also contribute toys, clothing, etc. Some of these articles are in good nick, but alas, others embarrassingly are not.

"Most of our donors understand the core values on which Impilo is based, in that we treat our babies as our own and that we ask ourselves whether we would give these toys and clothing to our own children before giving them to our Impilo babies."

"In as much as Yad Aharon and Michael is extremely grateful for every donation given to them, there is a problem with some of the goods donated in that some of the items are in no way fit for a fellow Jew," says Yad Aharon Managing Director Alice Friedman.

Yad Aharon is a charity that services the Jewish community by providing fresh produce and other parcels to 540 needy families on a regular basis.

"Although the core purpose of Yad Aharon revolves around food, the demand for good second hand clothing is so high that we decided to open a clothing boutique a few years ago to service our clients' growing needs."

"When clothing comes in, it is sorted into three grades. The

Photo by Ilan Ossendryver



Janys Orelowitz with Onelia Malatjie, one of Impilo's caregivers; and several of Impilo's young tots.

best goes into our shop strictly for recipients; whatever does not pass our stringent quality standards is sold to selected hawkers and whatever is left behind after that, is given to charities who service the wider population. The rest is so damaged that we cannot even use them.

"At Yad Aharon we put our recipients first on our list of priorities, which means that the quality standard we set for our recipients, is high. Their

self-esteem is low as it is, so by giving them sub-standard quality goods, we only compound the problem and this essentially defeats the spirit of the mitzvah of chesed and tzedakah.

"I cannot tell you how wonderful it is for our shop staff to open a parcel that contains washed and neatly folded garments which so obviously mirror those donors' respect for the needs of our recipients and for that we are deeply grateful."

DA affirms its commitment to a two-state ME solution

MOIRA SCHNEIDER
CAPE TOWN

Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) was not the way forward in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, DA Shadow Minister of International Relations and Co-operation Ian Davidson, told a gathering held under the auspices of the Cape Board of Deputies' Straight Talking series. He also reaffirmed the DA's commitment to a two-state solution in the ME.

Davidson, who participated in the parliamentary portfolio committee's visit to Israel and the Palestinian Territories in March, said the ANC's struggle history tended to "warp" its attitude to matters such as the conflict.

The trip was a follow-up to one made by the committee over a year ago when it visited Gaza only and was in response to an ACDP recommendation that the resolution it intended to submit to the National Assembly, stand over until all sectors had been visited, to ensure a more credible report.

Expressing himself unequivocally on BDS, Davidson said: "We don't believe that type of campaign will be at all helpful. Clearly, neither the new South African ambassador (to Israel) nor the (incoming) Israeli ambassador has BDS in mind," adding that both wished to promote trade between the two countries instead.

"We recognise that there are problems and that negotiations have come to a stuttering halt - we would like to see them resumed. We believe in a two-state solution and a shared Jerusalem."

Concerning the "alleged discrimination" practised within Israel, he said this was not investigated more thoroughly



Dr Ivan Meyer, DA leader, Western Cape; Dan Plato, MEC Community Safety; Li Boiskin, Cape Chairman SAJBD; Ian Davidson, Shadow Minister International Relations and Co-operation; and Alan Winde, MEC Finance, Economic Development and Tourism, at the meeting hosted by SAJBD.

"because we were trying to see the broader issue."

"We recognise security as key as far as Israel is concerned," he added. "We also recognise the pain on the Palestinian side, but we recognised that you couldn't trade off pain against security."

Davidson felt that the ANC members of the delegation were "disillusioned a bit" as far as the Palestinian side was concerned and that their perceptions had changed quite markedly as a result of the visit. Conceding that there were no simple solutions, he felt that South Africa possibly had a role to play in the region.

"It was certainly a tightrope that we walked trying to present a reasonable voice," he said, referring to the Cope, ACDP and DA members of the delegation.

DA Western Cape leader Dr Ivan Meyer, noted that South Africa was one of the few countries in which citizens lived in religious harmony and he thanked the Jewish community for promoting

"cultural warmth".

He said the DA was committed to making the National Development Plan work. "There's a lot of co-operation behind the scenes which you never hear about when we meet with the national ministers."

Community Safety MEC Dan Plato spoke of watching briefs introduced by the DA, that saw lawyers and law students sitting in court in hand-picked cases to see how magistrates and justices were conducting themselves and to ascertain why so many cases were thrown out of court. This was then taken up with the National Prosecuting Authority.

MEC of Finance, Economic Development and Tourism Alan Winde, acknowledged that black economic empowerment was necessary "to fix the misalignment of the past, where so many were disenfranchised", but said that there needed to be a sunset clause as the practice was "anti-competitive, giving advantage to some over others".



Beit Emanuel Progressive Synagogue Community Rabbi

Beit Emanuel/Temple Emanuel, a Progressive Synagogue in the historic suburb of Parktown, Johannesburg (South Africa) is seeking a full-time rabbi with effect from August 2013.

Beit Emanuel has historically been the largest or "flagship" Progressive congregation in Johannesburg and South Africa, and the successful applicant will work with lay leadership to reinvigorate congregational life and grow membership.

Beit Emanuel has just under 400 member family units, with varying ages, income and levels of observance. Services are offered for Shabbat and all festivals, and the community is attempting to grow its Religion School, youth and young adult demographic and activities.

The ideal candidate will combine warmth and learning, and will have a demonstrated ability to build and grow a community, as well as the skills and abilities usually expected of a solo or senior rabbi for a Progressive community.

Due to the imminent deadline, interim appointments will be welcomed, and in this regard, applications are invited from senior students, rabbis on sabbatical or those recently retired.

The remuneration package will be market-related and negotiable to the right candidate.

Applications close 31 May 2013.

**For more information
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Nominations are now open for Jewish Achiever Awards

HOWARD SACKSTEIN
SA JEWISH REPORT BOARD MEMBER
CHAIRMAN: JEWISH ACHIEVER
AWARDS COMMITTEE

I write to you on behalf of the Board of Directors of the SA Jewish Report. Each year the SA Jewish Report hosts the Jewish Achievers Gala Banquet which honours members of the Jewish community who have excelled in business, entrepreneurship, as well as in a number of additional categories.

We request your assistance to nominate people whom you consider worthy of receiving any of these awards. The Business and Entrepreneurial awards are judged by a panel of independent businesspeople, financial journalists, stockbrokers and representatives from Absa (the event's main sponsor) who interview all of the candidates.

Previous winners of awards include Brian Joffe (Bidvest); Adrian Gore (Discovery); Raymond Ackerman (Pick n Pay); Asher Bohbot (EOH); Alec Wapnick (Octodec); Gill Marcus (Reserve Bank); Brett Levy (Blue Label); Steven Joffe (Gold Reef City); Philip Krawitz (Cape Union Mart); William Kirsh (Primedia); Herschel Mayers (Discovery Life); Sean Melnick (Peregrine); Abe and Solly Krok (Krok Brothers); John Copelyn (HCI); Arthur Gillis (Protea Hotels); Jeff Zidel (Resilient Properties); William Kentridge (Artist); Danny K & Kabelo (Shout Campaign); Phillip Tobias (Paleoanthropologist); Ina Perlman (Operation Hunger); Johnny Clegg (Musician); Ali Bacher



Brian Joffe presenting Alec Wapnick (who has since passed away), with the Life-Time Achiever Award, at last year's Jewish Achiever Awards.

(Cricket administrator); and Pieter-Dirk Uys (Satirist).

We have also in the past honoured both President Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu for their contribution to South Africa.

The awards are:

- The Cell C Lifetime Achievement Award in honour of the late Helen Suzman: Award-

Award: Awarded to a Jewish person who is in a senior leadership position in an Unlisted Company and who has achieved enormous success worthy of recognition.

- Business Person – Absa Entrepreneur Award: Awarded to a Jewish person who has shown enormous entrepreneurial flair and business innovation.
- The Community Service Award: Awarded to a Jewish person who has served the Jewish community with remarkable distinction.
- The Arts, Science, Sports & Culture Award: In honour of the late Helen Suzman. Awarded to a Jewish person who has excelled in any of the aforementioned spheres.
- The Chivas Humanitarian Award in honour of the late Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris: Awarded to either a Jewish or non-Jewish person who has contributed substantially to the betterment of the lives of the people of South Africa.

Please share this opportunity to nominate candidates with your friends and colleagues.

Nominations should include:

- The nominee's name, telephone number and e-mail address.
- The award for which the nominee is nominated.
- A short motivation for the nomination.

All nominations can be e-mailed to nominations@SAJewishReport.co.za

The closing date for nominations is June 28, 2013.

Attention all our lovely Jewish brides!

Entries are open for Jewish Report's exciting and prestigious Bride of the Year 2013 competition. Enticing prizes await the winning bridal couple.

- Rules:**
1. Entries close at the end of November 2013. (The exact date will be announced later.) All brides married between January 2013 and November 2013, are eligible for entry.
 2. Brides must be present in South Africa at the time of judging.
 3. The only photographs permitted for entry, are those submitted by the bride herself, or by her photographer with her explicit permission. All entries MUST be signed by the bride herself.
 4. Photographs will be printed within the time frame and discretion of the Jewish Report.
 5. Photographs for submission, must be in high resolution PDF or JPEG.
 6. The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
 7. Members of Jewish Report and competition sponsors, will not be allowed to vote on family member entries.
 8. Very important: Please note that all photographs MUST be submitted to brides@sajewishreport.co.za - a form is available on www.sajewishreport.co.za

Send the photos to: Attention: Susan at brides@sajewishreport.co.za

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Contact telephone number (groom)

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Email consent given for the printing of this photograph

Would you like to get your photographs back? YES / NO

Note: No entries will be accepted unless all the fields (name, telephone number, e-mail address etc) are filled in correctly.

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Jewish Report

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• Business Person - Absa Listed Company Award

• Business Person - Absa Unlisted Company Award

• Business Person - Absa Entrepreneur Award

• The Community Service Award, The Arts, Science, Sports & Culture Award

• The Chivas Humanitarian Award in honour of Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris.

TO NOMINATE OR FOR MORE INFORMATION:

email nominations@SAJewishReport.co.za or visit www.SAJewishReport.co.za

The closing date for nominations is the 28 June 2013

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Jewish Report

Guptagate challenge
to armchair critics

Among the outcomes of the recent Gupta Waterkloof jet saga – which has become known as “Guptagate” - is not only anger, but a sense of great weariness, rather than surprise, as well as a feeling of overwhelming impotence for the man in the street when he catches a glimpse of the big-money, big-politics shenanigans going on over his head.

For this issue of the Jewish Report, we asked a range of Jewish South Africans their views on corruption in the country and their sense of what they as individuals should do (see page 2).

The close friendship between President Jacob Zuma and the Guptas – like that between Vivian Reddy and the Shaik brothers – prompts memories of the ugly Indian-Zulu tensions which characterised their respective histories in the former Natal. Lingering resentment still exists between the two groups.

Have they sufficiently been put to rest, or could something more serious be re-ignited by the activities of the wealthy and powerful Gupta family in South Africa today?

There is also an undercurrent of antipathy towards “Johnny-come-latelys” like the Guptas, who seem to be running the country by proxy. The irony is that our president – who was very much a stalwart of the Struggle and sacrificed years of his life in exile – is now their best buddy, and is seemingly allowing the country whose freedom he fought for to be exploited by them.

The outpouring of anger about the Waterkloof saga was actually just the tipping edge of a simmering resentment against interlopers who arrive in this country with their fortunes and buy status and patronage not owing to them.

Residents of Johannesburg who drive past the opulent Gupta mansion in Saxonwold will bear testimony to the almost permanent presence of a black Mercedes parked on the pavement at the grand entrance to the estate, with threatening-looking “heavies” standing next to it, behaving like watchdogs of the Gupta “fiefdom”.

There is nothing unusual about super-wealthy people taking steps to protect themselves, but given recent events, it reinforces that family’s poor public image.

Whether or not there is any credence to the growing perception in this country that Zuma is in the Guptas’ pocket, appearances are important, and if he wants the respect that should accompany his office, he must convince the nation it is not true.

Furthermore, Zuma’s family members are obviously entitled to make a good living; but an unsettling perception is growing that they are benefiting from the Zuma name, rather than their own efforts - and if this does not provoke an outcry, then we are in serious trouble. Resigned acceptance would indicate just how far the rot has set in.

Ordinary South Africans – Jews as much as anyone else – face a serious question, particularly young ones. They must be asking themselves whether corruption has become so endemic that the situation is beyond redemption and South Africa is on a non-stoppable downward spiral. If so, what would they advise their children to do – stay here and try to fix it, or leave the country?

The answer depends on a personal vantage point. Fortunately, there are still many optimists – or patriots – who believe their efforts can turn the corruption tide and realise this country’s colossal potential, and who feel it is still possible to bring back something of the “Rainbow Nation” euphoria of Nelson Mandela’s era.

Beware of the “doom and gloom” syndrome. Certainly, there are problems in this country and warning lights flashing about our government’s and leaders’ behaviour and morals. But it is imperative that we don’t become sullen armchair critics mired in cynicism and resigned to the rot.

Getting up and doing something about it means different things to different people. But G-d forbid we should give in to corruption and let this beautiful country be stolen from us.

Professor Stephen Hawking joins the
academic boycott of Israel

Stephen Hawking (pictured) is pulling out of a conference hosted by President Shimon Peres in Jerusalem to protest Israel’s treatment of Palestinians, The Guardian reported Wednesday.

Hawking, 71, the world-renowned theoretical physicist and Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at the University of Cambridge, had accepted an invitation to the fifth annual president’s conference, Facing Tomorrow, in June. Major international personalities and thousands of participants will this year celebrate Peres’ 90th birthday.

Last week he wrote to Peres to say he had changed his mind. The British Committee for the Universities of Palestine with Hawking’s approval described it as “his independent decision to respect the boycott, based upon his knowledge of Palestine, and on the unanimous advice of his own academic contacts there.”

The Guardian first reported that in the four weeks since Hawking’s participation in the Jerusalem conference was announced, he had been bombarded by an intense campaign by boycott supporters to persuade him to change his mind. Hawking, who is in very poor health, later told friends he decided to follow the advice of Palestinian colleagues and not attend.

Hawking has visited Israel four times in the past. Most recently, in 2006, he delivered public



lectures at both Israeli and Palestinian universities as the guest of the British embassy in Tel Aviv.

Presidential Conference Chairman Israel Maimon said: “The use of an academic boycott

is outrageous and improper, especially by those for whom the spirit of liberty is at the basis of the human and academic mission.”

“The boycott decision is incompatible with open and democratic discourse,” he added.

Netanyahu must learn from Sadat

MARC SCHNEIER
NEW YORK

US Secretary of State John Kerry is correct to describe a new proposal by the Arab League to revive Israeli-Palestinian peace talks as “a very big step forward”.

Yet there will be no serious movement toward peace until Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu responds to the Arab League initiative by evoking the words of the late Egyptian leader Anwar Sadat before travelling to Jerusalem in the later 1970s, vowing “to go to the ends of the earth” - even to the Qatari capital of Doha or the Saudi capital of Riyadh - in order to achieve peace.

The new peace initiative, which was presented to Kerry and Vice President Joe Biden by a Qatari-led Arab delegation in Washington on April 30, would revive - and improve, from Israel’s standpoint - the so-called Saudi Peace Initiative of 2002.

That proposal, subsequently endorsed by the entire Arab League, promised Israel full peace in exchange for a return to its pre-1967 borders.

Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim Al Thani, presented the new initiative, accepting for the first time a modification of those borders.

According to Al Thani, “The Arab League delegation affirms that agreement should be based on the two-state solution, on the basis of the 4th of June 1967 line” with the possibility of a “comparable and mutual agreed minor swap(s) of the land.”

This important Arab League initiative comes in the wake of another significant but little noticed development that also originated in the Gulf: an April 8 resolution by the Kingdom of Bahrain condemning Hezbollah as a terrorist organisation.

The outlawing of Hezbollah, overwhelmingly passed by Bahrain’s parliament, represents the first known instance that an Arab country has used

the T word to describe a militant Arab organisation like Hezbollah, which has rained missiles on northern Israel and last year murdered Israeli tourists in Bulgaria.

When I visited Bahrain in December 2011, becoming the first rabbi to meet with King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifah in his palace, he told me - as widely reported by the media - that Bahrain and Israel share a common enemy in Hezbollah’s patron, Iran, which sits directly across the narrow Persian Gulf from Bahrain and other Gulf states including the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Kuwait.

Yet nearly a month after the Bahraini statement, there has been no official response by the Israeli Government. Indeed, when a reporter for the Times of Israel asked the Foreign Ministry why it has not commended Bahrain for its anti-Hezbollah stand, a spokesman blandly responded: “If the Bahrainis had wanted Israel to say something, they could have sent us a message through diplomatic channels. Since they didn’t, we didn’t.”

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu may well have decided to err on the side of caution in responding to both the Bahraini and Arab League initiatives by waiting to see whether support will hold up across the Arab world.

Yet this is one of those critical moments in Middle East history when an excess of caution may doom hopes for a breakthrough by strengthening cynicism and peace process fatigue on both sides.

Following the dramatic steps by Bahrain, Qatar and the Arab League, Netanyahu needs to respond in similarly dramatic fashion. Just as Sadat fundamentally transformed Israeli-Egyptian relations 35 years ago by declaring his willingness to travel even to Jerusalem, Netanyahu should declare his readiness to fly to Doha or Riyadh to demonstrate his genuine desire for peace - with the Palestinians as well as Saudi

Arabia and the other Gulf states.

The Israeli government and people need to remember that Israel exists and is destined to live forever in the heart of the Middle East, not the Middle West. The Jewish state can only secure its long-term survival by reaching an accommodation with the Arab world - or at least an important part of it.

Thankfully, the positive initiatives of the past few weeks by Bahrain and the Arab League delegation led by Qatar - neither of which would have taken place without the encouragement and support of Saudi Arabia - make clear that a historic opportunity exists for Israel to build a strategic alliance with the oil-rich states of the Arabian Peninsula.

Israel and the Gulf states are endangered by Iran, a genocidal theocracy with nuclear ambitions that vows to destroy the Jewish State and has extended its reach into the heart of the Arab world through manipulation of proxies like Hezbollah in Lebanon and the tottering Assad regime in Syria.

If Netanyahu seizes the moment to reach a peace agreement with the Palestinians, thanks to the initiative put forward by the Qataris and the Arab League, there is a chance that after generations of bitter conflict, Israelis will finally live in peace and security.

If, however, the Israeli prime minister spurns this opportunity, he will only empower the extremists in the Arab and larger Muslim world who are determined to destroy the Jewish State. Now is the time for Netanyahu to secure a better future for the people of Israel by taking a dramatic step for peace. (JTA)

• *Rabbi Marc Schneier, president of the Foundation for Ethnic Understanding, is co-author with Imam Shamsi Ali of “Sons of Abraham: A Candid Conversation About the Issues that Divide and Unite Jews and Muslims,” to be published by Beacon Press in September.)*

Concerted effort can beat assimilation



Breaking the glass at a Jewish wedding.

SHIRA DRUION

Assimilation between Jews and non-Jews is increasing rapidly worldwide, as young people leave the Jewish fold to pursue a life that is, for the most part, devoid of religion.

Since 2000, Johannesburg UOS statistics reflect a 40 per cent drop in the number of Jewish marriages processed. Cape Town’s figure sees a 33 per cent drop for the same period.

If this is an indication of what the future holds, there are grave concerns which the community must tackle to prevent an impending apocalypse that could threaten Jewish continuity.

“Assimilation is definitely on the increase,” says Rabbi Ron Hendler, head of the conversion programme for the Johannesburg Beth Din.

“It is difficult to quantify exact statistics; it’s safe to say that a large number of Jews in our community have at least one family member who has married out or who is living with a non-Jew.

“Although many couples do apply for conversion, many more opt not to, because they don’t want to be obligated to live a life of observant Judaism, which is one of the prerequisites in order to enrol in our conversion programme.

“Many couples meet in the workplace and the rest are introduced by friends,” says Hendler. “They begin dating, not initially thinking there’s a strong possibility that they could fall in love.

“But, after several months, it becomes obvious that they have strong feelings for one another and then the whole debacle starts, and in the internal battle that ensues, love trumps religion, because when it boils down to choosing between the two, people would rather lose religion than their partner who they have come to love.

“I have witnessed that intermarriage usually starts to become problematic for the Jewish partner when children come into the equation and the disparity in the different value systems becomes apparent. Tragically, this is then too late for many and the damage has been done.”

“We need to distinguish between assimilation (becoming less and less ‘Jewish’) and intermarriage (someone who is Jewish, marrying someone who is not),” says Rabbi Doron Kornbluth, perhaps best-known as author of *Why Be Jewish?* *Raising Kids to LOVE Being Jewish* and the bestselling *Why Marry Jewish?*

“Assimilation is hard to define and measure. Intermarriage isn’t. Internationally, over 50 per cent of young Jews are marrying out of the faith. South Africa is better off, but not radically so.

“The days of a 10 per cent intermarriage rate in South Africa are long gone. This is evident by the number of calls and e-mails that I receive from South Africans asking for my assistance with couples who are considering intermarriage.

“Furthermore, many South Africans living in London, Toronto, Australia or America, encounter the intermarriage issue while abroad; their stats are probably as harrowing as those of any

other international Jewish community.

“I remember speaking in SA years ago and hearing intermarriage was not one of the community’s main concerns because local Jews were so traditional. Things have changed radically.

“Without proactive efforts to strengthen Jewish identity and directly encourage ‘in-marriage’, the South African community is going to implode; it’s just a matter of time... Of course, the strongly Orthodox section of the community will survive, but what will happen to the rest? It is very concerning.”

“In classroom conversations about intermarriage, it has become clear to me, that what drives the average young secular Jew’s insistence that intermarriage is not such a ‘big deal’, is not intellectual but is in fact more indicative of the social pressure of having to support the decision of friends or friends parents to have intermarried” says Rabbi Dani Brett, head of Beit Medrash and curriculum development for Herzlia schools.

“This is a reflection of a much diluted approach to Judaism.” says Brett. “Once upon a time, there was a stigma attached to those who ‘married out of the faith’, but today the tables have turned and the stigma is attached to ‘narrow-minded Jews who have issues around intermarriage.’”

“Today, the silent Holocaust is reflected by the Christmas tree that replaces the shattered menorah that lies at the far end of the garage, says recently converted Ansie Janse van Rensburg.

“This is evident in the hurried burial of tallit and tefillin that lie in the bottom drawer; where one settles for a life of Friday night dinners in front of the TV, instead of blessing one’s children around the lights of the Shabbat table.”

“The truth is that South Africa has a strong community structure, excellent leadership in the Chief Rabbi, and much to offer,” Says Kornbluth.

“With this in mind, it is possible to avoid becoming just like one of the many dying, assimilated American communities - but it won’t happen by itself. If more money and time is invested in Jewish education, the community will prosper, because essentially it is the key to prevention.

“Jewish educators also need to be empowered through enrichment programmes and allocated enough teaching hours to cover relevant ground. Shabbatonim are needed to inspire the youth, as well as regular visits from dynamic speakers who know how to ignite that Jewish spark.

“Trips to Israel are also very important to help young people to develop a connection with G-d, their people, and their land.

“I would also advise parents to partner with their children and attend weekly classes in Judaism. If parents are not learning, why should their children take Judaism seriously? The message starts from the top; a home devoid of Judaism can have devastating effects on the family and their place in the tapestry of Jewish continuity.

“Good news is that young Jews can be turned on to Jewish identity - if we play our cards right.”

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Guidelines for letters
Letters up to 400 words get preference. Provide your full name, place of residence, and daytime contact phone number. We do not publish letters under noms de plume. Letters should preferably be e-mailed. Letters may be edited or shortened. *The Editor, PO Box 84650, Greenside, 2034 email: sharon@sajewishreport.co.za*

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO STOP THE JNF FROM DOING?

I have some questions for Allan Horwitz and his “Stop the JNF” organisation. Firstly, what are you trying to stop the JNF from doing? Greening Israel? Because that is what the aim of the Jewish National Fund is. They have planted millions of trees in Israel which has turned the country from a desert into a garden.

You also mention that you are concerned with fairness and even-handedness. Well, I would like to know where are your “Stop Hamas and Hezbollah” campaigns, as their aim is the destruction of Israel which is written in their creed.

And If your organisation is so fair and balanced, where is your call to the Palestinian leadership to negotiate with the Israeli leadership, because I believe there have to be at least two parties to negotiate.

As far as I have seen in the media, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has clearly stated during President Barack Obama’s

recent visit that he wants to restart negotiations for a two-state solution with the Palestinians, but so far has had no response from the Palestinian leadership.

You also state that you support freedom of association and assembly. So, how come the BDS and Palestinian supporters came into the concert halls at both the Yossi Reshef and Yom Ha’atzmaut concerts or are the Jewish community not included in this freedom of association and assembly?

Somehow I don’t understand how a demonstration could have taken place outside the concert halls, as you state in your letter, when there is photographic evidence of a person being struck down and lying on the floor inside the venue.

Finally, I would suggest that you go and learn what our Torah really has to teach about wars of survival and especially justice and catch a wake-up!

Dennis Kahlberg
Fairmount, Johannesburg

NETANYAHU DESERVES CREDIT FOR ISRAEL’S GROWTH AND STABILITY

I refer to Gary Selikow’s letter, “Lamenting the disappearance of social justice”, in the issue of April 12.

Last year’s peaceful “tent protest” in Israel and the dramatic rise of the Yesh Atid party - which fought the recent elections largely on social issues - are events which reflect Selikow’s “disappointment about the direction the national rightwing Zionist parties have taken regarding social justice”.

In his criticism of Benjamin Netanyahu’s leadership in that respect, he correctly pointed out that Likud had “always espoused the social welfare policies of Ze’ev Jabotinsky, a great believer in universal equality and justice for all”.

However, to be fair, in dealing with the economic realities of the Jewish State within a hostile neighbourhood - exacerbated by the global financial crisis - under Netanyahu’s watch Israel achieved the highest economic growth in the world, and created 360 000 jobs (more than any other country), with only 6,5 per cent unemployment. Also, after the social protests, Netanyahu immediately set up a commission of enquiry to investigate the situation on the ground. Generally speaking, in a democratic country, economic policies are cyclical, responding to public pressures from time to time - necessitated by evolving circumstances - causing governments to adapt accordingly.

Likud today leads a coalition government which includes Yesh Atid (with Yair Lapid as the minister of finance) as well as followers of Jabotinsky’s national liberal policies. So, let’s see how this combination plays itself out in the light of present public demand - with Likud still the Israel party best suited to implement Zionist patriotism, national security, individual liberty and free enterprise.

David Abel
National Vice Chairman
Likud South Africa

DENYING G-D IS LIKE DENYING ONE’S PARENTS

With regard to a recent letter to the Jewish Report by Yossi Bogacz suggesting that the Holocaust could never have been part of a G-d’s plan, I would like to point out that we cannot know G-d’s plans.

The Holocaust is not proof that a Divine force never created the world - that is a totally unrelated matter. After all many Holocaust survivors retained their religious faith.

Nevertheless it does make it difficult to understand how a benevolent G-d would allow it to happen.

The Kabbalah explains that someone who has done wrong in a previous life might be given another chance in a future incarnation.

This could explain why some good people suffer - they might be atoning for a previous life’s sins.

According to Jewish tradition, to be martyred for our religion (al kiddush Hashem) is one of the greatest mitzvot possible.

Perhaps G-d gathered together the souls of six million sinners from throughout history and enabled them to be purified in this way, allowing them to achieve the greatest heights of the World to Come.

To deny Hashem is to disconnect from the most powerful force in the universe. Such a view would also leave us spiritually impoverished.

Rejecting G-d’s existence reflects a major disloyalty towards our Creator and is like denying one’s parents.

It is also a denial of our very essence. This is why most people believe in the Divine - it is part of our nature. A major crisis of faith (such as great anger towards the Creator), is usually needed to dislodge this inherent part of our souls.

Atheism is therefore not a natural nor happy state of mind.

Martin Zagnoev
Johannesburg

Lag B’Omer celebrations on Saturday evening

In our front page article last week on Lag B’Omer, we mentioned that the Lag B’Omer celebration was on Sunday night; it was, in fact on Saturday evening. Due to space constraints in our paper, we mentioned by name the students of Rabbi Akiva and rebel leader Simon Bar Kochba as two of the historical pivots of the festival, but omitted to also mention Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, whose yortzheit is celebrated on Lag Ba’Omer. All three narratives are significant parts of the Lag B’Omer tradition.

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Restored Maputo Shul to be inaugurated on May 19

The restored Maputo Synagogue will be inaugurated on Sunday, May 19 at 15:30. The ceremony will include the Hachnasat Sefer Torah and restoration to the community of the Torah scrolls taken to South Africa for safekeeping some years ago. The synagogue is located at Rua Tomás Nduda, 203, in Maputo.

The Jewish Community of Mozambique in a media release sketches the shul's history from the 19th century when Jews from different countries immigrated to the growing port city of Lourenço Marques looking for trading opportunities.

The congregation was founded in 1899 with the encouragement of Rabbi Joseph H Hertz (who visited the city on his expulsion from the Transvaal Republic by President Paul Kruger).

Services were initially held in the members' homes. In 1921, the Jewish community was officially established as the Associação de Benevolência Israelita Honen Dalim. Around the same time as the Jewish cemetery.

The historic Maputo Synagogue was constructed and consecrated in 1926. The community was composed of both Sephardi and Ashkenazi immigrants, speaking several languages, from a wide range of social and educational backgrounds and engaged in a



variety of activities.

They were a diverse, even disparate group, but they joined together to build and maintain both a beautiful synagogue and a strong community. The community declined during the period prior to and following national independence. Like many other houses of worship in Mozambique, the synagogue building was briefly nationalised.

In late 1980s the synagogue was returned to the community and both it and the cemetery were gradually rehabilitated.

By 1994, the community had grown and began to hold regular Shabbat and holiday services. In 2010, the community was official reconstituted as Associação Honen Dalim - Comunidade Judaica de Moçambique.

Today's Jewish community in Maputo bears a striking resem-

blance to its forerunner. Its membership is diverse, comprising both Mozambican citizens and long-term foreign residents, and it regularly welcomes Jewish visitors to Maputo.

Services in a mix of Hebrew, English and Portuguese, are held on Friday nights and holidays. Recently, the community has celebrated a wedding, batmitzvah, bar mitzvah, and the birth of children.

The inauguration ceremony will be attended by representatives of the Mozambican government, the ambassador of Israel to Mozambique and a delegation of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, led by Mervyn Smith and will include "The Travelling Rabbi", Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft - who will carry the Sefer Torah into the synagogue - and Ann Harris, widow of former SA Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris.

'Jewish' Brandfort celebrated in an enlightening booklet

SUZANNE BELLING

Brandfort, a tiny dorp in the Free State, in the middle of nowhere, would probably have gone unnoticed on the map of South Africa, had Winnie Madikizela-Mandela not been banished there during the apartheid era.

The town's now-depleted Jewish community was once a vibrant one but, up till now, there was hardly any record of its existence. Former resident, Faisia Shaskolsky (née Cheerin), of Milnerton, changed all that with the compilation of a booklet recording the history of the Jews in the town and bringing to life the memories of the personalities who lived there.

On April 30, Faisia, her husband Dr Ivor Shaskolsky, "Travelling Rabbi" Moshe Silberhaft, who co-ordinated the publication of the booklet, former residents and those with ties to the town, braved the numerous potholes for a reunion in Brandfort and the launch of the booklet in the library of the former township, metres from the exile home of Winnie Madikizela-Mandela.

Councillor Gladys Mafa, representing Mayor Steve Koalane, was guest of honour. Librarian Reuben Mayo, who worked alongside Shaskolsky in organising the event, was also present, as were schoolchildren from Matshediso High School and current residents of all denominations.

Jews (the Boerejode), Afrikaners and the Sotho people, over the generations had uniquely close relationships.

Winnie Madikizela-Mandela said in a message read out by Rabbi Silberhaft: "I was extremely grateful for the kindness shown to me by the Jewish community. Had it not been for them, I would not have survived the brutality of apartheid.

"They understood what it was to be persecuted and have played a great role in helping

me and Zindzi, my daughter, cross the racial barriers under very difficult circumstances."

She added that she welcomed the memoir. "I have many memories of Brandfort, some of them harsh, others sad, all too often times of hardship, suffering and loneliness. Exile is never easy - something the Jewish people know only too well from their own 2 000 years of Diaspora existence - and I believe it is important to keep a proper record of it."

Shaskolsky was prompted to undertake the project after a return visit to Brandfort, following an absence of many years.

"I was disappointed to find hardly a noticeable trace that a Jewish community had lived, flourished and fully participated in life in our village.

"I came away with a definite drive to put Jewish life, as it was then, on the map, as those were important and formative years that needed to be placed firmly in the roots of our lives."

Mafa told the schoolchildren: "Books are knowledge," encouraging them to make use of the library.

The programme included reminiscences by former Brandfort residents and the blowing of a shofar by Afrikaans resident Dalena Visser, who bought copies of the Tanach for her Jewish friends. She told the gathering how much she loved Israel and had visited the country 13 times.

Rabbi Silberhaft said the Country Communities Department of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies commended Shaskolsky on "her foresight and dedicated efforts in conceiving this project and bringing it to fruition".

The Jewish members of the gathering then proceeded to Brandfort's Jewish cemetery, where Rabbi Silberhaft led them in Kaddish as there were enough men present to make up a minyan.

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Hungarian anti-Semites protest WJC conference presence

DAVID SAKS

South African delegates at the World Jewish Congress (WJC) Plenary Assembly, held in Budapest, Hungary, from May 5 - 7, were shocked by the open displays of anti-Semitism that confronted them during their visit.

It was to show solidarity with the local Jewish community as well as to put pressure on the Hungarian government, that

the WJC took the decision to hold its meeting in Hungary rather than, as is usually the case, in Israel.

What delegates witnessed and experienced, soon confirmed the extent to which far-right anti-Semitism and racism have surged in that country in recent years.

On the Saturday morning, some 700 demonstrators protested outside the Hungarian parliament. The crowd was addressed by representatives of the far-right

Jobbik Party, who alleged that there was a Jewish conspiracy underfoot to buy up the country and accused the WJC of choosing to hold its four-yearly gathering in Budapest to “shame the Hungarian people”.

Jobbik won 17 per cent of the vote in the 2010 elections and, with 43 seats, is the third largest party in the 386-member Hungarian parliament.

SAJBD National Chairman Mary Kluk said it had brought home to her once again how fortunate South African Jews were to live in a country where such overt displays of anti-Jewish prejudice and hostility, particularly by a recognised political party, were all but unknown.

Some 500 delegates and observers from the WJC’s affiliated Jewish communities in 100 countries, participated in the conference. The rise of neo-Nazi political parties in various European and other countries, and the situation in the Middle East, were among the issues addressed.

The South African delegation comprised representatives of the National and Cape Council of the SAJBD, headed by National Chairman Mary Kluk and including National Director Wendy Kahn; African Jewish Congress (AJC) President Mervyn Smith; AJC CEO Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft; and Cape Council Chairman and Executive Director Li Boiskin; and David Jacobson. Other AJC representatives were from Namibia, Zimbabwe and Swaziland.

Smith, a former national chairman of the SAJBD with a lengthy record of service in international Jewish affairs, was appointed - with Moshe Kantor - as co-chairman of the WJC Policy Council.

It was further confirmed that South Africa, as home to one of the 12 largest Jewish communities in the Diaspora, would be represented on the executive committee outside Israel.

In his address at the gala dinner, WJC President Ronald Lauder, warned that in Hungary, as well as in Ukraine, Greece and other places, Jews and other minorities were increasingly being singled out, vilified and demonised.

The Jobbik Party in particular was tarnishing Hungary’s good name through “its anti-Semitism, its hostility to the Roma, and its paranoid rantings at the outside world”.

Fascism and intolerance always singled Jews out first, he warned, but Jews were



Wendy Kahn; Mary Kluk; Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft; Mervyn Smith

never the last victims and in the end, such hatred and intolerance only destroyed a nation’s hopes, progress and future. Lauder was subsequently re-elected to a second four-year term as WJC president.

In his opening night address on Sunday, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán condemned anti-Semitism and racism, but largely failed to convince his audience that his government was committed to taking the necessary steps to confront it.

In its subsequently released statement, the WJC expressed regret at his failure to address any recent incidents of anti-Semitism or racism in the country, as well as for not drawing a sufficiently unequivocal line between his government and the far-right.

Words were all very well, but ultimately actions were needed to confront the true nature of the problem, which was “the threat posed by the anti-Semites in general and by the extreme-right Jobbik Party in particular”.

A highlight of the conference was the address on Monday by German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle, who reaffirmed his country’s emphatic support for the Jewish people and Israel and called for more effective means to fight racism in EU member states.

“Tolerance is wise, but tolerance in the face of intolerance is historic foolishness”, he said.

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Members of the far-right Jobbik Party protesting against the WJC choosing to hold its gathering in Budapest.

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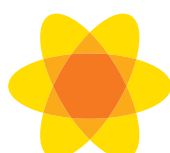
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Fabulous aura of gentle-fondness in Uys’ work

SHOW: “An audience with Pieter Dirk Eish” (Theatre on the Square, Sandton, (011) 883-8606) Until May 25

REVIEWED BY ROBYN SASSEN

From the abandoned bobba in Hill-brow with Polish roots and markings on everything, from the level of her coffee to her forearm; to the nasty nitwit that defined white South African racism in his harshly pulled down khaki hat, and his gun at the ready; not to forget NoWell Fine, the quintessential South African kugel, who whiffs of hypocrisy, Pieter-Dirk pulls several tricks out of the proverbial box, in this show, which above all, celebrates the magic and wisdom of theatre.

Yes, he uses used characters, and lines so frequently present in his rep-artee they’ve grown beards, and the old tricks of non-trickery, where he dons his eyelashes and lipstick and becomes someone else while still on stage, but there’s a fabulous aura of gentle fondness throughout this work, giving you to understand what a master he actually is.

Sparing nobody and nothing, he reaches for the jugular in every context, from Gupta extravagance to grotesque media behaviour on the part of an ageing Mandela, but more entertaining than the sheer skill of characterisation and his ability to force you to laugh at your greatest fears, is the unique structure of this production.

The audience is presented with 16



Pieter-Dirk Uys and his bevy of characters.

numbered, rather rudimentary containers. Each contains the simple transformative wherewithal for Uys to do a complete character change.

A selected audience member - a birthday celebrant, a first-timer at an Uys production, a proud and out homosexual, someone with a defining milestone, or hat - is called upon to choose their lucky number, and like a juke box, he comes alive with a tasty and dire bit of political diatribe, spiced to the hilt and rotten with hilarity.

The absolute master in this country

of the Jewish oxymoron, the “bittere gelechte”, the sad joke, Uys will make you laugh with the grim hilarity he’s sparked in audiences for over 40 years.

The upshot of a show of this nature is its freshness. Uys magnificently demonstrates the role of the audience, in rendering a live performance different every single night. Almost in his 70th year, he unpacks the whole trajectory of his life, from his first experience of Shakespeare’s King Lear in 1961, to his first sexual encounter and his various confrontations with the mediocre monsters of

Afrikanerdom that were apartheid’s aides, up until the farcical shenanigans of the world in which we live, as reported in today’s newspaper.

You won’t see all 16 possibilities of character in one show - the production is about 90 minutes long, and each characterisation is long enough for the character in question to become fully three-dimensional, but the “Pick-A-Box” (in Afrikaans, Kies ‘n Doos) nature of the show means that you in the audience will win, no matter which box is opened.

‘Racier’ Othello for younger audiences

ROBYN SASSEN

Twenty-four-year-old Aimee Goldsmith (pictured, inset) has an unquenchable love for Shakespeare, and she’s not afraid to show it. She plays Desdemona in a new production of Othello, geared specifically for young audiences.

She believes school teachers don’t teach Shakespeare properly. “With Shakespeare, everything is in the text.” She argues that teachers often side-step Shakespearean raunchiness, which would, in fact, make hormonal teenage readers of it instantly fascinated.

“I’ve performed in Romeo and Juliet and a Midsummer Night’s Dream, so far,” says this Wits drama graduate, who you might recognise from Courtneigh Cloud’s Holocaust play, Boys from the Ashes.

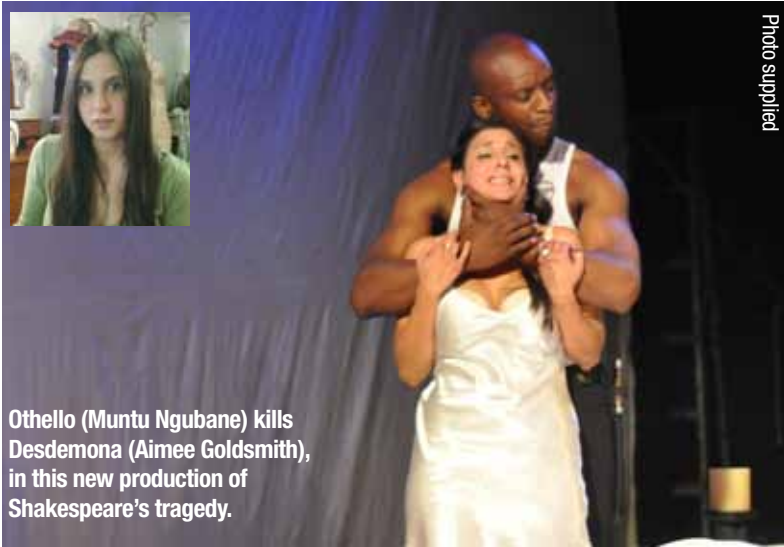
“Before auditioning for the role of Desdemona, I had read Othello a few times, but when you’re performing, you read with a different eye.

“Desdemona’s often performed as a weak girl. Even her name, from the Greek, means wretched. But I think she shows strength in defying her father’s wishes, in discovering her own sexuality.

“My Desdemona has high self-esteem. She doesn’t die easily. She must be killed. Her innocence is her strength.”

Directed by Denel Honeyball, this adaptation cuts the original cast of 13 to eight. “Now 90 minutes long, it serves young audiences, making its core story clearer and racier.

“Shakespearean language shouldn’t be modernised. If the ac-



Othello (Muntu Ngubane) kills Desdemona (Aimee Goldsmith), in this new production of Shakespeare’s tragedy.

tors understand what they’re saying, their audiences will.

“In developing this play, we were honoured to have theatre veteran Dorothy Ann Gould do a workshop with us. She told us about how actors tend to downplay Shakespeare to school audiences.

“You don’t know how many of them are going through what the play addresses; Dorothy taught us to make the approach empowering, not boring.

“This year, Othello is an IEB grade 11 drama network and a GDE grade 12 English first language network. But there are threads that connect it to contemporary realities.

“When Denel heard about Reeva Steenkamp’s murder in February, she could not but draw parallels; the murderer was an admired hero who overcame enormous odds to be respected, but perhaps harboured deep insecurity about his adequacy.

“The heroine who may have been unfaithful, suffers an untimely death on a day of romance; Desde-

mona dies on her wedding sheets; Reeva Steenkamp died on St Valentine’s Day.

“The set is monochromatic, a decision forced by budgets,” Goldsmith comments on the tiny POP-art’s stage. “But making magic has little to do with size. It’s about listening to the audience. And listening to the work. I’ve experimented with different technical approaches to Desdemona, but when I get on that stage, it is like a blank canvas, and the snot and tears run of their own accord!”

And the race card? “This play is about sexual jealousy,” she’s adamant. “Race was central to Othello in the last generation, but it is no longer. The most important part of Othello is the main character’s self-hatred.”

• Othello is at POPart in Johannesburg, May 14 - 19; later in the year, it will be staged at Joburg Theatre’s The Space and the Soweto Theatre.

Arts Briefs

ACiDBaSS in Cape Town, May 12

The band ACiDBaSS, featuring David Bass (piano), Mike Rossi (saxes/clarinet), Marc Duby (bass), Alan Thwaites (drums), Willy Haubrich (brass menagerie), and Tony Drake (electric keys) play at the Marimba Restaurant, Cape Town Convention Centre on May 12. Describing themselves as “drawing on a pool of musicians with different backgrounds and featuring a range of music wide as the chemical spectrum,” they promise to “squeeze the entire spectrum of jazz-rock-gospel-boogie-blues-world-mayhem into 80 minutes”, with free access to ladies, “whether they be mothers past, present or future”, but will charge R40 at the door for men. Contact Alan 082-925-4524 or David (021) 674-4967.



Strike’s The Miser for Baxter

Multiple-award-winning Molière play, The Miser, directed by Sylvaine Strike, performs at the Baxter Flipside until May 25. The play recently walked off with four Naledi Theatre Awards for Best Production of a Play, Best Director (Strike), Best Performance by a Supporting Actress (Patricia Boyer), and Best Costume Design (Sarah Roberts) after its season on Johannesburg. Featuring an astonishing Lionel Newton in the lead, with support from William Harding and Kate Liquorish (pictured above), Mpho Osei-Tutu and Atandwa Kani, this play was deemed by this newspaper as the play of the year last year, in Johannesburg. Now Cape Town gets to experience the deliciousness. Bookings: (021) 685-7880.

A column of the Chevrah Kadisha

Is happily ever after attainable?



At the end of 2012, the Chev’s Community Social Services counselling division “married” CAJE - Rabbi Goldman’s College of Adult Jewish Education. By the time you read this column we will already have presented the 3rd session in our monthly, “Enrich Your Life” series, to full houses and appreciative audiences.

In addition to its reactive counselling for people in need of emotional support for a wide variety of conditions, our social services strategy has always aimed at providing proactive educational forums, like marriage prep and teaching high school kids what healthy relationships should look like.

But this wonderful partnership with CAJE has added prestige to this platform and boosted our ability to offer stimulating speakers to address matters of deep relevance and concern to our community.

We are very blessed to have highly acclaimed experts who give freely and gladly of their considerable knowledge and experience for all of our benefit.

The first lecture in March consisted of a panel of four

professional therapists who addressed, each from the perspective of their own fields - speech, occupational, physio and psychological - the very pertinent question of why so many of our children are in therapy these days.

The answer, in a nutshell, identified the techno-times in which we live, the benefits of early intervention and the fact that parents and teachers are conditioned to a heightened awareness. In other words, we know a lot more about what to look out for these days, and our children exercise a lot less.

The following month our lecturer spoke to an audience of over 200 about dealing with stress. The good news: To be alive is to experience stress. It’s the good kind we need to seek out.

You could be forgiven for thinking that the title of this column refers to our relationship with CAJE and, in the interests of literary creativity, I may have deliberately misled you. The title, in fact, refers to last night’s panel of eminent clinical psychologists who spoke about marriage and how to make it meaningful and make it endure.

So is happily ever after attainable? For every married couple and every meaningful partnership, it is!

I have learned that in all relationships communication is crucial. This fact is underscored by the amount of feedback I receive from this column and I urge you to keep the comments flowing. May OUR partnership continue to thrive!

Send comments to feedback@thechev.org.za

This column is paid for by the Chevrah Kadisha

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

Strong display of Jewish solidarity



At the time of writing, the World Jewish Congress Plenary Assembly in Budapest, Hungary, is approaching its conclusion. It has been a stirring, if often sobering experience to have been part of this great gathering of Jewish leaders from throughout the world.

The reason why Budapest was chosen for this year’s meeting, as noted last week, was to show solidarity for the Hungarian Jewish community at a time when it is confronted with an alarming upsurge in anti-Semitism.

In the course of our stay, we have witnessed at first-hand the severity of this problem. Whatever problems we might face in South Africa, it bears no relation to a situation where overt anti-Semitic rhetoric features continually in the public domain, driven not by individuals but by a major political party.

We certainly cannot deny the high level of security that was provided for the conference by the authorities, yet the very fact that such comprehensive measures were deemed necessary tells its own sad story.

One cannot imagine a Jewish leadership gathering in South Africa ever having to be protected in this way.

In the firing line is Hungary’s 100 000-strong Jewish community, one of the largest in Europe. We were heartened to see how, despite the negative propaganda against them, its members are going about fostering a broad-based renewal of Jewish life in the country.

At the same time, it was evident how pervasive is the legacy of the Holocaust within the community. It was only near the end of the war that the Nazis extended their programme of mass extermination to Hungarian Jewry, yet even in the short time available, and despite the heroic efforts of Raoul Wallenberg, they succeeded

in shooting and gassing of more than half a million Jewish men, women and children.

As WJC President Ronald Lauder pointed out in his opening address, Hungarian Jews comprised a staggering one-third of the 1,1 million Jews murdered at Auschwitz. Unlike in Poland, Lithuania and elsewhere, however, a significant minority was liberated in time, and they and their descendants are acutely aware that they are a community of Holocaust survivors.

Despite this tragic legacy and awareness of the current menace, the conference provided an inspiring display of Jewish solidarity, as well as strong messages of support from other European leaders.

No matter where they might be, Jews everywhere know that their fellow Jews, whether under the umbrella of the WJC or other influential world bodies, will exert themselves to the utmost on their behalf in confronting anti-Semitic threats against them.

This was the strong message that was conveyed to Hungarian Jewry, as well as to the government of that country.

Warm congratulations to Mervyn Smith

I warmly congratulate our past president and current President of the African Jewish Congress Mervyn Smith, on his appointment as co-chairman of the WJC Policy Council. It is a fitting acknowledgement of his many years of outstanding service to the Jewish people, both in South Africa and on the international stage.

We are further much encouraged by the fact that South African Jewry, one of the 12 largest Jewish communities in the Diaspora, will henceforth be represented on the WJC Executive Committee outside Israel.

Through our presence on this all-important body, we can participate more meaningfully in advancing the cause of the Jewish people and ensuring their safety.

• Listen to Steven Gruzd on Jewish Board Talk on 101.9 ChaiFM every Friday 12:00 - 13:00.

This column is paid for by the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

Knesset panel advances plan regulating Bedouin settlements

JERUSALEM - A Knesset committee has advanced a plan to resettle 30 000 Bedouin. The draft ratified by the Ministerial Legislation Committee, regulates Bedouin settlements in the Negev Desert. Along with requiring the resettlement of the Bedouin, the Law of Arrangement of Bedouin Settlement in the Negev would resolve some 12 000 land claims, Army Radio reported. In a media release, The Association for Civil Rights in Israel, said it would “cause the displacement and forced eviction of dozens of villages and tens of thousands of Bedouin residents, dispossessing them of their property and historical rights to their lands, destroying the social fabric of their communities, and sealing the fate of thousands of families into poverty and unemployment. All of this while the government simultaneously promotes the establishment of new Jewish communities, some of which are even planned to be built on the fresh ruins of Bedouin villages.” (JTA)



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FEB – S LAWRENCE
MARCH - DR C LEVY
APRIL - L GONCALVES

What's On

Saturday (May 11)

• Beit Emanuel in Parktown, is host-
ing a weekly series of talks in its
adult education programme, in its
boardroom every Saturday morning
after the Shabbat morning service
and before the Talmud study ses-
sion. Times: From 11:15 to 12:15
and Talmud study at 12:15. No cost.
Today, Prof Merle Williams will
talk on “Tensions Within Jewish
Tradition and Values: Isaac Bashe-
vis Singer’s Story, ‘The Spinoza of
Market Street’.”

Sunday (May 12)

• RCHCC screens the documentary,
“Unmasked: Judeophobia the Threat
to Civilisation”. Venue: Clive M
Beck Auditorium. Time: 19:30.
Donation: R30 (incl refreshments).
Booking: Hazel or René (011)
728-8088/8378, after hours (011)
728-8378, e-mail: rchcc@telkomsa.
net or rene.s@telkomsa.net, or www.
greatpark.co.za

• Big Band Music Appreciation
Society meets at St John’s College in
the Jeffrey Auditorium in St John’s
Road, in Lower Houghton. Time:
14:15 sharp. We will feature The
Mills Brothers. Information: Barney,
(011) 440-1996 or Jack, (011) 782-
7111.

Sunday (May 12)

• Second Innings hosts Laura Fried-
man who will talk on “Building a
Bridge Between the Emotional and
Cognitive Sides of the Brain for
Lowering Stress Levels”. Venue: The
Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden
Acres. Time: 10:00 for 10:30. Cost:
R20 members, R40 visitors.

Monday (May 13)

• UJW CT’s Na’arot group will be
hosting a talk by Shireen Shapiro,
Paralympic swimmer. Venue: Fire
& Ice Hotel. Time: 19:30. Cost:
R100. Enquiries: Karen Kaimowitz,
082-897-7799 or Vanessa Arelisky,
082-882-3615.

• UJW adult education division hosts
Yaacov Finkelstein, Deputy Chief
of Mission Embassy of Israel, who
will talk on “Post-Election Relations
Between South Africa and Israel”.
Time: 09:30. Donation: R30 unless
otherwise stated. Contact: (011)
648-1053.

Tuesday (May 14)

• UJW adult education division
hosts Arlene Bernstein, former
head of LifeLine, who will lead a
group discussion. Venue: 1 Oak
Street, Houghton, Johannesburg.

Time: 09:30. Donation: R30 unless
otherwise stated. Contact: (011)
648-1053.

• UJW adult education division hosts
musicologist Estelle Sher who will
talk on “Beethoven - An Overview”.
Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton,
Johannesburg. Time: 09:30. Dona-
tion: R30 unless otherwise stated.
Contact: (011) 648-1053.

Wednesday (May 15)

• Greenside Shul hosts a Shavuot
brocha on the first day of Shavuot,
after the shul service. Guest speaker
is Debbie Mankowitz on “Israel Le-
gitimacy Revisited”. Contact: (011)
788-5036.

• Pine Street Shul presents “Shavuot -
Accessing and Containing the Light”
with Yocheved Bacher, for first day
Shavuot. Venue: Pine Street Shul.
Time: 10:30. Contact Kiki on 083-
692-6399.

Saturday (May 18)

• Beit Emanuel in Parktown, is host-
ing a weekly series of talks in its
adult education programme, in its
boardroom every Saturday morning
after the Shabbat morning service
and before the Talmud study ses-
sion. Times: From 11:15 to 12:15

and Talmud study at 12:15. No cost.

Monday (May 20)

• UJW adult education division hosts
David Shapiro of Sasfin Bank, who
will talk on “America - The Next
Emerging Market”. Venue: 1 Oak
Street, Houghton, Johannesburg.
Time: 09:30. Donation: R30 unless
otherwise stated. Contact: (011)
648-1053.

Tuesday (May 21)

• JHGC in partnership with Liliesleaf,
Embassy of the Czech Republic and
French Institute SA, hosts a talk
by award-winning author Laurent
Binet. Venue: Liliesleaf Farm. Time:
19:00. Booking essential. Contact:
Thuli (011) 640-3100 or thuli@
jhbholocaust.co.za.

• WIZO Forum hosts a “Wellness Day
with Discovery Health”, where audi-
ence members will get a complete
health assessment, learn about
healthy lifestyle choices and have a
screening test done by healthcare
professionals. Venue: Beyachad.
Time: 09:30. Cost: R70. Bookings:
Sandy, (011) 645-2515.

• UJW’s Johannesburg branch holds
its AGM. Guest speaker Simone
Hope speaks on “Lessons Learned

on a Mountain” an inspirational
talk and slide presentation by a
feisty granny who recently climbed
Kilimanjaro. Venue: 1 Oak Street,
Houghton, Johannesburg. Time:
09:30. Donation: R30 unless
otherwise stated. Contact: (011)
648-1053.

Wednesday (May 22)

• UJW CT adult education pro-
gramme has as its guest speaker Tali
Feinberg on “The Jewish Chronicle
- 2013”. Venue: Stonehaven. Time:
10:00 for 10:30. Cost: R20 (incl
refreshments). Enquiries: (021) 434-
9555 (mornings only).

• UJW adult education division hosts
Dr Lorraine Chaskalson, former
lecturer in the Department of Eng-
lish at Wits, presents a series of five
lectures on “Contemporary Poetry”.
Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton,
Johannesburg. Time: 09:30. Dona-
tion: R30 unless otherwise stated.
Contact: (011) 648-1053.

• Second Innings hosts an “Outing to
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Gabriel, (011) 532-9718.

Jews seen as UK soccer’s ‘forgotten tribe’



ROCKING THE BOAT
Jack Milner

Among the South African Jewish population we arguably have substantially more supporters of English football than local soccer.

However, ask the same people how much influence Jews have had on the sport in the UK, the same people probably would reply “very little”. That response would be understandable as one could probably count on your fingers the number of Jews who have played in the Premier League, for example.

That theory, however, has been quashed in a recent book by Anthony Clavane called *Does Your Rabbi Know You’re Here? The Story of English Football’s Forgotten Tribe*.

Clavane, a history teacher turned journalist, dispels this popular myth to reveal the hidden history of Jewish involvement in English football.

He argues that football’s transformation from a working-class pursuit into a global industry would not have been possible without such forgotten Jewish figures as Harry Morris (played for Millwall, Swansea and Swindon Town), Leslie Goldberg (played for Leeds in the 1930s), Louis Bookman (played before the First World War and for Luton Town after 1919) and Edward Freedman (the man credited with creating a merchandising revolution in English football).

Clavane, as a youngster growing up in England, was told at school that “football is not for a Yiddisher boy”. In the process he had his football confiscated, followed in turn by a tennis ball. In fact, he is quick to point out that English Jews were hostile to people who did play soccer as they considered the sport “unfitting”.

Clavane points out that at the beginning of the 20th century there was a major discrepancy between being seen as “English” and being viewed as Jewish. He offers a well written slice of untold social history to prove that there were Jewish players, fans, managers and directors and details how Jews became English and how far becoming English and staying Jewish were in tension.

“For many decades, Anglo-Jewry had a conscious preference for assimilation. It was possible to belong but not to rock the boat; the fear of stoking anti-Semitism was rarely far away.”

The author, who came from Leeds, admits that he too was not aware of any

Jews involved in English football until 1967, when Mark Lazarus helped Queens Park Rangers to victory in the League Cup. In the fourth round, Lazarus set up both the QPR goals as they defeated Carlisle United 2-1.

He scored the third goal against Birmingham City in the semifinals, which was also the first time QPR had won an away match in the League Cup.

This put them in the final against cup holders West Bromwich Albion. Having gone two goals down by halftime, the QPR team staged a comeback during the second half.

With nine minutes remaining, Ron Hunt collided with the West Brom goalkeeper, knocking the ball loose. Lazarus latched on to the loose ball and slammed it into the back of an empty net, his team winning the match 3 - 2, and with it, the trophy.

Tottenham Hotspur has always been regarded as the club most associated with Jewish support, even though West Ham was closer to large Jewish communities. Tram routes had a lot to do with it.

Combustion-engine-powered cars and buses were forbidden on Shabbat but the electric tram, stopping outside White Hart Lane, was not. One in three of 30 000 fans at a Spurs home game in the 1930s, was Jewish.

So, it was ridiculously dumb for the English Football Association to host Germany at White Hart Lane in 1935. As a result of their naive insistence that the game was beyond politics, the English were outplayed by German football diplomacy. It was thought merely polite for the England team to give Nazi salutes and for the Nazi swastika to flutter above White Hart Lane.

One brave Spurs fan climbed on to the roof and tore it down, but was fined for his trouble.

The Jewish Chronicle, having editorialised against protests over the game as “disorderly”, ignored that story, instead praising Jewish refugees from the Nazis for acting as interpreters and tour guides for the German visitors.

The real place of Jewish influence takes place off the pitch. David Pleat, whose father anglicised the family name from Plotz, speaks in the book for the first time about being Jewish and why he avoided making it part of his public identity.

Clavane shows how the most important Jewish contributions to English football were in the boardroom. Burnley chairman Bob Lord banned television cameras, declaring in 1974 that he would “stand up against a move to get soccer on the cheap by the Jews who run television”. Such



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The English national soccer team “politely” gives the Nazi salute during and international played at White Hart Lane against Germany in 1935.

open anti-Semitism, however, soon gave way to professionalism.

Irving Scholar’s Spurs and David Dein’s Arsenal introduced basic commercial principles to the game. The Russian, Roman Abramovich, on the other hand is treated as an insurgent outsider by the author who is in essence, a football traditionalist.

British Jews are often cited as a model minority. What Clavane explains in the

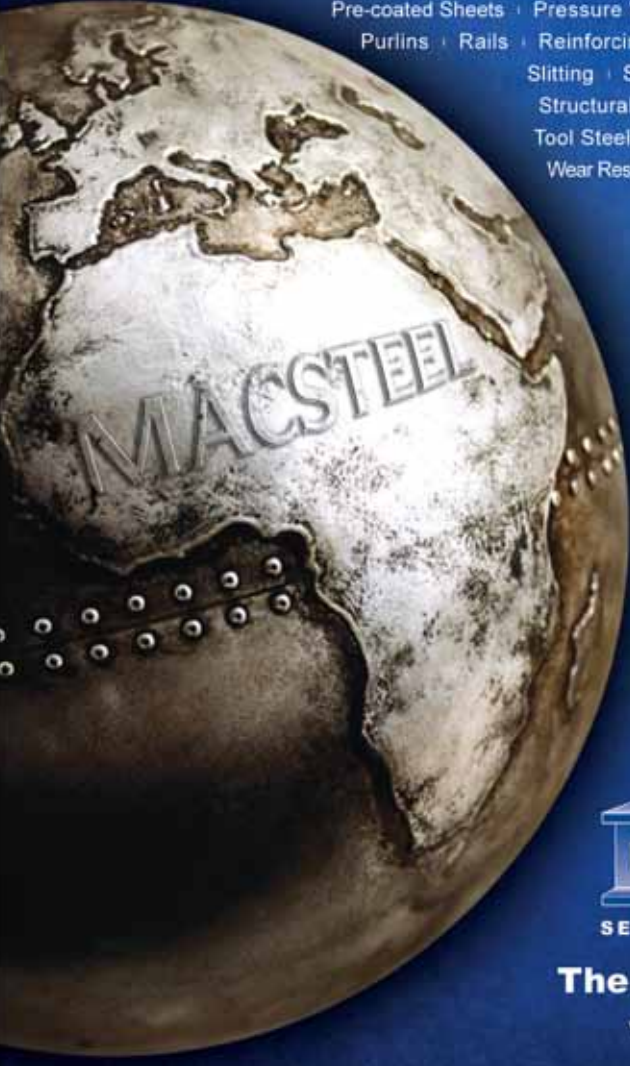
book is why the journey took so long for English Jews to find the confidence to give voice to their story.


Perhaps one of the most amusing tales that sums it all up is when Clavane, on the night Chelsea played Bayern Munich in the Champions League Final, found himself wondering about something his grandparents and parents would always ask: Which result “would be good for the Jews”?

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Palestinians poll highest on suicide bombings

NEW YORK - Out of all the Muslim respondents in a global survey, Palestinian Muslims polled highest in favour of suicide bombings as a justifiable means to “defend Islam”. A new Pew Research Centre survey of Muslims around the globe finds most are deeply committed to their faith and want its teachings to shape not only their personal lives, but also society and politics.

In most of the 21 countries where the question was asked, few Muslims endorse suicide bombing and other forms of violence against civilian targets as a means of defending Islam against its enemies. But four out of 10 Palestinian Muslims see suicide bombing as often or sometimes justified, while roughly half (49 per cent) take the opposite view.

In Egypt, 29 per cent consider suicide bombing justified at least sometimes. Elsewhere in the Middle East, fewer Muslims believe such violence is often or sometimes justified, including 15 per cent in Jordan, 12 per cent in Tunisia, nine per cent in Morocco, and seven per cent in Iraq. (Israel Hayom/Exclusive to JNS.org)

World News in Brief

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Wishing you a happy Shavuot
Chag Sameach!

